

From: OLGA BLANTHORNE
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 2:45 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Students Need a Broader Perspective

Ethnic Studies:

I read the article in the December 20, 2020 edition of the San Gabriel Valley Tribune Newspaper titled "Students Need a broader Perspective" by Murray Bessette. I am concerned that your committee will be biased and not fair in deciding the history curriculum of California. I really suggest you read this article which I am in agreement. I would like to give you my views on Ethnic Studies.

When I attended Mount. San Antonio College, my history professor gave our class several books to read. Each book covered a different group's experience in coming and living in the United States, but in a slanted one way view experience- Black, Native America, Immigrants (Irish-Italian-German-Russian, etc), Asian, Mexican and Pilgrims. Originally, I protested to the teacher, but he said to just stick with it. The book on the Blacks experience was on how the other groups of people were cruel and terrible in their treatment of the blacks with only a few people coming to their aid (Quakers, etc.), the same with the Native American, Immigrants, etc. Each group overcame a great deal of difficulties, were abused terribly, but also treated other groups terribly. Each group had great people involved who did courageous deeds and overcame many obstacles. That same group also had terrible individuals that cause great harm to their own people and other groups of people. Some of these individuals (good and bad) were shaped by the other people they encountered who helped or who hindered them in their human development. Great hate and/or great love were shown to be in all people and their groups.

I eventually complimented my History professor on the choice of his reading material. I learned a great deal on the many diverse groups of people that settled our country and how they persisted. Our country was made by both saints and sinners and some individuals a bit of both. All the different groups have suffered no matter what color of skin or religion or place of birth. Some people were able to be successful and passed their success on to others. Other people were greedy and caused a great deal of suffering to others. The successful and/or greedy individuals were discovered in all of the groups.

I am sincerely hoping, that when you decide an ethnics studies for California, you treat our history fairly. Every group had their saints, sinners, and those that were both. Most of the groups had people that were both. Just look at our own relatives, who are imperfect with all their faults, we still love them. As human beings, we can chose to change our behavior, as we grow and learn in our understanding of our attitude toward others. We can only do so, if we are provided true and actual facts on our history. Please don't make the United States a villain as our country has done a lot of good in the World and for all people. Otherwise, why do people, fleeing their countries, still want to come to the U.S? Of course, lots of decisions and behaviors need improvement, but our country has come a long way. As far as removing statues and changing names of schools, who can be perfect. No one is perfect. You who remove these statues are stating, because you are such a perfect human and have never made a bad decision in your life, you can decide who is perfect. They are still a part of our history.

As for the Civil war heroes both sides, they were brothers, husbands, and fathers. Remember they were mostly White Southern and Northern men, who fought bravery to end slavery for the Black population. If I was a Union soldier fighting against my Confederate brother, I would not want my relative dismissed on his death for fighting for his State. Instead, I would want to grieve and remember. Many of those who fought in that war were poor and fought for their State as if it was their country. Please don't rewrite history, but instead complete and fill in the parts that need to be included of people that have too long been excluded. Women that assisted in the many wars behind and in the lines. Those religious groups build schools, hospitals, that tended to many ill, wounded, fleeing slaves, epidemics, etc. Individuals, who overcame great obstacles to contribute to the growth of our Nation.

Thank you for listening to my request. I pray you will consider how important your decisions can be on the minds of our children. Our children need to know that as citizens of this country, our country is not perfect, but we have learned and are still learning from our past. We need to take pride in the good that our country has done, accept that our forefathers made mistakes and then take responsibility for correcting problems that do exist now.

Sincerely,

Olga Blanthorne
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