



Eagle Forum of California

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Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, 95814
Fax No: 916-558-3160

RE: Please Sign the Resolution to Delay the New AP History Curriculum Frameworks

Dear Governor Brown:

As you know, California's brightest students take Advanced Placement U.S. History (referred to as APUSH) and the College Board AP History Test at the end of the year. The course and test have traditionally been designed to present a balanced and correct view of American history and prepare students for college level history courses, for which they even receive college credit.

The College Board, however, under the leadership of President David Coleman, has recently created new frameworks and standards for the APUSH course and test which reflects a radically revisionist, distorted and biased view of American history that emphasizes only negative aspects and leaves out many important people, essential events, historical documents and literature and anything positive that America has done.

For example, there is no mention of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, John Adams, Patrick Henry, Paul Revere, and so many more of our Founding Fathers. The only person who is mentioned is George Washington, but nothing about him or his amazing life. They just give a few sentences from his farewell address.

There is very little mention of the various wars we have been involved in, no military leaders, and the only thing mentioned during World War II is that evil America put all the Japanese-Americans in internment camps and used an atomic bomb on their motherland of Japan. There is no mention of the reason we were involved in the war – no mention of Hitler or the holocaust. No mention of six million Jews that were killed.

The recurring theme that runs throughout the entire course is that Americans are “imperialistic, oppressive and racist.” Never anything is said of the amazing good that America has done for so many other countries, that we were the shining city on the hill, the beacon of light of freedom to the rest of the world. There is no mention of the reason so many early colonists came flocking to America – for religious liberty.

Is this new AP history what we really want our students to learn? Are they no longer to be proud of being American, but ashamed? One wonders what is the real agenda behind the College Board and these

strange new frameworks? One cannot receive any word back from them as to who wrote these new standards that are so far from any American history we have ever known.

Larry Krieger, an authority on the AP History traditional course who taught it for 22 years and wrote study guides for students to help them do well on the APUSH final exam, believes the new standards are far inferior to the old ones and are actually in violation of most states' minimum requirements for Social Studies. He states that to be the case for California as well.

I am attaching a resolution that we ask you to sign and to support which has also been sent to the State Superintendent and the State Board of Education. The petition is asking for the delay of the implementation of the APUSH in our state for a year, as is being asked for in other states. This will give time for a committee to be convened to draft new APUSH frameworks that are consistent with traditional American history standards and also consistent with California Social Studies requirements.

I am also including links to a white paper and two articles that go into greater depth as to how biased and flawed these new APUSH standards are.

I am hoping that you will consider our request, especially in light of this election year. It would be important for the voters of California to think whoever is to be the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the next four years has respect and high regard for the truth in U.S. history and wants our youth to be taught the truth, not a biased, flawed, one-sided view. As George Santana said, "If we do not learn from history, we are condemned to repeat it." How can the youth of America learn from history if they are not even being taught what that history is?

Sincerely,

E. Orlean Koehle, State President

Link to White Paper: The former traditional California history standards are commended on p.15 of: "Imperiling the Republic: The Fate of U.S. History Instruction under Common Core" http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/imperiling-the-republic-the-fate-of-u-s-history-instruction-under-common-core/?utm_source=History+%26+Common+Core+PR+Sept+2014&utm_campaign=History+Sept+2+2014&utm_medium=email

Attached are the following:

"History abridged – New AP curriculum troubling," by Larry Krieger and Steve Davis published in the Orange County Register, Aug. 24, 2014

"Twenty-Nine Biased Statements in the New AP U.S. History Redesign" by Larry Krieger
The Resolution to Delay and Rewrite the AP History Curriculum Frameworks

History abridged – New AP curriculum troubling

Posted on August 24, 2014 by Steve Davis

By Larry Krieger, Retired AP History Teacher from Pennsylvania / Contributing Writer /
Orange County Register *Published: Aug. 18, 2014 Updated: 5:44 p.m.*

How would you describe the American experience? Since our nation's founding, generations of Americans have looked to America as a land of liberty, opportunity and democracy. President Ronald Reagan gave enduring expression to these values by referring to America as a "shining city" to express his ideal of a nation that is "God-blessed and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace."

This optimistic view of America did not inspire the anonymous authors of the College Board's redesigned AP U.S. History (APUSH) curriculum. Returning students, about 60,000 California sophomores and juniors, will be taught a very different curriculum from the one mandated by California's History–Social Science Framework. The new course of study is best described as a curricular coup that will override state guidelines and indoctrinate students with a radically flawed reinterpretation of American history.

The College Board's redesigned curriculum is totally antithetical to the goals and content of the California Framework. The California Framework has exhorted a generation of teachers to "emphasize the importance of history as a story well told." Inspired by their state standards, California teachers focused on forceful personalities whose struggles and triumphs demonstrated courage and conviction. Teachers enriched their lessons with vivid literary excerpts recommended by the California Framework. In stark contrast, the College Board Framework states that its goal is to train a new generation of students to become what it calls "apprentice historians." These 10th and 11th grade apprentice historians will read, interpret and argue about informational texts. The 98-page College Board document does not recommend a single work of literature. In addition, the just released College Board Sample Exam does not contain a single reference to a work of literature.

The content of the College Board document inculcates a consistently negative and superficial view of the American experience. For example, the College Board's anonymous authors dispatch World War II with the following two sentences: "The mass mobilization of American society to supply troops for the war effort and a workforce on the home front ended the Great Depression and provided opportunities for women and minorities to improve their socioeconomic positions. Wartime experiences, such as the internment of Japanese Americans, challenges to civil liberties, debates over race and segregation, and the decision to drop the atomic bomb raised questions about American values."

In contrast to this shallow and biased coverage, the now-discarded California Framework contains standards that call upon teachers to begin their discussion of World War II by examining the rise of fascism in Germany and militarism in Japan. The California curriculum then recommends that teachers include material about the sacrifices of American soldiers who fought in such key battles as Midway, Normandy, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and the Battle of the Bulge. Students also examine Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, discuss the constitutional issues involved in the Japanese internment and investigate Hitler's atrocities against Jews and other minorities.

The College Board's coverage of World War II is not an isolated example. Although it is 98-pages long, the College Board's AP U.S. History Framework could only find space for the following sentence about the Korean and Vietnam Wars: "The United States sought to contain Soviet-dominated communism through a variety of measures, including military engagements in Korea and Vietnam." That's it! But at least the College Board Framework mentioned the Korean and Vietnam wars. While the College Board's anonymous authors did find space for the Students for a Democratic Society, they failed to even mention Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The College Board knows that it has a problem. What if citizens in California, and across America, object to having their history standards usurped by their new Framework? In an effort to placate irate teachers and parents, the College Board claims that teachers have the flexibility to include materials from their state standards.

The College Board's flexibility doctrine is contradicted by its own unequivocal statement: "Beginning with the May 2015 AP U.S. History Exam, no AP U.S. History Exam questions will require students to know historic content that falls outside of this concept outline." The just-released Sample AP U.S. History exam clearly reveals that all of the test questions are firmly anchored in the College Board Framework. So California teachers do have the freedom to use excerpts from *The Grapes of Wrath* and teach stories about the indomitable will of Holocaust survivors. However, these topics will not be tested on the APUSH exam.

The College Board Framework has sparked shock and outrage across America. Concerned parents are urging their elected public officials to demand that the College Board delay the implementation of the new course, while restoring the previous course that did not circumvent the guidelines legally enacted by the California History-Social Science Framework.

Larry Krieger has taught urban, rural and suburban students in a teaching career that began in 1970. He is the author of leading U.S. History, World History and AP prep books that are used throughout the country.

As commentator Stanley Kurtz accurately [observes](#), "**The College Board is pushing U.S. history as far to the left as it can get away with at the high school level.**" (<http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2014/07/22/College-Boards-Flexibility-Doctrine-in-AP-US-History-Exam-For-Optics-Only>.)

Twenty-Nine Biased Statements in the New AP U.S. History Redesign

by [LARRY KRIEGER](#) (AP history teacher of 22 years from Pennsylvania and author of U.S. History, World History and AP History Prep books and founder of Insider/Test Prep) August 19, 2014



The "[Open Letter from the Authors of the AP United States History Curriculum Framework](#)" raises a number of important issues. Here are questions and our response to the key points raised in this "Open Letter," followed by a list of 29 biased and ill-considered statements from the Framework, and a list of 17 omitted seminal documents about U.S. history.

- **Who wrote the College Board's AP U.S. History (APUSH) Framework?** The nine members of the College Board's Advanced Placement United States History Curriculum Development and Assessment Committee identify themselves as the authors of the APUSH Curriculum Framework. However, page v of the Framework lists 19 college professors and high school teachers under the heading "Acknowledgments." There is a significant professional difference between the terms "Acknowledgments" and "Authors." If the nine signers of the "Open Letter" are indeed authors who wrote the APUSH Framework, the College Board has a responsibility to revise its misleading attribution on page v. In addition, since one other professor who was listed under "Acknowledgments" admitted he didn't know who actually wrote the Framework, there remains significant confusion about who really created the working drafts that the signers of the Open Letter used.
- **For whom was the APUSH Curriculum Framework written?** The Open Letter authors state that the Framework "was written by and for other AP teachers." This statement ignores that the

Framework prescribes the essential content that will be taught to about 500,000 high school sophomores and juniors. These students are the sons and daughters of parents who have a direct stake in what is being taught to their children.

The “by the profession, for the profession” approach endorsed by the Open Letter authors also excludes civic leaders who are not specialists but are deeply concerned about how U.S. history is taught to American high school students. Including people from outside the academic world would have added to the Framework’s credibility and might have saved the document from its egregious problems.

- **Why does the Framework omit key American leaders and seminal documents?** The Open Letter acknowledges that the Framework omits Benjamin Franklin, Dwight Eisenhower, Martin Luther King Jr, and many other key figures in American history. They accuse critics of “misunderstanding our document.” Unfortunately, we have not misunderstood anything; the document is clear. The Framework devotes pages 28 to 80 to a detailed outline of the “required knowledge” students are expected to learn in their AP U.S. History course. The Framework unequivocally states, “Beginning with the May 2015 AP U.S. History Exams, *no AP U.S. History Exam questions will require students to know historical content that falls outside this concept outline*” (emphasis added).

The Framework is a lengthy document that provides more than enough space to include key figures and seminal documents from American history. Neither the College Board nor the Open Letter authors have explained why the Framework does have space to include Chief Little Turtle, the Students for a Democratic Society, and the Black Panthers, but does not have space to include Dwight Eisenhower, Jonas Salk, and Martin Luther King Jr. The omissions have been widely criticized. But once again, College Board officials and the Open Letter authors have adamantly refused to revise the Framework or delay its implementation.

- **What will critics find when they examine the AP Practice Exam?** The Open Letter authors invite critics to examine the just-released AP Practice Exam. They contend that reviewers will find “a rich and inclusive body of historic knowledge.” In reality, reviewers will find an exam that tests a surprisingly limited range of topics. Since every exam question is firmly anchored in the Framework, the test does not include questions on Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, Martin Luther King Jr, and numerous other historic figures.

President Ronald Reagan is the only historic figure who actually generates specific questions. In one question, Reagan’s famous “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” quote is used to reflect “increased assertiveness and bellicosity.” In another question, President Bill Clinton’s ideas on “big government” are associated with ideas expressed by Reagan.

It is important to compare the lack of key figures on the Practice Exam with the inclusion of key figures on previous APUSH exams. An analysis of eight released exams revealed seven multiple-choice questions on Thomas Jefferson, five on William Lloyd Garrison, seven on Theodore Roosevelt, four on Dwight Eisenhower, and six on Martin Luther King, Jr. This predictable clustering of questions on key figures and events enabled teachers to efficiently prepare their students for the APUSH exam.

- **Does the Framework provide a balanced coverage of American history?** The Open Letter authors insist that the Framework strikes “a careful balance between teaching factual knowledge and critical analysis.” We believe the APUSH Framework fails to meet the test of providing a balanced curriculum that acknowledges both the nation’s founding principles and its continuing struggles to be faithful to those principles. Here is a list of biased statements taken verbatim from the Framework. In addition, we have added a list of seminal documents omitted by the Framework. Taken together, they provide overwhelming evidence that the College Board Framework seems determined to create a cynical generation of what it calls “apprentice historians.” Is this really what we want our nation’s top students to know about American history?

Twenty-Nine Biased Statements – only giving one side of the issue:

1. Teachers can explore the roots of the modern environmental movement in the Progressive Era and New Deal, as well as debate the underlying and proximate causes of environmental catastrophes arising from pesticide use and offshore oil drilling. (Pages 12 – 13)

2. Many Europeans developed a belief in white superiority to justify their subjugation of Africans and American Indians, using several different rationales. (Page 34)
3. Unlike Spanish, French, and Dutch colonies, which accepted intermarriage and cross-racial sexual unions with native peoples (and, in Spain's case, with enslaved Africans), English colonies attracted both males and females who rarely intermarried with either native peoples or Africans, leading to the development of a rigid racial hierarchy. (Page 35)
4. Reinforced by a strong belief in British racial and cultural superiority, the British system enslaved black people in perpetuity, altered African gender and kinship relationships in the colonies and was one factor that led the British colonists into violent confrontations with native peoples. (Page 36)
5. The New England colonies, founded primarily by Puritans, seeking to establish a community of like-minded religious believers, developed a close-knit, homogeneous society and – aided by favorable environmental conditions – a thriving mixed economy of agriculture and commerce. (Page 36. Note that this is the Framework's sole statement about the New England colonies. It omits the Pilgrims, Mayflower Compact, Winthrop's "City Upon a Hill," Roger Williams and religious toleration, New England town meetings and the birth of democratic institutions, and much more.)
6. The demographically, religiously, and ethnically diverse middle colonies supported a flourishing export economy based on cereal crops... (Page 36. Note that this is the Framework's sole statement about the Middle Colonies. It omits William Penn, the Quakers, Pennsylvania policy of religious toleration, and the fact that its economic prosperity attracted a diverse mix of ethnic and religious groups.)
7. The colonies along the southernmost Atlantic coast and the British islands in the West Indies took advantage of long growing seasons by using slave labor to develop economies based on staple crops; in some cases, enslaved Africans constituted the majority of the population. (Page 37. Note that slavery is the sole focus. This omits the House of Burgesses, the Maryland Act of Religious Toleration, and much more.)
8. European colonization efforts in North America stimulated cultural contact and intensified conflict between the various groups of colonizers and native peoples. (Page 37. Note that this "Key Concept" establishes the Framework's dominant theme that American history is really the story of identity groups and conflicts.)
9. By supplying American Indian allies with deadlier weapons and alcohol, and by rewarding Indian military actions, Europeans helped increase the intensity and destructiveness of American Indian warfare. (Page 38. Note the Europeans are portrayed as destructive predators.)
10. The presence of slavery and the impact of colonial wars stimulated the growth of ideas on race in this Atlantic system, leading to the emergence of racial stereotyping and the development of strict racial categories among British colonists, which contrasted with Spanish and French acceptance of racial gradations. (Page 39)
11. Although George Washington's Farewell Address warned about the dangers of divisive political parties and permanent foreign alliances... (Page 43. This is the Framework's sole reference to George Washington.)
12. The colonists' belief in the superiority of republican self-government based on the natural rights of the people found its clearest American expression in Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and in the Declaration of Independence. (Page 43. This is the Framework's sole reference to the Declaration of Independence. Note that it actually follows Washington's Farewell Address. Although the Framework stresses the skill of historical causation, the document contains numerous examples of events that are not presented in chronological order.)
13. Teachers have the flexibility to use examples such as the following: *corridos*, architecture of Spanish missions, *vaqueros*. (Page 46. Note that the Framework does have space for these topics but cannot find the space to discuss Washington's career and the principles of the Declaration of Independence.)
14. Many white Americans in the South asserted their regional identity through pride in the institution of slavery, insisting that the federal government should defend their institution. (Page 49)

15. Resistance to initiatives for democracy and inclusion included proslavery arguments, rising xenophobia, antiblack sentiments in political and popular culture, and restrictive anti-Indian policies. (Page 49. Note that the Framework omits both Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy. This biased statement reinforces the Framework's consistently negative portrayal of the American experience.)
16. The U.S. sought dominance over the North American continent through a variety of means, including military actions, judicial decisions, and diplomatic efforts. (Page 52. This is how the Framework describes the Monroe Doctrine and the annexation of Texas.)
17. The idea of Manifest Destiny, which asserted U.S. power in the Western Hemisphere and supported U.S. expansion westward, was built on a belief in white racial superiority and a sense of American cultural superiority, and helped to shape the era's political debates. (Page 54. Note that generations of American students have been taught that Manifest Destiny expressed America's mission to spread its democratic institutions and technology across the continent. This revisionist definition clearly expresses the Framework's negative biases.)
18. States' rights, nullification, and racist stereotyping provided the foundation for the Southern defense of slavery as a positive good. (Page 56)
19. Lincoln's election on a free soil platform ... Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. (Page 57. These are the Framework's sole references to President Lincoln. Note that the Framework omits Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.)
20. Business interests battled conservationists as the latter sought to protect sections of unspoiled wilderness through the establishment of national parks and other conservationist and preservationist measures. (Page 62. Note the one-sided portrayal of "business interests.")
21. As transcontinental railroads were completed, bringing more settlers west, U.S. military actions, the destruction of the buffalo, the confinement of American Indians to reservations, and assimilationist policies reduced the number of American Indians and threatened native culture and identity. (Page 63. The construction of the transcontinental railroads was a major American achievement. Note that it is portrayed in an entirely negative light.)
22. A number of critics challenged the dominant corporate ethic in the United States and sometimes capitalism itself, offering alternate visions of the good society through utopianism and the Social Gospel. (Page 64. Note the Framework's consistently negative portrayal of capitalism.)
23. Although the American Expeditionary Force played a relatively limited role in the war... (Page 69. This is how the Framework describes America's contribution to the Allied cause in World War I.)
24. The mass mobilization of American society to supply troops for the war effort and a workforce on the home front ended the Great Depression and provided opportunities for women and minorities to improve their socioeconomic positions. Wartime experiences, such as the internment of Japanese Americans, challenges to civil liberties, debates over race and segregation, and the decision to drop the atomic bomb raised questions about American values. (Page 70. Note that that the Framework's complete coverage of World War II is contained in these two sentences. The Framework completely omits all mention of American military commanders, battles, and the valor of our servicemen and women who ended the long night of Nazi oppression. Also note that the Framework completely omits the Holocaust.)
25. The United States sought to "contain" Soviet-dominated communism through a variety of measures, including military engagements in Korea and Vietnam. (Page 71. Note that the Framework covers both the Korean War and the Vietnam War in one sentence.)
26. Activists began to question society's assumptions about gender and to call for social and economic equality for women and for gays and lesbians. (Page 73)
27. Teachers have the flexibility to use examples such as the following: Students for a Democratic Society, Black Panthers. (Page 74. Note that the Framework omits Rosa Parks and Dr. King, but does have room for the SDS and the Black Panthers.)
28. President Ronald Reagan, who initially rejected détente with increased defense spending, military action, and bellicose rhetoric, later developed a friendly relationship with Soviet leader Mikhail

Gorbachev, leading to significant arms reductions by both countries. (Page 78. Note that this is the Framework’s simplistic explanation for how and why the Cold War ended.)

29. Demographic changes intensified debates about gender roles, family structures, and racial and national identity. (Page 80. Note that this is the Framework’s concluding statement. The College Board authors then state that teachers have the flexibility to use examples such as the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” debate.)

- **OMITTED SEMINAL DOCUMENTS**

- The Mayflower Compact
- The Northwest Ordinance
- Federalist Paper Number 10
- Frederick Douglass’s Independence Day speech at Rochester
- Excerpts from the writings of Emerson, Thoreau, and other Transcendentalist writers
- Alexis de Tocqueville—excerpts from *Democracy in America*
- Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural Address
- Emma Lazarus, “The New Colossus”
- Woodrow Wilson, “Peace Without Victory” speech
- Theodore Roosevelt, “The New Nationalism” speech
- Excerpts from Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath* describing the Dust Bowl
- Franklin D. Roosevelt, “The Four Freedoms” speech
- Harry S. Truman, “The Truman Doctrine” speech
- George Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”
- John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address
- Dr. King, “I Have a Dream” speech and Letter from Birmingham City Jail
- Lyndon B. Johnson, speech to Congress on Voting Rights

Will the Open Letter mark the end of the controversy over the APUSH Framework?

The Open Letter authors conclude by hoping that their statement will mark the “end of this controversy.” Unfortunately, their Open Letter fails to fully and forthrightly address central issues raised by the APUSH Framework.

A growing chorus of critics justifiably believes that the Framework does not engage students with “the major individuals, developments, and ideas that have guided our nation through its history.”

We believe that achieving this goal will require the College Board to restore the previous APUSH course for at least a year. This will give a new and more inclusive committee an opportunity to create a truly balanced APUSH curriculum that reflects America’s guiding principles and traditions.

LARRY KRIEGER