

From: Appelgate, Holly <holly.appelgate@sno.wednet.edu>
Sent time: 12/11/2020 01:00:46 PM
To: Sandstrom, Dane <dane.sandstrom@sno.wednet.edu>
Cc: Hutchison, Megan <megan.hutchison@sno.wednet.edu>
Subject: RE: Book pick up

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Hi Dane,

Thank you for looping us in. Let me know if you connect with [REDACTED] during your office hours. I am sure we have had parents question the titles we use in our curriculum before, but I haven't been there to sort through that process yet. Megan, what has been the process used when parents are not satisfied with district selected curriculum? I am here to support, but past practice would be helpful for me.

Holly Appelgate
Assistant Principal
Glacier Peak High School

From: Sandstrom, Dane <dane.sandstrom@sno.wednet.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 11, 2020 10:48 AM
To: Appelgate, Holly <holly.appelgate@sno.wednet.edu>
Cc: Hutchison, Megan <megan.hutchison@sno.wednet.edu>
Subject: Fw: Book pick up

FYI - This has never come up for me before. Not sure how to proceed. Do I allow this student an alternative text to read?

Please advise.

Dane Sandstrom, M.Ed.
English and CTE Digital Video Teacher
Glacier Peak High School
(360) 563-7620



From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, December 11, 2020 10:10 AM
To: Sandstrom, Dane <dane.sandstrom@sno.wednet.edu>
Subject: RE: Book pick up

[External Email]

Even if you are teaching this book as a cautionary tale of the dangers of adopting a philosophy that is completely destructive to any semblance of society, (that on the surface may seem sensible and reasonable), I still don't think it's acceptable. Fourteen and fifteen year olds do not have enough life experience to be able to digest this with the context of knowing Ayn Rand's economic and world views. As one reviewer stated "She massages the egos of juveniles, exploiting the idea that their individualism is paramount above all else in life." This is a fictional tale, but her philosophy (which has been adopted by many powerful and influential people throughout the world) is not fan fiction. She teaches and expounds her philosophy to have real life applications. As another reviewer who just happens to agree with Rand's world view put it, "Anthem is a brilliant novel that warns, accurately of the dangers faced by modern liberalism, aka socialism."

In the Q&A, a man asked Rand:

At the risk of stating an unpopular view, when you were speaking of America, I couldn't help but think of the cultural genocide of Native Americans, the enslavement of Black men in this country, and the relocation of Japanese-Americans during World War II. How do you account for all of this in your view of America?

Ayn Rand speaking about racism, slavery, and Native Americans, at West Point in 1974 (TRANSCRIPT)

To begin with, there is much more to America than the issue of racism. I do not believe that the issue of racism, or even the persecution of a particular race, is as important as the persecution of individuals, because when you deprive individuals of rights, if you deprive any small group, all individuals lose their rights. Therefore, look at this fundamentally: If you are concerned with minorities, the smallest minority on Earth is an individual. If you do not respect individual rights, you will sacrifice or persecute all minorities, and then you get the same treatment given to a majority, which you can observe today in Soviet Russia.

But if you ask me well, now, should America have tolerated slavery? I would say certainly not. And why did they? Well, at the time of the Constitutional Convention, or the debates about the Constitution, the best theoreticians at the time wanted to abolish slavery right then and there—and they should have. The fact is that they compromised with other members of the debate and their compromise has caused this country a dreadful catastrophe which had to happen, and that is the Civil War. You could not have slavery existing in a country which proclaims the inalienable rights of Man. If you believe in the rights and the institution of slavery, it's an enormous contradiction. It is to the honor of this country, which the haters of America never mention, that people died giving their lives in order to abolish slavery. There was that much strong philosophical feeling about it.

Certainly slavery was a contradiction. But before you criticize this country, remember that that is a remnant of the politics and the philosophies of Europe and of the rest of the world. The black slaves were sold into slavery, in many cases, by other black tribes. Slavery is something which only the United States of America abolished. Historically, there was no such concept as the right of the individual. The United States is based on that concept. So that so as long as men held to the American political philosophy, they had to come to the point, even of a civil war, but of eliminating the contradiction with which they could not live—namely, the institution of slavery.

Incidentally, if you study history following America's example, slavery or serfdom was abolished in the whole civilized world during the 19th century. What abolished it? Not altruism. Not any kind of collectivism. Capitalism. The world of free trade could not coexist with slave labor. And countries like Russia, which was the most backward and had serfs liberated them, without any pressure from anyone, by economic necessity. Nobody could compete with America economically so long as they attempted to use slave labor. Now that was the liberating influence of America.

That's in regard to the slavery of Black people. But as to the example of the Japanese people—you mean the labor camps in California? Well, that was certainly not put over by any sort of defender of capitalism or Americanism. That was done by the left-wing progressive liberal Democrats of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

[Massive applause follows, along with a minute in which the moderator asks Ayn Rand to respond to the point about the genocide of Native Americans. She continues.]

If you study reliable history, and not liberal, racist newspapers, racism didn't exist in this country until the liberals brought it up—racism in the sense of self-consciousness and separation about races. Yes, slavery existed as a very evil institution, and there certainly was prejudice against some minorities, including the Negroes after they were liberated. But those prejudices were dying out under the pressure of free economics, because racism, in the prejudicial sense, doesn't pay. Then, if anyone wants to be a racist, he suffers, the workings of the system is against him.

Today, it is to everyone's advantage to form some kind of ethnic collective. The people who share your viewpoint or from whose philosophy those catchphrases come, are the ones who are institutionalizing racism today. What about the quotas in employment? The quotas in education? And I hope to God—so I am not religious, but just to express my feeling—that the Supreme Court will rule against those quotas. But if you can understand the vicious contradiction and injustice of a state establishing racism by law. Whether it's in favor of a minority or a majority doesn't matter. It's more offensive when it's in the name of a minority because it can only be done in order to disarm and destroy the majority and the whole country. It can only create more racist divisions, and backlashes, and racist feelings.

If you are opposed to racism, you should support individualism. You cannot oppose racism on one hand and want collectivism on the other.

But now, as to the Indians, I don't even care to discuss that kind of alleged complaints that they have against this country. I do believe with serious, scientific reasons the worst kind of movie that you have probably seen—worst from the Indian viewpoint—as to what they did to the white man.

I do not think that they have any right to live in a country merely because they were born here and acted and lived like savages. Americans didn't conquer; Americans did not conquer that country.

Whoever is making sounds there, I think is hissing, he is right, but please be consistent: you are a racist if you object to

that [laughter and applause]. You are that because you believe that anything can be given to Man by his biological birth or for biological reasons.

If you are born in a magnificent country which you don't know what to do with, you believe that it is a property right; it is not. And, since the Indians did not have any property rights—they didn't have the concept of property; they didn't even have a settled, society, they were predominantly nomadic tribes; they were a primitive tribal culture, if you want to call it that—if so, they didn't have any rights to the land, and there was no reason for anyone to grant them rights which they had not conceived and were not using.

It would be wrong to attack any country which does respect—or try, for that matter, to respect—individual rights, because if they do, you are an aggressor and you are morally wrong to attack them. But if a country does not protect rights—if a given tribe is the slave of its own tribal chief—why should you respect the rights they do not have?

Or any country which has a dictatorship. Government—the citizens still have individual rights—but the country does not have any rights. Anyone has the right to invade it, because rights are not recognized in this country and neither you nor a country nor anyone can have your cake and eat it too.

In other words, want respect for the rights of Indians, who, incidentally, for most cases of their tribal history, made agreements with the white man, and then when they had used up whichever they got through agreement of giving, selling certain territory, then came back and broke the agreement, and attacked white settlements.

I will go further. Let's suppose they were all beautifully innocent savages, which they certainly were not. What was it that they were fighting for, if they opposed white men on this continent? For their wish to continue a primitive existence, their right to keep part of the earth untouched, unused, and not even as property, but just keep everybody out so that you will live practically like an animal, or maybe a few caves about.

Any white person who brings the elements of civilization had the right to take over this continent, and it is great that some people did, and discovered here what they couldn't do anywhere else in the world and what the Indians, if there are any racist Indians today, do not believe to this day: respect for individual rights.

I am, incidentally, in favor of Israel against the Arabs for the very same reason. There you have the same issue in reverse. Israel is not a good country politically; it's a mixed economy, leaning strongly to socialism. But why do the Arabs resent it? Because it is a wedge of civilization—an industrial wedge—in part of a continent which is totally primitive and nomadic. Israel is being attacked for being civilized, and being specifically a technological society. It's for that very reason that they should be supported—that they are morally right because they represent the progress of Man's mind, just as the white settlers of America represented the progress of the mind, not centuries of brute stagnation and superstition. They represented the banner of the mind and they were in the right.

[thunderous applause]

Attached is a link to the entire article

https://www.salon.com/2015/10/14/libertarian_superstar_ayn_rand_defended_genocide_of_savage_native_americans/

My question is, is this something that your school or school district wants to promote? Now you may say it's important to read books that don't align with all your personal ideals. True like for instance a criminal profiler may choose to read Charles Mason's or Ted Bundy's book to get insight into serial killers to find clues on how to catch them. But this is not that at all. First of all, a criminal profiler is an adult who has the knowledge and life experience to put these books into context and understands why they are reading them, a fourteen or fifteen year old does not. And second, you are not giving them a choice whether or not to read this book. Setting aside Rand's myopic world view on individualism and society as a whole, just her ideas about indigenous people (which she opening and enthusiastically expressed in her speech to West Point) is disqualifying as someone who young people should read.

I am also attaching a PBS article that details Rand's socioeconomic views from the stand point of real world application.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/column-this-is-what-happens-when-you-take-ayn-rand-seriously>

Signed,
[REDACTED]

From: Sandstrom, Dane [<mailto:dane.sandstrom@sno.wednet.edu>]

Sent: Friday, December 11, 2020 9:45 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Book pick up

Hey [REDACTED] - I was planning on getting back to you today after school. However, after [REDACTED] posted some links in the

chat during class today, I wanted to check in immediately. I tried to talk to her in an individual breakout room but she didn't want to.

We read Anthem as an example of a sci-fi dystopian future story. When we start the book, we discuss Ayn Rand's experiences during the Russian Revolution growing up. We do not get into politics and I have always remained politically neutral in my classroom.

It is part of the required Freshman English curriculum in the Snohomish School District.

If you and [REDACTED] would like to continue the conversation, I am more than happy to.

My office hours are from 12:30-1:30 today.

<https://snohomishsd.zoom.us/j/97596890833>

Thank You!

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From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2020 3:12 PM
To: Sandstrom, Dane <dane.sandstrom@sno.wednet.edu>
Subject: Book pick up

[External Email]

I got the email about picking up the Ayn Rand book. I'm wondering, in what context is this book going to be taught? Also, is this book required reading set by the school district?

[REDACTED]