

# A PRIMER ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: UNIFYING OR DIVISIVE FORCE?

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## Executive Summary

With regard to multicultural education, definitions count. It can be a constructively inclusive approach to teaching about the cultural ingredients of a unified nation. Unfortunately, the multiculturalism advocated in much of the academic world today downgrades unity in favor of cultural separatism. It encourages minority cultures to shun assimilation and condemns the common culture as the product of centuries of oppression not yet overcome. This ideology is plainly at work in the proceedings of organizations like the National Association for Multicultural Education, which annually brings together K-12 teachers and university professors from all 50 states.

As the situation in Illinois and Chicago illustrates clearly, multicultural doctrine trivializes the teaching of United States history while giving overwhelming emphasis to the heritage of nations, such as Mexico, from which newcomers have come to America in search of opportunity. Meanwhile, bilingual education in K-12 schools encourages the children of immigrants to continue using their non-English languages rather than quickly gaining fluency in English. This further encourages cultural separatism, and could lead to the long-term Balkanization of America.

Details follow.

## A Primer on Multicultural Education: Unifying or Divisive Force?

By Robert Holland, Senior Fellow

The idea that multicultural education should have an honored place in U.S. elementary and secondary schools has become deeply rooted in recent years.

That can be a bad thing, or it can be a positive development. It depends on what is meant by the terms multiculturalism, multicultural diversity, and multicultural education.

There are two radically different meanings. It is quite possible for two people to agree, pro or con, on multiculturalism in a conversation, yet unknowingly be of opposite minds because they are working from conflicting definitions.

Getting the semantics straight is important for far more significant reasons than facilitating conversation in a cocktail lounge. A decision on which kind of multiculturalism will prevail in American public education is crucial to the future of this country.



### A Unifying Form of Multiculturalism

One kind of multiculturalism is unifying and inclusive. It honors the reality that America is a diverse nation composed of many cultures. But while recognizing the contributions of those cultures, it stresses values that Americans have in common – our common culture. It sees a primary mission of education as assimilating children from many backgrounds and cultures into a unified America, all with a command of the English language, a knowledge of the national heritage, and practical skills to ensure their success in the workforce.

This pluralistic, diversity-within-unity model of multiculturalism has come into being mainly since the 1960s, before which time study of minorities and minority cultures received short shrift in U.S. education. The civil rights revolution changed that, and made cultural pluralism a widely accepted form of multiculturalism.

### The Separatist Brand of Multiculturalism

Unfortunately, a second kind of multiculturalism is divisive and separatist. It harps constantly on the cultural and ethnic differences within the United States and slams the ideal of a common culture. It excoriates the American Republic for failing to live up to its ideals, and indeed charges that it has been an oppressor force from day one to the present. Its advocates reject

assimilation, and favor instead bilingual education that keeps immigrant students speaking their native languages in preference to promptly mastering English. This culturally separatist vision has greatly influenced how schools teach U.S. history (or “social studies”). The goal no longer is to tell the story of America’s founding and its progress toward realizing its social ideals but instead to radically transform a diverse nation into something resembling the old Austro-Hungarian Empire or Yugoslavia.

A British educator and scholar, Dennis O’Keeffe, has commented on the folly of this:

In America and Britain we have many cultures; that is a fact. What we do not need is multiculturalism as a policy. Our countries are the two favorite destinations of those who seek shelter. It is not hard to see why. But what we need to do with the children who come to us, is make them American, or British. Any other policy is madness.

Multiculturalism is based on the envious idea that every culture is as good as any other. Even if we believed this, which surely we do not, we would want to give the children enough in common intellectually and morally to live together in reasonable harmony. We need in the practical circumstances to stress the things which unite, not those which divide.<sup>1</sup>

## The Impact on Teaching U.S. History: The Illinois Example

The multicultural movement has had a profound effect on how schools teach United States history. The state of the curriculum in Illinois and Chicago provides a case in point.

Recently, Sheldon Stern, historian at the prestigious John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston, graded the standards of 48 states on the teaching of history in a project for the Fordham Foundation. Stern gave Illinois an "F." He found Illinois' standards, which fall under the amorphous umbrella of "Learning Standards for Social Science," to be an incoherent mishmash, lacking any sort of chronological structure or sequence for the teaching of U.S. history from the early grades through high school.

In Dr. Stern's words, "All topics appear to be of equal importance, nothing is defined as essential, and everything is presented in a historical jumble. Except for a list of the most general American 'historical eras' . . . the Illinois Learning Standards for United States history have no measurable standards, no coherent history, and no discernible potential to help students learn anything of value about the nation's past."

Remarkably, in a state that was home to one of the giants of American history, Abraham Lincoln, the state's history standards rarely even mention "the names of flesh and blood figures in American history," Dr. Stern notes.<sup>3</sup>

Contrast Illinois' downgrading of U.S. history with the elaborate 163-page curriculum guide that Chicago Public Schools' Office of Language and Cultural Education provides to encourage the Windy City's teachers to take students into the heritage of Mexico in great depth. As opposed to the lack of sequential guidance Illinois provides for teaching about U.S. history, this multicultural guide explores four time periods of Mexican history: Prehispanic Mexico, Conquest and Colonization, Independence/Revolution, and Modern Mexico. The Guide states that its intent is "to provide teachers with background knowledge so that the lessons will not be taught in isolation." Meanwhile, as Dr. Stern's keen analysis of the Illinois Standards for Social Science makes clear, aspects of *United States* history *are* taught in isolation in Chicago and Illinois.<sup>4</sup>

The Office of Language and Cultural Education offers not only timelines and extensive discussion of the waves of civilizations

throughout Mexican history (such as the Ilmec, Teotihuacan, Zapotec, Mixtec, and especially the Mayan and Aztec), but numerous activities in which to engage children. For instance, teachers are told how guide children in weaving and pottery-making as practiced in the Mayan and Aztec cultures, and even in making an Aztec mask used in religious rituals. Some critics of the exclusionary practices against Christianity in U.S. schools may question activities that focus the attention of Chicago children on creating symbols, such as the God's Eye, that Aztecs used to communicate with their deities.

The guide also contains extensive depictions of the heroes and heroines of Mexican

and 2 to 3 days making piñatas, the decorated clay pot filled with candies and treats that children in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America break on festive occasions. The materials even include a connect-the-dots exercise to sketch a Mexican "Rain God."

Of course, there is a proper place in American schools for study of other lands and of diverse cultures within an American melting pot. But the Chicago approach – combined with an aggressive use of bilingual education that spurns English immersion in favor of prolonged reliance on students' non-English languages – does more to encourage preservation of separate, Balkans-like enclaves than it does to assimilate diverse populations into a united

**“2 days to make masks used by the Aztecs in religious ceremonies; 50 minutes to make a Mexican flag; two 40-minute sessions to commemorate “The Hero Children” who lost their lives defending a castle in Mexico City from a United States Army invasion in 1847; and 2 to 3 days making piñatas”**

Independence. This focus on flesh-and-blood people once again contrasts sharply with Illinois' shortchanging of the Founders of the American Republic.

In addition, the Mexican Heritage Resource Guide suggests that teachers engage students in activities that consume large blocks of time that arguably could be used for more serious instruction. Some examples are 30 minutes to make an Aztec headdress; two 50-minute periods to create pottery similar to that in ancient Mexican civilizations; almost a whole week to put on a play on Aztec legends regarding the origin of the sun and the moon; 40 minutes to make a codex, an Aztec manuscript recording religious and historical events; 45 minutes to make a rattle used in religious, military, or community ceremonies; 2 days to make masks used by the Aztecs in religious ceremonies; 50 minutes to make a Mexican flag; two 40-minute sessions to commemorate "The Hero Children" who lost their lives defending a castle in Mexico City from a United States Army invasion in 1847;

America. Illinois' Mexican population jumped from 275,000 in 1990 to 680,000 in 2003, with the vast majority of the newcomers settling in the Chicago area.

Multiculturalism celebrates diversity, but there is nothing diverse about immigrants living as separate cultural enclaves and being encouraged by the public schools to continue to cling to their own language, culture, customs, and history to the exclusion of learning the heritage and language of their adopted land. Public education is forfeiting its historic mission of assimilating immigrant families into a united America, and nowhere is this more obvious than in Chicago. Unless such policies are reversed, the breakup of a Balkanized America surely is not far distant in the future.

**The Rain God**

*The art on this page is the depiction of a Mexican Rain God used as a connect-the-dots exercise in Chicago's multicultural curriculum.*



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Dr. John Fonte, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, has summed up succinctly the sharp differences between the two types of multiculturalism. The major question confronting 21st Century America, he argues, is whether “American constitutional democracy and the American way of life {will} be **transmitted** to future generations of Americans or . . . be **transformed** into something radically different.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Academe’s Support of the Separatist Brand**

Many of the most powerful academic organizations favor the brand of multiculturalism that presses for social transformation. That mindset is particularly strong in the social studies community – i.e., the National Council for the Social Studies. And perhaps most significant of all is the commitment of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which exerts strong influence on the professional certification of the nation’s K-12 teachers.

NCATE requires that in order to win its accreditation, teacher-training institutions must demonstrate that they are imbuing future teachers with a dedication to multicultural diversity. NCATE defines diversity as follows: “Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.”<sup>5</sup> One of NCATE’s six standards for schools of education requires a commitment to diversity. In addition, its leaders have said multicultural diversity comes into play in virtually all of its accreditation standards reviews. What that means becomes clear in an NCATE vision statement published by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, in which NCATE hailed “the intrinsic connection of values with the purposes and processes of the education profession.”<sup>6</sup>

What values? Whose values? NCATE went on to assert: “First and foremost, quality teacher units must be places of active conscience. The professional commitment to social justice and the power of equity and diversity in American culture must be palpable.” The NCATE credo added that to serve the cause of social justice, “we continuously reinvent the free society. . . .”<sup>7</sup> So as Dr. Fonte observes, the mission of education becomes not to transmit the values of American constitutional democracy and the common culture, but to transform it into something entirely different. Freedom would be reinvented so that it no longer means equal opportunity for individuals but group rights defined as equity, multicultural diversity, and a globalist perspective.<sup>8</sup>

The peril of this approach for classes taught in the public schools has been well stated by Jonathan Burack, a former teacher who for the past 20 years has produced materials for secondary-school history curricula: “For two decades, and especially since the end of the Cold War, a global education ideology has taken hold in social studies education. This ideology, the international equivalent of separatist versions of multiculturalism, is deeply suspicious of America’s institutions, values, and role in the world, while uncritically celebrating the institutions and values of most other societies. This ideology was clearly guiding many educators as they organized lessons and materials about 9/11 and its significance.”<sup>9</sup>

A suggested lesson plan posted on the National Education Association website implied that teachers should avoid placing blame for the 9/11 atrocities and concentrate instead on flaws in U.S. policies that engendered hostilities within Islam. The NEA’s approach mirrored that of the nation’s preeminent organization of multiculturalists – the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), whose activities are examined below.

### **The NAME Connection**

NCATE as well as the NEA closely network with NAME. Founded in 1990, NAME annually convenes thousands of schoolteachers and college professors from all 50 states and several foreign nations to spread the doctrine of multicultural diversity as they define it. One of NAME’s leading theorists, Paul Gorski, has said that the “underlying goal of multicultural education” is to bring about social change, which he says entails three kinds of transformation – of self; of schools and schooling; and of society. “We (the multicultural educator) must explore and deconstruct structures of power and privilege that serve to maintain the status quo,” he has written.<sup>10</sup>

At NAME’s annual conventions (several of which the writer of this paper has attended), speakers have consistently praised minority cultures while contending that the very idea of an American common culture merely perpetuates the legacy of European oppression and exploitation of supposedly purer cultures. NAME advocates disparage the idea of immigrants or members of racial/ethnic minorities assimilating with or integrating into the fabric of American society. Assimilation is the dirtiest of words at NAME gatherings. Bilingual education fits perfectly into this

separatist, anti-assimilation mold. The idea is that children have a right to continue to function in their non-English native language and that to insist they quickly learn English and be tested in English is oppressive.<sup>11</sup>

As noted above, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on America brought to light the extent of multiculturalist influence on K-12 education. Without condemning the terrorists who murdered almost 3,000 people at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, NAME members re-dedicated themselves "to restructuring education to reflect the authentic histories, cultures, and conditions of the global community." NAME's resolution adopted just two months after the horrendous terrorist attacks urged "critical analysis of the underlying causes of terrorist actions and the reasons for anti-U.S. hostility in some parts of the world." Again, there was not a hint of accountability for radical Islam, only an insinuation that America had it coming.

### **The "Oppressor Race"**

At NAME workshops, there is evident a concerted effort to instill in white educators a feeling of guilt as members of an "oppressor race." The racism inherent in such stereotyping is obvious. Speaker after speaker condemn what they call "white privilege" and sometimes "Christian privilege" as well.

At the 2002 NAME convention in Arlington, Virginia, and again at the 2003 session in Seattle, Washington, a full-day pre-conference institute was devoted to the topic, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being: Dismantling White Privilege and Unconscious Racism in Our Classrooms and Schools." The workshop leaders were Heather Hackman, a teacher educator at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota, and Mary Gannon, an "equity and diversity consultant" in Vermont.

These two white women said they were professing their own racism and guilt by way of inviting other white participants to profess their own sins of white privilege. During a discussion of ways to deconstruct whiteness, participants blamed whites for the "psychological violence" that instills in children of color a desire to attain the norms of the "dominant white culture." According to this NAME conclave, "white" beliefs and values that contribute to a supremacist outlook are:

- Rugged individualism;
- Competition;
- Majoritarian democracy and chain-of-command decision-making;
- Working hard to achieve success;
- The objective and logical thinking upon which the scientific method is based;
- The desire to own goods, space, and property.

### **Cultural Clashes With the Home**

The multiculturalists do not confine their attempts to transform beliefs and identities to their own ranks. Ten years ago, a NAME keynote speaker, Lily Wong Fillmore of the University of California, Berkeley, made this memorable assertion at the first NAME conference this writer attended: "When you consider the kinds of things I am proposing as necessary additions to the school curriculum for a multicultural society," she declared, "there will be some definite clashes with the practices, beliefs, and attitudes that are taught in many homes. In fact, that is precisely why such curricular changes are needed and why the changes have to be for all children, not just those we serve."

Such attempted reprogramming of children into the oppressed-vs-oppressor mindset has been pervasive in the years since Fillmore uttered those words. The Foundation Endowment has recorded and documented these NAME strategy sessions annually, and the comments quoted below are drawn from that record.

The separatist strain of multiculturalism is very heavily into victimology, or oppression studies. Students are classified into "oppressors" and the "oppressed" according to their race and sex. At the 2000 conference, there occurred a fascinating discussion about whether "critical pedagogy



works with privileged students," during which one eighth-grade teacher who said she teaches "anti-oppression" described her class this way:

We start engaging in discussions. I will stop before the end of class and ask them did they notice anything. And from then, it becomes the oppressed students being able to name what it is they are noticing, and my role is supporting them to name that stuff and rename it. And, then, the oppressor students get called on their stuff by oppressed students in the group. But then, also, there is a lot of one-on-one work, especially to name the pattern of oppressor students, in the sense of that 'internalized dominance' or superiority .... And I tell that to the eighth graders and we talk about that. So they're supposed to call each other on it.

Labeling kids as oppressors at grade eight. Instilling in them deep feelings of collective guilt. Inculcating in others the feeling that they are victims of an evil system, that they are entitled to recompense. Are these practices appropriate to an educational system? Or are they more closely akin to indoctrination?

### **Constructivism as a Tool of Multiculturalism**

To bend education in this grotesque way, multiculturalists take a page out of the so-called progressive educators' century-old playbook. They use ostensibly what is called a constructivist approach – that is, the children supposedly construct their own knowledge, their own meaning. This is sometimes called learner-centered education. But with the purposeful multiculturalists, this is a naturalistic approach only up to a point – the point at which indoctrination begins.

Consider the strategy for teaching teachers recommended by a NAME presenter. He said one objective was to move students from the much-derided (by NAME) "Heroes and Holidays" approach to multiculturalism (that is, honoring occasions like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday) to "shaping them up a bit." The class reads such works as "White Privilege" and "Retaking our Schools," and then supposedly thinks critically about what they've read. But please note it is the instructor who selects all the materials and furnishes all the prompts. This teacher of teachers concluded that "it just had never occurred" to many of the Anglo students that "they have privileges as whites that many other people may not have." Upon that flash of realization, the instructor has the prospective teachers wallow in their collective guilt and write a paper "synthesizing all this." The class then proceeds to develop a curricular unit on multiculturalism "because we want them to go back into their classrooms ready to move with this stuff."

"They are," he added, "starting to learn about the histories of groups they have never heard about." So the pattern goes: Feed the children selected information, use the power of suggestion, then go to the applications stage – pressing for social action, ready to radicalize the curriculum.

In this process of constructing a multicultural curriculum that could be used with children in the very earliest grades, the multiculturalists lay great stock by cultivating lessons in which the children – or at least the oppressed ones – can "see themselves" everywhere – in the books used, in the pictures on the bulletin boards, in the stories told. In other words, cultures of non-white immigrants or descendants of African slaves or American Indians receive primacy. This approach is the antithesis of Eurocentrism: The debt the American common culture owes to Great Britain and the West in general is to be mentioned only by way of depicting it as the product of rape, plunder, torture, and capitalistic exploitation.

### **Rigged Teacher Guides**

Textbook publishers sometimes produce guides inviting teachers to distort stories in order to serve the multicultural agenda. A particularly egregious example (as documented in an excellent book by Harvard researcher Sandra Stotsky, *Losing Our Language*) is the teachers' guide called "Appreciating Cultures," which is used with Silver Burdett Ginn books. There is a story for the fourth grade called "Pettranella." It is a charming story of a family that left Europe by ship in the 1800s, landed in Canada, and traveled overland to settle in Wisconsin. Pettranella, the young daughter in the story, left behind a beloved grandmother in the old country. The story is about that relationship, about keeping a promise to grandmother.<sup>12</sup>

But the Teachers Guide is entirely about the homesteading policy that opened up land in the West to European immigrants. It instructs teachers to dwell on how the Indians "must have felt" when they had to move to make room for these settlers. The students are invited to explore their own feelings by imagining how they would feel if "suddenly told they had to leave so people from other parts of the world could move in."

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Thus does a story about universal human values become a one-sided morality tale about victimization, utterly devoid of context. The history of the world is largely one of exploration, conquest, and settlement, of course, but this story focuses all the negative attention on the language, customs, and beliefs of the white settlers. The Teachers Guide offers nothing about what caused the family to move, or the courage they faced in traveling to a strange new land halfway around the world. Instead teachers are enlisted in encouraging students to have negative feelings about how our society came into being.

In addition to distorting history, the multicultural ideology of tailoring the curriculum to satisfy ethnic vanities (as the late Russell Kirk put it) is having the effect of limiting students' mastery of English and development of English vocabularies. Basal readers supposedly exist for the purpose of teaching children how to read and write the English language, but the Stotsky research reveals the modern readers to be clogged with non-English words, phrases, and sentences. Most of the non-English words are specific to minority or non-American cultural groups and are not commonly used in English.

### **The Bilingual Education Connection**

The purpose appears to be nothing more than facilitating students' group identification and group self-esteem – goals that seemingly now have higher priority than teaching English. This is evident in so-called transitional bilingual education, which keeps immigrant children in classes taught in their non-English native languages for seven, eight years or longer – consigning them to a kind of linguistic ghetto, while doing so supposedly for the sake of their self-esteem.

At the 2002 NAME convention, a National Education Association official presented a United Nations report on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that led to a fascinating discussion indicating the multiculturalists' belief that children have "language rights" protecting them from being taught English as an effort to assimilate into American culture.

The NEA official, Jill Christianson, said that it is a misconception that children's rights to education are denied only in Third World countries, where girls in particular are often held out of school. Human rights are "entitlements rather than private law," she said, and "because we (the United States) have not ratified the (Rights of the Child) treaty, we have sidestepped children's rights, and children do not have their voice in education." She and other presenters emphasized portions of the UN report suggesting that protection of parents' rights may be at odds with protecting children's rights:

The lack of recognition of the child's right to education, rights in education, and rights through education prevent children from being treated as the subjects of rights. The exclusive focus on parental rights is a major impediment to recognition of the rights of the child. Parents make choices with or without consulting children, at their discretion. Parentless children and those with irresponsible parents suffer in consequence. All children suffer the consequences of their lack of political voice....<sup>13</sup>

Clearly this proposition assumes that children's rights are superior to those of parents. But do unschooled children have the wisdom derived from experience to make sound decisions? Obviously not. So is this really about the "right" of educators – multiculturalists in particular – to make decisions for the children, on behalf of the children, in lieu of parental influence?

### **A Right Not to Learn English?**

Sonia Nieto, a professor of education at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and long-time force within NAME, was particularly exercised about what she called the "erosion of language rights" resulting from state initiatives (such as successful ones in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts) to eliminate so-called bilingual education in favor of English immersion. Drawing on the UN report, Nieto likened the campaign to end bilingual education (and teach English instead) to the kind of xenophobia that resulted in banning the teaching of German between world wars. In fact, the UN report suggested such a parallel obliquely. This is the relevant section from the 2002 UN report:

...An early United States Supreme Court case, which affirmed parental rights in education, revolved around the prohibition of teaching any subject in a language other than English. The background involved a ban on teaching in German, triggered by anti-German hysteria after the First World War. For many, the victimization of Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, and Sikh Americans after 11 September evoked memories of the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans (then referred to as 'people of Japanese ancestry') following the attack



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on Pearl Harbor. The country's self-perception of victimization had led to the collective victimization of its citizens of Japanese ancestry. The United States Government apologized five decades later, providing compensation to the victims.<sup>14</sup>

It seems a spectacularly huge stretch to equate a nation's ongoing attempt to teach all children a common language with repressive actions taken in the aftermath of surprise assaults like Pearl Harbor and September 11. After all, doesn't the United States, or any nation, have the legitimate power to use its educational system to assimilate its population in one common language (while permitting or even encouraging the teaching of foreign languages as well)? One could easily surmise from a 1999 UN report to Commission on Human Rights in Geneva that the answer is "no":

The state is obliged to ensure that all schools conform to the minimum criteria which it has developed as well as ascertaining that education is acceptable both to parents and to children. Education can represent a denial of the right to be different if it does not recognize and respect indigenous and minority rights. . . . Much as with school discipline, the human rights norms concerning the language of instruction are in their infancy. We have no idea what percentage of humanity starts and finishes education in a language that is foreign to them. We have some idea about the correlation between children's dropping out of school and the alien language of instruction. What we are referring to as dropouts could be more

appropriately called 'push-outs' {because} children are forced out of school through an incomprehensible curriculum presented in an alien language.<sup>15</sup>

Is, then, English an "alien language" if American schools insist that immigrant children from Mexico, or Nigeria, or Bangladesh learn it promptly so they can be mainstreamed into academic classes? That would seem to be what UN bureaucrats and their NAME and NEA colleagues suggest. Contrary to the UN report, dropout rates for Hispanic children soar when they are kept in non-English linguistic ghettos as opposed to being taught English promptly. But this is a question of ideology, not education. NAME is dead-set against assimilation, preferring that the United States dissolve into a motley assortment of cultures, with all enjoying equal status except for the long-dominant British/Western culture, which is to be denigrated at every turn as corrupt.

Interestingly, Professor Nieto criticized the introduction of market mechanisms such as school choice into education policy because when parents are "treated as consumers and education as a product. . . there is very little talk of the common good, what is good for all of us." But that is precisely the problem with NAME's brand of multiculturalism. It doesn't recognize a common good or a common culture, but practices a virulent form of anti-assimilation that would destroy the country were it ever to completely rule national policy.

### **Citizens of the World, Not the U.S.**

Plainly, NAME wishes to travel under the cloak of UN "rights" pronouncements in order to advance its propagandistic agenda in the schools – an agenda fully supported by the NEA, the nation's largest (and most radical) teachers union. At the 2002 NAME convention an official of the Smithsonian Institution said children should be taught the UN perspective more thoroughly. And he added that schools should emphasize to them "our role as global citizens, not national citizens."

Clearly the multicultural ideology has permeated much of the American education establishment. What has been a gradual, insidious effect on the teaching of history and the learning of language now threatens to be institutionalized. This movement affects all 50 states, and in each one this basic question needs to be asked: Does the mission of public education continue to be to transmit knowledge of this nation's social and political history (warts and all) and its bedrock values? Or are public schools now in the business of transforming society into one based on cultural/tribal differences and group entitlements rather than individual liberty and opportunity?

To put it another way, which brand of multiculturalism will prevail – the one that unites, or the one that divides?

## ENDNOTES

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