

FIRST BELL

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ILLUSTRATION BY DONGYUN LEE

Reader Reactions

“Extreme Prejudice” addressed why and how to teach about religious radicalism. This story generated significant dialogue—and some criticism.

Now that’s a good idea. What is extreme? What, then, is an extremist? Do extremists arise from religions, or are there other kinds of extremists? Nice!!!

—SUBMITTED BY DEBBIE DEWALL
VIA FACEBOOK

[T]he article ... is lacking in a few respects. First, as an alternative to her directions that educators should clarify that extremists are a minority within the religion, Ms. Fasciano offers an example that “not all Muslims are terrorists.” This statement leaves as one possible interpretation that almost all Muslims are terrorists. ... Moreover, while the 2013 Pew Research Center survey of Muslims located in other countries cited by Ms. Fasciano indicates that majorities in 11 Muslim countries think that “suicide bombings or other acts of violence that target civilians are never justified,” a better teaching moment for educators/readers would be to inform them of the 2011 Gallup poll which revealed that American Muslims, as compared to all other religious groups surveyed, are the least likely to accept the killing of civilians.

—SUBMITTED BY PATRICIA A. HANSON
VIA EMAIL

Our recent film, PD guide and magazine issues inspired an unprecedented amount of dialogue with readers.

“YOU’RE AN ALLY.”

I have relied on Teaching Tolerance for about 15 years. I love the magazine, videos and educational material. You probably don’t hear this often enough, but without you as an ally, schools would look very different!

ANONYMOUS
VIA SURVEY

RUBY DEE INSPIRES

#greatestgift in this month’s @Tolerance_org magazine. #inquiry is an essential part of education!

JEN MOREANO
(@JENMOREANO)
VIA TWITTER

SLURS IN SELMA

I understand the use of

racial slurs, but do not tend to allow them in materials in my classroom, as they cause discomfort to many students. We do debrief about the word, its origins, the hatred behind it, but we do not use it. It would be nice in the viewer’s guide [for *Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot*] if the times when

it occurs [in the film] were noted to make it easier for muting (or better yet, a version of the film with the word muted out).

ANONYMOUS
VIA SURVEY

PRAISE FOR TT CURRICULUM

I'm crazy about [Perspectives for a Diverse America], and I've been sharing it with all of my teachers. I'm planning a short Lunch 'n' Learn to demonstrate its usefulness and purposefulness. Thank you.

JOSEPH THOMPSON
VIA SURVEY

SUPPORTING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING STUDENTS

[On "Clear Connection"] I wish I'd had this as a child. I struggled through all 12 years and somehow managed to still be a B-average student although I never heard most of the instruction. It took a lot of extra effort though. I was shy and embarrassed as well, and afraid to speak up to ask the teacher to repeat or help. ... It definitely made me feel isolated, insecure and anxious for my entire childhood. It is good to hear

(pun) that things are changing. I taught myself to read lips, faces, emotions and body language to fill in the blanks. I wish I had been taught sign language and coping skills though, that would've been helpful. ["Clear Connection"] makes me feel good that children won't have to go through what I went through!

SUSIE GRACE WAGGONER
VIA FACEBOOK

DISAPPOINTED READER

I'm really disappointed that Teaching Tolerance would include an article like ["Dressing in Solidarity"] about cultural appropriation. Human identities are fluid and to label someone's action as appropriation assumes you know who they are. Is an African American who is labeled by their peers as "acting white" appropriating white culture? No, we'd say that individual is stepping past the limits placed on them by peers stuck in a limiting mindset. Appropriation has intent. Seeking an identity that is aligned with your personal experience of yourself is not appropriation. Teaching Tolerance should be acknowledging



Tim Charleston @MrCsays



If you aren't following @Tolerance_org, you are not giving yourself or your students the full picture. #perspective #GlobalEdchat #sschat



ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL FISHER

that we cannot judge other people unless we are open to hearing their voices and their truth.

ELIZABETH SACHA
VIA FACEBOOK

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

[On Let's Talk! Discussing Race, Racism and Other Difficult Topics With Students] We are trying to have these conversations in our schools and parent meetings, in our work through PTA and our area council. Recently, a few

parents shared that race is very difficult for them to talk about because they don't want to seem oblivious to privilege or say the wrong things, or offend. Other parents have shared that they have felt that their concerns were met with denial. It can be difficult to talk about race in the classroom or other settings. But is discomfort keeping people from needed conversations or "in-the-moment" teaching?

LYNN ALEXANDER
VIA FACEBOOK

EDITOR'S NOTE

Flip to page 19 to read "Begin Within," an excerpt from Let's Talk!

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Have an opinion about something you see in Teaching Tolerance magazine or on our website? Email us at editor@tolerance.org with the subject line "Letter to the Editor." Or mail a letter to 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104.



Carolyn Cook Rittenhouse

[On "Rewriting History—for the Better"] Calling all educators! It's time to "get away from this kind of one-dimensional, Eurocentric version of the history" and re-write it so that it's accurate and truthful for all kids.

VIA FACEBOOK