

A.P.U.S.H Summer Reading Assignment

As a means of gaining a better understanding of U.S. history, you are to read Chapters 1 & 2 from Howard Zinn's, *A People's History of the United States*. The Zinn text is available online at the following link:

<http://www.historyisaweapon.com/zinnapeopleshistory.html>

You are to read Chapters 1 and 2 during the summer and complete the assignments. This assignment is due the first day of class. Answers must be typed; Times New Roman 12 Font. Be prepared to discuss. Enjoy!!

Chapter I: Columbus, The Indians, and Human Progress

1. After reading, answer the following questions:
 - a. Did this chapter reinforce your knowledge about Columbus and the “discovery of America”, or did it conflict with prior information?
 - b. Who was Bartolome de las Casas? What is your opinion of him? Give an overview of his work.
 - c. Zinn gets away from specific historical content regarding Columbus and begins to discuss historiography. What does this mean?
 - d. Why is Zinn critical of “Columbus Day”?
 - e. Why is Zinn critical of Harvard Historian Samuel Eliot Morison?
 - f. Identify one motive that drove Columbus to oppress indigenous peoples. With what results?
 - g. How did the Pilgrims and Puritans respond to the “Indian problem”?
 - h. What was the Pequot War?
 - i. Explain Governor John Winthrop’s legal and biblical justification for seizing Native American land.
 - j. In his concluding sentence Zinn states, the excuse of progress in the annihilation of races, and the telling of history from the standpoint of the conquerors and leaders of Western civilization.” **What do you think?** Is history told from the standpoint of the victors? Justify your response by giving specific historical examples. If this is accurate, is there anything wrong with this?
 - k. Does the author show bias?
 - l. Is this a conservative, liberal, or moderate piece?

Chapter 2: Drawing the Color Line

1. Answer the following questions:
 - a. According to Zinn, what is the root of racism in America?
 - b. Why were Africans considered “better” slaves than Indians in Virginia?
 - c. How did slavery in Africa differ from slavery in Europe and the Americas?
 - d. Describe the conditions that slaves on ships coming to America (“Middle Passage”).

- e. In terms of mortality, what was the cost of slavery? How was Africa impacted over that 300 year time period?
- f. What evidence exists that America's slaves did not accept their fate easily?
- g. Why did slave owners fear poor whites? How and why was the "color line" drawn?
- h. How does Zinn attempt to prove that Native Americans and West Africans were not inferior to Europeans?