

I am a Native of Portland Oregon; African American, Native American and German American former PPS student and Mother of two PPS students. I filmed, "Oregon FAIL!" in spring 2016, capturing 5<sup>th</sup> grade Irvington Elementary students advocating for inclusive, accurate historical curriculum.

Our children are demanding the truth! We must give educators the resources and training to teach Oregon students about our rich, diverse and complex history.

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It is imperative that curriculum explores the greater historical context of European imperialism and colonialism that had become a well oiled machine by the time Europeans reached North America; having honed this formula of conquest throughout the Asian and African continents.

It is crucial to understand that racism is fundamental to colonization and how it was propagandized by 'white man's burden' to sell it to the Christian populations, reconciling religious anxiety about protecting their own freedoms while intentionally denying the same rights to others.

Historically contextual accurate education clarifies how privilege always comes at a cost to others who are oppressed; that, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness only applied to white men.

It's completely logical that "settlers" and "pioneers" wanted a better life for their families and suffered through hardships on the Oregon trail and beyond to attain that- but it must be taught that it came at a great cost to native Americans, African-Americans, Chinese Americans and other people of color and women.

It is imperative to learn that land is the greatest builder of wealth and was the building block in America of creating white wealth at the cost of impoverishing people of color, who today are still impacted by it.

Policies, practices and exclusionary laws are institutionalized racism; these are then embedded in our culture and in people who continue to perpetuate systemic oppression even after these laws are amended and the cultural practices are shunned.

We then can connect the dots of how this is still present -and playing out today.

Centuries of oppression, policies and laws that excluded people of color from owning land, generating wealth, employment, equal pay, access to housing, healthcare and education. Generation after generation after generation of exclusionary laws insure brown bodies remain in poverty while whites build wealth with the privilege of laws that work in their favor exclusively; the best education, healthcare, and opportunity continue to subjugate minoritized populations to inequities in wealth, health, violence, imprisonment and education.

Linear Historic Education demystifies the seemingly unrelated social ills and the staggering complexities of our past and present. Education begins to dismantle oppressive structures.

Understanding our shared history is understanding systems of oppression. This insures accountability and empowers youth who may use their relative privileges to dismantle internal and structural racism in themselves, their communities and the world.

It is harmful to learn history out of a greater context.

Pre-existing conditions and cultural mores that create climates ripe for genocide, state sanctioned violence and oppression are rendered invisible, just like the racialized populations who suffer most from these very same systems of oppression that is today perpetuated in current curriculum.

Layna Lewis

"Oregon FAIL!" Artist Statement

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"Oregon FAIL!" Screening & Panel

7pm (doors at 6pm) Tuesday, May 9th, 2017

Race Talks @ Kennedy School

[https://www.facebook.com/OregonFAILactionNOW/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/OregonFAILactionNOW/?ref=br_rs)

<https://youtu.be/lxAMb6KH920>

<http://www.wweek.com/tag/murmurs/>