

Common App Letter Showcases Politics as Educational Endgame

I taught seminars in Latin, history, composition, and literature to homeschool students in Asheville, North Carolina for more than 15 years, including Advanced Placement courses. As a result, students often asked me to write college recommendation letters for them, such as letters for the Common Application, or Common App as it is known. Though I left teaching over four years ago, I continue to receive emails from the Common App crew.

Below is an email I opened a few days ago. It came with the signature of President & CEO Jenny Rickard which I could not reproduce here. The rest of the email, however, is exactly as I received it.

If you want to know what we're up against in the fight for the future of this country, please read this email. My comments follow.

Dear Friend,

On January 6, we were yet again reminded of the critical importance of an educated and just society as we bore witness to a deeply disturbing attack on democracy by violent white supremacist insurrectionists. The stark differences between how peaceful Black and brown protesters were treated this summer relative to Wednesday's coup again call attention to the centuries-old open wound of racism in this country – and highlight the work we still have to do to create a more just and equitable society.

Wednesday's unsettling attack, while a harsh reminder of how far we have to go, also reaffirmed Common App's commitment to

revolutionizing the college admission process to ensure that all students – no matter their race, class, identification or creed – can access a higher education experience that prioritizes belonging, justice, and equity.

We reached out to students to remind them that an educated, just, and more equitable society has never been more critical, and a college education is still the best investment they can make. We desperately need their bright minds and diverse experiences to help us all achieve a better world.

I am confident that as we enter 2021, we are in a strong position to build on the momentum we gained in 2020 and continue to break down barriers for students. I look forward to continuing this work side by side with you.

Sincerely,

Jenny Rickard

President & CEO

I was at the Jan. 6 rally, not the storming of the Capitol building, but the rally itself. You can read my account [here](#). I saw no “violent white supremacist insurrectionists.” As for the differences between that melee and those of last summer, we have to laugh at Rickard’s use of the phrase “peaceful Black and brown protesters.” Those protesters, many of them associated with Black Lives Matter and/or Antifa, and many of them young white people, rioted, looted, and set buildings on fire in Minneapolis, Kenosha, and other cities across the country. By no means were these protests peaceful.

In addition, there was no coup on Jan. 6, not even an attempted one.

In her second paragraph we have the usual empty words: race, class, identification, creed, belonging, justice, and equity. A “higher education experience,” Rickard writes, will prioritize such things. Should those really be the values of higher education? Maybe we should be more concerned about actually learning something. How about the philosophy of Aristotle or Pascal, Shakespeare’s plays, Tolstoy’s novels, the good and bad of American history, and science and math?

Regarding Rickard’s third paragraph, I confess to wondering: what exactly is a “better world?” Is it a world of freedom and natural rights, or a world built from someone else’s ideas of justice and equity? One wonders whether a college education is still the “best investment” students can make, and if so, at which colleges they can safely make that investment.

Do we “desperately need their bright minds and diverse experiences”? Rickard may feel differently if those bright minds have the diverse opinions of conservatism. What if their bright minds and diverse experiences have led them to believe the election was a fraud? What if they’re not buying the systemic racism theory? Do they still deserve to attend college?

Finally, what barriers are there for students entering college other than good grades, high scores on standardized tests, and some outstanding extracurricular activities? And how do the folks at Common App intend to “work side by side with you?”

Jenny Rickard’s email isn’t a call to higher learning and knowledge. Instead, it is a call to deaden our minds and bury knowledge, adding insult upon injury for millions of American voters.

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Dear Readers,

Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us

advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by [becoming a member](#) for just \$5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler [@CharlemagneInstitute!](#)

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