

"Writing the truth
as I see it;
trying not to
offend
those who will
disagree."

The truth as I see it[®]

Idaho Common Sense[®]



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Mediocre and entitled

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"There is an infinite difference between a little wrong and just right, between fairly good and the best, between mediocrity and superiority."

*Orison Swett Marden (1850-1924)
American writer*

November 2007, KMGH television Denver Colorado – "To end complaints about the sometimes fierce competition among overachieving high school students, the Boulder (Colorado) Valley School District is getting rid of the practice of crowning a single valedictorian," ending "unhealthy" class rankings. And in 2010, Boulder graduated its first class without a valedictorian.

Leading to that decision were district concerns that competitive students "were forced to opt for academic heavyweight classes" and that "students were penalized for taking harder courses because they couldn't maintain A's."

Of the change, a thoughtful freshman student said, "I think that if people work that hard they should be rewarded." A parent added, "The entire purpose of school is to produce scholars." Are these just quaint concepts?

Welcome to the sharing of mediocrity. Welcome to the envy of entitlement. When did taking harder classes become something we don't want? When did getting an A in that hard class become unfair to those who did not? When did striving for excellence become "overachieving" and "unhealthy?"

Didn't our parents teach us we were only entitled to what we earned and nothing more? Didn't our parents teach us to work hard and

strive for excellence? My dad always told me I could do anything I wanted if I was willing to work hard and pay the price to get there.

Are these simple, honest values outdated and just another step toward our socialist mentality? To paraphrase Sir Winston Churchill's comments on socialism, "With a creed of ignorance and a gospel of envy" Boulder Colorado created "the equal sharing of mediocrity."

But isn't Boulder just reflecting our evolving national values, best expressed by our political leaders who also exalt mediocrity by demonizing those who work hard and excel? According to Washington, too much hard work, too much success, too much money defines the "enemy."

Not surprisingly, some of our more enlightened, progressive Ivy League universities are adopting Boulder's values. These universities discovered that some students were performing too well in high school and basing admissions on merit was interfering with the racial mix they wanted.

The problem students? Asians. As a race, they work too hard and perform too well, ruining the wanted racial mix. So, some universities now accept lesser-qualified students to maintain the "proper" racial mix, turning away better-qualified students of the wrong race.

Is this what we want to teach our youth? Don't work hard. Don't do too well. Don't stand out. Don't pay the price for excellence. Rather, you will be rewarded for mediocrity. You are entitled. Shared mediocrity,

entitled mentality; it's a short step from one to the other.

Every day we become a more "entitled" society, fewer people accepting responsibility for themselves. Every day, our government creates more indentured servants needing and expecting the government to care for them.

Well, how well is this new ethos serving our nation? A recent report on the math proficiency of graduating high school students showed that the U.S ranked 32nd among 65 nations. And guess what? In our entitled society of shared mediocrity, the U.S. students who ranked highly in these international comparisons were Asian students. Yes, the very same Asian students some of our most prestigious universities see as a problem.

Perhaps our educational and political leaders should heed the advice of Common Cause founder John W. Garner who said, "The idea for which this nation stands will not survive if the highest goal free man can set themselves is an amiable mediocrity. Excellence implies striving for the highest standards in every phase of life."

Don't our founding fathers and those who have died for us, for our freedom, and for our opportunity, deserve a better thank-you than a mediocre, entitled citizenry? It's worth some thought.

Dr. Bosley's book titled *The Truth as I See It[®]*, *Idaho Common Sense[®]* is hardcover, 374 pages, \$24.95 – available at www.craigbosley.com. To contact him directly, you can email him at craig@craigbosley.com. His columns are available at www.craigbosley.com.