

# 'U' VIEWS

**As U.S. citizens, what do you feel the response following news of Osama bin Laden's death should be?**

*Question and column compiled by Bryan J. Heinlen.*



"A sense of redemption and joy for the victims of 9/11 and our military, but an understanding that terrorism and extremism still need to be fought."

*Adam Gault  
Philadelphia  
Class of 2012*



"That we as a nation, should be happy the victims of 9/11 finally received the justice they longed for, but also realize hate only begets hate and we should remain vigilant on our shores and abroad."

*Mike Molitoris  
Plains  
Class of 2011*



"I feel that we have the right to celebrate the death of Bin Laden, but at the same time, we must remember that this death is only the beginning of the end. We should also keep the victims of his actions in our thoughts and prayers, and in doing so, unite as citizens of the U.S."

*Hillary Fanelli  
Toms River, N.J.  
Class of 2012*



"I don't think that the celebrations around our country were appropriate. It is important to celebrate the justice that was served in a more somber manner let us keep the victims of 9/11 in our thoughts and prayers."

*Brianna McCullough  
Philadelphia  
Class of 2013*

# Time to desegregate American history

COMMENTARY BY  
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Negro History Week was first celebrated in America in 1926, at the suggestion of Dr. Carter Wilson, who was unsatisfied with the lack of attention given by historians and academics to the contributions made by African Americans. The week was intended to diminish the cogency of racial prejudice by educating Americans about the overlooked contributions made by African Americans. In 1976, this week was expanded and became what is now Black History Month. Given the considerable improvements to race relations that have since been made in America, and the fact that the study of Black historical figures has been increasingly addressed by academia and incorporated into the discipline of American history, it would seem reasonable to judge the results of these institutions as successful.

Therefore, the issue at stake is not whether the project of giving Black History a month has yielded appreciably positive results. Instead, the question is at what point does the act of drawing attention specifically to the actions of individuals of a particular type stop providing us with the desired end of increased egalitarianism, and instead unintentionally serves to



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**MOTOWN FOUNDER Berry Gordy Jr. and Grammy Museum's executive director Bob Santelli look on as First Lady Michelle Obama hosts "The Motown Sound: In Performance at the White House," a concert in celebration of Black History Month and the legacy of Motown Records Feb. 24.**

confirm separatist intuitions? I imagine that there exists a point at which the role of separately addressing a certain group of people no longer works to unite people through educating them and will only serve to highlight differences.

Perhaps what I am saying is analogous to the economic principle of diminishing marginal utility, as we seem to have surpassed the point at which the advantages of addressing Black history separately can be said to have the optimum impact on

our society.

How can Americans ever expect to transcend racism if we still separately classify the historical events enacted by citizens of different degrees of melanin concentration? Continuing to make this distinction seems only to encourage us to see racial minorities as exceptions.

Since the goal for most Americans is to see each other as individuals rather than as embodiments of races and genders, it is clearly in our interest to resist

any behavior that promotes the view that any particular group is inherently divergent from or some kind of alternative to what is American.

We can imagine the repulsion that would be evoked if McDonald's were to "honor" Black Americans with their own water fountains. Similarly, it would seem radically unfitting for President Obama's staff to refer to him as Mr. Black-President. How strange it is that we still feel comfortable with the idea of a Black month?

Certainly we should not confuse the original goal of encouraging textbook manufacturers and teachers to acknowledge African Americans with the current function of the month, which is to serve as a promotional tagline in advertisements and public relation statements.

In conclusion, the best way to honor the contributions that any racial group has made to American history is to include it within the American history curriculum. Partitioning Americans, even when done with good intentions, only serves to exaggerate our differences.

The danger is that we may continue to perceive current and future events through a racial filter, remembering things like Obama's presidency as an aspect of Black, rather than American, history.

## "MIDDLE EAST" CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE

and Jordan, and by Ataturk in Turkey. We predicted that the recent Islamist victories in Ankara's parliamentary and presidential elections would soon spread throughout the Middle East. We wait to see if this scenario will take place.

Finally, there was the Yugoslav scenario of religious and ethnic genocide. This has been seen clearly in Egypt where the Christian Copts have already suffered "the horrendous Nag Hammadi massacre in which six innocent Copts . . . were killed at random as they were coming out of church on (Orthodox) Christmas Eve" as the Egyptian writer and future Nobelist, Alaa Al Aswany has noted in his Cairo newspaper column, "Can President Obama Save the Copts?"

Al Aswany blames the Coptic Pope Shenouda for much of the trouble because Shenouda backed Mubarak's son Gamal as successor to the father.

We thus see the Second Law of Politics at work: in all political systems, the principal cause of tension revolves around race, religion and ethnicity.

This Law now plays out

throughout the Middle East. In Syria, the dominant Alawite minority (16 percent) of the Harvard ophthalmologist, Bashar Assad, and the secularism of the Baath Party are being challenged by the Sunni majority (65 percent) with the fundamentalist Salafi-Wahhabi sect as point man in the ongoing civil war. In Bahrain, the Sunni monarch is besieged by the Iranian-funded Shia majority. In Libya, tribalism dominates the ongoing civil war between Qaddafi's predominantly western tribe and the eastern tribes in the Benghazi region seeking to replace him with some alternate benevolent ruler.

In Yemen, Al Qaeda has worked relentlessly to replace President Saleh because his anti-terrorist stance stands in the way of the ultimate plum: the fall of the Sunni house in Arabia. Even without Osama, the decentralized Al Qaeda operations in Morocco, Yemen, Jordan, and Egypt will continue to plan and plot.

By next fall, we will know how all of this has turned out. It should be an exciting summer.

### Longtime Arab leaders

*The uprising that forced Tunisia's president from power has cast a light on other leaders in the region who have tarnished human rights records.*

	Leader, took power	From U.S. State Dept. reports
<b>Algeria</b>	President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, 1999	Thousands of enforced disappearances; freedom of association is very restricted
<b>Morocco</b>	King Mohammed VI, 1999	Judiciary influenced by politics, corruption, inefficiency
<b>Libya</b>	Col. Moammar Gadhafi, 1969	Authoritarian regime; torture, arbitrary arrest are continuing problems
<b>Egypt</b>	President Hosni Mubarak, 1981	Emergency law in place for 30 years effectively outlaws political parties
<b>Sudan</b>	President Omar Al-Bashir, 1993	Bashir indicted for genocide for his counterinsurgency campaign in Darfur
<b>Jordan</b>	King Abdullah, 1999	Law does not provide citizens the right to change government
<b>Syria</b>	President Bashar Asad, 2000	Has failed to comply with minimum international human rights standards
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	King Abdullah, 2005	Severe violations of religious freedom
<b>Yemen</b>	President Ali Abdullah Saleh, 1990	Mounting poverty among a growing young population; frustration with a lack of political freedoms



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