

“PROJECT ONE” – IB History of the Americas due Friday, October 2, 2020

Although this project is not due until the end of the first week of October, 2020, it involves reading a full-length book. It is recommended that you use time available during the summer to read this wonderful book. Remember that the beginning of school, in whatever form it occurs, will be filled with lots of new demands and assignments (including in this course).

Please read the dual biography *Elizabeth and Hazel: Two Women of Little Rock* by David Margolick.

This book, published in 2011, recounts the story of two women who were first brought together in an unfortunate and ugly way. 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford was one of the first African-American students admitted, in 1957, to a previously all-white high school in Arkansas. Hazel Bryan was a ninth-grader who, as part of a mob of racist white students, taunted and threatened her. A nearby photographer captured a scene of Hazel shouting epithets at Elizabeth, and the picture went viral. After setting the stage with this confrontation, the book follows the two women through the present day as their lives unfold and periodically intersect in unexpected ways. It serves as a mini-history of race relations in the U.S. over the past 60 years.

In October, we will discuss the stories of Elizabeth and Hazel and place them in the larger context of history. While reading, you should keep a journal in which you answer the following questions (you can do this after you’ve finished reading, but it will probably be easier to keep adding to the journal, from time to time, as you read). Also, for a couple of the questions, some outside research will be necessary.

1. What are your reactions to the circumstances in which Elizabeth and Hazel find themselves at different parts of the book, both in their respective lives and in their relationship with each other? Be sure to discuss especially the terms on which their relationship ultimately ends (but don’t only talk about this part of their lives).
2. What conversations could you imagine them having with one another over particular situations in which they find themselves. For example, what might you imagine Elizabeth would say to Hazel if she had the opportunity to when wronged? What might Hazel have said in her (plot spoiler) apology? [These are just examples of the types of situations you could use, not required questions.]
3. In 1957, when the first chapter of the book takes place, what music would the girls have listened to (don’t assume it’s the same for both)? What television shows might they have watched? What books/magazines read? What else was going on in the world at that time?

Pick another moment in the book and answer the same questions based on that new time.

4. Write a list of questions that you’d like to ask the two women about their experiences if you had the opportunity to speak to them.

WHERE TO FIND THE BOOK

The book is available new or used (at very low cost) from on-line booksellers. If you have a Westchester library card, you can probably also find the book in eBook format at no cost.

IF YOU NEED ANY ASSISTANCE OR HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,

PLEASE e-mail MR. HOFFMAN at hoffmanr@dfsd.org.

This e-mail will be checked periodically (i.e., not daily) over the summer. Please do not use it for questions requiring immediate attention.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL READING

Although not required, this book is STRONGLY recommended for any student about to begin the college search and admissions process. You, and your parents, really should read it!

Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania

by Frank Bruni.