

# On Kaepernick's Protest



By Ben Coulthard  
Sports Editor

At first, no one noticed. Colin Kaepernick, the savior of the 2013 San Francisco 49ers Super Bowl team,

took a knee during the national anthem of a preseason football game in August against the Texans. He took a knee again in the 49ers next game six days later. Again, no one noticed. The media did not pick up on Kaepernick's protest until he refused to stand for a third consecutive game.

Kaepernick's reasoning for taking a knee was that he wanted to give a voice to those who did not have one, explaining, "I'm going to continue to stand with the people that are being oppressed. To me, this is something that has to change."

The media began to ask questions. Why was Kaepernick the only player out of the whole league protesting for this cause? He was one of few who dared to speak up, failing to be deterred by the potential consequences of an incredibly publicized protest. Criticism? Sure. Lost endorsements? Kaepernick didn't care. He was willing to do what he felt necessary to get his point across. Hate poured onto Kaepernick across the

country. Many football fans wondered why someone making millions of dollars would protest the American flag because he felt "oppressed." He's been sent death threats merely because others don't agree with his viewpoint. Millions of Americans fail to understand the point of Kaepernick's protest. No one talks about why Kaepernick does what he does. Rather than complain, people should take time to think about the motive for the protest in the first place. Many attempt to weaken Kaepernick's argument by accusing the activist of doing something he's not, such as disrespecting America or its military. Kaepernick doesn't claim he's oppressed. Instead, he believes he is giving a voice to the millions of people of color in America who experience racial subjugation and violence in their daily lives yet don't have the ability to stand up for themselves.

Instead of criticizing Kaepernick, Americans should respect the courage he has displayed. Thankfully, other influential athletes have started to take their own stands. Eighteen NFL players and counting have protested in some form during the national anthem. Megan Rapinoe, the popular midfielder on the U.S. women's soccer team, has kneeled before her matches. Adam Jones, centerfielder for the Baltimore Orioles, said MLB players aren't kneeling during the national anthems because "baseball

is a white man's sport," and that it would be too risky for an African American baseball player to partake in a protest. Yet even President Obama praised Kaepernick's actions for "exercising his constitutional right" not to stand during

**Rather than complain, people should take time to think about the motive for the protest in the first place.**

the anthem. If nothing else, the athletes involved in these various protests are succeeding at forcing Americans to consider the magnitude of the issues facing people of color in this country. It's 2016, and we're still facing the same problems in America that people like Tommie Smith and John Carlos protested with raised fists during the 1968 Olympics. Unarmed black victims are still being shot and killed by police, and little is being done by people in control to combat these numbers from increasing. Names like Alton Sterling, Terence Crutcher, Eric

Garner, and too many more have become commonplace due to their unjust

deaths. According to The Guardian, police have killed sixty-seven people since Kaepernick's protest began. That's only 22 days. About one-fourth of those victims have been black. Many of them did not deserve to be killed. Another part of the problem is that there is no fallout from police shootings as there has been over a protest. The same people who talk about Kaepernick protesting during the national anthem have been silent when these shootings take place. That is part of the reason Kaepernick follows through with his protests. People must come to grips with this problem when they question why Kaepernick kneels. Americans need to encourage the bravery of Kaepernick's actions for succeeding generations. Generally people stand up for something that is unjust are applauded due to their determination to fix a societal problem. Kaepernick's message, however, has upset the so-called "morals" of many. Until real progress is made in the United States by confronting challenges to basic human rights, Kaepernick should continue to kneel. Once American society can answer the question of why Colin Kaepernick is protesting in the first place, change may finally come to fruition.

# AP U.S. History Textbook: Marxist Propaganda?



By Mac Roberts  
Assistant Opinions  
Editor

Last year, in AP U.S. History, I was reading an analysis of Calvin Coolidge and his

economic policies during the "roaring twenties," when I noticed that the book was particularly critical of the former president. I began to wonder about the author of my textbook. Do you have a copy of Give Me Liberty? If you do, flip to the front of your APUSH book, and there he is: Eric Foner. He didn't write history, but the way he wrote the textbook on it has made me begin to question whether or not he was interpreting it.

Foner is a professor of history at Columbia University and has chaired several major historical societies—all information found on a simple Google search. However, upon further investigation, his personal website turns up some more interesting facts. Articles, which were published by Professor Foner and compiled on his website, point to his progressive politics. In his article "Letter to Bernie" - published in the left-leaning publication The Nation- Foner

writes: "...socialism is as much a moral idea as an economic one—the conviction that vast inequalities of wealth...are simply wrong...". This statement, made in an open letter to democratic socialist Bernie Sanders, is startling, when you realize that this man is the author of the textbook APUSH students read every night. He even taught U.S. history at the University of Moscow in 1990, when the communists were still firmly in control of the Soviet people. While I don't know for sure, it stands to reason that Foner's interpretation of U.S. history was approved by Moscow, and I can't imagine that the Soviets would have approved of a pro-capitalist, pro-Republic course of study on the U.S.

All of these concerns lead me to question exactly who is writing my textbooks and whether or not they are able to leave their politics at the door. Foner is not a liberal progressive who is editing a calculus textbook. He's editing a history book- one that must be read by thousands of AP US history students in America in order to receive college credit in this prestigious national program. This book will inform and influence all of those thousands of young minds.

Even beyond Foner, however, lies greater questions. Who chose this book

and tapped Foner to write it? Who is pulling the strings on the national AP text selection committee? I hope that an even-handed committee is vetting the editors and authors of such an important text, but I don't know for sure that this is the case. Conspiracy theorists might suggest truly dark motives, but even moderate minds can become suspicious, when they are presented with the facts.

Call me old-fashioned, but studying a history text written by a Marxist does not bode well with me.

In the end, I don't expect Foner to live in a bubble. Certainly, he is entitled to his politics, as I am to mine. However, I'm writing an opinion piece, not editing a history text that thousands of students will read. If I were in Foner's position, I'm not sure I could keep out my views. They might slip in quietly. I wonder how many, if any, of Foner's views slipped in.

There is no doubt that Foner is a qualified scholar. He is learned, articulate, and, therefore, qualified to write or edit a book on history. Furthermore, he's entitled to his political views. It's not as if he should be a political eunuch just because he publishes history books.

However, the radical nature of

his politics begs the question: where is the oversight? Maybe there is plenty of fair and even-handed oversight from an AP committee, and this piece is all for nothing. But what if there isn't any? What is our responsibility as students? I end up with more questions than answers, but I think it is our moral obligation to at least ask them.

**ROLL RED?** Does MBA or the College Board endorse Marxism? Assistant Opinions Editor Mac Roberts thinks so.

