

Defend The Honor Campaign  
*Advocating for the respectful treatment of the Latino WWII Experience within the*  
*PBS/WETA/Ken Burns documentary*  
defendthehonor.org\*

THE WAR, a 14-hour documentary on WWII, is scheduled to air in September on PBS. Director Ken Burns and associates took six years to interview more than 40 individuals in four communities (Waterbury, Connecticut; Mobile, Alabama; Sacramento, California; and Luverne, Minnesota). The documentary features individuals in those communities, with two ethnic/racial groups given special consideration: Japanese Americans and African Americans. The film has no reference to the Latino contribution. The documentary also has an accompanying book and educational materials. PBS officials say, in a news release: "... PBS's goal for THE WAR is to reach into every home and classroom -- so together we can better understand what we as a nation experienced in those difficult years and what we as a nation accomplished."

The PBS position on this issue at this point is:

- The Ken Burns documentary, 6 years in the making, is completed and cannot be changed.
- PBS cannot and will not request that Burns alter his documentary; it would violate Mr. Burns' artistic independence.
- PBS is funding local programming by member stations, which may include Latino representations.

Defend The Honor says:

- The story of WWII in the United States is incomplete without the Latino perspective.
- The exclusion of Latinos from The War insults our community; it should not air without the Latino experience.
- It is certainly Mr. Burns' prerogative to develop his documentary as he sees fit. It is OUR DUTY to ensure that the Latino and Latina WWII perspective is included.
- We are willing to meet directly with Mr. Burns to discuss our concerns.
- As this documentary took six years to complete, it is inexplicable that no one at PBS or sponsoring station WETA flagged this problem of Latino exclusion earlier. This suggests that Latinos have no meaningful voice at PBS, WETA, or on Mr. Burns' production team.
- Mr. Burns' projects have exhibited a pattern of neglecting Latinos in the past (the jazz documentary, the baseball production, and others) and individuals have complained to him and to PBS about this. It is inexplicable that PBS has not taken their concerns seriously.

What you can do, either as organizations or as individuals:

1. Voice your concerns to your elected officials, especially those at the national level.
2. Voice your concerns to your local PBS stations.
3. Voice your concerns to The War's sponsors.
4. Subscribe to email updates at defendthehonor.org
5. **Respond immediately, with letters to the editor, emails, phone calls, to any media reference to this issue.**
6. Support various organizational efforts to advocate for the Latino inclusion.

See defendthehonor.org for contact information for various parties you can write or email.

\* defendthehonor.org is sponsored by the U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project at the University of Texas at Austin. The Project's work on this campaign is supported solely by your contributions. Contact the project office at (512) 471-1924; or email us at

**info@defendthehonor.org**