

To Ms. Paula Kerger, President and CEO, PBS

For Ken Burns to exclude Mexican American and Latino servicemen and women from his "documentary" of WWII makes a travesty out of the term, documentary. That exclusion obviously reflects a conscious decision by Burns to deny the Hispanic presence in WWII: the numerous medals of honor earned by Chicanos--more than any other ethnic group--and the hundreds of thousands of others who came out of the barrios to fight side by side other Americans speaks to a damning prejudice. Why has Burns written them off as if Latino servicemen had not fought in Europe, Africa, and the Pacific?

My grandmother had FOUR of her boys in service during the war--that's four gold stars in the window, Ms. Kerger. Two were regular Army, one in the tank corps, the fourth a sailor; the fifth son was asked by the military to spend the war re-building the wooden planes that pre-flight trainees used when we couldn't afford to make them out of metal, and my mother earned her stripes packing parachutes, some of which might have been used to liberate France--there weren't many Chicano families with sons who didn't see at least one of them don a uniform.

Airing this video while excluding Latinos is clearly an injustice; perhaps Burns intended to rectify the injustices done to African Americans and the Japanese, but in this case, two rights make a wrong.

Ms . Kerger, this is a misdirected venture; putting the series on public television stations will undermine and contradict the very nature of public service. I'm urging everyone I know or can reach by the Internet to contact you and let you know how we feel. I have supported PBS and NPR for as long as I can remember--this proposed series will destroy all that.

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