

'American Sniper' Accused of Promoting Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

Author's note: *Following the publication of my column Thursday evening and facing national outrage, the University of Michigan reversed its decision to cancel an upcoming campus screening of "American Sniper" late Thursday night.*

"It was a mistake to cancel the showing of the movie 'American Sniper' on campus as part of a social event for students," said E. Royster Harper, the university's vice president for student life.

Harper said the original decision to cancel the movie "was not consistent with the high value the University of Michigan places on freedom of expression and our respect for the right of students to make their own choices in such matters."

The film will be shown, as originally planned on Friday, April 10. The original column is below:

Muslim, Middle Eastern and North African students at the University of Michigan were successful in their mission to cancel a campus screening of "American Sniper"—claiming the film promotes anti-Muslim rhetoric and made them feel unsafe.

The university had planned on showing the critically-acclaimed film about the life of Navy SEAL Chris Kyle on Friday. Instead, students will be treated to *Paddington*—a PG rated flick based on the children's book about a stuffed Teddy bear.

The abrupt change came after several hundred students and their supporters filed a protest—attacking both the film and Chris Kyle.

"The movie 'American Sniper' not only tolerates but promotes anti-Muslim and anti-MENA rhetoric and sympathizes with a mass killer," wrote the group of Muslim, Middle Eastern and North African students (MENA). "Chris Kyle was a racist who took a disturbing stance on murdering Iraqi civilians."

The College Fix reported that members of the Muslim Students' Association and a Palestinian solidarity group also joined the protest.

"Watching this movie is provocative and unsafe to MENA and Muslim students who are too often reminded of how little the media and world value their lives," the students wrote in their letter.

The Center for Campus Involvement (CCI) took one look at the letter, freaked out and immediately pulled the plug on the highest grossing film of 2014. They promised to reschedule the film "in a forum that provides an appropriate space for dialogue and reflection."

Yeah, right.

"We deeply regret causing harm to members of our community and appreciate the thoughtful feedback provided to us by students and staff alike," the CCI wrote on its Facebook page. "While our intent was to show a film, the impact of the content was harmful, and made students feel unsafe and unwelcome at our program."

Let's hope none of the students feel unsafe around stuffed animals.

The MENA students continued on about the university "perpetrating these negative and misleading stereotypes" by showing "American Sniper." They said the film has "contributed to a culture of Islamophobia in America."

While we're on the subject of perpetrating negative

stereotypes—what about the Islamists who attacked the Boston Marathon or the Islamist who committed jihad at Fort Hood or the Islamist who tried to blow up a plane with a bomb in his underpants?

Derek Draplin, of *The College Fix*, found at least one person on campus who objected to the heavy-handed actions of the university.

“It would be nice to see the university ... take a stand against outrageous claims of ‘student exclusion,’” sophomore Jason Weaver told the online website. “The film ‘American Sniper’ in no way creates student exclusion any more than ‘Saving Private Ryan.’”

While the Muslim students said they “respect” the right to freedom of speech, “we believe that with this right comes responsibility: responsibility of action, intention and outcome.”

With all due respect to the Muslim Student Association—you do not have a Constitutional right not to be offended by a film or a column or anything else for that matter. That’s not the way we do things in America, kids. If *American Sniper* makes you feel unsafe—don’t watch it.

By the way—you know what makes me feel unsafe? Islamic jihadists beheading people and blowing up churches and flying jetliners into buildings and slaughtering Christian college students —that’s what makes me feel unsafe.

On the other hand, Americans like Chris Kyle make me feel safe. He was a man who was willing to put his life on the line to protect our nation—our freedom. He was a hero—a patriot—a fellow countryman.

The Muslim Student Association at the University of Michigan and their supporters smeared this man’s good name. Mr. Kyle’s family is owed an apology.

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