

Harvard Wants to Remove Christian Roots From School Traditions

Prestigious American university Harvard is considering removing a line from its ceremonial song that references its Christian heritage.

A Harvard professor claims the lyric could be racist, but a U.K. academic has described the proposal as “morally disoriented.”

Harvard takes its name from John Harvard, who emigrated with the Puritans to the United States in the 1600s and left his academic books to the institution after his death.

‘Truth, Light, Love’

“Fair Harvard” is sung when students begin at the university and when they graduate.

*“Let not moss-covered Error moor thee at its side,
As the world on Truth’s current glides by,
Be the herald of Light, and the bearer of Love,
Till the stock of the Puritans die.”*

The current ending to “Fair Harvard”

Harvard’s ‘Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging’ is now running a competition to create a new ending to the song as they claim it currently “suggests that the commitment to truth, and to being the bearer of its light, is the special province of those of Puritan stock.”

And while they say they do not want to “write Puritans out,” they state they can imagine a line without any reference to

them.

‘Don’t Neglect History’

Stephen Burt, an English Professor at Harvard who is judging the song entries, said the line could be interpreted as being “complicit with racism.”

The idea has drawn criticism, however, with social commentator Frank Furedi describing it as a “Morally disoriented attempt to detach Harvard from its past.”

Stephen Shoemaker, who lectures at Harvard, said history “should not be neglected.” He added: “That doesn’t mean that it defines us today, but we need to know where we came from.”

And Harvard student Kent Haeffner said the suggestion showed university priorities were misplaced.

Gender Identity Controversy

The Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging say the winner will be announced at the beginning of the spring term next year.

Last month, a Harvard-funded LGBT group faced criticism for claiming gender identity can change on a daily basis.

The office of BGLTQ Student Life made the claim in a flyer handed out on campus. It also stated that people who disagree are committing “violence” against transsexual people.

It was criticized as “moral manipulation” by one social commentator who said universities should oppose moves designed to shut down debate.