

From: Haya Rubin

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 5:44 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: Jerry Lynn Rubin; Amanda Devons; JEFFREY CARMEL; Stand With Us; Alisa Yaffa; Israel Rind; Talya Rind; Richard Spector; marty medwin; Rabbi Yitzchok Feldman; Rabbi David David Booth; Sarah Felsen

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Revisions still needed to ethnic studies curriculum.

At this very polarized moment in our country it is so important that we teach our students ethnic studies. Even more important however is that a curriculum being proposed in the name of tolerance and multicultural understanding not be designed as a tool to promote hate against any specific ethnic group .

While I am appreciative of direct slurs against Jews largely being removed from the main body of the ethnic studies curriculum, unfortunately, this second draft still continues to foster antisemitism and continues to be very narrow and biased in its treatment of "Arab Americans and other Middle Easterners."

The curriculum does not acknowledge the presence of the indigenous Middle Eastern minorities who today and in the last 100 years have experienced oppression in the Middle East. These indigenous peoples over centuries have been and today continue to be killed and oppressed, to have their property taken and their places of worship destroyed. They include Zoroastrians in Iran, Yazidi and Kurds in Iraq, Mizrahi Jews in every Middle Eastern country, Coptic Christians in Egypt, and Assyrian Christians in Syria among many other groups. In California these indigenous Middle Easterners make up more than 60 percent of the Middle Eastern immigrants and Arab Americans 40 percent. All these groups have had their stories omitted in favor of the story of victimization and fictional genocide of Palestinian Arabs by Israeli Jews. Needless to say the Israeli Jewish narrative of being victimized by extremist terror groups and the UN and in the US by some extremist Arab Americans is completely neglected and contradicted by the examples and the references given in the curriculum. Israeli Jews are targets of terror and murder in their own country due to antisemitic terrorist violence, and of hate in the US due to prejudiced and false narratives being spread about them by Hamas, and other terrorist groups.

The Holocaust and the role of American and world prejudice against Jews in preventing their immigration and rescue in the 1930s and 1940s is omitted from the curriculum, as well as 'gentleman's agreement' antisemitism in the ivy league and medical schools and clubs, forcing Jews to create their own schools, universities and hospitals.

Another problem is that the curriculum claims that privilege was given to Jews in the US at the expense of other groups. This is a false statement. Jews continue to be the number one target of hate crimes in our country exceeding African American, Latino, Asian and Arab American populations and these crimes are increasing dramatically and have increased with the Black Lives Matter movement, which has an antisemitic charter. White privilege is often negated by antisemitism for white Jews. And today Jews of color including all indigenous Middle Eastern and African Jews, experience discrimination by their stories being completely unheard and untold in the US. Jews are characterized only as 'white' or European whereas a large portion of them are not, and have faced racial discrimination both by white Jews and non Jews. For them antisemitism manifests as a complete erasure of their narrative, denial of their experience of racism and being excluded from intersectional dialogues because due to antisemitism they are classed as colonial imperialists instead of the victims of imperialism which they are. And for white Jews, the experience of ethnic Jew hatred negating their skin color is minimized and

denied. 6 million "white" Ashkenazi Jews were killed by white Germans, with the assistance of white Ukrainians, white Poles, white Slovaks, white French etc. White privilege did nothing for them. Antisemitism as an ethnic and racist hatred overrode the color of their skin as any kind of a privilege and the Nazis and their collaborators burnt 6 million of them in ovens. And the few survivors who straggled to the US encountered quotas against them in universities, graduate schools medical schools, and by elite employers.

Anti-black racism is critical to this curriculum. If that narrative is polluted by unfairness to and prejudice against other ethnic groups, it will eventually be discredited and cause a backlash. It will not ultimately help intolerance at all. Jews stood together with blacks in the 1960s and we are standing with them now. They deserve our allegiance but we deserve theirs as well. Jews also deserve the allegiance of every other minority that has suffered from bias and discrimination in this country and globally.

The curriculum's guiding principles refer to texts which promote hatred against Israel and Jews who support Israel and to authors who spread hateful lies about Israel and Zionism. These books to which the curriculum refers in its guiding principles falsely accuse Israel of genocide, when in fact it is Jews who endured the largest genocide in the last 100 years while the US maintained almost complete barriers to Jewish immigration due to prejudice against Jews. Jews were vilified in the US in the 1940s as spies and Communists. Senator Joseph McCarthy's targeting of Jews in then 1950s anti Communist libels was a shameful episode of US anti Jewish discrimination. Today US Jews experience more lies and hateful rhetoric especially on our university campuses, where Jews are discriminated against today if they support the right to a Jewish state in Israel, our ancient homeland where there has been a continuous Jewish presence for over 3000 years. Jews have been targeted in synagogue shootings the US in Pittsburgh and San Diego and are targets of hate on both the right and left of the political spectrum.

Instead of the ethnic studies curriculum highlighting the experience of discrimination that Jews have gone through in this country, it ignores it and promotes antisemitism by its reference list and its sample questions.. It should present anti Zionism as a new insidious form of antisemitism, denying the ethnic Jewish right to even a small part of the ancient homeland in which we have been indigenous for over 3000 years. It should have noted the oppression and eviction of Jews indigenous to the the Middle East and North Africa in the Middle Eastern experience as the other Middle Eastern narrative of oppression which highlights the importance of the Jewish homeland. Instead this curriculum continues to contribute to antisemitism by citing and legitimizing authors who express hatred for Jews and who advocate their murder and genocide. The authors cited who promote the hateful BDS movement in the US tell tales about Jewish oppression of Palestinians out of context of the oppression and complete eviction of Jews throughout the region from ancestral homes of thousands of years in Aleppo, Kabul, Baghdad, Alexandria, Cairo, and Istanbul, to give only a few examples. The authors cited who tell only an anti Zionist narrative fail to note that only a tiny corner of the entire Middle East and North African region is now the ONLY place Jews can and do live in the entire region, and has absorbed all the Jews evicted from Arab countries. The curriculum fails to note how anti-Zionists now victimize [Israel](#) as the Jewish state and want to drive the Jews out of this homeland as well, where no other ethnic group ever had an independent state since ancient Judea and there was a continuous Jewish presence. The curriculum fails to note this ethnic Jew hatred in the US or globally.

Replacing one hatred with another will never result in improvement in intolerance. I call on the designers of the curriculum for Ethnic Studies to lead the way and acknowledge the world's oldest and most ubiquitous ethnic hatred, and to try to put an end to it once and for all. Do not cite as heroes of the war on racism and intolerance rabid antisemites who continue to indulge in and spread this

hatred.right now. My grandparents died in the Holocaust along with 300 of their family members. My parents were each the only survivors of their nuclear families and among very few survivors of large extended families. This hatred killed them and I see it happening here. Are you not willing to address it? Do you not realize that if we raise our children on this hatred it will grow and envelop.the US as it did Europe and the Middle East? You have it in your hands to check this cancer, this blight, this virus. Please do it! I want other Jewish students to be able to go to college without fear. My daughter will not.go.to.any UC campus now. She is afraid of being targeted by Jew haters. Just as afraid as any black person is of being pulled over by a white cop. This ethnic studies curriculum as it stands gives teachers rein to teach ethnic studies in a way that promotes ethnic hatred against Jews.

This curriculum.violates its own stated principle of presenting multiple.points of view. Please fix this! Among the objectors to this curriculum are likely to be many organizations such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Museum of Tolerance who could help ensure that this curriculum does not promote antisemitism, and rather addresses it as an important ethnic hatred that occurred in this country and continues today.

Haya R Rubin

UCLA alumna

Mother of graduate of California elementary middle and high schools in Mountain View Los Altos and Palo Alto Unified school districts.