

From: Heidi Morein

Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 11:17 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] BDS inclusion into ethnic studies

Dear Decision Makers for California Education,

As an educator, therapist, parent and daughter (at least), I must object to the promotion of BDS in any formalized curriculum tied to state education requirements. Here is my reasoning:

1. Whatever monies are dedicated to this, the lack of understanding of the Holocaust, its denial, its ahistorical positioning as something to take a swing at, is the most serious and frightening trend. Such educational programming with both depth and breadth must be placed in first order of importance AHEAD of anything else. Period.

2. What follows from teaching the history of holocaust and properly contextualizing it is the creation of Isreal as a construct created less by the Jews than perhaps by the British and Egyptians after the Second World War. This provides a chance to emphasize the kinds of legacies you get with colonial impulse or abandonment (Haiti is another case study, albeit a variation of more dire proportions).

3. While it's delightful to assume an orientation towards Jews and/or Israel which is positive or at the very least open and without prejudice on the part of teachers implementing such a program, it's not a given. After all, the class action suit against Waldorf Schools failed in your the most liberal circuit; and that programming is predicated upon the belief that Jews are an inferior race.

4. I would be hesitant to foreground BDS because that's rather like Including intelligent design along with evolution: the meta-message is to put a dent into evolutionary theory which may derail its understanding completely or interfere with it at least.

5. BDS as a political movement arises out of a willful ignorance of the Israeli economy vis a vis exports as well as an ahistorical and inflammatory conflation of South African oppression and the State of Israel: Not comparable.

6. BDS is a political movement worth debating which is not the same as elevating it along with historical fact or critical interpretation and ****teaching it.****

7. The real effect of BDS has been to create a haven for anti-Jewish sentiment which does not make fine distinctions between Israel as a state, its current government, Israeli economy, its history, and the acknowledgement not only of the holocaust but of the tiny proportion of Jews in the world: 4 for every 1,000 people.

8. I urge creative materials to spur discussion such as Michael Chabon's "The Yiddish Policeman's Union," which posits an alternate world in which Alaska becomes the dedicated land.

9. Close family members of mine include current and former office holders, as well as citizens of your beautiful state: which must remain fully and sensitively inclusive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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