

From: Kymberlie V Schifrin

Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 9:26 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on the Revised Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Members of the Instructional Quality Commission,

After reviewing the ESMC draft, I urge you to reconsider Unit 6 - specifically the section regarding European Immigrants. You discuss Jewish and Irish immigrants in the same breath, with no mention of anti-semitism or any current data that shows the increase in antisemitic attacks or hate crimes. Antisemitic hate crimes have increased in the past few years, with a total of 2,107 antisemitic incidents across the United States in 2019. There were 1,879 incidents in 2018. (Source: <https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/antisemitic-incidents-hit-all-time-high-in-2019>)

It takes only a quick Google search to recognize that Jews are not identified by the average American as white (though many white Jews do benefit from white privilege). In 2018, the FBI identified that of religious-based hate crimes, Jews were the target of 57.8 percent. The next highest target group were Muslims with 14.5 percent of the total. Recent antisemitic events have taken place throughout the entire United States. Eleven people died in Pittsburgh's Tree of Life shooting in 2018. One person died in the Chabad of Poway shooting in April 2019. Another four died in New York and New Jersey in a shooting and stabbing a few weeks apart in December 2019. It's worth noting that the attacker in the Poway shooting was a graduate of a public California high school. (Source: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2018/topic-pages/incidents-and-offenses>)

I could not find any information on anti-Irish hate crimes in the United States. While anti-Irish sentiment may still exist in this country, it is not significant enough to garner its own category in any database that I could find.

Additionally, this section on ethnic studies omits large swaths of the Jewish population. There are entire communities of Black Jews, Arab Jews, and Hispanic Jews. The senior rabbi at New York City's Central Synagogue, for example, is a Korean Jew. There are many other examples of Latinx and Black rabbis in California and across this country. Omitting the experience of these Jews by equating all Jewish Americans as white negates the experience of those who do not fit into the stereotypical white mold. Failing to mention the existence of these groups (and equating Jews to a single color and/or ethnicity) is another example of curriculum violence. Curriculum violence not only exists as a form of racial trauma, but can also be perpetuated by leaving histories out of the curriculum or teaching in ways that are irresponsible. You can read further on this at Teaching Tolerance: <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2020/ending-curriculum-violence#:~:text=Two%20Black%20scholars%2C%20Erhabor%20Ighodaro,well%2Dbeing%20of%20learners.%E2%80%9D/>.

As a parent of children in California's public school system, and as an education and data analysis professional, I am saddened to see that California is putting forth a curriculum that has either not been vetted, or has simply ignored the recommendations of those best positioned to comment. The structure of this proposed curriculum suggests either

malice or lack of education on the part of its authors. While I applaud the efforts to put together a curriculum that recognizes the unique experiences of different peoples in the United States - the one I see here ignores important nuance on this and many other topics. I urge you to reconsider what you have included in Unit 6, to make changes that acknowledge the unique experience of Jews in this country, and to review the entire curriculum for bias and irresponsible teaching.

Sincerely,

Kymerlie Schifrin