

From: Meyer Shwarzstein
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:11 PM
To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Including Jews - I know it's complicated

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing to comment on the question of whether or not to include Jews in the new educational requirements and how.

The Jewish story is complicated and oft misunderstood. Here are a few facts about my family which portrays some of this complexity.

My father's father was born in Jerusalem in 1895 to a family that lived there for generations. He was living there since well before Zionism. Indeed, in the 19th Century, Jerusalem's majority was Jewish.

My mother was a Holocaust survivor who lost all of her family in what was once Poland. She compiled a history of her town which includes many memoirs. She was a survivor of what is now known as the Holocaust by Bullets.

My cousin was killed at the World Trade Center on 9/11.

I am a white-skinned entertainment executive who has been a victim of anti-semitism. I am not hated because of what I believe - it is because of my lineage. Anti-Semitism is a form of racism practiced and nurtured for thousands of years.

I'm not arguing that others have been victimized more or less. Indeed, my family history has made me doubly sensitive about the weaponization of the deadly hatred inflicted upon black and brown people.

I'm not asking for "special treatment".

I'm suggesting that Jews deserve a patch on the ethnic quilt which *is* America and that our patch ought not be stigmatized using any language which may reinforce a negative stereotype. That would only fuel a fire which, once started, may be impossible to put out.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Meyer Shwarzstein