

To; The California Dept of Education

From: Irving Jacoby, MD  
Emeritus Professor of Emergency Medicine  
University of CA San Diego School of Medicine  
200 West Arbor Drive, MC #8676  
San Diego, CA 92103-8676

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RE: Ethnic Studies Curriculum Draft;

I write this letter to express my surprise and opposition to the Ethnic Studies Curriculum being considered for distribution and promulgation in state schools. It is absolutely one sided, demonstrably anti-Semitic, with additional distortions of history, filled with gross inaccuracies. Comments relate to specific pages and lines in Chapter 2.

I wish to protest the inclusion of the BDS Movement in the list of "Potential Social Movements (Page 35, Line 684), and subsequent one-sided discussion of this co-opted organization. I question why the Zionist movement was not included as a prime, leading social liberation movement to reject the powers of Colonialism in having displaced the Jewish people from their homeland, and work to have the Jewish people return to their homeland, made more important following the enormity of the Holocaust. The authors state on Page 1, Lines 20-22: "The purpose for the inclusion of these two course models, in addition to the other stand-alone courses, is a direct response to specific concerns of representation by Arab American and Pacific Islander communities." I hereby express my specific concerns of lack of representation by the Jewish community.

Allow me to elaborate on the serious issues in the curriculum related to the BDS Movement.

First, the Introduction of the Curriculum states specifically that "the implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers . . . to enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the elimination of bigotry, hate and racism." Despite this goal, the curriculum document does not mention the greatest example of bigotry, hate and racism even perpetrated in the history of mankind... the Holocaust activities that evolved from a millennium of anti-Jewish laws, bigotry and hate. With ignorance about the Holocaust well-demonstrated among millennials, this curriculum is severely limited and misses the greatest example of the outcome of racism and hatred.

Anti-Semitism is certainly a growing problem once again, for inscrutable reasons, but cannot be glossed over. Misrepresentations of the Jewish people's beliefs, practices, and roles in society have been misrepresented for hundreds of years. In this document, the following are actual examples of anti-Semitic tropes that merit being condemned rather than being taught to students of all ages:

1) Chapter 2, page 256, Lines 5477-5494; and pages 264-270, Lines 5692 – 5830: These entries encourage teachers to use an anti-Israel poem which imputes that Jews control the media and use it to manipulate the public. This is an old, well-known, common anti-Semitic slur of Jews. There has never been any evidence that this is true, and is a recognized example of bigoted discrimination. This has no place in a curriculum on ethnic studies.

2) Chapter 2, page 242, Lines 5157-5161: This section depicts the Arab narrative of the 1948 War for Independence, but the opposing narrative of the Jewish majority is not shared, making this a politically one-sided description. It is well known historically that following the Declaration of Independence that renamed Palestine Israel, the President of the United States, Harry Truman, recognized the new State of Israel immediately, and the state was simultaneously invaded by 5 Arab nations. Prior to that, the term "Palestinian" referred to a resident of Palestine, which included Jews, Arabs, Christians, Armenians and others, and in itself did not indicate nationality. Since this is such a political controversy, having a one-sided curriculum makes this a highly politicized document and should not be approved for general dissemination. My own uncle lived in Palestine, as a Jew, although he was sentenced to jail for drawing an anti-Ottoman Empire cartoon, and was subsequently ejected from the state.

3) Chapter 2, Page 234, Lines 4956-4958: This section attempts to encourage teachers to glorify and highlight the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement), and a pro-BDS Group called Direct Action for Palestine, but does not give equal time to voices or groups critical of their perspectives. It should be noted that the BDS movement has been linked on many occasions to Hamas and militant terrorist organizations, and I encourage those involved in making decisions about this curriculum to review the well-referenced article in Wikipedia [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott,_Divestment_and_Sanctions)] about the BDS movement, which offers both views of the issue, includes more references, and which makes it a better document than the proposed curriculum. Further recognition should be made of the fact that Jonathan Schanzer, a former terrorism finance analyst for the US Treasury Department, testified before the US House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-proliferation and Trade, that "in the case of 3 organizations that were designated, shut down or held civilly liable for providing material support to the terrorist organization Hamas, a significant contingent of their former leadership appears to have pivoted to leadership positions within the American BDS campaign." (Reference Schanzer, Jonathan (19 April 2016). "[Israel Imperiled: Threats to the Jewish State](#)" (PDF). U.S. House of Representatives Document Repository.)

Approval of this curriculum would appear to make the California Educational system a de facto supporter of Hamas, a known terrorist organization. Multiple states have passed legislation forbidding companies from complying with the Boycott advocated by the BDS movement, which in fact HURTS Arabs living in Israel in the areas of Judea and Samaria, because they lose their jobs with Israeli companies employing them.. (Reference: <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Palestinian-employees-hurt-by-BDS-speak-up-about-its-negative-effects-560511>). Advocacy for the BDS Movement can only be interpreted as an attempt by the Arab Block to de-legitimize an independent country.

Page 52, Lines 1058-1067. The curriculum pretends to provide the reason that many African American families lost their homes during the 2008 economic crash as being due to the Federal housing Administrations's refusal to underwrite loans for African Americans looking to purchase property in white neighborhoods, when it has been widely known that the number of housing loans made to all Americans were based on the demands of the Left -wing activists who began accusing banks of racism and redlining because blacks were being denied mortgages at higher rates than suburban whites. The pressure to make loans to minorities (Those with poor credit ratings) became relentless, resulting in the Community Reinvestment Act "empowering regulators to punish banks that failed to meet the needs of 'low income, minority and distressed neighborhoods.'" Thus banks and the 2 government – chartered mortgage finance companies encouraged such "sub-prime" lending to enable high-risk borrowers to purchase houses beyond their means." [See [http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2008/09/28/franks\\_fingerprints\\_are\\_all\\_over\\_the\\_financial\\_fiasco/](http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/09/28/franks_fingerprints_are_all_over_the_financial_fiasco/)]. Rewriting the history of the housing bubble serves no one in particular other than the left-wing activists who need to project blame on others for their charges of

racism when there was a distinct difference in the credit of those in different socio-economic groups, which were reflected by lower ability for loan qualifications for many reasons in the black communities, not due to flagrant racism.

Page 63, Lines 1333-1339. This is another significant issue with this highly marginalized, left wing political curriculum: Advocating for projects such as ...organizing a direct action (e.g. a sit-in, a die-in, a march...). The authors do not define what a “die-in” is. I certainly do not know. As an Emergency Medicine physician, I can’t see any redeeming values to such an activity. But with the numerous episodes of school violence occurring in our schools currently, how will that be interpreted by a marginalized student who might be a victim of bullying? Is this permission to be the vector for a “die-in”? If this encourages just one student to start shooting in a school, and offer the justification that a “die-in” is permissible for ethnic studies reasons, will the State Board of Education take responsibility for incitement to violence? How could this possibly belong in a school curriculum/ Unfortunately the list of important “potential significant figures” listed in lines 986 to 1001 includes such “heroes” as Lolita Lebron, convicted of attempted murder in a group assault that wounded 5 congressmen; Oscar Lopez Rivera, a member of a paramilitary group that carried out 130 bomb attacks, as a Puerto Rican Nationalist, and convicted cop-killers Mumia Abu Jamal and Assata Shakur. This is an outrageous attempt to promote violence in the name of “ethnic studies,” which has gone too far in this document to be broadly acceptable. So far I have seen no guidance for peaceful as opposed to non-peaceful demonstrations in any of the curriculum recommendations.

Page 118, 2<sup>nd</sup> box. The first characterization (“ Interpersonal racism is what white people do to people of color up close—the racist jokes, the stereotypes, the beatings and harassment, the threats, the whole range of personal acts of discrimination.”) is not something I as a white person do . This characterization of interpersonal relationships violates the issue of blaming an entire group for the actions of individuals of that group. It is a perfect example of racism. I take offense at this characterization. It does not say interpersonal racism is what SOME white people may do, or that some non-white people do to other people of other non-white color. It is a blanket statement and is simply wrong and offensive to all peoples. This cannot be something that is taught to our students, of any color. If there is even only one white person who is not guilty of interpersonal racism, that statement is false.

Similarly, the comment is made that “interpersonal sexism is what men do to women—the sexual abuse/harassment, the violence directed at women, the sexist jokes, ignoring or minimizing of women’s thinking, etc.” This is blatantly wrong because not all men do this to women, and is therefore also a false statement. Authors of this section are truly in need of counseling.

Finally in this same box, the authors write “Many people in each dominant group are not consciously oppressive. They have internalized the negative messages about other groups, and consider their attitudes towards other groups quite normal.” This again is an extremely insensitive and biased statement. In fact the statement actually applies to the authors of this document, who have internalized negative messages about whites and men, most apparent from the aforementioned 2 statements. Even in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it was acknowledged that people accuse others of things that they are guilty of themselves, and these 3 statements point the finger at the authors of these statements for having serious guilt about their feelings towards Caucasians.

Pages 137-139, Lines 2910 – 220; and Pages 140-142 , Lines 2921-2933. In the Discussion regarding Sanctuary Cities, it is interesting how there are some “sample reasons” given for the “For Sanctuary

Cities” position, but there are no sample reasons for the “Against Sanctuary Cities” position. This clearly shows the bias of the authors towards Sanctuary Cities and makes this less of a “curriculum” and more of a “political indoctrination” document. There certainly are arguments against sanctuary cities ( Violates federal law, decreases respect for laws in general, makes it easier to justify breaking laws in general; encourages both illegal immigration and illegal trafficking. After only giving examples of one side the students are then asked to debate the issues. In a balanced course, both sides should receive equal time. Overcoming the bias of this one-sided introduction is beyond what can be expected by high school students.

Page 275, Lines 5926-27. Is a link to a map of Arab countries, but it leaves out South Sudan.

Page 276, Lines 593-32. Link does not work.

Grammatical errors: Page 21, Line 428. The incorrect homonym is used. Change “...branch out and bare (naked?) fruit....” to “...branch out and bear fruit...” (meaning “produce” fruit).

Page 23, Line 458: Statement reads “...relationships between people...” should be changed to “...relationships among people..” because there are multiple possibilities of relationships (plural), hence “among “ is the correct word to use when talking about 3 or more people.

Page 40, Line 772: Change the word “an” to “is.” Once you read the sentence with the article changed to a verb, you will see why.

In Summary, this is a deeply flawed attempt by extreme left wing advocates to intercalate various historically inaccurate positions, including the anti-Semitic excesses of the left wing, into high school education in the State of California, under the guise of Ethnic Studies, and should be rejected as a required mandate by the California Dept of Education.