

From: Teri Tracht
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:11 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Curriculum and Text

January 21, 2021

Dear California Department of Education-Ethnic Studies,

As a teacher of nearly 35 years, I need to voice my concern on Sample Lessons 40-41 pertaining to Jewish America and your proposed curriculum for Ethnic Studies. I have read through your text and it is excellent except for the one statement regarding the Jewish Community in sample lesson 41 and the statement is pertaining to Jewish people. "By examining how Jews....sometimes have experienced conditional whiteness and privilege....." This statement clearly mirrors the term "white privilege" which pertains to people of all faiths.

The problem with the inclusion of this statement is that it may provide fuel to those that are looking to separate, dehumanize, abuse and murder Jews. As your lesson summarizes, Jews have experienced hatred, abuse, dehumanization, separation, torture and murder routinely over the past 3000 years. This all culminated in the Nazi Holocaust. As your lesson also summarizes, the excuse given for this routine mayhem changes with the times and as history reveals, every century has seen a different excuse to abuse and murder Jews.

From my experience as a teacher and as a Jew, I fear the noted statement will become just another excuse to harm a group of people based on inflammatory language and poses the question of why language like this was included in your text pertaining only to Judaism as it clearly excludes other religions such as Christianity. Please know this is genuine issue and it is my obligation as a teacher and a Jew to bring your attention to a very real issue. Kindly exclude this statement so teachers can utilize your text to truly educate students in the area of Ethnic Studies.

Sincerely,
Teri-Lee Tracht-MA Communicative Disorders-Deaf and Hard of Hearing