

From: Lori Kalika

Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2019 4:23 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: Comments

I could certainly write a longer commentary but will limit my comments to reflect my concern that this draft curriculum does a disservice by singling out four groups of people of color as the focus of ethnic studies. From my own experience as a Caucasian born to Dust Bowl Era “refugees” to California (think Grapes of wrath) we experienced the stigma of being Oakies, farmworkers and outsiders. My great grandparents hailed from France and Germany, Beginning lives in the US, and our family heritage is filled with stories of how they struggled, adapted and ultimately contributed to our generation’s success. My husband is a refugee (now a citizen) of the former USSR. Our children are half Russian. Their father, at age 19, began his life here with parents that had less than \$2,000 to their name. They spoke no English. Their struggles were real and my children, though Caucasian, certainly relate to issues surrounding their ethnicity. By not acknowledging the ethnicity of all individuals, we risk mitigating the experiences of many in our culture that have valuable stories to tell. By teaching children to assume only those with noticeable differences in their race have valuable, interesting or difficult stories to tell, we risk alienating these students. As one of the only Caucasian students in an Asian Studies course at UC Davis, my daughter relates how devalued she felt when many 4th and 5th generation Asians relayed how they were judged, all the while never recognizing nor asking her to share her family story.

I know you have received feedback from the Jewish community. I think they have a similar concern.

Let's teach children that everyone has a heritage that makes them who they are. Let them share all their stories if you want to teach respect for everyone, decrease defensiveness and racial/ethnic tensions in society.

Thank you for considering this input. I would write more but tomorrow will bury my Russian Jewish mother-in-law. We hope to honor her culture and the contribution her sacrifice made to our family.

Sent from my iPhone