

From: Michael Di Girolamo

Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 12:17 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] ESMC Suggestion: Italian American Internment

Hello,

I am writing you today to offer a mild suggestion for the state of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). I believe that the Instructional Quality Commission should strongly consider including curriculum on the history of Italian Americans in California, especially in light of the state's internment of Italian Americans during World War II. In 2010, the California Legislature passed a resolution apologizing for the mistreatment of Italian Americans during World War II, but unfortunately I have met very few people who are aware Italian Americans were once interned largely on the basis of their ethnicity alone. In fact, I never learned of the Italian American internment or other civil rights violations (such as the 1891 New Orleans lynchings of 11 Italian American, which some sources list as the largest mass lynching in U.S. history) in school, and I strongly wish people were more aware of what happened to better contextualize issues facing minority groups today. I have provided a link to the California Legislature's apology below.

California Legislature's apology to Italian Americans mistreated during World War II:

[SCR 95 Senate Concurrent Resolution - Bill Analysis \(ca.gov\)](#)

I am asking the IQC to consider including the history of Italian Americans because I believe the Italian American experience strongly intersects with the core disciplines of ethnic studies, as well as because it will provide further nuance in understanding the roles race, ethnicity, religion, and culture have shaped human rights and civil liberties in the U.S. While I am not a California resident, I know that California's ethnic studies curriculum will provide a model for my home state of Kentucky if and when we decide to implement similar curriculum here. As such, I would very much appreciate if you consider implementing a lesson on the Italian American Internment and the greater Italian American experience in California and the United States to not only shed light to one of the lesser known stains on American history, but also to help us better understand inequality in the U.S. today.

Thank you so much,
Michael Di Girolamo