

From: Ken Firestein

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 8:59 AM

To: Ethnic Studies -

Subject: a bit more comments on Ethnic Studies curriculum

To whom it may concern,

While I understand islamophobic has a place in a study of various groups and their concerns the inclusion of the issues surrounding the Middle East - read: Palestinians and their issues... is NOT an ethnic studies concern but a world history issue. I don't think Palestinians are singled out in the US as an ethnic group.

On the other hand Jews have been singled out in this country and state as an ethnic minority group and anti-semitism is as much, if not more, an issue then islamophobia, Anti-semitism has been an issue and is and unfortunately looks like it will be an issue. In fact the ignoring of anti-semitism and the highlighting of issues about Palestinians is considered by many as anti-semitism hiding behind anti-Israel sentiments.

Finally, consider that while some people may view Jews as privileged that view is mixed, insanely, with a continuum of ideas that on one side presents Jews as powerless and animal and primitive while on the other side as people who are smarter and wealthier and more powerful. Hate for Jews goes both ways and anti-semitic beliefs and actions pick and choose what they want to base horrific actions and thoughts.

Please do not ignore or even minimize anti-semitism and the Jewish people!

Ken Firestein

Below is my previous note:

To whom it may concern,

I have read emails and news reports about the draft ethnic studies plan and as a Jew I am very concerned about missing content in that plan during these times when statistics show acts of anti-semitism are on the rise and the news has terrifying instances of mass shootings directed as hate crimes against Jews. Jews ARE A MINORITY and we are often viewed as an ethnic minority AND OUR STORY IS SIGNIFICANT.

Our story is one of several groups being immigrants to this country to escape oppression in Europe. This is similar to people seeking asylum today. Our story also

begins way back in Biblical times with the Exodus from Egypt when we as immigrants in Egypt sought freedom from slavery and were expelled into the desert!

There is much to the stories of Jews throughout the world and throughout history from Biblical times to the Spanish Inquisition to Russian pogroms to the Holocaust and today the anti-semitic and anti-Israel energies directed against the Jewish minority of the United States of America and the world!

While the draft ethnic studies program seems to limit itself to experiences in the United States there are many, many groups who have been oppressed. It is not only, as apparently stated in the draft. people of color. Jews, Italians, and Irish immigrants come quickly to my mind. Oppressions of OUTSIDERS especially when they are a minority is too often what happens. Stuff happens to a rainbow of peoples.

The Draft needs to fully address context and all issues while remembering the US does not live in a vacuum nor has it the length of its own historical examples available for consideration, understanding, and reconciliations.

I fear the current version is an example of a lack of a broad geographical and temporal perspective. It may be an error due to the view that what is fairly recent and in the news with support groups looking for political advantages is most significant. I suggest a correction. In these times of terrible population displacements - forced and voluntary immigration and emigration on our whole Planet of all kinds of people the view of an ethnic studies program needs a very broad view of the issues to make itself understood and believable and helpful.