

**From:** Adam Leiter

**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2021 8:40 AM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

It is my understanding that today is the last day to comment of the proposed curriculum.

I am commenting on Sample Lessons 40 and 41, pertaining to Jewish Americans.

First - clearly an immense amount of work has gone into this program. Thank you for the very hard work on our behalf and for the ongoing attempt and accomplishment of such a huge complicated task.

Regarding Sample Lessons 40 and 41, there seems to be a genuine balanced approach taken in much of the lessons to describe the very diverse background and experiences of the Jewish community.

However, the inclusion of the statement in sample lesson 41, “By examining how Jews....sometimes have experienced conditional whiteness and privilege.....” is problematic.

I'll try to jump directly to the problem. As your lessons summarize, Jews have experienced hatred, abuse, delegitimization, dehumanization, separation, torture and murder routinely over the past 3000 years. This all culminated in the Nazi Holocaust just a mere 70 to 75 years ago. As your lessons also summarize, the excuse given for this routine mayhem have changed over time. One thing is certain, every century has seen a different excuse to abuse and murder Jews.

The problem is the inclusion of the text saying that Jews have “sometimes experienced conditional whiteness and privilege” will provide a new excuse to those that are looking for one to separate, dehumanize, abuse and murder Jews.

Nothing in your lessons given to teachers and students, should ever be able to be used as a pretext or excuse to harm anyone, to harm any group. Your text is supposed to educate to reduce or eliminate hatred and violence.

As a 58-year old Jew, I can guarantee you that the individuals and groups looking for another excuse to harm Jews will find one in your description of Jews “sometimes experiencing privilege”.

This now begs the question, what is the purpose of including this language? What will be gained by it in terms of your an attempt/goal to educate to reduce hatred and violence?

There doesn't seem to be any positive reason to include this language. Your are accomplishing the same thing every Jew hater has ever attempted to accomplish, you are separating Jews out and away from others. You are dehumanizing and delegitimizing Jews, once again.

Hopefully my letter will be read and considered. You guys have done an incredible job. Hopefully you will take my comments as genuine and an attempt to help. It's very easy to comment and criticize. I am not attempting to criticize. I am attempting to bring your attention to a very real issue in your lessons so an adjustment can be made that will help accomplish the overall goal. Giving anyone a new excuse to separate out Jews from the rest of the human race is not a good thing. 3000 years of separation and murder attest to the truth of my letter to you.

Thank you.

Adam Leiter