

Knowing Critical Race Theory When You See It and Fighting It When You Can

Critical race theory (CRT) is an academic discipline founded by law professors who used Marxist analysis to conclude that racial dominance by whites created “systemic racism.” Critical race theorists have been dominant in colleges and universities for years, but their impact on public policy was limited until recently. The precepts of CRT have now burst outside the universities, affecting K-12 schools, workplaces, state and federal governments, and even the military. This has sparked resistance from Americans who refuse to have their children indoctrinated or to submit to race-based workplace harassment.

As a new tactic against this grassroots opposition, CRT’s defenders now deny that the curricula and training programs in question form part of CRT, insisting that the “diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)” programs of trainers such as Ibram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo are distinct from the academic work of professors such as Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, and other CRT architects. While there are many different CRT variations, there are bedrock features that are common to all its theorists and practitioners.

HOW TO IDENTIFY CRT

1. Systemic Racism: Critical race theory’s key assertion is that racism is not the result of individual, conscious racist actions or thoughts. Racism is “systemic” and “structural.” It is embedded in America’s legal system, institutions, and free enterprise system, and imposes “whiteness” as the societal norm. The system, including capitalism, is “rigged” to reward white behavior and preserve white supremacy. Curricula and training sessions that teach that racism is systemic and structural, and demand that Americans work to dismantle laws, traditions, norms, institutions, and free-market enterprise—the entire American system itself—are part of CRT.

CRT AT WORK:

“It’s important to try to help youth understand how bias and oppression are institutional, structural and systemic, and not simply interpersonal,” asserts Dorinda Carter Andrews, chairperson of the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University.

2. Race Drives Beliefs and Behaviors: Critical race theorists assert that American culture is a conspiracy to perpetuate white supremacy by

imposing white concepts on people of other races. Thus, members of minority groups must retain their cultural habits and never adopt standard practices or norms, no matter how neutral. Curricula or DEI programs that separate individuals by race, or teach that concepts such as being on time, hard work, literacy, etc., are products of white values, and therefore must be rejected by minorities, are part of CRT.

CRT AT WORK:

“[M]any Latinos naturally view information about time more generally and simply cannot see the judicial system’s need for specificity and exactitude,” says Maria Ontiveros in “Critical Race Feminism.” (p. 223).

3. White Privilege: Because of the above, critical race theory says that white people are born with unearned privilege that other Americans are denied. This produces a “whiteness premium” that prevents working-class whites from working with working-class blacks to change the economic system. Reflecting its Marxist origins, CRT asserts that to achieve the unification of the working class, whites must recognize their white privilege and renounce it. Any curricula or DEI program that compels students or employees

to accept their white privilege and/or work to abandon it, are part of CRT.

CRT AT WORK:

As Derrick Bell writes in “Race, Racism and American Law,” segregation “represented an economic-political compromise between the elite and working-class whites [that] gave to the poor the sense of superiority, while retaining the substance for the rich.”

4. The System Won't Allow Non-Whites to

Succeed: Critical race theory teaches that whites have rigged the system, so the criteria used to measure merit and success in school or the workplace are not objective, but are designed to keep white individuals on top. Hiring metrics and workplace benchmarks, such as punctuality and logical thinking, need to be eliminated if non-whites are to succeed. Any curriculum or training program that says color blindness is a myth and advocates for eliminating standard measurements of success, including standardized testing for university admissions for reasons of racial equity, are part of CRT.

CRT AT WORK:

“In short, merit serves as the phony pennant of color-blindness, used as justification for opposition to affirmative action,” claims Derrick Bell in “Popular Democracy.”

5. Equity Replaces Equality: “Equity” sounds like “equality”, but under critical race theory, it has become its functional opposite. “Equality” means equal treatment of all Americans under the law. CRT’s “equity” demands race-based discrimination. Because systemic racism has produced disparities between the races and because the system will only deepen these disparities by rewarding the “wrong” criteria, government must treat individual Americans unequally according to skin color to forcibly produce equal outcomes. Advocating equity over equality is part of CRT.

CRT AT WORK:

“Equitable treatment means we all end up in the same place,” said Vice President Kamala Harris.

HOW TO STOP CRT

- 1. Find out what your schools teach.** Submit a FOIA request to gain access to public documents, including school board and school district materials. If requested, the government is required to hand over the records via “open records laws” and “sunshine laws.” Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3zclRtZ>
- 2. Speak to your child's teacher and principal** and share with them Heritage's analysis (heritage.org/critical-race-theory) showing that treating students in the manners described above violates several statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 14th Amendment.
- 3. Engage with your local school board.** More than 14,000 school boards and 100,000 school board members across the country determine the shape and content of curriculum in their school districts, holding the key to how these various issues are addressed in American classrooms.
 - Identify local school board meetings to attend throughout the year (these typically occur monthly during the school year).
 - Stay abreast of board activities by reading meeting minutes (usually posted online after the meeting).
 - Locate school district budget documents and draft questions about spending on CRT/DEI-related activities, training, and personnel.
 - Look up the local school board's mission statement and become familiar with assigned textbooks.
 - Become involved in the school's Parent Teacher Association/Organization (PTA/PTO).
 - Set up a parent group on Facebook or other social media for families in the local school community.
- 4. Become a whistleblower.** You can submit documentation of CRT training at your school or workplace to Parents Defending Education (defendinged.org), activist Christopher Rufo (christopherrufo.com), or The Daily Signal (comments@dailysignal.com).