

CRITICAL RACE THEORY - USA WATCH “DEBRIEF” [10-8-20]

Why Are We Talking About This?

- Sept. 4, 2020, President Trump directed the Office of Management & Budget to identify any Critical Race Theory (CRT) and white privilege training within their departmental training plans. Said the memo: the mission is to stop funding any and all programming that suggests the *“United States is an inherently racist or evil country or that any race or ethnicity is inherently racist or evil.”*
- Sept. 20, 2020, President Trump issued an executive order banning federal contractors from conducting *“racial sensitivity training”*;
- Sept. 17, 2020, Pres. Trump Speech at National Archives - *“students in our universities are inundated with CRT, this is a Marxist doctrine holding that America is a wicked and racist nation; that even young people and children are complicit in oppression, and that our entire society must be radically transformed. Critical theory is being forced into our children’s schools, it’s being imposed into workplace training, and it’s being deployed to rip apart friends, neighbors and families.”*
- Sept. 29, 2020 Chris Wallace questioned Pres. Trump regarding CRT in the first Trump-Biden debate at Case-Western..

Response:

- From the American Association of University Professors: released a statement that called on faculty and administrators to *“condemn this ban”* on CRT
- Reporting on Trump & CRT, generally: *Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Time, Vox, The Boston Globe, NBC News, others.*
- Time magazine: *“The influence of CRT on academic thought in the last few decades has been so thorough, many say, that it would be effectively impossible to stop its use.”*

What is “Critical Race Theory (CRT)?”

It is a vast subject, and this is a very abbreviated summary.

It is an intellectual movement started by black legal scholars in the early 1970s as a way to examine how laws and systems uphold and perpetuate inequality. As one of its founding proponents explained: *“[CRT] recognizes that racism is endemic to American*

life.... We ask how traditional interests and values...federalism, privacy and property interests...serve as vessels of racial subordination. [CRT] expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of objectivity, neutrality, color-blindness, and meritocracy."

CRT has several core principals:

- 1. CRT Believes Racism is Mainstream** - Racism is ordinary, not aberrational. It is systemic. CRT says racism permeates every aspect of life: housing, education, work, criminal justice system, etc. It affects all relationships and all interactions
- 2. CRT Believes in "Interest Convergence"** - white people only give opportunities and freedoms to black people when it is in the interest of white people.
- 3. CRT Believes That So-called "Free Societies" Perpetuate Inequities** - although many liberals believe in "color-blindness" and neutral principles of constitutional law, CRT says that the ideals of personal/individual autonomy and freedom obscure larger structural systems of inequality. As one writer says: *"a free society fools people into believing they have more freedom of choice than societal structures actually allow."*

In other words, the notion of a *"free society"* is a conspiracy theory that keeps minorities suppressed.

- 4. CRT Believes science, reason and evidence are a "white" way of knowing, whereas "storytelling" and lived experience is a "black" alternative.**

CRT believes power and politics of cultural groups infects science because science and reason was predominantly produced by white, western men. Therefore, according to CRT, it is used to maintain and perpetuate white dominance.

Whereas science believes in objectivity. CRT calls that ideal an *"oppressive myth."* Proponents question whether *"objectivity is desirable or even possible."* Knowledge is instead *"reflective of the values and interests of those who produce it."*

vs.

Critical race theorists say that storytelling about their *"lived experience"* is the primary mode by which black people and CRT produce and advance knowledge. They insist on the *"recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color...For this reason we use personal histories, parables, chronicles, dreams, stories, poetry, fiction and revisionist history."*

5. CRT Believes All Alternatives (including the principal of color-blindness) Are Forms of Racism

CRT opposes the common-sense idea that race becomes less socially relevant and diminished when race is not the focus all the time. *“Color-blindness,”* they claim, can only remedy the most blatant forms of racism. Being too colorblind causes people to not see racism at all (Called: *“racism-blindness”*).

CRT says racism needs to be made relevant in every situation where racism is present. This means you need to focus on “hidden racism” at work, school, society, church, community, friends and relationships, all the time.

CRT is very different from the Civil Rights Movement and the words and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King.

6. Anyone Who Disagrees with CRT is a Racist (even if the person is black)

Robin DiAngelo (author of *White Fragility*) says white people enjoy *“white comfort”* and therefore suffer *“white fragility”* that prevents them from confronting their racism through Critical Race Theory.

Alison Bailey claims that when racially privileged people disagree with Critical Race Theory, they are engaging in a *“defensive move”* called *“privilege-preserving epistemic pushback.”*

7. CRT Marginalizes the African American Christian Tradition

CRT neglects Christian tradition and has *“developed arguments that are incompatible with the deeply religious normative frameworks that many African-Americans bring to bear on issues of law and justice.”*

The modern Civil Rights movement was fundamentally a religious movement that was born in the black church.

Why It is Critical to Understand Critical Race Theory?

1. George Floyd, Breanna Taylor, Jacob Blake, Daniel Prude

For CRT purposes, these tragic incidents are stories that define the narrative that black persons (men in particular) are subject to systemic racism in policing. That, in turn, drives the push for defunding of police and gutting criminal justice institutions.

At the same time, CRT proponents completely disregard the cumulative statistical evidence showing that black persons are not disproportionately the victims of police overreach or abuse (i.e. there is no systemic racism in policing).

These tragic incidents/stories are leveraged inappropriately by CRT theorists. Instead of just seeking justice for the individual incidents, they make the absurd claim that entire departments and institutions of justice need to be discarded. This is true even when race has no facially apparent role in the incident (e.g. Brianna Taylor).

2. **As President Trump said, the Reach of CRT is Pervasive**

Students. My wife and I minister to Christian students at Cornell University and Ithaca College. The vast majority of these Christian students (85-90% estimate) have already accepted the major tenets and principles of CRT. They have been exposed to it repeatedly in their education and the colleges they attend now reinforce the dogma.

Issues like this are sensitive subjects, especially with students of color. Bringing up these issues (and politics, generally) creates a source of tension and disconnect that can impair our primary ministry which is to share the gospel and make disciples of Christ. The major campus fellowships never discuss these issues for fear of disrupting their primary mission.

Sadly, we have seen anecdotal evidence that some ministries are actually partnering with some CRT principles in the context of their ministries..

Workplaces - Workplaces of all varieties are training employees in the principles of CRT. It is pervasive, and one of the reasons for why the President took steps to prevent the same via executive order (to the extent of his authority).

Since the trainings are often mandatory, there is no ability to “opt-out.” In addition, not adhering to a “politically or “CRT-correct” response is deemed evidence of “*racism*” and “*sexism*.” As a practicing employment attorney, I have seen this firsthand.

What is the Spiritual Root of CRT?

- CRT attacks the rule of law and those who enforce it;
- CRT perverts and undermines the concept of “justice.”
- CRT sows division and discord.
- CRT undermines institutions rooted in Judeo Christian principles
- CRT aims to suppress the so-called oppressors

Spirit of lawlessness?

Antichrist spirit?

Victim Spirit (credit: Evelyn Wright)