

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

What It Is and How to Fight Back



Dr. James Lindsay

Friend,

What on earth is Critical Race Theory? How did it seem to come out of nowhere to threaten our nation's future?

Those questions are on so many Americans' minds these days. Here are some answers. They came from Dr. James Lindsay, in a talk he gave this May to a group of Leadership Institute supporters.

Dr. Lindsay sounded the alarm about Critical Race Theory before many of us had even heard of it. Now, it's urgent that more Americans learn the facts he shares, so we can organize to defeat this deadly threat.

With that in mind, I asked my staff to transcribe the highlights of Dr. Lindsay's speech to share with friends like you.

You simply must read this. It's absolutely terrifying.

Dr. Lindsay knows what he's talking about. He's an expert on postmodern theory and other radical academic disciplines that gave rise to Critical Race Theory.

Dr. Lindsay earned a great deal of attention in 2017, when he and two other professors submitted 20 fake papers to various scholarly journals for publication. They copied the ridiculous and illogical style of today's leftist jargon, to an intentionally nonsensical degree. Then several of their papers made it through the "rigorous" peer-review process and into publication!

Alas, with Critical Race Theory, such academic insanity now spreads rapidly to the rest of society. You and I must fight back to defend common sense and save our country.

Please read this eBook to learn the terrible truth about Critical Race Theory and join the fight to stop its spread in your own community. As Dr. Lindsay says, "If you take that leap of faith into fighting this stuff, the crowd is going to come up underneath you and catch you. It's ready to catch you and carry you. So don't be afraid to do it."

Cordially,

Morton C. Blackwell
President, Leadership Institute

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Critical Race Theory: What It Is and How to Fight Back

A very early message I want to plant in your head is that there is a tremendous amount of grassroots energy right now against Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory has become a recognized term. It's an idea that people understand as a problem, but they may not understand the details.

I'm going to try to help you understand a little bit more about Critical Race Theory so that you can be equipped to fight back. If you are interested in being activists or training activists to work in conservative causes and get involved in these local or even state or national elections in any regard, the energy around this right now is white hot.

The model we just saw take place in Texas is what you should look at. What very simply happened is you had parents and some other people who organized and got informed. You have to learn the basics of this stuff. Then they got organized and they showed up in a group and they literally took over a school board. The vote went 70 to 30 in their favor. So learning a little bit about it and getting organized and then just showing up is more important than you think it is.

These critical race theory activists usually like to operate in the quiet. They don't like people to see what they're doing. They actually want to do this as secretly and quietly as possible.

They show up – the world is being run right now by people who like to go to meetings. So if you become people who will go meetings too, all of a sudden those Critical Race Theorist activists will encounter opposition.

They don't have evidence. They don't have arguments. All they have is calling people names and flipping out. And if you actually show up, then it's very easy to start turning over at the bottom level at grassroots, like school boards, city commissions, county commissions, et cetera, to start flipping these things over and start pushing this stuff out. You do have to be willing to push it out, though.

You have to be willing to actually say, "No, we're not going to do this," and then weather the insane storm that's going to come. Get your talking points in order before you do because they're going to come back at you with, "Oh, you're limiting our first amendment rights."

No, you're not. The state doesn't have first amendment rights. You have to be able to answer that just like that. Individuals have first amendment rights to protect them from the impositions of the state. It's not the other way around.

The state doesn't have any right to say certain things to kids in schools. That right doesn't exist. The state is not granted a first amendment right. So you have to be able to very quickly come back with these things.

They'll say, "Oh, you know, academic freedom." And you have to be able to say, "Well, there's nothing prohibiting you from teaching Critical Race Theory. There's only something prohibiting you from teaching Critical Race Theory as uncontested fact without some alternative,

without other perspectives. Teach it as an academic theory, go right ahead.” They don't want to do that of course.

So there's actually a very easy thing to do. Get a little bit informed. I've tried to put out a lot of resources for it. Other people are doing it. Organize and show up. Another thing is that people are desperate. What I hear from people all the time is “I feel like I'm alone.” Start changing that.

If you are against this, you're actually in not just a majority and not even just in a super majority, but like a super, super majority. The overwhelming number of people hate this stuff. Overwhelming numbers of people do not like it, and every one of them feels like they're the only one.

So you start figuring out ways to build networks where everyday people in everyday life can figure out how to connect to one another. That's huge.

I'll tell you another example of something that people can do on the grassroots level.

Recently, one of the first states to try to pass a bill against this stuff in their schools was New Hampshire, and a woman took up the leadership role – we're at the Leadership Institute, so here you go.

All she did was organize people to show up to the zoom call in the different legislative committee meetings. All she did was make sure I got the email, “Hey, come speak, come testify. Hey, it's going to be at this time. Can you make it?”

“Hey, I liaised with the committee to make sure they know you're coming and that you're an important person.” Somebody who does that basic organizing stuff that makes it easy for people who do have the knowledge, who do have the willpower, who do have the skills to show, and do have the leadership to show up to things they wouldn't otherwise know are happening.

So people should get on the ground and figure out what's going on in these different state level or local level races, meetings, concerns. And how do we get people there who can make an impact? How do we organize and make sure that there's going to be 50 people to speak up on our behalf? How do we make sure that Governor Stitt in Oklahoma just received over a thousand emails in support of a similar bill that's on his desk now?

It takes people taking up that basic leadership role of organizing, doing that grunt work. People who do that are going to change the world. So that's a do-tank kind of activity that you can definitely lean into. And if you don't want to do any of that, you know what my Christian friends say, you have to lean into your gifts of spirit. So what are they? Do you connect well with people? Can you create?

I just went to a little meeting with these women that my wife's friends with. They meet once every two weeks to vent like a little support group for themselves. Can you do that? Can you have a potluck dinner at your house every two weeks for people you found at your church or in your community or at your kid's school, where you can get together and just kind of vent about this?

That's where organization starts happening. What can you do? Do you have money? Can you give it to somebody who's trying to take up the fight in a more public way than you feel comfortable doing. Can you offer words of support?

Can you dig up stories that people might dig into and get them to where people with more prominence, like in the friendly media like Tucker Carlson or someone who might start talking about them? All of those are things that people can do very easily.

Most importantly, though, I want people to come away understanding that a year ago, you were risking a lot to speak up against this. And right now, if you take that leap of faith into fighting this stuff, the crowd is going to come up underneath you and catch you. It's ready to catch you and carry you. So don't be afraid to do it either.

It is a strongly winning issue to try to address because people perceive Critical Race Theory as a problem. They perceive that Critical Race Theory is dangerous. They do not want it in their schools. They do not want their children being indoctrinated by it. They do not want it in their workplaces, if that can be arranged as well.

People are being force fed this, and they're very aware of it. So go forward thinking that this is a very important issue and that there's a lot of energy in taking it on.

First, I want to give you some sense of the breadth and depth of Critical Race Theory and its related subjects: queer studies, post-colonial theory, sexuality studies, fat studies, disability studies – I could go on.

One of *their* most prominent scholars, a woman named Judith Butler, referred to these things as “that exasperated et cetera,” where you have to try to name all of these different things. This huge umbrella of concepts that are similar to, but different from, Critical Race Theory is what I refer to as critical social justice.

You've probably heard that there's this movement that everybody's been pushing for: social justice. There are a lot of different domains in which that becomes relevant. Critical Race Theory is one, and it deals with race in a particular way. Let's call it the critical social justice way. To get academic and technical, it's called *critical constructivism*, which is a combination of critical theory, in other words Neo-Marxism, and postmodernism.

Constructivism refers to social or cultural constructivism, which is a postmodern idea dealing with how people think about knowledge and how society is organized around knowledge and discourse in the way that we use language, whereas *critical* is a particular means by which you analyze society.

Critical here is not the same critical as critical thinking. In fact, it's a perversion of that. It uses the same word on purpose.

That's another theme that we will run into a lot within the idea of critical theory. Critical theorists misuse words intentionally, with double meanings frequently, to try to move their ball.

Also, it's not just Critical Race Theory that's the issue.

You've probably seen a lot of the things that are going on with trans-activism. You've seen these bills to try to protect women's sports from transgender participants – biological males, participating in women's sports where they obviously have a gigantic, unfair advantage.

You've probably heard the discussion around whether or not children should be induced to have puberty blockers given to them as a standard course of treatment if they have something called gender dysphoria. There have been a lot of ideological pushes around this that try to deny the fact that this has any social component to why it's happening. Why has there

been a massive increase in the number of children, especially of young girls, who are identifying as gender dysphoric and thus trans in the past five or six years?

Why is that happening?

There's a hypothesis called the social contagion hypothesis that explains it under the umbrella of queer theory, which is a sister theory to Critical Race Theory. I would like to convince you that they actually share most of the underlying architecture but build upon it in different ways.

Critical Race Theory is more rooted in Neo-Marxism, whereas queer theory is more rooted in postmodernism. There are others we don't deal with very much in the United States like post-colonial theory. Our friends throughout the British Commonwealth do deal with this. In Britain, Canada, Australia, and parts of Africa, we hear tremendously about the issues of post-colonialism. This is yet another sister theory.

I'm trying to give you a sense right now that there's a lot of breadth to what's going on.

This is a very complicated thing, but it's easy to describe. In fact, it's like a Hydra where you may take on and defeat the Critical Race Theory head of the monster. Then the queer theory head bites you or the post-colonial theory head knocks you off your feet.

It's a very complicated thing that has evolved especially over the last century to be very difficult to challenge, very difficult to defeat, and very difficult in particular to take over from within academia. That's why we did the so-called grievance studies affair.

There is a great deal of breadth to this, and critical social justice is their primary approach.

I don't know what you might think about the idea of social justice. I have a complicated set of thoughts. I think it's one of those terms that has two meanings.

On the one hand, there is a safe meaning that most people in society agree with by default now, which is that we hope for a more fair, more equal, less discriminatory, less stereotypical, less prejudiced society. We do not want to see people held back on account of how they happen to have been born – the accidents of birth. Most people believe in social justice in that kind of very general sense.

But if you read the academic literature around social justice theory, even without getting into critical social justice, you'll read things like, "Whereas the idea of justice focuses on individual rights, social justice focuses on group rights."

That's a concerning statement because there are no such things as group rights. Groups don't have rights. Individuals have rights. Individuals within groups might have rights. If you were, for example, excluding people from their individual rights because of group membership, you might have an issue.

But this is a completely different thing. To talk about group rights is already a concerning notion because it's a category error, to be logical about things. Groups don't have rights; individuals have rights. So you already have this kind of disjunction here. Then you add in the critical side: critical social justice, post-colonialism, Critical Race Theory, queer theory, disability studies, fat studies, sexuality studies, and so on.

When you add in the critical theory aspect, now what you're saying is that you very specifically want to achieve group rights, in other words through identity politics, by means of using critical theory.

Critical theory is a very specific thing, and there's a very specific question we should be asking. Do we think that even if you're a supporter of social justice – however you want to define that term – do we want to use critical theory to get there? Do we believe in that method? That's a very important question and where now I want to start talking about the depth of this.

Critical theory was first formally described in 1937. It's not new. The underpinnings of critical theory were first laid out in the very late 1910s and very early 1920s. There was a relatively impactful meeting in 1923 in Vienna between a handful of communists, including Antonio Gramsci and a man named Georg Lukács.

Antonio Gramsci was an Albanian-Italian who wrote the *Prison Notebooks*, which is over 3,000 pages of the most poignant communist analysis that's probably ever been done. If you want to learn how to take over a culture to make room for communism, Antonio Gramsci laid this out in his *Prison Notebooks* which he wrote in prison in 1926. While the ideas he would write about hadn't been codified yet, his mind was there by 1923 at the meeting with Lukács.

Georg Lukács was a Hungarian who was one of the people who helped orchestrate the communist revolution of Hungary in the late 1910s. It fell apart after eight to nine months when the Hungarians resisted the revolution and pushed it back off. So the architect of this literal communist revolution was in this meeting with Gramsci.

Also present was a man named Max Horkheimer who went on to become the first director of the Institute for Social Research at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany – better known as the Frankfurt School. The goal of Max Horkheimer's Frankfurt School was to take these ideas that Lukács and Gramsci and other communists had cooked up to try to figure out why Western civilization wouldn't succumb to communism.

Why did communism work in Russia? Russia was a peasant society, 85% to 90% peasant. Whereas Marx had predicted the communist revolutions would happen in the most industrial cities, societies, and countries, London and Britain did not go communist. They resisted it. Berlin wasn't going communist; they resisted it. New York wasn't going communist. America wasn't going communist. Why not?

They pinned the needle, so to speak, on Western culture.

What they realized was that if you want to make room for a communist style revolution in the West, you have to undermine Western culture from within. This was Antonio Gramsci's idea of a cultural hegemony. Hegemony means control or dominance. He believed that Western culture had a hegemonic power to it where this is just the accepted way it is, the status quo - this is how we organize our society.

That view has passed generation to generation in the West by means of religion and family. It's passed from one generation to the next through education. It's passed to the existing population through media and law.

So then, these five pillars of culture that Gramsci identified – family, religion, education, media, and law – became the targets which one would have to undercut to create room for a communist revolution in the West. The way that you do that, he said, is that you infiltrate

them. You get inside of them – you don't try to fight them from the outside. You instead go inside and you start slowly changing the cultural mores and values. You start slowly changing the way people think about those institutions from within and create what he called a *counter hegemony* from within.

Max Horkheimer, who was at this meeting, went on to found and direct the Institute for Social Research. He is the one who in 1937 defined what critical theory is for the first time.

What is a critical theory? A critical theory, to boil it down as is done by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, must contain three components.

First, it has an idealistic vision for society. In other words, a utopian vision or a communist vision for society. It must then tell or analyze how the society we currently live in does not live up to that vision or is not headed toward that vision. And then it must also inspire social activism on its behalf.

So you have to have a utopian vision, complain about why society is not headed toward utopia – which of course it never would – and then inspire social activists to try to infiltrate those cultural institutions to start changing their culture from within.

I gave a talk in which I described Critical Race Theory as the tip of a 100-year-long spear. That phrasing is a bit tongue in cheek – spears are obviously measured in feet, not years – but it's a useful metaphor.

There was a meeting in Vienna in 1923, between a handful of communists, including three very prominent ones who had come up with a new way of thinking about the world, now called Neo Marxism. Critical theory is the brainchild that came out of this. So now when we look at something like a critical social justice movement, which includes Critical Race Theory, we have to ask ourselves, do we want to use that particular method in order to try to achieve social justice?

My thesis was whether you believe in social justice or not – whether you find yourself leaning left, leaning right, in the center, libertarian or whatever, and you think “yeah, more fairness in society is good” or even maybe we should consider whether or not people are being excluded from individual rights by group, even if you go so far as to say maybe “group rights” does have something that makes sense to it – you still have the open question of whether or not you want to approach those issues through the tool of critical theory.

What critical theory is going to do is begin from the assumption that the society we live in is itself constructed out of systems of power and oppression that serve the dominant interests, what Marx would have called the bourgeois interests, at the expense of everybody else. So you still have this kind of Marxian, exploitative vision of how society is constructed.

The neo-Marxists were not strictly Marxist. They were not particularly interested in seizing the means of economic production. They instead wanted to seize the means of cultural production. They're not so concerned with who has wealth. It's not a very class-oriented way of thinking. They're interested in who has cultural power, otherwise known as *privilege*.

Rather than seizing the means of producing economic power or economic wealth as Marx advocated, it's now about how do we produce privilege and how do we redistribute privilege in society. That's the new objective.

That's the perspective Neo-Marxism brought to this discussion and critical theory is the tool by which they agitate to try to make people aware of heteronomous interests, in the words of the next director of the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse.

Marcuse wrote about that in *One Dimensional Man*, his most famous book, in 1964. In that first year it sold over 300,000 copies – in the sixties.

Let that sink in. He was a leftist, intelligentsia rockstar at the time. He says in there that the people are controlled. Marcuse laid out that in the consumerist society we live in, with all of its various systems of power that structure society, people are not thinking in terms of their own interests. They're thinking in terms of what he called heteronomous interests.

The people making the products and selling them to you through advertisements, that's an interest that they're projecting onto you. So you're thinking in terms of *their* interests when you think you're thinking in terms of *your own* interests.

Your boss who wants you to show up to work, do your job, and be a good employee, you're operating within his interest. His job is to convince you, culturally speaking in this cultural Marxism mentality, that you are actually getting a good deal out of this.

When you look at the nature of pop culture – the music, the advertisements, the television shows, the way that people hang out and spend time, the sports they watch – popular culture all feeds into this idea of, “Hey, our culture's great! You're not oppressed – you probably enjoy life.” And this all creates a series of heteronomous – meaning outside of yourself – interests.

Many different interests outside of you control how you think such that Marcuse goes so far as to say that you are no longer even a rational person in and of yourself. You're acting irrationally if you are not conscious of this in the same way that Marx meant conscious of class when he said that we must raise class consciousness. Well, Marcuse wanted to raise *critical consciousness* that makes you aware of the various heteronomous interests and the way that the society is constructed to keep you down.

That includes that there are white supremacist interests, there are anti-gay interests, there are patriarchal interests – you basically are being brainwashed into believing something that isn't even in your own best interest.

If you want to know specifically what he's talking about, we can refer to his 1969 essay on liberation, where he says that what that means is socialism, but without the bureaucracies – as if that's real.

But the real name for a socialism without bureaucracy, if you've read Marx, is communism because Marx's vision was that socialism would replace capitalism and it would have to be bureaucratic in its early instantiation. And then, as people progress through the dialectical materialism to understand the contradictions in the system that were still inherent there, that eventually the state would become redundant and drop away.

In other words, there'd be no bureaucratic apparatus over the top. And so we would now enter into a non-bureaucratic socialism, which is called communism, the last stage of history, or actually the end of History with a capital “H” as Marx laid it out.

So Marcuse had these exact same ideas. Marcuse can't be credited entirely for the birth of Critical Race Theory specifically, or any of these other critical theories, but you do have to

give him some credit for this because also in *One Dimensional Man* he lays out this idea that the leftist intelligentsia have to team up.

Intelligentsia by the way doesn't mean smart people. It means people who have bought into this particular view of the world in one way or another. This was a Leninist term. So the leftist intelligentsia have to team up. That is, mostly academics like himself have to team up with the racial minorities and the radical outsiders, people like the Weather Underground.

They needed to team up and create basically a large coalition that's going to start achieving basically what was Antonio Gramsci's plan in the first place that got named by Rudi Dutschke in the 1960s, "the long march through the institutions." So they have to start infiltrating and getting inside the institutions.

There's an open question as to whether Dutschke had read Gramsci because Gramsci wasn't translated into English until 1970 by Pete Buttigieg's dad, as it turns out, Joseph Buttigieg at Notre Dame. Interesting little connection there, but it was not translated into English. Dutschke may have read it in Italian. He may have read it in some other language, I don't know. It was certainly smuggled to Moscow in 1937 on Gramsci's death. And so the Comintern, the third international communist party, had it.

It's not known for certain whether or not Mao gained access to it, but the kind of academic consensus around Mao and Gramsci is that, and this is an exact quote from a scholar, "Mao did what Gramsci thought." Dutschke and Marcuse were known to be watching Mao, of course the propaganda aspect that made it the West, not the real aspect.

It's not like they went to China and saw what was going on and thought, "Wow, this actually works! The cultural revolution actually works!" Their vision was to infiltrate the institutions of the West with a long march through the institutions that was modeled off of Mao, that probably was modeled off of Gramsci one way or another, with the goal of eventually effecting a cultural revolution in the West that would make room for a communist state in the West, especially in America.

Well, welcome to what started on May 25, 2020 when George Floyd died and our cultural revolution began in earnest. Their vision has come to pass. This is what we are in. We are living through a cultural revolution right now.

It is not clear that they're going to win. The American people have slightly different fiber than some of our fellows around the world.

But this is actually the 100-year-long spear – I know that's a weird metaphor – where Critical Race Theory becomes its tip. I really do mean that.

And why is Critical Race Theory the tip of this 100-year-long spear? Well, let's go back to another communist: Dr. Bella Dodd. She was actually a defected member of Communist Party USA. She was active in the 20s, 30s, and 40s in the Communist Party USA.

In 1953, for whatever reason, she had defected by this point, and she testified to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, which has often wrongly conflated with McCarthyism. McCarthy, you might remember was a Senator and the House committee has nothing to do with the Senate.

Nevertheless, the House committee for Un-American activities was dissolved, of course, but its duties have all been assumed by the House Judiciary Committee. So it actually still exists in literally all of its duties within the House of Representatives and the House Judiciary Com-

mittee, which you can look at what they're doing now, now that they've been fully infiltrated, you can see how that's all working out.

What Bella Dodd testified was that the communists, as early as the 1920s, realized that the wedge issue that would tear America apart was race. America was too sensitive around race. There was too much grievance, there's too much resentment, there's too much injury. The scab is too easily picked, the wound is too deep underneath it. And if you pick at race enough and in a skillful way, you can actually tear apart the cultural hegemony of the United States and open the door to communism.

This turns out to be known in China as well. An expert on Chinese and Taiwanese affairs wrote me a brilliant essay that I published on *New Discourses* a few months ago, where he discussed how we hear everything's white supremacy, whiteness, white this, white that, good whites, bad whites, everything. That's here now today.

Well in the 1930s in China, before Mao was able to step into this damaged culture, it was Han supremacy. People in the party labeled themselves as good Hans who are going to help usher in a more racially harmonious era for the 56 races of China where Hans are not just the ones who gain all of the power. The exact same dynamics, exact same phrasing, the exact same everything, just take out white and replace with Han. That was used in China to break apart their culture.

The communists realized it would work in China, and then it did. They realized it would work in America, and they didn't have their tool until one of Herbert Marcuse's students, Angela Davis.

Davis is a very famous woman -- radical, went to prison, and eventually got out of prison. She eventually became an education activist along with people like Bill Ayers and the rest of these people in the Weather Underground.

Marcuse talked to them and convinced them that they should all become education and K-12 activists to infiltrate one of those five pillars of culture, namely the education pillar.

Angela Davis, in her own words, was radicalized by Herbert Marcuse. She is through and through a critical theorist in the old school, Frankfurt-School sense, but she also is a black feminist and black feminism is its own line of thought.

I'm not saying that she is a black person who happens to be a feminist. They call those people feminists of color. She's a Black Feminist. They don't usually capitalize the "F" they usually capitalize the "B," of course, but you could capitalize them both and make it a proper noun because it is an identifiable line of thought.

That line of thought was largely developed out of what was known as black liberationism, which is a very radical approach (you often hear words like black separatism and black nationalism associated with it) that was running in parallel to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. And so black liberationism leading into when it mixed with radical feminism gives birth to this idea of black feminism.

So Angela Davis brings her black feminism, combines it with Marcuse's very radical Frankfurt School, critical theory ideas in ways to dive in and tear apart a culture from within to awaken people from their false consciousness now about race.

So now you have to awaken a racial consciousness. People need to have their racial consciousness awakened – same consciousness as critical consciousness, same consciousness as class consciousness, the exact same idea, just reappropriated to different contexts.

And Angela Davis goes on to inspire people. Derrick Bell at Harvard Law was the originator of Critical Race Theory, and his student Kimberly Crenshaw, also at Harvard Law and the creator of intersectionality, named Critical Race Theory. Kimberly Crenshaw writes in her most influential paper that she owes a debt of gratitude to Angela Davis for helping develop these thoughts.

It's definitely the case that Angela Davis and the black feminists were very active in what's known as the Combahee River Collective, which was a very radical, queer, black, socialist organization that arose in the 1970s and coined the term identity politics in 1977.

By the way, if you ever hear people say Martin Luther King was engaging in identity politics, probably not because what was meant by identity politics wasn't even described properly until 1977, by these radical, queer black feminist socialists in the Combahee River Collective in the 1970s.

If you read stuff from the Combahee River Collective, then you read Kimberly Crenshaw who also mentions them, she was definitely aware of them. You can see that Crenshaw probably isn't as creative as history is crediting her with. She just imported a lot of those ideas. So Critical Race Theory has this direct connection back through Marcuse back to Gramsci with this hundred-year-long intention to conquer the West from within to create counter hegemony and to use race as the issue that would tear the country apart.

So this is where Critical Race Theory comes from. You see something like this critical social justice thing is very broad. And then you have also this great amount of depth: a 100-year-long project to develop this kind of cultural super weapon that's now ripping America apart. But what is Critical Race Theory specifically?

Critical Race Theory describes itself, just to tell you from the beginning, as a movement. If you are an academic that should strike you as odd. It should really strike you as odd that it describes itself as a movement of scholars and activists.

Theories attempt to understand and describe the world. Usually they're not movements made of activists unless you go back to Marx's maxim that philosophers, hitherto, have sought to understand the world, but the point is to change it; unless you look at Max Horkheimer's idea that we have to separate traditional theories, which try to understand the world, from critical theories, which try to change the world.

So we're already seeing that Critical Race Theory is in a long line of tradition that seeks to reorganize society. They say that what they want to do is transform the relationships between race, racism, and power. To do that, they begin with the kind of very postmodern assumption that race is socially constructed. It's not rooted in biology. It's not real. It's a social construct.

But it's not just enough to say "a lot of people would agree with that – maybe race isn't that significant." Critical Race Theory goes further. It says that the races were actually socially constructed by white people, specifically for the purposes of holding people of color, and particularly black people, down. White people constructed whiteness specifically to achieve anti-blackness. That is actually a tenet of Critical Race Theory.

So you can see that there's this impossible divide, this impossible black-white divide, built into Critical Race Theory from the beginning, and the social constructivist thesis holds this. Not to be too intellectual, but it's a critical constructivist thesis.

Critical theory would say society is stratified according to different groups, that there's power dynamics across those groups, and that those power dynamics have to be interrogated by the means of critical theory to expose the contradictions that they cause and then to synthesize them into a new, more utopian vision of society as Marcuse put it, "Historical possibilities that have been regarded now as utopian possibilities."

The other basic assumption of Critical Race Theory is that racism is systemic. That means it's not individual, and it's not necessarily institutional. It is an artifact of the system itself, and "the system" actually means everything – everything that happens. It's how we talk, how we think things are, what we think is true and not true, how we're going to investigate ideas, how we're going to organize society, what the norms of society are, what the expectations are.

If you and I meet and have a dialogue, there are expectations, a guide: I'm not going to punch you in the head, and you're not going to insult my mother. We're not going to just become angry. We're going to try to stay a certain number of feet apart so that we don't get into people's personal space, et cetera. There are all these norms, and that's all part of "the system." And the system ultimately boils down for them to the multiple systems that were devised in Europe under what's known broadly as the Enlightenment.

Everything that follows from Western Enlightenment thinking – and I particularly mean the Scottish Enlightenment, politically speaking, which led to the United States (that's what the philosophy that our Declaration of Independence and Constitution are ultimately based upon) but also the Scientific Revolution and even the Protestant Reformation – those lines of Enlightenment thought are also part of the foundation of "the system."

These are the things that Critical Race Theory calls into question fundamentally. I'll give you a couple of quotes directly from a textbook, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, which is written by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. Richard Delgado is now in his eighties and has been one of the biggest, most famous proponents of Critical Race Theory since the 1980s.

In the first paragraph of this textbook on Critical Race Theory, which bears the unassuming title *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, they write, "unlike traditional approaches to civil rights, which favor incrementalism and step-by-step progress, Critical Race Theory calls into question the very foundations of the liberal order." In other words, what I just said about the Scottish Enlightenment.

So they don't like traditional approaches to civil rights, and they don't like the liberal order. In other words, the fruits of the Scottish Enlightenment. These include equality, theory, legal reasoning, enlightenment rationalism, and the neutral principles of constitutional law.

So they don't believe in equality. They don't believe in rule of law. They don't believe in rationalism as outlined by the Enlightenment. They have other ways of knowing, as you may have heard. They prefer to dabble in subjective, lived experience or more accurately *phenomenological* lived experience. And they do not believe in neutrality or the principles of the Constitution.

Further down in the same book, a few pages later, they write that critical race theorists are highly suspicious of another liberal mainstay, namely rights. This is when they're talking

about their critique of liberalism. So they are highly suspicious of the idea that individuals would have rights.

Systemic racism just becomes what makes the point of that spear, that I've used in metaphor, sharp. It is an argument by what you can say, "Even if nobody's acting in a racist way, even if you can't identify any racist thoughts or behavior in anybody, the system itself is producing disparate outcomes, and therefore racism must be present in the system somewhere."

So you can keep dredging up racism, even when you can't find it anywhere because it's now in the very organization of the system. We saw that, for example, maybe most poignantly when the National African-American History Museum from the Smithsonian put out that horrendous graphic last year, which I hope you've all seen, where they describe the articles of white supremacy culture.

But you can also see this for what it's worth in the educational programming, even in math education, in Washington, Oregon, and California. It's sought to be adopted in other states now as well – those, of course, were just the beginning. They say things like "getting the right answer in math class is an aspect of white supremacy culture," and "believing that math can be done in an individualist sense rather than as a collectivist sense is white supremacy culture."

Things like loyalty, punctuality, hard work, achievement by your merits – these are all considered aspects of white supremacy culture, according to Critical Race Theory. That's a very worrying way to think about the world.

It also proceeds from a number of assumptions. I think these are dubious, and using a particular number of methods I'd like to outline a number of these to give you some idea of how horrific this ideology is. But before I do that, I want to convince you that this is literally a worldview. This is not just a theory. It's not even just a movement. It is a way of thinking about the world.

If advocates of a theory, idea, or movement are telling you that you have to "develop a consciousness" in it to understand it, and that if you don't have that consciousness you probably have some kind of false consciousness or some kind of internalized racism or internalized problem where you aren't able to think clearly, you are probably dealing with an entire way of viewing the world.

You're not dealing with simply an analytical tool. You're not dealing with something that's simply to be described as a theory. You're describing a complete way to view the world.

And this is exactly what Herbert Marcuse talks about in *One Dimensional Man*. He says that the heteronomous interest flattened life into a one-dimensional experience, and that you have to awaken a multidimensional consciousness to see the world in a different way. And if you don't, you have false consciousness.

This is exactly what you see when you have people like Robin DiAngelo say that when you're challenged about race and racism in her peculiar way, that you lack the racial stamina, lack the racial humility to do the work of anti-racism, which she calls white fragility. It's exactly the same thing. You have to be awakened to the critical race consciousness to understand it.

This means it's a worldview.

It is a way of interpreting all of the phenomena of the world. These assumptions that underline this worldview include ideas that racism is the ordinary state of affairs in society. That's a direct statement that they make in virtually all of their textbooks. Racism is the ordinary state of affairs in society. It's not an aberration from them. It is what's happening, regardless of what else is happening.

Robin DiAngelo boils this assumption down to this simple statement: "The question is no longer did racism take place, but how did racism manifest in this situation."

So racism is to be assumed in every situation, and the people who are competent to find it – maybe it's in Dr. Seuss, for example, maybe it's Coca Cola being too white or whatever – the people who are qualified to find it are called critical race theorists. And in their own words, everybody who has the racial privilege to do so has the duty to identify and disrupt this racist dynamic everywhere that they find it. This is a culture of white supremacy that they allege we live in.

This leads to what is known as the imminence of racism.

The imminence of racism holds that racism is the default state of affairs, right underneath the surface, everywhere throughout society. And as the default state of affairs, just underneath the surface, any individual or institutional act or outcome of racism is not an isolated incident. It's not one guy who was being a jerk. It's now indicative of a system that allows that to happen.

That's a very important way to think. It's like one boil that comes up in measles. The boil isn't the problem. The underlying virus that's systemic is the problem. So having a single boil or whatever pop up on your skin is just indicative of a deeper underlying problem that is systemic. That's the way they think about racism.

So if one guy says one racist thing, that's because the society exists in a system that allows that to even have occurred. That means this is a fundamentally totalizing and thus totalitarian ideology, which is to stamp racism out entirely to the point where it's not even possible for racism to occur from any institution or individual, whether by ignorance or by malice.

That's a very concerning situation. To kind of tie that to the moment, though, if you noticed when Derek Chauvin was convicted on all three counts, within minutes you had people like Bernie Sanders and AOC coming out and saying, "Justice was not done. This is an act of accountability. Justice requires complete systemic change." That's because he's one boil of a underlying measles disease.

Until you completely remake the system in accordance with them – which will be achieved just by giving them power, by the way, and money – until you completely remake the system, there is no justice.

So for them, justice means they have all the power and that they'll somehow magically make this work.

This is exactly the same mentality that Marx had or the Bolsheviks, at least Lenin, had: when the Bolsheviks get all the power, they'll be able to usher in the situation to which socialism will inexorably become a communist utopia.

A third assumption is the imposition of racism. The claim is that white people invented the races so that they could impose race and racism on other people so that they could control them.

This leads into a further and deeper concept called interest convergence, which is a brain-child of Derrick Bell, the first critical race theorist. His concept says that white people don't ever help people of color – and we're talking mostly at a group level – unless it's also in their own self-interest to do so.

So anything that you do, in accordance with what they define as racial progress is actually in your own self-interest because it makes you a better person. So therefore, taking up anti-racism, for example, becomes a racist act under the doctrine of interest convergence. And they twist people for this. They're constantly problematizing allyship. They're constantly saying that it's not truly altruistic or truly selfless or true solidarity.

They also say that this creates a system in which people in dominant positions in society, particularly white people, are put in a position of motivated ignorance.

They often refer to this as active ignorance, pernicious ignorance, white ignorance, willful ignorance – they have lots of terms for this – where it is not to white people's advantage to become aware of the “racial realities” – in other words, how they describe race and racism in Critical Race Theory – and accept those statements.

It's not in white people's self-interest as a group that's got power and privilege. Again, this is very Marxist conflict-theory thought. Therefore, they don't know and they don't want to know. They have an intentional desire to stay ignorant of this. This enables what they describe as white comfort. They want to rationalize white success and white privilege by claiming that success as a result of merit, meritocracy, is considered a pillar of white supremacy culture and Critical Race Theory.

This is a really poisonous doctrine. If you understand what this is pointing to, it gives them the ability any time anybody disagrees with Critical Race Theory to say that they're acting in their own selfish interests. If it's a white person who does so, it's because they have white privilege, and it's considered to be an aspect of white privilege, which thus needs to be interrogated and rearranged and checked. If a person of color does it, if that person is, as they say, “brown,” that probably means that they still have internalized anti-blackness.

You see this a lot with the stop Asian-American hate narrative that's being pushed right now. Asian-Americans have anti-blackness so they're saying it over and over and over again. If that person happens to be black, say like Barack Obama, then they will write a book in 2013 called *Acting White* to explain that he had to act white in order to gain that kind of position.

And this is a huge kind of theory. We see what's going on with Tim Scott, so-called “Uncle Tim,” as they're horrifically calling him. You can see how this just massively justifies racism.

All of this basically boils down to the idea that Critical Race Theory really operates on: *structural determinism*. That's a very fancy academic term. It basically means that the power dynamics, the systems of society, as they have been created and organized, lead to people in various identity groups – or in this case racial groups under Critical Race Theory – having their lives determined for them.

Determinism means, you don't have any control. You don't have any agency. Well, for them, what they're claiming is that the system or the structure of society itself, the white supremacist structure of society itself, is in fact creating certain outcomes. So when you have somebody who deviates from those outcomes, perhaps they got lucky, perhaps like Barack Obama as they alleged “acted white” to do so. But most importantly, if they try to speak out against

Critical Race Theory, what you're going to find immediately is that they're going to be accused of speaking falsely to the lived experience that their group is supposed to have experienced.

So now there is no longer the individual of any race. Each individual person is just a kind of avatar or diplomat or something like that, of that racial category, and Critical Race Theory has defined what the experience of being that is. If it's white, it's privileged. If it's black, it's this. If it's brown, it's that. If it's Latino, it's that. So the claim is that life is determined based by the racial category you've had, allegedly, imposed upon you.

This is where Kimberly Crenshaw in her most influential and famous paper in "Mapping the Margins" writes that there's a fundamental difference between "I am black" and "I am a person who happens to be black." That latter statement – which is what Dr. King advocated for – she says strives for a certain universality that ignores the imposition of racial categories on people.

"I am black" leans into that identity category and enables the ability to do identity politics. In other words, it enables the ability to create a political activist block that uses something as immutable and sensitive as identity to try to move its ball.

The doctrine of structural determinism is how it does this. Because of structural determinism, they believe in what are known as authentic racial experiences or authentic racial knowledges.

This means, if you agree with Critical Race Theory's take on what your race is *supposed* to experience, then you have it authentically. And if not, you have internalized racism, false consciousness of some kind, and you're not expressing your racial experience authentically.

In other words, you're being duplicitous, selfish, or willfully ignorant in some way, which means you can't disagree with Critical Race Theory, even if you are of whatever particular racial minority group that happens to be spoken about.

They say that gives rise to a unique voice of color so that each color, each racial category – or each identity category, if we get more intersectional, as they say, with it – has a unique, structurally determined experience, that there's a unique voice that speaks to that experience, and when it's authentic, in other words when it repeats Critical Race Theory, then it's speaking into that unique voice of color. Therefore it contains knowledge that other racial groups don't have access to.

So white people can't understand black people except by "shut up and listen." That's one of their phrases.

Even then, you still can't understand, so you have to keep shutting up and keep listening because there's a unique voice of color that derives from this idea of authentic racial experiences that derives from the doctrine of structural determinism under the broad assumption of an ordinary state of affairs of systemic racism that's been imposed upon society by power hungry whites functionally identical to the bourgeoisie that Marx was complaining about.

White supremacy culture or white coat culture, or whiteness is identical to bourgeoisie, functionally speaking.

There's a demand, therefore, to engage your positionality always. You aren't able to speak as an individual who has studied or has thought or has worked or has done or whatever. You have to speak as a black man or as a Latina or *Latinx* woman because you have to speak

into your identity category because identity categories are believed to be productive of authoritative knowledge.

Therefore methodologies, rigorous methodologies and truth, are not expected to be productive of authoritative knowledge. They are in fact something that's characterized as being located within the so-called "white racial frame" of the entire liberal order, Enlightenment, rationalism, and so on. Therefore, it engages in identity politics because identity groups become unique blocks. It cares about the impact over the intent.

If somebody perceives that they've experienced racism, then they have, and you have to shut up and listen and just accept that. It favors narrative and storytelling and even counter storytelling over facts, evidence, rationale, and reason.

The idea is to tell that story, which obviously we've all heard: "You know, I know somebody who smoked a pack a day and lived to be 90."

Well, that's called the exception. But they will talk into that exception and say, "Well, you can't say that that we're wrong." Or, they will tell a story.

We heard this very frequently after George Floyd died. How many unarmed black people were killed by police in say 2019? I think the answer is somewhere, if it's truthful, between something like seven and sixteen or something like that, somewhere in that vicinity. But they say that they feel like they're being killed in the streets by police every single day. It's narrative and storytelling.

We see the idea of the narrative all throughout the media. Look at what's happening again with the Asian-American situation.

They believe in revisionist history – retelling history from the perspective of Critical Race Theory. That's what the 1619 project is about, if you didn't know. It's not even intended to be history. It's meant to foist a story and a perspective upon history so that history is now selectively told to uphold the Critical Race Theory narrative.

As you would have already gathered, this is fundamentally anti-liberal. And I mean liberal in the classically liberal sense, the exact sense that say Thomas Jefferson was talking about when he talked about the truths that we take to be self-evident.

Jefferson talked about people being created equal and "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, including life, Liberty, and pursuit of happiness" – those things are to be drawn into question.

We can appeal to our reason, and we can appeal to methods and practices and epistemological tools that will allow us to get to better answers to hard questions – that's all just going to be cast into a white cultural frame or white racial frame, or white Eurocentric masculine frame.

This is basically repeating the same mistakes that we've seen before. We saw the Bolsheviks talk about "communist science" versus "bourgeois science." This is the same thing.

We saw Hitler talk about "Jewish science" versus whatever he was doing. This is the same thing.

When I say that we're talking about a 100-year-long spear with a very sharp tip called Critical Race Theory that is tearing Western society open, what we're talking about is the reinvention

of all the worst ideas of the 20th century. It's taking the least American ideas of the 20th century and cramming them into a purposeful tool that's used to infiltrate our institutions because people aren't willing to either understand what it is or to just stand up and resist it and to realize that just because some lunatic called you a racist, that doesn't mean that you're a racist.

Just because some lunatic said that these are aspects of white supremacy culture that can be tied in some way as to having been rooted in some white supremacists that they can dig up in a history book doesn't mean that something like productivity is a white supremacist value. It is actually a value that works.

This is the danger that Critical Race Theory poses. It's already infiltrated most of our institutions.

We've now seen the scary video from the CIA. We've already seen the infiltration into the military where there's "extremism stand down" and the fact that they're doing diversity equity and inclusion, which is all rooted in this stuff.

You see the eruptions when you try to get it taken out.

When you see Republican state legislatures and governors trying to knock it out of schools, you see them go berserk and try to accuse people of trying to just ban diversity training or teaching of history. We're in a precarious position.

There are reasons for hope. Like I started with, I'll close there.

There's a lot of energy to take this on now. A lot of people are aware of it and I'm honored to be able to come help more people become more aware of just how bad a set of ideas this is, just how dangerous a set of ideas this is.

But I don't want anybody to go away with a false impression. America and Western civilization are legitimately at risk. Critical Race Theory may not be the entire story. There are others. It is the tool that's making it all possible. The other metaphor I like to give for it is that it's the lockpick that's opening the gates to Western civilization.

I'd like for you to think of it that way going forward and to think very seriously about getting at least cursorily educated in it, organizing around it, and doing any activism that the various leaders coming out of this Institute are going to take into the social and political world, whether it's organizing at the level of school boards and grassroots or whether that's organizing even for national campaigns.