

Critical Race Theory: A Misguided Ideology

Britannica Encyclopedia defines critical race theory (CRT) as follows:

Critical race theory is an intellectual movement and a framework of legal analysis according to which (1) race is a culturally invented category used to oppress people of color and (2) the law and legal institutions in the United States are inherently racist insofar as they function to create and maintain social, political, and economic inequalities between white and nonwhite people.¹

CRT claims that racism is a systemic aspect of society and is embedded into systems and institutions that replicate racism and associated racial inequality. I emphasize the word *systemic*.

Many CRT proponents rebuke the idea of legislative acts that supposedly level the playing field between blacks and whites, claiming they take place only because they also serve the interests of the whites. This idea is called *interest convergence*. The concept claims nothing happens to help the interests of blacks unless it converges with the interests of whites.

CRT and interest convergence claim that racism is indigenous to all white America. The two concepts hold that racism is in every nook and cranny of the country, including legislation and laws that were supposedly created for the benefit of minorities, especially blacks.

CRT: Oblivious Cynicism

CRT represents an inaccurate understanding of racism in America, bordering on oblivious cynicism. It glosses over, even ignoring, the efforts of this country---the collective will of many whites, with no personal benefit to themselves---to right the injustices of historically indigenous slavery and its lingering consequences into modern times.

Here are three examples among many:

- Puritans and Quakers of the colonial era: rejected slavery as it was offensive to their ethics and morals.
- Thirteenth Amendment: abolished slavery. The act was supported by a substantial number of whites (especially in the north) who would have benefited from the practice of slavery.
- Protest marches in the south in the 1960s: whites risked their well-being, even lives, with nothing to gain personally.

Instances are plentiful in America in which CRT and interest convergence are shown to be wrong-headed, or more to the point, non-existent. Consider the Civil War.

In some southern states, whites were murdered after being discovered to have sympathy for blacks. The deaths were so numerous and were of such magnitude, President Ulysses S. Grant ordered the army's intervention to protect the homes and lives of these whites.

Turning to more recent times, Lyndon Johnson broke the back of the Jim Crow South with his shepherding the 1964 Civil Rights Act through Congress.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/critical-race-theory>.

Refuting the critical race theory and interest convergence advocates, Lyndon Johnson did not support the black cause because it was to his benefit. Just the opposite: He took this stand as an ethical and moral principle.

So did many of our ancestors during the Civil War times. So did the civil rights marchers during the civil rights protesting times. So do many of today's citizens, lawmakers, and institutions.

School Curriculum: The Facts will Suffice

Curriculum in schools can address the issue of critical race theory by teaching both viewpoints: pro-CRT and anti-CRT.

The two perspectives contain claims that need to be examined. An American citizen should know about the country's long history of racism. To deny it is to deny reality. But an American citizen should also know about the country's equally long history of combating racism. To deny it is to also deny reality.

I cannot let another CRT assertion go by. Some CRT spokespeople claim the future America entered the Revolutionary War with England in order to protect the cause of slavery!

This leads us to contrast two words in the English language touched on earlier: systematic and systemic.

Critical race theory discusses systematic racism in America. But it uses the word *systemic* instead of *systematic*.

Systematic means methodical, orderly, and regular, but says nothing about universality.

In contrast, systemic means universal, total, complete.

Racism in America has never been systemic, nor is it systemic now. It has been in the past, and remains today a society in which racism is extensive. But systematic racism has been defeated in America. Racism is quite prevalent, but it is no longer methodical or orderly, as it was in the past. Quite the opposite, it is considered aberrational and its practices are disorganized and irregular.

Critical race theory and interest convergence overreach in assessing the race problem. The two theories also assail people and institutions in America who put themselves at risk to right the injustices of racial inequality in this country. The basic assertions in the CRT ideology are simply untrue. Same goes for interest convergence.

Many anti-CRT advocates are using the issue to push their agenda to white-wash the history of racial discrimination in America. Some are placing pressure on schools to exclude teaching all the reasons the Civil War occurred, stating the curriculum on this subject should be about states' rights, and only states' rights.

The die-hard members of these two opposing camps are not going to alter their stand. The saying, "Never the twain shall meet," epitomizes this aspect of a major division in America's society. It presents an enormous challenge to the admirably idealistic, but sometimes floundering, republic.