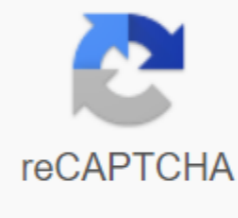




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## Five basic tenets of critical race theory

Good morning! The first time I heard about Critical Race Theory (CRT) I was in college. I didn't learn about it in school because I predominantly attended white institutions. During this time I was trying to figure out why the education I was paying for wasn't meshing with the lived experience I possessed being a black woman from the south of Chicago. It was like living in a totally different world than the one my teachers teach about. CRT showed me i am. A friend of mine said that Liberty School is basically my way of bringing Critical Race Theory to good people in my life. He was right! I know Critical Race Theory sounds incredibly academic, but I have a feeling many of you are already doing work on the basis of CRT and just don't know, so we pulled together an overview for y'all. Brief history: In 1970 and 80 a group of lawyers, activists, and legal scholars \* recognized that they needed a new framework to combat racism and oppression in America. They mixed concepts from critical legal studies and radical feminism with the influences of the Black Power and Chicano movements of the time, and the theory of the critical race was born. At first it was mentioned mainly in the law scholarship, but now it is used in many different fields and disciplines. You can read a much more detailed history here. Critical race theory requires us to consider how we can transform the relationship between race, racism, and power and work toward the liberation of black people. How many of you asked that at school? I would guess too little if there is. These super-intelligent researchers have identified 5 basic principles\*\* of Critical Race Theory – the basic components. 1. Centrality and intersection of racism. Racism exists everywhere in American life - from our own thoughts, to our personal relationships, to our workplaces, to our educational and judicial systems. CRT says that racism is not only the actions of individuals, but that it is embedded in our institutions, systems, and culture. It's our way of life. 2. Challenge of dominant ideology. In law and other arenas there is a belief that concepts such as neutrality, objectivity, colorblindly and meritocracy can be fully updated. CRT says, not so quickly, can it really be neutral on race issues when racism is baked into the fabric of America? (Um, you can't). Crt pointed out that demands for objectivity and colorblindness can be ways in which dominant groups camouflage their interests in order to get what is best for them-to-check out housing and education in this country if you don't believe me. 3. Commitment to social justice. Crt as a framework recognises how all interrelate sorphering and focuses on eradicating and other forms of oppression by centering People of Color and taking a position on the issues of Justice. Black people were fighting before this country was formed for justice and this didn't stop in some form or fashion. 4. The importance of experiential knowledge. This is huge y'all, CRT says that the experiences of People of Color however expressed (storytelling, family history, biographies, scripts, parables, cuentos, chronicles, narratives)\*\* are crucial to understanding racism and oppression, that they are necessary in our quest for liberation. From academic, to legal, to experienced activist arenas must be taken seriously. 5. Use of an interdisciplinary perspective. CRT relies on many different areas to create a strong and nuanced framework for involvement in race and racism. There is no answer, no discipline, no path to freedom. CRT says we use all the tools in the toolkit to help educate people so we can get free. Of course, CRT is more theoretical then I described, but this is boiled down to its core. CRT is the education that most of us didn't get-or didn't get until after we left school. It is an education that appreciates that it challenges the status quo and prioritizes lived experiences. It's rooted in collective learning and community building and there's nothing wrong with that. Let's free ourselves together. \*Researchers leading CRT development: Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, Mari Matsuda, Kimberle Crenshaw, Charles Lawrence, Neil Gotanda, Patricia J. Williams, Angela Harris \*\*Solorzano, D., & Yosso, T. (2000). Towards a critical race theory of Chicana and Chicano education. If this overview has left you wanting for more, Freedom School starts next week! You can watch me talk about it here. The theory that examines the relationship of society and culture with the race The Theory of Critical Race (CRT)[1] is a theoretical framework in the social sciences that examines society and culture in terms of the classification of race, law and power. [2] [3] It is unified by two common themes. First, the CRT proposes to maintain the supremacy of whites and racial power over time and, in particular, for the law to play a role in this process. Second, the work of the CRT investigated the possibility of transforming the relationship between law and racial power, as well as pursuing a project to achieve racial emancipation and broader anti-subordination. [4] It is based on critical theory, a social philosophy that holds that social problems are influenced and created more by societal structures and cultural hypotheses than by individual and psychological factors. It began as a theoretical movement in American law schools in the mid to late 1980s as a reshuffling of legal studies on race issues. [5] [6] By 2002, more than 20 American law schools and at least 3 law schools in other countries had offered courses or courses in critical race theory that covered the problem in addition to law, critical race theory is taught and innovated in the fields of Education, Political Science, Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies, Communication, Sociology and American Studies. [8] Leading researchers in this theory include Derrick Bell, Patricia Williams, Richard Delgado, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Camara Phyllis Jones and Mari Matsuda. Critics, including Richard Posner and Alex Kozinski, are enduring the theory in postmodernism and its dependence on moral relativism, social constructivism and other principles contrary to individual freedom and classical liberalism. Some also argue that CRT is inherently racist. [9] Definition According to the UCLA School of Public Affairs:[10] CRT recognizes that racism is rooted in the structure and system of American society. Individual racist should not exist to note that institutional racism is ubiquitous in the dominant culture. This is the analytical lens that CRT uses in examining existing power structures. Crt identifies that these power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of black people. Lawyer Roy L. Brooks defined CRT as a collection of critical positions against the existing race-based legal order, adding that:[11] [I]t focuses on the different ways in which the tradition received in law negatively affects people of color not as individuals, but as a group. Thus, the CRT tries to analyze the law and legal traditions through the history, contemporary experiences and racial sensitivities of racial minorities in this country. The question always hidden in the background of CRT is this: would it look legal landscape today if black people were the makers? Origins In the early 1980s, black students at Harvard Law School organized protests in various forms to address the lack of racial diversity in the curriculum, as well as among students and teachers. These students supported Professor Derrick Bell, who left Harvard Law in 1980 to become dean of the University of Oregon School of Law. During his time at Harvard, Bell developed new courses that studied American law through a racial lens that black students wanted black college to teach in his absence. However, the university, ignoring the demands of students has created a significant conflict with the administration. The conflict arose with a Harvard law course on race relations taught by the director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) a well-respected white civil rights lawyer, along with the nation's leading black civil rights lawyer, who served as president and director of the LDF. The boycott was based in part on Harvard's failure to minority college at his college. Harvard rejected their request to teach the course only to black law professors. Lawyer Randall Kennedy Kennedy that some students felt affronted using a liberal white archetypal... in a way that hinders the development of black leadership. (See Racial Criticism of the Legal Academy, Randall Kennedy, Harvard Law Review Vol. 102:1745 at p. 1757). In response, many students, including Kimberlé Crenshaw and Mari Matsuda, boycotted and organized to develop an Alternative Course using Bell's Race, Racism, and American Law (1973, first edition) as the basic text and included guest speakers Richard Delgado and Neil Gotanda. [12] [13] Harvard Law's repeated refusal to recognize the demands of black students led to the self-declaration of critical race theory as a branch of critical legal studies in 1987. Crenshaw sent a call to participate in a retreat entitled New Developments in Critical Race Theory that effectively created the domain under the name CRT. According to Crenshaw, only herself, Matsuda, Gotanda, Chuck Lawrence, and a handful of others knew that there were no new developments in critical race theory, because CRT had no old ones - it didn't exist, it was invented as a name. Sometimes you have to pretend until you succeed. Crenshaw asserts that critical race theorists have found ourselves to be critical theorists who have made racial and racial justice advocates critical. [14] [13] Crenshaw writes, it could be said that CRT was the successor to a post-civil institutional activism that was generated and informed of an oppositional orientation to racial power. [12] Theoretical positions Regarding CRT as radical, Will Oremus argues:[15]T]he theory [is] radical... in the sense that it questions fundamental assumptions.... And unlike some components of academic and legal thinking, critical race theory has an open and activist agenda, with a focus on stories and personal experience. It's about righting the wrongs, not just questing after knowledge.... [M] any of their ideas are not radical today in the sense of being out of the mainstream: critical race theory is widely taught and studied. Recent developments in critical race theory include work based on updated social psychological research on unconscious prejudices to justify affirmative action; and work on legislation and economic methodology to examine structural inequality and discrimination in the workplace. [16] The influence of critical legal studies As a move that relies heavily on critical theory, critical race theory shares many intellectual commitments with critical theory, critical legal studies, feminist jurisprudence, and postcolonial theory. However, some authors like Tommy J. Curry have pointed out that epistemic convergences with such approaches are accentuated because of its idealistic turn in race theory The latter, as Curry explains, is interested in speech (e.g., we're talking about race) and theories white continental philosophers, over and against the structural and institutional accounts of white supremacy that were at the heart of the realistic analysis of racism introduced in Derrick Bell's early works.[17][necessary page] and articulated by black thinkers such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, and Judge Robert L. Carter. [18] [necessary page] Critical race theory is based on the priorities and perspectives of both critical legal studies and the conventional civil rights scholarship, while challenging both areas with a focus. The theoretical elements of crt are provided by a variety of sources. Angela P. Harris describes CRT as sharing a commitment to a vision of liberation from racism by fair reason with the tradition of civil rights. [19] It deconstructs some of the premises and arguments of legal theory and argues at the same time that legally constructed rights are incredibly important. [20] [the necessary page] After described by Derrick Bell, the theory of race critical in Harris' opinion is devoted to radical criticism of the law (which is normative deconstructionist) and... radical emancipation by law (which is normatively reconstructed). [21] Major themes Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic have documented the following major themes as characteristic of work in critical race theory: Criticism of liberalism: CRT researchers favor a more aggressive approach to social transformation, as opposed to the more cautious approach to liberalism; [required citation] a race-conscious approach to transforming the liberal embrace of affirmative action, color blindness, role shaping, or the principle of merit; [22] and an approach that relies more on political organization, as opposed to liberalism's dependence on rights-based remedies. [citation required] Storytelling, counter-storytelling, and naming your own reality: Using narrative to illuminate and explore experiences of racial oppression. [23] Bryan Brayboy emphasized the epistemic importance of the story in indigenous-American communities as superseding that of theory, and proposed a critical tribal theory of race (TribCrit). [24] Revisionist interpretations of American civil rights law and progress: Criticism of the civil rights grant and anti-discrimination law, would be Brown v. Education Council. Derrick Bell, one of the founders of crt, argued that civil rights for black people coincided with the self-interest of white elitists. Mary L. Dudziak also conducted extensive archival research in the U.S. State Department and Department of Justice, including the correspondence of U.S. ambassadors abroad, and found that U.S. civil rights law was not passed because black people were Rather, it was adopted to improve the image of the United States in the eyes of the Third World countries that the U.S. needed as allies during the Cold War. [25] Application of perspectives social sciences written on race and racism to legal issues. [23] Intersectional theory: Examination of race, gender, class, national origin and sexual orientation, and how their combination unfolds in different contexts, for example, how a Latin person's needs are different from those of a black male person and whose needs are those promoted. [26] Essentialism vs. Anti-Essentialism: Delgado and Stefancic write: Scientists who write about these issues are concerned about the appropriate unity for analysis: Is the black community one or more communities? Do middle class and working African-Americans have different interests and needs? Does all oppressed peoples have anything in common?. This is a look at the ways in which oppressed groups can share in their oppression, but they also have different needs and values that need to be viewed differently. It is a question of how groups can be essentialised or cannot be essentialised[27] Non-white cultural nationalism and separatism (incl. black nationalism): Exploring more radical views that support separation and repair as a form of external aid. [23] Legal institutions, critical pedagogy and minority bar lawyers. [23] Structural determinism: Exploring how the structure of legal thought or culture influences its content, whereby a particular way of thinking or a widely shared practice results in significant social outcomes, which usually occur without conscious knowledge. As such, theorists postulate that our system cannot fix certain types of mistakes. [28] White Privilege: Faith in the notion of the multitude of social advantages, benefits and courtship that come with being a member of the dominant race (i.e. whites). An official who doesn't follow you into a store or have people crossing the street at night to avoid you, are two examples of white privileges. [29] Microaggression: Faith in the notion that sudden, amazing or dispiriting transactions have the power to apple everyday to oppressed individuals. These include small acts of racism consciously or unconsciously committed, whereby an analogy could be that of water dripping on a cliff bearing away at it slowly. Micro-aggressions are based on assumptions about racial issues that are absorbed from cultural heritage. [30] Empathic error: Believing that a narrative can be changed by providing an alternative narrative in the hope that the listener's empathy will quickly and reliably take control. Empathy is not enough to change racism as most people are not exposed to many people different from themselves and people seek mostly information about their culture and group. [31] White as property From the perspective of CRT, the white skin that some Americans possess is similar to owning a property, insofar as granting privileges to the landlord that a tenant (in this case a black person) would not be granted. [32] [32] I. Harris and Gloria Ladson-Billings describe this notion of white as property, whereby white is the ultimate property that single whites can possess; valuable as the property. The ownership functions of the white – that is, the right to the disposal; rights of use and use, reputation and status of property; and the absolute right to exclude - makes the American dream more likely and achievable for whites as citizens. Karen Pyke's internalization documents the theoretical element of internalized racism or internalized racial oppression, whereby victims of racism begin to believe in ideology that they are inferior to the culture of whites and whites who are superior. The internalization of racism is not due to any weakness, ignorance, inferiority, psychological defect, credulity, or other shortcomings of the oppressed. Instead, it is how authority and power in all aspects of society contribute to feelings of inequality. [33] Institutional racism Camara Phyllis Jones defines institutionalized racism as structures, policies, practices and norms that result in differentiated access to the goods, services and opportunities of society by race. Institutionalized racism is normative, sometimes legalized and often manifests itself as an inherited disadvantage. It is structural, having been absorbed into our institutions of custom, practice, and law, so there must be no identifiable offender. Indeed, institutionalised racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need, manifesting itself both in material conditions and in access to power. As regards premiums, examples include differentiated access to quality education, solid housing, paid jobs, adequate medical facilities and a clean environment. [34] Solid Ground, an organization working to combat poverty, describes institutionalized racism as the systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunities in society for the benefit of white people and the exclusion of black people. Institutional racism dates back to slavery, segregation, internment camps and Indian reserves. Such a form of racism can be present in institutions designed primarily to benefit and respond to white people's lives, such as bank lending policies and various housing contracts, which both refuse black people to live in certain neighborhoods or areas. Many black people are also racially profiled by law enforcement, and many groups are skewed in news and other media. There are also restrictions on certain types of employment, as well as workplace progress, which are strictly based on one's race. [35] Applications in critical race theory have focused, with a certain peculiarity, on the hate speech

