

By [Sylvia Duckworth](#)

(With many thanks to [@angeljonesphd](#) and [@katerslater](#))

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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sylviaduckworth/> (I believe you have to create a Flickr account before you can see the download button). Please be sure to credit and tag me, Dr. Angel Jones and Dr. Kate Slater whenever you use the images.

NOTE: This is the text that goes with the images on [this Instagram post](#). Part 2 follows.

PART 1

Slide 1: **Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a framework that is used to help us understand why racial inequities exist in our society and how we can eradicate them. Why is this so threatening to some white people?**

Slide 2: Definition:

CRT is an academic framework or practice that examines how systems, policies and the law perpetuate systemic racism.

It is called CRITICAL Race Theory because it asks you to look **critically** at systems to better understand the origins of racial inequities. This knowledge can then be used to mitigate and stem the inequities at the root cause (ie. the system, policy, or law).

(Note: While there are similarities, CRT is **not** Anti Bias Anti Racism Education, Culturally Relevant Teaching, Diversity and Inclusion Training, Multicultural Education, or other anti racism approaches.)

Slide 3: CRT originated in the mid-1970s amongst American legal scholars including Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Cheryl Harris, Charles R. Lawrence III, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia J. Williams.

Today CRT is taught mostly at the higher education level. However, there is a growing consensus amongst educators that it should be taught at earlier levels. Unfortunately, lawmakers in at least 15 states have recently introduced and have already passed bills (in 5 states so far) that seek to prevent teachers from using CRT and other anti-racism resources that discuss racism and social justice in school curriculums (including the fabulous Pulitzer winning New York Times 1619 Project). (Note: the following sentences are not in the slides) **The problem is that the term CRT has become an all-encompassing catch-all phrase for any antiracism curriculum and has become demonized and weaponized by conservatives.** The truth is that the real CRT has typically only been used in academia.

Slide 4: "Learning about CRT is important because in order to challenge systems of oppression, you must first be able to identify them. CRT encourages students to become more civically engaged by equipping them with the tools they need to think critically about issues of race and racism." - Dr. Angel Jones ([@angeljonesphd](#))

Slide 5: CRT asks you to analyze situations with a critical lens in a way that decenters the typical white narrative and to focus instead on the root cause of racism and inequity. Younger students, for example, can be taught the truth behind the Christopher Columbus and Thanksgiving narratives (with a Colonizer/Colonized context) and then discuss how and why this differs from the history that is normally taught.

Slide 6: Some other examples of how one might use CRT in an educational context:

- To examine the unconscious biases that cause white teachers to punish children of color more frequently and severely.
- To investigate why Black children are disproportionately excluded from gifted and advanced academic programs
- To determine why Black children score significantly lower on standardized tests
- To interrogate why racialized children are over-represented in drop-out rates
- To critique dress code policies which prohibit natural Black hairstyles
- To re-evaluate the predominance of curriculum that excludes the history and lived experiences of racialized people and imposes a dominant white narrative of history
- To reframe deficit-oriented instruction that characterizes students of color as in need of remediation
- To examine school funding disparities, including the persistent underfunding of property-poor districts, many of which are composed primarily of children of color

Slide 7: In other areas, CRT theory can be used to analyse phenomena such as

- Why Black women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women
- Why racialized communities are the hardest hit by COVID19
- Why Black people are three times more likely than white people to be killed by police
- Why Black people are incarcerated five times the rate of white people and for longer sentences for the same crimes
- Why houses owned by white people are appraised at a value higher than houses owned by Black people in the same neighbourhood
- The history of Red-lining Black inner-city neighborhoods
- Why racialized people have a significantly harder time securing bank loans than white people
- and much more...

Slide 8: There are a few key CRT themes which align with other anti-racism approaches:

1. Race is a social construct created to benefit white people.
2. Systemic racism exists across many spectrums (Criminal Justice system, policing, housing, healthcare, education, banking, politics, etc)

3. "A few bad apples" is a false narrative; racism is both individual and systemic.
4. White privilege leads to false ideas of meritocracy.
5. "Color blindness" invalidates racialized peoples' experiences
6. The experiences of oppression is exacerbated when a racialized person has additional marginalized identities ("Intersectionality")
7. Internalized racism occurs when a racialized person believes that they are inferior to white people.
8. Racialized people have valid and unique experiences that need to be heard.

Slide 9: There is no reason to fear CRT. As our awareness of how racist systems and policies originate and are perpetuated, so does our understanding of how to dismantle them. Only those who fear a loss of power will feel threatened.

Accounts to follow

1. [@kimberlecrenshaw](#)
2. [@akademic67](#) (Gloria Ladson-Billings)
3. [@angeljonesphd](#)
4. [@katerslater](#)
5. [@chrisemdin](#)
6. [@chicanstocracy_blog](#)

Slide 10: Action items:

1. Follow and support [Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw](#)'s work with African American Policy Forum [@aapolicyforum](#), where they are actively tracking anti-CRT legislation at [aapf.org/truthbetold](#)
2. Research anti-CRT legislation in your state and call your representatives to urge them to vote it down.
3. [Click here](#) for a document by [@antiracistartteachers](#) with all of the proposed bills, state by state (including petitions to sign).

Books/videos/podcasts/essays

1. [An Introduction to Critical Race Theory.](#) by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic
2. [Critical Race Theory: A Primer \(Concepts and Insights\)](#), by Khiara M. Bridges
3. [Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement](#), by Kimberlé Crenshaw
4. [Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education](#), by Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate.
5. ["What is Critical Race Theory?": IGTV live with Dr. Angel Jones and Dr. Kate Slater](#)
6. [Conflicted: How Black women negotiate their responses to racial microaggressions at a historically White institution \(Using CRT as a Framework\)](#), (academic paper) by Dr. Angel Jones

7. [The Weeds Podcast \(The Vox\): What is Critical Race Theory?](#) With Morgan Williams, Jr. (scroll down 60 episodes)
8. CNN interview with Kimberlé Crenshaw: [“Politicians attack critical race theory without understanding it, experts say.”](#)

Articles:

1. [Letter: In defense of critical race theory](#), by Shawn R. Coon and Vanessa Johnson-Ojeda, The Salt Lake City Tribune
2. [The War On Critical Race Theory Continues As Some Call It Anti-White](#), by Janice Gassam Asare, Forbes Magazine.
3. [As schools expand racial equity work, conservatives see a new threat in critical race theory](#), by Laura Meckler and Hannah Natanson, The Washington Post
4. [What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?](#), by Stephen Sawchuk, Education Week
5. [Four States Have Placed Legal Limits on How Teachers Can Discuss Race. More May Follow](#), by Sarah Schwartz, Education Week.
6. [Critical race theory in the classroom: Understanding the debate](#), by Kiara Alfonseca, ABC News
7. [A Lesson on Critical Race Theory](#), by Janel George, American Bar Association.
8. [What critical race theory is -- and isn't](#), by Faith Karimi, CNN.
9. [Why the panic over "critical race theory" is the perfect right-wing troll](#), by Amanda Marcotte, Salon.

Critical Race Theory, Part 2

(This is the text for [this instagram post](#))

CRT...

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS	TRUTH
1. Is the same thing as Anti Bias Anti Racism Education, Culturally Relevant Teaching, Diversity and Inclusion Training, Multicultural Education, Anti-Racism training	Is an academic framework used mostly in higher education
2. Focuses on racism as an individual act	Focuses on systemic / structural racism
3. Blames white people for all racial inequities in society and atrocities in the past	Recognizes that race and racism are woven into the very fabric of our institutions.
4. Brainwashes students with a socialist, communist, anti-American agenda.	Equips students with the tools to think critically about issues of race, racism, and inequity

5. Forces educators to teach material that makes everyone uncomfortable	Provides educators with a new lens for examining their schooling practices and rethinking their teaching.
6. Makes BIPOC students feel like powerless victims and white students guilty	Raises students' awareness of how policy shapes life outcomes for people of different races
7. Pressures students to become activists and attend violent BLM riots.	Helps students recognize and challenge systems of oppression
8. Reinvents historical narratives and confuses students	Encourages students to critique historical narratives that are told through a white-dominant perspective
9. Divides students into "oppressed" and "oppressor" groups	Increases awareness of how intersecting identities impact one's power and privilege in society
10. Reinforces racial stereotypes and traumatizes students	Recognizes that race is a social construct

In summary, CRT is a framework that helps students develop critical thinking skills, recognize inequities in society, understand the mechanics of systemic racism, and learn how to enact change.

It is important to note that the term CRT has become an all-encompassing catch-all phrase for all antiracism curriculum and has become demonized and weaponized by conservatives. The truth is that the true CRT framework is rarely taught in the K-12 setting and is most often taught at the post-secondary level and in law schools.

A CRT framework can be used to analyze racism across many fields. For example:

Entertainment

- Why is there a lack of representation of BIPOC in lead roles?
- Why are BIPOC entertainers paid significantly less than white entertainers?
- Why are BIPOC characters often relegated to one-dimensional, simplistic character tropes (i.e. the "sassy Black friend")

Literature/Publishing

- Why do children's books have 5X more white characters than Black characters? (2019)
- Why are 95% of published books written by white authors? (2020)
- Why are 90% of book publishing companies white-owned?

Education

- Why are children of color disciplined more frequently and severely?

- Why are Black children disproportionately excluded from gifted and advanced academic programs?
- Why are school teachers and administrators 82% white?

Housing

- Why are houses owned by white people appraised at a value higher than houses owned by Black people in the same neighbourhood?
- Why is it so much harder for racialized people to get a mortgage than white people?
- Why are racialized neighbourhoods so devoid of natural greenspace and often have disproportionately low access to fresh markets/food?

Health

- Why are Black women 3-4X more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women?
- Why are racialized communities the hardest hit by COVID19?
- Why are Black men 70% more likely to die from a stroke than white men?

Policing and the Criminal Justice System

- Why are Black drivers 20% more likely to be stopped than white drivers and searched 2X more than white drivers?
- Why are Black people three times more likely than white people to be killed by police?
- Why are Black people incarcerated five times the rate of white people and for longer sentences for the same crime?

Business and Wealth

- Why are there only 5 Black CEO's on the Fortune 500 list?
- Why is the average income of white families 7 X higher than Black families?
- Why is NFL ownership 97% white?

Politics

- Why do Black Americans face disproportionate barriers to the ballot box?
- Why are there no Black governors in the US government and only 3 Black senators?
(Error in the slide)
- Why has there been only one president of color and one vice-president of color in almost
- 400 years of American government?

The 5 Tenets of CRT in Education (Solórzano, 1998)

- 1) Racism is entrenched in the fabric of American society and is intersectional (compounded by class, gender, sexuality, etc.)
- 2) Dominant narratives in education such as objectivity, meritocracy, color blindness, and equal opportunity need to be challenged.
- 3) The experiential knowledge of people of color is legitimate and crucial to understanding racial inequality (i.e. 'counterstorytelling')

4) Race and racism must be analyzed across many different disciplines (eg. psychology, sociology, history, science, literature, the humanities, the arts, etc.) as well as historically and currently.

5) CRT is committed to social justice and eliminating racism.