

Transformation through CRT, IBT, and DEI?

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The movement known as Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the implicit bias training (IBT) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs are sweeping the nation. California is replete with examples of the implementation of IBT and DEI. Check out the DEI presence on the websites of the CU, CSU, and the California Community Colleges systems; the Public Utilities Commission (sponsor of the California Energy Virtual Summit - Driving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: CA Energy STEM Initiative, April 2021 that brought together the largest energy providers in the state and the higher education community); and CA Department of Justice's newly launched DEI Council. These are a few among many and work in tandem with the bias training bills that are moving through the California legislature. What is CRT, IBT, and DEI and are they harmful or beneficial to citizens and the nation?

A prominent feature of CRT is that all human beings are grouped according to race. A theory advanced by Karl Marx in the nineteenth century saw members of a society not as individuals but as permanent members of a group or class. Marx primarily advanced economic theories that saw free market and industrial economies as harmful to workers (proletariat) because those who owned the means of production or controlled capital (bourgeoisie) were oppressors. The workers had no power and were thus oppressed. Marx's solution was a revolution that would lead to the rise of communism. His best-known work is *The Communist Manifesto*.

Fast forward to more recent times and connect Marx's theory with the critical race theory that dates to a legal-studies movement at Harvard Law School in the 1970s. Advocates of this movement added racial and social components to Marx's perspective of groups over individuals. In a legal setting, instead of the actions of an individual being judged by the rule of law, the theory advocated a broader scope that included among other things a disadvantaged background or racial injustices as considerations when determining innocence or guilt. The aim was to transform the principle of equality before the law by consideration of other factors that went beyond the action or behavior of the accused.

The emphasis on race in CRT is at the forefront of efforts to transform America. Among the means to accomplish it is through programs that emphasize IBT and DEI. At first glance raising awareness to prevent bias and diversity, equity, and inclusion seem to be laudable goals, but pull back the curtain and a different picture emerges. Current implementation is consistent with Marx's vision of the group over the individual and CRT's vision of race-based measures to advance policies and outcomes. They are contrary to America's founding principles, as stated in the Declaration of Independence, that human beings are inherently equal and have natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Executive Orders by Presidents Trump and Biden highlight the divide in America. President Trump issued Executive Order 13950 Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping to preserve the American beliefs in the equality of every individual, no matter their race or country

of origin, and King's dream that his children would one day "not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." In stark contrast, on his first day in office, President Biden signed an Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (13985) that included a revocation of President Trump's EO 13950. President Biden stated his intent in the EO: "It is therefore the policy of my Administration that the Federal Government should pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality." The demand for "equity" instead of "equality" is rooted in the Marxist ideal of class or group struggle, not the self-evident truths of individual rights articulated in the Declaration of Independence.

The American tradition of judging individuals on their merits instead of judging people based upon an assigned group status is thus at grave risk from the division and harm resulting from CRT, IBT, and DEI programs. It is imperative that we act to expose and then defeat these pernicious programs.