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Weaponizing Our Schools: Critical Race Theory and the Racist Assault on America's Students

by Richard L. Cravatts, Ph.D.

Foreword

As the debate over Critical Race Theory has emerged in the media and garnered the attention of the nation, Richard L. Cravatts, Ph.D., has aided us in understanding the insidious nature of this radical new ideology now being taught to American schoolchildren and the myriad ways in which public school students are being groomed to carry out the agendas of the Left.

In the following articles, Cravatts documents and exposes the left's attempts to indoctrinate America's youth through our public schools. We meet Bettina Love, founder of the Abolitionist Teaching Network, a group recently promoted by President Biden's Department of Education, who believes that we must "recognize America and its schools as spaces of Whiteness, White rage, and White Supremacy, all of which function to terrorize students of color." We learn about the children's book *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness (Ordinary Terrible Things)*, which claims that "Racism is a white person's problem and we are all caught up in it" and portrays "whiteness" as a literal deal with a pointy-tailed devil. *Not My Idea* is now being taught to schoolchildren in 30 school districts across America. Meanwhile, 4th and 5th grade students in the Seattle Public School district are taught to question whether "Black Lives Matter in America?" and are presented with skewed data which allegedly prove that police officers, motivated by racism, unjustly murder innocent black men with impunity.

"CRT does not teach tolerance by urging school children

to be kind to each other and treat each other as equals, which it purports to do,” writes Cravatts, “but instead elevates blackness by degrading whiteness, making white people seem to be regressive, intolerant, hateful, and perennially racist as part of their very nature. Thus, CRT is condemned by its critics for branding white children in this way while at the same time telegraphing to black children that they are perpetual victims in a society dominated by whites who are morally defective as a result of their racist core.”

Weaponizing Our Schools is an essential read for anyone concerned about the future of public education in America.
-Sara Dogan, National Campus Director, David Horowitz Freedom Center

Radical Educators Who Want to Tear Down Public Education

An obsession with race and deconstructing ‘white supremacy.’

Department of Education officials were embarrassed recently when it was revealed by multiple sources that a guide the Department had made available to more than 13,000 school districts to help schools reopen in the wake of Covid 19, [“ED COVID-19 HANDBOOK: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students’ Needs,”](#) included a link to a radical education organization, the Abolitionist Teaching Network (ATN)

Bettina Love, University of Georgia professor and a founder of the ATN, has been very clear that modest modifications in the schools will be insufficient for the type of change she desires, that an entire dismantling of the racist system she and her fellow travelers believe created and controls public education must take

place. “We are not interested in reform or small measures that do not target the root of the problem,” she said, “which is racism and ‘whiteness’ that is deeply embedded within education.

In her 2019 book, *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, Love revealed that, in her mind, racism was systemic, destructive, and endemic in schools, and that disruptive steps have to be taken to tear down the old system and replace it with a new, post-racial one. “To even begin to attack our destructive and punitive educational system,” she wrote, “pedagogies that promote social justice must . . . help educators understand and recognize America and its schools as spaces of Whiteness, White rage, and White Supremacy, all of which function to terrorize students of color.”

An ATN publication, its *“Guide for Racial Justice & Abolitionist Social and Emotional Learning,”* is a resource for “abolitionist” teaching and asserts, ludicrously, that current teaching in public schools “can be a covert form of policing used to punish, criminalize, and control Black, Brown, and Indigenous children and communities to adhere to White norms” and that these “frameworks are weaponized against Black, Brown, and Indigenous children and communities.” While there is exhaustive discussion in the guide of ways schools should be restructured to serve the needs of non-white students, white students are completely ignored, the assumption being that white supremacy has been in place too long and an upending of the old paradigm needs to take place. How would that happen? The guide suggests, for a start, eliminating “all punitive or disciplinary practices that spirit murder Black, Brown, and Indigenous children” and providing “Reparations for Children of Color stolen by the school-to-prison pipeline.”

The guide also includes a number of flighty, essentially meaningless “Abolitionist Teacher’s Demands,” including: “Curriculum that reflects People of Color and their contributions, humanity, and joy;” “Teaching standards, learning standards, and teacher evaluations that are grounded in the pursuit of Black, Brown, and Indigenous liberation, criticality, excellence, and joy;” “School-wide culture committed to restorative justice for all members of the school community;” a bucket of Age of Aquarius-like empty language meant to help woke teachers envision a new age of education dedicated to non-white children.

Tellingly, however, there is no discussion in this guide about how the educational needs of white students will be addressed in this brave new world of public education, no mention of how any of these paroxysms of liberation will help black children learn and achieve more academically, how any of this tearing down of the existing system and replacing it with a kinder, gentler model of race-focused instruction will help either white or non-white students learn math, history, writing, science, and other fundamental knowledge that public schools were presumably created to impart.

When did school boards and parents decide that the central role of contemporary public school education—at a time when test scores and overall achievement in basic academic skills have been in decline—is to focus on race, to obsess about racial and social justice, to indoctrinate children about their respective roles as either oppressors (if they are white) and oppressed victims (if they are black), and to use schools as training camps for grooming activists to try to reshape society through restorative justice, social equity, critical theory, and the demonization of whiteness and the notion of white supremacy?

The simple answer is that such decisions were never

made, and that graduate schools of education, teachers' unions, social activists, the Black Lives Matter movement, and assorted race hustlers who profit from forcing well-intentioned people to see everything through the lens of race have taken it upon themselves to deconstruct existing public school education and to attempt to transform schools into places where identity politics are promoted, refined, and used as a way of galvanizing power and influence, both within school systems and outside in the broader American society.

Public school education was not created as a way of facilitating social engineering, other than its desire to create citizens who were literate, familiar with history and science, and who could become productive voters, workers, and parents in later life.

But no one ever assumed, nor was permission given, for teachers to radically shift the emphasis from the important basic knowledge of writing, reading, and math to radically and relentlessly focusing on race, tolerance, bigotry, victimization, oppression, white supremacy, and social justice and trying to shape the moral and social values of young minds.

Why is this even important in the first place, other than when it is part of a discussion about historic racism and current events? Who decided teachers have the responsibility or even the right to teach this theory—which is what it actually is, a theory, not fact—that white children are by virtue of their skin color alone irredeemable racists and black children, also by virtue of their skin color, are permanent victims of white oppression and white supremacy?

Who decided that it is a fact that racism is so systemic that black children, as a result, are plunged into a pipeline that leads directly from schools to prisons, so punishment for

errant school behavior –truancy, assaults on teachers and other students, carrying weapons—should be abolished and school resource officers (SROs) should be prohibited in schools?

The abolitionists assume, naively, that the mere presence of SROs in schools causes the bad behavior of black students, making it more likely for them to be expelled and thus hampering their lives and condemning them to criminality and prison as adults. But metal detectors, SROs, and zero tolerance for weapons policies exist in schools because there was obviously a problem that had to be addressed and school systems implemented measures to protect students and staff from misbehavior and criminal activity of some students. The abolitionists, of course, are reversing cause and effect: the criminal activity of some students preceded the presence of tactics to confront and punish such behavior, not the other way around.

The question that should be being asked is, why is it that black students are more likely to be punished, expelled, or pushed toward a life a crime and possibly prison, too? A 2021 report from the Brookings Institution found that black students were overrepresented in arrests compared to their percentage of the population. While the Brookings report likely wanted to expose latent racism in the higher incidence of arrests among black students, it is also possible that they are arrested in greater numbers because they commit offenses on school grounds in greater numbers, not that they are selectively arrested based on race. “Black students comprised 36 percent of arrests in the 2015–2016 school year, despite accounting for only 15 percent of the student body,” the report found. “Meanwhile, 33 percent of those arrested were white, despite representing 50 percent of students. In Washington D.C., Black girls are nearly six times more likely to be suspended from school than white girls.”

Is it the very presence of school resource officers in the schools and zero tolerance for certain offenses that results in higher numbers of black offenders, or is it possible that black students are more likely, for a host of other reasons, to be both the perpetrators of the in-school crimes and the victims of punishment for that behavior, something that has nothing to do with the race of the child who committed the offense and everything to do with personal responsibility and the parenting and values of that particular child?

Even the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA) has entered the discussion of racial equity and restorative justice in schools and made some unproven assumptions about systemic racism. In its [“Racial Justice In Education”](#) resource guide, for example, the NEA claims that racism is pervasive in schools, resulting in inequitable treatment of minorities. “The persistence of deep racial disparities and divisions across society is evidence of institutional racism,” the guide suggested, “the routine, often invisible and unintentional, production of inequitable social opportunities and outcomes. When racial equity is not consciously addressed, racial inequality is often unconsciously replicated.” And in discussing the school-to-prison pipeline, the guide promised that, in language similar to that heard in the current defund-the-police campaign, the NEA would “Deliver trainings for educators and students on the school-to-prison-pipeline (STPP) . . . , trainings for board members, educators and students on mass incarceration and criminal justice reform . . . , [and] Develop restorative justice campaigns aimed at reducing suspensions, expulsions, zero tolerance policies and disciplinary referrals among students of color . . . ,” including “a campaign to eliminate resource officers from schools and initiate agreements between schools and police departments.”

The American public school system was created and designed to educate all children, regardless of race. The notion that the existing educational system should be abolished, reimagined, and radically transformed into something that has as its motivating mission to be anti-racist, anti-white, and serve primarily the psychological, emotional, and educational well-being of children of color is ludicrous. Blacks comprise some 13% of the U.S. population and, much like other minority groups in America, they deserve to be protected from any bias or discrimination in their school experience; but the entire public school system obviously cannot and should not focus almost exclusively on their cultural and intellectual needs, any more than it should on the white majority of this nation. It is perfectly acceptable for educators to want to teach children to be tolerant of other races and to promote learning that helps eliminate bias, bigotry, and hate. But that is not the public school system's primary role, nor, obviously, is creating a new paradigm of reverse racism where hatred of white people and whiteness is taught and justified and the coddling of non-whites is seen to be not only just but a moral necessity. Parents of white children clearly will not find that new way of dealing with race acceptable—nor the appropriate role of educators to promote—and many thoughtful black parents, it would seem, might also take offense at having their children labeled as permanent victims of institutionalized racism.

CRT and the current trend in education embodied in the Abolitionist Teaching Network, the NEA, Black Lives Matter in School, and other race-obsessed organizations to racialize everything to do with learning and then divide children—and teachers—based on race is an example of counter-productive, divisive racial narcissism that reflects a struggle for political and social power as part of the currency of identity politics.

That these efforts are masked by good intentions and the expressed desire to foster tolerance and the end of racism in schools and the society outside the schoolyard cannot disguise the true motivation of these ethnic machinations and the destructive ideology behind it. Parents, elected officials, school boards, and valiant teachers have to stand up to this hijacking of instruction and push back against the interests who are attempting to tear down a whole system in a disingenuous effort to promote what, ultimately, is clearly a radical agenda of reverse racism.

Teaching School Children the Evil of Whiteness

School books that promote a hatred of white people and police.

In a 1963 [interview](#) with Louis Lomax, Nation of Islam spokesman Malcolm X, commenting on white people, said that “The white devil’s time is up . . .,” and that “Anybody who rapes, and plunders, and enslaves, and steals, and drops hell bombs on people . . . anybody who does these things is nothing but a devil.” NOI’s Louis Farrakhan has often repeated the same slur about white people being satanic, and such language has long been part of the organization’s radical, anti-white discourse and ideology.

What is surprising, however, is that this same view—of whiteness being linked to the devil in a satanic pact through which white people are given supremacy, power, and wealth—has made its way into a children’s book used in school districts all over the country.

Written by a white woman, Anastasia Higginbotham, [*Not my Idea: A Book About Whiteness \(Ordinary Terrible Things\)*](#), at first appears to be an innocuous picture book about race, but

its not-so-subtle “anti-whiteness” message is part of the race indoctrination being promoted in public schools as part of critical race theory (CRT) and the ideology which teaches children that white people are irredeemable racist oppressors and blacks are perpetual victims of that oppressive white supremacy and racism. *Not My Idea* tells the story of a white family in which the white parents shelter their child from the reality of police violence against black people, the suggestion being that white people turn a blind eye to this form of racial injustice and, in not standing up against it and teaching their children to do so also, they are complicit in that injustice and in perpetuating white supremacy.

Higginbotham (pictured above) clearly was inspired by her self-loathing at being white and presents her assumptions as facts for the young readers in her book. “Whiteness is the reason these killings by police happen,” she said in an [interview](#), “the white cultural mindset that tells us white is good and innocent, while Black is bad and dangerous.”

She also has apparently bought into the false and dangerous view, promoted most notably by the Black Lives Matter movement, that white police officers frequently and maliciously kill unarmed black people because of systemic and prevalent racism, a belief, however, that is not actually supported by facts or reality. “Whiteness is the reason cops make split-second decisions to fire their weapons into the body of an unarmed person who is Black,” Higginbotham suggested, “while not even reaching for their weapon during interactions with armed and violent criminals who are white.”

CRT clearly has as its guiding intention to change what Higginbotham referred to as “the white cultural mindset that tells us white is good and innocent, while Black is bad

and dangerous.” In fact, CRT and books like this one have as their express purpose to flip this paradigm on its head, so that children are now being indoctrinated with the idea that whiteness is essentially bad, negative, oppressive, cruel, and racist, and that blackness, because of its victim status and as a result of its oppression, is virtuous and innocent. CRT does not teach tolerance by urging school children to be kind to each other and treat each other as equals, which it purports to do, but instead elevates blackness by degrading whiteness, making white people seem to be regressive, intolerant, hateful, and perennially racist as part of their very nature. Thus, CRT is condemned by its critics for branding white children in this way while at the same time telegraphing to black children that they are perpetual victims in a society dominated by whites who are morally defective as a result of their racist core.

Not My Idea has found its way into classrooms and on reading lists of more than [30 school districts in 15 states](#) around the country, and critics are particularly troubled by one section of the book in which a white character with the red pointed tail of the devil presents a Faustian bargain with the book’s main character with a “Contract Binding you to Whiteness.” After announcing that “WHITENESS IS A BAD DEAL, It always was,” children read the satanic contract which, for the white recipient, promises offers of “stolen land,” “stolen riches” and “special favors,” presumably derived from, and to the detriment of, people of color. In exchange for “WHITENESS” which gets “your soul,” the recipient is able “to mess endlessly with the lives of your friends, neighbors, loved ones and all fellow humans of COLOR” and, of course, “for the purpose of profit,” reinforced graphically with the image of a \$20 bill blazoned behind the contract and flames of hell.

Documents for a lawsuit by the Southeastern Legal

Foundation, *Deemar v. Board of Education of the City of Evanston/Skokie (“District 65”)*, noted that “in 2020 and 2021, all teachers from Pre-K through fifth grade [in the district] were instructed to read aloud” from *Not My Idea*, including such views that “Racism is a white person’s problem and we are all caught up in it . . . ;” “Even people you love may behave in ways that show they think they are the good ones . . . ;” “In the United States of America, white people have committed outrageous crimes against Black people for four hundred years . . . ;” and “White supremacy has been lying to kids for centuries.”

The lawsuit further revealed how teachers purposely use the book to indoctrinate students with the notion of the permanence and evil of white supremacy. “District 65,” the lawsuit read, “also instructed fifth grade teachers to repeat out loud to students, ‘The author says that grown ups hide scary things from kids because they are scared too. This is called burying the truth . . . It is something many White people do to ignore racism when they feel uncomfortable.’” Additionally, those same teachers were instructed “to repeat out loud to students, ‘Pretending not to see color is called color blindness. Color blindness helps racism. . . . Many White people use color blindness to ignore the problem of racism.’”

Imagine for a moment the paroxysms of outrage that would arise were the language of this book changed and the devil in the story had made a contract with another ethnic group, as it did here with white people, along with language that defined what characteristics that group would have. Would language be tolerated by teachers and school boards that described Muslims, for example, as perpetually engaged in jihad against infidels, who subjugate women and behead and stone unbelievers and apostates, who do not accommodate other faiths and demand that other religions live in dhimmitude, and who are the most

frequent perpetrators of terrorism? What if the story was revised and instead of white people it was Jews making the contract with the devil, for which they were given control of the media, ownership of banks and great wealth, dual loyalty to the U.S. and Israel, and the ability to initiate and profit from all wars? Would educators notice that bigoted language?

Or, even more relevant to this discussion about race, if the devil had contracted with black people in this story and attributed to them behavior which included over-representation in prison populations and the commission of crimes, fatherless homes, high percentages of black children born out of wedlock, low academic achievement compared to other ethnic groups, and a breakdown of the nuclear family in black communities, how would teachers react to that list of ascribed characteristics and what is the likelihood that such a book would ever find its way onto a public school reading list in the first place? Of course, none of these alternate versions would ever be adopted by educators precisely because, even if some of the assertions are truthful, they are animated by toxic stereotypes and bigotry and would be immediately rejected by any schools, woke or otherwise.

Another children's book, *Something Happened in Our Town (A Child's Story About Racial Injustice)* is being used by educators to promote the notion that white law enforcement is biased against black people and randomly and frequently murders black people without cause. In the book, children read about an unarmed black man who is shot by police accidentally, even though, as Michael Brown was alleged to have done, held his arms up to surrender. When a little girl asks, "why did the police shoot that man?" her father replies that "the police thought he had a gun." But the girl's sister contends that "It wasn't a mistake." "The cops shot him because he was Black."

Moreover, according to the girl's mother, although "shooting him was a mistake," "It was a mistake that is part of a pattern." And what is this pattern the book suggested guides law enforcement in its interaction with black people? The mother suggests that "this pattern is being nice to White people and mean to Black people. It's an unfair pattern." Further, the book suggested, "cops stick together and don't like black people" and the victim who was shot and killed by the police in the story "wouldn't even have been stopped if the driver was white."

Older children are introduced to another popular, though problematic book, *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*, co-authored by Jason Reynolds and the controversial "anti-racist" Ibram X. Kendi. In the "Educators Guide, Ages 12 and Up" for the book, teachers are instructed to push radical views onto students, including the idea that public education itself is racist and "Racist ideas rooted in legislation shape the institution of education and its outcomes for Black children, while the nation's leaders assert that color blindness is the solution for racism."

"In *Stamped*," the guide continued in suggesting what the key themes are that should be taught in the classroom, "Reynolds exposes and debunks the myths of several master narrative themes such as: America is a meritocracy and anyone who works hard enough can succeed; truth and justice (or law and order) should be valued; people should be colorblind." Even some of the core values and virtues which define the United States are attacked in the suggested lesson plans, including the notion in the book that "Racist ideas, along with economic greed, are central to the formation of this nation, its laws, policies, and practices. Meritocracy and the American Dream narrative are rooted in whiteness."

Virtue signaling teachers and school boards who select and use these types of books to divide children and make them more aware of the color of their skin, and more aware of what their peers think about them depending on whether they are black or white, are clearly not promoting tolerance or racial justice, as many of them purport to be doing.

In fact, they are violating both the intent and spirit of 14th Amendment protections which guarantee equal protection to all citizens. CRT divides the world into black and white, with specific and permanent characteristics assigned to each group of children depending on their skin color, exactly what the courts have found to be in violation of the law.

“Classifications of citizens based solely on race,” the Court found in a 1993 [decision](#), “are by their nature odious to a free people whose institutions are founded upon the doctrine of equality, because they threaten to stigmatize persons by reason of their membership in a racial group and to incite racial hostility,” something which, it would seem, would be antithetical to the mission and purpose of public education, especially in the pursuit of racial equity and social justice.

The National Education Association’s Radical Agenda for Public Education

Turning classrooms into indoctrination centers for social activism.

One positive aspect of the vigorous current debate over critical race theory (CRT) being taught in public schools is that parents and other interested parties have a new awareness of what is being taught in their children’s classrooms. The criticism has also resulted in educators closing ranks against a

questioning of their perceived role in promoting a leftist, radical ideology that many think has no place in public school systems.

In a July 6th speech at an American Federation of Teachers (AFT) meeting, Randi Weingarten, the organization's left-leaning president, defended the teaching about race and pushed back against critics who questioned the educational and moral validity of CRT being part of a school curriculum.

"Let's be clear," Weingarten proclaimed, mendaciously, "critical race theory is not taught in elementary schools or high schools." And answering back defiantly to anyone who questioned how the current teaching about race may be divisive rather than educational, she further claimed that ". . . culture warriors are labeling any discussion of race, racism or discrimination as CRT to try to make it toxic. They are bullying teachers and trying to stop us from teaching students accurate history."

Weingarten and other educators, including local boards across the country, have been walking back their previous vigorous defense of CRT, claiming instead, as she did, that teaching about race and white supremacy is merely "accurate history," and not part of a campaign to indoctrinate students with an ideological mishmash of racial justice, activism, white police brutality, social and economic disparities between whites and so-called "people of color," and a culture of white supremacy in which the privilege of the majority disadvantages and oppresses black victims.

But Weingarten's protestation aside, the National Education Association (NEA) -- with some 1,680,000 members -- and other educators groups are not only actively engaged in promoting CRT but are creating learning environments in which students are bombarded with an increasingly radical set

of lesson plans, some taught in conjunction with Black Lives Matter at School Week and some part of regular instruction, that teach children a one-sided view of race, law enforcement, class, family structure, crime, and economics—topics that have not heretofore been a central, or even appropriate, part of K-12 education.

What began as a well-intentioned attempt to teach tolerance and anti-racism in schools—a perfectly acceptable and reasonable component of a child’s education—has widened into an ideological campaign that permeates school curricula and exposes children to a set of radical, leftist ideas about race and society that are certainly not mainstream, even if they should be taught in public schools in the first place.

Some components of that ideological campaign were revealed at the NEA meeting, in fact, in one matter adopted by members, [New Business Item 39](#). Contrary to Weingarten’s minimizing CRT’s presence, the resolution committed the NEA members to “Share and publicize, through existing channels, information already available on critical race theory . . . [and] have a team of staffers for members who want to learn more and fight back against anti-CRT rhetoric; and share information with other NEA members as well as their community members.”

And lest there be any doubt about how committed the NEA members are to leftist ideology, the contorted language of this business item affirms the promotion of “an already-created, in-depth, study that critiques empire, white supremacy, anti-Blackness, anti-Indigeneity, racism, patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy [sic], capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism, and other forms of power and oppression at the intersections of our society, and that we oppose attempts to ban critical race theory and/or *The 1619 Project*.”

Not only is the NEA actively engaged in promoting CRT, but, contrary to Weingarten's public denials, it plans to fund an effort to attack and discredit any critics of CRT in the schools, including the controversial and discredited [1619 Project](#) that attempts "to place the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of the story we tell ourselves about who we are as a country."

The NEA's obsession with race, social justice, and victimization permeates the organization's ideology and its notion of what should be taught, and propagandized, in public schools. In an NEA resource guide, "Racial Justice in Education," for example, the organization lays out for teachers a group of what they term "Guiding Principles on Racial & Social Justice in Education." The NEA's "vision for public education," the guide proclaims, "advances inclusion, equity, and racial and social justice in our schools and society."

Whether it is the primary, or even secondary, role of public education to promote social justice in society is a discussion that may be worthwhile to have before educators commit to it fully and design teaching programs to advance this leftist agenda and indoctrinate children with its tenets.

The bias in the NEA's vision is revealed in some of the subsequent language of the guide, particularly such baffle-gab as the proclamation that teachers' "work must dismantle white supremacy, and ensure that bigotry or discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, disability or national origin are not part of our classrooms, educational curricula, school policies and discipline practices," and, in a nod to the factually incorrect notion that white law enforcement brutalizes minorities, that "schools must be safe for all students, and free from state-sanctioned, racialized, and gender-based violence."

Teachers are encouraged to engage as social activists—and to pass on that engagement to their students—by other teaching resources, as well. On an NEA-sponsored website, edjustice.com, for example, one of the recommended books is *Teaching for Black Lives*, a Rethinking Schools publication. The book’s introduction challenges teachers to enlist in a campaign for racial equity, and, in fact, to transform classrooms into centers of resistance, with students, presumably, complicit activists.

“The ferocity of racism in the United States against black minds and black bodies demands that teachers fight back,” the book’s introduction reads, and the editors “see this collection as playing an important role in highlighting the ways educators can and should make their classrooms and schools sites of resistance to white supremacy and anti-Blackness”

Even though one would expect that teaching basic skills of language, history, mathematics, science, and other disciplines is the primary role of educators, according to the editors of this book, teachers “must organize against anti-blackness amongst our colleagues and in our communities; we must march against police brutality in the streets; and we must teach for Black lives in our classrooms.”

Black Lives Matter, of course, had seeped into school instruction prior to George Floyd’s death, at which point its visibility and adoption accelerated at a dizzying rate. But educators had already begun to adopt some of the movement’s principles and ideology, and particularly those aspects which called on supporters to become activists in the cause of racial justice.

Support for BLM is fine for adult citizens who wish to promote racial equity in American society. Whether it is appropriate for children to have to absorb its worldview—

much of it animated with hatred for the police, a vision of a fundamentally and irredeemably racist society, Marxist and anti-Semitic elements, and other less than savory aspects of the movement—is another question, but the NEA and many teachers apparently feel it is their duty to indoctrinate students with this particular view of racism and American society.

Teaching for Black Lives' introduction admits that one of its sections, "Making Black Lives Matter in Our Schools," has as its purpose to show "how police violence and the movement for Black lives can explicitly be brought to schools and classrooms by educators through organizing mass action and through curriculum" and how "it is also important for students and teachers to understand their roles in organizing in support of Black life and Black communities, and against anti-Black racism" through "the hope and beauty of student activism and collective action."

If the prevailing ideology in classrooms, based on these curricular materials, is one that divides children by race, black and white, oppressed and oppressor, victimizer and victim, privileged and unprivileged, then one has to question what exactly the purpose of this teaching is. Who does it benefit? Public schools are not civil rights organizations where activists committed to a particular cause work to address that problem in the wider world and attain racial harmony, peace, economic equity, or some other social good. These are public school classrooms, places where now a white student, regardless of whether he or she has any actual bias in them, will be considered privileged, oppressive, and part of the hateful, bigoted white majority.

Given how the left and Democrats spent the last four years labeling Trump supporters and conservatives as white

supremacists, it is obvious now that where once a white supremacist, as it was widely understood, would be wearing a sheet or have a swastika tattooed on his arm, now, in the post-Trump era, a white child encountering this instruction whose parents wear a MAGA hat or vote Republican may think of himself as irredeemably racist, immoral, and part of the white culture that oppresses and denigrates people of color and who supports the left’s fantasies about empire, colonialism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and police and state violence.

And not content to merely enlist educators in the campaign to obsess on the racist defects of the United States—and to promote that view to impressionable students—teachers additionally try to prepare students for social activism, even recruiting elementary school-aged children to become foot soldiers in the cause of social justice.

A 2019 Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action [“Lesson and Activity Plan Links for Elementary School,”](#) for example, designed for use by grades 3-5 but which “may include lessons appropriate for K-2 as well,” is a lesson plan for teaching “Activism, Organizing and Resistance.” In one of the lesson plan’s modules, students are taught “Art and Activism” purportedly as a way of learning about tolerance. While parading as an art activity, the activity “capitalizes on children’s natural relationship to art by prompting them to examine the ways art relates to community leadership and activism,” [with individual lessons on “Art and Community Activism. Who Are the Activists in My Community?”](#) [“Art and LGBT Rights: Study of Symbols”](#) and [“Art and Social Justice: What is a Portrait?”](#)

In another module, “Resistance Stories (#teachresistance),” students are directed to read stories about activists “in order to consider ideas around economic justice and protest as a means to

achieve change.” Once they have read the stories and discussed them in class, they “will then consider ways that they can take a stand about a social issue within their own school or community that concerns them” and “. . . then explore issues in their own communities and engage in a form of activism to address that issue.” And, as an indication that the teachers are anything if not up to date in their use of tactics to disseminate their ideology, the lesson plan also “introduces children to different ways young people have used the internet to work toward positive social change.” An additional, somewhat self-serving part of the lesson plan is the section called “Exploring Teacher Strikes,” during which, through role-playing, “Children explore the reasons why teachers have gone on strikes by engaging in role-playing,” helpful support in the event that teachers want to strike on behalf of BLM, Covid safety, or some other cause that would necessitate them leaving the classroom to extract higher salaries from taxpayers in their districts.

This, of course, is not teaching; it is political indoctrination. This type of lesson plan and curricula, together with such instructional resources as *Teaching for Black Lives* and Black Lives Matter at School Week, are one-sided, left-leaning, well-intentioned but divisive tools that have questionable educational value in the first place, and are clearly being shoved down the throats of public school children who find themselves being categorized in groups based on whether they are black or white—the very definition of racism—in a purported effort to combat intolerance in American society.

But by forcing children to assume their roles as either victimizer or victim in what is described as an irredeemably racist society, the NEA and educators are doing a great disservice to public school students who should be judged, as Dr. King put it, not on the color of their skin, but on the content of their

character.

Schooled in Hate

Teaching black kids in public schools to hate the police.

When some 200 parents crowded into a highly charged, heated Loudoun County, Virginia school board hearing on June 22nd to air their displeasure with curricula and teaching in area schools, they were expressing the same discontent that parents across the country have more increasingly begun to feel as they witness the radical ideology that informs much of public-school education today. Though one teacher did give a powerful statement on how she disagreed with the hijacking of education by a core group of teachers with a leftist, extreme ideology, the school board, and presumably a majority of the district's teachers, were obdurate in their defense of current practices in public school education.

At hand in this case was a debate about transgender policy proposals requiring Loudoun County Public Schools employees to use students' preferred names or pronouns. The use of artificial pronouns, randomly chosen by children or adults who arbitrarily decide to shift their gender, and the whole emphasis on transgender rights and how they impact decisions about school bathrooms, among other items, is part of the chronic indoctrination taking place in schools where woke teachers, captivated by paroxysms of tolerance, virtue signaling, and political correctness, have attempted to deflect parental opposition and tailor instruction so that students receive a highly-politicized, radical education—much of what passes for learning being little more than in-school training for activism and a new generation obsessed with race and their role as either oppressed or oppressor,

The scene at the Loudoun County meeting has been playing out with increasing frequency around the country, with parents expressing similar sentiments about their unhappiness with the content and ideology behind much of what passes today as pedagogy. Rather than being understanding of parents' concerns, teachers and school boards are increasingly combative, pushing back against parental complaints, rejecting suggestions for more transparency with curricula and teaching materials, and expressing outright indignation at the notion that parents—the very taxpayers who pay the salaries for teachers and bloated school system bureaucracies—should push back against the practices of the Nanny State, a society in which the government, not the family, instructs on morality, culture, race, sexuality, and faith—much more than the reading, writing, and arithmetic that public school education was nominally created to teach.

More troubling is the fact that educators keep pushing the boundaries of acceptable content for curricula, widely incorporating, as one current problematic topic, critical race theory (CRT) into teaching so that black students are taught they are victims and oppressed by virtue of their blackness alone and white children taught that they are the privileged oppressors by virtue of the color of their skin.

CRT has gained traction by race-obsessed educators seeking “restorative justice” or racial equity, with the unproven assumption that making permanent victims out of minority students and guilt-tripping white kids because of their alleged privilege somehow ameliorates and transcends racism, but many are unconvinced that CRT is anything more than leftist ideology designed to shift power to marginalized groups by maligning and labeling the white majority as irredeemable racists.

The obsession with race in public school instruction gained even more oxygen with the ascent of the Black Lives Matter movement, and the renewed focus on racial injustices exposed by the death last year of George Floyd gave new urgency and justification to further indoctrinating children about racism, and, after several of the high-profile police shootings of black suspects, law enforcement's interaction with black America.

As part of National Black Lives Matter at School Week, an ethnic studies "Identity Lesson" from the Seattle Public School system, for example, "Do Black Lives Matter in America?," designed for use with 4th and 5th graders, had the obviously biased theme of "Police Violence" and was clearly designed to instill in young minds a mistrust of and contempt for police officers.

The lesson plan instructs that "Students will use current statistical data to determine whether black people are being treated fairly by American law enforcement" after they have been helpfully provided with a one-sided view of police-involved shootings on a website called *Mapping Police Violence*, in which police enforcing the law, of course, is characterized as "violence." The elementary school children led to the inflammatory website discover in bold headlines that "Police have killed 482 people in 2021," "Black people are most likely to be killed by police," "Police violence is changing over time," "Police killed Black people at higher rates than white people in 47 of the 50 largest US cities," "There is no accountability" for police who shoot black suspects, and even if black criminals *are* committing crimes, so-called police violence is actually "not about crime" because "Levels of violent crime in US cities do not determine rates of police violence."

Is this a productive and useful message to drill into young

students' minds: that police are predominantly racist murderers who randomly kill black young men without any justification? That there is an epidemic of so-called police violence in America's urban centers that focuses almost exclusively on black suspects?

Is mistrust of law enforcement a positive message for any students, and especially for black students in inner-city neighborhoods where their interaction with police officers is statistically more likely? Will not these preconceived, ill-advised, and factually incorrect attitudes about police behavior be likely to make black adolescents disrespect law enforcement? Might it subtly encourage them to resist arrest in the event they are stopped and questioned? Make them more apt to believe that criminal behavior is justifiable if the law enforcement establishment is itself immoral, murderous, dangerous to minorities, and acts in illegal ways on a regular basis?

In fact, the narrative that white police officers are killing unarmed, innocent young black men at a rate that is excessive and based on racism is a complete inversion of the truth. There are approximately 10 million arrests annually and out of that number only 1000 suspects are shot and killed by police; a *Washington Post* database indicated that actually, since 2015, ninety-one percent of black men killed in police shootings were armed and that only 2% of the victims of police shootings were unarmed black men.

The Washington Post's database also revealed that, far from there being an epidemic of killings by police of unarmed black people, as the media and BLM movement have been widely and loudly claiming, in 2019, there were actually only 14 unarmed black victims (compared to 25 unarmed white victims). And those 14 black victims, while being unarmed, may well have

been resisting arrest, assaulting the police officer, going for a weapon, or about to harm either himself or others. That they were unarmed did not mean they were not engaged in, or had previously been engaged in, criminal behavior.

Apparently, the conclusion that teachers wish children to come to, revealed by the Seattle lesson plan as one example, is that there is widespread, blatant racism in the behavior of white police officers that compels them to use disproportionate deadly force against black people in an unjust, illegal, immoral way.

There is, of course, an alternate interpretation of those facts, one which is actually the truthful conclusion that one would come to when honestly reviewing that data. Black people, it is true, are only 13% of the U.S. population, but they also make up 60% of prison populations. Are those high numbers the result of racism on the part of the entire criminal justice system, including police officers, or could it be something else? Could it be that black men are killed in interactions with law enforcement because they are more likely to be involved in criminal activity? That would also explain why they are over-represented in prison populations, as well. But this has nothing to do with the racism of white police officers and everything to do with the behavior of black men.

So, instead of having an elaborate graph indicating the national locations of police shootings where a black person was shot, educators' way of driving home this misleading and false narrative of police racism toward black people, it might have been just as instructive, for instance, to have a graph indicating the frequency and location of shootings where black people were killed, not by police, but by other black people. Unlike the minuscule percentage of instances where white police killed black men, the percentage of black people killed by other black

people, according to the FBI's [Universal Crime Report](#), is a staggering 90%.

Instead of instilling fear in impressionable children about murderous police officers looking for black victims, they may be better served by understanding that black-on-black crime is a far more grievous and prevalent problem than the rare, though still unfortunate, instances when unarmed suspects are shot by the police. In Cook County, home to Chicago, for example, out of the 875 victims who died from gun violence last year, 78% were black, even though only slightly more than 26% of Cook County's residents are black. A 2019 report by the Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute noted that while the number of adolescents killed by a firearm in Chicago in 2016 was approximately three times the national rate, for Chicago's young black men between the ages of 15 and 19, that rate was nearly 50 times the national rate between 2013 and 2017.

Perhaps some of these young black men, who frequently grow up in fatherless homes (estimated to include over 57% of black children) and join gangs as part of their adolescent development, would be less likely to enter that life and embrace criminal behavior if they were taught personal responsibility, morality, a striving for academic and professional success, and a desire to become a productive member of society instead of being indoctrinated in classrooms by counter-factual information about an endemically racist, murderous law enforcement system which is not to be trusted and which has malign intentions whenever it interacts with the black community.

Obviously, police brutality, and especially if it is inspired by racism, is something that should be universally denounced, just as it generally is—including by law enforcement itself which does not wish for its ranks to be tarnished by the misbehavior

of a very few bad actors. But an elementary school curriculum that portrays *all* law enforcement as being capriciously violent; that asserts white police officers target and disfavor black suspects in the enforcement of justice; that suggests that police officers unnecessarily use deadly, dangerous tactics against suspects during arrests, particularly with black suspects; that promotes the notion that incarcerated minorities are in prison without justification and as a result of their skin color; that lends credibility to the naïve and dangerous idea that “restorative justice” requires defunding police departments and substituting them with some kinder, gentler form of social protection; and that convinces black children to never trust law enforcement and the justice system because it is irredeemably racist and will never treat them fairly—all of these ideas, clearly articulated in the Seattle school system example, serve absolutely no purpose in helping minority children prepare for roles as citizens in what should be a color-blind society.

When did it become the appropriate role of public school teachers to be social activists who promote a left-wing, radical view of law enforcement to impressionable children? Why are these biased, toxic views of police being taught at all to grammar school-aged children, particularly when so much of the content is either lacking context, contorted, or counter-factual? Why the obsessive focus on black interaction, and only black interaction, with law enforcement and the one-sided approach which vilifies and condemns white officers?

If teachers want to assume the responsibility for teaching morals and tolerance, they might better concentrate on building a child’s self-esteem in a way that, instead of labeling them as a perennial victim in a racist society controlled by white privilege, encourages the development of productive individuals with the ability to embrace opportunity in a color-blind society in which

they can prosper and co-exist with their non-minority peers.

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