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MAC Arrow

Unitarian Universalist
Multiracial Unity Action Council
(UUMUAC)



“For the Unity of the
light and dark skinned
people of the world.”

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The Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Action Caucus to carry out and foster anti-racist and multiracial unity activities both within and outside the Unitarian Universalist Association through education, bearing witness and other actions, and expansion of our membership both within and outside the walls of our congregations.

We also seek to defend our UU Principles against those who seek to undermine them.

The Vision Statement

We envision our congregations, denomination, and society as not being color blind but color appreciative; as judging and treating members of the world’s rank and file by the content of their character, not the color of their skin or their cultural heritage; and as treasuring diversity in the context of the “Beloved Community.” We call this vision Multiracial Unitarian Universalism.

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The Voice of Them That Crieth in the Wilderness: A Narratological Summary of the First Annual UUMUAC Conference, under the theme of The Upsurge of the New Forms of Academic Racism

By Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell

I. The First Annual UUMUAC Conference was a qualified success, establishing us as a major player in the struggle to reform the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUAC).

A. The first element of the success was the keynote speech by Sister Anne Schneider, a committed UUAC member and a former academic at Arizona State University with a focus on social policy and the author of the well regarded book, dealing with the nature of the white supremacy culture theory.

1. She emphasized four key points. First of all, she laid out an explanation about the nature of white supremacy culture.

2. Then she explained how the UUA leaders assigned the task of developing our Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression strategy got caught up in this kind of analysis.

3. Next she outlined why it is dangerous to both the UUAC and society in general because how it hardens racial division with false analyses with enough truth to make the falsity seem valid.

4. Finally, she came up with a series of proposals on what a truly social justice, anti-racist program should look like; e.g., supporting programs which will allow rank and file folks to acquire housing, especially black and brown workers; programs which would encourage the development of community policing, etc.

Let us now examine the second part of the program.

II. The next major activity in our morning plenary was our panel discussion, moderated by Carl Wolf. The panel dealt with the ideology of academic racism which is the intellectual source of the neo-racist movement crippling Unitarian Universalism as a humanistic religion.

A. Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell, MAC spokesperson and chair, began by defining academic racism (the use of academic process to create racist ideology) and then giving an historical tour of the role which racist originating among intellectuals has played in creating racist consciousness among the masses of the people.

He began with Thomas Jefferson and the founding of the university of Virginia and touched on such scholars as Louis Agassiz, William V. Dunning, and Lewis Terman and others, ending with the modern founders of neo-racist academics: Arthur Jensen, William Banfield, and Richard Herrnstein and how they implicitly argued that the talented tenth of the Afro-American population could be admitted fully into a racist imperialist system.

B. This was then followed by MAC Board of Directors member Dick Burkhart who sought to clarify the essential nature of critical race theory which is one of the key sources of the neo-racist ideologies clouding the consciousness of many of our Unitarian Universalists leaders and that essential nature is the fact that there is no racial individuality but only racial group identity.

He explain that critical race theory or CRT was more like a religion or totalitarian dogma than an ideology, focusing on an ideological purity, with the dogma that all whites, whether they know it or not, were white supremacists and any attempt to deny it was a sign of their racism. All this rested on three pillars:

1. Group identity is socially constructed and is greater than class and it is a dominant culture, in this case a white supremacy culture, which controls that process

through a variety of means; e.g., language, culture, and sub-conscious meanings.

2. Moral and intellectual relativism is primary in opposition to progressive liberalism with its commitment to reason and universal human rights and truth, especially as revealed by science.

3. The only truth which can be trusted comes from your racial identity

C. Sister Schneider supplemented the panel discussion while expanding on some of the points she had made during her speech and indicated agreement with what had been said.

III. The last segment of the conference, which contributed to its success, was the business meeting where several key points were made.

A. First of all, we heard an exciting report from Brother Michael Johnson, Chair of the Seven Principle UU Fellowship of Austin, Texas which consisted of the following:

1. How they were forced into a position of resigning by the neo-racist movement at Wild Flower UU Church;

2. But thanks to the influence of Rev. Todd Eklof, a UUMUAC member, and their own creativity and commitment they were able to establish the first UUMUAC chapter in the country and a new fellowship of some 25 people, including some holding joint membership with both congregations.

B. Finley gave a political report about the role of UUMUAC in the future, both within and without of walls of the UUAC, specifically to be the voice, popular or unpopular, to speak against all forms of racism, old and new, by boldly or timidly calling for multiracial Unitarian Universalism.

C. Allan Lindrup reported on the updated brochure and its new changes: improved section on actions, adding the sources, modifying the Telling the Story segment, and most importantly to add to our mission statement the defending of the Seven Principles.

D. At the heart of our ideological /theological work is the petition drive and our efforts to get a discussion or debate at the 2021 (or 2022) GA on the questions that given the clear contradictions between the UUA leadership and the UUAC membership...where are we headed? Toward chaos (violating the Seven Principles) or toward community (seeking to live up to them). We must get out the word about our petition by using many methods and technology, aiming for 420 or more signatures.

E. We are looking forward to our last mass gathering of the year, other than our annual meeting in early December, a forum on neo-racist (un)employment, in which we will look at how multiracial Unitarian Universalism can help us in our struggle to improve the conditions of unemployed, semi-employed, and "fully" employed worker in today's pandemic form of capitalism.

F. There was a major emphasis on building MAC groupings or chapters in or around our congregations using a variety of techniques: first, the nuclei (two-five persons), then the chapter (6 plus), and in no particular order, task forces within the MAC itself, across church lines, and outside of the walls of our congregations; such as Religious Leadership, the Multiracial Trade Union Educational League, a UUMUAC Outreach Task Force, and a dream of UUMUAC CommUnity Task Force and an educational task force, all helping us to bear witness to the importance of multiracial Unitarian Universalism.

Then we heard a report from MAC member Fahima Gaheez about the work of the Afghan Women's Fund and its efforts for a women and girls school in Achin province. The UUMUAC Board subsequently voted to contribute \$300 to help with that program. Later, she gave her impressions of the Afghan/Taliban/US peace talks and felt that it could have been solved earlier and it does not touch on human rights. So far the violence is still continuing.

To summarize and conclude: clearly we can see that much was accomplished as UUMUAC continues to use the Zoom technology and our commitment to the humanist theology of UUism to increase our growth and impact. Nevertheless, we must call this a qualified success because some members did not show up for this important event, but we are thankful for those who did come. 37 in attendance, including a number of new members.

Afghan Women's Fund Report and Appeal

By Fahima Gaheez, Executive Director

Dear friends,

I hope this message arrives to find you and your families healthy and safe.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc in all of our lives, including the lives of women in Afghanistan. I am turning to you because the Afghan Women's Fund has been particularly hard hit by the effects of the pandemic, and our ability to continue our much-needed work in Afghanistan has been severely compromised. I would like to provide some background regarding the projects that have already been underway and the urgent need for funding now.

Last year, we opened literacy and vocational training classes for girls and women in the province of Paktia, and soon after in nearby Achin, which is a district in the eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan.

In April 2017, the United States dropped the massive "mother of all bombs"—the largest non-nuclear bomb ever used by the US in a conflict—into the Achin district. Even before this brutal act, the district had been struggling with the inability to engage in construction and rebuilding, due to four decades of war. The bomb had devastating effects on whatever remained of an already compromised area. An unknown number of people were killed and buildings were destroyed.

When the bomb exploded, I, together with our Afghan Women's Fund team were in the neighboring town, working on a peace conference and starting classes for women and girls in a nearby area called Khewa. A few months after the bombing, when the villagers in Achin saw the success of Khewa women, they asked us to help them with women's education as well.

After sending our team to survey the situation and seeing the enthusiasm of the villagers, we decided to start similar projects in Achin. It was challenging because Achin was an area long run by religious fundamentalists. It is in close proximity to Pakistan and terrorist groups trained in Pakistan have been crossing back and forth across the border easily for many years. Consequently, there were not many development projects in this region.

In the winter of 2018, after the government's efforts to increase security in the area, we decided the area was safe enough for us to respond to the needs of the villagers. We started literacy classes for women and a learning center (school) for girls. By April 2020, the women's projects were finished and eighty women graduated from literacy and vocational training courses.

This was the first time in many decades that education was made available in these areas. We are proud of the brave women who graduated and are now able to support their families because of the valuable skills they learned in our school. We are especially proud of the courageous and dedicated female teachers who travel over an hour by bus or other means to teach the girls and women. Our supporters can feel proud that they have enabled these women to put bread on their children's plates and earn money with dignity.

Just when we thought that the situation was improving and had turned a corner, the coronavirus pandemic hit. Due to lack of funds, we were unable to open new women's literacy classes and vocational training classes. Sadly, we were unable to open any new classes in

the Achin area when the 2019/2020 academic year had ended.

Fortunately, the girls' school in Achin continues to operate, with over two hundred girls continuing their classes, despite the pandemic. But although the school has remained open, the school is struggling. It is still operating in a small, inadequate rented house, with many classes held outdoors. Students must endure brutally cold temperatures in the winter and baking temperatures (over 120° F) in the summer, as they sit under the sun, trying to concentrate on their schoolwork.

Another important reason for a building is that families fear unrest and attack by terrorists and are not willing to allow their daughters to attend school without a building where they can feel safe and securely surrounded by walls. Additionally, more than five hundred girls are on a waiting list to attend school but are unable to do so because the school has no building in which to hold classes. So while we can be helpful with providing school supplies and books and paying teachers' salaries, there is a much larger need that we are unable to fill.

We hope that you can help us achieve the goal to build a small school so the girls can study under more favorable circumstances and acquire the skills to support themselves and their families. This school in Achin Nangarhar needs special attention. The school building that we have in mind will have 8-10 classrooms and will cost between \$80,000 and-\$100,000. Additionally, we will need another \$20,000 for the furniture. But for now, the building is more pressing. At great personal expense and sacrifice, the villagers have donated land, which shows their commitment to the project; but we cannot continue without urgently needed funds for a building.

This building will not only benefit the students but also the community as a whole. We will be using local labor for the construction, which will help people in the area economically. Moreover, the building (like our other school buildings) will serve many purposes. During the day, the students will use the school for two or three shifts of classes. In the evening, the building will be used for literacy classes, vocational training, computer training classes, and for meetings of community elders. The well associated with the school will provide clean drinking water for the neighborhood. In some schools, solar power is being used to give power at night to the entire neighborhood.

Please don't let the new dreams of the girls and women of Achin evaporate. If you are able to help, you will be contributing not only to the lives of the students in the school, but also to their children, communities, and society at large. Together, we can facilitate their dreams of being educated and contributing to society on a larger-scale basis.

Thank you very much for your generosity and support.

Warm regards and wishes for your good health,
Afghan Women's Fund
1321 Maple Ave
Verona PA, 15147

On the next page is a list of specific costs and expenses for your consideration.



Below is a list of specific costs and expenses for your consideration.

Building a school for 500+ students (2-3 shifts of students)	\$80,000-\$100,000
Providing furniture for the middle school	\$20,000-\$30,000
One teacher's salary	\$150-\$250/month
School supplies for one year/per student	\$30-\$60
Solar system for the school	\$5,000-\$10,000
Well for the school	\$3,000-\$8,000
Starting a small business for women who already attended our vocational classes	\$100-\$150
Running literacy classes for 40 women	\$3,500-\$4,500/year
Tent classroom for 35-40 students	\$300-\$400 (for 2 shifts)
School uniform for girls	\$10/student/year

www.afghanwomensfund.org

A Critique of Critical Race Theory by James Lindsay

As unlikely as it seems, a highly obscure academic theory known as Critical Race Theory has completely mainstreamed in society, and now everyone is discussing it. While Critical Race Theory has the noble goal of pointing out problems that can be hard to see and that maintain or constitute racism, it turns out to be a remarkably bad way of going about this. A little familiarity with the basic principles of Critical Race Theory and how they go wrong can help with this.

Before I begin, I offer my apologies to the reader. Critical Race Theory has been growing for over 40 years, and it has many deep problems. Therefore, this is long, and still it is not nearly complete. Here, I document *just eight* of the biggest problems with the entire Critical Race Theory approach. Treat them as eight short essays on specific topics in Critical Race Theory and digest them one at a time. I offer them in the hopes of helping people understand it better so they can decide for themselves if Critical Race Theory is the way we should be dealing with race issues and racism in our society, or if we can genuinely do better.

Since this is so long: here's the 'too long; didn't read' bullet-point summary: [Critical Race Theory...](#)

- believes racism is present in *every* aspect of life, *every* relationship, and *every* interaction and therefore has its advocates look for it *everywhere*
- relies upon “interest convergence” (white people only give black people opportunities and freedoms when it is also in their own interests) and therefore doesn't trust *any* attempt to make racism better
- is *against* free societies and wants to dismantle them and replace them with something its advocates control
- *only* treats race issues as “socially constructed groups,” so there are *no individuals* in Critical Race Theory
- believes science, reason, and evidence are a “white” way of knowing and that storytelling and lived experience is a “black” alternative, which hurts everyone, especially black people
- rejects *all* potential alternatives, like colorblindness, as forms of racism, making itself the only allowable game in town (which is totalitarian)
- acts like *anyone* who disagrees with it *must* do so for racist and white supremacist reasons, *even if* those people are black (which is also totalitarian)
cannot be satisfied, so it becomes a kind of activist black hole that threatens to destroy everything it is introduced into

Critical Race Theory *begins* from the assumption that racism is an ordinary part of *every* aspect of life in our societies. Foundational Critical Race Theory scholars Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic write, “First, that racism is ordinary, not aberrational—‘normal science,’ the usual way society does business, the common, everyday experience of most people of color in this country,” on page 7 of the standard introductory textbook on the subject, titled *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*.

Notice that these scholars list this assumption *first* among the “basic tenets of Critical Race Theory” in the introduction of their book. Understand also that what they mean by “racism” isn't even what most people think racism means. It is not prejudice based upon race or believing some races to be superior or inferior to others that they mean by “racism.” It is, instead, the “system” of everything that happens in the social world and beyond that results in *any* disparity that works in the favor of “racially privileged” groups (on average) or *any* “racially oppressed” person claiming they experience racial oppression.

These assumptions lead people who take up Critical Race Theory to *look for racism* in everything until they find it. That is, after all, the job of a “critical” theorist or activist: to look for the hidden problems that they *assume* must be present in whatever they scrutinize.

In the workplace that adopts Critical Race Theory, this means that it's only a matter of time until someone with that worldview finds out how your entire company and its culture is “racist.” At that point, they will cause a meltdown that forces everyone to take sides and demand a reorganization of the entire (now divided) office culture and management.

In schools, it will mean teaching our children to think this way and always be looking for racism in every situation and interaction. In our personal relationships, it means that friends and even family members—especially our kids who have already been educated with Critical Race Theory ideas that have been incorporated in our schools—will eventually call each other out and reject one another, because tolerating racism is also considered a form of racism that would have to be discovered and stopped.

2) “Interest convergence”: White people only give black people opportunities and freedoms when it is also in their own interests

One of the founders of Critical Race Theory, a (now deceased) scholar at Harvard Law named Derrick Bell, made his “Interest-Convergence Thesis” central to the Theory. Turning to Delgado and Stefancic again. The second feature, sometimes called “interest convergence” or material determinism, adds a further dimension. Because racism advances the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class people (psychically), large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it. Consider, for example, Derrick Bell’s shocking proposal (discussed in a later chapter) that *Brown v. Board of Education*—considered a great triumph of civil rights litigation—may have resulted more from the self-interest of elite whites than a desire to help blacks. (p. 7)

It isn’t hard to see how paranoid and cynical this idea is, but it’s also horrible when you pause to consider some of its implications. Take the *demand* that also comes from Critical Race Theory that everyone should be an anti-racist. This sounds good on the surface but is horrible underneath. If someone with “racial privilege” (including white, Asian, Hispanic, Arab, Indian, and lighter-skinned black people) decides to become an anti-racist in accordance with this request, the Interest-Convergence Thesis would say they only did so to make themselves look good, protect themselves from criticism, or to avoid confronting their own racism. This isn’t a fringe idea or possible gap in the concept, either. The academic literature on “whiteness studies” is *filled* with this notion, including book-length treatments by academic scholars, for example one titled *Good White People* that was published in 2018 by the State University of New York Press.

The Interest-Convergence Thesis makes it literally impossible for anyone with any racial privilege (again, as outlined by Critical Race Theory) to do anything right because anything they do right must also have been self-interested. If Critical Race Theory makes a demand of people with any form of racial privilege and they comply, they just make themselves more complicit in “racism” as Critical Race Theory sees it. By giving people no way out, Critical Race Theory becomes deeply manipulative and unable to be satisfied in its lists of demands

3) Critical Race Theory is *against* free societies.

Believe it or not, Critical Race Theory is not a *liberal* idea. It is, in fact, *critical* of liberal societies and against the idea of freedom to its core. Critical Race Theory sees a free society as a way to structure and maintain inequities by convincing racial minorities not to want to do radical identity politics. Since Critical Race Theory exists specifically to agitate for and enable radical racial identity politics, it is therefore against free societies and how they are organized. (In this way, it is very different than the Civil Rights Movement it incorrectly claims to continue.)

Turning to Delgado and Stefancic, a critical stance about free societies and their norms is again central to Critical Race Theory: “critical race scholars are discontent with liberalism as a framework for addressing America’s racial problems. Many liberals believe in color blindness and neutral principles of constitutional law” (p. 21). The famous “critical whiteness educator” Robin DiAngelo (author of the now overwhelmingly famous book *White Fragility*) puts it even more plainly, writing with a colleague named Ozlem Sensoy in a widely read education book called *Is Everyone Really Equal?*,

These movements [Critical Theory movements upon which Critical Race Theory is based] initially advocated for a type of liberal humanism (individualism, freedom, and peace) but quickly turned to a *rejection* of liberal humanism. The ideal of individual autonomy that underlies liberal humanism (the idea that people are free to make independent rational decisions that determine their own fate) was viewed as a mechanism for keeping the marginalized in their place by obscuring larger structural systems of inequality. In other words, it [free society] fooled people into believing they had more freedom and choice than societal structures actually allow. (p. 5)

In other words, Critical Race Theory sees free societies and the ideals that make them work—individualism, freedom, peace—as a kind of tacit *conspiracy theory* that we all participate in to keep racial minorities down. When its advocates accuse people of being “complicit in systems of racism,” this is part of what they mean. Obviously, they would prefer that we do not have free societies and would rather arrange society as they see fit and make us all go along with their ideas.

4) Critical Race Theory *only* treats race issues as “socially constructed groups,” so there are *no individuals* in Critical Race Theory.

Critical Race Theory isn’t just against free societies and the individualism that enables them, but it also *doesn’t even believe individuals meaningfully exist* at all! In Critical Race Theory, every person has to be understood in terms of the social groups they are said to inhabit, and these are determined by their identity, including race. “A third theme of critical race theory, the ‘social construction’ thesis, holds that race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient” (p. 7), write Delgado and Stefancic.

Under Critical Race Theory, races are categories that society invents and that we impose entirely through social assumptions (mostly stereotypes), and people are members of those racial categories whether they want to be or not. Moreover, they argue that society is “socially stratified,” which means that different social groups (like these racial groups) have differentiated access to the opportunities and resources of society. While this bears some truth on average, it ignores individual variations that are obvious when considering examples of powerful, rich, and famous black people like Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, and Kanye West. Critical Race Theory forces people into these averages, though, and considers them primarily in terms of their *group identity* rather than their *individual identity*. This is part of why they use the word “folks” instead of “people”—it designates a *social group*.

Thus, in Critical Race Theory, the goal of ideally treating every person as an individual who is equal before the law and meant to be judged upon the contents of their character and merits of their work is considered a *myth* that keeps racial minorities down. Instead, it sees people according to their racial groups only. This is why it is so common that progressive racial programs end up hurting the people they’re written to help most. “Racial justice,” in Critical Race Theory, means getting “justice” for the *group*, which it says is a social construction, not for the real person, who is just a member of that group. As Lynn Lemisko writes on page 193 of *Educator to Educator*, another education manual in Critical Social Justice programs: “If democracy is about individual rights (justice for individuals), then social justice is about group rights (justice for groups). And for me there is a fundamental difference between the general notion of justice and the notion of social justice.”

5) Critical Race Theory believes science, reason, and evidence are a “white” way of knowing and that storytelling and lived experience is a “black” alternative.

Remember above, where Delgado and Stefancic said that “normal science” is a part of the everyday, ordinary racism of our societies? That’s because Critical Race Theory is not particularly friendly to science, residing somewhere between generally disinterested in science and openly hostile to it (often depending upon the circumstances). This is because Critical Race Theory, using that “social construction” thesis, believes that the power and politics of cultural groups make their way intrinsically into everything that culture produces. Thus, science is just politics by other means to Critical Race Theory.

Since *modern* science was predominantly produced by white, Western men, Critical Race Theory therefore views science as a white and Western “way of knowing.” Critical Race Theory therefore maintains that science encodes and perpetuates “white dominance” and thus isn’t really fitting for black people who inhabit a (political) culture of Blackness.

This is obviously a *horrible* sentiment, and it is one that goes against one of the very first pillars of science: universality. Universality in science says that it doesn’t matter who does an experiment; the result will always be the same. This is because science believes in objectivity, which Critical Race Theory *also* calls an oppressive myth. For example, Robin DiAngelo and Ozlem Sensoy write,

One of the key contributions of critical theorists concerns the production of knowledge. Given that the transmission of knowledge is an integral activity in schools, critical scholars in the field of education have been especially concerned with how knowledge is produced. These scholars argue that a key element of social injustice involves the claim that particular knowledge is objective, neutral, and universal. An approach based on critical theory calls into question the idea that objectivity is desirable or even *possible*. The term used to describe this way of thinking about knowledge is that knowledge is socially constructed. When we refer to knowledge as socially constructed we mean that knowledge is reflective of the values and interests of those who produce it. (p. 7)

Sensoy and DiAngelo also claim that science “presume[s] superiority and infallibility of the scientific method” (p. 5) (by the way, this is false), and therefore we should be asking “*whose* rationality” and “*whose* presumed objectivity” underlies the scientific method. Then, even more cynically, they insist that we must ask *whose interests* are served by science, as though that’s the relevant question to ask of a universalist method. Critical Race Theory falsely asserts that white people’s interests are primarily served by science. This isn’t all just wrong (*and genuinely racist!*), it’s dangerous.

Continuing the genuinely racist thinking that black people aren’t suited to or served by science, Delgado and Stefancic say that *storytelling* about their “lived experience” is the primary mode by which black people and Critical Race Theory produce and advance knowledge. Importantly, these lived experiences are only considered valid if they agree with Critical Race Theory. They write,

Critical race theorists have built on everyday experiences with perspective, viewpoint, and the power of stories and persuasion to come to a better understanding of how Americans see race. They have written parables, autobiography, and “counterstories,” and have investigated the factual background and personalities, frequently ignored in the casebooks, of well-known cases. (p. 38)

While stories can be informative, to create a position that science is a “way of knowing” for white, Western people (especially men) and storytelling is one more suited to racial minorities, Critical Race Theory is itself racist (against racial minorities) and cripples the people it claims to help. This happens in multiple ways, including by undermining their capacity for critical thinking,

teaching them to see the world in an us-versus-them way that oppresses them, and associating them with harmful, negative stereotypes that rigorous methods are what white people, and not black people, use.

6) Critical Race Theory rejects *all* potential alternatives, like colorblindness, as forms of racism.

Critical Race Theory is completely against the common-sense idea that race becomes *less* socially relevant and racism is therefore diminished by not focusing on race *all the time*. Where liberalism spent centuries removing social significance from racial categories once it had been introduced in the 16th century, Critical Race Theory inserts it again, front and center.

In fact, as you might guess now, it sees the idea of “colorblindness” as one of the most racist things possible because it hides the *real* racism from view. “While colorblindness sounds good in theory, in practice it is highly problematic,” write Sensoy and DiAngelo (p. 108). As we read from Delgado and Stefancic,

Color-blind, or “formal,” conceptions of equality, expressed in rules that insist only on treatment that is the same across the board, can thus remedy only the most blatant forms of discrimination, such as mortgage redlining or the refusal to hire a black Ph.D. rather than a white high school dropout, that do stand out and attract our attention. (p. 7)

While there is a point here—that being *too* colorblind can cause someone not to see racism at all, even when it is a real problem and especially when its influence is subtle (this is called “racism-blindness”)—the remedy Critical Race Theory gives to this *imperfection* in the colorblind approach is to do exactly the opposite. Thus, racism has to be made relevant in *every situation* where racism is present, which is *every situation*, as we saw in point #1 above, and it has attached incredible amounts of social significance to race and how it factors into *every interaction*. That means you have to find and focus upon the “hidden” racism in your workplace, your school, your society, your neighborhood, your books, your food, your music, your hobbies, your faith, your church, your community, your friends, your relationships, and yourself (and everything else too) *all the time*, according to Critical Race Theory.

This has the opposite of the putatively intended effect. Although it does cause people to see some legitimate racism that they would have otherwise missed, it makes all of our relationships and social systems extremely fragile and tense, ready to explode over a highly divisive issue. It also diverts resources from doing real work or building real relationships because looking for and thinking about racism *all the time* takes effort. (Critical Race Theory says minority races already have to think about racism all the time and only white people have the privilege not to, but this is, again, more sloppy analysis that ignores the reports and experiences of every racial minority who disagrees.)

7) Critical Race Theory acts like *anyone* who disagrees with it *must* do so for racist and white supremacist reasons, *even if* those people are black.

Following the “social construction” thesis discussed above in point #4, Critical Race Theory has outlined what the essential *experience* of each racial group is. It then judges individual people (especially of minority races) on how well they give testimonial to that experience—which is to say, they judge individual people based on how well they support Critical Race Theory. This makes it impossible to disagree with Critical Race Theory, even if you are black.

Before we discuss the case of how impossible disagreement is for *white* people (and other “racially privileged” people) consider a few poignant examples. The black superstar musician Kanye West famously donned a “Make America Great Again” hat and said he thinks for himself. In response, the poet laureate of Critical Race Theory, Ta-Nehisi Coates, wrote a widely read article suggesting that West is no longer really black. The black musician Daryl Davis, who is most famous for talking hundreds of real white supremacists out of their Ku Klux Klan hoods, once tried to invite a conversation of

this sort in 2019, and members of the nominally “antifascist” group “Antifa” called him a “white supremacist” for being willing to associate with (rather than fight or kill) the people he invited to have a conversation.

This phenomenon can be explained. As Nikole Hannah-Jones, creator of the *New York Times Magazine* 1619 Project (a Critical Race Theory historiography—not an article of history), tweeted (and then deleted) that there is “racially black” on the one hand, and “politically Black” on the other. Critical Race Theory is only interested in the identity politics associated with being “politically Black,” and anyone who disagrees with Critical Race Theory—even if “racially black”—does not qualify. The common way to phrase this is that they are “not really Black.” This means that in Critical Race Theory, diversity (which it calls for often) *must* be only skin deep. Everyone’s politics *must* agree with Critical Race Theory.

This is obviously much worse a problem for white people or others who are said to have “racial privilege.” There are more concepts in Critical Race Theory to deal specifically with how and why white people are racists for disagreeing with Critical Race Theory than perhaps any other idea. Charles Mills claims that all whites take part in a “racial contract” to support white supremacy that is never discussed but just part of the social fabric. Barbara Applebaum says all white people have “white complicity” with white supremacy because they automatically benefit from white privilege and “white ignorance” which is a way for them to willfully refuse to engage (and proper engagement can only be proven by agreeing). Robin DiAngelo says white people enjoy “white comfort” and therefore suffer “white fragility” that prevents them from confronting their racism through Critical Race Theory. (Therefore, she says, *anything* that maintains white comfort should be considered suspect and in need of disrupting.) Alison Bailey claims that when racially privileged people disagree with Critical Race Theory, they are engaging in a “defensive move” called “privilege-preserving epistemic pushback,” which means that they are just arguing to keep their privilege and could not possibly have legitimate disagreements. All of these ideas implicate racially privileged people in racism anytime they disagree with Critical Race Theory.

8) Critical Race Theory *cannot* be satisfied.

We have already seen how Critical Race Theory cannot be disagreed with, even by black people. We have also seen how it rejects all alternatives and how it believes any success that it has comes down to “interest convergence.” Because it rejects science, it cannot be falsified or proven wrong by evidence, and because it assumes racism is present and relevant to all situations and interactions, even the acceptance of Critical Race Theory must somehow also contain racism. Therefore, Critical Race Theory *cannot be satisfied*. It is, in this way, like a black hole. No matter how much you give to it, it cannot be filled and only gets stronger—and it will tear apart anything that gets too close to it.

This means that if your workplace takes up Critical Race Theory, eventually activists will start to make demands and will threaten to make trouble if they do not get their way. (They usually do not ask.) If you give into them, you will not satisfy them, however, because Critical Race Theory cannot be satisfied. It is guaranteed, before you do anything at all, that you will do it wrong because of your racism. You did it out of “interest convergence,” to make yourself look good because of your racism. You did it in a way that just created new problems that amount to racism. You didn’t do it sooner, faster, or better because of your racism. No matter what you do, the resulting situation *must* contain racism, and the Critical Race Theory activist’s job is to find it and hold you to account.

Therefore, giving into a demand made by Critical Race Theory cannot appease it. It can, however, signal that you will give into their demands, which will then continue to come and to escalate. As we have seen in countless examples across the corporate world recently, this will include demands for you to step down from your job and give it to activists, and even *that* won’t satisfy them. And if the venture fails as a result of all of this disruption, racism was the cause of that failure too.

And that’s not all!

This is a grim but fair description of Critical Race Theory, and, what's worse, it's woefully incomplete. There are other horrible ideas at the very core of Critical Race Theory that fall in this same mold that we do not have time to list here. These include the idea that racism barely gets better, if at all, that equality is a source of racism, that people who benefit from "racism" have no incentives to be against racism, that racism is a zero-sum conflict that was arranged by white people so that no one else can have a real chance in society, that the races cannot truly understand one another (while demanding that they must and that racism is the *whole cause* of the inevitable failure), that racially privileged people are inherently oppressors and everyone else is inherently oppressed (this is derived from Marxism applied to racial groups), and that the only way to end racism is through a social revolution that unmakes the current society entirely and replaces it with something engineered by Critical Race Theory. It is easy to see what kinds of problems these doctrines will create in practice, and it's horrible how Critical Race Theory consistently preys upon the best parts of our natures to achieve its goals (which, if it were correct (and it's not), mostly leaves only the worst candidates to oppose it—real white supremacists—which it then uses as evidence of its bogus claims). Therefore, there are *many* good reasons that have *nothing to do with real racism* to reject most of what Critical Race Theory teaches. *Good people* have every reason to reject Critical Race Theory for better alternatives, and the main reason they don't is because they don't know what it is and see what it offers kind of sounds right and sort of seems good.

In summary, we can see that Critical Race Theory is a *truly horrible* way to deal with race issues and racism, and that would be true even if every problem (or "problematic") it points out were 100% true. It simply is not a good way to go about these problems, and, as its advocates might say in realizing such a situation, we have an obligation to educate ourselves (about the problems and weaknesses of Critical Race Theory) and to do better (than they can hope to). *do*).

Asset-Based Anti-Racism vs. Guilt-Based Anti-Racism: What works and what doesn't?

By Dr. Kenneth Christiansen

I hope to add light rather than heat to a subject I suspect we all care about, namely, anti-racism.

The first question I want to address is, why am I using these terms, Asset-Based Anti-Racism and Guilt-Based Anti-Racism? Both of these terms are descriptions of existing practices, not new inventions. As descriptive terms they lift up key qualitative differences between two approaches to anti-racism, both having long histories. They are not equal or convergent paths. Nor do they produce similar results.

The point of using the term Asset-Based Anti-Racism is that everyone fighting the fight comes into the arena on an equal basis, as an asset. Not a guilt-laden liability.

The modelling for Asset-Based Anti-Racism asks a group of people who are collaborating across any and all demographic lines 1) to identify specific policies, specific patterns of injustice, discrimination and/or oppression encountered in specific times and places; 2) identify potential solutions, changes that need to be made, to accomplish greater justice; 3) communicate well to mobilize everybody available from any background who will share the moral outrage and actively support the solution(s) you have identified; and 4) work together in what Rev. William Barber calls a "Fusion Coalition" to accomplish your goal(s) and achieve greater social justice (*The Third Reconstruction*, pp. 50-53).

Asset-Based Anti-Racism describes the basic approach taken by Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and its allies throughout the 1960s, and by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) up until May of 1966 when Caucasian participation was eliminated. (Rep. John Lewis records this moment, and his feelings about it, in *Walking With The Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, p 380-81.) Currently, Asset-Based Anti-Racism is operative in the work of many Church Based Community Organizations (CBCOs) that include UU churches on their rosters. More about CBCOs later.

The alternative approach to Asset-Based Anti-Racism is Guilt-Based Anti-Racism. Guilt itself has a questionable history as a motivator. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Collective guilt, guilt laid on a large group of people, works only if most or all of the members of the group acknowledge culpability. As we know, this is rare. Some research has been done to ascertain the extent to which collective guilt does or doesn't work as a motivator in real life situations. We will get to that in a moment.

In the Guilt-Based Anti-Racism approach to greater justice, white individuals are asked to own all the racist and oppressive actions committed by white people in any time or place; confess their involvement in the wrongs done by way of the benefits they have received by being born white; and affirm what is expressed by Robin DiAngelo on page 149 of her book, *White Fragility*, "... a positive white identity is an impossible goal. White identity is inherently racist; white people do not exist outside the system of white supremacy."

This approach is based on Critical Race Theory. In Critical Race Theory, there is no way for white people to escape from participation in collective guilt. Racism is everywhere. If you don't see it, you just aren't looking. If you react negatively to the charge of being racist, you are "fragile." Or worse. This is the foundation for "Guilt-Based Anti-Racism" and it is currently a very widespread theory.

To summarize, these are the basic alternatives for Caucasian involvement in anti-racism:

- 1) To see all persons involved as assets. To collaborate as equals to identify specific policies that need changing. To share empathy and moral outrage. To work together to get needed changes accomplished, whatever it takes and however long it takes.
- 2) To accept guilt for centuries of wrongdoing by members of a socially constructed race with which you are asked to completely identify. To acknowledge one's participation in White Supremacy Culture (WSC) and the advantages one has received from White Privilege. To scour the soul for any and all vestiges of WSC including, from Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones' list, a reliance on logic, reason and evidence rather than the truths conveyed by stories; a sense of urgency about everything; fears about making mistakes; worship of the written word.¹

I am committed to the idea that we cannot achieve policy changes unless we work together across all racial and ethnic boundaries. It's a really big question: how do you view potential allies? Do you view them as guilty liabilities because of membership in a group with greater power? Do you view them as wounded individuals and collectively because of membership in a group with less power? Or do you view them as valuable, co-equal assets in a common struggle? I opt strongly for the latter and I think you should also!

I am going to shift gears and talk about research that has been done on the efficacy, the actual functioning, of guilt-based motivations for policy change. I have read quite a few academic research studies on guilt as a motivator. Most of them are very left-brained and statistical and don't have a good story connected with them. One that does have a good story is titled *Of Saints and Sinners: How Appeals to Collective Pride and Guilt Affect Outgroup Helping*.² The study was done in Holland. The authors studied whether appeals to collective pride, or appeals to collective guilt, were more effective in motivating people to take actions to help a disadvantaged group. Participants in the study were told one of two stories.

One story was intended to inspire feelings of collective pride in relation to the participants' Dutch identity. The other was intended to inspire a sense of collective guilt. Both the collective guilt story and the collective pride story dealt with how Dutch people treated Jews during World War II. Both were true. After hearing either one of these stories, questions were asked that identified how supportive the individual was for the Dutch government to continue to aid Jewish families that were significantly damaged by the Nazis.

Another variable played a key role in the study, namely, how strongly did the subjects of the study identify with being Dutch as opposed to simply being human? Everyone in the study was Dutch and would be identified by an outsider as Dutch. Individually, however, people can feel very different levels of emotional connection with their ingroup. Study subjects who very strongly identified as being Dutch were referred to as "high identifiers" while those with weaker bonds were referred to as "low identifiers." The collective guilt story focused on Dutch citizens who collaborated with the Nazis in their persecution of Jews during WWII. Many Dutch citizens did so collaborate. The collective pride story, on the other hand, focused on Dutch citizens who hid Jews in their homes (Anne Frank being the prime example) and sabotaged Nazi efforts to persecute Jews in other ways. There were also many of this kind of Dutch citizen.

Even though this study was being done sixty-five years after the end of World War II, questions related to helping, or not helping, Jews were still relevant. For instance, the Nazis confiscated property from Jewish families including family heirlooms and many of these have never been returned to their rightful owners. Many Jewish families who saw their homes taken and businesses destroyed have also not fully recovered. The Dutch government could do more to help Jews in either or both of these areas. This is similar to the question of reparations in this country.

What did the study reveal? Overall, persons who were told a story that inspired collective pride in their Dutch identity expressed more empathy for Jews. They were also more willing to support additional government help to Jewish families for recovering lost heirlooms and righting other wrongs that happened during WWII than were persons who were told a story that inspired collective guilt in relation to their Dutch identity.

The most extreme differences came between "high identifiers" and "low identifiers." To "low identifiers," people for whom their Dutch identity wasn't emotionally important, hearing a pride story or a guilt story didn't affect their level of empathy or willingness to help Jews. They were more willing to help. On the other hand, "high identifiers," persons for whom being Dutch was emotionally very important, there was considerable difference in their responses to the two stories. While a collective pride story motivated empathy and support for positive action, a collective guilt story turned them off.

What does this study have to say to our approaches to race and culture in the UUA? Or more generally in the USA today? Is the emphasis on White Supremacy Culture a good thing? This study would suggest that it isn't, that it may be provoking white American "high identifiers" to move closer to white nationalism.

"Low identifiers" on the other hand, a description likely to fit UUA members if they are at all serious about the Seven Principles, can absorb a collective guilt story and not run away. Nonetheless we need to ask the question, how much more energy would there be in the UUA for positive action if we told more collective pride stories? This is an important question for us. What contemporary collective pride stories are available? Many of our UU congregations participate in Congregation Based Community Organizing (CBCO). CBCO involves interfaith, multi-race and multi-class efforts to bring about specific changes in the communities surrounding these congregations. While there are five national networks of Church Based Community Organizations, I am most familiar with the Direct Action & Research Training Center (DART). There are eleven DART organizations in Florida cities; two each in Kansas, Kentucky, South Carolina and Virginia; and one each in Georgia, Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee.

Each local DART organization has a unique name. I belong to ICARE, the Interfaith Coalition for Action, Reconciliation and Empowerment in Jacksonville, Florida. 38 religious congregations are part of ICARE, more than half of them being African-American. Both UU congregations in Jacksonville are very active participants in this work.

All of the ICARE congregations have House Meetings in the fall where individuals identify community issues that affect them. Issues identified in House Meetings are brought to a vote at the Community Problem Assemblies. Next, Research Committee members talk with local stakeholders and persons affiliated with groups in other cities that have faced the same challenges. Issue cuts need to be both urgent and winnable, even if it may take multiple years to gain the win. This work comes to a head at the Nehemiah Assembly each spring. Attendance at Nehemiah Assemblies averages 1,500 to 1,800 member of ICARE congregations. Office holders and other persons with the power to make decisions come to the Nehemiah Assembly because their constituents are there. All ICARE offices and activities are integrated except, perhaps, for the House Meetings that are only as integrated as the individual congregations are integrated.

What has ICARE accomplished lately?

- It took 8 years to get policing organizations in our county, and eventually throughout Florida, to stop arresting youths for a list of 12 common youthful offenses and issue Civil Citations instead. Civil Citations take a counseling and restitution approach and there is no arrest record. The recidivism rate for youths given Civil Citations is about 4 %, compared to over 20% for youths arrested.
- We ushered Restorative Justice practices into Jacksonville's public schools with the strong support of the current Superintendent.
- We convinced the city to support a Day Resource Center for homeless people. This took about six years.

We are currently working to get the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) to provide 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team training for a significant portion if not all of the on-duty officers. The former sheriff of a neighboring county estimates the one or two calls answered by officers every day involve mental health or substance abuse situations in which guns and tasers aren't well-suited de-escalation tools. Several years ago, one of our ICARE Network Members in the B'Hai congregation called JSO to help calm down her ex-husband, a Vietnam vet with PTSD. The officers calmed him down alright, by choking him to death. This incident was never in the news, but it fits a national pattern. If officers are going to answer these kinds of calls, they need different tools for de-escalation than they presently possess. We are working on it.

"A Provocateur from the Left"

a review by Dick Burkhart of

The Racial Contract:

By Charles Mills (1997)

Charles Mills is an influential academic philosopher, well versed in "social contract" theory, but this book is more polemic than solid philosophy, his target being "white supremacy". His famous opening line is "'white supremacy' is the unnamed political system that has made the modern world what it is today". Thus his basic thesis is that racial animosities and practices are the driving force behind all the mal-governance of today's world. Yet a wealth of scholarship has demonstrated that economics has always been at the root of oppression, slavery being a prime example. And in European history the Church, not race, has traditionally been at the ideological forefront of subjugation and exploitation of other peoples, the Doctrine of Discovery papal bull of 1492 being a prime example, along with the missionary vanguard during the colonial era.

Despite acknowledging such facts, Mills asserts that the racial lens is more fundamental, citing only a litany of oppressions and atrocities, not carefully reasoned argument. Nor does he ever apologize for phraseology whose meaning in popular discourse is associated with hate groups and violent anti-black racism. Thus I've concluded that his intention was to be a provocateur, to guilt-trip some "whites" into becoming "white renegades" or "race traitors" (p 127). But he ignores the majority who will resent the demeaning label, especially those, not just in the white underclass who've always been vilified, but also in the white working class who've suffered greater economic losses in recent decades than any minority group (note: they had more to lose, which is what counts in this era of neoliberal capitalism). Their life experiences have been that the benefits flow to the ruling classes, leaving themselves on the trash heap of history, dying "deaths of despair" (Deaton and Case), despite the purported privilege of their "white identity".

It is the white evangelicals, far more than any other group, who've felt the sting of Mills' language as "condescending elitism" (documented by Rabbi Michael Lerner). This again demonstrates the primacy of religion over race in the cultural wars and political gridlock, with the election of bigoted demagogues coming as no surprise to those of us who've studied this history. Thus the primary underlying dynamic has been 40 years of escalating inequality, but the actual form of the rebellion has been shaped by identity politics, especially whipped-up racial animosity, from both the Right and the Left in different ways.

But how about the book's title, a supposed "racial contract"? Turns out that this is a hypothetical beast created by Mills, by way of analogy with the "social contract" theory of Rousseau, Locke, etc. To the extent it has any validity, the phraseology "racial regime" of some recent scholars would be far more accurate. First off, the classical theory came before the era of modern anthropology, supposing that there was a "state of nature" where humans were "free and equal" but uncivilized. Civilization supposedly happened when people adopted a "social contract" for a more modern system of governance. Of course, we now know that hunter-gatherer groups self-governed by strong codes of "mutual reciprocity", not individual freedom. That is, survival demanded sharing, which is what yielded relative equality. Plus, it took many thousands of years to evolve modern civilization, much of it by imperial conquest and domination, not by any contract-like agreement.

Thus Mills chose a poor model for his "racial contract". In addition, the word contract, as commonly used, implies the voluntary agreement of all parties, focusing on mutual obligations. Mills restricts the supposed contract only to the ruling classes and does not provide evidence that it was voluntary or fundamentally racial in nature. Perhaps the closest match in history would be the adoption of the US Constitution. It was ratified by the 13 colonies whose voters came from propertied households, representing majorities of their populations. These were mostly men as the traditional "head of household" and mostly white, though many colonies did permit voting by free blacks too. But it is very clear here that the primary qualification was property (usually real estate), not color, with poor workers, mostly white, being regarded as being "corruptible" instead of upright citizens. In fact, property was so important that in the Constitution that citizens holding slaves as property were given more voting power.

But mostly the racial regimes that concern Mills were simply imposed by elites, like the edicts of Kings or Popes or the later doctrines proclaimed by leaders in more democratic governments, such as Jim Crow. And contrary to the impression left by Mills, these were not without controversy. An example is the Dred Scott decision of 1857, stating that the benefits of slavery were accepted as "an axiom in morals and as well as in politics" (p 25), though this decision was considered so outrageous by many in the North that the Civil War came just 3 years later. Thus Mills' hypothetical contract comes across as something of a straw man.

At the end of the book Mills even admits that his "white supremacy" demon is not in fact a singularly "white" phenomenon, citing the racial doctrines of imperial Japan in World War II (p 128). Of course, the history of Chinese emperors should be cited as well. Ironically, Mills claims that his philosophy is grounded in reality, unlike that of classical philosophers, whom he accuses of "misinterpreting" the world (p 18), with some justification, by not viewing the world through racial or ethnic lenses. Yet it seems to me that flipping to the opposite, where the racial lens is dominant, leads to its own misinterpretations, with dangerous political consequences once it has escaped the academy, as it has today.

Four Perspectives on White Privilege Briefly Explained

By Dr. Kenneth Christiansen

Perspective 1: Discussion tool. When Peggy McIntosh wrote the article, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*, (1989), I used it as a discussion starter in the Cultural Diversity classes I was teaching at the time. Looking at the list with my students, I didn't enjoy quite a few of the fifty privileges she listed even though I am white. They were more like class privileges. Many other items clearly identified privileges based on race, some very powerfully. The list raised awareness and created good class discussion.

Perspective 2: Empathy block. In the 2010-2012 period I actively participated in an integrated anti-racism email list set up by the Unitarian Universalist Association. I remember one very painful exchange where a white participant discussed his father's very hard life. The response from several of the African-American participants was that he was still better off than they were because he had White Privilege. White Privilege was used as an excuse to deny empathy. I heard a similar attitude expressed recently in an invitation to an antiracism program for white people, that white people's problems would not be a subject of conversation.

Perspective 3: Guilt wedge. In Robin DiAngelo's book, *White Fragility*, White Privilege means all of the advantages received by participation in White Supremacy Culture. White Fragility refers to the defensiveness whites demonstrate when pressed to admit these advantages and their participation in White Supremacy Culture. When their White Fragility resistance turns on, Caucasians become emotionally disabled in DeAngelo's argument. I view this as exactly what happens with Guilt-Based Anti-Racism. The energy available for real social change work is greatly diminished both by the emotional paralysis created by guilt and by the mis-directed use of energy required to force Caucasians to own up to their collective guilt for participating in White Supremacy Culture. (For further explanation of the term Guilt-Based Anti-Racism, go to <https://assetbasedantiracism.com>.)

Perspective 4: Resource inventory. From the perspective of Asset-Based Anti-Racism, every privilege, every access to power possessed by anyone – based on class, race, gender, age or anything else – is desperately needed in the struggle to change racist policies. Racist and oppressive policies exist because they support constellations of power that favor one race-class over another. Power responds only to power. We need to value and mobilize, rather than denigrate, all of the privileges, insights, abilities and resources available to accomplish needed policy changes. We need to collaborate with strong personal commitments and relationships across any and all race-class lines to accomplish the goals we seek.

NOTE: The fact policing organizations in the United States utilize two very different protocols for African Americans and for Caucasians must be changed. It can only be changed if African Americans and Caucasians vigorously work together in local, regional and national venues to change the specific policies that allow, permit, or require differential treatment for African Americans and Caucasians. White Privilege is NOT the root cause of the problem. Rather, we all need to use every privilege and power we can muster in collaborative, focused efforts to achieve change for greater justice.

