



FAIR Advocacy Toolkit

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The New Religion

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

The New Religion

Excerpt from *The Elect: The Threat to a Progressive America from Anti-Black Antiracists*

By John McWhorter

One can divide antiracism into three waves.

First Wave Antiracism battled slavery and segregation. Second Wave Antiracism, in the 1970s and 1980s, battled racist attitudes and taught America that being racist was a flaw. Third Wave Antiracism, becoming mainstream in the 2010s, teaches that racism is baked into the structure of society, so whites' "complicity" in living within it constitutes racism itself, while for black people, grappling with the racism surrounding them is the totality of experience and must condition exquisite sensitivity toward them, including a suspension of standards of achievement and conduct. Third Wave Antiracist tenets, stated clearly and placed in simple oppositions, translate into nothing whatsoever:

1. When black people say you have insulted them, apologize with profound sincerity and guilt. **But** don't put black people in a position where you expect them to forgive you. They have dealt with too much to be expected to.
2. Black people are a conglomeration of disparate individuals. "Black culture" is code for "pathological, primitive ghetto people." But don't expect black people to assimilate to "white" social norms because black people have a culture of their own.
3. Silence about racism is violence. **But** elevate the voices of the oppressed over your own.
4. You must strive eternally to understand the experiences of black people. But you can never understand what it is to be black, and if you think you do you're a racist.
5. Show interest in multiculturalism. **But** do not culturally appropriate. What is not your culture is not for you, and you may not try it or do it. But—if you aren't nevertheless *interested* in it, you are a racist.
6. Support black people in creating their own spaces and stay out of them. **But** seek to have black friends. If you don't have any, you're a

racist. And if you claim any, they'd better be *good* friends—in their private spaces, you aren't allowed in.

7. When whites move away from black neighborhoods, it's white flight. **But** when whites move into black neighborhoods, it's gentrification, even when they pay black residents generously for their houses.
8. If you're white and only date white people, you're a racist. **But** if you're white and date a black person you are, if only deep down, exotifying an "other."
9. Black people cannot be held accountable for everything every black person does. **But** all whites must acknowledge their personal complicity in the perfidy throughout history of "whiteness."
10. Black students must be admitted to schools via adjusted grade and test score standards to ensure a representative number of them and foster a diversity of views in classrooms. **But** it is racist to assume a black student was admitted to a school via racial preferences, and racist to expect them to represent the "diverse" view in classroom discussions.

I suspect that deep down, most know that none of this catechism makes any sense. Less obvious is that it was not even composed with logic in mind. The self-contradiction of these tenets is crucial, in revealing that Third Wave Antiracism is not a philosophy but a religion.

The revelation of racism is, itself and alone, the point, the intention, of this curriculum. As such, the fact that if you think a little, the tenets cancel one another out, is considered trivial. That they serve their true purpose of revealing people as bigots is paramount—sacrosanct, as it were. Third Wave Antiracism's needlepoint homily par *excellence* is the following:

Battling power relations and their discriminatory effects must be the central focus of all human endeavor, be it intellectual, moral, civic or artistic. Those who resist this focus, or even evidence insufficient adherence to it, must be sharply condemned, deprived of influence, and ostracized.

Third Wave Antiracism is losing innocent people jobs. It is coloring, detouring and sometimes strangling academic inquiry. It forces us to render a great deal of our public discussion of urgent issues in doubletalk any 10-year-old can see through. It forces us to start teaching our actual 10-year-olds, in order to hold them off from spoiling the show in that way, to believe in sophistry in the name of enlightenment. On that, Third Wave Antiracism guru Ibram X. Kendi has written a book on how to raise antiracist children called *Antiracist Baby*. You couldn't imagine it better: Are we in a Christopher Guest movie? This and so much else is a sign that Third Wave Antiracism forces us to pretend that performance art is politics. It forces us to spend endless amounts of time listening to nonsense presented as wisdom, and pretend to like it. I write this viscerally driven by the fact that all of this supposed wisdom is founded in an ideology under which white people calling themselves our saviors make black people look like the dumbest, weakest, most self-indulgent human beings in the history of our species, and teach black people to revel in that status and cherish it as making us special. Talking of *Antiracist Baby*, I am especially dismayed at the idea of this indoctrination infecting my daughters' sense of self. I can't always be with them, and this anti-humanist ideology may seep into their school curriculum. I shudder at the thought: teachers with eyes shining at the prospect of showing their antiracism by teaching my daughters that they are poster children rather than individuals.

Ta-Nehisi Coates in *Between the World and Me* wanted to teach his son that America is set against him; I want to teach my kids the reality of their lives in the 21st rather than early-to-mid-20th century. Lord forbid my daughters internalize a pathetic—yes, absolutely pathetic in all of the resonances of that word—sense that what makes

them interesting is what other people think of them, or don't.

Many will see me as traitorous in writing this as a black person. They will not understand that I see myself as serving my race by writing it. One of the grimmest tragedies of how this perversion of sociopolitics makes us think (or, not think) is that it will bar more than a few black readers from understanding that I am calling for them to be treated with true dignity. However, they and everyone else should also realize: I know quite well that white readers will be more likely to hear out views like this when written by a black person, and consider it nothing less than my duty as a black person to write it.

A white version of this would be blithely dismissed as racist. I will be dismissed instead as self-hating by a certain crowd. But frankly, they won't really mean it, and anyone who gets through my new book on this subject, which I am now publishing in serial, will see that whatever traits I harbor, hating myself or being ashamed of being black is not one of them. And we shall move on. As in, to realizing that what I am documenting matters, and matters deeply. Namely, that America's sense of what it is to be intellectual, moral, or artistic; what it is to educate a child; what it is to foster justice; what is to express oneself properly; what it is to be a nation—all is being refounded upon a religion.

This is directly antithetical to the very foundations of the American experiment. Religion has no place in the classroom, in the halls of ivy, in our codes of ethics, or in deciding how we express ourselves, and almost all of us spontaneously understand that and see any misunderstanding of the premise as backward. Yet since about 2015, a peculiar contingent has been slowly headlocking us into making an exception, supposing that this new religion is so incontestably good, so gorgeously surpassing millennia of brilliant philosophers' attempts to identify the ultimate morality, that we

can only bow down in humble acquiescence.

But a new religion in the guise of world progress is not an advance; it is a detour. It is not altruism; it is self-help. It is not sunlight; it is fungus. It's time it became ordinary to call it for what it is and stop cowering before it, letting it make people so much less than they—black and everything else—could be.

Third Wave Antiracism exploits modern

Americans' fear of being thought racist, using this to promulgate an obsessive, self-involved, totalitarian and unnecessary kind of cultural reprogramming. One could be excused for thinking this glowering kabuki is a continuation of the Civil Rights efforts of yore, the only kind of new antiracism there could be. Its adherents preach with such contemptuous indignation, and are now situated in the most prestigious and influential institutions in the land—on their good days they can seem awfully “correct.”

However, there is nothing correct about the essence of American thought and culture being transplanted into the soil of a religious faith. Some will go as far as to own up to it being a religion, and wonder why we can't just accept it as our new national creed. The problem is that on matters of societal procedure and priorities, the adherents of this religion—true to the very nature of religion—cannot be reasoned with. They are, in this, medievals with lattes.

We need not wonder what the basic objections will be: Third Wave Antiracism isn't really a religion; I am oversimplifying; I shouldn't write this without being a theologian; it is a religion but it's a good one; and so on. I will get all of that out of the way as we go on, and then offer some genuine solutions. But first, what this is not.

1. *It is not an argument against protest.* I am not arguing against the basic premises of Black Lives Matter, although I have had

my differences with some of its offshoot developments. I am not arguing that the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s would have been better off sticking to quiet negotiations. I am not arguing against the left. I am arguing against a particular strain of the left that has come to exert a grievous influence over American institutions, to the point that we are beginning to accept as normal the kinds of language, policies and actions that Orwell wrote of as fiction.

2. *I am not writing this thinking of right-wing America as my audience.* I will make no appearances on any Fox News program to promote it. People of that world are welcome to listen in. But I write this to two segments of the American populace. Both are what I consider to be my people, which is what worries me so much about what is going on. One segment is the *New York Times*-reading, National Public Radio-listening people of any color who have innocently fallen under the impression that pious, unempirical virtue-signaling about race is a form of moral enlightenment and political activism, and ever teeter upon becoming card-carrying Third Wave Antiracists themselves. The other is those black people who have innocently fallen under the misimpression that for us only, cries of weakness constitute a kind of strength, and that for us only, what makes us interesting, what makes us matter, is a curated persona as eternally victimized souls, ever carrying and defined by the memories and injuries of our people across four centuries behind us, ever “unrecognized,” ever “misunderstood,” ever unpaid.
3. *This is not merely a complaint.* My goal is not to venture the misty statement that a diversity of opinions is crucial to a healthy society. Citing John Stuart Mill at Third Wave Antiracists serves no purpose because they are operating under the influence of a religion. Our current

1. conversations waste massive amounts of energy in missing the futility of “dialogue” with them. Of a hundred fundamentalist Christians, how many do you suppose could be convinced via argument to become atheists? There is no reason that the number of people who can be talked out of the Third Wave Antiracism religion is any higher. As such, our concern must be how to continue with genuine progress in spite of this ideology. How do we work around it? How do we insulate people with good ideas from the influence of the Third Wave Antiracists’ liturgical concerns? How do we hold them off from influencing the education of our young people any more than they already have?

My interest is not “How do we get through to these people?” We cannot, at least not enough of them to matter. The question is “How can we live graciously among them?” We seek change in the world, but for the duration will have to do so while encountering bearers of a gospel, itching to smoke out heretics, and ready on a moment’s notice to tar us as moral perverts.

One more thing: We need a crisper label for the problematic folk.

I will not title them “Social Justice Warriors.” That, and other labels such as “the Woke Mob” are unsuitably dismissive. One of the key insights I hope to get across is that most of these people are not zealots. They are your neighbor, your friend, possibly even your offspring. They are friendly school principals, people who work quietly in publishing, lawyer pals. Heavy readers, good cooks, musicians. It’s just that sadly, what they become, solely on this narrow but impactful range of issues, is inquisitors.

I considered titling them The Inquisitors. But that, too, is mean. I’m not interested in mean; I want to get these people off the bottom of our shoes so we can actually move ahead. Whoops—that was mean. But I intended it as an accurate metaphor—this ideology impedes moving ahead.

The author and essayist Joseph Bottum has found the proper term, and I will adopt it here: We will

term these people The Elect. They do think of themselves as bearers of a wisdom, granted them for any number of reasons—a gift for empathy, life experience, maybe even intelligence. But they see themselves as having been chosen, as it were, by one or some of these factors, as understanding something most do not.

“The Elect” is also good in implying a certain smugness, which is sadly accurate as a depiction. Of course, most of them will resist the charge. But its sitting in the air, in its irony, may also encourage them to resist the definition, which over time may condition at least some of them to temper the excesses of the philosophy, just as after the 1980s many started disidentifying from being “too PC.”

But most importantly, terming these people The Elect implies a certain air of the past, *à la* Da Vinci Code. This is apt, in that the view they think of as sacrosanct is directly equivalent to views people centuries before us were as fervently devoted to as today’s Elect are. The medieval Catholic passionately defended prosecuting Jews and Muslims with what we now see was bigoted incoherence, rooted in the notion that those with other beliefs and origins were lesser humans. We spontaneously “other” those antique inquisitors in our times, but right here and now we are faced with people who harbor the exact same brand of mission, just against different persons.

In 1500, it was about not being Christian. In 2020, it’s about not being *sufficiently* antiracist, with adherents supposing that this is a more intellectually and morally advanced cause than antipathy to someone for being Jewish or Muslim. They do not see that they, too, are persecuting people for not adhering to their religion.

But there is a difference between being antiracist and being antiracist in a religious way. Following the religion means to pillory people for what, as recently as 10 years ago, would have been thought of as petty torts or even as nothing at all; to espouse policies that hurt black people as long as supporting them makes you seem aware that racism exists; to pretend that America never makes any real progress on racism; and to almost hope that it doesn’t because this would deprive you of a sense of purpose.

Elect ideology affects people in degrees. There are especially abusive Elect ideologues. Some are comfortable ripping into people in person; more restrict the nastiness to social media. Other Elect do not go in for being mean, but are still comfortable with the imperatives, have founded their sociopolitical perspectives firmly upon them, and are hard-pressed to feel comfortable interacting socially with people in disagreement. They allow the openly abusive Elect to operate freely, seeing their conduct as a perhaps necessary unpleasantness in the goal of general enlightenment.

I do not wish to imply that The Elect are all of the especially abusive type; the vast majority are not. The problem is the degree to which the perspective has come to influence so many less argumentative

but equally devout people, whose increasing numbers and buzzwords have the effect of silencing those who see Elect philosophy as flawed but aren't up for being mauled.

The Elect are, in all of their diversity, sucking all the air out of the room. It must stop.

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Clues Your School is Going Neo-Racist

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Clues Your School is Going Neo-Racist

By Bonnie Snyder

Here are five ways to figure out if Critical Race Theory and other divisive, neo-racist ideologies have infected your child's school and curricula. Look for the following words in the school's promotional material, curricula (including textbooks, lesson plans, syllabi, readings, etc.), emails from the school and school system, and in any other written form:

1) "Critical Race Theory," "White fragility," "White Supremacy", and "Systemic Racism".

Educational systems and administrators who manage them do not try to hide or smuggle in these terms; they proudly proclaim them and make them easy to find. These three words make up the trinity of the new moral orthodoxy.

2) "Equity".

This is a pleasant-sounding word that "the quality of being fair and impartial" is now being used by some to mean the opposite of what many people think it means. Equity is not being used to mean equality of opportunity, that is, providing equal opportunity to all students regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation. To make systems equitable some students must be denied equal opportunity on the basis of their race, gender, or sexual orientation so that other students may have those opportunities. Equity is being used by some to mean the opposite of treating people equally.

If an educational administrator claims "equity" and "equality" are synonyms, ask why they don't just use the word "equality," or even the word "fair," instead of "equity."

3) "Inclusion."

Inclusion does *not* mean including people of different races, genders, and sexual orientations. Inclusion means limiting speech. Here's how it works: an inclusive space makes people feel welcome. People will not feel welcome if they feel

offended by words or ideas. So, an inclusive space must limit or restrict words and ideas (that is, speech) to make all people feel welcome.

Note, there is a difference between criticizing an idea and attacking an immutable characteristic of a person, like skin or eye color. Inclusive spaces do not make a distinction between the two. Learners' immutable characteristics must be free from attack *and* learners must retain the ability to criticize ideas.

4) "Microaggression", "Trigger warning.", "Safe Spaces", "Prioritize impact over intent".

These words and phrases are a telltale sign that the institution is under the sway of this new morality. Microaggressions are small slights against minorities, and trigger warnings are statements made prior to sharing content that may trigger or disturb students. There is some truth to microaggressions and some usefulness behind trigger warnings. However, proponents often take these to their extremes. Trigger warnings are used to limit speech and microaggressions are weaponized by offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to punish people who commit perceived slights. Safe spaces and the phrase "Impact over intent" claim to create inclusive welcoming spaces, but often stifle open discourse, cause self-censorship of any expression that might cause someone to claim "harm", and conflate speech with violence.

Authors to watch out for (please read for yourself!):

- Paolo Freire
- Henry Giroux
- Frantz Fanon
- Angela Davis
- bell hooks
- Audrey Lorde
- Antonio Gramsci
- Robin DiAngelo
- Ibram X. Kendi
- Howard Zinn (A People's History of the United States)
- The 1619 Project

If a class reading list includes these authors, ideally it should be balanced with authors who voice a variety of viewpoints.

DEI staff training to watch:

- Courageous Conversations
- Abolitionist Teaching
- Implicit Bias Training

Words to Watch:

Abolitionist

Acting white

Activism

Affirmations

Allyship

Accomplice, being an (allyship's more committed form)

Ancestral roots

Antifa and Antifascism

BIPOC

"Black Bodies"

Blank slatism

Bothsides-ism (framing it negatively)

Chants

Cisnormativity

Citation Justice (also Research Justice)

Collectivism

Coloniality / colonization / de-colonization

Color-blindness (framing it negatively)

Critical consciousness

Critical Theory, Critical Race Theory

Critical "Lens"

Critical (as an adjective before i.e. consciousness, ethnic studies, hope, pedagogy, praxis)

Cultural appropriation

Cultural relativism

Culturally responsive teaching

Decolonize

Discursive aggression

Dismantle

Disrupt	Positionality
Diversity	Postcolonialism
Dominant narrative	Praxis
Educational trauma	Privilege
False consciousness	Progressive stack
Fat studies	Punching up
Folx	Queer theory
Front hole	Rape culture
Good white	Resistance
Gender assigned at birth	Revolution
Heteronormativity	Revolutionary love
Hegemony	Settler, settler colonialism and settler fragility
Holistic humanity	Solidarity
Humanization / de-humanization	Spirit-murder
Hxrstory	Standpoint epistemology
Identity	Structural racism
In Lak'Ech	Systemic racism
Intersectional/Intersectionality	Transformation / Transformative resistance
Implicit bias	Ways of knowing / Ways of being
Internalized racism	White woman's tears
Land Acknowledgement	Whiteness studies
Liberation	White Fragility
Lived experience	White Privilege
Manel (male panels)	White Saviorism
Master's tools	White Supremacy / White Supremacist
Narrative medicine	White Supremacist Culture and Thinking
Oppressor / Oppressed	White Comfort
Patriarchy	YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research)
Pedagogy of discomfort	



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Taking Action Through Conversations, Social Media, and the Law

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Taking Action Through Conversations, Social Media, and the Law

By Bonnie Snyder

It is difficult to have conversations with administrators and teachers who hold neo-racist beliefs, especially because they think they are better people and better educators because of their beliefs. The first three strategies will help you have productive conversations as you navigate deep moral divides with your children's teachers and administrators while building community. The fourth strategy will help you get the word out about what's going on in your child's school. The fifth and final strategy will advocate suing as a way of fighting back.

Keep your cool.

The most important thing you can do is to be calm, cool, and collected. Yelling doesn't change minds; it entrenches people in their beliefs.

Ask questions.

The vast majority of educators have been trained in ideological echo chambers. It has never occurred to them that their worldview and teaching methods are ideologies, as opposed to truth generating processes. The silver lining in this is that these beliefs—critical pedagogy, Critical Race Theory, cultural appropriation, equity, inclusion, internalized racism, relativism, systemic racism, etc.—are especially vulnerable to questions. This is because educators who've received their teaching certificates (which is virtually all teachers) are highly unlikely to have been exposed to challenges to the views they've been taught to hold.

Before attempting to challenge or question their guiding principles, it is crucial that you understand what these principles are and why they hold them. Consequently, it is extremely important that you ask specific questions and, when appropriate, write down the answer (see #5, below). The purpose of asking questions is to understand why they believe what they do, and not as "gotchas." When in doubt, ask.

Show up.

One of the most important things you can do is to simply show up. Go to as many school meetings as possible. Get to know your child's teachers and administrators, but even more important is getting to know other parents. Talk to your child's friend's parents at PTA meetings. Introduce yourself to people you don't know. Share your concerns but do so gently and be sure to listen. If you come across as too strident people are less likely to take your concerns seriously.

Post neo-racist curricula on social media.

Get a Twitter, locals, Instagram, and Facebook account, take pictures of neo-racist material your child is learning in school, and upload it. To be even more effective, take some time and understand how these platforms work (for example, tag relevant people, follow groups who share your interests, and "like" content you want others to see). You'll quickly learn you are not alone and sharing neo-racist content from your child's school will help others learn they are also not alone.

Lawyer up.

One of the fastest ways to implement real change is to find a lawyer and sue. While few people like being involved in a lawsuit, it is often necessary in cases of civil rights violations, like those caused by Critical Race Theory and other neo-racist ideologies. It is very important that you document everything, take photos, keep notes on conversations, save emails, etc.



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Taking Action: Short Term & Long Term Strategies

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Taking Action:

Short Term and Long Term Strategies

What Can I Do?

If you feel overwhelmed trying to stem the tide of whiteness and Critical Race Theory, know that you are not alone. Research shows that only eight percent of Americans are progressive activists who support ideologies like Critical Race Theory. This means that the vast majority of Americans oppose Critical Race Theory and do not want to treat people differently based on their skin color or other immutable characteristics. As Americans, we want to be treated equally under the law and in our society. So, what do you do when you want to speak out but know that the stakes are too high: being labeled a racist, losing friends, and possibly losing your job? This article will discuss practical steps you can take, both immediate and long term.

Immediate

The first step is to build a local support network with people who are concerned about Critical Race Theory. You can connect with FAIR to start a local chapter. Within this group, you can reach out to others and expand the group membership. Your group can support people, of all political

persuasions, who share the core values of FAIR: seeking to treat everyone equally without regard to their skin color or other immutable characteristics, emphasizing our shared humanity, and seeking to understand other points of view.

Your group can develop a social media presence and post articles about why Critical Race Theory will not solve the problem of racism, but will only make it worse. Many of FAIR's Board of Advisors are authors who frequently produce new articles about the problems of Critical Race Theory. You can also write your own thoughts and concerns about national events or issues in your community. If necessary, you can use a pseudonym. Don't be afraid to have respectful discussions with people who are promoting Critical Race Theory ideology. Always acknowledge their concerns and back up your arguments with evidence about how the way in which Critical Race Theory is being implemented in workplaces and schools is harming people around the country.

For examples of these harms, you can talk about high school student William Clark, who was coerced, under a "Critical Race Theory /

Intersectionality”-based curriculum, to make statements contrary to his personal conscience and beliefs, and was retaliated against when he objected conscientiously. You can discuss Jodi Shaw, who resigned from her position at Smith College because, in her words, her colleagues “manage student conflict through the lens of race, projecting rigid assumptions and stereotypes on students, thereby reducing them to the color of their skin.” You can mention Asra Q. Nomani, a journalist and mother of a student at Thomas Jefferson High School, who has been documenting how activists, guided by Critical Race Theory frameworks, have eliminated the merit-based admissions process at one of the nation’s best public schools.

On a larger level, philanthropic assistance is urgently needed to fund a project with the following goals: identify the main school districts that are implementing Critical Race Theory and/or social justice-based curricula, recruit school board candidates, fund campaigns, and increase turnout from voters who support foundational American values. Please consider running for the school board in your district.

If you are a teacher or a parent, you can organize a group of concerned teachers and parents to attend the school board meetings together. If activists make attempts to put Critical Race Theory into the curriculum, concerned teachers and parents can organize to speak at school board meetings. Note that you will likely only have three minutes to make your comments, so prepare them ahead of time. Explain why you are opposed to Critical Race Theory: it does not comport with fundamental American values; it will not solve racism; it will harm the psychology of children; and it will further damage the social fabric.

You can explain that Critical Race Theory is based on an anti-American value system. Its own theorists state this. In *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, Delgado and Stefancic state that Critical Race Theory “questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law.” In other words, Critical Race Theory seeks to replace the US Constitution

with a new legal framework that is not based on fundamental American values.

In terms of higher education, nearly all American universities are guided by social justice ideology. If you are a parent or a teacher who wants your students to avoid universities altogether, you can promote the benefits of attending community college or vocational school and encourage your students to do an apprenticeship program and learn a skilled trade. Many skilled trades pay well and are a pathway to a career in which you are unlikely to be cancelled.

Concerned citizens should organize, at the state level, to investigate their universities. First, people should demand an end to administrative bloat and should advocate for an end to unnecessary offices, departments, and administrators. Second, people should research their state universities’ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. If these investigations find politically motivated ideological bias and discrimination in admissions, in faculty and staff hiring, and in teaching, then these findings should be turned over to state lawmakers. Third, citizens should make sure that their state universities explicitly include viewpoint diversity in their diversity initiatives. Citizens should demand that their tax money be withheld from public universities until administrators take concrete steps to ensure that there is viewpoint diversity represented among the faculty. If you are an alum, you can write a letter about why you are withholding donations. You can refuse to send your children to the state university and make the university aware of this fact.

Long-term

On a deeper level, the institutional structure of modern society is undergoing a transition period, due to multiple factors, including the internet. We are moving from a society of large, centralized institutions to an era that will be more decentralized, based on local relationships while still maintaining global communications. The authoritarianism of social justice ideology is viewed by some as an attempt of elites to enforce control over the population because they know that the influence of elite mediating institutions is

waning. For this reason, we need new institutions that meet our current needs.

The first task is to create new schools. The American public educational system is a complete failure. According to results of the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress, released in late 2020, less than a quarter of high school seniors are proficient in math. Nearly two-thirds of high school seniors are not proficient readers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many parents have taken their children out of the public schools and are homeschooling or are starting microschools. These initiatives should be encouraged.

In the private sector, existing Classical Christian schools are an excellent option. For people who want a secular private school that is not guided by social justice ideology, however, there are hardly any options. There is a huge market for private, secular K-12 schools that are based on the pursuit of truth, on teaching the fundamentals of literacy, numeracy, the scientific method, Western civilization, and diverse classic texts from world literature. Schools of this type can be decentralized and offer a comprehensive private education, with a rigorous well-established curriculum, complete with standards and testing, using mostly virtual networks. Also, there is a huge market for new colleges with a classical liberal arts mission. A great example of this is a new college that will be starting this year, Ralston College.

People who have been trying to reform higher education for decades believe that the most important task is to advocate for an end to government student loans because this is one of the main factors increasing college attendance (one of the social justice activists' goals). When federal student loans are easily available, more students want to go to college, so colleges can,

and do, raise the price. If government student loans are ended, low-income college students will still be supported through private scholarship programs.

If the government no longer gives student loans, there will be multiple positive outcomes. First, students who aren't serious about college will not enroll, and will instead do more pragmatic things such as apprenticeship programs to learn job skills. Second, this will end degree programs that indoctrinate students into social justice activism and provide them with useless degrees, with which they cannot find jobs, therefore increasing their anger and activism. Third, this will eliminate the pool of money available for unnecessary administrative positions, specifically the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion bureaucracies at every university, which are forcing social justice ideology onto all the students, which then spills out into K-12 education and the rest of society.

In addition to education, it is important to build new media institutions. People should start new media companies—including news, film, and book publishing—that are free from ideological bias of any kind, that pursue excellence as their primary criterion, not identity politics. The current state of the media, and the arts, is focused almost exclusively on diversity and social justice ideology, not on producing works that are beautiful and honest about the universal human condition. There is a huge market for artistic ventures—new foundations, galleries, publishing companies, literary journals, and so forth—with the sole criterion promoting art, based solely on quality and beauty, that speaks to our shared humanity. Check out this one here.

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A Step-By-Step Survival Guide for Parents

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Your School Has Gone Neo-Racist. Now What?

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Students were separated by skin color at school as part of a diversity exercise. Your child was asked to add up his “privileges” as a math assignment. The class reading list was recently overhauled, the classics have been removed, and you notice that one point of view is particularly dominant. Welcome to neo-racism. Another chapter of this advocacy toolkit will give you more “clues your School is going Neo-Racist”.

And this is what to do next.

Step 1: Get informed

Nowadays, there are many terms associated with the trend taking aim at universal liberal ideals. No doubt you have heard about identity politics, wokeism, cancel culture, Critical Social Justice activism, white privilege, anti-racism, Intersectionality, Critical Ethnic Studies and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Some of these terms have a nice ring to them. What could you possibly have against social justice, anti-racism, ethnic studies and DEI and similar concepts? Nothing. Unfortunately, these terms, their meanings, and their application have been hijacked by the neo-racism movement.

Following is a link to an excellent article by James Lindsay that describes CRT.
[What Is Critical Race Theory? - New Discourses](#)

Neo-racism is based on Critical Race Theory (CRT), a set of ideas that explicitly rejects time-tested universal liberal ideals such as equality, freedom and individuality. CRT teaches that:

- Racism is permanent.
- Racism is pervasive throughout our culture, systems, and institutions.
- If racism isn't evident in a culture, system, or institution, it doesn't mean that the system or institution isn't racist. Rather, it means that the racism hasn't yet been uncovered.
- Racism is perpetuated by the dominant group (white, conditional white, and white adjacent people) because it benefits them over the minoritized group (non-white people). The dominant group perpetuates this racism in order to maintain their dominance (“privilege”).
- The dominant group acts against racism only when it is to their benefit. This is the critical race theory principle of interest convergence.
- The dominant group uses past progress on racism such as “Brown v. Board of Education” and civil rights legislation as camouflage for perpetuating racial oppression.

(Source: Educators for Quality and Equality
- Lori Meyers - January 2021).

Critical Social Justice, a relative of Critical Race Theory, is described in the following article by Helen Pluckrose.

[What do we Mean by Critical Social Justice - Counterweight \(counterweightsupport.com\)](#)

Step 2: Document everything

As soon as you start noticing neo-racism at your child's school, start documenting. Write down what your child tells you about class activities. Keep copies of assignments. Save every school email, especially those having to do with DEI. Write notes of conversations with teachers and school officials, including dates and names. A good habit to get into is to write a follow-up email to the person you meet with, recapping exactly what was discussed. Remember, if you don't document it, it didn't happen.

Step 3: Ask questions

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are federal laws that require educators to use, to the greatest extent possible, academic and behavioral practices and programs grounded in scientifically based research. Furthermore, in education, it is considered best practice to establish learning targets that are clear and measurable. Don't hesitate to ask your child's school for evidence regarding the reasons why CRT-based lessons have been introduced, what evidence was considered in the decision making process to do so, and what purpose the lessons serve. Remember, the issue is not whether the subject of race and diversity should be included in school lessons. Of course it should be included. The issue is why CRT is the lens through which lessons are being presented. Inquire as to the "metrics" of such lessons, which means what the goals are, how the goals are stated, and how they will be measured. One objective at this stage, and during any interaction with teachers and school officials on the subject of neo-racism, is to elicit information.

Step 4: Build alliances

Find like-minded people who are concerned about neo-racism. Start by talking to your trusted friends, and go from there. If you can, find just one teacher or staff member who shares your opinion and is willing to help you. Take time to understand the politics at your school. Examples of this include assessing the degree to which your PTA/PTO has influence and understanding the interpersonal dynamics of the school leadership (i.e. the assistant principal might be more accessible than the principal). The non-licensed school staff, such as paraprofessionals and front office staff, can be allies and reliable sources of insider information, too. Get to know them. Having a good understanding of how your school works and developing strong relationships will help you cultivate whistleblowers and gather data.

Step 5: Talk to your child's teacher

Even though your state and school district have academic standards and an approved curriculum, most teachers have a lot of freedom in what lesson plans they teach. If you have concerns about a lesson being taught by your child's teacher, reach out, and follow these tips. Don't get emotional and do show respect. Start from a place of shared caring for students. Ask questions, then clearly articulate what you see as being problematic. Provide details and explain your desired outcome. Connect this information to your child's classroom experience, but also to a broader scale. Write down everything you discuss with the teacher and follow up with an email. Be aware that many teachers, especially more recent college graduates, have been immersed in CRT since college, and they genuinely believe that it is not just a theory, but that it is the undeniable Truth. It can be challenging to reason with someone like that.

For more advice, consult the Advocacy Toolkit chapter "How to Talk to a Critical Theorist", on page 29.

Step 6: Talk to the school counselor

School counselors and/or social emotional learning specialists are a wonderful resource, and tend to be genuinely invested in helping students. If the school counselor suddenly becomes overwhelmed with students who are feeling bullied and depressed due to the school's neo-racist activities and hears from their concerned parents, it will get attention.

Step 7: Talk to the school administration

The school principal is in charge of shaping the school's philosophy and academic vision. So, if you have talked with your child's teacher and the school counselor and there is still no improvement, move up the ladder. Call your school principal and make an appointment to meet in person. It can be a one on one meeting, but remember that there is strength in numbers. Consider organizing a small group of parents who share your concerns, then make the principal aware that he or she will be meeting with a group. At a minimum, bring your spouse, partner, or at least one other friend. When you meet, have a clear objective, be prepared with documentation and a suggested course of action. Keep notes and follow up with an email detailing what was discussed in the meeting and what was agreed upon.

Below is an example of a meeting with a school principal that made a difference:

The lesson caused an immediate uproar among Meyerholz Elementary parents. "We were shocked," said one parent, who agreed to speak with me on condition of anonymity. "They were basically teaching racism to my eight-year-old." This parent, who is Asian-American, rallied a group of a half dozen families to protest the school's intersectionality curriculum. The group met with the school principal and demanded an end to the racially divisive instruction. After a tense meeting, the administration agreed to suspend the program. (When reached for comment, Jenn Lashier, the principal of Meyerholz Elementary, said that the training was not part of the "formal curricula, but the process of daily learning facilitated by a certified teacher.") (Source: ChristopherRufo.com)

[Here is a link to the entire article: Woke Elementary \(christopherrufo.com\)](https://christopherrufo.com)

Step 8: Involve the school board

After you have exhausted all channels of communication at the school level and if you have not had a satisfactory outcome, it is time to involve the school board. If you take this step, get prepared, do your homework and be organized.

See a detailed overview of why school boards matter and what to expect at a school board meeting on page 34: What to Expect at a School Board Meeting

Step 9: Share your story and your success story

Many are shocked at the speed with which illiberal neo-racism has swept the country. People are being silenced, canceled, fired, and mobbed. School curriculums are getting turned upside down. How has neo-racism affected you and your family? Share your story; there is strength in being heard. Have you had success pushing back against the neo-racists? Tell people about it; doing so will help the next person who lands in your situation.

FAIR provides opportunities for members to share their stories in online forums. It helps knowing that you are not alone.

FAIR also has a network of reporters who will write articles on stories submitted by whistleblowers. If you send us an email to whistleblower@fairforall.org then we can put you in touch with a reporter who can cover your story.

Step 10: Launch a social media campaign

Most people understand the importance of social media in drawing attention to a cause. Here are some specific strategies that will help you launch a social media campaign.

- Create an attention-getting hashtag. Come up with a phrase related to your concern designed to pique interest among other social media users.
- Involve your family and friends. This is the essence of social media. With the help of your close circle of contacts, you can broaden your net quickly. Be direct. Ask your social media contacts to share, like, retweet, respond and take action.
- Share images. Show the assignment, letter, slide, etc. that has caused your concern and let it speak for itself. Social media posts that

contain images receive far more retweets, shares and likes than text-only posts.

- Make community engagement easy. Get input through a question or a fill in the blank form.
- Identify a target for your message. Use your social media campaign to get the attention of elected officials, such as school board members or other local or state representatives. Call them out. Identify who they are and provide a means for your social media followers to contact them.
- Encourage others to share their experiences on social media and support them. Social media is the modern day town square. Let's hop on our soapboxes.

Jodi Shaw is an example of someone who successfully used social media to expose neo-racism at her place of employment. She has gained national attention. It all started with the posting of one ten-minute video. [Watch Jodi Shaw's first video here.](#)

And take a look at how her advocacy work has grown: (20+) Jodi Shaw | Facebook

Step 11: Consider taking legal action

There are various ways you can challenge neo-racism at your child's school, both through administrative actions and in court. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination—including the creation of a racially hostile environment -- at institutions that receive federal funds. This includes public schools, which receive federal funds through a variety of programs, and it may also include some private K-12 institutions, though that is less common. You can bring a Title VI claim directly in a court of law, but you also have the option to file an administrative complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). If OCR investigates and finds that a school has violated Title VI, it can order the school to take actions to come back into compliance or else lose its federal funds.

[Here is the link to the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights: OCR: Discrimination Complaint Form \(ed.gov\)](#)

You may also be able to take your child's school to court. At public schools, you can bring a federal lawsuit alleging violations of Title VI. There may also be First Amendment claims based on a school's imposition of an ideological orthodoxy on its students (for the same reason that public schools cannot compel students to salute the flag).

At private schools, there may be a breach of contract. For example, the school itself probably has a non-discrimination policy it is violating.

[FAIR can connect you with attorneys who can help you determine whether you may have a claim. Here is the link: Legal Network – FAIR \(fairforall.org\)](#)

Step 12: Live not by lies and speak the truth

Don't say something you don't believe. Don't sign an anti-racist statement that is, in reality, neo-racist. Speak up in groups; you might be surprised that more people agree with you than not and will follow your lead. On the other hand, know that when you take a stand against neo-racism, it is possible that it will not be well-received. People might call you names, accuse you of being racist, target you on social media, or worse. If you are not comfortable discussing what you are against, consider talking about what you are in favor of, such as reason, evidence, equality, rigorous debate, and multiple viewpoints. Whatever approach you take, remember that you have the right to speak up and that you are standing up for hard-fought, tried and true liberal ideals. The longer you wait to say something, the more difficult it will become, because neo-racism is on the rise and it is not going away anytime soon.

[Here is an article by Bari Weiss that will inspire you to be courageous in this moment. 10 ways to fight back against woke culture \(nypost.com\)](#)



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You are an educator. You love teaching—the thrill of discovery, the controlled chaos of a classroom brimming with energy and engagement. Of course, those are the good days; but even on less-than-good days, teaching can be exhilarating, challenging, exhausting, and fulfilling, all at the same time.

But schools have changed. Now, in hallways, offices and meetings, you constantly hear the words “racist” or “privilege” or “lived experience” or “colonizer.” Maybe you’ve had to revamp your curriculum. Maybe you’ve had to throw away your favorite lessons because they don’t conform to your school’s new ideology. Maybe you’ve had to publicly acknowledge your racial stress or your complicity in racial supremacy or been asked to sign a pledge supporting illiberal “anti-racist” initiatives.

Whether you teach at a public school or private school, these changes have been accelerating, and you might be wondering if there is anything you can do. Here are some steps you can take to help stem and even turn the tide at your school.

Step 1: Be informed.

First, make sure you understand what is happening. You can read all about this here and here. Don’t be lulled by the benign language of “social justice” and “community-building.” Make sure you understand that these labels don’t actually describe what is happening. Understand that the

illiberal movement is grounded in a specific kind of educational philosophy or pedagogy—a word educators love to throw around—namely, critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogy, which is based on post-modernist and Marxist theories, asserts that educators should use the classroom to start a revolution against the world’s power hierarchies and systems of oppression. (You can read about the critical theorist Paolo Freire and the history and application of his Marxist ideas here.) This radical political idea of education stands in opposition to the pro-human liberal values of civil liberties, equal protection, and fairness.

Understanding, defining, and naming critical pedagogy as the ideological force behind your school’s illiberalism should be your first step toward empowering yourself and others to speak truthfully about what is happening.

Step 2: Inform others.

Once you understand and see clearly what is happening, inform others. Start conversations with colleagues, parents, and friends. In light of the current climate of orthodoxy, these conversations can be incredibly difficult to begin, and people can be afraid even simply to entertain ideas that contradict the illiberal orthodoxies.

Starting these conversations takes moral courage. But the more you can inform others of the radical theoretical underpinnings of the new illiberal ideology, the more they can begin to see the truth of what is happening, and there is power in numbers.

Begin with simple, light-hearted openers that can lead to the sharing of pro-human, liberal values. Here are some conversation-starters:

- I don't know about all this (training, material, programming).
- I feel like the focus on group identity is kind of backward. Didn't the civil rights movement try to end this way of thinking?
- I wonder whether some basic ideas like fairness and shared humanity are getting lost in all of this (training, material, programming).
- I wonder if educators really should be activists. (This is a question that has been hotly debated for decades.) Does everyone really just agree now?
- This (training, material, programming) reminds me of that book by Paulo Freire. Have you heard of him? Did you ever have to read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*?
- Have you heard of Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism (FAIR)? They're a group of thinkers and writers of all political persuasions who are working to uphold civil liberties by promoting basic liberal values of fairness, understanding, and humanity.

Step 3: Speak up. Be honest in public.

You're sitting in a faculty meeting, and everyone agrees (or seems to agree) on the latest illiberal programming. Do you nod along in agreement? Or should you speak up? The answer, of course, depends on your circumstances and your tolerance for risk. Are you a public school teacher or a private school teacher? What is the culture in your school district? What is the culture among families in your school?

For all educators, the First Amendment protects your right to free speech. You can not go to jail for things you say (with some well-known carve outs

that don't apply here). But that does not mean you won't face consequences for speaking up. Here are some ways to be honest in public about the truth of illiberalism, while also mitigating your risks.

- Ask a question. You might ask for clarification on how a particular program will have the desired effect. You might ask for a definition of the terms they're using, especially when they're being used in a way to obfuscate or twist an idea to fit their illiberalism. You might also ask by what metrics for success these programs will be measured, given that the latest research findings on the effectiveness of anti-bias programs are decidedly mixed.
- Wonder out loud about whether anyone—hypothetically speaking—disagrees with this stuff. Wonder if there anyone who is skeptical, or closeted, so to speak. How big, really, is that closet? Comments like these might garner chuckles, or they might invite some proverbial daggers. But watch carefully for how those around you react. You might find a peer by speaking up publicly. (See Step 5.)
- Offer the alternative viewpoints of liberal, pro-human values. Ask if anyone has heard of the work of John McWhorter, Glenn Loury, and others who oppose illiberalism in education. Simply mentioning these names in public also might help some closeted teachers see that they are not alone. (See Step 5.)
- Point out the reductive and essentialist thinking that views individuals as representations of their race. Insist on your right to your own individual viewpoint. (This is no easy task in a room filled with people ready to point out your privilege or fragility.) Don't let anyone tell you what you believe, or should believe, because of the color of your skin. Recall that the civil rights movement fought against racist categorizing, and won. Racial classification was wrong then, and it is wrong now.

Step 4: Choose silence as a form of conscientious objection

What if you just can't bring yourself to speak out publicly? Can silence be enough? Yes! You do not have to say anything you don't believe. No one can compel you to speak, and you don't have to explain your reasons for remaining silent.

Consider silence as a moral or conscientious objection. You might also decide that you want to assert your silence. If someone calls you out for your silence, you might simply offer the words: "I prefer not to speak" or "I'm going to stay silent here." One teacher reports that, in a faculty meeting, she stated simply, "I am not comfortable sharing my views." That teacher's simple statement disrupted the illusion of uniformity, which then led to other teachers finding her and forming connections. (See Step 5.)

Regardless of your choice of whether to speak up or remain silent, keep in mind that there is a real benefit to living honestly with your liberal values in public. Teachers who have taken public steps like these report the deep satisfaction of knowing that they have acted with moral courage and that they may have given comfort or inspiration to others.

Step 5: Find a peer or ally

Living in the liberal closet can be lonely, but you are not alone. Find a peer or ally. But how?

Email an article (or essay or podcast or video) to colleagues. You don't have to say much; you can just offer it as "food for thought." You might hear only crickets in response, but you might also be surprised to find someone who is receptive or similarly skeptical of the orthodoxy.

Actively notice signs of liberalism around you. You might spot a colleague with (oh my!) an American flag sticker on her computer or car. You might have received a question about curricular changes. You might know of a colleague who values or even enjoys political discussions across partisan lines. Any of these might signal an openness to liberal values.

If you're having trouble finding peers at your school, consider looking beyond your institution. Organizations like Heterodox Academy, The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), and Braver Angels provide resources and opportunities to connect online, which will help you build more moral courage to bring back to your own school.

Step 6: Form alliances

Teacher alliances. An alliance of like-minded colleagues might be casual, as in simply sharing information and support. Or you might decide to take action. The kinds of action you take will depend on whether you teach in a public or private setting, as well as your risk tolerance.

In private schools, any teacher action that has a whiff of disagreement with official policy can be risky due to the school-created contracts and the absence of union protection. Some private schools do, however, try to provide some voice for teachers, whether it's a seat on the board of trustees or through a formal liaison to the administration. Consider connecting with those teachers who have amplified voices. If there is none, consider whether you might be able garner support among colleagues to petition for some kind of collective representation or formal channel for airing concerns.

Public school teachers should start by informing themselves of their rights, both under Title VI (which protects civil rights in education for districts that receive federal funds) and your own contract. Reach out to your union representatives to discuss formal or informal actions you might take. You might also consider getting in touch with school board members or others active in the district. For those with tenure, you might write an article in the local paper to express concern about a policy that is harmful to student learning or the community.

Teacher-parent alliances. Whether you're a private or public school teacher, consider parents as possible allies. Parents generally care about the teachers and their experiences, and they're generally in the dark about what goes on inside the school and eager to learn more of what happens behind closed doors.

On back-to-school night, you might introduce yourself as both a teacher and a lifelong learner who values a marketplace of ideas and civil discourse as part of education. You might have parents fill out a quick questionnaire to gauge their expectations for the class and their attitudes toward an educational environment that welcomes viewpoint diversity. These responses could be useful later when looking for potential allies.

An alliance of teachers and parents could leverage teachers' inside knowledge with the power of parents, whose dollars fund the school, to make a real difference. Schools will have a much harder time ignoring alternative views that challenge the orthodoxy if parents and teachers are aligned.

Step 7: Stay neutral and non-partisan

To be a liberal, pro-human educator, it's important to remain neutral and focused on liberal values. When teaching or working with colleagues, openly stand for liberal values like reason, evidence, equality, rigorous debate, multiple viewpoints, and respect and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their cultural identifiers or political viewpoints.

True liberalism is neither conservative nor progressive. It is simply the idea that every single person should be treated fairly and equally. Don't get pulled into partisan politics.

Step 8: Model and promote liberal values in your own classroom

Cultivate a school and classroom culture that promotes constructive, liberal values. Here are some ideas:

- Offer a viewpoint diversity workshop at your school, for teachers or for students or both. You could use the many different online resources from FAIR, FIRE, Heterodox

Academy, Moral Courage Project, and Open Mind Platform to create a presentation like this one to encourage and cultivate healthy discourse, an essential liberal value.

- Put up posters in your classroom like "Think Different" or "Question Authority" or "Think for Yourself." Even if you never utter a word to your students, your students will be staring at and, hopefully, internalizing liberal values of reason, equality, and viewpoint diversity. Never underestimate the lasting effect of classroom posters.
- Include images or symbols of liberal values, such as the Statue of Liberty or the American flag. (You don't have to be of any particular political persuasion to recognize that the flag -- for all of its illiberal baggage -- is also a symbol of liberal values.) You don't have to explain yourself. You don't have to use a big flag or even a fabric flag. You could simply print out and post an image of the flag by Jasper Johns -- it's art!
- Find out what newspapers and magazines your school library subscribes to. Be sure that there is an alternative to *The New York Times*, which, as the "newspaper of record," is not what it once was. Get a subscription to other newspapers and journals. *The Wall Street Journal* offers discount subscriptions for schools and students. Introduce websites like the Flip Side or Ground News that will help your students recognize the importance of alternative viewpoints, itself a liberal value.
- Introduce yourself to students as a lifelong learner, and give them open and genuine invitations toward disagreement. Explain that you love disagreements because they help you learn. Insist on respectful, civil discourse, which will provide the classroom with a kind of guardrail, but then let the discussions flow.
- Model curiosity, inquiry, and reason, and embrace multiple viewpoints as a liberal value. Cultivate a culture of ideas. When everyone agrees (or seems to agree), suggest that you suspect there might be another viewpoint. Ask the question hypothetically -- what would someone who disagrees say?

- Encourage authentic questioning. Ask students to keep a journal that tracks: Did you ask a good question today? What was the question? Consider this essay on the art of asking questions for why and how this approach is essential to liberal thinking and education. Empower students to ask questions to which there might not even be answers. The idea is to tap into their natural curiosity and engage them in true inquiry, another liberal value.
- Select materials, to the extent possible, that reinforce reason and shared humanity. George Orwell's *1984* is a classic that students still love, and it's more relevant than ever. Its presentation of questioning, reality, and orthodoxy provide excellent springboards to learning about liberal values. William Lutz's essay on "The World of Doublespeak" exposes students to the connection between language and free thinking. For younger students, consider Maya Angelou's poem "The Human Family," which you can read here, and listen to here. (Apple's commercial use of it is pretty powerful too.)
- Identify students who are skeptical or free thinking and encourage them to start a "viewpoint diversity" club with like-minded peers. One teacher reports that students formed a non-partisan "political discussion" club, which is still going strong, years after its original founders graduated.

Step 9: Document everything

Document everything that shows what is happening in your school -- all of the illiberal programming, materials, or conversations involving administrators, colleagues, students, or parents. Take notes, and keep a journal. Be as specific as possible. The act of documenting what is happening can give you a sense of clarity and purpose.

You might use what you write down in a formal complaint, or you might decide to build a legal case. Looking at your documentation over time might also give you courage to take another step in this field guide. But even if you do nothing with these materials other than reflect, the very act of documenting and keeping a journal can be a form of moral resistance.

Step 10: Strive toward the most courageous version of yourself

For both yourself and your students: Live in truth, and insist on truth, from yourself and your school. Moral courage comes in many forms. Maybe, for today, it was reading this field guide. Maybe, tomorrow, you can take another step.

Your own moments of courage and risk-taking may very well encourage others to do the same. The more teachers who stand up to illiberalism in our schools, the more likely we are to make a difference.



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How to Talk to a Critical Theorist

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How to Talk to a Critical Theorist

In many ways, Critical Theorists (or specifically Critical Race Theorists) are just like anyone. They feel all the emotions, they care about their kids and spouses, they worry about the bills they have to pay, they have ambitions, dreams, and self-doubts. They experience shame, loss, pride, and joy. If you find yourself in a casual conversation, then, all the normal rules of establishing a baseline human connection apply. Making small talk around similar concerns and interests is not a bad idea. We tend to be favorably disposed in some way to those that are friendly. The woke are no different in this regard.

At some point in the relationship, however, you are bound to come into conflict over the question of *values*. At some point, your interlocutor will make an assumption that you share their values, in order to test the relationship in its early stages. They may make a positive statement about new race-explicit curriculum initiatives, or a negative comment about an elected official, teacher, administrator, or

administrative policy that they consider to be anti-DEI, or one that doesn't go far enough.

Their expectation is that you will agree with their sentiments, which means you appropriately reflect their moral framework. However, if you don't immediately give a sign of this alignment, things may get awkward. The person may feel like the commonality they assumed to exist is now in jeopardy. A sidelong glance or a quizzical look is all it takes. If you choose to question their statement openly, or ask for clarification, the person may experience this as a challenge to their beliefs. You will notice, just by failing to act as a mirror for this person's assumed truth, that you are experiencing stress as well. So are they. This is entirely normal... get used to it!

Depending on your goals, you may choose to exit the interaction gracefully, at least on your end, or press your questioning. If you choose the second path, you will need to manage your emotions.

Self-control

Engaging in advocacy for your principles in the face of a Critical Race Theorist, particularly in group settings, requires tremendous self-control. The great Civil Rights struggles of the '50s and '60s required activists to have enormous self-control. Yesterday's activists comported themselves differently from today's. The most effective among them dressed well, carried themselves with quiet dignity and self-respect, and strove to not let the hate and racism they faced deter them from making the right choices to advance the cause. You will need to adopt the same strategy in order to be effective against the neo-racism in vogue today.

When in doubt about your ability to control yourself, it is usually better to remain silent than betray negative emotions. Critical Race Theory interprets anger in opposition as fragility and denial. By playing into this expectation, it lets them put you more easily in that box, and will turn off any fence-sitters who are also present, who may be willing to hear you out.

Two Judgments

If you engaging with a Critical Race Theorist in an open conflict, you should be prepared for two things:

- 1) They will think you are ignorant, and
- 2) They will judge you as immoral.

We will address each of these two judgments in turn, and suggest what you can do about it.

1) They think you are ignorant

They will think you are ignorant, even willfully so. You will quickly be able to read this in their condescension and attitude.

The “woke” are always going to view any dissent by you as indicative of your mental childhood—yes they are really that condescending. In their worldview, their esoteric belief makes them savvy and perceptive, and anyone who doesn't accept their baseline understanding of privileged or oppressed group identities is sleepwalking through life, in a state of ignorance. So there is no way

you can ever hope to engage them at the level of mutual respect and still disagree—since your difference and deviation from their ideas makes you unworthy of intellectual respect. The only thing they will seek to do with you is to lead you into the light of their understanding. Many of them have had conversion experiences—at a training or conference where they were brainwashed--where they suddenly grasped the essence of the universality of privilege and oppression. You must appreciate that they are literally acting out of a realization gained during a quasi-religious experience.

2) They think you are immoral

Woke morality rests almost entirely on selective empathy for groups they deem to be oppressed.

The moral awakening they experienced (for many of them at CRT conferences or workshops) was grounded in empathy for those oppressed. Your denial of that reality is not only an intellectual failing, it is a moral one. Anyone who cannot “see” that disparities are due to discrimination is therefore apologizing for oppression, minimizing and denying it, and therefore enabling it to continue. Imagine someone who noticed an elderly person who had fallen down while crossing the street, and refused to lift a finger to help. They will be just as appalled at your indifference as you would be at someone who behaved this way. They are on the side of the angels--on the “right side of history”--and if you disagree, then you are implicitly just as immoral as this bystander.

The Good News

Once you realize and accept that these two judgments are inevitable, you can take steps to counter them. To do so, you must, first and foremost, maintain your self-control, hold fast to your principles, and articulate them whenever challenged. Jodi Shaw, a staff member at Smith College, made a YouTube video that expressed those principles with quiet, calm eloquence:

“People's identities are not reducible to their immutable characteristics. Stop expecting them to base what they think and feel about themselves on those categories. Stop presuming to tell me

or my kids how they should think and feel about themselves based on those categories. Stop asking them to project stereotypes and assumptions onto others, based on their skin color.”

Principles aren’t powerful because they demonstrate that you’re more intelligent. Ingraining them within you will demonstrate something more powerful than intelligence-conviction. And you can trust in them to the extent that you understand how crucial they are. The neo-racism of Critical Race Theory assigns group guilt, and group virtue to individuals based on immutable characteristics and superficial social identities. The pro-human principles FAIR stands for--individual rights, fairness, humanity, and understanding--have far greater moral power than this misguided pseudo-ethics, which holds individuals responsible for the assumed historical crimes of other members of the group.

Ask Questions

The vast majority of educators have been trained in ideological echo chambers. It has never occurred to them that their worldview and teaching methods are mere ideologies, as opposed to truth generating processes. The silver lining in this is that these beliefs—critical pedagogy, Critical Race Theory, cultural appropriation, equity, inclusion, internalized racism, relativism, systemic racism, etc.—are especially vulnerable to questions. This is because educators who’ve received their teaching certificates (which is virtually all teachers) are highly unlikely to have experienced challenges to the views they’ve been taught to hold.

Before attempting to challenge or question their guiding principles, it is crucial that you understand what these principles are and why they hold them. Consequently, it is extremely important that you ask specific questions and, when appropriate, write down the answer. The purpose of asking questions is to understand why they believe what they do, and not as “gotchas.” When in doubt, ask. Once they attempt to reveal and justify those positions, then you can address them one by one at the level of your principles.

The Ecological Fallacy

In practice, one of the great fallacies at the heart of Critical Race Theory is called *the ecological fallacy*. Someone who makes an ecological fallacy is falsely assuming that each individual member of a group reflects the *average* statistical qualities of the group as a whole. Critical Race Theory holds each individual within a racial category as a tiny exemplar of the group, as experiencing the same privileges or oppressions that they have projected onto the group as a whole. They will twist and distort any deviance from this assumption to fit that projection. Exposing this fallacy whenever you can is very powerful.

The Moral Failure at the Heart of Critical Race Theory.

You can also directly impugn their lack of empathy, in that they don’t view people as individuals, but as a collection of abstractions. Protecting the sanctity of the individual shows *more* empathy than Critical Race Theorists show towards favored groups, because, for you, no individuals can be dispensed with based on the color of their skin. Everyone deserves empathy, not just groups of people considered to be oppressed. For example, if a Critical Race Theorist accuses me of “not caring about black lives” because they draw attention to rioting that results in property damage and lost jobs, you can say with confidence that you absolutely do care, *even more so than them*, because, “not only do I care about police violence towards black people, but I also care about police violence towards all people. I care about small business owners, many of whom are black, who have had their businesses destroyed, and/or their insurance rates increased. I care about jobs lost as larger businesses move elsewhere. I care about the collapse of vulnerable communities that rioting causes, and the poverty that results. I care about the impact of these losses on the children who live in these neighborhoods. I care about reckless calls for “defunding the police” when the people that have been most harmed by these proposals are the very people BLM claim they have empathy for.” (h/t to James Lindsay, who discusses this in more detail in his podcast [“Four Roads to Deal with the Woke”](#)).

Attacking the selective empathy inherent in woke thought is based on the core principle of fairness.

This approach to argumentation can be replicated across many different domains where Critical Race Theories have been applied. Can you see how this critique of Woke “selective empathy” might apply to gender issues?

Steal their Motte, and Bomb their Bailey

Many Critical Race Theorists address challenges to their agendas by using a rhetorical technique called the “Motte and Bailey”. In his podcast [“Stealing the Motte”](#), James Lindsay offers a detailed breakdown on how this technique operates, and how it uses more easily defended arguments in order to advance more radical ideas.

“Don’t you care about being more racially sensitive?” is used to justify indoctrinating children into becoming neo-racists that make broad assumptions of others based on their skin color

“All we want is just to reduce inequality, make a more just world” is used to justify radical proposals—even teaching children to excuse or celebrate violent resistance and revolution. It is also used to dismiss the costs of riots and

“Encouraging children to gain a deeper understanding of themselves” is used to justify teaching children to identify primarily with their racial and gender groups rather than their individual characteristics.

When engaging with a Critical Theorist, you should anticipate this maneuver and pre-empt it.

Assert the more easily defended position, which all agree upon, and use it to attack their more radical position.

“We all want to be sensitive to discrimination based on race, which is why we must never make assumptions about others based on it.”

“We should strive to reduce inequality, but extreme solutions lead to more inequality, not less.”

“Children should gain a deeper understanding of themselves, by being able to express themselves freely, not by conforming to a reductive identity based on race.”

Conclusion

The most important things to keep in mind, when talking to a Critical Race Theorist:

- 1) Stay calm. Expect to be condescended to both intellectually and morally. Ignore it.
- 2) Stand up for your principles.
- 3) Expose the flaws in their logic. Call out the ecological fallacy with facts.
- 4) Assert the primacy of your own moral schema, and confront them directly on their moral failings.
- 5) Steal their motte, and bomb their bailey.
- 6) See #1!

Helpful Links:

[No, the Woke Won’t Debate You. Here’s Why. - New Discourses](#)

[A Principled Statement of Opposition to Critical Race Theory: An Excerpt from ‘Cynical Theories’ - New Discourses](#)

[How to Talk to Your Employers About Anti-Racism - New Discourses](#)



What to Expect at a Schoolboard Meeting

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

What to Expect at a Schoolboard Meeting

And Why Schoolboards Matter

Each local school board makes important decisions on behalf of the school district they serve. They control the budget, which means deciding how to allocate taxpayer dollars district-wide. The school board makes policies that affect your child's school, be it elementary, middle or high school. Decisions regarding curriculum, staff training, and textbooks are all responsibilities of the school board. They also appoint the superintendent. Policies should be in place as to the board's obligations regarding discrimination; it would be wise to become familiar with these policies. Typically, a school board is composed of three to

seven elected representatives whose terms last four years. The election cycle for school board members is usually staggered, in which at least some school board members are up for reelection every two years. This presents an opportunity for changes to take place with your school board on a pretty regular basis. If you have ever considered running for school board (and you should consider it if you are displeased with the direction your school district is going), you have regular opportunities to launch a campaign. It has been said that 100 local school board members have more direct influence on the U.S. population than 100 elected officials in Washington.

Schoolboard Meetings

When should you involve your school board on an issue of concern? After you have exhausted all channels of communication at the school level and have not had a satisfactory outcome, it is time to involve the school board.

If you take this step, get prepared and be organized. Start by researching your school board members in order to gain knowledge as to where they might stand on your issue. Look at their Facebook pages; see what they are saying on Twitter; look up news stories where they are quoted. Next, arrange a meeting with a chosen school board member. Doing this may take some persistence, particularly in a large district. Identify other parents who share your concerns and ask them to attend the meeting with you. A small group of dedicated parents can have a big impact on a school board. When you meet with the school board member, bring any material that will help your cause, including data, research and anecdotal examples. Be ready to clearly articulate your concerns and one or more solutions. Do your best to keep emotions in check.

If you decide to attend a school board meeting and wish to address the board, you will most likely have an opportunity to comment on agenda items during the meeting (i.e. textbook or course approval, equity committee presentation, contract with consultants). However, don't just show up

and plan to talk about a subject that is not on the agenda, unless you follow the guidelines for introducing it. For that, most school boards allow time for public comments at the end of meetings, generally limited to a two or three-minute presentation, but you will probably need to sign up for the public comment period at least 30 minutes before the meeting starts. Get there early. Sometimes those public comment periods are limited and they do get filled up. If you want an item to be formally added to the agenda of an upcoming meeting, you will need to submit a request several days in advance. District Websites normally post details about this online.

Comments you make during a school board meeting may or may not automatically be added to the board minutes. If you want them added as something more than "Mary Smith then addressed the board," be sure to specifically say, "I would like this document added to the minutes" and provide a written copy of your comments.

No matter what, pay attention to your school board. Attend your school board meetings or watch the livestream. Read the agenda and minutes. At election time, support school board members you like and vote. Why? Because the school board makes incredibly important decisions that directly affect your kids.



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How to Build a Power Base and Get the Attention of a Politician

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

How to Build a Power Base and Get the Attention of a Politician

Introduction

Have you ever wondered why politicians keep acting the same way all the time, enacting policies that are increasingly bad for us? Have you ever wondered why they're always so indifferent to our country's people and future, and why the typical methods individuals and organizations most commonly use don't ever work? This guide is going to provide answers to those questions, and more importantly, let you in on the secret of what does work.

To change policy, as everyone knows, you have to first get the attention of elected politicians, and more importantly, get them to listen to you and do what you want. If they're already doing what you want, you have to make sure they continue and don't suddenly change course.

Many people think the way to do this is to present better arguments than their opponents, appeal to the politician's sense of fair play, common sense, logic, supporting evidence, the best interests of the country, or humanitarian principles. If they could just show the politician that his policy actions are inconsistent with what he says he believes in on TV or in his speeches, that he'll realize his mistake and turn it around immediately.

Except that it's not a mistake. Real politics, also known as *realpolitik*, is, first and foremost, a contest for power between those who have it, and those who want it. To get the attention of a politician, you have to use the immutable laws of power to your advantage. This remains true whether the politics is local, statewide, or national, and whatever the political persuasion of the politician or the particular issues at stake.

Our Rulers Care About Their Political Futures

Elected officials today, in the 21st century, don't *represent* us, they *rule* us. That's why they're now called "elected officials," whereas they used to be called "our elected representatives." With a tiny handful of exceptions here and there, they are, indeed, no longer *ours*.

Today we don't have citizens and citizen representatives. We have people in power, people out of power, and people with some power. The people who have power are the *rulers*. The people who passively obey are the *ruled*. The remainder are people who have or want some power, a hand on the steering wheel, but not a tight grip on it. This is where we come in. To be able to deal with politicians, we have to want some power. And what we want we must build ourselves, before any elected politician will have to, or want to, listen to us.

Unlike the elected representatives of the past, who cared about the future of the country they were building with our parents and grandparents, elected officials care, first and foremost, about their political futures. That means getting into power, staying in power, and if possible, expanding their power. That's the Political Prime Directive of all elected officials in our present-day, failed state environment.

Once their power is secure, some, but not all, elected officials also have certain policy preferences and ethical standards of their own that they might wish to follow if they can. However, if their own sense of fair play, common sense, logic, supporting evidence, the best interests of the country, humanitarian principles, or personal policy preferences get in the way of the Political Prime Directive, those things will never see the light of day. Even a politician who still has some ethical standards can't implement them politically if he's knocked out of power. Most hours of most days of most politicians are indeed spent staying in power, and fending off their rivals and adversaries.

So if we want to get their attention, we have to place ourselves in a position to become capable of affecting their political futures one way or the other. We have to become capable of either

threatening their power, or helping them retain or expand it, depending on whether or not they do what we want. And that means we must build a power base of our own.

It's not that our power has to match that of our opponents, don't get me wrong. It just has to be capable of negatively affecting elected officials' political futures if those politicians fail to take our policy preferences and ethical standards into account in the making of policy. That means that, once built, it has to be leveraged *strategically* to ensure maximum effect, and it has to be *projected* directly at the politician in accordance with the unwritten rules of the political theater of action, both of which are outside the scope of this introductory guide.

If we can do both of those with whatever power we've built, however small, we can even overcome power that, at least on paper, is superior to our own. We can make our policy preference for pro-humanity, and our ethical preferences for things like fair play, common sense, logic, attention to supporting evidence, the best interests of the country, and humanitarian principles, from which that policy preference naturally derives, matter in real-world settings. For now, we'll just say that we have to first combine and channel our energies in ways that will enable us to become a *credible political actor* if we wish to attract the attention of an elected official and make him do what we want, or stop doing what we don't want. *That depends on us, and us alone.*

Approaching Politicians Without Power of Our Own

If you were the chief of staff of an elected city councilman or school board member in a town of, say, 100,000 people, obeying the Political Prime Directive, and a couple of people, bearing organizational titles and an e-mail list several thousand names long, demanded that your elected official do something they want, or stop doing something they don't want, what would your first question to yourself be?

The answer that should pop into your mind is another question: *Why?*

Their answer to that might be some argument based on fair play, common sense, logic, supporting evidence, the best interests of the country, humanitarian principles, or even consistency with your politician's other stated policy preferences. Or, it might be something like: "The polls say that's what the majority of people in this town or district support." What would you think then?

Correct answer: *So what?*

All they're doing is telling you, as that politician's chief of staff, they don't understand how politics works, which is another way of saying they're not *credible*. What's more, they're not even worthy of your respect, because they have no power. You know very well that if they can't, or don't want to, project power at the official in question, that they can't hurt or help him, they don't matter. They're irrelevant, and you have more important things to spend your time on.

After all, your purpose as a chief of staff is to run the affairs of your elected official in a way that protects and enhances his political future.

You can't tell that to the people who approached you directly though, because it might hurt your politician's image. So you decide to assign a low level-member of your staff to meet with them: he can go and listen to them talk for some finite period of time. When they meet him, they'll probably notice that he looks bored and that maybe he seems a little arrogant. That's because he doesn't care. He cares about what you, his chief of staff, cares about, and he cares about looking good in front of both you and your politician.

Therefore, your low-level staffer will simply humor them, and come back afterwards and tell you there's nothing to worry about, it's safe to ignore them. To wrap things up, you tell him to send them a form letter, which is intended to paper over your politician's differences with them, perhaps soothe and placate them by assuring them that he has the town's best interests at heart, and otherwise keep them at bay and out of your and your politician's way.

Sound familiar?

Building an Independent Power Base

Before expecting any politician to care what our policy or ethical preferences are, we have to build up our own independent power base, and then learn to leverage that power, and project it at the politician in the right way. First things first.

A power base begins with people, not money. Relationships are the real currency of politics. Organized relationships in which a core set of human beings, who know and trust one another personally, together develop the capability to channel the energy of many, many other thousands of others whom they don't know personally, directly, or indirectly, at a politician. Money that's thrown around, either at a politician or into public relations efforts, but without those relationships underlying them, will be ignored. That's because without them, we can't properly leverage the money to our advantage, and because in that case, it would also be likely to be misused in ways that aren't to our benefit because there'd be no internal accountability. Money on top of the required relationships can be used to magnify and extend existing power, but it can't replace them if they're not there.

Nor does power come from technology. Technology that's deployed in the absence of the required relationships makes for a lot of long hours, weeks, and months of busy work for a lot of people, but not a lot of political effectiveness, if any. Email lists taken alone are like titles: without anything under them, they exist only in thin air.

It's better to have 100 or 200, 50, or even 20 organized people who you know personally and have established relationships with than it is to have thousands of email addresses sitting around on your computer awaiting mass mailings telling the humans behind them to write to "their representative" on this or that issue, or whatever.

Building a power base means, first and foremost, building out the relational core of the organization. To do this, you'll need a handful of leaders, say, four or five others, to help you do that as part of a core state leadership team. This part is critical: it matters who those people are. Despite what the culture is trying so hard to make

us believe, humans are not interchangeable with one another. It isn't a case of the more the merrier, it isn't about calling for "volunteers." It's about selecting specific people who are both capable and share our purpose. If we believe in old school values, well, this is old school. Our methods, not just our objectives, must reflect who we are, and what kind of country we want to have.

And it isn't like looking for people as if we were a human resources department: we don't need people who will be cogs in a wheel. We need original, creative, dedicated, trustworthy thinkers and doers who are serious, focused, and mutually accountable to one another and who feel they share their little part of responsibility for history's judgement of us all right now. Especially since we're expecting them to perform human leadership functions at varying levels up and down the structure, which we must be.

And here is the core concept, in terms of how it will affect our ability to get the attention of a politician: these relationships form our primary power source, since all politics is built on relationships. *The eventual effectiveness of our efforts will depend entirely on the quality of our internal relationships, for they are the material on which our combined power is built.* As long as that's in place, the rest will take care of itself. Should they fail to be built, the entire effort will crumble and disappear.

Then the imperative becomes how to channel the potential energies of that independent power structure we've built at a specific politician we want to move.

What It Means to Project Power at a Politician

Here is an example of projecting power at a politician. We can take the example of a school board member in that town of 100,000 people who is aggressively influencing its other members to do things we don't like, let's say, something specific, the one worst thing. We get together with our state leadership team and decide on a strategy to counter it. Perhaps that strategy is to disrupt the relationships of that member. Politicians care about their relationships, for they are as much their currency of power as they are ours.

Now is the time, and only now, to start worrying about creating large e-mail lists of interchangeable supporters. But we're not going to use them to tell people to write to "their representative." We're going to tell them that this particular elected school board member is doing something that is harmful to us, our children, and our community, and that we together need to stop it.

We give them the Twitter address of that politician and tell them to get on there and Twitterstorm him in a tightly focused way with opposition to whatever he's doing. The aim is to make him look like a bad person for doing that thing, which harms his image, tell him that they're going to vote for someone that has their interests at heart the next time if he doesn't stop immediately, which in large numbers makes him look weak, and tell him they're also getting other people not to vote for him, which in large numbers makes him look very weak.

Making a politician look weak in front of other politicians actually weakens his influence on the school board. Making him look weak in front of the public hinders his ability to attract votes in a future election, because now he looks to be extremely controversial. A politician with a lot of highly motivated enemies appears to be vulnerable, and that's bad for him, as it creates a power drain on him. It means that he may have overreached his power, as obviously evidenced by the fact that he is now engulfed in a Twitterstorm. Then we follow up the Twitterstorm with emails from our list to supporters who live in that town to make sure that 50 or 100 people are consistently rallying outside (and even inside) of the school board meeting every month for six months with signs directly referring to that politician and what he's doing that we don't like.

From now on, he'll lose a little bit of his influence over the other members of the school board, and perhaps even in adjacent venues. Depending on whatever opposing powers are active in the theater, they may even be open to being dissuaded from doing what he's doing, or at least to doing less of it less intensely, because they don't want the same thing to happen to them.

Now we work with the local leader we've appointed

who lives in that politician's local area to figure out which of the other members of that school board who was following in the direction of the member we don't like we should approach, and how we should approach him.

This we will know because those of our people who live there, working under the direction of that local leader, will have already been hanging around the school board building relationships and gathering intelligence about the relationships, relative power standings, and political positions of the entire school board and their staff. Preferably, we single out first the member who is the *least* committed to the one who was the bad influence, or whose relationship with him was the most strained already.

This is the time when we should make our move to get the attention of a politician, now that we have the capability to influence his political future, as well as that of his rival to boot, which also affects his power in a huge way. We call his chief of staff directly and ask for a meeting with that school board member we've selected. We tell him that his fellow school board member has become controversial, we don't like him, we know that he doesn't really like him either because he's a rival of one sort or another. We tell him that we can help each other, and we'd like him to start by at least doing X.

The implication for that politician is that by doing X, his political future will be brighter, and that of his rivals will be dimmer. Whereas if he doesn't do X, he may find himself on the wrong end of our Twitterstorm or a future vote-getting effort, which we are now thoroughly capable of. This gives him an incentive to do it. If he does, not only will that politician not be on the wrong end of an ongoing series of our Twitterstorms and rallies, but he can even ask us to use these capabilities we've built up to help get him elected instead of his rival. We could even have one of our experts on some other less controversial issue to go on the local news and express support for him on that other, unrelated issue.

The fact of the matter is, this politician may have wanted to do X all along anyway, but couldn't, due to the prior realities of the balance of power. Now

we've changed that balance. And now, we have an ally in power, someone whose interests are aligned with our own. Now we can figure out who is the next person we want to talk to on the school board. The ultimate aim is to isolate and exert pressure on the member we don't like, which includes stripping away some of the allies he thinks he has, until he has no power left, until most of the power is in the hands of the new allies we've made.

Conclusion

The goal of this guide is not to overwhelm, but rather to empower you. First and foremost, you deserve to know the truth, and just as importantly, we want all of our time spent doing this to be substantive and meaningful. It may sound like a lot of effort, but it's mostly interhuman effort, not parallel, time-consuming bureaucratic, administrative, and technological tasks undertaken by individuals separately, each in his own little silo, in solitude.

Because you'll be dealing with people directly, you'll know what's happening in other states and how it relates to your own state because you'll also have personal relationships with your fellow state leaders. You'll find that it's exhilarating, because you'll be acquiring, through what we're all intent on building together, the power to change things. Along the way, you'll make a lot of genuine, close, deep friendships with wonderful like-minded people who feel the same way we do. And together we all have personal responsibility for the outcomes that we ourselves create, or don't create.

That concludes this guide on how you get the attention of a politician, and how we all together change the trajectory we're on. This is how we begin to build and deploy the kind of power necessary to bend the arc of future history. We look forward to talking with you individually and getting to know you personally over time, as we build out our historic effort and the deep human, strategic structures that must drive it.



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Recommended Reading List & Sources

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Books

The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas Are Setting Up a Generation for Failure:

Lukianoff, Greg, Haidt, Jonathan

Cynical Theories: How Activist Scholarship Made Everything about Race, Gender, and Identity and Why This Harms Everybody:

Pluckrose, Helen, Lindsay, James

The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion:

Haidt, Jonathan

Prey: Immigration, Islam, and the Erosion of Women's Rights:

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan

How to Have Impossible Conversations:

A Very Practical Guide: Boghossian, Peter, Lindsay, James

Free Speech: Why It Matters:

Doyle, Andrew

What Do White Americans Owe Black People: Racial Justice in the Age of Post-Oppression:

Hill, Jason D

Winning the Race:

Beyond the Crisis in Black America:

McWhorter, John

Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress:

Pinker, Steven

How The Other Half Learns: Equality, excellence, and the battle over school choice:

Pondiscio, Robert

Taboo: 10 Facts You Can't Talk About:

Reilly, Wilfred

Agency: Inspiring the Next Generation to Build Strong Families and Be Masters of Their Own Fate:

Rowe, Ian

The Believing Brain: From Ghosts and Gods to Politics and Conspiracies—How We Construct Beliefs and Reinforce Them as Truths:

Shermer, Michael

Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters:

Shrier, Abigail:

How to Fight Anti-Semitism:

Weiss, Bari

Self-Portrait in Black and White: Family, Fatherhood, and Rethinking Race:

Williams, Thomas Chatterton

Beyond All Reason: The Radical Assault on Truth in American Law:

Farber, Daniel A. and Sherry, Suzanna

ON TOTALITARIANISM

Live Not by Lies: A Manual for Christian Dissidents:

Dreher, Rod

Origins of Totalitarianism:

Arendt, Hannah

1984:

Orwell, George

FOR SOME HUMOROUS PERSPECTIVE ON A SERIOUS SUBJECT

Woke: A Guide to Social Justice:
McGrath, Titania

My First Little Book of Intersectional Activism: McGrath, Titania

ONLINE RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONS

[Heterodox Academy](#)

[FIRE \(thefire.org\)](#): Experienced. Nonpartisan. Defending Your Rights.

[Institute for Humane Studies \(theihs.org\)](#)

[Counterweight \(counterweightsupport.com\)](#)

[New Discourses](#)

[FREE BLACK THOUGHT](#)

[Critical Race Training in Education](#)
[ChristopherRufo.com](#)

[Critical Therapy Antidote Protecting the Integrity of Talking Therapies](#)

[The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal](#)

[National Association of Scholars | NAS](#)

[American Council of Trustees and Alumni \(goacta.org\)](#)

[Scholars at Risk](#) | Protecting scholars and the freedom to think, question, and share ideas

[Braver Angels](#)

[BridgeUSA](#)

[Student Press Law Center](#)

[Unity Training Solutions](#) | Harnessing Individual Talent

ONLINE MAGAZINES

City Journal: A Publication of The Manhattan Institutel
[\(www.city-journal.org\)](#)

Tablet Magazine: A New Read on Jewish Life [\(www.Tabletmag.com\)](#)

Quillette: Platform for Free Thought
[\(www.quillette.com\)](#)

COMPENDIUM OF FREE BLACK THOUGHT

For suggested Resources from FreeBlackThought.com, [Click here](#)

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.: JUST A FEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Martin Luther King Jr. Speeches, Sermons, Texts: 5 to Know | [Time](#)

Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community? (King Legacy): King Jr., Martin Luther Dr., Harding, Vincent, King, Coretta Scott

Strength to Love: Martin Luther King Jr

A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches: King, Martin Luther, Washington, James M.

Why We Can't Wait (Signet Classics): King Jr., Martin Luther Dr., Jackson, Jesse

CRITIQUES OF WHITE FRAGILITY

Watch Chloe Valdary speak [here](#) on the Black Intellectual Roundtable hosted by Bret Weinstein. This podcast features some of the most brilliant and educated minds discussing issues involving race in this country. None of them say teaching “white fragility” is the answer.

Here is a fantastic open exchange between Brown professor Glenn Loury and John McWhorter of Columbia about White Fragility, revisionist history, and race: (<https://youtu.be/GfsH3AaoqYM>)

In [this BBC interview](#), Thomas Chatterton Williams, author and New American fellow, discusses BLM and the issues of focusing on racial identity groups instead of individualism. [In this article](#) he recommends 10 mind-opening books on race as alternatives to White Fragility.

Matt Taibbi's eye-opening critique of White Fragility, which directly addresses its paradoxical approach and very real implications: (<https://taibbi.substack.com/p/on-white-fragility>)

MUST-READ ESSAYS AND ARTICLES

John McWhorter, 2017: [Antiracism, Our Flawed New Religion](#)

Andrew Sullivan, 2018: [America's New Religions](#)

Matt Yglesias, 2019: [The Great Awakening](#)

Zach Goldberg, 2019: [America's White Savors](#), and Goldberg's [original Twitter thread](#) on the NYT

Alex Tabarok, 2019: [The NYTimes is Woke](#) [summarizing Goldberg's analysis of NYT word use]

Eric Kaufman, 2019: [Americans Are Divided by Their Views on Race, Not Race Itself](#) [graphs]

George Packer, 2019: [When the Culture War Comes for the Kids](#) [a long and important essay by a journalist with impeccable progressive credentials, documenting how white progressives in the Brooklyn public school system got much more ideological around 2014, in ways that harmed students]

Jon Haidt, 2019: [The Dark Psychology of Social Networks](#). Atlantic. [Gives the backstory to the awakening—how social media changed from 2009 to 2013, creating an “outrage machine” that caused many things to go haywire beginning around 2014]

Barack Obama, warning democrats and young activists about wokeness: ‘That’s Not Activism’ [Video and article in NYT](#)

Eric Kaufmann, 2020: [The Great Awakening and the Second American Revolution](#).

Joshua Mitchell, THE SPIRITUAL QUEST OF IDENTITY POLITICS. podcast. and see his book: [American Awakening: Identity Politics and Other Afflictions of Our Time](#).

Titus Techera, What Lies Beneath the Wokeness.

Randall Kennedy, [Radical Critiques of Legal Academia](#)

James Chen, [UnLoving](#)

The Orwell Foundation | [The Freedom of the Press](#)

Bari Weiss on cancel culture, Leaving The New York Times and self-censorship—[Deseret News \(2021\)](#)

The University as the Woke Mission Field: A Dissident Women's Studies Ph.D. Speaks Out—[New Discourses \(2021\)](#)

Shakespeare Wasn't Woke—[Persuasion \(2021\)](#)

California Is Cleansing Jews From History—[Tablet Magazine \(2021\)](#)

Schools Must Resist Destructive Anti-racist Demands—[The Atlantic \(2021\)](#)

General Counter Wokecraft ([woke-dissident.github.io](#)) (2021)

The Rise, Fall, and Renaissance of Classical Liberalism | [Libertarianism.org](#)

America's cultural revolution is just like Mao's—[UnHerd \(2021\)](#)

HOW SOCIAL JUSTICE WENT FROM BEING A MOVEMENT TO A RELIGION: IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Stanley Kurtz: *The Church of the Left*

John McWhorter: [Antiracism, Our Flawed New Religion](#)

Jon Haidt, lecture at Duke: [Why Universities Must Choose One Telos: Truth or Social Justice](#)

Andrew Sullivan: [Is Intersectionality a Religion?](#)

William Deresiewicz: [On Political Correctness](#)

Frank Bruni: [The Dangerous Safety of College](#)

Jesse Singal: [This Is What a Modern-Day Witch Hunt Looks Like](#)

Kerri Smith: [On Leaving the SJW Cult and Finding Myself](#)

John McWhorter: [THE GREAT AWOKENING](#). Atonement as Activism. "You're taught that on race issues you are morally obliged to suspend your usual standards of logic. Faced with a choice between some benign mendacity and being mauled, few human beings choose the latter."

Bo Winegard: [The Preachers of the Great Awakening](#)

James Lindsay: [Postmodern Religion and the Faith of Social Justice](#)

BJ Campbell: [Social Justice is a Crowdsourced Religion](#); he mostly summarizes....

Grievance Studies Team: Boghossian, Lindsay, Pluckrose: See [this video: Is Intersectionality a Religion?](#)

Heretical = Problematic;
Blasphemy = Not Politically Correct;
Original Sin = Privilege; Church = Safe Space; Born Again = Woke

Andrew Sullivan: [America's New Religions](#)

John McWhorter, 2018, Atlantic: [The Virtue Signalers Won't Change the World](#)

Toby Young: [The Great Awakening](#)
“What’s distinctive about members of the social justice left is not that they don’t believe in magic — they clearly do — but that the supernatural forces that govern their universe are all malevolent. Theirs is a religion bereft of a divine being.”

Samuel James: [We’re All Fundamentalists Now](#)

Megan McArdle: [Meet Your New Woke Inquisitors, Same as the Old Ones](#)

Paul Hollander: *“There is at last the phenomenon of identity politics. . . . Identity politics assumes that some basic attribute such as race, sex, ethnicity, or sexual preference is the single determinant and source of one’s true identity and all political interests. . . . In effect, identity politics has come to serve as a substitute for religion.”*

(p. liv, citing Christopher Lasch)
Prescient is his 1998 introduction to the 4th edition of [Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba 1928–1979](#).

John Judis, 2005: [The Chosen Nation: The Influence of Religion on U.S. Foreign Policy](#)

Antonia Senior, 2020: [Identity Politics is Christianity Without Redemption](#)

Molly McGrath, 2020: [Sacrificial Politics and Sacred Victims](#)

Eric Kaufmann, 2020: [Liberal Fundamentalism: A Sociology of Wokeness](#)

Titus Techera: [What Lies Beneath the Wokeness](#). In Law and Liberty

Joshua Mitchell: [THE SPIRITUAL QUEST OF IDENTITY POLITICS](#). podcast. See his book: [American Awakening: Identity Politics and Other Afflictions of Our Time](#).

Michael Lind: [The Revenge of the Yankees: How Social Gospel became Social Justice](#)

John McWhorter: [The Neoracists —Persuasion \(2021\)](#)

WHY THE CURRENT TRENDS IN DIVERSITY TRAINING MISS THE MARK

[The Problem\(s\) With Diversity-Related Training - Musa al-Gharbi](#)

A PUSHBACK AGAINST IDENTITY POLITICS FROM ACADEMICS AND INTELLECTUALS WHO ARE NON-WHITE

Anthony Appiah, Book: [The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity Politics](#). See his essay in the NYT: [Speaking As A](#),

Amy Chua, Book: [Political Tribes](#); See her essay in The Guardian, [How America’s Identity Politics Went From Inclusion to Division](#).

Frances Fukuyama, Book: [Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics or Resentment](#); See his essay against identity politics, in Foreign Affairs, and here, in AI, [on Huntington](#)

Jason Hill, Book: [We have overcome](#). See [Interview at Spiked](#)

Jonathan Rauch: [Review of Chua](#)

Coleman Hughes: Many [columns at Quillette](#), including [this](#) on intersesctionality

[Glenn Loury](#)

Irshad Manji: [Don't Label Me.](#)

John McWhorter: Builds on Rorty, in The Atlantic: [Are Campus Activists Too Dogmatic?](#) See also [Antiracism, Our Flawed New Religion.](#)

Eboo Patel: [Essays on identity](#)

John Wood: [The Spectrum of Black Contrarianism](#)

Zachary Wood, Book: [Uncensored: My Life and Uncomfortable Conversations at the Intersection of Black and White America](#)

Ayan Hirsi Ali

Kahlil Bird

PERSPECTIVES ON RACE IN AMERICA

Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life: Fields, Karen E., Fields, Barbara J

The Omni-Americans: Some Alternatives to the Folklore of White Supremacy

Black Boy [Seventy-fifth Anniversary Edition]: Wright, Richard, Wright, Malcolm, Wideman, John Edgar

Felon: Poems: Betts, Reginald Dwayne

Shadow and Act: Ellison, Ralph

Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File: Wideman, John Edgar

Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family: Jackson, Mitchell

The Souls of Yellow Folk: Essays: Yang, Wesley

FILMS

Accidental Courtesy: Daryl Davis, Race & America | Prime Video ([amazon.com](#))

What Killed Michael Brown?, Written by Shelby Steele, Directed by Eli Steele (<https://whatkilledmichaelbrown.com/>)

How Jack Became Black, by Eli Steele



Reading List for Kids & Teens

FAIR ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

The FAIR Reading List for Kids & Teens

Here is a list of books for kids and teens that demonstrate values such as perseverance, leadership, judgment, curiosity, friendship, self-regulation and hope. The list includes memoirs, fiction, non-fiction, and American history.

Young Readers

I am Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Brad Metzger and Christopher Eliopoulos

Enemy Pie

by Derek Munson, Tara Calahan King, illustrator

Little Blue Truck

by Alice Schertle, Jill McElmurry, illustrator

Ferdinand

by Munro Leaf, Robert Lawson, illustrator

Mae Among the Stars

by Roda Ahmed, Stasia Burrington, illustrator

Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type

by Doreen Cronin, Betsy Lewin, illustrator

Juno Valentine and the Magical Shoes

by Eva Chen, Derek Desierto, illustrator

A Good Day

by Kevin Henkes

Hair Love

by Matthew Cherry, Vashti Harrison, illustrator

Elementary School

*The Boy, The Mole,
The Fox and the Horse (all ages)*
by Charlie Mackesy

George Washington
National Geographic Society

Abe Lincoln Remembers
by Ann Turner, Wendell Minor,
illustrator

I Have a Dream
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
and Kadir Nelson

Wonder
by R.J. Palacio

*Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez
and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation*
by Duncan Tonatui

*A Place to Land: Martin Luther King, Jr. and
the Speech that Inspired a Nation*
by Barry Wittenstein, Jerry Pinkney,
illustrator

The Year of Billy Miller
by Kenvin Henkes

Code 7: Cracking the Code for an Epic Life
by Bryan Johnson

*Free For You and Me: What Our First
Amendment Means*
by Christy Mihaly, Manu Montoya,
illustrator

Little House on the Prairie
by Laura Ingalls Wilder

*Chester Nez and the Unbreakable Code: A
Navajo Code Talker's Story*
by Joseph Bruchac, Liz Amini-Holmes,
illustrator

Best Friends
by Shannon Hale, LeUyen Pham,
illustrator

The Phantom Tollbooth
by Norton Juster

Middle School

FICTION

Resistance
by Jennifer Nielsen

Freak the Mighty
by Rodman Philbrick

American Born Chinese (Graphic novel)
by Gene Luen Yang

A Long Walk to Water
by Linda Sue Park

The Book Thief
by Markus Zusak

Fahrenheit 451
by Ray Bradbury

Harrison Bergeron (short story)

by Kurt Vonnegut

The Giver

by Lois Lowry

Anthem

by Ayn Rand

Animal Farm

by George Orwell

Inside Out and Back Again

by Thanhha Lai

Bud, Not Buddy

by Christopher Paul Curtis

MEMOIR

Red Scarf Girl

by Ji-li Jiang

I am Malala

by Malala Yousafzai

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

by Anne Frank

The Night Diary

by Veera Hirandani

Refugee

by Alan Gratz

Out of My Mind

by Sharon Draper

The House on Mango Street

by Sandra Cisneros

Watership Down

by Richard Adams

OTHER

Unbroken (The Young Adult Adaptation)

by Laura Hildebrand

“Human Family”

poem by Maya Angelou

“Kindness”

poem by Naomi Shihab Nye

A Maze me - Poems for Girls

Naomi Shihab Nye

High School

FICTION

1984

by George Orwell

In the Time of the Butterflies

by Julia Alvarez

The Handmaid's Tale

by Margaret Atwood

The Testaments (sequel)

by Margaret Atwood

The Circle

by Dave Eggers

Brave New World

by Aldous Huxley

A Free Life

by Ha Jin

The Secret Life of Bees

by Sue Monk Kidd

Tell the Wolves I'm Home

by Carol Rifka Brunt

The Screwtape Letters

by C. S. Lewis

Life of Pi

by Yann Martel

The Kite Runner

by Khaled Hosseini

The Chocolate War

by Robert Cormier

Feed

by M.T. Anderson

MEMOIR

The Color of Water

by James McBride

Educated

by Tara Westover

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings

by Maya Angelou

*The Slave Narrative of the Life
of Frederick Douglass*

by Frederick Douglass

Night

by Elie Weisel

Maus (Graphic Memoir)

by Art Spiegelman

Persepolis (Graphic Memoir)

by Marjane Satrapi

OTHER

The Madness of Crowds

by Douglas Murray

1776

by David McCullough

The Gulag Archipelago

by Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community

by Martin Luther King, Jr., Forward by Coretta Scott King

The Other Wes Moore

by Wes Moore

In Order to Live: A North Korean Girl's Journey to Freedom

by Yeonmi Park

The Librarian of Auschwitz

by Antonio Iturbe Lilit Thwaites,
translator

Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom

by David W. Blight

*The Rise of American Democracy:
Jefferson to Lincoln*

by Sean Wilentz

Hamilton: An American Biography

by Tony Williams

*The Constitution and the Declaration
of Independence: The Constitution of
the United States of America,
by The Founding Fathers*

by Paul Skousen

The Know Your Bill of Rights Book

by Sean Patrick

