



# Social Justice, Critical Theory, and Christianity: Are They Compatible?

Dr. Neil Shenvi  
March 3, 2020  
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Social "justice" is a *postmodern*,  
*Marxist*, fascist, GLOBALIST,  
vegetarian, PRO-BIOTIC conspiracy





**Cher**  @cher · 12 Dec 2018

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**ROSIE**  @Rosie · 12 Dec 2018

say no 2 joe



145



35



857



**Robert Pavao** @mendonca1969 · 12 Dec 2018

No to Joe, maybe Kamala, Elizabeth or Gavin???



2



12



**ROSIE** 

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no more old white men

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103





**"The enemy is now and has always been the four threats of white supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism, and militarism.** These forces and not Islam create terrorism. These forces, and not queerness, create homophobia. These forces unleash destruction primarily on those who are Trans, and queer, and brown and Black, and we are the first to experience its' violence. These forces create the conditions for our dehumanization and our death, and we will hold them to account, no matter whose face they may wear."



# Glaciers, gender, and science

## A feminist glaciology framework for global environmental change research

Mark Carey [↑](#)

M Jackson

Alessandro Antonello

Jaclyn Rushing

University of Oregon, USA

Mark Carey, Robert D. Clark Honors College, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, USA. Email: [carey@uoregon.edu](mailto:carey@uoregon.edu)

### Abstract

Glaciers are key icons of climate change and global environmental change. However, the relationships among gender, science, and glaciers – particularly related to epistemological questions about the production of glaciological knowledge – remain understudied. This paper thus proposes a feminist glaciology framework with four key components: 1) knowledge producers; (2) gendered science and knowledge; (3) systems of scientific domination; and (4) alternative representations of glaciers. Merging feminist postcolonial science studies and feminist political ecology, the feminist glaciology framework generates robust analysis of gender, power, and epistemologies in dynamic social-ecological systems, thereby leading to more just and equitable science and human-ice interactions.

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[feminist glaciology](#)

[feminist political ecology](#)

[feminist postcolonial science studies](#)

[folk glaciology](#)

[glacier impacts](#)

[glaciers and society](#)

# Outline

- Why should we care?
- What is critical theory?
- Conflicts between critical theory and Christianity
- Logical implications
- Critical theory in the church
- Advice for dialogue

# Why should we care?

●●●○○ Sprint LTE 9:11 AM 75%  
< Messages Pretend Texts Details

Christians should care about social justice!!!

Yeah, that seems reasonable

Beacuse the gospel is about caring for the poor

Wait, what do you mean

Does it really matter whether Jesus is God anyway?

...

●●●○○ Sprint LTE 8:57 AM 75%  
< Messages Pretend Texts Details

Sexism is a sin. Women are made in God's image

absolutely!

The church needs to stop oppressing women!

in what way?

SMASH THE PATRIARCHY! WICCA FOR ALL!

I'm must be missing something

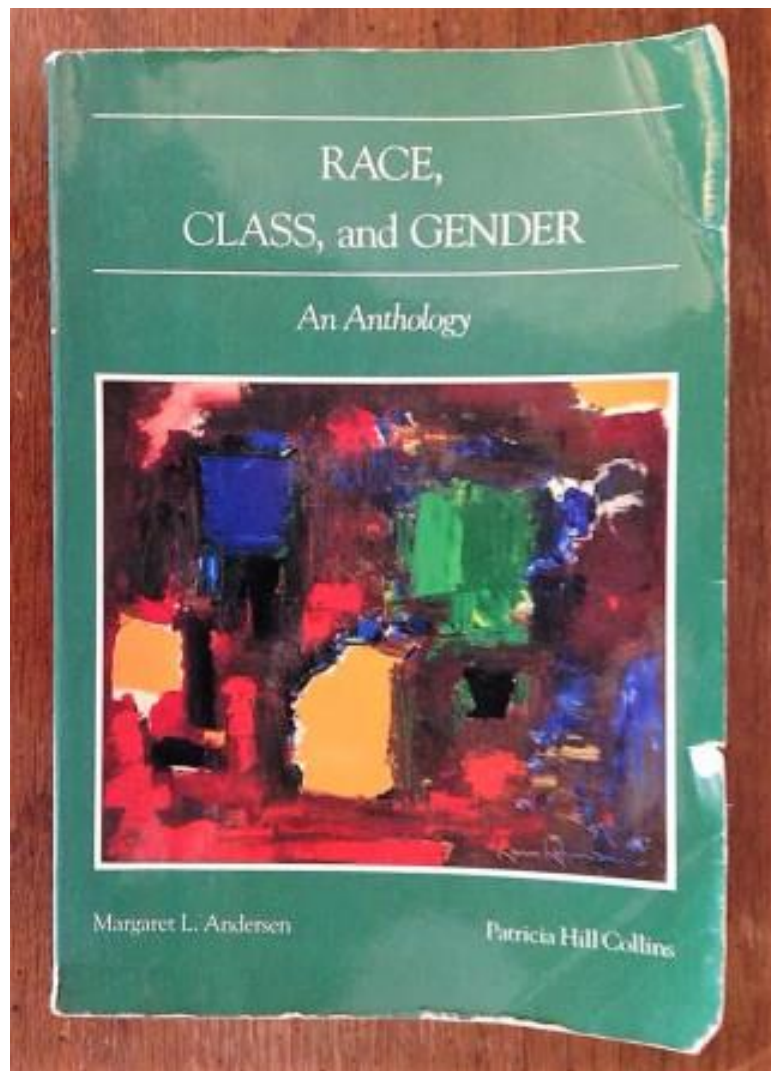
Warning: fake texts. For pedagogical use only

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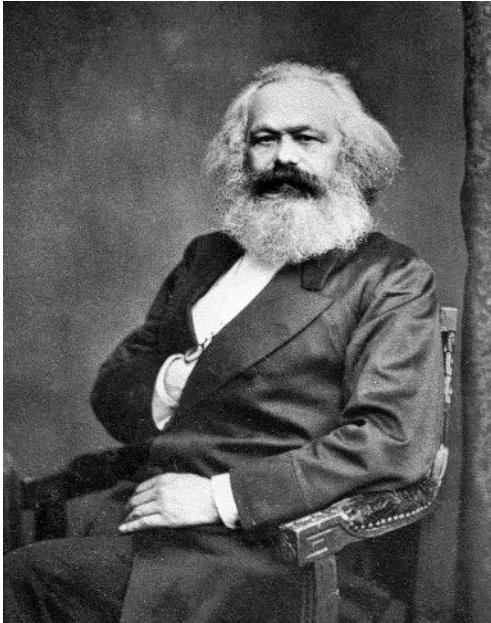
# Why should we care?



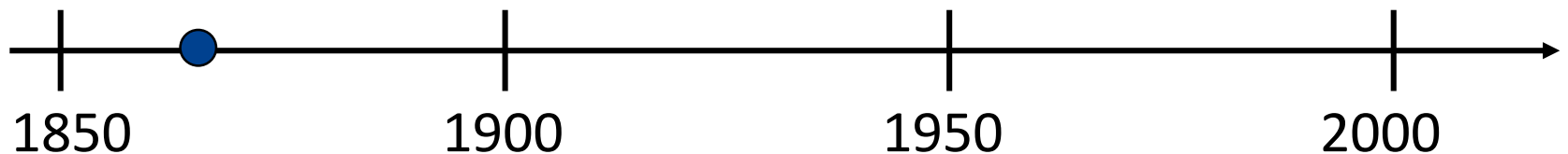
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# Critical theory and Karl Marx



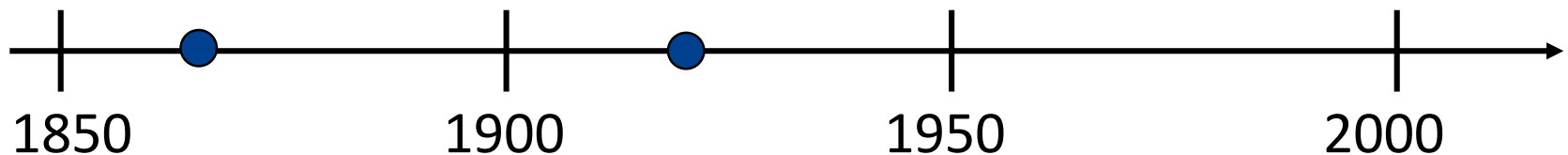
“Alone among these thinkers [i.e., Horkheimer, Bourdieu, Foucault, etc.], **Karl Marx invites consensus as a ‘true’ critical theorist. Indeed, for many, he alone inaugurates the critical tradition**” (Levinson et al, *Beyond Critique*, p. 25-26)



# Critical theory and the Frankfurt School



“Critical theory was conceived within the crucible of Marxism” “The Frankfurt School not only contested establishmentarianism view of history, but projected a radical alternative. European radicals applied its ideas to reconfiguring the family, sexuality, and education.” – Bronner, *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 2, 7



# Other critical social theorists

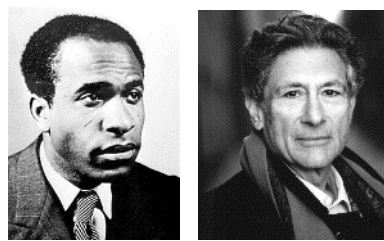
## Cultural Studies



Bourdieu

Hall

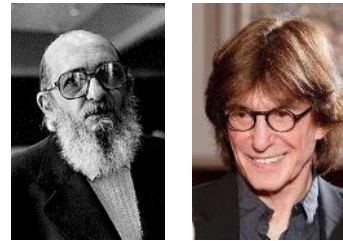
## Postcolonialism



Fanon

Said

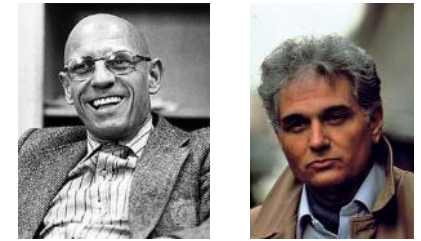
## Critical pedagogy



Freire

Giroux

## Postmodernism



Foucault

Derrida

## Feminism



de Beauvoir

Friedan

## Black feminism



hooks

Lorde

## Queer theory



Butler

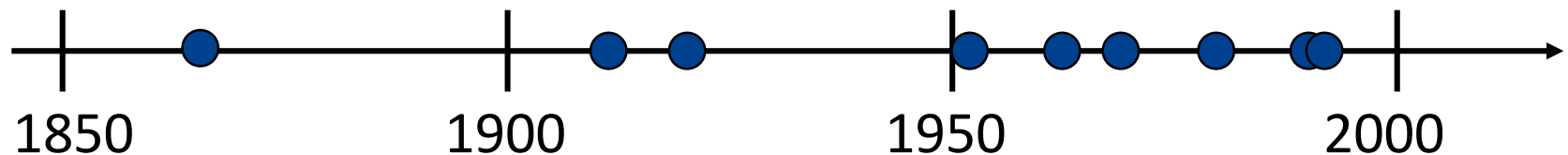
Rich

## Critical Race Theory



Bell

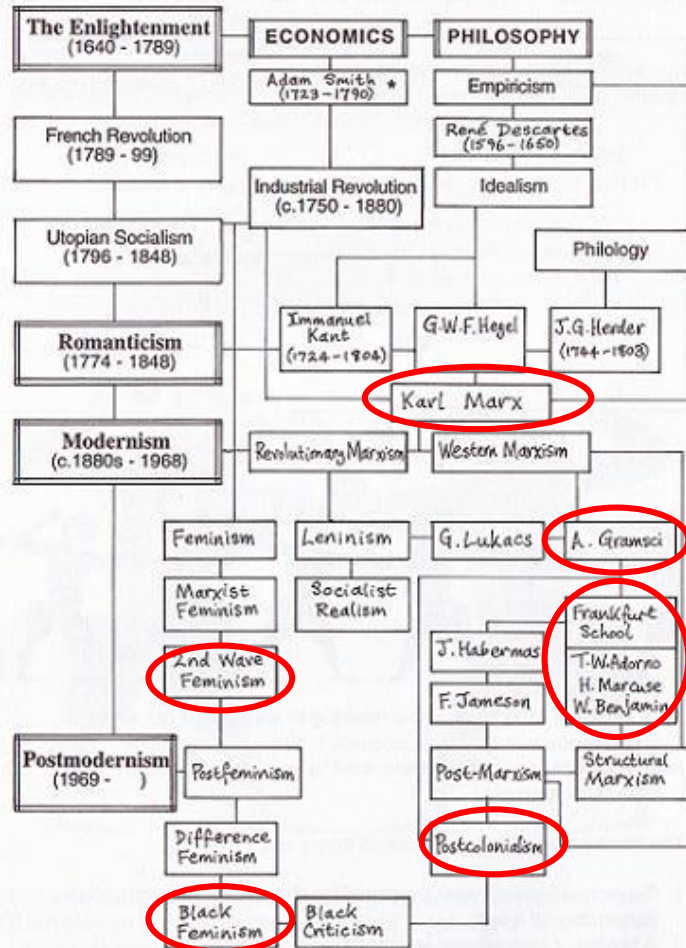
Crenshaw



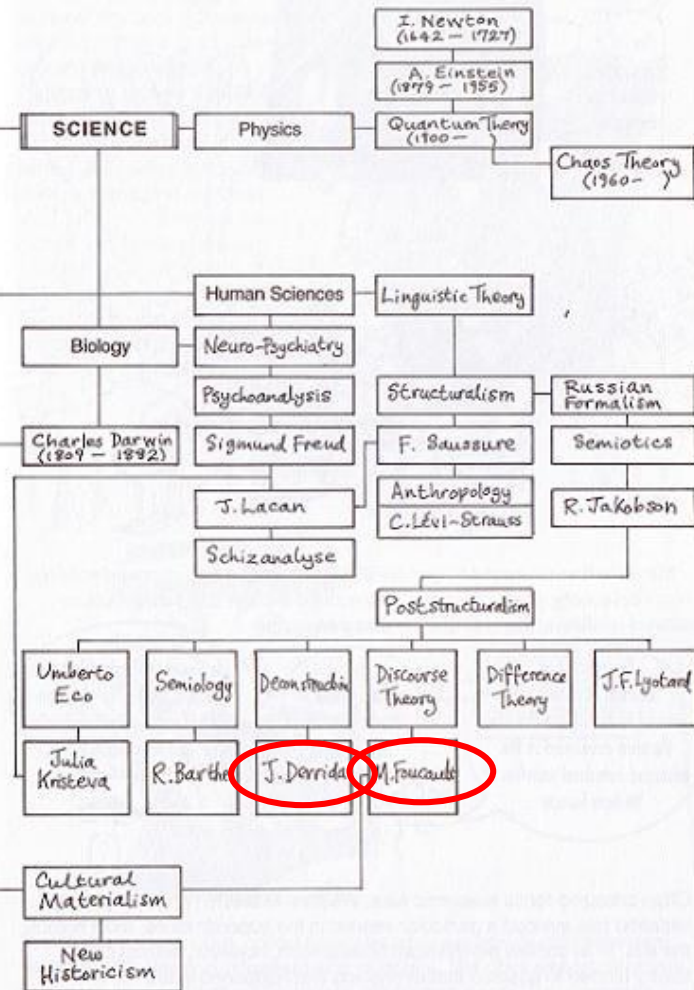


# The Taxonomy of Critical Theory

## Mapping the Origins of Critical Theory



\* Single names given in the table are 'representative figures'



# The Taxonomy of Critical Theory

“critical theory” = critical social theories

**Neo-Marxism**

**CULTURAL  
STUDIES**

**Queer  
Theory**

**CRITICAL  
PEDAGOGY**

“Critical Theory”  
= Frankfurt School



**GENDER  
STUDIES**

**feminism**

**intro to  
critical  
race  
theory**

Critical theory resists essentialism (it is hard to define!)



# What is critical theory?

“intersectionality”

“White privilege”

“White fragility”

“colorblind racism”

“internalized oppression”

“lived experience”

“heteronormativity”

“gender performativity”

“epistemic injustice”

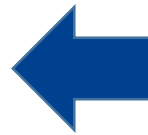
“cisheteropatriarchy”

“compulsory heterosexuality”

“whiteness”

# What is critical theory?

“intersectionality”  
“White privilege”  
“White fragility”  
“colorblind racism”  
“internalized oppression”  
“lived experience”  
“heteronormativity”  
“gender performativity”  
“epistemic injustice”  
“cisheteropatriarchy”  
“compulsory heterosexuality”  
“whiteness”



Kimberlé Crenshaw  
Peggy McIntosh  
Robin DiAngelo  
Eduardo Bonilla-Silva  
Patricia Hill Collins  
Maurianne Adams  
Richard Delgado  
Beverly Tatum  
etc...

# What's in a name?

“intersectionality”  
“White privilege”  
“White fragility”  
“colorblind racism”  
“internalized oppression”  
“lived experience”  
“heteronormativity”  
“gender performativity”  
“epistemic injustice”  
“cisheteropatriarchy”  
“compulsory heterosexuality”  
“whiteness”



~~Cultural Marxism~~

~~Identity Politics~~

~~Critical Race Theory~~

~~Neo Marxism~~

~~Intersectionality~~

~~Grievance Studies~~

**“Contemporary critical theory”**

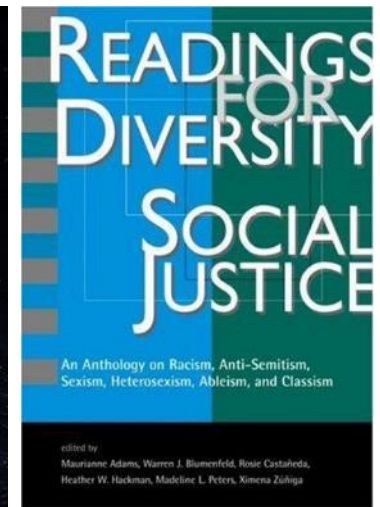
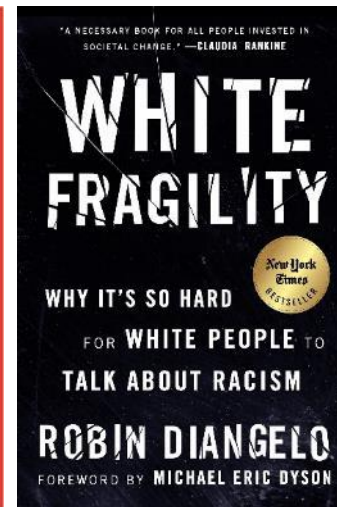
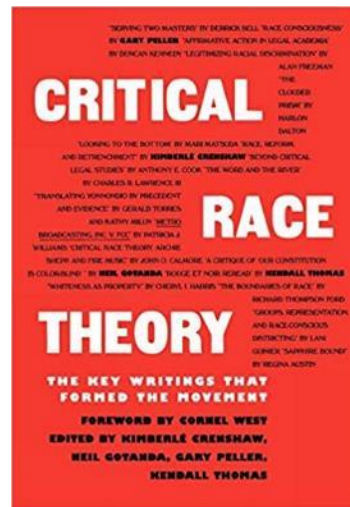
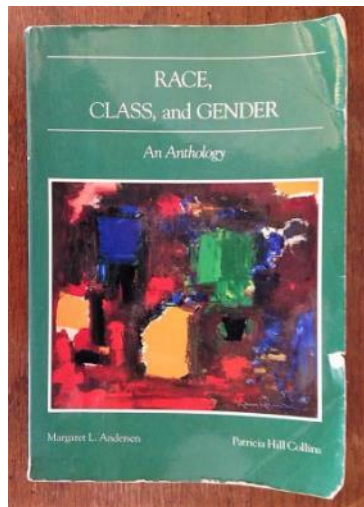
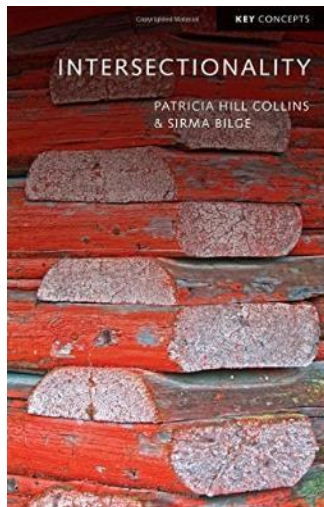
# The central premises of contemporary critical theory

Premise I: Social binary

Premise II: Oppression through ideology

Premise III: Lived experience

Premise IV: Social justice



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- Why should we care?
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  - Premise 1: Social binary
  - Premise 2: Oppression through ideology
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  - The strengths of critical theory
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# Premise #1: Society is divided into oppressed and oppressor groups

**“For every social group, there is an opposite group...** the primary groups that we name here are: race, class, gender, sexuality, ability status/exceptionality, religion, and nationality”

*“Oppression describes a set of policies, practices, traditions, norm, definitions, and explanations (discourses), which function to systematically exploit one social group to the benefit of another social group. The group that benefits from this exploitation is termed the *dominant* (or agent) group, and the group that is exploited is termed the *minoritized* (or target) group.... **Sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and heterosexism are specific forms of oppression**”* – Sensoy and DiAngelo, *Is Everyone Really Equal?* p. 44, 61





# Premise #1: Society is divided into oppressed and oppressor groups

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Is Everyone Really Equal?

**Figure 5.1. Group Identities Across Relations of Power**

Minoritized/Target Group	Oppression	Dominant/ Agent Group
Peoples of Color	Racism	White
Poor Working Class	Classism	Owning Class
Middle Class		
Women; Transgender; Genderqueer	Sexism	(cis)Men
Gays; Lesbians; Bisexuals; Two Spirit	Heterosexism	Heterosexuals
Muslims; Buddhists; Jews; Hindus; and other non-Christ- ian groups	Religious Oppression Anti-Semitism	Christians
People with Disabilities	Ableism	Able-bodied
Immigrants (perceived)	Nationalism	Citizens (perceived)
Indigenous Peoples	Colonialism	White Settlers



# Premise #1: Society is divided into oppressed and oppressor groups



Matrix of Oppression

Social Identity Categories	Privileged Social Groups	Border Social Groups ↔	Targeted Social Groups	Ism
Race	White People	Biracial People (White/Latino, Black, Asian)	Asian, Black, Latino, Native People	Racism
Sex	Bio Men	Transsexual, Intersex People	Bio Women	Sexism
Gender	Gender Conforming Bio Men And Women	Gender Ambiguous Bio Men and Women	Transgender, Genderqueer, Intersex People	Transgender Oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual People	Bisexual People	Lesbians, Gay Men	Heterosexism
Class	Rich, Upper Class People	Middle Class People	Working Class, Poor People	Classism
Ability/Disability	Temporarily Abled-Bodied People	People with Temporary Disabilities	People with Disabilities	Ableism
Religion	Protestants	Roman Catholic (historically)	Jews, Muslims, Hindus	Religious Oppression
Age	Adults	Young Adults	Elders, Young People	Ageism/Adultism

# Premise #1: Society is divided into oppressed and oppressor groups



Intersectionality complicates the social binary, but doesn't reverse or erase it.

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# Premise #2: Oppression occurs through hegemonic power

*“Hegemony refers to the control of the ideology of society. **The dominant group maintains power by imposing their ideology on everyone.**”*

*“From a critical social justice perspective, **privilege is defined as systemically conferred dominance** and the institutional processes by which the beliefs and values of the dominant group are ‘made normal’ and universal.” – Sensoy and DiAngelo, *Is Everyone Really Equal?* p. 73, 80*



# Premise #2: Oppression occurs through hegemonic power

“oppression also traditionally carries a strong connotation of conquest and colonial domination... New left social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, however, shifted the meaning of the concept of oppression. **In its new usage, oppression designates the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer not because a tyrannical power coerces them, but because of the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society...** Oppression in this sense is structural, rather than the result of a few people’s choices or policies. Its causes are embedded in **unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols.**” – Iris Young, “Five Faces of Oppression,” *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, p. 36



“**Marcuse’s notions of ‘one dimensional thought’...complements the critical theory tradition to better understand how hegemony, as cultural domination, normalizes and sustains the political/economic power of particular historic blocs** – the ruling coalition of economic, political and cultural elites” – Lauren Langman, “From Domination to Liberation: Marcuse, Gramsci, and a Critical Theory of Social Mobilization”, p.14, *Conference Papers – American Sociological Association*.





# Premise #2: Oppression occurs through hegemonic power

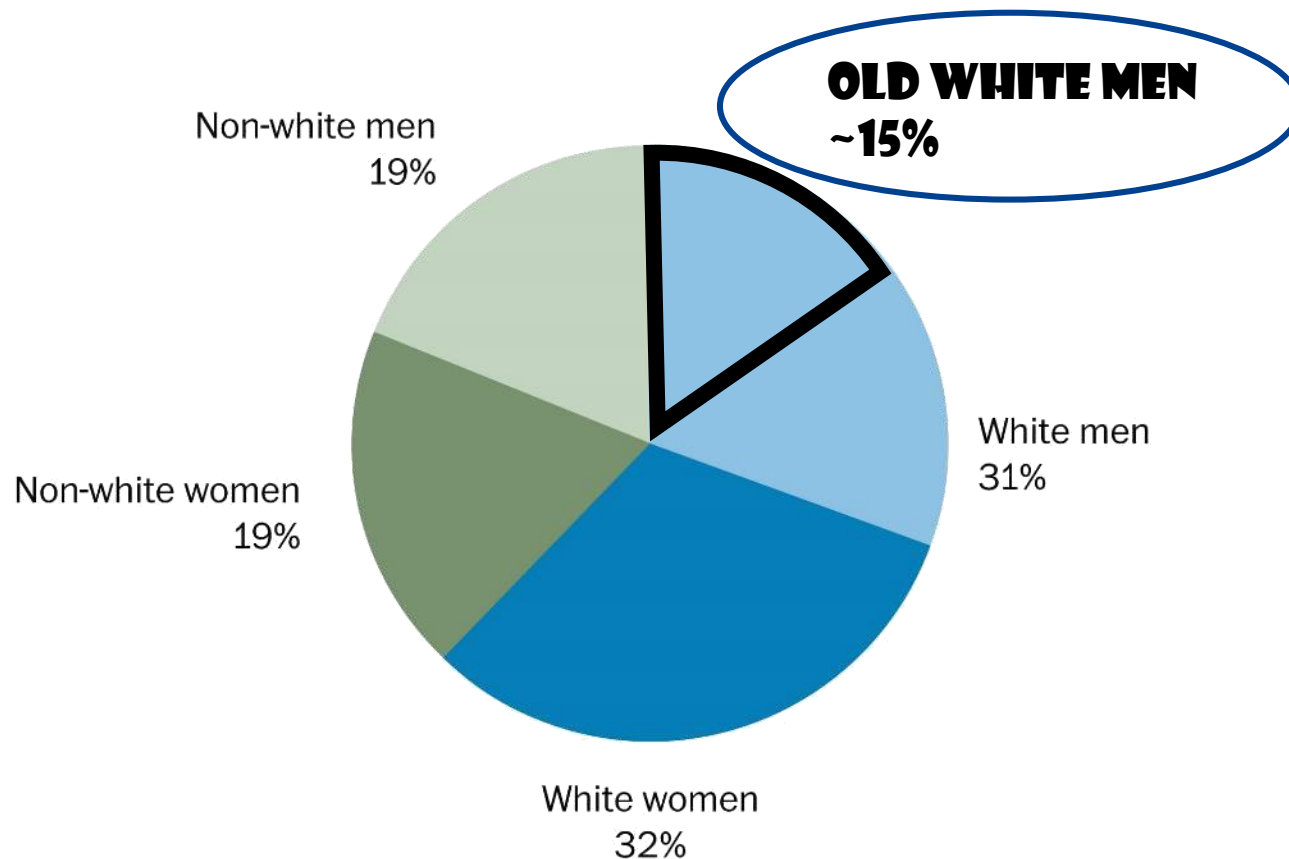
“Ideology – the received wisdom – makes current social arrangements seem fair and natural. **Those in power sleep well at night; their conduct does not seem to them like oppression**” – Richard Delgado, “Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others”; in *Critical Race Theory*, pp 71-72



“This new ideology [of color-blind racism] has become a formidable political tool for the maintenance of the racial order... **the beauty of this new ideology is that it aids in the maintenance of white privilege without fanfare, without naming those who it subjects and those who it rewards.**” Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*, p. 3-4



# Premise #2: Oppression occurs through hegemonic power



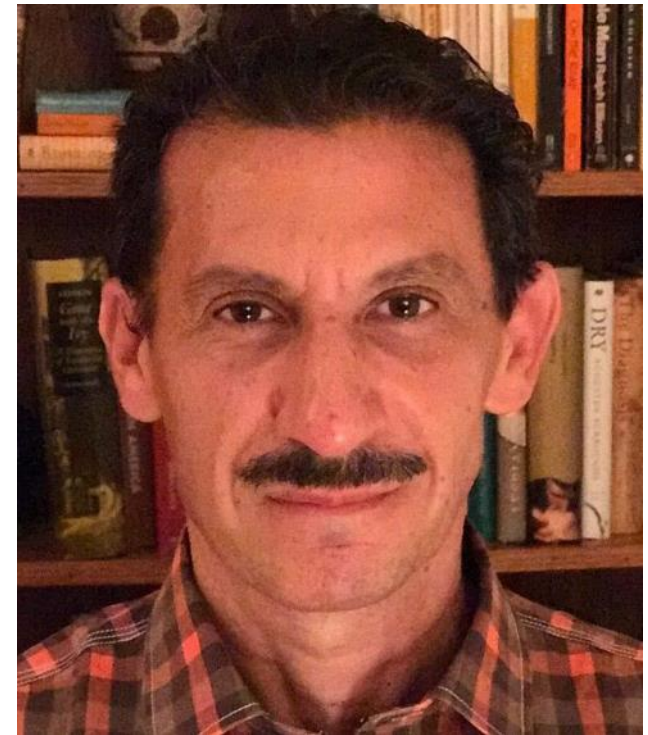


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# Premise #3: 'Lived experience' gives oppressed groups privileged access to truth

“oppressed groups do have a distinctive set of experiences and ... are better positioned and better equipped for a particular kind of epistemic subversion... As Mills puts it, ‘Hegemonic **[dominant] groups characteristically have experiences that foster illusory perceptions about society’s functioning, whereas subordinate groups characteristically have experiences that (at least potentially) give rise to more adequate conceptualizations’**” – Medina, *Epistemology of Resistance*, p. 46.



# Premise #3: 'Lived experience' gives oppressed groups privileged access to truth

**“[We] must learn to privilege [our] own perspectives and those of other outsiders,** understanding that the dominant legal discourse is premised upon the claim to knowledge of objective truths and the existence of neutral principles. We must free ourselves from the mystification produced by this ideology. **We must learn to trust our own senses, feelings, and experiences, and to give them authority, even (or especially) in the face of dominant accounts of social reality that claim universality.”** – Charles R. Lawrence III, “The Word and The River: Pedagogy as Scholarship as Struggle,” in Crenshaw’s *CRT*, p. 338



# Premise #3: 'Lived experience' gives oppressed groups privileged access to truth

“The idea that objectivity is best reached only through rational thought is a specifically **Western and masculine way of thinking** – one that we will challenge throughout this book.” – Margaret L. Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins, “Reconstructing Knowledge,” in Anderson and Collins, *Race, Class, and Gender*, p. 4-5



# Premise #3: 'Lived experience' gives oppressed groups privileged access to truth

## Oppression and epistemology:

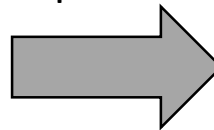


Privilege



Internalized oppression

Lived  
experience



Liberatory consciousness

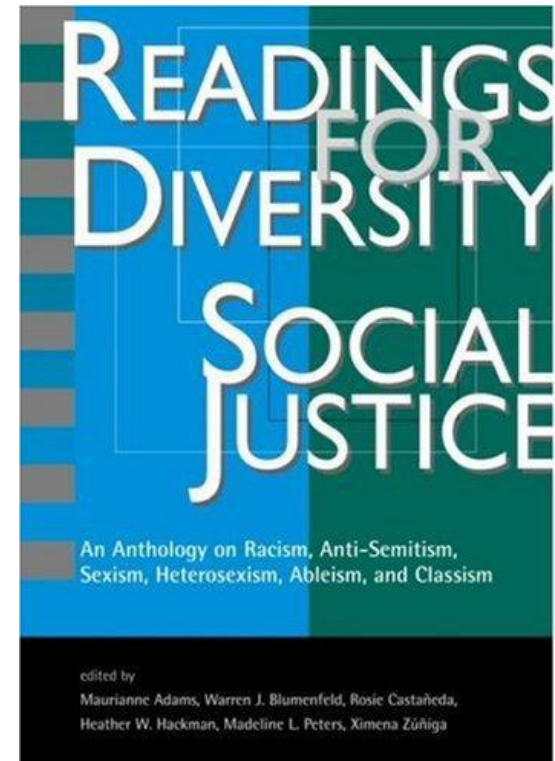
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# Premise #4: Social justice demands the liberation of oppressed groups

## Definition of social justice:

“Prior to celebrating diversity, we must first eliminate intolerance. No matter what form it takes or who does it, we must all take action to stop intolerance when it happens. Working towards a celebration of diversity implies working for **social justice – the elimination of all forms of social oppression...** Social injustice takes many forms. It can be injustice based on a **person’s gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, or economic class.**” – Mary McClintock, “How to Interrupt Oppressive Behavior,” *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, p. 483





# Premise #4: Social justice demands the liberation of oppressed groups

“These political times call for renewed dialogue about and commitment to the politics of **liberation...Liberation requires a struggle against discrimination based on race, class, gender, sexual identity, ableism and age**” – Suzanne Pharr, “Reflections on Liberation,” in Adams et. al., *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, p. 450



# Premise #4: Social justice demands the liberation of oppressed groups

“Gender, race, ethnicity, nation, sexuality, ability, and age... reference important knowledge traditions among subordinated peoples who oppose **the social inequalities and social injustices** that they experience. Such projects aim to **address the deep-seated concerns of people who are subordinated within domestic and global expressions of racism, sexism, capitalism, colonialism, and similar systems of political domination and economic exploitation**. Whatever the form of oppression they experience –**race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, ethnicity, and nation**– subordinated groups have a vested interest in resisting it.” – Collins, *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory*, p. 10



# Premise #4: Social justice demands the liberation of oppressed groups

“Movements for **social justice** that hold on to outmoded ways of thinking and acting tend to fail. The roots of **visionary feminism** extend back to the early sixties [when] women’s liberation movement visionary thinkers were dreaming about a radical/revolutionary political movement that would... grant women civil rights within the **existing white supremacist capitalist patriarchal system while simultaneously working to undermine and overthrow the system**” – bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*, p. 110

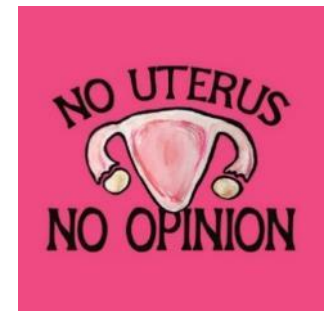
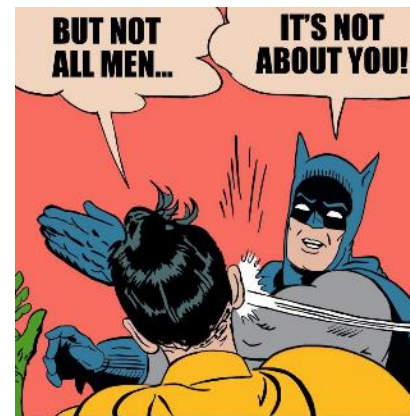


# Premise #4: Social justice demands the liberation of oppressed groups





# Critical theory is an important and influential ideology in today's culture



## Glaciers, gender, and science A feminist glaciology framework for global environmental change research

Mark Carey

M Jackson

Alessandro Antonello

Jaclyn Rushing

University of Oregon, USA

Mark Carey, Robert D. Clark Honors College, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, USA. Email: [carey@uoregon.edu](mailto:carey@uoregon.edu)

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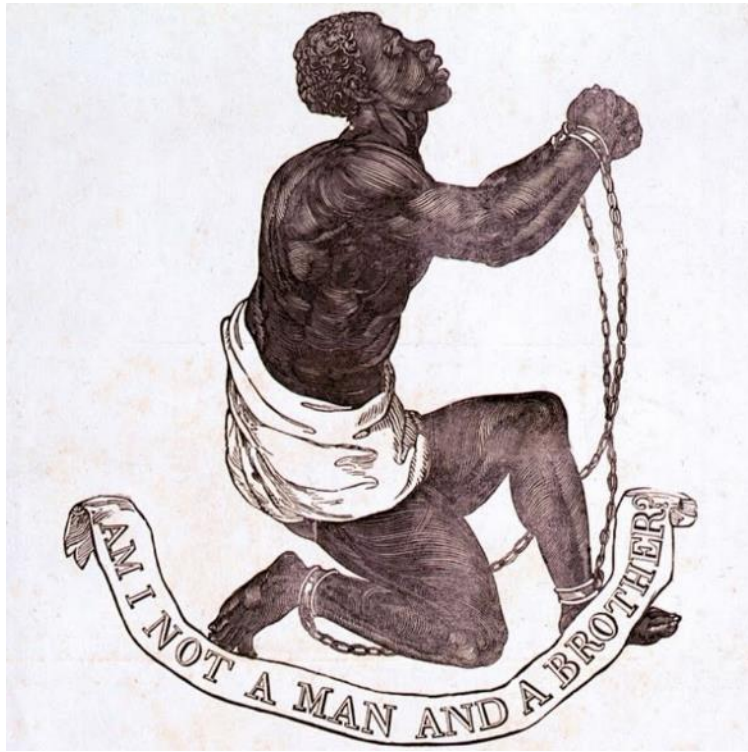


# Strength #1. Emphasis on the sinfulness of oppression

- “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.” – Is. 1:17
- “Do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” – Zech. 7:20
- “Love your neighbor as yourself.” – Mark 12:30
- “Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts” – James 5:4



# Strength #2. Focus on structures, systems, and norms



# Strength #3: Recognition of hegemonic power




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  - Worldview
  - Epistemology
  - Adversarial identities
  - Hegemonic power
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# Worldview questions

- Who are we?
- What is our fundamental problem as human beings?
- What is the solution to our problem?
- What is our primary moral duty?
- What is our purpose in life?

# Christianity and critical theory are competing worldviews

Christianity	 <div> <div>CREATION</div> <div>FALL</div> <div>REDEMPTION</div> <div>RESTORATION</div> </div>			
Critical theory	-----	Patriarchy White supremacy Heteronormativity Toxic masculinity <b>OPPRESSION</b> Classism Ageism Ableism Cisgenderism	Protest Resistance <b>ACTIVISM</b> Education Awareness	Equity Power reversal <b>LIBERATION</b> Justice Diversity



# Worldview questions

	Christianity	Critical theory
Who are we?	God's creatures	Members of various groups
What is our problem?	Sin	Oppression
What is the solution?	Jesus	Liberation
What is our duty?	Loving God	Liberating the oppressed
What is our purpose?	Glorifying God	Working for liberation

# Critical theory as worldview



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## I. Scripture

While divinely inspired, we deny the Bible is inerrant or infallible. It was written by men over centuries and thus reflects both God's truth and human sin & prejudice. We affirm that biblical scholarship and critical theory help us discern which messages are God's.

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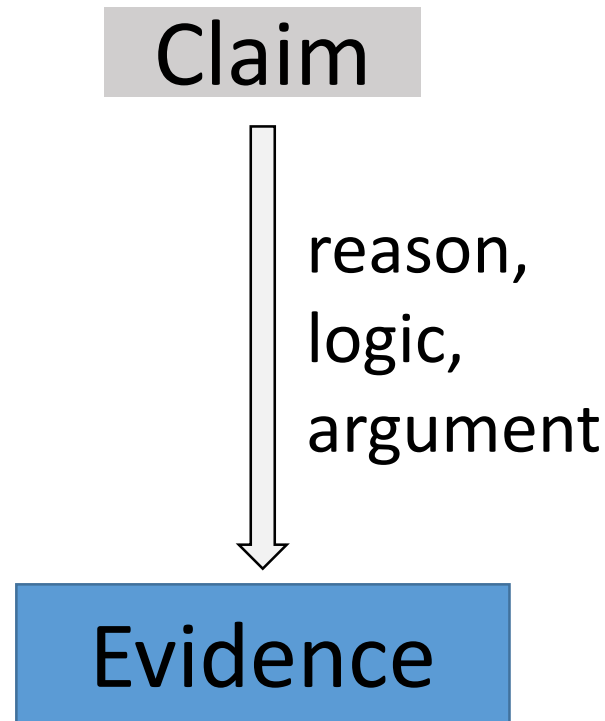
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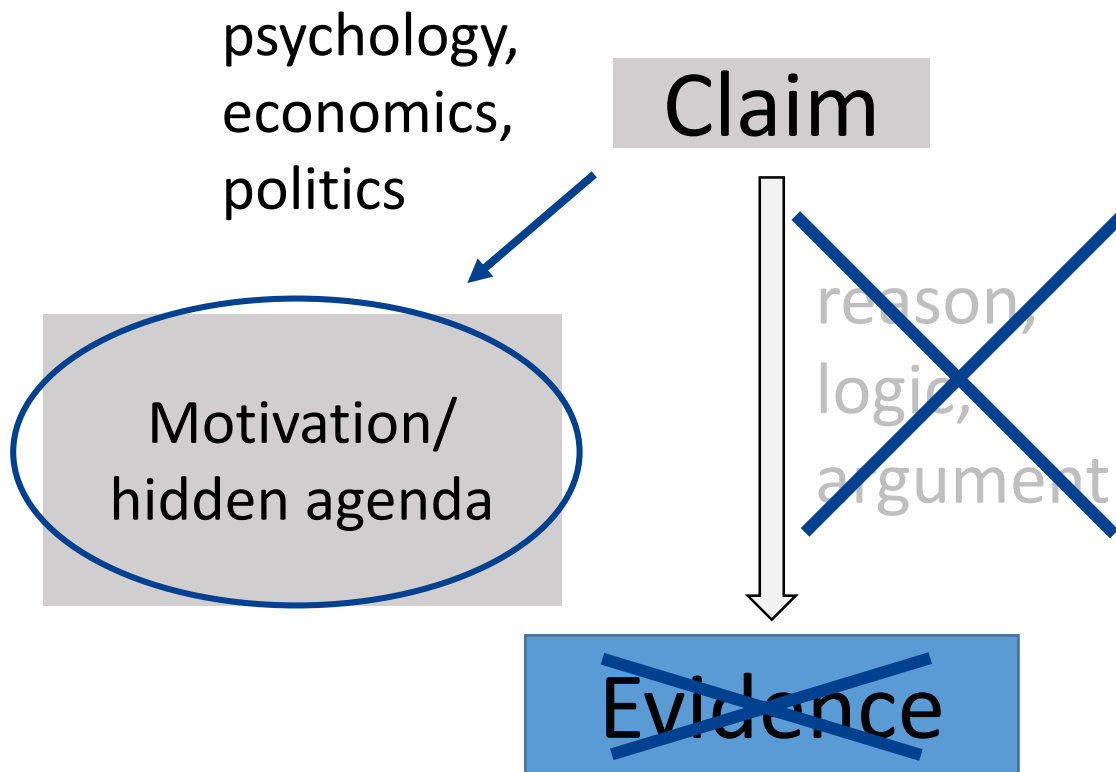
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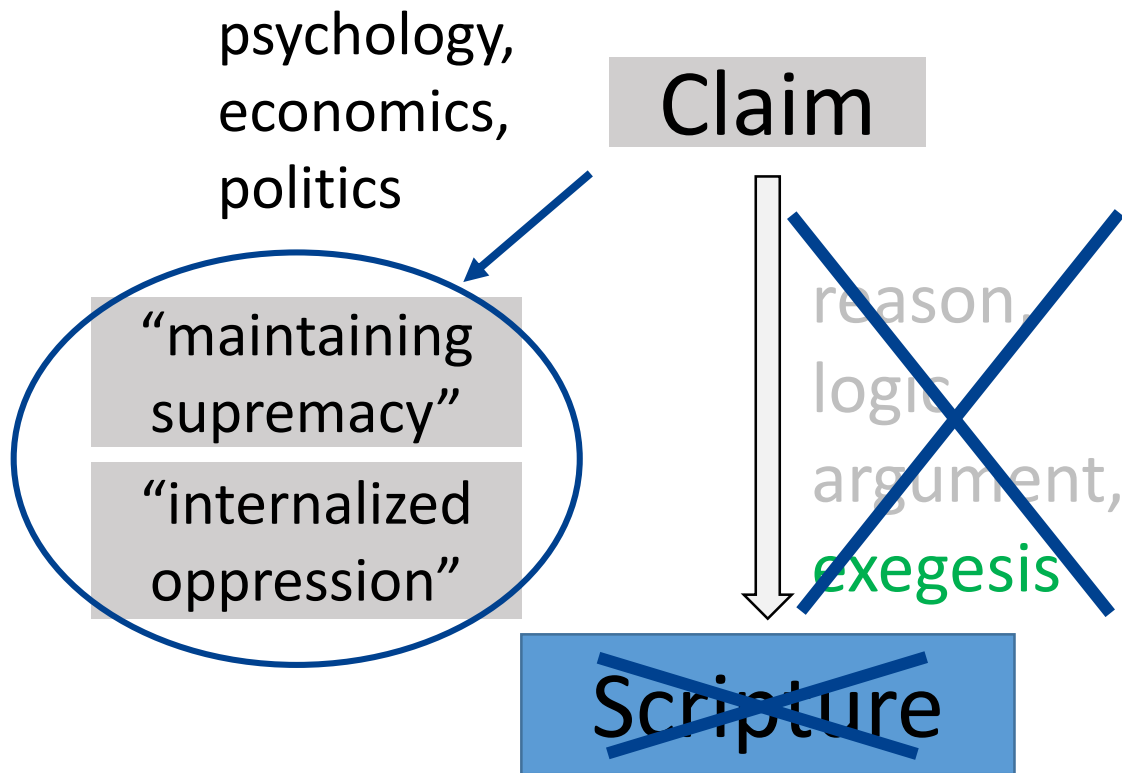
# Epistemology



# Bulverism



# Epistemology

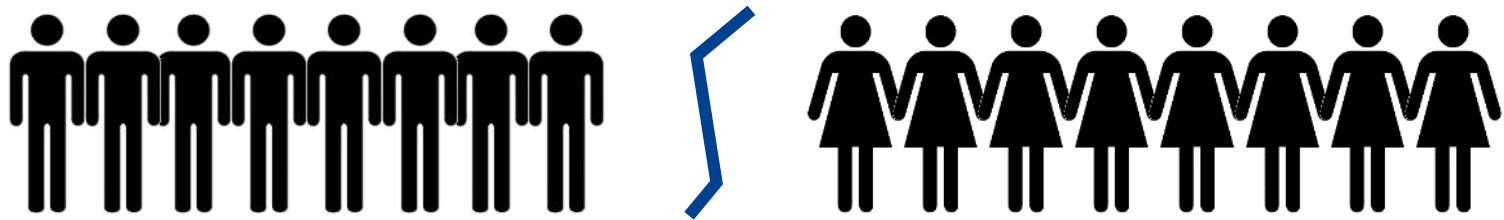




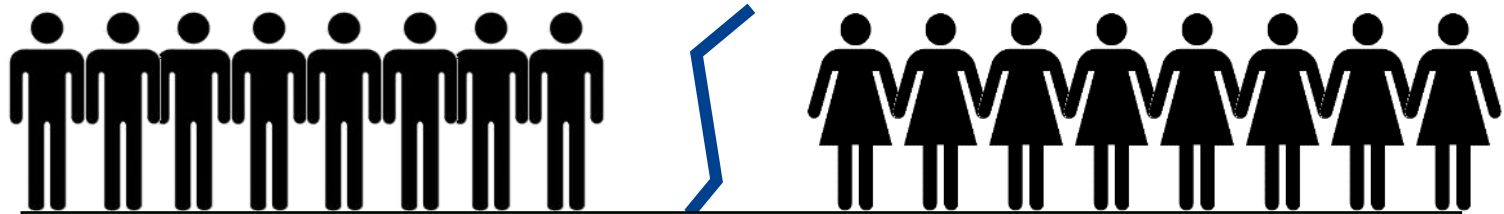
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# Identity and solidarity



# Identity and solidarity



Creation

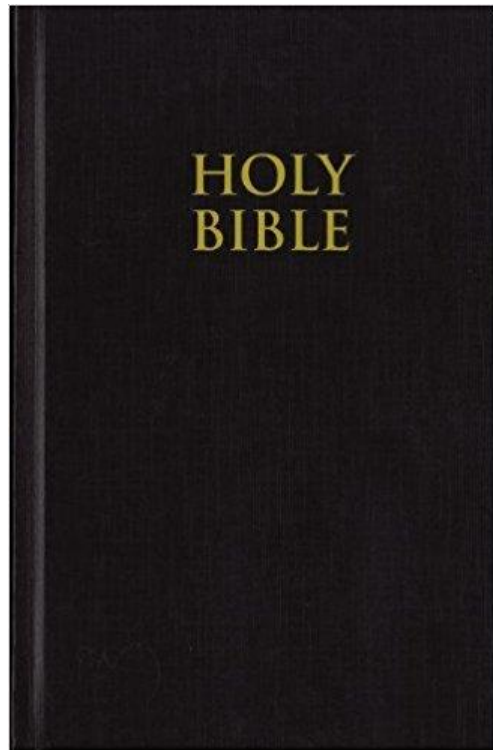
Sin

Redemption

# Outline

- Why should we care?
- What is critical theory?
- Conflicts between critical theory and Christianity
  - Worldview
  - Epistemology
  - Adversarial identities
  - Hegemonic power
- Logical implications
- Critical theory in the church
- Advice for dialogue

# Christianity as hegemonic discourse



Religion

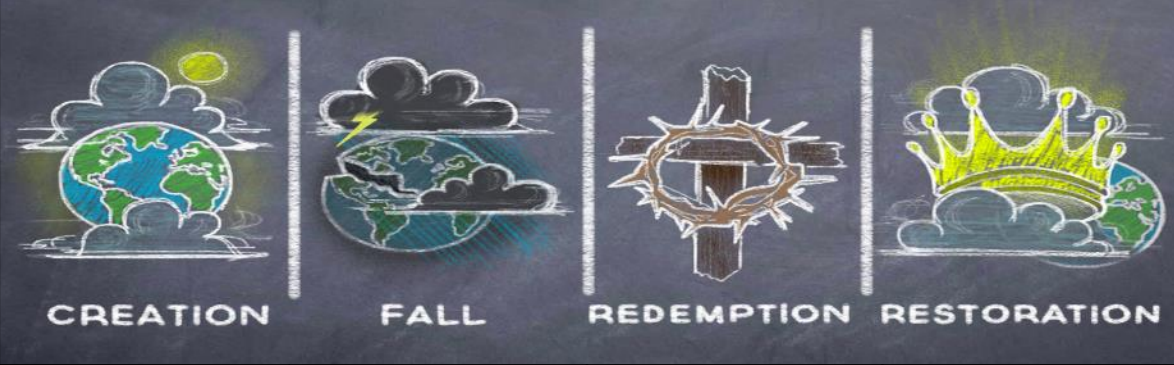
Morality

Sexuality

Gender

etc...

# Christianity and critical theory are competing worldviews

<b>Christianity</b>	 <p>CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION</p>			
<b>Critical theory</b>	----	<b>OPPRESSION</b> Patriarchy White supremacy Heteronormativity Toxic masculinity Classism Ageism Ableism Cisgenderism	<b>ACTIVISM</b> Protest Resistance Education Awareness	<b>LIBERATION</b> Equality Power reversal Justice Diversity



# Outline

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# Claim #1: “We should never challenge ‘lived experience’”

- “As a [woman](#), I know that our society is deeply sexist.”
- “As a [black man](#), I know that our society is deeply racist.”
- “As a [lesbian](#), I know that sexual orientation is fixed from birth.”
- “As a [Sufi Muslim](#), I know that Islam is true.”
- “As a [polyamorous man](#), I know that sex outside of marriage is okay.”
- “As a [Hindu](#), I know that all paths lead to God.”

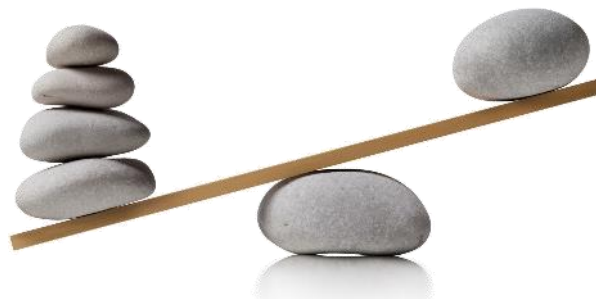
Truth claims must be evaluated on the basis of Scripture and objective evidence.

## Claim #2: “We need to liberate our theology from privileged groups”

- “We need to de-center ‘white theology’ and platform the theology of people of color.”
- “We need to de-center ‘Western theology’ and platform non-Western theology.”
- “We need to de-center male theology and platform feminist theology.”
- “We need to de-center the Eurocentric creeds of the Reformation, and platform liberation theology.”
- “We need to de-center the all-male books of the Bible and platform the extra-biblical books written by women.”

# Claim #3: “We should dismantle all structures which perpetuate privilege”

- “We should dismantle [private property](#), because it perpetuates economic privilege.”
- “We should dismantle [male eldership](#), because it perpetuates male privilege.”
- “We should dismantle [the institution of marriage](#), because it perpetuates heterosexual and monogamous privilege.”
- “We should dismantle [the connection between sex and gender](#), because it perpetuates cis-privilege.”
- “We should dismantle all [Christian moral norms](#), because they perpetuate Christian privilege.”



# Claim #4: “We should promote diversity within the church”

- “We should promote a diversity of ethnicities within the church.”
- “We should promote a diversity of cultures within the church.”
- “We should promote a diversity of racist, misogynistic, materialistic, idolatrous cultures within the church ”
- “We should promote a diversity of moral behaviors within the church.”
- “We should promote a diversity of theological beliefs within the church.”



# Positives and negatives

Claim #1: “We should never challenge ‘lived experience’”

Positive: Lived experience can give us valuable insights

Negative: ...but must still be subjected to the scrutiny of Scripture and evidence.

Claim #2: “We need to liberate our theology from privileged groups”

Positive: We should constantly reexamine our theology to recognize where our identity has biased our interpretation

Negative: ...but the truth or falsehood of a claim does not depend on the identity of the person making it.

Claim #3: “We should dismantle all structures which perpetuate privilege”

Positive: Power can be abused and misused

Negative: ...but power is not inherently evil and power imbalances are not necessarily unjust.

Claim #4: “We should promote diversity within the church”

Positive: Some forms of diversity are elements of God’s good creation

Negative: ...but others are the result of sin and must be rejected.



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# Christ our Black Mother

Mar 1 at 7:01am

## **INTRODUCING THE 7 LAST WORDS OF CHRIST OUR BLACK MOTHER – A LENTEN SERIES**

My heart stopped when I first encountered Afro-Cuban artist [Harmonia Rosales' / Exist](#). By reinterpreting Michelangelo's [Crucifixion](#), Rosales gave voice to the often-silenced blackness and femaleness of Christ.

Even though I know in my head that Christ is not a white man, I still sometimes continue to experience that reality in my heart, body and nonconscious perceptions. And though James Cone and others have helpfully examined [God's blackness on the cross](#), I've been wanting to dive deeper into an [intersectional exploration that examines both God's blackness and femaleness on the cross](#), and the ways in which God explicitly relates to black women while on the cross.

– Urbana speaker, *Christianity Today* author, 23K+ Twitter followers



# All Whites are Racist

## 10 Ways You Can Actively Reject Your White Privilege

9 for you. And be okay with it.

10 Recognize that you're still racist.  
No matter what.

\*POC = People of color

Source: So you say you've got white privilege. Now what? | Marchaé Grair | NewSacred.org



[Redacted] Y'all who are concerned about #10 need to educate yourselves on what it means to be racist.

DiAngelo's "what does it mean to be white?" is a good place to start.

Like · Reply · 32w



– Urbana speaker, *Christianity Today* author, 23K+ Twitter followers

# Whiteness 101

“Don’t demand proof of a POC’s lived experience or try to counter their narrative with the experience of another POC. The experiences and opinions of POC are as diverse as its people. We can believe their stories. But keep in mind: just because one POC doesn’t feel oppressed, that doesn’t mean systemic, institutional racism isn’t real”

“Don’t chastise POCs (or dismiss their message) because they express their grief, fear, or anger in ways you deem ‘inappropriate.’ Understand that historically, we white people have silenced voices of dissent and lament with our cultural idol of ‘niceness.’ Provide space for POCs to wail, cuss, or even yell at you. Jesus didn’t hold back when he saw hypocrisy and oppression; POCs shouldn’t have to either.”

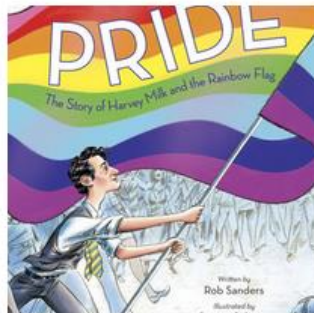
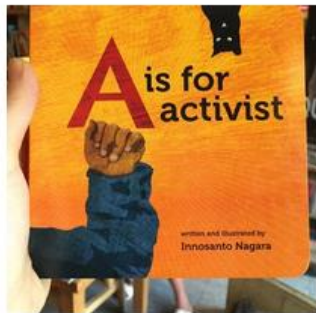
“Don’t get defensive when you are called out for any of the above. When a POC tells you that your words/tone/behavior are racist/oppressive/triggering, you stop. Don’t try to explain yourself (see #6.) Don’t become passive-aggressive or sarcastic. Don’t leave in a huff. (It may be helpful, however, to inconspicuously step outside/go to the restroom and take a deep breath.) Remain cognizant of the dynamics of white fragility, and take note of how it usually shows up in you.”



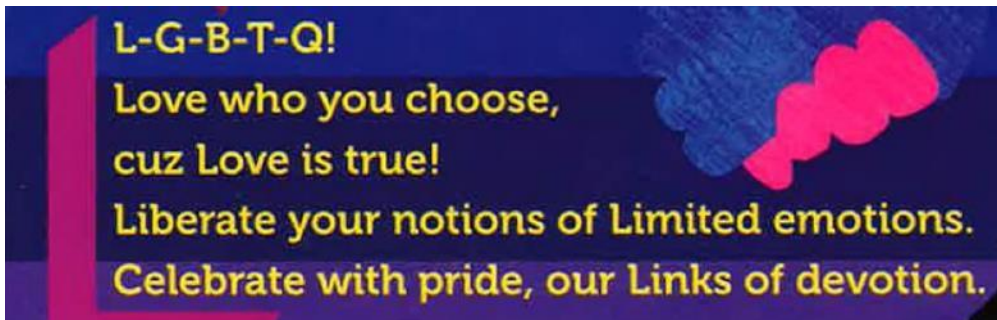
– Christian racial reconciliation group featured in *Christianity Today*, 24K+ FB group members

# “Raising Kids Who Aren't \*\*\*holes (formerly Woke Parenting)”

“For white people or people with any other privilege granted by societal systems of oppression and supremacy (male privilege, abled privilege, cishetero privilege, citizenship status privilege, and so on), we act like intent is what matters most. We're wrong.”



T is for Trans.  
Tulips, Tassels, Tigers.  
Tractors and Tiaras.  
Trust in the True:  
The he she they that is you!



- Christian author who has written for the ERLC, *USA Today*, etc..., 18K+ Twitter followers

# White men and nuclear weapons



Follow



As white men move from an entitled majority and our country is increasingly led by women and people of color, a future without nuclear weapons feels within reach. A world where the weapons of colonialism and subjugation are confined to museums seems plausible. Help us Lord.

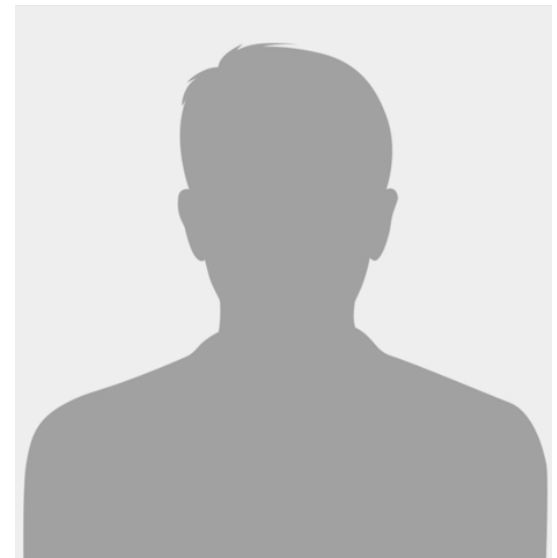
8:47 PM - 29 Sep 2018

164 Retweets 1,378 Likes



96 164 1.4K

- Evangelical author, 96K+ Twitter followers





# White racial blindness

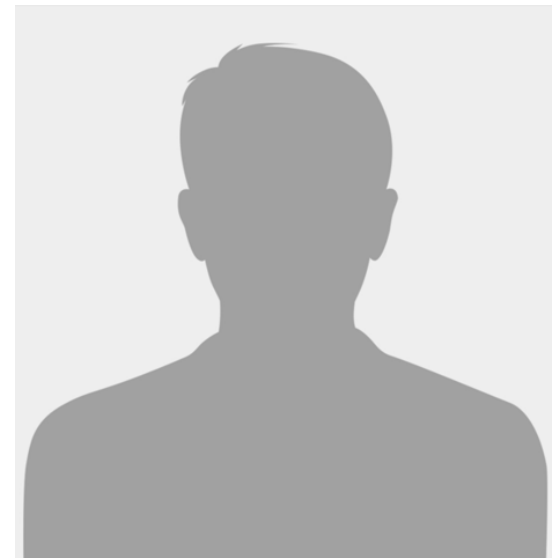
“my problem as a white man was that I didn’t know how to live in skin. This was the poverty of my so-called privilege, what kept me from seeing the fullness of the gospel’s power for my own life”

“[Implicit bias] was the patterns of whiteness I simply had not noticed... Racial blindness was in my DNA”

“Many white people would rather do something to address the symptoms we can see than acknowledge our original sin. Racism isn’t only a part of who we’ve been. It is, in ways we don’t even comprehend, who we are. It has cut to our very core, severing soul from body. Which is to say, if we are honest with ourselves, we carry the wounds of white supremacy in our bodies”

“White people suffer from a malady [called] ‘shriveled-heart syndrome.’ It is rooted in the experience of white people enslaving black people.”

- Evangelical author, 16K+ Twitter followers



# Whiteness is wickedness

“**whiteness is wicked**. It is wicked. It's rooted in violence, it's rooted in theft, it's rooted in plunder, it's rooted in power, in privilege”

“**I went into that racist space** and did what I was supposed to do, tell the truth as a fully embodied BLACK woman... [Neither the conference director] nor her **racist organization** are sorry for their mistreatment”

“I’m going in with a mission on two ends: to affirm black people and **to speak the truth about racism to white people**. And give **them** a way of change or transformation, **repentance from racism** through the power of the gospel”

“Me entering into a **white racist space** is an act of love because, and this work is very dangerous. **I’m putting my life on the line every time I do that**. This is not a game... **My life is actually on the line when I go in**. I take that risk.”

- Evangelical author, 18K+ Twitter followers



# White fragility




1019  
↓ Yes!  
Pray that God would protect BBIPOC who are gender,  
sexual, and/or religious minorities, and that he  
would fill them with hope, joy, and peace.  
(Deuteronomy 31:6, Romans 15:13)

“[Critical race theory] is a made-up problem. From what I’ve seen, a group of **mostly white, mostly male** Christians decided that CRT was becoming a problem in their circles. And they created a sufficient-enough stink in blog posts, on Twitter, on podcasts and at conferences to make people sit up and listen...Now here’s what I think the real issue is: white fragility. Yeah? I said it. I think what had happened was some Christians, including myself, started using words associated with the social sciences such as ‘white fragility’, ‘white supremacy’, ‘intersectionality’, ‘power’, and other words. So some people heard this and thought ‘the enemy is within the gate. To arms! To arms!’ Speaking for myself, I find these terms helpful.”





- Evangelical author, 23K+ Twitter followers






# Invalidating experiences

Whiteness wants Black people to accept our Blackness as a source of inferiority but hates it when we embrace our Blackness as a source of empowerment.

 91  69  578 




 **Dr K**  
@Doc\_K 

Replying to 



General claims require empirical data we can generalize from. You got a source, or are you just making conjectures? (Side note- personal anecdotes are not empirical)


2:28 PM · Jan 24, 2020 · [Twitter for Android](#)

5 Likes

Whiteness also wants to invalidate your experiences and insights about race under the veneer of detached "empirical" inquiry. It tries to the burden on Black people to "prove" our own oppression rather than holding the oppressors accountable.

 **Dr K**  
@Doc\_K 

Replying to 

General claims require empirical data we can generalize from. You got a source, or are you just making conjectures? (Side note- personal anecdotes are not empirical)

11:28 AM · 1/24/20 · [Twitter for Android](#)

6:53 PM · Jan 24, 2020 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

17 Retweets 92 Likes


# Response to Tim Keller's *NYTimes* article



November 6 at 4:18 AM · The New York Times

Follow

This article was just brought to my attention. On this Election Day I must speak.

Tim Keller has NO AUTHORITY to teach on justice—NONE. I interviewed him for my first book, .

 I asked him what issues would move him to engage his church in the work of systemic and structural justice in NYC. On the record, Keller acknowledged that his church has NOT engaged in doing justice. But he added: "If there were anything as dire as slavery, then we would be compelled to act." Slavery was and is actually happening in NYC's underground economy.

How INCREDULOUSLY PRIVILEGED for Keller—a RICH WHITE MAN WHOSE MINISTRY TARGETS RICH PEOPLE—to fashion himself as the judge of whether or not injustice rises to the level of OPPRESSION!!! No!!!! The only ones with divine authority to define the bounds of oppression are the oppressed themselves!

Oppressed and colonized people wrote every single word of The Bible. The Jewish people were colonized people. Jesus, himself, was a brown, indigenous, colonized man. Not one person who the scripture was written by or originally written for sat in the social location of Tim Keller.

The only person in all of scripture who came close to the social location of Tim Keller was Pilate. Look at what he did. He pontificated on the meaning of truth. Then he stepped back and let the forces of injustice kill Jesus.

When oppressed people request the solidarity of the privileged (as many have asked Keller) and the privileged decide they are not oppressed ENOUGH to engage (as I have witnessed Keller do for decades), then the passive privileged become tools in the hands of Satan.

No!!!! Keller has NO authority to speak or teach on justice. His silence when called on to speak helped pave America's path to White Nationalism.

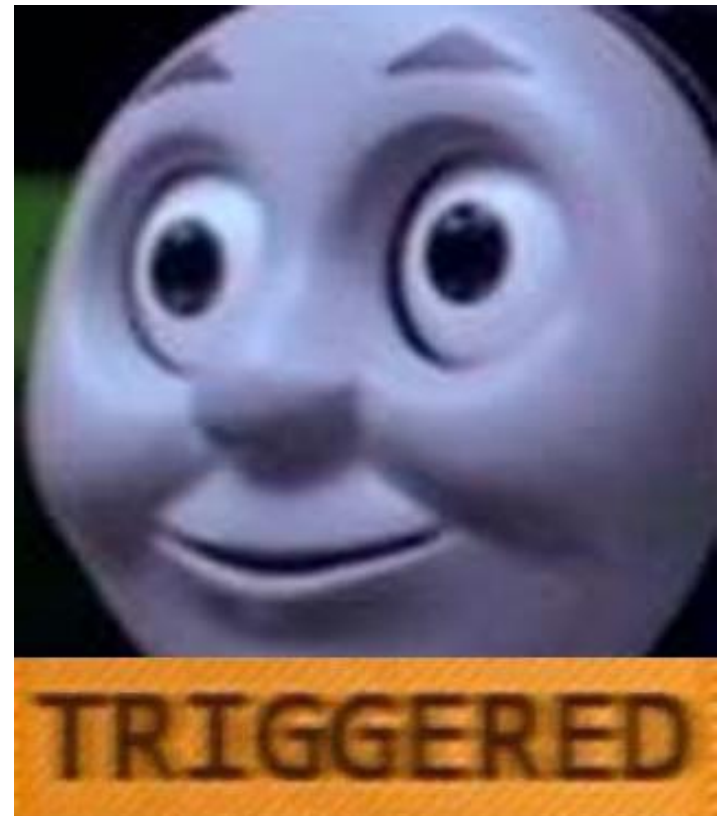
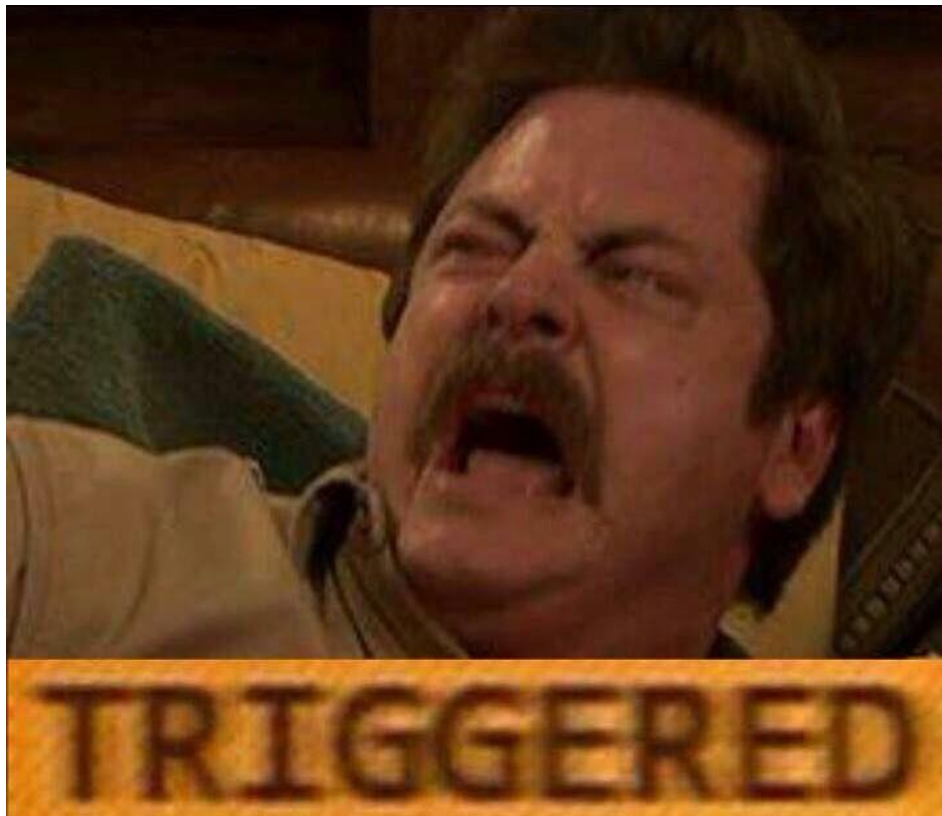
- Evangelical author, 25K+ Twitter followers

# Outline

- Why should we care?
- What is critical theory?
- Conflicts between critical theory and Christianity
- Logical implications
- Critical theory in the church
- Advice for dialogue



# Advice for dialogue



# Outline

- Why should we care?
- What is critical theory?
- Conflicts between critical theory and Christianity
- Advice for dialogue
  - Acknowledge and fight racism
  - Read broadly
  - Put the gospel first

# Acknowledge and fight racism



# Acknowledge and fight racism





# Acknowledge and fight racism



# Acknowledge and fight racism





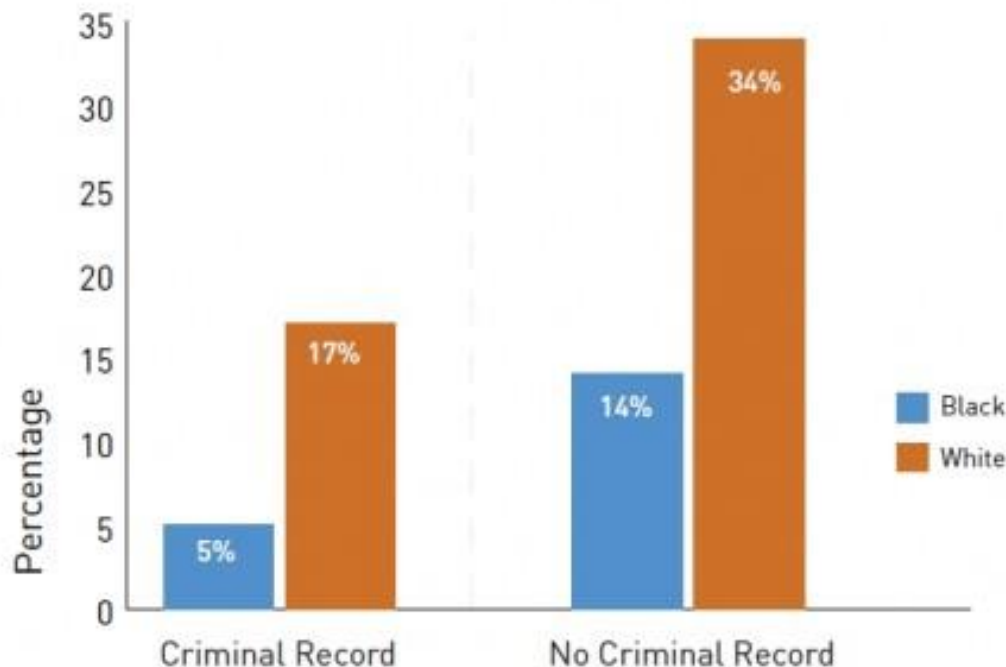
# Acknowledge and fight racism

“These and other experiences colored how I was raised to deal with whites, whether Christian or not. Just as my father’s experiences impacted my perceptions about race, so my perceptions will mark those of my three sons... **This is how it works. One generation’s pain and fears are passed on to the next...** It doesn’t mean that we must repeat the sins of racism and bigotry of the past, but it does mean that they impact us in some way” – Dr. Eric Mason, *Woke Church*, p. 77



# Acknowledge and fight racism

Fig. 9. Racial Impact of a Criminal Record on Interview Callbacks, 2003



20% higher response rate for whites **with criminal record** compared to blacks **with no criminal record**

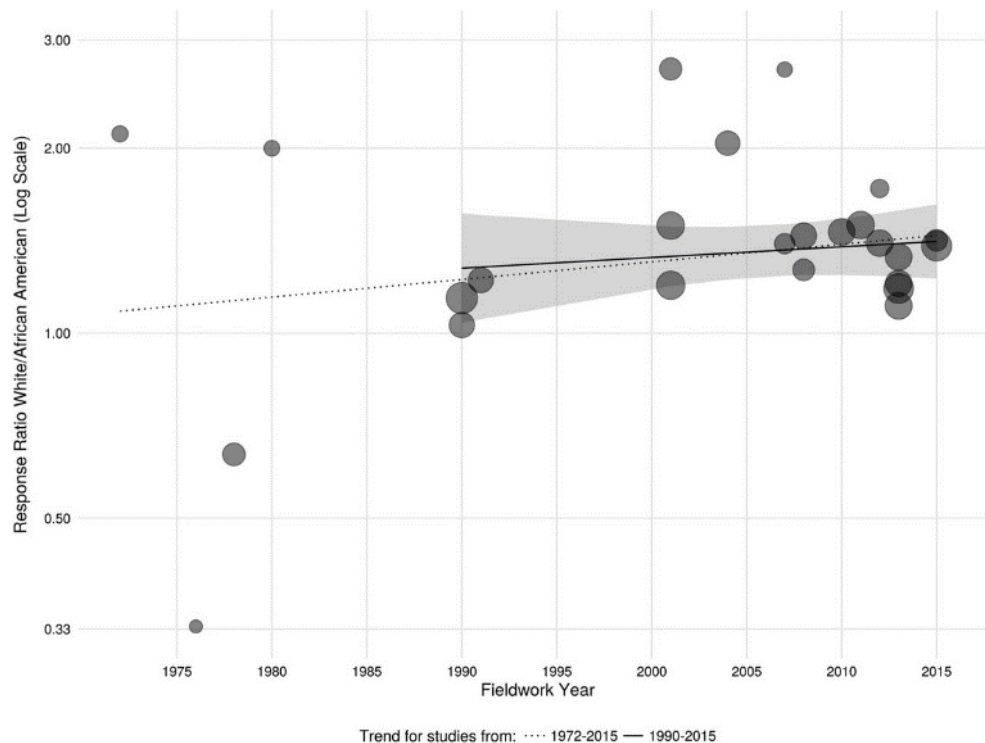
Source: Devah Pager, "The Mark of a Criminal Record", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 108, No. 5 (March 2003), Figure 6, p. 958.

# Acknowledge and fight racism

**Meta-analysis of field experiments shows no change in racial discrimination in hiring over time**



Lincoln Quillian, Devah Pager, Ole Hexel, and Arnfinn H. Midtbøen



Note: Size of plotting symbols proportional to meta-regression weights. Shaded region gives 95% confidence interval.

40% higher response rate for whites has not changed in at least three decades

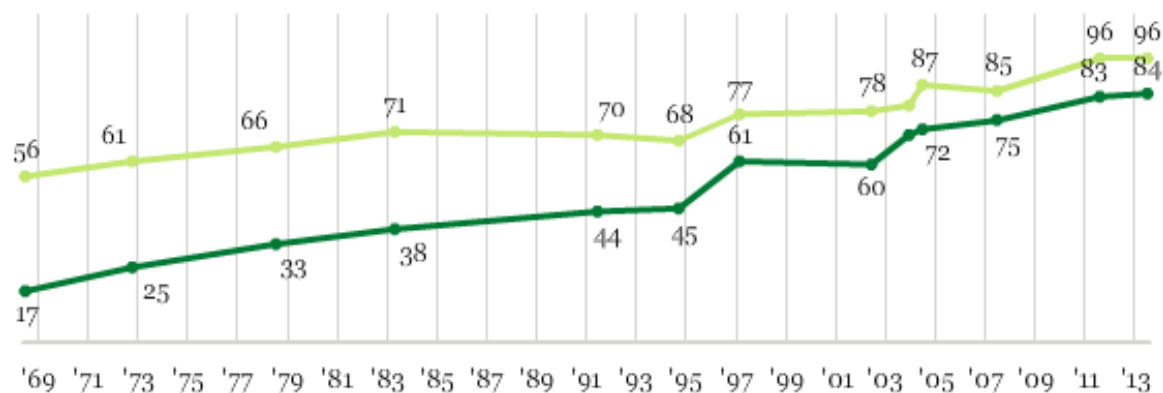
# Acknowledge and fight racism

## *Approval of Black-White Marriage Among Whites and Blacks*

Selected trend

Whites ^

Non-Hispanic blacks



1958 wording: "... marriages between white and colored people"

1968-1978 wording: "... marriages between whites and nonwhites"

^ Trend from 1968-2003 includes Hispanics; trend from 2004-2013 is for non-Hispanic whites only

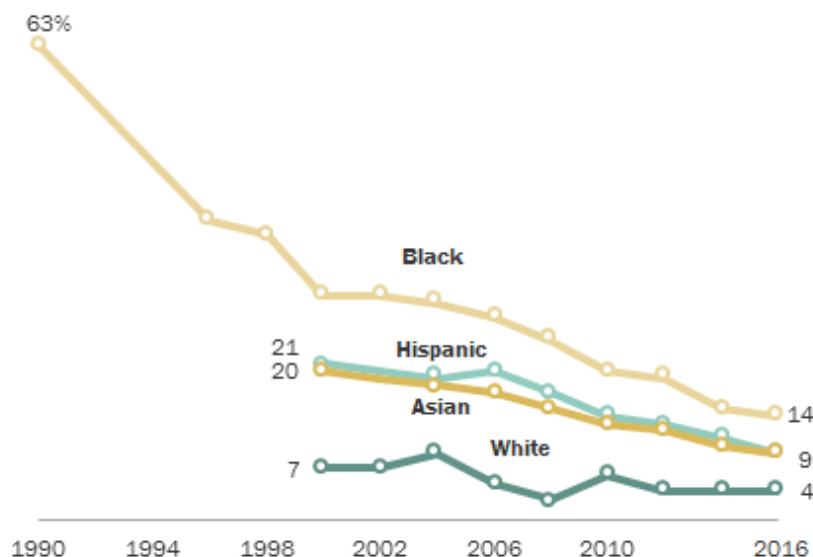
GALLUP®

16% of whites do not approve of intermarriage between whites and blacks

# Acknowledge and fight racism

## Dramatic dive in share of nonblacks who would oppose a relative marrying a black person

*% saying they would be very or somewhat opposed to a close relative marrying someone who is \_\_\_\_ among U.S. adults who are not that race or ethnicity*



14% of non-blacks would oppose a relative marrying a black person

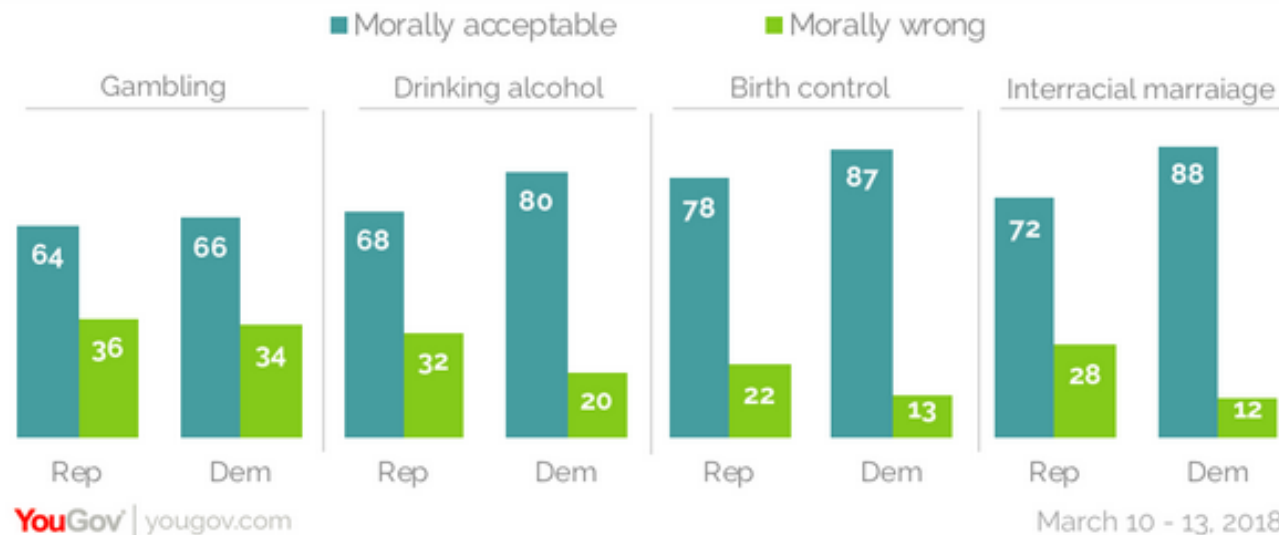
Note: Due to changes in question wording, the universe of nonblacks prior to 2000 includes anyone who reported a race other than black; in 2000 and later, the universe of nonblacks includes those who did not identify as single-race, non-Hispanic blacks (and so may include Hispanic blacks and multiracial blacks).

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of General Social Survey.  
"Intermarriage in the U.S. 50 Years After Loving v. Virginia"

# Acknowledge and fight racism

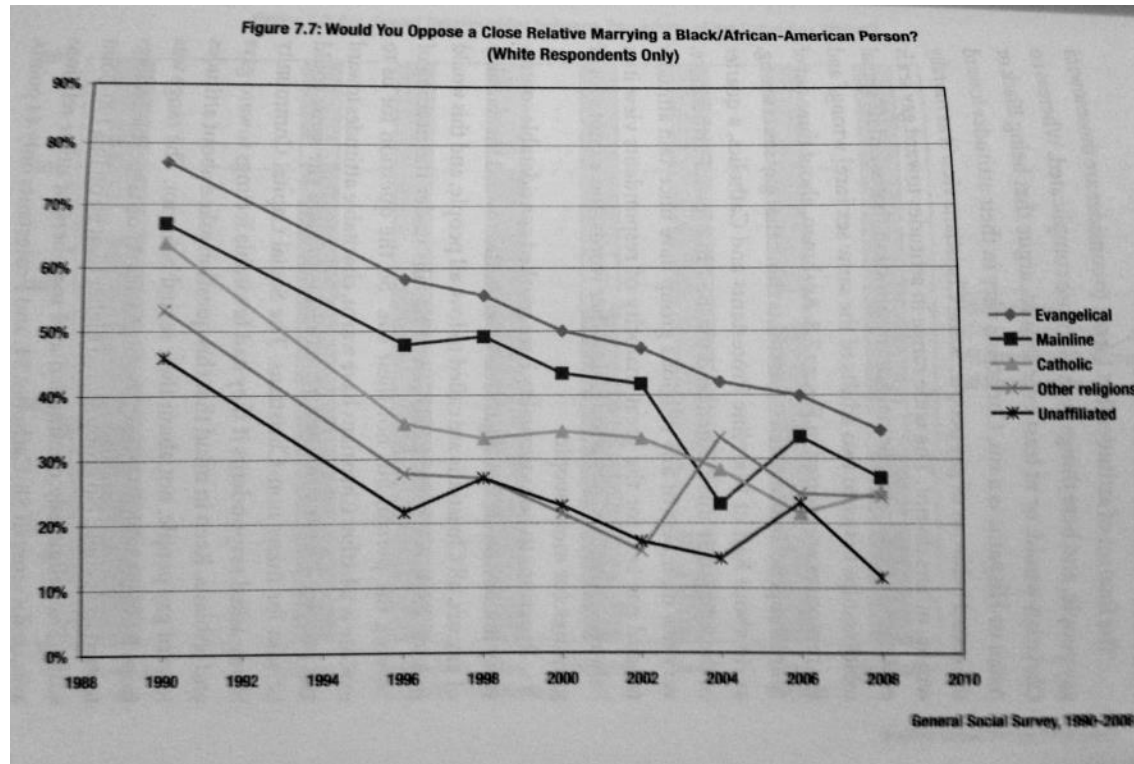
## Broad acceptabnce in many formerly taboo areas

Regardless of whether they should be legal or not, which of the following things do you personally consider to be morally acceptable or morally wrong? %



28% of Republicans think interracial marriage is 'morally wrong'

# Acknowledge and fight racism



34% of white Evangelicals would oppose a close relative marrying a black person

“Among Evangelicals... we see no evidence of prejudicial attitudes decreasing with church attendance.” – Bradley Wright, *Christians Are Hate-Filled Hypocrites... and Other Lies You've Been Told*, p. 170



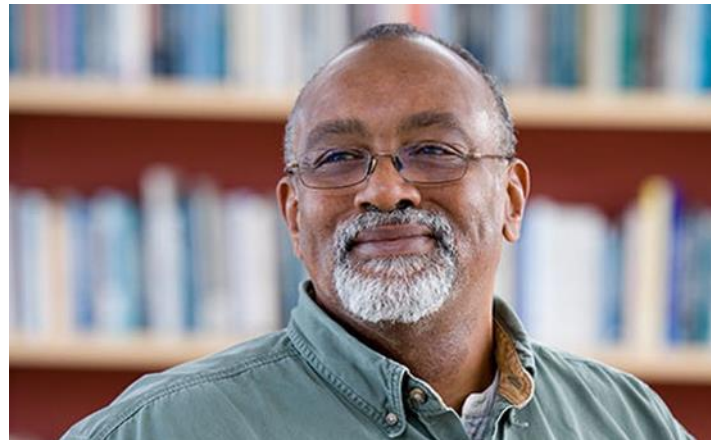
# Outline

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- Advice for dialogue
  - Acknowledge and fight racism
  - Read broadly
  - Put the gospel first

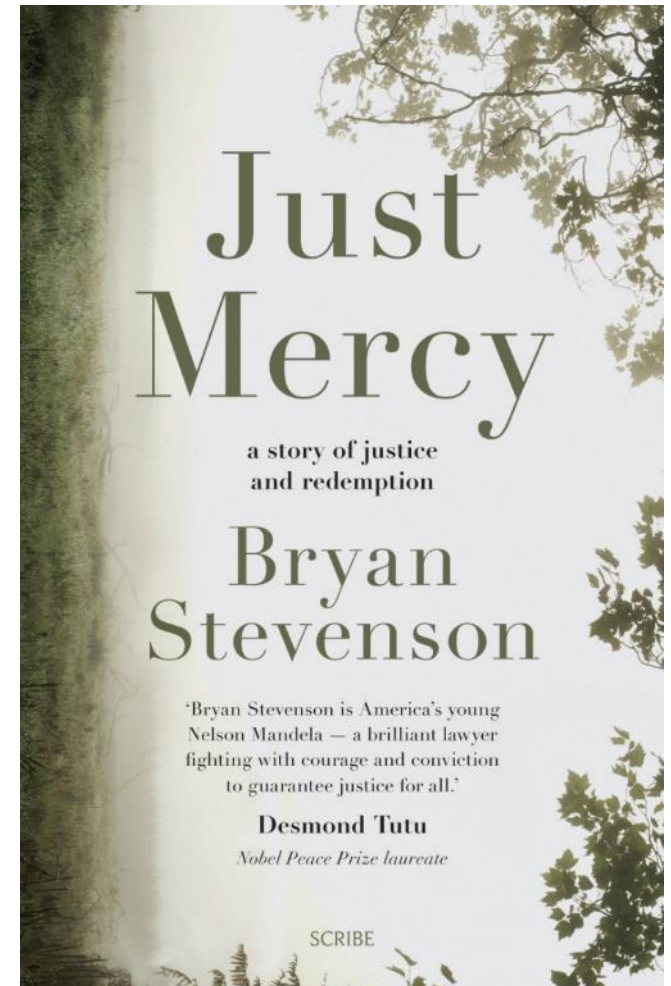
Read broadly



# Read broadly

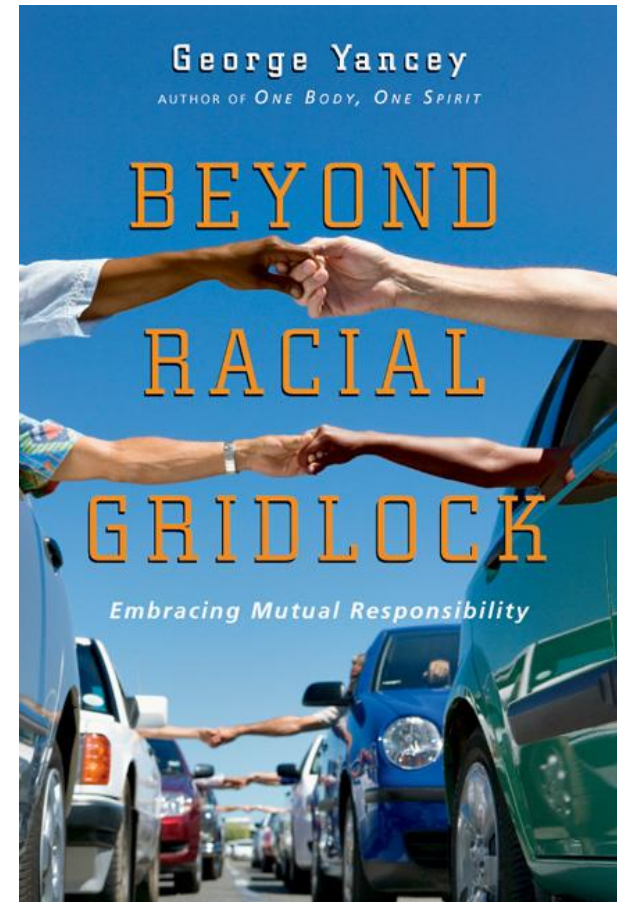


# *Just Mercy*, Bryan Stevenson





# *Beyond Racial Gridlock*, by Dr. George Yancey

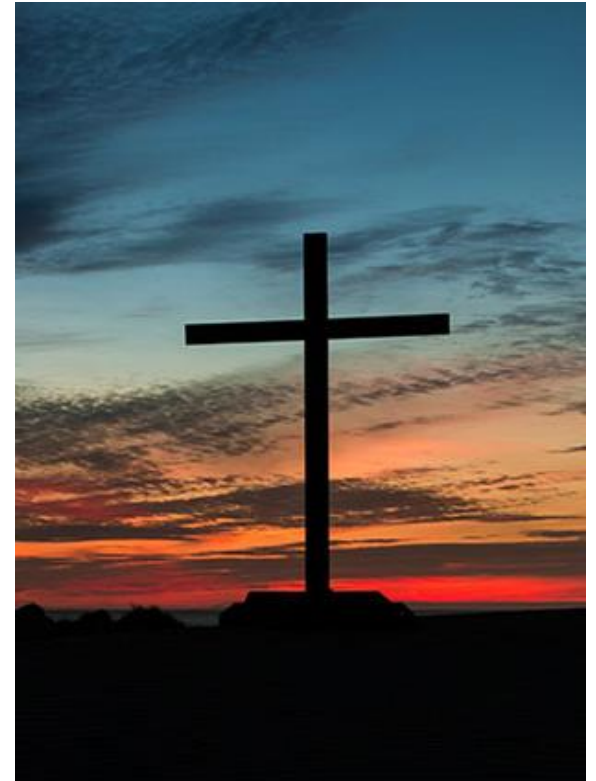


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# Keeping the gospel first for Christians

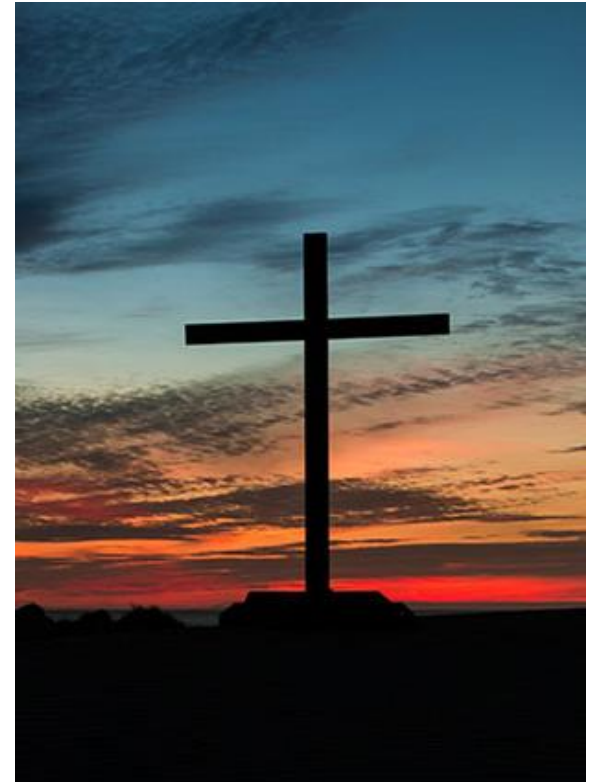
- Is **social justice** a Christian imperative? Does God command it? Is it our moral obligation? Is it something we *ought* to do?
- Is **the gospel** an imperative or an indicative? Is it a statement of what we *ought* to do, or what God *has done* in Christ?





# Keeping the gospel first for non-Christians

- What are our **moral obligations**?
- Have you **kept** them?



# Acknowledgements and additional resources

Dr. Christina Shenvi



Dr. Pat Sawyer



- “The Incompatibility of Critical Theory and Christianity,” *The Gospel Coalition*
- “Gender, Intersectionality, and Critical Theory,” *Eikon*
- “Engaging Critical Theory and the Social Justice Movement” *Ratio Christi*
- [shenviapologetics.com/defend19](http://shenviapologetics.com/defend19)
- Twitter @NeilShenvi