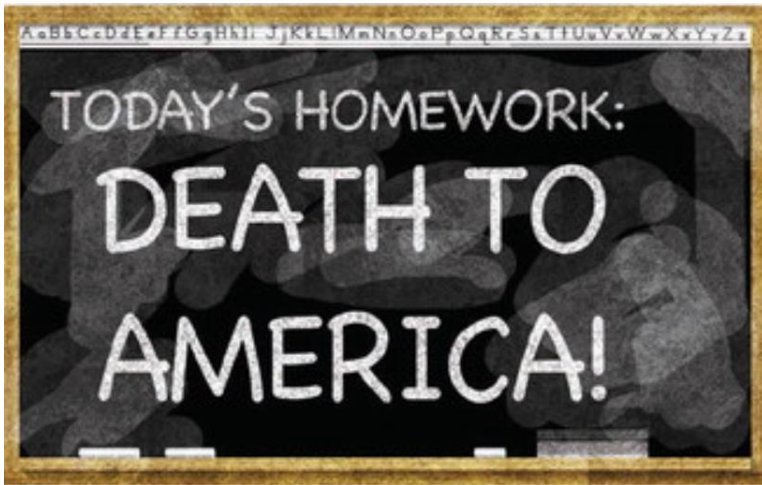


# Why are educators fomenting racial resentment?

## Ethnic studies programs goad students to be revolutionaries

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When California lawmakers made “ethnic studies” a graduation requirement for K-12 students three years ago, they hoped their state would become a national model. It is — of what not to do.

Ask the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, a Jewish advocacy organization.

Along with attorneys from the American Jewish Committee, among others, the center presented evidence in a lawsuit last year that a California school district intentionally tried to exclude Jewish students and families from meetings about the district’s K-12 ethnic studies courses.

District officials made antisemitic comments at the meeting, according to documents presented by the litigants, which further showed that the new curriculum has a decidedly discriminatory slant.

The lawsuit, which exposes ethnic studies’ radical, racist roots, doesn’t surprise us. Our latest research documents ethnic studies’ revolutionary origins and dependence on identity over citizenship.

It’s painfully obvious that education officials need to jettison ethnic studies and approve social studies and history standards that focus on historical facts, civic responsibilities and rights under the law — not identity politics.

It’s an old problem. In the 1960s, young radicals imbued with Marxist ideas about overthrowing the United States borrowed from Third World revolutionaries such as China’s Mao Zedong and Cuba’s Fidel Castro and demanded that universities create ethnic studies departments.

Creating ethnic studies was one of the demands of the Black Panther Party. Two of its founders, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, met at a protoethnic studies group set up at Berkeley in 1962, the Afro-American Association.

They were not the only radicals to meet there: Kamala Harris' parents, Donald J. Harris and Shyamala Gopalan, met at one of the group's study sessions.

One purpose ethnic studies was to replace area studies in higher education and K-12 schools. Educators had created area studies to educate young Americans about regions of the world and prepare them to play a role in their country's leadership position at a time when the United States was ascending after World War II.

Ethnic studies aimed to do the opposite. Its advocates wanted to "decolonize" the school curriculum and believed that "the job of the black educator is to train his people how to dismantle America, how to destroy it," according to historian C. Vann Woodward.

Ethnic studies do not advance belief in individual rights or equality under the law; they militate against them.

Ethnic studies is a "critical" field. It focuses on societal conceptual superstructures and how to undermine them through withering criticism. It analyzes power imbalances and seeks political changes — Marxist notions used to deconstruct American society.

And now Marxist-friendly policymakers in California and Minnesota have created ethnic studies standards for K- 12 schools to follow.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz even signed a bill "embedding" ethnic studies across K-12 subjects. Notably, researchers at the Center of the American Experiment, a research organization in Minnesota, found that the state's ethnic studies curriculum has strong pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli content, similar to California's ethnic studies material.

State lawmakers and education officials should replace ethnic studies content with instructional material that recognizes America's unique place in world history and that even though Americans may originate in all parts of the world, they constitute one people and one nation. Standards should consider local, national and world history, as well as the importance of participating in society through civic organizations and voting. State legislators should prohibit taxpayer resources from being spent on diversity, equity and inclusion offices and programs in K-12 schools because these offices promote ethnic studies and policymakers' use of racial preferences in public policy. Ethnic studies doesn't prepare students to be engaged citizens; it goads them to be revolutionaries, regardless of their proficiency in relevant academic subjects.

America isn't perfect. Educators can and should acknowledge how Americans have failed to live up to our national ideals through our history. But they can do that while emphasizing that our Founding Fathers made remarkable and historic contributions to the cherished ideas of liberty and representative government.

But these are not lessons of identity politics. Educators should prepare the next generation to appreciate our national story, not spread racial resentment.

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