

Critical Race Theory (CRT) vs Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

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Many terms and acronyms used in public discussions refer to the progressive (or “woke”), neo-Marxist ideologies about which STARRS has been monitoring and educating the public. The radical left uses the phrase, “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” (DEI), rather than “Critical Race Theory” (CRT), in their vernacular for reasons I articulate below, which center on the left’s apparent attempt to shroud/cover up its true agenda or perhaps not realizing that following the modern day tenets of DEI is CRT put into practice. Regardless, CRT jargon is now the “language of choice” at USAFA.

On its face, DEI can be perceived as positive, even desirable, by strong patriotic supporters of the U.S. Constitution, as well as by America as a whole.

For instance, reasonable Americans can see the positive aspects of searching for people with diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and general life experiences who might be interested in serving their country. Obviously, there are young people with great talent and potential that grew up in poverty or areas with less-than-optimal schools or life circumstances (single parent homes, family members with addictions, jumping between foster care families, living in small communities with limited educational opportunities, etc.). We can seek to reach these individuals and mentor them, and we can and should encourage them to join our national security institutions once they meet the standards of those fine institutions. Once members, they should be treated with the same respect and dignity as everyone else. This is “good”: The Constitution guarantees that everyone has the right to equal opportunity – this is central to what America is all about!

The problem arises when, in the name of DEI, individuals are preferentially incentivized and selected for these organizations' most important challenges, opportunities and positions **based on quotas or affirmative actions** instead of the **merits** of their performance and/or their potential to achieve success in those endeavors.

Setting aside the dog-whistle-politics acronym itself, whether any of “diversity”, “equity” or “inclusion” are good or bad from a constitutional perspective depends upon how these terms are defined and how they are applied practically, in policies and actions. The acronym, “DEI”, has been pushed by its advocates as a replacement vernacular for “CRT”, apparently in a response to discovering that CRT carries with it its own baggage and set of toxic connotations. Yet how these radicals define and apply DEI is not how most Americans would do so.

While its proponents would quickly point out that “DEI” does not equal “CRT”, it certainly dovetails with the intended outcomes of CRT and is imbued and embedded with many of CRT’s fundamental tenets. As alluded to earlier—DEI is CRT in action. And clearly, CRT advocates use DEI to cloak CRT in an ostensibly benign wrapper. It is anything but benign. The proof of this argument is evident from cursory observations of the CRT-related ***activities*** USAFA’s “***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion***” ***Officer*** has instituted at USAFA:

- The Diversity and Inclusion Reading Room consists primarily, if not exclusively, of leftist propaganda readings until STARRS became involved.
- CRT-related training is now mandatory for entering USAFA appointees – many of these appointees (as well as their parents) found this material highly offensive.
- USAFA selected a single book – a radical, highly-opinionated work by George Takei – for its “One Book One USAFA Reads” program for all incoming cadets. This work not only demonized American treatment of Japanese immigrants during World War II, but in it Takei also strongly advocates that the U.S. dissolve its

borders. That is, Takei is indirectly advocating that the U.S. should lose its fundamental sovereignty as a state.

- A parallel chain-of-command structure has been implemented in the cadet wing to accommodate the DEI chain. Such a move is strongly reminiscent of the Bolsheviks' institution of Russian commissars in military units to ensure compliance with communist thinking. Like the commissar chain, the DEI chain is arrayed with its own identifying insignia, including distinctive uniform aiguillettes.

STARRS has learned through various credible sources that the DEI programs at our nation's service academies are actively being used to reward and/or select individuals based on minority/gender goals rather than merit. Additionally, graduates and/or cadets from four out of the past five classes affirmed to us that this is the case. Example: **“Where all this emphasis on DEI shows up is in selection of leadership positions in the cadet wing”** (an exact quote from a third-class cadet [i.e. a USAFA sophomore], confirmed all the way down from recent grads to fourthclassmen). In a related aside, I note that months ago STARRS submitted a *Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA) requesting USAFA to release information containing the percentages of minorities and/or women in USAFA cadet leadership positions – we are still awaiting a response.

Whether or not intended, these actions have the practical effect of preferring certain demographics over others, creating resentment and crushing motivation and initiative among those not deemed to be among a favored population. This philosophy exactly opposes of the ideals the American military – our country's greatest meritocracy – has promoted for decades.

Confucius said, “When words lose their meaning, people will lose their liberty.” (Quoted by F.A. Hayek, *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p. 106.). We know

that the vagueness and obscurity of the “language” used by radicals is intended by those who author such lexicons.

Certainly, DEI is unmistakably the new lexicon of USAFA’s leadership, but shouldn’t we be permitted to ask why it is that an organization such as USAFA – an organization that is supposed to be apolitical – is so strongly embracing, adopting and promoting DEI? Thus far, the only rationale we have heard is, “Because it is being directed from above.”

We know that, like the Marxists who came before them, the neo-Marxists of today are masters of language manipulation, and we have shared this observation with USAFA’s Superintendent. Yet we continue to hear from cadets, paraphrased, “I hear *diversity, equity and inclusion so often I feel like I am continually being indoctrinated.*”

1. Diversity

Just a few short years ago “diversity” was a well-defined, widely-accepted word. After all, who *wouldn’t* want diversity of ideas, backgrounds, gender, race and other attributes? Put another way, no one was against “diversity” as it had been traditionally defined: THAT kind of diversity is among America's greatest strengths!

Today, however, “diversity” has a very different meaning:

- It is synonymous to many with “identity politics”.
- It engenders tribalism, pitting one group against another, and is undermining our national culture.
- It almost always refers to race or sex – and to a growing extent sexual and/or gender preference – not to anything related to the content of one’s character, their talent, or their merit.
- In contrast to “cognitive diversity” – a concept that has been studied extensively by scientists and has noted strengths and value – it centers on superficialities such as skin color, gender or sexual

preference. No proof exists that any of these lead to better unit cohesion, military readiness or combat effectiveness.

- It is incongruous with our national motto, *E Pluribus Unum* (“Out of many, one”), the core notion that diversity – of opinion, experiences and people, generally – is America’s greatest strength.
- It counters assimilation into American culture by emphasizing pre-biased, status-based discrimination accorded to certain arbitrarily-chosen classes and withheld from others.
- It promotes the sponsorship of those who are *assumed* to be marginalized and further
- It wrongly assumes that those within that marginalized identity group are monolithic in their thinking and ideological beliefs.
- It does not foster *true* “diversity”: a state in which those from widely-varying backgrounds are all afforded equal *opportunity* within a collaborative environment whose core theme is, “We are all in this together.” This type of “diversity” has been, until very recently, a cornerstone of military effectiveness and success.

2. Equity

“Equity” is probably the most dangerous of the words in the DEI “trilogy”, as the veiled intent underpinning this term is nothing short of pure communism. “Equity” of what? **Outcome!** Not too long ago, most students learned in their freshman history class in high school that communism (or its interchangeable double, “Marxism”) hasn't worked anywhere it has been tried. The reason for this is simple: The human spirit is such that no one would ever be satisfied with "just being the same" as everyone else. The good Lord, thankfully, has blessed each of us with motivation, initiative and self-esteem. Equity strikes a blow at all of these. And from an Air Force point of view, at least, “equity” is far removed from the Air Force core value, "Excellence in all we do," since excellence is antithetical to the metric by which equity is measured.

Like “diversity”, today’s practical definition of “equity” is also much different from that of its traditional meaning:

- Equity is often used as a lever to lower standards so that they are attainable by the favored identity group.
- “Equity”, as the left would have America define it, is impossible to achieve: Countless variables would have to be considered and adjudicated to produce the fantasy of “equity”, as today’s Marxists define that term.
- Equity is being used as the “camel’s nose under the tent”: Even a brief examination of the laundry list of outcomes under “equity” reveals the never-ending wish-list of the radical left.
- Equity has become an industry, drawing precious resources away from a military facing an increasingly threatening array of adversaries. While it must be acknowledged that certain injustices do exist in our country, it is not the military's job to attempt to solve these problems. Rather, it is our military’s job to deter threats and if that deterrence fails, to win wars.

A growing consensus among many, including many members of Congress, is that too much time, energy and money is now being asymmetrically channeled to areas involving “equity” in its modern-usage sense. Were our military leaders required simply to emphasize the core value of respect for one's fellow military member, true equity-related issues would suddenly vanish. Put another way, those bringing claims of “inequities” should be held accountable to produce hard evidence of such charges. And that evidence should not be of the “lies, damn lies and statistics” version popularized by Mark Twain; rather, solid, smoking-gun evidence should accompany such extreme claims.

In contrast, comments collected from Senator Tom Cotton’s office from military members on the subject of “equity” highlight the concerns of many who now serve. Underscoring these concerns, note that 94% of

sailors responding to this survey take issue with the Navy's leadership and culture:

<https://www.cotton.senate.gov/news/press-releases/cotton-statement-on-delivery-of-a-report-on-the-fighting-culture-of-the-navys-surface-fleet>

Similarly, a Fox News article recently discussed this issue.

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/afghanistan-military-officials-distracted-woke-issues>

3. Inclusion

Certainly, “inclusion”, as modernly interpreted, is an oxymoron. Cadets tell STARRS that “**inclusion**” means, “**either you go along with what we are telling you or you won't be included.**” They add, “**I just keep my head down and wait for this training to end.**” Again, these statements are the paraphrased, but by no means minority, responses we receive from the cadets with whom we have dialoged.

Indeed, “inclusion” appears to be aimed at ensuring certain individuals and groups are “included” and welcomed, to the exclusion of the rest of the ranks of unit members. We observe this phenomenon also playing out on many college campuses, with separate, multicultural graduation ceremonies, as well as separate student unions and living accommodations. Ironically, true segregation is back, with the “chosen few” who are “included” demanding it! In the Air Force, this phenomenon can be readily observed in specially designated “DEI events.” The non-“included” need not apply (or attend): You weren't invited.

Is the use of the word “inclusion” teaching those hearing it that an effort should be made to ensure everyone has an input? Maybe--or is it teaching those hearing it that they have an equal share in decision making? In a military organization? Because the word is likely

intentionally vague, who knows? I think you would agree that all good leaders listen to their subordinates, but commanders decide. “Inclusion” should have some limits.

It appears the Superintendent is trying to implement a different agenda than the one the words he uses might otherwise convey. The words he uses seem intentionally vague (perhaps to diminish accountability?) and they are very definitely the “language of the left.” Doesn’t clarity of speech and purpose serve the military better?

To expound here:

Is this emphasis on “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” necessary inside the USAF and the USAFA? Has not our military led our society in terms of diversity, integration and lack of discrimination? (This doesn't mean we can't get better still--but “better” should include **NOT** being divisive. I believe we should “listen” to how the words come across to the population the message is aimed at. And many of them tell us it is divisive. I would like to think if someone told me the *way* or the *particular words* I was using were interpreted by some of the people I was leading as not unifying (as we have told the Superintendent multiple times), I would find a clearer, less divisive way of delivering the message.

Unfortunately, it is not only the words that are divisive. They are not said in a vacuum--they are tied to actions--actions that in some cases are also divisive. (Special DEI events open only to minorities being just one example).

I think almost everyone in STARRS has made an assessment at this point that there are two options here:

#1. Sit on the sidelines, do nothing, and watch the neo-Marxists continue to march through our institutions – this activity has been ongoing for decades – and completely consume our military, while

we also watch the diversion of attention away from military fundamentals, negatively impacting mission readiness.

– OR –

#2. Push back, engage, continue to articulate that the road the leaders of today are taking the military down is not one conducive to cohesiveness--i.e., "listen to those you are leading." Our allegiance to an individual or an institution is limited to their alignment with the *Constitution of the United States* and all that inspired it and all that it implies. I am sure the Superintendent believes he is supporting and defending the *Constitution* in the performance of his duties. Others might disagree, as he seems to be bowing to the neo-Marxist ideology which is clearly weakening our military.

STARRS chooses option #2. We wish there were an option #3, but so far no one has come forward with another option.

In closing, we view our actions as not only supporting the long-term health of USAFA, the USAF and the US military, but also as being completely aligned with the prophetic vision of our Founding Fathers and the profound wisdom in which they codified that vision in our *Declaration of Independence* and *Constitution*. We are the voices of parents, veterans and concerned cadets who would like to still have input on what is being taught to America's children and we do NOT like the current anti-American drift.

Were the Superintendent serious about being more than just a likable guy, he would **not** ignore the feedback from the myriad grads, parents, grandparents, cadets, and other concerned citizens, all of which is sounding an unmistakable alarm over CRT and its dangers to the Services and to our national security. Instead, STARRS recommends he address the issue head on; explain why he continues to use the language of the left; why he is permitting the things that are happening to happen;

and why he is taking the actions he is taking. His responses to questions at reunions have been superficial at best – “disingenuous” could even be a better word. Effectively he states, “We need to teach cadets about CRT so they can better handle the future philosophical environments they will face.” He has added that “kids want to talk about this stuff.” Perhaps if USAFA’s actions matched these words, they would be true enough. However, it’s one thing to teach **ABOUT** CRT; it’s quite another to **indoctrinate** cadets with the tenets of CRT.

As I have said in several public appearances over the past summer, “Isn’t it ironic that the Denver Broncos don’t care much about ‘diversity’ (or equity and inclusion for that matter)? ‘Teamwork, cohesiveness, and unity’ yes.” (Football probably being the closest professional sport to “war”). “But where actual lives are on the line and the security of our nation is at stake, we seem to no longer want the ‘best’ accomplishing that mission—but instead, ‘Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.’ The Russians and the Chinese, I am sure, are impressed.”

- *E Pluribus Unum*, not the tribalism of the new: **Diversity**
- Equality for all under the law, not: **Equity**
- Unity, not the division of the new definition of: **Inclusion**

Through this prism, which I share with many, pushing DEI into every nook and cranny of USAFA is not a good thing!