



PARENTS DEFENDING EDUCATION

# ACTION

## Let's Talk About: Ethnic Studies

- **What is ethnic studies?** Ethnic Studies is a subject taught in many K-12 public schools across the country. It *sounds* like it introduces students to different ethnicities and cultures, but it tears people apart and paints an ugly picture of US history. It is critical race theory (CRT) by another name.
- **Why is it bad?** Ethnic Studies posits people as either aggressors or victims based on characteristics like skin color and ethnicity. It focuses on group identities instead of *individual* characteristics and attributes. It imposes a narrow political ideology and worldview on students. It is polarizing, fundamentally anti-Western, and views history and civics through a racial lens.
- **Examples:** Look at [PDE's Indoctrination Map](#) for examples from your state to share with your local citizen activists and lawmakers.

**Ethnic Studies proponents may use these phrases, so we broke them down for you.**

When they say...	They mean...
Critique empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism, and other forms of power and oppression at the intersections of our society	Students are taught to be critical of modern society, which is claimed to be founded on white supremacy, racism, capitalism, and heterosexual male leadership.
Challenge imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels	Western Civilization is founded on the oppression and enslavement of indigenous peoples; and these beliefs still “enslave” marginalized groups through education systems, daily interactions, and culture write large.
Connect ourselves to past and contemporary resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels to ensure a truer democracy.	Students are taught to revere activism that challenges America’s cultural values and that the liberation of all peoples cannot be achieved until a truer democracy is established. (“Truer democracy” is a term that refers to Communism and the abolition of private property.)

If you are asked...	You can say...
Why don't you want students to learn about other cultures?	Learning about different cultures is great. Ethnic studies isn't about culture or history, but about imposing a narrow worldview and divides people into oppressors and victims based on fixed traits.
Why do you want to ban teaching <i>true</i> history?	History is markedly distinct from <i>imposing an ideology</i> which is what ethnic studies is.
But students need to know about our white supremacist, racist, patriarchal, capitalist roots and how they hurt people even today.	Learning about injustice and atrocities in history can be done absent of indoctrination.
Define ethnic studies	It is an interdisciplinary study rooted in post-modernism and critical race theory that purports to explore race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, and gender through the lens of power structures and oppression.
But you're white/male/wealthy/Christian/Jewish, how can you understand?	<p>People are not defined by their skin color, sex or religion. Like you, I'm a person who cares about quality K-12 education for our children.</p> <p><i>Note- Jewish people are a minority, making up merely 2.4% of the US adult population, and there are Jews of all ethnicities and skin colors.</i></p>
Is there any good Ethnic Studies?	Yes, Constructive Ethnic Studies. The Guiding Principles of Constructive Ethnic Studies are to empower students to dream big, overcome challenges, and be motivated, engaged community members.

[Learn more from Parents Defending Education's Ethnic Studies resources.](#)