

Wokeness Is Sabotaging the Military Academies

heritage.org/defense/commentary/wokeness-sabotaging-the-military-academies

John Cooper

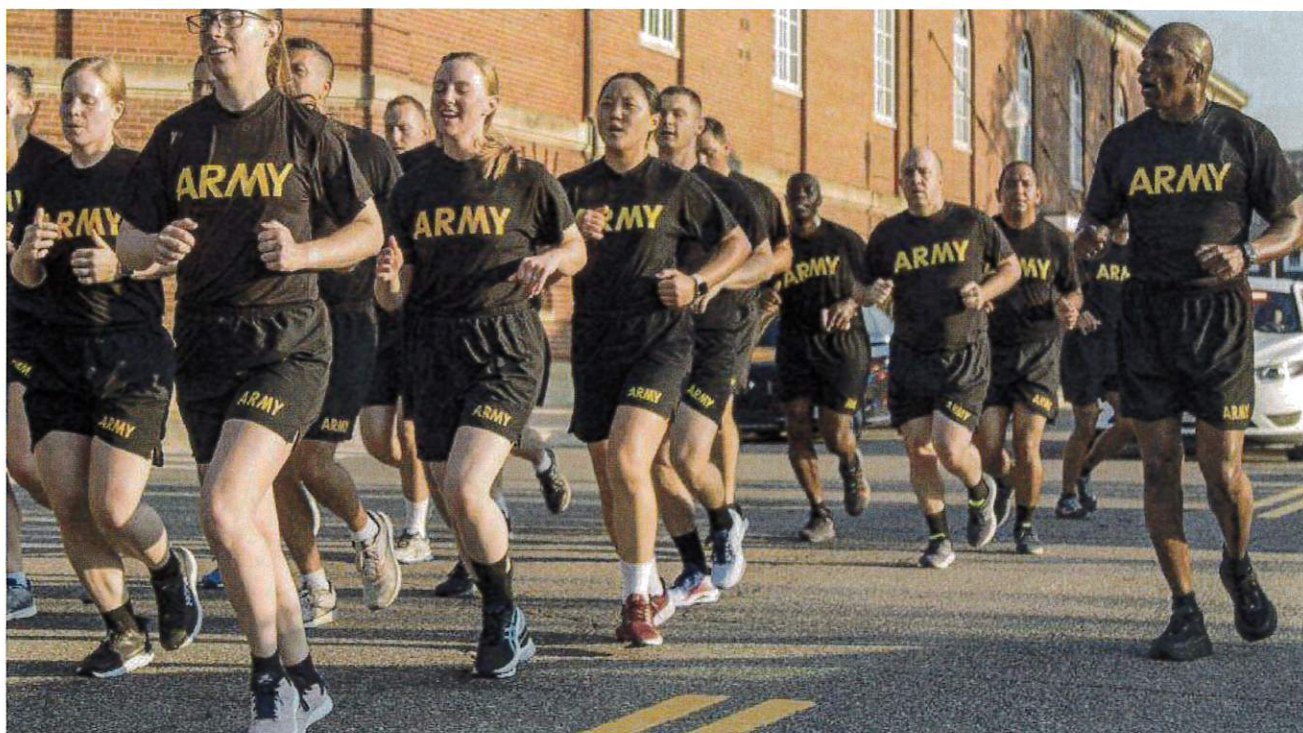
@thejcoop

Former Senior Advisor, Communications

John Cooper was a senior advisor for communications at The Heritage Foundation.



COMMENTARY BY



Soldiers assigned to the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as ‘The Old Guard,’ participate in the U.S. Army Birthday Run at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., June 14, 2021. Spc. Laura Stephens / U.S. Army

Key Takeaways

Critical Race Theory proponents, like Professor Lynne Chandler Garcia, have set their sights is the United States military, namely the United States Air Force.

Making cadets aware of the concept is not the problem. Indoctrination and extensive academic focus is the problem.

How can our military pledge their lives to defend the Constitution when CRT suggests that the Constitution is a racist, dehumanizing, flawed document?

Professor Lynne Chandler Garcia recently published an op-ed in the *Washington Post* in which she defended indoctrinating her students on the concepts of critical race theory, or CRT.

Normally, this wouldn't raise any eyebrows. A member of the intelligentsia teaching her students a boutique academic theory? Hardly shocking. What did get people's attention was Garcia's place of employment. None other than the U.S. Air Force Academy.

CRT presents a nebulous set of beliefs that encourage people to look at every issue through the prism of race. Its next step is to sort individuals into groups of "oppressors" and "oppressed." It's a poisonous ideology that accuses white people of being oppressors and asserts that minorities cannot succeed in America without perpetuating white supremacy.

At its core, CRT is a race-based way of looking at the world. Which is somewhat ironic for a philosophy ostensibly about "anti-racism!" It essentially advocates burning down those basic American structures, norms, and institutions that CRT theorists deem unacceptable. The goal? Undermining and ultimately replacing these norms and institutions.

>>> **Critical Race Theory Will Destroy Our Military**

One of those institutions on which CRT theorists have set their sights is the United States military.

As my Heritage colleagues Mike Gonzalez and Dakota Wood have previously explained, the creeping influence of CRT on the military jeopardizes the health and strength of the armed forces. Introducing CRT's racial division and resentment will erode camaraderie. CRT will undermine the instrumental unity that is essential for the U.S. military to successfully protect our national interests. But CRT theorists are not content to just push these radical concepts on the force at large. They are working to indoctrinate the next generation of officers, as Garcia makes plain.

To be clear, informing cadets about controversial concepts is not the issue. Republican Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton echoed this sentiment at a recent Heritage event, saying that he would be surprised if a Western philosophy class did not cover Karl Marx and communism, given the impact of Marx's ideology on world history.

The same is true of CRT. Making cadets aware of the concept is not the problem. Indoctrination and extensive academic focus is the problem. Just as professors at the service academies should not be endorsing communism in the classroom, they shouldn't be endorsing CRT. Unfortunately, that's exactly what is happening.

Indeed, senior military leaders seem to be endorsing CRT. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Mark Milley, recently told Congress he wants to "understand white rage." Adm. Michael Gilday, chief of naval operations, included Ibram Kendi's "How to Be An Anti-Racist" on his professional reading list (which recommends selected works for the Navy).

James Hasson, a U.S. Army veteran, recently wrote about the slow but steady acceptance of woke concepts at the service academies in his book, *Stand Down: How Social Justice Warriors Are Sabotaging America's Military*. While chronicling documented cases of woke ideology run amok at the service academies, Hasson writes, "It might surprise the average American taxpayer to learn that civilian professors at the service academies are as leftist as any other group of professors...their 'scholarship' is often indistinguishable from what might be found at the most progressive, leftist university." Indeed, as Hasson points out, cadets such as communist-sympathizer Spenser Rapone have been radicalized at the service academies.

>>> **Critical Race Theory**

To serve as an officer in the U.S. military, the government requires men and women to pledge their service, their careers, even their very lives, to the defense of the Constitution. Rightly so. But how does this coalesce with the teaching of CRT principles which suggest that the Constitution is a racist, dehumanizing, flawed document?

I have yet to hear CRT advocates successfully square that circle.

Our service academies should be focused on one thing: training and equipping young men and women to be the best warfighters and leaders in the world. To be ready to keep those under their command alive and to complete the mission. Sadly, it seems our military leaders have a different priority. China and Russia must be celebrating. This piece originally appeared in the Washington Examiner