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New foundation launched to end 'Marxist' takeover of ethnic studies

By **Peter Cordi**

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EXCLUSIVE — A new [foundation](#) launched on Tuesday seeks to warn parents about the hard-left “hijacking” of ethnic studies in [K-12](#) education and hopes to facilitate intellectual [diversity](#).

The THINC Foundation commissioned a nationwide Ipsos survey of parents about their opinions on ethnic studies, which they generally view in a positive light, as well as colorblindness and Martin Luther King Jr.’s vision of judging one by the content of his or her character as opposed to the color of one’s skin, which parents overwhelmingly support.

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The organization's founder and CEO, Mitch Siegler, sat down with the *Washington Examiner* to explain how THINC plans to raise awareness about the dangers of "liberated ethnic studies."

'Sunshine is the best disinfectant'

Ethnic studies departments in both K-12 and higher education almost exclusively employ liberal employees peddling critical race theory to students, and this is most evident in liberated ethnic studies in which subscribing to that ideological framework is a prerequisite to being hired.

The idea of colorblindness, or treating people equally regardless of race, is deemed racist by champions of CRT, yet parents have a high opinion of both colorblindness and ethnic studies, according to the survey of 1,463 parents of children ages 0-17 shared with the *Washington Examiner*.

Siegler explained that "part of the challenge" THINC faces is raising awareness about the ideological takeover of ethnic studies because many parents are not aware of what their children are being taught at school. In fact, many parents report not knowing what liberated ethnic studies is.

"Sunshine is the best disinfectant," he said, explaining that "what's missing" from many organizations fighting the same fight is the "preparing [of] the ground aspect" through "data and research, information, education, and advocacy," with the goal of "creating the conditions to get a very large group of Americans, parents, and others, mobilized."

Only 54% of parents report being familiar with ethnic studies, while 35% are familiar with liberated ethnic studies.

"If you don't like" teachers bringing their politics into the classroom, framing things through the lens of "oppressor versus oppressed," Siegler said, "you're really not going to like some of the stuff that's being taught to young children, and if you connect the dots as to where that can lead, you really aren't going to like that very much, either."

Because students are, by and large, not being taught "healthy ethnic studies," Siegler argues, they are being taught to resent their peers, and this has led to the rise of militant and hateful movements such as the anti-Israel demonstrations in K-12 and on college campuses.

THINC Foundation's 'end game': K-12 and beyond

In Siegler's ideal world, ethnic studies should foster an inclusive and pluralistic society in which educators are following "Martin Luther King Jr.'s maxim that we should judge people by the content of their character, not the content of their skin."

According to their survey, 93% of parents agree with King's vision, and 81% agree with colorblind equality.

"We should be a melting pot in America," he said. "We should be welcoming. We should have empathy and curiosity about the other person's cultural heritage and background as they should in ours. And when you have that, you have the conditions for people to come together and find common ground and compromise."

THINC Foundation's "end game" consists of educating parents and mobilizing them to demand that ethnic studies taught in an "unhealthy, divisive, even Marxist, fashion" be replaced with "commonsense" programs

that teach about the experiences of every race and ethnicity without framing some as oppressed and others as oppressors.

Other groups have attempted to combat the ideological takeover of ethnic studies and other educational programs through civil rights legislation. [Title VI](#) actions are filed when there is evidence that the school is fostering a hostile environment for students based on race or ethnicity, and [Title VII](#) actions are filed when employment opportunities are denied based on race or ethnicity.

Siegler said that while THINC does not have any plans to get involved in civil rights litigation, they don't want to close the door on the notion down the road.

The most common civil rights actions filed in the wake of the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attack against Israel are [Title VI actions](#) prompted by a widespread and significant rise in antisemitism on campuses, both in K-12 and at the university level. In the wake of the attack, physical assaults against Jewish students [increased](#) by 2,500%, and violent threats increased by 900%.

Siegler argues that militant anti-Israel movements that have, in many cases, turned antisemitic are "branches from the same tree" of liberated ethnic studies. He said this is because the success of historically marginalized groups such as Jews undermines the narrative that people only get ahead in the United States based on whether they are oppressors or oppressed, so Jewish people have to be deemed oppressors.

"I'm Jewish," he said. "My father fled the Nazis as a 12-year-old boy in the 1930s, came to this country, joined the Army, was twice decorated with the Purple Heart, was a big believer in freedom, marched with Martin Luther King in the South in the 1960s."

"My dad and my grandparents came in the middle of the Depression," Siegler added. "They were not oppressors. They had to scratch and scrape to put food on the table. So when Jewish people, many of whom have the immigrant experience and have undergone through millennia of discrimination, are categorized as oppressors, it's because [the Left] can't otherwise explain the success in many fields of Jewish Americans and Hindu Americans and Asian Americans."

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The THINC Foundation is a nonprofit group dedicated to promoting "transparency, honesty, and integrity in the classroom" by advocating inclusivity as opposed to liberated ethnic studies in curricula.

"If anyone wants to join us in our mission of preparing students to succeed in this diverse melting pot society that is America, based on facts and mutual respect and critical thinking, please join us by signing up for our newsletter on [our website](#) and follow us on [social media](#)," Siegler said.

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