



FOREVER SCHOLARS

CRITICAL RACE THEORY AND *THE 1619 PROJECT*

Professor Richard Bell

Starting Monday, February 20, 2023

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Course Syllabus

By now, it seems everyone has an opinion about the *1619 Project*, a special edition of *The New York Times' Magazine* that tried to focus readers' attention upon the continuing legacies of race slavery in American life. Legislators in several states have since passed laws to ban it from school curriculums, along with the teaching of Critical Race Theory—or CRT—a set of premises developed by legal scholars in the 1990s to interpret America's institutions in the context of race and civil rights.

In this two-part course, University of Maryland historian Richard Bell will take us back to basics. We'll push past the headlines and talk candidly about what the *1619 Project* says and doesn't say, and what CRT means for the teaching of American history.

Session 1

February 20, 2023 - Monday at 6:30 p.m. ET

A Citizen's Guide to *The 1619 Project*

In this first lecture, we'll test three of *The 1619 Project's* central claims against the evidence in the historical record. We will examine whether or not the preservation of slavery was a central motivation of the American Revolution. We will explore whether or not the 1787 Constitution enshrined the right to hold 'property in man.' We will also study the multi-faceted character of Abraham Lincoln's racial politics during the Civil War. While *The 1619 Project* has aroused controversy, this program will focus on the facts and the evidence, leaving participants well equipped to make up their own minds.

Session 2

February 27, 2023 - Monday at 6:30 p.m. ET

Critical Race Theory: Context, Controversy, and Call to Action

This second lecture has three different goals. The first objective is to locate the origins of CRT, establish its core premises, describe the recent controversy, and interrogate the stakes of it all. The second objective is to show you CRT in action—to narrate the histories of voting rights and of crime and punishment in the United States through the lens of Critical Race Theory. The third is to introduce participants to a list of practices that CRT scholars believe all of us can adopt to mitigate the worst legacies of slavery in our supposedly post-slavery world.