



Children's
Home Society
of Minnesota



Lutheran
Social Service
of Minnesota

Anti-Racism Reading List

(in alphabetical order by title)

A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota: Sun Yung Shin (Ed)

"In this provocative book, sixteen of Minnesota's best writers provide a range of perspectives on what it is like to live as a person of color in Minnesota. They give readers a splendid gift: the gift of touching another human being's inner reality, behind masks and veils and politeness. They bring us generously into experiences that we must understand if we are to come together in real relationships."

Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism: bell hooks

"For the reader who wants to learn more about black feminism, *Ain't I a Woman* is considered one of the most important and comprehensive works on how sexism and misogyny specifically affects women of color."

Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor: Patricia J. Williams

"Patricia Williams is a lawyer and a professor of commercial law, the great-great-granddaughter of a slave and a white southern lawyer. The *Alchemy of Race and Rights* is an eloquent autobiographical essay in which the author reflects on the intersection of race, gender, and class."

Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism: Safiya Umoja Noble

"Safiya Umoja Noble investigates the many ways in which search engines like Google perpetuate and promote damaging biases that privilege white people and discriminate against people of color, especially women of color."

An African American and Latinx History of the United States: Paul Ortiz

"Spanning more than two hundred years, *An African American and Latinx History of the United States* is a revolutionary, politically charged narrative history, arguing that the "Global South" was crucial to the development of America as we know it."

A People's History of the United States: Howard Zinn

"A wonderful, splendid book--a book that should be ready by every American, student or otherwise, who wants to understand his country, its true history, and its hope for the future." --Howard Fast

Between the World and Me: Ta-Nehisi Coates

"In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis."

Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West: Dee Brown

“This is a thorough discussion of the history of Native Americans in the late 19th century. A history that should disturb you, but hopefully illuminate any misinformation you’ve consumed throughout your years in American schooling.”

Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology: Incite (collective)

“The editors and contributors to Color of Violence ask: What would it take to end violence against women of color? Presenting the fierce and vital writing of organizers, lawyers, scholars, poets, and policy makers, Color of Violence radically repositions the antiviolenence movement by putting women of color at its center. The contributors shift the focus from domestic violence and sexual assault and map innovative strategies of movement building and resistance used by women of color around the world. The volume's thirty pieces—which include poems, short essays, position papers, letters, and personal reflections—cover violence against women of color in its myriad forms, manifestations, and settings, while identifying the links between gender, militarism, reproductive and economic violence, prisons and policing, colonialism, and war.”

Dear Martin: Nic Stone

Raw, captivating, and undeniably real, Nic Stone joins industry giants Jason Reynolds and Walter Dean Myers as she boldly tackles American race relations in this stunning New York Times bestselling debut, a William C. Morris Award Finalist.

Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpowers: Brittney Cooper

“Far too often, Black women’s anger has been caricatured into an ugly and destructive force that threatens the civility and social fabric of American democracy. But Cooper shows us that there is more to the story than that. Black women’s eloquent rage is what makes Serena Williams such a powerful tennis player. It’s what makes Beyoncé’s girl power anthems resonate so hard. It’s what makes Michelle Obama an icon.”

Heart Berries: A Memoir: Teresa Marie Mailhot

“It is no secret that colonialist structures put in place centuries ago still work to silence and psychically maim indigenous and First Nations Peoples, and with this memoir it is no longer something that happens in the back rooms of history”

How to be Less Stupid about Race: Crystal M. Fleming

“‘Not all white people.’ ‘All lives matter.’ ‘I don’t see color.’ These are statements that often mean well, but often derail a larger conversation that needs to be had. Fleming takes a no-BS approach to the ridiculous proverbs that plague common racial rhetoric.”

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption: Bryan Stevenson

“Every bit as moving as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and in some ways more so . . . a searing indictment of American criminal justice and a stirring testament to the salvation that fighting for the vulnerable sometimes yields.”—David Cole, *The New York Review of Books*

Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong: James W. Loewen

"The American education system fails so completely in historical study, and Loewen points it out in a scathing indictment. Not only does it isolate students of color, it romanticizes history and sets up American heroes as gods capable of no wrong."

Locus (poetry): Jason Bayani

"Weaving his way through the muddled recordings of history and personal memory, Bayani looks to tell a story of migrant bodies, the impermanence of home, and how one learns to find themselves in the transient states of the experienced and mythologized America." --
<https://www.omnidawn.com/product/locusjason-bayani/>

Men We Reaped: A Memoir: Jesmyn Ward

"In Jesmyn Ward's 2013 memoir she begins by telling us what she knows of her family's mixed lineage. She is black, Choctaw, Haitian, and white, born and raised in Mississippi. She wants us to know what and where she is so we can understand something she has witnessed. With the complexes of race and place set firmly in her reader's mind, she begins a slow recording of the tragic premature deaths of the men in her family."

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies: Resmaa Menakem

"*My Grandmother's Hands* is a call to action for all of us to recognize that racism is not about the head, but about the body, and introduces an alternative view of what we can do to grow beyond our entrenched racialized divide."

So You Want to Talk About Race: Ijeoma Oluo

"Oluo gives us--both white people and people of color--that language to engage in clear, constructive, and confident dialogue with each other about how to deal with racial prejudices and biases."
--*National Book Review*

Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth (poetry): Warsan Shire

"What elevates '*teaching my mother how to give birth*', what gives the poems their disturbing brilliance, is Warsan Shire's ability to give simple, beautiful eloquence to the veiled world where sensuality lives in the dominant narrative of Islam; reclaiming the more nuanced truths of earlier times"

The Book of Unknown Americans: Cristina Henríquez

"Here Henríquez seamlessly interweaves the story of these star-crossed lovers, and of the Rivera and Toro families, with the testimonials of men and women who have come to the United States from all over Latin America. *The Book of Unknown Americans* is a stunning novel of hopes and dreams, guilt and love—a book that offers a resonant new definition of what it means to be American."

The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority: Ellen D. Wu

"The Color of Success tells of the astonishing transformation of Asians in the United States from the 'yellow peril' to 'model minorities'—peoples distinct from the white majority but lauded as well-assimilated, upwardly mobile, and exemplars of traditional family values—in the middle decades of the twentieth century."

The Hidden Rules of Race: Barriers to an Inclusive Economy: Andrea Flynn, Susan R. Holmberg, Dorian T. Warren, and Felicia J. Wong

"When we talk about race and inequality in this country, it's typically in social terms, but the United States' economy is one of the biggest barriers to an equal and inclusive nation where black and white families are granted the same opportunities. At least, that is what *The Hidden Rules of Race* strives to prove by offering up concrete examples of the many ways in which unspoken rules of race and economics perpetuate inequality."

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks: Rebecca Skloot

"This is the true story of Henrietta Lacks, a poor black woman whose cells from cervical cancer have been used by scientists for developing advances in everything from cloning, gene mapping, cancer treatment and polio vaccines."

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration of the Age of Colorblindness: Michelle Alexander

"Arguably the most important parallel between mass incarceration and Jim Crow is that both have served to define the meaning and significance of race in America. Indeed, a primary function of any racial caste system is to define the meaning of race in its time. Slavery defined what it meant to be black (a slave), and Jim Crow defined what it meant to be black (a second-class citizen). Today mass incarceration defines the meaning of blackness in America: black people, especially black men, are criminals. That is what it means to be black."

The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex: Incite (collective)

"A trillion-dollar industry, the US non-profit sector is one of the world's largest economies. From art museums and university hospitals to think tanks and church charities, over 1.5 million organizations of staggering diversity share the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) designation, if little else. Many social justice organizations have joined this world, often blunting political goals to satisfy government and foundation mandates. But even as funding shrinks, many activists often find it difficult to imagine movement-building outside the non-profit model. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* gathers essays by radical activists, educators, and non-profit staff from around the globe who critically rethink the long-term consequences of what they call the 'non-profit industrial complex.'"

The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace: Jeff Hobbs

"This moving biography recounts the life of Robert Peace, a young man who escaped the streets of Newark, New Jersey, to attend Yale University — only to lose his life after graduating."

This Bridge Called My Back: Writing by Radical Women of Color: *Cherríe Moraga & Gloria Anzaldúa* (Eds)

“Originally released in 1981, *This Bridge Called My Back* is a testimony to women of color feminism as it emerged in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Through personal essays, criticism, interviews, testimonials, poetry, and visual art, the collection explores, as coeditor Cherríe Moraga writes, ‘the complex confluence of identities—race, class, gender, and sexuality—systemic to women of color oppression and liberation.’”

This is Muslim American Life: Dispatches from the War on Terror: Moustafa Bayoumi

“In this eye-opening book about fear, racism, paranoia, and surveillance, Moustafa Bayoumi offers an unflinching look at the culture of the War on Terror as experienced by Muslim Americans. A powerful blend of personal experience and academic research, this engaging collection of writing is an important and timely addition to the world of Muslim studies.”

Uprooting Racism: Paul Kivel

“Completely revised and updated, this fourth edition of *Uprooting Racism* offers a framework around neoliberalism and interpersonal, institutional, and cultural racism, along with stories of resistance and white solidarity. It provides practical tools and advice on how white people can work as allies for racial justice, engaging the reader through questions, exercises, and suggestions for action, and includes a wealth of information about specific cultural groups such as Muslims, people with mixed heritage, Native Americans, Jews, recent immigrants, Asian Americans, and Latino/as.”

Waking Up White: Debby Irving

“For twenty-five years, Debby Irving sensed inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships. Then, in 2009, one “aha!” moment launched an adventure of discovery and insight that drastically shifted her worldview and upended her life plan. In *Waking Up White*, Irving tells her often cringe-worthy story with such openness that readers will turn every page rooting for her—and ultimately for all of us.”

When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir: Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Asha Bandele, and Angela Davis

“A poetic and powerful memoir about what it means to be a Black woman in America—and the co-founding of a movement that demands justice for all in the land of the free.”

White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism: Robin DiAngelo

“In this ‘vital, necessary, and beautiful book’ (Michael Eric Dyson), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and ‘allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to “bad people”’ (Claudia Rankine)”

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?: And Other Conversations About Race: Beverly Daniel Tatum

“Walk into any racially mixed high school and you will see Black, White, and Latino youth clustered in their own groups. Is this self-segregation a problem to address or a coping strategy? Beverly Daniel Tatum, a renowned authority on the psychology of racism, argues that straight talk about our racial identities is essential if we are serious about enabling communication across racial and ethnic divides.”

*Unattributed book synopses are drawn from the book's amazon.com listing

List compiled from the following sources:

- Recommendations from representative community members
- <https://bookriot.com/2018/07/27/books-about-race/>
- <https://www.bustle.com/p/10-books-about-race-to-read-instead-of-asking-a-person-of-color-to-explain-things-to-you-8548796>
- <https://electricliterature.com/decolonize-your-bookshelf-with-these-books-by-native-american-writers/>
- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/16-books-about-race-that-every-white-person-should-read_n_565f37e8e4b08e945fedaf49