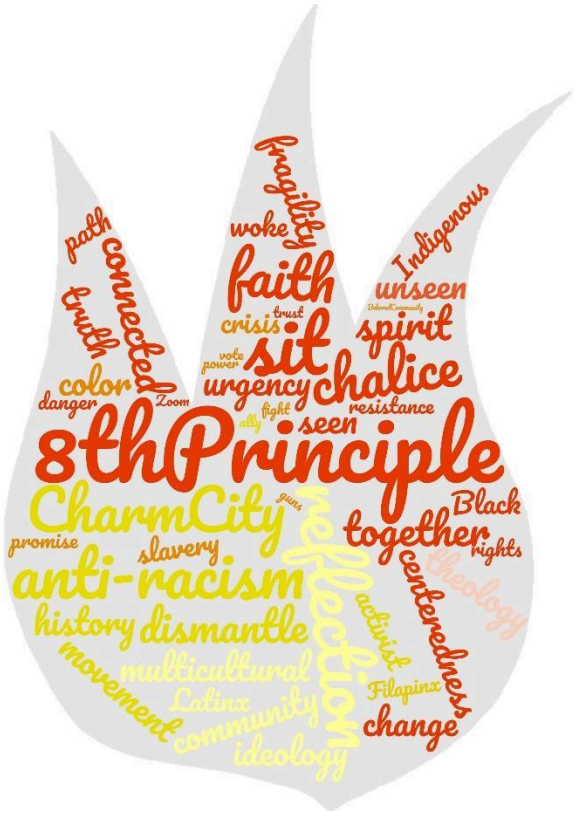
Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Be a Good Ancestor

First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
Common Read – Spring 2020

<u>Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, Be a Good Ancestor</u> by Layla Saad

It's not our differences that divide us. It's our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences **--Audre Lorde**

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. **--James Baldwin**



FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF BALTIMORE 200 CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF COMMITMENT & COMMUNITY

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Discussion Guide for On-line Common Read Study Group Discussion

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Paula Cole-Jones, founder of A Dialogue on Race & Ethnicity (ADORE), a former president of Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), Central East Regional Interim Congregational Life staff, and co-author, with Bruce Pollack-Johnson, of the 8th Principle for Unitarian Universalist Congregations, for inspiring my expanded understanding of the Beloved Community as an inter-dependent Community of Communities and for her spiritual grace.

Deepest gratitude to Melissa Feliciano for her wise and steady counsel, encouragement, and support and her always finding ways to make, what Rep. John Lewis called, 'good trouble' to make us better.

Very heartfelt thanksgiving to the Rev. Dr. Doreion Colter whose January 26, 2020 sermon on integrity served, in many ways, as a spiritual lightning bolt for this project when he declared from the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore on January 29, 2020, "Integrity . . . means that what you say and what you do match up."

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank the beloved people who *are* the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore. I'm grateful for each of you in ways that make me confident and hopeful even in this time of global pandemic. Thank you for the connections that sustain me.

I hope our shared experience with our Common Read, **Me and White Supremacy**, helps to guide us toward Beloved Community sustained by the spacious faith and love we have for one another. The courageous heart is one that is unafraid to open without armor, as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "using only the instruments of love." May it be so.

Gratefully,
Camille Loya
Chair. Adult RE Committee
First Unitarian Church of Baltimore

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Introduction

The Common Read, **Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor**, was originally developed by its author, Layla Saad, for personal self-reflection and it works well for that purpose. However, the book is also well-suited for group discussion and engagement. In fact, such group discussions are intended, at least in part, to contribute to deeper reflection and meaningful outcomes in our personal lives, in the life of our First Unitarian Church of Baltimore Congregation, and across our Unitarian Universalist Community of Communities.

This Discussion Guide is designed to be used to help us share and work through our Common Read virtually, via Zoom, in an imagined space 'sitting around a fire in a circle.' This feels right given the intention that our Common Read be a community dialogue, an opportunity for listening, for receiving another's experiences, and for reaching toward one another both within and across our Community of Communities in the spirit of love and reconciliation.

Chilean biologist turned philosopher Humberto Maturana wrote, in The Biology of Love that thousands of years ago humans developed language when we moved closer to one another. The closer we got, the more curious and expressive we became. So, in that spirit of moving closer to one another, one and all are invited to sit together as equals, slowed down and held together by the shape of the Circle in our minds.

The six (6) sessions scheduled for Sundays, 1:30pm to 3:30pm May 24, May 31, June 7, June 28, July 5, and July 12 for the discussion and study of **Me and White Supremacy** are intended to be lightly structured with the following offered as a suggested format—

1. **First 10-15 minutes: Check-in and Greeting**

The Check-in helps to ensure everyone is acknowledged and welcomed. It will open with the Facilitator. One simple opening could be— "Hello, my name is _____. I'm here today because _____." The check-in is complete when everyone in the group has checked in as part of the discussion circle.

2. **90 Minutes of Discussion Led by Session Facilitator**

Each of the six sessions will start with a summary of the part of the book that we'll be covering followed by open discussion and sharing of our experiences, feelings, and understandings. The Facilitator will use the Discussion Guide content summaries and open up discussion to the group. We will be mindful of allowing everyone opportunities to share throughout our time together.

3. Last 10-15 minutes: Check out and Farewell

Each of our six sessions will take the last 15 minutes or so, to allow opportunities for each person to share comments on what they learned, or what stayed in their heart and head, as the week's discussion concludes. This checking-out allows all who wish to reflect on the personal and shared take-aways from the book. It is also an opportunity to encourage and support one another in this difficult but important work.

How to Use This Guide

This Discussion Guide is designed with detailed summaries of each main section of the Book so that people can drop in as they are able without feeling as if they are behind and can't participate.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is noted the author of our Common Read primarily intended it as a workbook for those who people who hold white privilege or who benefit—even involuntarily—from white privilege. While this includes all white people, it may also apply to people of color who are perceived to benefit from systems of white supremacy; people who may be able to 'pass' for white because of appearance or other reasons. Nonetheless, the experience of white supremacy and racism for such people of color is different from those who are not and carries particular emotional burdens.

For this reason it is important as well as respectful not to call upon or pressure Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color to take the lead in the processing of white supremacy unless such Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color initiate it or take that work on voluntarily. While it is absolutely true that we 'are all in this together' in a larger sense, it is important to acknowledge and accept we experience day-to-day white supremacy, in a personal sense, from different places and are burdened by it differently and this needn't be a source of conflict or discomfort.

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Common Read Discussion Session 1

Book Content—

Part I: Welcome to The Work

What is White Supremacy?
Who Is This Work For?
What You Will Need To Do This Work
How to Use This Book
Self-care, Support, and Sustainability
Part II: The Work – White Privilege, White Fragility
The Basics
You and White Privilege
You and White Fragility

Summary of Session 1 Content:

The book opens with a forward by Robin DiAngelo, author of White Fragility, who states, based on her twenty-five years as a white anti-racist educator, that "white people don't really *want* to know what to do about racism if it will require anything of them that is inconvenient or uncomfortable." DiAngelo observes that white participants invariably ask at the end of her presentations, "What do I do?" She states her belief that asking such a question is one way white people bypass the personal work and reflection necessary to understand one's complicity in white supremacy. She ultimately offers, in answer to the question, "What do I do?" that people 'Work through this [Me and White Supremacy] book.'

Introducing Part I of the book, the author states it is organized as a twenty-eight day "journey to help you explore and unpack your relationship with white supremacy" and to "help people with white privilege understand and take ownership of their participation in the oppressive system of white supremacy . . . and to help them take responsibility for dismantling the way that this system manifests, both within themselves and within their communities." She also brings forward her motivations, as a Black woman, for her work—her desire to become a good ancestor by creating change, facilitating healing, and seeding new possibilities for future generations; in short, to "leave this world in a better place than you found it."

The author puts forward several related 'definitions' of white supremacy—

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- a racist ideology that is based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to people of other races and that therefore, white people should be dominant over other races.
- an ideology, a paradigm, an institutional system, and a worldview that you have been born into by virtue of your white privilege.
- historic and modern legislating, societal conditioning, and systemic institutionalizing of the construction of whiteness as inherently superior to people of other races.
- this idea that white equals better, superior, more worthy, more credible, more deserving, and more valuable
- a system that has granted you unearned privileges, protection, and power . . . a system that has been designed to keep you asleep and unaware of what having that privilege, protection, and power has meant for people who do not look like you.

In making explicit who the book is primarily directed toward, the author simply states—

> [t]his work is for any person who holds white privilege. By any person, I mean persons of any gender identify, including gender non-conforming persons, and by *who hold white privilege* I mean persons who are visually identifiable as white or who pass for white. Therefore, this includes persons who are biracial, multiracial, or white-passing People of Color who benefit under systems of white supremacy from having lighter skin color than visibly Brown, Black, or Indigenous people.

The book describes the three things needed to do this work—(1) your truth ("the more you tell the truth, the deeper this work takes you"), (2) your love ("you believe that every human being deserves dignity, freedom, and equality . . . love to you is not a verb but an action"), and (3) your commitment ("you have to decide what is going to be your anchor that keeps you committed to this work . . . a commitment to anti oppression . . . to your own healing . . . to being a better friend . . . to your own personal or spiritual values").

In providing suggestions for using this book, the author recommends keeping a journal; going at your own pace; avoiding generalizations; going through the book sequentially; after working through the book, going back to parts you are drawn to explore more deeply; work through the book alone and/or in a group; ask a lot of questions.

Ending Part I, the author encourages those doing this work to prioritize self-care to stay grounded and emotionally well; e.g., reaching out to others doing this work. It is also important to be self-compassionate and be the friend to yourself that you want to be to others. She also

importantly states with respect to any feelings of shame, anger, grief, anxiety, confusion, or apathy, "Don't run away from those feelings. Feeling the feelings—which are an appropriate human response to racism and oppression—is an important part of the process. When you allow yourself to feel those feelings, you wake up."

White Privilege

The term 'white privilege' was first used by Women's Studies scholar Peggy McIntosh in 1988 as—

> an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious . . . like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks.

White privilege is not part of the natural order of life but describes unearned advantages granted because of one's whiteness or ability to 'pass' as white. In the absence of white supremacy, white privilege is meaningless.

The author notes that white privilege is separate from, but can intersect with class privilege, gender privilege, sexuality privilege, age privilege, able-bodied privileged, or any of a number of other constructs of unearned advantage. Also, having white privilege does not cancel out one's other marginalized identities; e.g. one can be gay and still have white privilege, one can lack economic privilege but still have white privilege. In addition, when someone has white privilege combined with other privileged identities (e.g., cisgender male, able-bodied, wealthy) the amount of overall privilege and advantage is multiplied.

White Fragility

The author adopts the definition of 'white fragility' used by the author of the book, White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo as, "a state when even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves." She goes on to posit that the lack of exposure to conversations about the causes and implications of racism—one of the features of white privilege—has left people with such privilege ill-equipped to handle the discomfort of racial conversations. It is such discomfort that leads to white fragility.

The author wants readers and those doing this work to understand that the basis of white fragility is fear. However, when such fears lead to defensive moves those benefiting from white privilege are unreliable allies to Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color. The author states—

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"If you cannot talk about racism, especially about the ways in which you have been unintentionally complicit in racism, then you will never be able to go beyond a superficial understanding of racism."

Suggested Group Discussion Questions:

1. The author states the book is equal parts education—expansion of our intellectual and emotional understanding of racism and white supremacy—and activation—doing the work as an individual to dismantle white supremacy.
    - How do these twin purposes—education and activation—fit with UU's 7 established Principles as well as the 8th Principle— "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions"
    - Why is it insufficient to merely *imply* such an 8th Principle? Why would local UU congregational and UUA-wide commitments to dismantling white supremacy and racism need to be made explicit? Why would the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore wait to adopt the 8th Principle?

2. In what ways has the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic affected those with white privilege differently that those without such privilege? In what ways has white supremacy been brought to light through the federal, state, local, and corporate/business responses to the pandemic?
3. What are ways we can establish conditions for our engagement in uncomfortable conversations about race and white supremacy without centering white needs for comfort? In what ways might it be valuable to sit with uncomfortable feelings? Is it part of white privilege to be able to choose to be uncomfortable talking about the consequences of racism?
4. How can we help and empower youth to see, understand, and resist racism and white privilege?

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Common Read Discussion Session 2

Book Content—

Part II: The Work
You and Tone Policing
You and White Silence
You and White Superiority
White Exceptionalism
You and Color Blindness

Summary of Session 2 Content:

Tone Policing

The author defines 'tone policing' as a "tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who do not by focusing on the tone of what is being said rather than the actual content." Tone policing is not only a drain on the psyches of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), it is inhumane in the extreme by expecting BIPOC to talk about experienced pain of racism and white supremacy without *expressing* that pain, or the internalized rage or grief.

Tone policing is as aspect of white supremacy because it reinforces white supremacist norms of how BIPOC are supposed to show up in order to be heard. When BIPOC are not believed or are questioned, if not interrogated, about their experiences unless they speak in a tone that makes those with white privilege more comfortable, it is a claim by those with white privilege that white people's experiences are at the center and more superior, or at least take precedence over that of BIPOC.

White Silence

While tone policing is how those with white privilege silence BIPOC, 'white silence' is the flip side and describes one way the status quo of white supremacy is defended by those with white privilege: silent complicity when it comes to issues of white supremacy and race. It is there when family members, friends, or colleagues make racist jokes, comments, or judgments and those with white privilege stay silent. It is there when BIPOC colleagues at work are discriminated against while those with white privilege stay silent. It is there when those with white privilege refuse to show up to protest how BIPOC refugees are treated, or stay silent about anti-racism work for fear of losing friends or making others uncomfortable.

White silence is not benign nor neutral. Such silence is an overt method of self-protection for those with white privilege and is, therefore, also the protection of the dynamics of white

supremacy. It protects those with white privilege from having to deal with the harm of white supremacy. By keeping white supremacy from being challenged, it keeps it in place. When it does that, white silence is violence. It is violence because it actively protects white supremacy as a system of oppression. Even where spiritual spaces, work spaces, or social spaces are protected from overt individual acts of racism, covert and systemic racism is allowed to seep into the accepted culture of such spaces through white silence.

White silence is a silence that is, in fact, a loud message that one sides with white supremacy. It is a message, loud and clear to BIPOC, that they cannot be safe with you with their experiences of racism and white supremacy.

White Superiority

Directly propping up white supremacy is the belief that people with white skin or white-passing skin are better than and therefore deserve to dominate BIPOC. Such a belief is one of the foundational concepts of the system of white superiority.

The seeds of white superiority are planted at a very young age and not as a merely a relic of by-gone days. White people are seen as the standard, superior in all ways to BIPOC in terms of beauty, intellectual capacity, contributions, and value. White superiority is conveyed in the way history is presented, who is chosen as role models for children, who is presented as beautiful in popular media, how BIPOC are presented as exceptional when their accomplishments are not possible to deny.

White Exceptionalism

White exceptionalism is the belief and day-to-day reliance on being exempt from the effects, benefits, and conditioning of white supremacy so that anti-racism work does not really apply to you as "one of the good ones."

White exceptionalism is an issue, in particular, for white liberals who insist their progressive ideologies and 'movement work' separate them from the racism of the extreme right. It is the people with white privilege who insist they are an exception and are not an impediment to anti-racism work who carry white exceptionalism like a badge of honor. They say things like, "I voted for Obama so I'm not racist" but do not see that racism and white supremacy are their problem on a personal level. The individual acts of voting for a Black president or having relationships with BIPOC do not inoculate one against the benefits of white supremacy and, therefore, do not make one exempt from the work to dismantle it.

Just as white silence is violence, white exceptionalism where it blinds one to their complicity in white supremacy, makes those with white privilege dangerous to BIPOC. People who believe

they are exceptional, not part of the problem, will not do the work and will continue to do harm even if such harm is unintentional. As the author states, "[t]he moment you begin to think you are exceptional is the moment you begin to relax back into the warm and familiar comfort of white supremacy."

Color Blindness

The idea or belief that you, personally, do not 'see' color or race is color blindness. Both nonsensical and dismissing of difference, color blindness suggests that if we could all just stop seeing race, then racism would go away. Such perspective—acting as if the social construct of race has no actual consequences—denies the reality of those who benefit from white privilege and those who do not. White supremacy does not go away because you refuse to see it.

When it comes to racial color blindness, what begins as a seemingly noble purpose (going beyond the idea of race) quickly reveals itself as a magic trick designed to absolve people with white privilege from having to own their complicity in upholding white supremacy. When you say "I don't see color" to a BIPOC, you are saying, "Who you are does not matter, and I do not see you for who you are. I am choosing to minimize and erase the impact of your skin color, your hair pattern, your accent or other languages, your cultural practices, and your spiritual traditions as a BIPOC existing within white supremacy."

Finally, color blindness is a way to avoid not only looking at other's races, but to avoid looking at your own. Often, white people see themselves as 'normal' or the standard with everyone else being a race or being other. The consequence is they fail to investigate how the idea of color blindness protects them from having to reflect on what it means to be white in a white supremacist society.

Suggested Group Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways have conversations in our church spaces about race or about conflicts regarding race been derailed by focusing on *how* someone said something (too loud, aggressive, angry) rather than *what* they said?
2. It is true that the spiritual space of our Church is free of overt symbols and acts of racism and white supremacy. However, in what ways covert or systemic white supremacy allowed to take the center and seep into the accepted culture of our Church?
    - In what ways is white supremacy *ever* discussed in our spiritual spaces?

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- What do we think about our use of symbols, stories, and music from African, African-American, Hindu, and other non-white European cultures without actually inviting or hearing from people who are African, African-American, Hindu, or from other non-white European cultures about what such symbols, stories, or music mean for them?

3. How do you know that BIPOC in the Congregation feel they can 'show up' fully within the Congregation and feel seen?
4. When BIPOC talk about their experience(s) of racism with you, do you seek a parallel experience in your own life instead of staying focused on *their* experience(s) when it/they is/are different from your own?
    - How may making parallels from your experience(s) be experienced by BIPOC as erasing their experience(s) and centering yourself?
5. How does the use of coded language, such as "urban," "inner city," and "minorities," and "diversity" help maintain the white superiority?

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Common Read Discussion Session 3

Book Content—

Part II: The Work
You and Anti-Blackness Against Black Women
You and Anti-Blackness Against Black Men
You and Anti-Blackness Against Black Children
You and Racist Stereotypes
You and Cultural Appropriation

Summary of Session 3 Book Content:

Anti-Blackness Against Black Women

The author introduces this section with a recounting of actress Viola Davis' public observation about being a Black woman in Hollywood and her experience of the lack of representation on one hand and the stereotyping of Black women on the other. She points out that such issues exist for Black women across all industries and spaces.

Black women are represented in ways that categorize them into specific stereotypes that deny them of their humanity and individuality. Melissa Harris-Perry lays out some of the core stereotypes of Black women in America—Strong Black Woman (so strong as to be able to survive anything and not need comfort), Jezebel (sexually voracious woman positioned as the opposite of a proper woman), Sapphire (from the 1930s *Amos 'n' Andy*, domineering woman who usurps her role and consumes men; related to Angry Black Woman), and Mammy (good-natured, often overweight, and loud, overtly servile or protective of the interests of whites). The author notes these stereotypes originate in a distorted and violent American history, but that Black women around the world experience the "white gaze" of being seen as angry, strong, aggressive, and wild, as well as not being intelligent and less beautiful than other women. White people persist in seeing Black women as either the aggressive adversary, the sassy sidekick, or the deferent devotee to white women, but never unique complex women.

The stereotypes and myths about Black women lead to mistreatment, abuse, and even death while also constricting Black women's sense of individuality and worthiness. When Black women are perceived as strong and less worthy, they are denied what white women can expect as a matter of course. As the author quotes Harris-Perry, "Therapists are less likely to perceive a Black woman as sad; instead they see her as angry or anxious."

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The author posits that the empowerment of Black women is one of the biggest threats to white supremacy and states signs that one harbors anti-Blackness toward Black women include feelings like you can't relate to Black women, assuming Black women are less capable than you or less educated.

Anti-Blackness Against Black Men

Like Black women, Black men are trapped in one-dimensional images of what and who they are supposed to be and this stems, again, from America's violent history with African people stripping them of their humanity. Black men are stereotyped as unintelligent and sexually aggressive toward white women in what the author states is propaganda disseminated to justify the violent treatment and death of Black men. This propaganda message still lives in the white psyche and is not something of the past. Electing Barack Obama did nothing to change this. The abusive relationship of Black men, along with other Black people, and the justice system is enabled by white people who call the police on Black men (and other Black people) for simply existing or being where they "don't belong."

Another stereotype, common in films, is the myth of the *magical negro*, a Black character in a supporting role whose function is to come to the aid of the white protagonist aided by mystical powers and special insights. Such stereotype makes such Black characters disposable, existing only to selflessly soothe and serve white people.

Anti-Blackness against Black men is key to upholding the white supremacist view of Black men as violent, animal-like savages and brutes who are less intelligent than their white counterparts and who pose a threat to white womanhood and to society at-large OR the view of Black men as disposable mystical supporting characters with special magical powers. Either way, Black men are denied their own uniqueness, individuality, and agency as multi-dimensional, complex human beings.

Anti-Blackness Against Black Children

Here the author describes how Black children, boys and girls, experience "adultification," the experience of being seen and treated as thought they are older than they actually are. With respect to boys, they are seen "as older and less innocent and . . . they prompt a less essential conception of childhood than do their White same-age peers" with predictable rates of police violence against Black boys who, from the age of ten are "perceived as older and more likely to be guilty than their white peers [making] police violence against them more justified." The author uses the example of Tamir Rice and Trayvon Martin who were killed because they were not seen as children, but feared as Black men who could do harm to anyone at any moment.

Black girls experience of "adultification" is distinct from that of boys but no less harmful. Data from the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality shows that adults view Black girls as less innocent and more adult-like than their white peers and that, compared to white girls of the same age, Black girls were perceived to need less nurturing, need less protection, need less support, be more independent, know more about adult topics, and know more about sex. The perception that Black girls are less innocent contributes to harsher punishments by educators and school resource officers for the same behaviors as white girls. This perception also translates into fewer leadership and mentorship opportunities in schools for Black girls. From an early age, Black children—boys and girls—are treated with less care and more suspicion than their white counterparts, meaning that throughout their lives, Black people are treated as inferior and worthy of racism in thought and action.

Racist Stereotypes

White supremacy has not just hurt and killed Black people through systematic anti-Blackness, it has also hurt and killed Indigenous peoples and other People of Color. This is done, in part, through damaging stereotypes about all groups of people who are not white. It is damaging by the way white supremacy maintains nonwhite people as "other" and the ones who should be feared, criminalized, ridiculed, dehumanized, and caged.

It is important to clarify the difference between prejudice and racism. All people, regardless of race, can prejudge a person who is not the same race as they are based on negative racial stereotypes and other factors. Such prejudice is wrong and can be hurtful, but it is not the same as racism. Racism is the combination of prejudice with power where the dominant racial group is able to dominate over all other racial groups and negatively affect those racial groups at all levels—personally, systematically, and institutionally. Understanding this distinction—Prejudice + Power--enables us to see that a BIPOC can hold prejudice against a white person, but they cannot be racist toward a white person. They do not have the power, coming from white privilege nor the backing of a system of oppression (white supremacy) to be able to turn that prejudice into domination and punishment in a way that a white person is able to.

Even recognizing BIPOC, while helpful in terms of language, can dilute the nuanced experiences that different racial groups have when it comes to white supremacy. When the umbrella term BIPOC or POC is used, we are essentially grouping people from all kinds of cultures and racial experiences into one category that flattens their experiences and gives the wrong impression that they all experience white supremacy in the same way, which they do not.

The author explains she chose to cover anti-Blackness separately from Indigenous and other People of Color because Black people also experience anti-Blackness from these groups even

though all these non-white groups have abusive experiences with white supremacy. She encourages readers to break down the experiences of different POC racial groups because they experience white supremacy in different ways.

Several things should be kept in mind as one looks at racial stereotypes with respect to Asian people, Latinx people, Indigenous people, Arab people, and biracial and multiracial people.

- Each group covers many countries and nations with their own rich and complex history both with white supremacy and with one another.
- Religions are not races, but racial groups often experience religious prejudice and discrimination associated with certain racial groups.
- One can belong to a group that experiences racial stereotypes and oppression while still holding white privilege or white passing privilege.
- Colorism is important to keep in mind where darker-skinned people often experience more racism than lighter-skinned people.
- Just because a stereotype seems positive does not mean it is not harmful as when they rob people of their individuality and erase the impact of colonization.

Racist stereotypes pertaining to non-white racial groups reinforce the idea that those who do not hold white privilege should not be given that privilege because they are other, inferior, and a threat to white civilization and superior ways of life. Racist stereotypes are used by politicians, policy makers, the media, and by those who hold white privilege to justify why certain groups of people should be treated they way they are. Even if subconsciously the beliefs that Indigenous people are primitive, Arabs are terrorists, or Latinx people are drug dealers, props up white supremacy and it then makes sense that they face the kind of treatment they do by the educational system, the justice system, the health-care system, the immigration system, the employment sector, etc.

<u>Cultural Appropriation</u>

Cultural appropriation is a facet of white supremacy and can include the appropriation of another culture's objects, symbols, rituals, artifacts, motifs, and other cultural elements. Because of advancements in technology, travel, and the widespread use of the internet and social media more and more of us are culturally connected. In addition, one person of a racial group can think

something is culturally appropriative while another person from the same group may disagree and consider it culturally appreciative. This makes it difficult to classify what is and is not cultural appropriation.

Writer Ijeoma Oluo defines cultural appropriation as "the adoption or exploitation of another culture by a more dominant culture." The first and most important thing to understand is cultural appropriation occurs between a dominant and a marginalized culture. In considering cultural appropriation in the context of white supremacy, it is important to recognize that those who hold white privilege always belong to the dominant culture. Cultural appropriation is <u>not</u> the same thing as cultural sharing and arguments that it is are flawed because of—

- Color blindness. The argument that we should act like one giant human culture who share everything would work if not for racism and the existence of tangible and intangible white privilege.
- Anti-Blackness. Anti-Blackness is not a thing of the past and it continues to marginalize and harm Black people around the world.
- Racist stereotypes. Racist stereotypes continue to cause marginalization, loss or denial of opportunities, erasure, suspicion, and ridicule.

Taking the above into consideration, it is very difficult to credit that white supremacy appreciates or freely exchanges with a culture it has historically oppressed and toward which thoughts and actions of superiority are held. In addition, often, cultural appropriation is a form of tokenizing or eroticizing while continuing to discard and dehumanize the actual people of that culture. Often, the cultural elements that are appropriated are stripped of their original cultural context, meaning, and significance and used in such a way as to serve whiteness. There are ways to appreciate other cultures that are respectful and honoring but that involves asking deeper questions related to history, stereotypes, and distribution of compensation for the taking of cultural elements.

What is harmful in acts of cultural appropriation is not the desire to share in a culture different from one's own. Instead, it is the power dynamic between the dominant and non-dominant cultures. White supremacist ideology is upheld by cultural appropriation by the message that white people can take what they pick and choose from BIPOC without consequence and that when a person with white privilege adopts something from a BIPOC culture, they are enhanced by adopting something exotic. The bottom line is that cultural appropriation is collecting the parts of Blackness and Brownness that appeal to whiteness while discarding actual Black and Brown people. Cultural appropriation rewrites history with whiteness at the center.

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Suggested Group Discussion Questions

1. Melissa Harris-Perry writes that respondents in Chicago and New York-based focus groups of Black women under thirty-five discussed how they described themselves: kind, giving, generous, friendly, helpful, dependable, good-hearted, sociable, cheerful. However, when asked to describe how others saw them, a very different picture emerged. They reported others saw them as mouthy, aggressive, loud, strong, bossy, and sassy. These women believed others saw them as considerably harsher and more aggressive than they saw themselves.

    - What kind of toll do you think it takes on Black women to deal with stereotypical expectations that others have of them? To feel pressured to calibrate their directness and to minimize their accomplishments and success to make others more comfortable? To have to address negative expectations and 'shift' who they are in order to counter perceptions that they're too aggressive, direct, or angry?
    - What can you do to call out generalized, racist stereotypes of Black women?

2. With your friendships with Black women and Black men, have you ever tried to explain that how they were or are treated isn't really racism, but something else, something related to some individual characteristic of themselves?

3. Considering the racial makeup of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore or Unitarian Universalism generally, what are some things you can do to improve the day-to-day relevance of Unitarian Universalism for Black women, for Black men, and for Black children?

4. Have you ever thought (in the privacy of your own mind) or made statements like the following to a Black person either in Baltimore or elsewhere—

    - "Why do you have to be so loud/animated?"
    - "Why do you have to be so angry?"
    - "Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."
    - "When I look at you, I don't see color. I just see you."
    - "I've tried to hire Black people, but none ever apply."

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Have you ever—

- Mistaken a Black person in a store for a service worker?
- Not smiled or greeted Black folks on the street?
- Not come directly to a Black co-worker with difficult conversations or hard feedback because you're afraid to be called a racist?
- Expected Black co-workers or other colleagues to do the hard work of bringing up or addressing discrimination and racism in the workplace or Church when it arises?
- Expected or nominating Black folks to do the "diversity" work: to sit on committees, and to take on "diversity" work in addition to other work they do?

5. Have you spent as much time—or any time—thinking about and being concerned about Black children, Latino children, Asian-American children who live in Baltimore as you do thinking about and being concerned about immigrant children from other countries? Is there any problem with that?

6. When a reading, poem, song, or other element from a non-white culture is used in a First Unitarian Church of Baltimore service or event, is its significance filling a hunger (for "sacredness," for "meaning") while we discard or ignore individual people in our Congregation or in our city from those non-white cultures?

    - Is it a problem to "shop" from cultures in this way? If not, why not?
    - Are there ways to seek direction from the cultures we're using or from someone of that community?

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Common Read Discussion Session 4

Book Content—

Part II: The Work
You and White Apathy
You and White Centering
You and Tokenism
You and White Saviorism
You and Optical Allyship
You and Being Called Out/Called In

Summary of Session 4 Book Content:

White Apathy

White apathy is a self-preservation response to protect oneself from having to face their complicity in the oppression that is white supremacy. Unlike white silence, white apathy is not neutral. Intentional non-action is just as dangerous as intentional acts of racism. White apathy lacks aggression, but it is deadly in its passivity. Through detachment and indifference to racial harm, white apathy says, "It's sad this is happening, but it's not my problem." In its essence, white apathy tries to enforce the idea that white supremacy is a problem inherent to BIPOC and not a problem created and maintained by people with white privilege.

Dismantling white supremacy is not a charitable cause. It is a system of oppression that confers unearned advantages and privileges to one group of people at the expense of other groups of people. White apathy is a choice to stay in the comfort of white supremacy and the privilege it affords. It is an important component that keeps white supremacy in place as the status quo. There is no personal gain for people with white privilege to do the work of dismantling white supremacy and a lot to lose in terms of privilege and unearned power. White apathy results from deciding not to involve oneself in the dismantling of a system that benefits white people at the expense of all others.

To fight against one's white apathy is to fight against white supremacy. It is to resist staying detached, retreating into silence, avoiding responsibility, or making excuses.

White Centering

White centering begins with the premise that white is normal and nonwhite is 'other' and is the idea that when a creation or event features mainly white people, it is for everyone, but if it features mainly BIPOC, it is only relevant to BIPOC.

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White centering is the centering of white people, white values, white norms, and white feelings over everything and everyone else. White centering is the natural consequence of white supremacy. If one believes one is superior, then one will unconsciously believe that one's worldview is the one that is superior, normal, right, and what deserves to be at the center. White centering dismisses all other narratives as less important and less relevant compared to white narratives.

The author points to an interview with Toni Morrison in which Morrison explains that white writers like Leo Tolstoy also wrote about race but that because "white is not seen as a race, nobody ever questions when white writers will write outside of whiteness" even where she and other Black writers are asked again and again, "When are you going to write books that are not about race?"

White centering is like an invisible net holding up white supremacy. While it is easy to see and point out the active racist who uses racial slurs, it is almost impossible to see the everyday racism that marginalizes and erases BIPOC through white centering. White centering is so normal that it barely registers as something that needs to be interrupted or disrupted and that is why it is such a dangerous part of white supremacy.

Tokenism

The author defines tokenism, in the case of white supremacy, as using BIPOC as props or meaningless symbols to make it look like antiracism is being practiced while continuing to maintain the status quo of white as the dominant norm. Tokenism is not merely a tactic to maintain white supremacy, it is something that individuals with white privilege use to prove their white exceptionalism and status as non-racists.

There are four primary types of tokenism—

1. Brand Tokenism. This describes when predominantly white organizations or events engage a few token BIPOC or who use BIPOC cultural elements to give the visual effect of diversity without being actually committed to inclusion or antiracism in practice or policy.
2. Storytelling Tokenism. This is when BIPOC characters are used to give the visual look of diversity or to supplement white main characters. This is seen in movies, on television, and in books. BIPOC characters' roles and storylines are often underdeveloped and lacking in nuance.

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3. Emotional labor Tokenism. This describes when people with white privilege place burdens on token BIPOC to carry the emotional labor of discussing and working on matters related to racism and, therefore, reducing them to their race.
4. Relational Tokenism. When a person with white privilege uses their proximity to and relationships with BIPOC as proof they are not racist, that is an example of relational tokenism.

All forms of tokenism use BIPOC as props to prove one's non racism. It dehumanizes BIPOC and treats BIPOC people as 'get-out-of-racism free cards." It is particularly insidious when used against another BIPOC because it weaponizes one BIPOC against another. Tokenism is a white supremacist act because it places BIPOC as objects and it protects people with white privilege from having to do the work of disrupting white dominance.

White Saviorism

White saviorism is the belief that people with white privilege, who see themselves as superior in capability and intelligence, have an obligation to 'save' BIPOC from their supposed inferiority and helplessness. This is exemplified in what writer Teju Cole has called the 'White Savior Industrial Complex;' the phenomenon of well-intentioned white missionaries and volunteers to 'rescue' BIPOC from their country's poverty and lack of development. Little regard is paid to understanding the historical background and cultural contexts they are entering.

White saviorism involves white centering with those with white privilege believing that just through their presence and their privilege, they have what it takes to rescue BIPOC from the very nuanced and complex issues they are faced with.

White saviorism can look benign on the surface, but it is another form of white supremacy. It puts BIPOC in the patronizing position of helpless children who need people with white privilege to save them. White saviorism is condescending and only serves to empower people with white privilege by making them feel better about themselves.

Optical Allyship

Optical allyship, or performative allyship is "allyship that only serves at the surface level to platform the ally. It makes a statement but doesn't go beneath the surface and is not aimed at breaking away from the systems of power that oppress." Such allyship involves no real risk to those with white privilege. It is performed from the safety of one's comfort zone of privilege.

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Among the examples of optical allyship are—

- Clinging to symbols like pink hats, safety pins, and hashtags over doing real work
- Reposting antiracism posts so everyone knows you are an ally but not doing more work beyond that
- Jumping into activism without doing any real self-reflection on one's personal racism.

Like tokenism and white saviorism, optical allyship is all about the person with white privilege and not the BIPOC it is intended to support. It is another form of white centering.

Being Called Out/Called In

Call outs and call ins are both methods of calling attention to problematic, harmful, and oppressive behaviors with the ultimate aim being changed behavior and the making of amends. A 'call out' refers to publicly naming instances or patterns of oppressive behavior and language used by others. A 'call in' refers to speaking privately with an individual who has done some wrong in order to address the behavior without making a spectacle of the address itself. The author focuses not on whether it is better to call out or call in, but on the reaction of those with white privilege to being called out or called in.

People with white privilege often cause more harm when being called out/in because their white fragility causes them not to receive the feedback necessary to listen, apologize, and do better going forward. Believing one is under attack, it is normal to want to stand up and defend oneself. Our brains react quickly and automatically with a fight-or-flight response. However, these feelings are exacerbated during racial conversations because of the existence of white fragility, white superiority, white exceptionalism, etc.

Calls out/in never feel good, but they are an invitation to become aware of behaviors and beliefs that are hidden and they are an opportunity to do better so that one can stop doing harm and make amends for the pain caused, even if it is unintentional. It is understood that the impact is still that harm was caused and it is the *impact* that matters more than our *intention*. When we talk about being called out or called in, a common reaction by people with white privilege is to focus on their intention rather than their impact on BIPOC. This is a form of white centering which prioritizes how a person of privilege feels about being called out/in versus the actual pain that BIPOC experience as a result of that person's actions, whether intentional or not.

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Suggested Group Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important NOT to make white supremacy a problem for BIPOC to work on dismantling, rather than a problem for white people to address?
2. Do you ever feel that discussions about race and anti-racism work are too hard or that it's optional work?
3. In what ways might you have looked at one or another BIPOC and thought it was ok to think of them as 'representing' all BIPOC and all BIPOC views and perspectives?
4. How is white centering apparent in the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore and in the Unitarian Universalist Association?
    - How might the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore do the work of de-centering the white experience, history, thoughts, and feelings and open up to *more* experiences, histories, thinking, and feelings?
5. If you have ever seen the movies *Glory*, *Mississippi Burning*, *Dances with Wolves*, *Last Samurai*, *The Revenant*, *The Great Wall, Lincoln*, or *Django* and noticed how they exemplify the white savior trope where a well-intentioned, kind-hearted, and good white person comes and save people of color who are desperate for saving? Why do you think these movies are still being made? Why is there an appetite for them?
6. Do you think public school curriculums put too much focus on Western European societies and cultures given the demographics of the United States, of Baltimore?
7. It is easy or hard to understand that 'ally' is not a self-proclaimed identity, that one we cannot decide we are an 'ally,' and that in the context of anti-racism work only BIPOC can determine that someone is an ally?
8. "Allies Don't Take Breaks Because Oppression is Constant"—how does that statement make you feel?
    - In the end, part of the privilege of white identity is that you have a choice about whether or not take a break from anti-racism work. Do you sometimes retreat into your privilege because you can and you sometimes get tired?

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Common Read Discussion Session 5

Content—

Part II: The Work
You and White Feminism
You and White Leaders
You and Your Friends and Family
You and Your Values
You and Losing Privilege
You and Your Commitments

Summary of Session 5 Book Content:

White Feminism

The author broadly defines 'white feminism' as "an epithet used to describe feminist theories that focus on the struggles of white women (usually cis-gendered) without addressing distinct forms of oppression faced by ethnic minority women and women lacking other privileges." It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender, and it does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections that are just as important, including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and so on.

White women, either explicitly or otherwise, will ask BIPOC to set aside their race and issues with racism to, instead, band together in sisterhood under the issues of gender and sexism first. This ignores two essential points:

1. White women have white privilege and do not have to consider the implications of race. Race is an identity where white women hold power. To ask BIPOC to set aside their race is to ask a BIPOC to act as if they are white.

2. To ask BIPOC to focus on sex or gender before race is to ask them to put their different and simultaneous identities in a hierarchical order. That is not possible. Women of Color experience oppression and discrimination because of *both* race and gender. The privilege of whiteness means only seeing yourself as a woman (if that is your gender identity) because due to white centering, you see yourself as 'raceless.'

Historically, the western feminist movement has marginalized BIPOC from its inception. Today white feminism and the divide between white women and BIWOC remains. Just as white

supremacy thrives today despite the granting of civil rights, mainstream feminism continues to marginalize BIWOC. This is difficult for white women to accept, but white women have all the privileges and power that comes with their race.

White Leaders

White supremacist thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors are within individuals but they also play out in relationships with other people with white privilege. White leaders are people with white privilege in positions of leadership, authority, and power. These include public figures, authors, teachers, worship leaders, politicians, and others including yourself if you are in a leadership position.

Your Friends and Family

The author invites the readers to cast their view out to all friendship and acquaintance circles; coworkers, peers, fellow worshippers, family friends. Because of your proximity to and relationships with these people, your have an even greater possibility of being able to influence these friends and acquaintances to engage in conscious antiracism practice or not. Similarly, if you practice white silence and white apathy, you influence them to do the same.

Everyone has complex family dynamics and bringing race and racism into these dynamics is a lot more complicated than with your friends or acquaintances. However, BIPOC have complicated family dynamics too plus having to deal with racism and white supremacy. Your family is, potentially, where you hold a great deal of influence. It is, also, the place where you most likely learned about white privilege and white supremacy although no one called it that. You are in a powerful position to help your family members expand and deepen their own antiracism knowledge and practice based on your (hopefully) more nuanced understanding of how people with white privilege are also complicit in white supremacy.

Your Values

Dismantling white supremacy is lifelong work and it is important to stay committed to the work beyond just getting through this book. Our values are the principles and standards that guide how we live our lives and where we choose to put our energy. They are our personal set of beliefs that determine our actions and what is important to us in life.

Owning white privilege and being conditioned within white supremacy means that one of the values you likely and understandably have is about white superiority, the idea that as a person with white privilege, you are more worthy and deserve to take up more space and resources than BIPOC. At the same time, you may have chosen values that say you believe all people are equal

and deserve to be treated equally. These two sets of values are at odds with one another and cause you to act in ways that contradict who you think you are and what you believe you value.

One thing to be mindful of and careful with is clinging to the idea of the "good white person" because it does more harm than good because it prevents you from doing the real and hard work. When you are so focused on making sure that other people know that you are not racist, you simply continue to practice racism through behaviors like white exceptionalism, tokenism, optical allyship, and white saviorism. Release the desire to be *seen* as good by other people and instead explore what it is to own that you are a person who is committed to practicing anti-racism.

Losing Privilege

Over the course of working through the book, you have explored what white privilege means in ways you probably never have done before and seen how such privilege harms BIPOC. In order for change to happen, you have realized you must lose some of that privilege. This does not mean "using your privilege for good" in some white savior super ally kind of way. This is not about rescuing or saving BIPOC by becoming a "voice for the voiceless." Instead it is about you being willing to let go of the privileges, advantages, and comforts you have so that BIPOC can have more dignity in their lives.

Being willing to lose your white privilege looks like—

- Having racial conversations with other white people, whether in person or online
- Taking responsibility for your own antiracist education with the free and the paid resources already available instead of expecting BIPOC to do that work for you
- Taking up less space and allowing BIPOC to take up more space so that they can be heard and their leadership followed
- Risking relationships and comfort by speaking up instead of staying silent
- Amplifying BIPOC voices
- Paying money to more BIPOC businesses, entrepreneurial ventures, and projects
- Calling out/in leaders, organizations, and institutions that are discriminating against and doing harm to BIPOC
- Continuing to show up, even when you are called out, you feel discomfort or fatigue, or you are not rewarded for it socially or financially

Your Commitments

When our perceptions have been expanded to see things we have never seen or acknowledged before, it is normal to want to re-create a feeling of stability and certainty by finding some clear

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and solid answer. Understanding the burden of white privilege and what it means to be personally complicit in the system of white supremacy is a lot to hold. It is hard to hold.

Holding that burden and being able to be with that truth is an important part of the work that people with white privilege must do. At the same time BIPOC have been holding the burden of what it feels like to be oppressed and marginalized. The devastation, anger, and confusion you are feeling is part of the work and without those feelings, nothing changes because there is no reason to heal what does not feel broken. The author appeals to the reader not to turn away from the pain but to allow it to break your heart open.

Superficial attempts to heal racism—color blindness, tokenism, etc.—protect you from having to feel this pain. There is no safety in this work but this inner work is truth work. There simply is no clean, comfortable, or convenient way to dismantle a violent system of oppression.

What you have learned can no longer be hidden from you. You cannot go back to sleep. You cannot unsee and unknow what you now see and know. The question now is how are you going to stay committed onward? All the learning in the world does not mean anything if it is not followed by committed actions for change. You can pledge commitments and take actions on those commitments. You can re-pledge daily and take actions daily. Antiracism is not about perfectionism. It is about the intention to help create change met with the consistent commitment to keep learning, to keep showing up, and to keep doing what is necessary so that BIPOC can live with dignity and equality.

Suggested Group Discussion Questions:

1. What actions can you take when white leaders in the neighborhood, the state, the federal government, the Church insist on centering whiteness, use racial stereotypes, practice cultural appropriation, or present as optical allies only?

2. Are there people you are more comfortable talking about racism or the work to dismantle racism than other people? Why?

3. Have you made any efforts to invite friends, acquaintances, or family into doing antiracism work with you?

4. If you are a parent or a mentor, how do you think you could speak with children about racism?

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Common Read Discussion Session 6

Now What?

1. What three concrete actions are you committed to take, as an individual, in the next 2-3 weeks toward antiracism? What will help make you accountable to keep moving forward?
2. What three concrete actions are you committed to lead or join collectively within the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore to do antiracism work?
3. Do you believe the following? If so, are you committed to making the world over, starting from where you are?

> Whiteness is an advantage and a privilege because you have made it so, not because the universe demands it. –Michael Eric Dyson, *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America*

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SELECT RESOURCES

Unitarian Universalist-Specific

Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry by Rev. Mitra Rahnema, Skinner House Books (2017)

Unitarian Universalists of Color: Stories of Struggle, Courage, Love, and Faith edited by Yuri Yamamoto, Chandra Snell, and Tim Hanami, Lulu Publishing Services (2017)

"The Ware Lecture (video and discussion guide)" by Brittany Packnett at UUA 2018 General Assembly
Talk on the impacts of racism and white supremacy culture within our UU faith
https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/blog/packnett-discussion-guide

"The Wilderness Journey" video https://youtu.be/LK86pRn3b-4
One compilation of views on the struggle for black empowerment and racial justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association 1967-1970.

Unitarian Universalist 8th Principle

"The 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism"
https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Berks County (PA)
https://uuberks.org/2020/02/07/the-8th-principle/ and
https://uuberks.org/2020/04/30/adore-a-dialog-on-racism-and-ethnicity-virtual-listening-cafe/#comment-1000

Intersectionality

TED Talk by Kimberle Crenshaw who originated the term and concept of 'intersectionality'
https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en#t-268925

"The Intersectionality Wars" by Jane Coaston,
https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/5/20/18542843/intersectionality-conservatism-law-race-gender-discrimination

The Operation of White Privilege and Racism

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"What is White Privilege, Anyway?" by Cory Collins, Fall 2018 (Teaching Tolerance)
https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/coic_talk_race_uua_112017.pdf

White Privilege: Let's Talk- A Resource for Transformational Dialogue
An Adult Curriculum from the United Church of Christ
http://privilege.uccpages.org/

"Understanding White Privilege" by Francis E. Kendall
https://www.cpt.org/files/Undoing%20Racism%20-%20Understanding%20White%20Privilege%20-%20Kendall.pdf

"An Open Letter to White Men in America" by John C. Dorhauer, Minister and President of the United Church of Christ (2015)
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/an-open-letter-to-white-m_b_7857790

"Ten Equity Implications of the Coronavirus COVID-19 Outbreak in the United States: The Imperative for Civil Rights, Advocacy, Monitoring, and Enforcement" NAACP
https://naacp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Ten-Equity-Considerations-of-the-Coronavirus-COVID-19-Outbreak-in-the-United-States_Version-2.pdf

Books

Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed The Movement edited by Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, Kendall Thomas, The New Press (1995) ***Academic deep dive***

Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism by Derrick Bell, Basic Books (1992)

How to Be Less Stupid About Race by Crystal M. Fleming, Beacon Press (2019)

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown, Convergent Books (2018)

Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America by Melissa V. Harris-Perry, Yale University Press (2011)

Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde, The Crossing Press (1984)

The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. Du Bois, Fine Creative Media (1903)

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Shifting: The Double Lives of Black Women in America by Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter-Gooden, Harper Collins (2003)

Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America by Michael Eric Dyson, St. Martin's Press (2017)

Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria by Beverly Daniel Tatum, Basic Books (2017)

Books for Parents About Race

"How White Parents Should Talk To Their Young Kids About Race" by Melinda Wenner Moyer http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/the_kids/2014/03/teaching_tolerance_how_white_parents_should_talk_to_their_kids_about_race.html

"What White Children Need to Know About Race" by Ali Michael and Eleonora Bartoli http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/What-White-Children-Need-to-Know-About-Race.aspx

Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Children in a Racially Unjust America by Jennifer Harvey Abingdon Press (2018)

40 Ways to Raise a Nonracist Child by Barbara Mathias & Mary Ann French, William Morrow (1996)

Books for Children and Adolescents About Race

Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice by Marianne Celano, Magination Press (2018) ***4-8 years old***

Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness by Anastasia Higginbotham, Dottir Press (2018) ***8-12 years of age***

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas, Balzer and Bray, (2017) ***Teen and Young Adult***

March: Book One (2013) and March: Book Two (2015) by Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell ***Graphic novels for older teens+***

Podcasts

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Intersectionality Matters with Kimberle Crenshaw, originator of the term and concept of 'intersectionality,' an American civil rights advocate, and leading scholar of Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Speaking of Racism a podcast that celebrates everyday activists who are disrupting, deconstructing, and dismantling racism.

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GLOSSARY

AAVE

African American Vernacular English.

Ally Cookies

Praise or other rewards for not being racist. Usually sought out by white privileged people who are more concerned with personal gain than justice.

Anti-Blackness

Defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as being opposed to or hostile toward black people. Anti-blackness can be found all around the world.

BIPOC

Black, Indigenous, People of Color.

BIWOC

Black, Indigenous, Women of Color.

Cultural Appropriation

A modern type of colonization that involves the stealing, appropriation and sometimes commercialization of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, hair and dress fashion styles, speaking styles and in the Internet age, forms of "digital blackface". Cultural appropriation happens when there is an imbalance of power and privilege - a dominant culture appropriates from a marginalized culture. Cultural appropriation does not work the other way around. BIPOC cannot appropriate from white people because BIPOC do not hold collective power and privilege over white people.

Misogynoir

Misogyny directed specifically towards black womxn; describing the place where anti-Black racism and sexism meet, resulting in Black women facing oppression and marginalization under two systems of oppression at the same time.

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Optical Allyship

The visual illusion of allyship without the actual work of allyship. Also known as performative allyship.

POC

People of Color

Spiritual Bypassing

A term introduced in the early 1980s by John Welwood, a Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist. Described as a "tendency to use spiritual ideas and practices to sidestep or avoid facing unresolved emotional issues, psychological wounds, and unfinished developmental tasks."

White Gaze

The white supremacist lens through which white privileged people see BIPOC. The white gaze also describes how BIPOC are defined, limited, stereotyped and judged in the white imagination - usually to the detriment of BIPOC.

Tokenism

When BIPOC are used as props to serve whiteness and white supremacy.

Tone Policing

A tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who don't by focusing on the tone of what is being said, rather than the actual content. Tone policing doesn't only have to be spoken out loud publicly. People of white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors.

White Apathy

A feeling of apathy, indifference, unconcern, detachment, dispassion and disregard about racism by white privileged people.

White Centering

The centering of white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else. The belief, whether conscious or not, that whiteness is "normal" and BIPOC are "other."

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White Exceptionalism

The belief that you as a white person are exempt from white supremacy. That you are "one of the good ones". That this work doesn't apply to you.

White Feminism

A feminism that focuses on the struggle of white women. It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender (usually cis-gender), but does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections which are just as important including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

White Fragility

A phrase coined by author Dr. Robin DiAngelo, and is defined as "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves."

White Privilege

A phrase coined by Peggy McIntosh her 1988 paper called *White Privilege And Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies* as follows:

"I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks."

White Saviorism

A colonialist idea that assumes that BIPOC need white people to save them. That without white intervention, instruction without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen as below and less than white in the white imagination, will not survive.

White Silence

Occurs when people with white privilege stay complicity silent when it comes to issues of race.

White Superiority

The erroneous, violent and racist idea that people with white/white-passing skin are more superior to, and therefore deserve to dominate, people with brown or black skin.

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Womxn

A definition of women that explicitly includes not only cis-gender women, but also trans women and femme/feminine-identifying genderqueer and non-binary people.