



Uprooting Inequity, LLC
Highly Recommended Books on
Historical and Structural Racism

(All descriptions from Amazon.com)

The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone & How We Can Prosper Together

McGhee, Heather. *The sum of us: What racism costs everyone and how we can prosper together. One World, 2022.* Paperback, 464 pages.

- New York Times bestseller. Longlisted for the National Book Award. Winner of the Porchlight Business Book Award. Longlisted For the Andrew Carnegie Medal.

Heather McGhee's specialty is the American economy—and the mystery of why it so often fails the American public. From the financial crisis of 2008 to rising student debt to collapsing public infrastructure, she found a root problem: racism in our politics and policymaking. But not just in the most obvious indignities for people of color. Racism has costs for white people, too. It is the common denominator of our most vexing public problems, the core dysfunction of our democracy and constitutive of the spiritual and moral crises that grip us all. But how did this happen? And is there a way out?

But in unlikely places of worship and work, McGhee finds proof of what she calls the Solidarity Dividend: the benefits we gain when people come together across race to accomplish what we simply can't do on our own. *The Sum of Us* is not only a brilliant analysis of how we arrived here but also a heartfelt message, delivered with startling empathy, from a black woman to a multiracial America. It leaves us with a new vision for a future in which we finally realize that life can be more than a zero-sum game.

The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Government Segregated

Rothstein, Richard. *The color of law: A forgotten history of how our government segregated America. Liveright Publishing, 2017.* Paperback, 368 pages.

- New York Times Bestseller. Notable Book of the Year. Editors' Choice Selection. One of Publishers Weekly's 10 Best Books of the Year. Longlisted for the National Book Award for Nonfiction. An NPR Best Book of the Year. Winner of the Hillman Prize for Nonfiction. Gold Winner. California Book Award (Nonfiction). Finalist Los Angeles Times Book Prize (History). Finalist. Brooklyn Public Library Literary Prize.

Widely heralded as a “masterful” (Washington Post) and “essential” (Slate) history of the modern American metropolis, Richard Rothstein's *The Color of Law* offers “the most forceful argument ever published on how federal, state, and local governments gave rise to and reinforced neighborhood segregation” (William Julius Wilson). Exploding the myth of de facto segregation arising from private prejudice or the unintended consequences of economic forces, Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation: with undisguised racial zoning; public housing that purposefully segregated previously mixed communities; subsidies for builders to create whites-only suburbs; tax exemptions for institutions that enforced segregation; and support for violent resistance to African Americans in white neighborhoods. A groundbreaking, “virtually indispensable” study that has already transformed our understanding of twentieth-century urban history (Chicago Daily Observer), *The Color of Law* forces us to face the obligation to remedy our unconstitutional past.

Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Reinvented Racism

Haney-López, Ian. *Dog whistle politics: How coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class*. Oxford University Press, 2014. 2nd Edition, Nov. 2022. Paperback, 336 pages.

Initially published in 2013, Ian Haney-López's *Dog Whistle Politics* offered a sweeping account of how politicians and plutocrats deploy veiled racial appeals to persuade white voters to support policies that favor the extremely rich yet threaten their own interests. As he showed, such appeals generate middle-class enthusiasm for political candidates who promise to crack down on crime, curb undocumented immigration, and protect against Islamic infiltration, but ultimately vote in favor of corporations and the rich. Rejecting any simple story of malevolent and obvious racism, Haney-López linked the two central themes that dominate American politics today: the decline of the middle class and the Republican Party's increasing reliance on white voters.

The book proved to be remarkably prescient. Donald Trump's 2016 campaign was built almost entirely around dog whistle politics, and he won the presidency because of it. This new edition of *Dog Whistle Politics* updates the book by a substantial new chapter on Trump that examines his appeal and places his campaign in the historical context that the first edition of *Dog Whistle Politics* so perceptively uncovered.

The Inequality Machine: How College Divides Us (first published as *The Years That Matter Most*). Paperback, 432 pages.

Tough, Paul. *The inequality machine: How college divides us*. HarperCollins, 2019.

From best-selling author Paul Tough, an indelible and explosive book on the glaring injustices of higher education, including unfair admissions tests, entrenched racial barriers, and crushing student debt. Now updated and expanded for the pandemic era.

When higher education works the way it's supposed to, there is no better tool for social mobility—for lifting young people out of challenging circumstances and into the middle class and beyond. In reality, though, American colleges and universities have become the ultimate tool of social *immobility*—a system that secures a comfortable future for the children of the wealthy while throwing roadblocks in the way of students from struggling families.

Combining vivid and powerful personal stories with deep, authoritative reporting, Paul Tough explains how we got into this mess and explores the innovative reforms that might get us out. Tough examines the systemic racism that pervades American higher education, shows exactly how the SATs give an unfair advantage to wealthy students, and guides readers from Ivy League seminar rooms to the welding shop at a rural community college. At every stop, he introduces us to young Americans yearning for a better life—and praying that a college education might help them get there.

With a new preface and afterword by the author exposing how the coronavirus pandemic has shaken the higher education system anew.

The Case for Reparations (16,000-word essay by Ta-Nehisi Coates)

Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. "The case for reparations." *The Best American Magazine Writing 2015*. Columbia University Press, 2015. 1-50. Not actually a book, but it might as well be, as it's a 16,000-word essay. [PDF](#).

- *The Case for Reparations* received critical acclaim and was named the "Top Work of Journalism of the Decade" by New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute and the George Polk Award for commentary in 2014. It also skyrocketed Coates' career and led him to write *Between the World and Me*, a New York Times bestseller and winner of numerous nonfiction awards. It took Coates two years to finish this 16,000-word essay.
- The article has been described as highly influential, sparking an interest among politicians, activists and policy-makers to pursue reparations. "Beautifully written, meticulously reported, highly persuasive ..." "The most powerful essay of its time." "Ground breaking." "It influenced the public conversation so much that it became a necessary topic in the presidential debate."

The article focuses on redlining and housing discrimination through the eyes of people who have experienced it and the devastating effects it has had on the African-American community.

Coates said he thinks it's time for a bold step to change the way we talk and think about race in America. He argues that we have to dig deeper into our past and the original sin of slavery, confronting the institutional racism that continues to pervade society. From the lynching tree to today's mass incarceration of young African-Americans, he says we need to examine our motives more intently and reconcile the moral debt and economic damage inflicted upon generations of black Americans.

For one, Coates points to a century of racist and exploitive housing policies that made it hard for African-Americans to own homes and forced them to live in poorer neighborhoods with unequal access to a good education, resulting in a major wealth gap between black and white.

Coates explains to Moyers: "I am not asking you as a white person to see yourself as an enslaver. I'm asking you as an American to see all of the freedoms that you enjoy and see how they are rooted in things that the country you belong to condoned or actively participated in the past."

From Wikipedia:

In *The Case for Reparations*, Ta-Nehisi Coates walks the reader through the hardships of African Americans, starting through the eyes of Clyde Ross, who was born in the 1920s in the [Deep South](#). Ross endured severe racism as a result of the harsh [Jim Crow laws](#).

Coates goes on to show the huge discrepancy between White and Black families that exists today, citing shocking statistics, such as how approximately 65% of Black children grew up in poor neighborhoods compared to 4% of White children. Coates continues to show how large cities like Chicago are still extremely segregated due to predatory contracts and redlining, or lowering home values where people of color live. These concepts have held African Americans down and not allowed them to grow their wealth the same way White families have.

The author then goes to show how the government systematically worked against African Americans. Examples of these are the [G.I. Bill](#), [New Deal](#), and founding of the [Federal Housing Administration \(FHA\)](#). The G.I. Bill gave veterans access to many benefits, including reduced college and housing costs. The G.I. Bill is often credited with forming the middle class^[4] but African Americans were exempt from it. The New Deal followed this precedent, giving unparalleled opportunity to White Americans but none to their Black counterparts. The FHA extended a hand toward White families in the form of loans that only pushed Black families down. This led to incoherent tension which rose in the course of months.

Coates rounds off his article by showing that reparations are not as radical of an idea as people believe, citing the [Germany Israel agreement following the Holocaust](#) and [H.R. 40](#), a reparations bill that has been revised since the late 1900s.

White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding & Segregation

Cashin, Sheryll. *White space, black hood: Opportunity hoarding and segregation in the age of inequality*. Beacon Press, 2021. Hardback, 312 pages.

- A 2021 C. Wright Mills Award Finalist

Shows how government created “ghettos” and affluent white space and entrenched a system of American residential caste that is the linchpin of US inequality—and issues a call for abolition. Includes historical photos, maps, and charts that illuminate the history of residential segregation as an institution and a tactic of racial oppression.

The iconic Black hood, like slavery and Jim Crow, is a peculiar American institution animated by the ideology of white supremacy. Politicians and people of all colors propagated “ghetto” myths to justify racist policies that concentrated poverty in the hood and created high-opportunity white spaces. In *White Space, Black Hood*, Sheryll Cashin traces the history of anti-Black residential caste—boundary maintenance, opportunity hoarding, and stereotype-driven surveillance—and unpacks its current legacy so we can begin the work to dismantle the structures and policies that undermine Black lives.

Drawing on nearly 2 decades of research in cities including Baltimore, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, and Cleveland, Cashin traces the processes of residential caste as it relates to housing, policing, schools, and transportation. She contends that geography is now central to American caste. Poverty-free havens and poverty-dense hoods would not exist if the state had not designed, constructed, and maintained this physical racial order.

Cashin calls for abolition of these state-sanctioned processes. The ultimate goal is to change the lens through which society sees residents of poor Black neighborhoods from presumed thug to presumed citizen, and to transform the relationship of the state with these neighborhoods from punitive to caring. She calls for investment in a new infrastructure of opportunity in poor Black neighborhoods, including richly resourced schools and neighborhood centers, public transit, Peacemaker Fellowships, universal basic incomes, housing choice vouchers for residents, and mandatory inclusive housing elsewhere.

Race for Profit: How Banks/Real Estate Industry Undermine Black Homeownership

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *Race for profit: How banks and the real estate industry undermined black homeownership*. UNC Press Books, 2019. Paperback, 368 pages.

- Longlisted for the 2019 National Book Award. Finalist, 2020 Pulitzer Prize in History.

Narrating the story of a sea-change in housing policy and its dire impact on African Americans, *Race for Profit* reveals how the urban core was transformed into a new frontier of cynical extraction.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, reeling from a wave of urban uprisings, politicians finally worked to end the practice of redlining. Reasoning that the turbulence could be calmed by turning Black city-dwellers into homeowners, they passed the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, and set about establishing policies to induce mortgage lenders and the real estate industry to treat Black homebuyers equally. The disaster that ensued revealed that racist exclusion had not been eradicated, but rather transmuted into a new phenomenon of *predatory inclusion*.

Race for Profit uncovers how exploitative real estate practices continued well after housing discrimination was banned. The same racist structures and individuals remained intact after redlining's end, and close relationships between regulators and the industry created incentives to ignore improprieties. Meanwhile, new policies meant to encourage low-income homeownership created new methods to exploit Black homeowners. The federal government guaranteed urban mortgages in an attempt to overcome resistance to lending to Black buyers - as if unprofitability, rather than racism, was the cause of housing segregation. Bankers, investors, and real estate agents took advantage of the perverse incentives, targeting the Black

women most likely to fail to keep up their home payments and slip into foreclosure, multiplying their profits. As a result, by the end of the 1970s, the nation's first programs to encourage Black homeownership ended with tens of thousands of foreclosures in Black communities across the country. The push to uplift Black homeownership had descended into a goldmine for realtors and mortgage lenders, and a ready-made cudgel for the champions of deregulation to wield against government intervention of any kind.

Dream Hoarders

Reeves, Richard V. *Dream hoarders: How the American upper middle class is leaving everyone else in the dust, why that is a problem, and what to do about it*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018. Paperback, 204 pages.

- An *Economist* Best Book of the Year.

Dream Hoarders sparked a national conversation on the dangerous separation between the upper middle class and everyone else. Now in paperback and newly updated for the age of Trump, Brookings Institution senior fellow Richard Reeves is continuing to challenge the class system in America.

In America, everyone knows that the top 1 percent are the villains. The rest of us, the 99 percent—we are the good guys. Not so, argues Reeves. The real class divide is not between the upper class and the upper middle class: it is between the upper middle class and everyone else.

The separation of the upper middle class from everyone else is both economic and social, and the practice of “opportunity hoarding”—gaining exclusive access to scarce resources—is especially prevalent among parents who want to perpetuate privilege to the benefit of their children. While many families believe this is just good parenting, it is actually hurting others by reducing their chances of securing these opportunities. There is a glass floor created for each affluent child helped by his or her wealthy, stable family. That glass floor is a glass ceiling for another child.

Throughout *Dream Hoarders*, Reeves explores the creation and perpetuation of opportunity hoarding, and what should be done to stop it, including controversial solutions such as ending legacy admissions to school. He offers specific steps toward reducing inequality and asks the upper middle class to pay for it.

Convinced of their merit, members of the upper middle class believe they are entitled to those tax breaks and hoarded opportunities. After all, they aren't the 1 percent. The national obsession with the super rich allows the upper middle class to convince themselves that they are just like the rest of America. In *Dream Hoarders*, Reeves argues that in many ways, they are worse, and that changes in policy and social conscience are the only way to fix the broken system.

White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America

Bucholtz, Mary. *White kids: Language, race, and styles of youth identity*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Paperback, 280 pages.

- Winner, 2019 William J. Goode Book Award, given by the Family Section of the American Sociological Association
- Finalist, 2019 C. Wright Mills Award, given by the Society for the Study of Social Problems

Riveting stories of how affluent, white children learn about race

American kids are living in a world of ongoing public debates about race, daily displays of racial injustice, and for some, an increased awareness surrounding diversity and inclusion. In this heated context, sociologist Margaret A. Hagerman zeroes in on affluent, white kids to observe how they make sense of privilege, unequal

educational opportunities, and police violence. In fascinating detail, Hagerman considers the role that they and their families play in the reproduction of racism and racial inequality in America.

White Kids, based on two years of research involving in-depth interviews with white kids and their families, is a clear-eyed and sometimes shocking account of how white kids learn about race. In doing so, this book explores questions such as, “How do white kids learn about race when they grow up in families that do not talk openly about race or acknowledge its impact?” and “What about children growing up in families with parents who consider themselves to be ‘anti-racist’?”

Featuring the actual voices of young, affluent white kids and what they think about race, racism, inequality, and privilege, *White Kids* illuminates how white racial socialization is much more dynamic, complex, and varied than previously recognized. It is a process that stretches beyond white parents’ explicit conversations with their white children and includes not only the choices parents make about neighborhoods, schools, peer groups, extracurricular activities, and media, but also the choices made by the kids themselves. By interviewing kids who are growing up in different racial contexts—from racially segregated to meaningfully integrated and from politically progressive to conservative—this important book documents key differences in the outcomes of white racial socialization across families. And by observing families in their everyday lives, this book explores the extent to which white families, even those with anti-racist intentions, reproduce and reinforce the forms of inequality they say they reject.

Merge Left: Fusing Race & Class, Winning Elections

Lopez, Ian Haney. *Merge left: Fusing race and class, winning elections, and saving America*. The New Press, 2019. Hardcover, 240 pages.

From the acclaimed author of *Dog Whistle Politics*, an essential road map to neutralizing the role of racism as a divide-and-conquer political weapon and to building a broad multiracial progressive future

"Ian Haney López has broken the code on the racial politics of the last fifty years."—Bill Moyers

In 2014, Ian Haney López in *Dog Whistle Politics* named and explained the coded racial appeals exploited by right-wing politicians over the last half century—and thereby anticipated the 2016 presidential election. Now the country is heading into what will surely be one of the most consequential elections ever, with the Right gearing up to exploit racial fear-mongering to divide and distract, and the Left splintered over the next step forward. Some want to focus on racial justice head-on; others insist that a race-silent focus on class avoids alienating white voters.

Can either approach—race-forward or colorblind—build the progressive supermajorities necessary to break political gridlock and fundamentally change the country's direction?

For the past two years, Haney López has been collaborating with a research team of union activists, racial justice leaders, communications specialists, and pollsters. Based on conversations, interviews, and surveys with thousands of people all over the country, the team found a way forward.

By merging the fights for racial justice and for shared economic prosperity, they were able to build greater enthusiasm for both goals—and for the cross-racial solidarity needed to win elections. What does this mean? It means that neutralizing the Right's political strategy of racial division is possible, today. And that's the key to everything progressives want to achieve.

A work of deep research, nuanced argument, and urgent insight, *Merge Left: Fusing Race and Class, Winning Elections, and Saving America* is an indispensable tool for the upcoming political season and in the larger fight to build racial justice and shared economic prosperity for all of us.

Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism

Gómez, Laura E. *Inventing Latinos: A new story of American racism*. The New Press, 2020.

Hardback, 336 pages. Paperback will be released on Sep. 6, 2022.

- Named One of the Best Books of the Year by NPR

A timely and groundbreaking argument that all Americans must grapple with Latinos' dynamic racial identity—because it impacts everything we think we know about race in America

Who are Latinos and where do they fit in America's racial order? In this "timely and important examination of Latinx identity" (Ms.), Laura E. Gómez, a leading critical race scholar, argues that it is only recently that Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Central Americans, and others are seeing themselves (and being seen by others) under the banner of a cohesive racial identity. And the catalyst for this emergent identity, she argues, has been the ferocity of anti-Latino racism.

In what Booklist calls "an incisive study of history, complex interrogation of racial construction, and sophisticated legal argument," Gómez "packs a knockout punch" (Publishers Weekly), illuminating for readers the fascinating race-making, unmaking, and re-making processes that Latinos have undergone over time, indelibly changing the way race functions in this country.

Building on the "insightful and well-researched" (Kirkus Reviews) material of the original, the paperback features a new afterword in which the author analyzes results of the 2020 Census, providing brilliant, timely insight about how Latinos have come to self-identify.

America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the U.S.

Lee, Erika. *America for Americans: A history of xenophobia in the United States*. Basic Books, 2019.

Updated 2nd edition (paperback) with a new epilogue on xenophobia during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021). Paperback, Hardback, 480 pages.

- Winner, American Book Award
- Winner, Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, Adult Non-Fiction
- Ralph Waldo Emerson Book Award Finalist
- 2020 Richard Frisbie Adult Nonfiction Award Honoree
- 2020 Minnesota Book Award Finalist

The United States is known as a nation of immigrants. But it is also a nation of xenophobia. In *America for Americans*, Erika Lee shows that an irrational fear, hatred, and hostility toward immigrants has been a defining feature of our nation from the colonial era to the Trump era. Benjamin Franklin ridiculed Germans for their "strange and foreign ways." Americans' anxiety over Irish Catholics turned xenophobia into a national political movement. Chinese immigrants were excluded, Japanese incarcerated, and Mexicans deported.

Today, Americans fear Muslims, Latinos, and the so-called browning of America. Forcing us to confront this history, Lee explains how xenophobia works, why it has endured, and how it threatens America. Now updated with an epilogue reflecting on how the coronavirus pandemic turbocharged xenophobia, *America for Americans* is an urgent spur to action for any concerned citizen.

Chapter 1 "Strangers to Our Language and Constitutions"

Chapter 2 "Americans Must Rule America"

Chapter 3 "The Chinese Are No More"

Chapter 4 The "Inferior Races" of Europe

Chapter 5 "Getting Rid of the Mexicans"

Chapter 6 "Military Necessity"
Chapter 7 Xenophobia and Civil Rights
Chapter 8 "Save Our State"
Chapter 9 Islamophobia
Epilogue to the Paperback Edition: When Xenophobia Spreads Like a Virus

Doing Race: 21 Essays

Markus, Hazel, and Paula ML Moya. *Doing race: 21 essays for the 21st century*. W.W. Norton & Company (2010). Paperback, 608 pages. \$52.75 new, but available secondhand for \$22.20.

The only collection of original essays on race **written with a college student in mind**. A collection of twenty-one interdisciplinary essays on race and ethnicity.

Doing Race pulls together original essays from some of the biggest names studying race today. The essays have been carefully edited to synthesize many of the ideas that their authors have discussed in academic journals and books, but without jargon and academic complexities.

Doing Race is a multidisciplinary book, comparative across racial and ethnic groups, and global in scope. The essay authors are internationally renowned scholars who have influenced the development of those disciplines—psychology, history, political science, education, sociology, drama, communication, religious studies, literature—that have been central to the study of race and ethnicity. The essays are based on lectures presented by these scholars in a highly successful undergraduate course at Stanford University entitled Introduction to Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity.

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