Books for
White Learning and Understanding
through the Perspective of Black Authors
February 2022

History
All that She Carried: the Journey of Ashley’s Sack, a Family Keepsake by Tiya Miles
Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson
The Color of Compromise: the Truth about the American Church’s Complicity in Racism by Jemar Tisby
Stamped from the Beginning: the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi
They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South by Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers
The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration by Isabel Wilkerson

Important works by other than Black authors
The Half has Never been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism by Edward Baptist

Recent Biography
The Dead are Rising: the Life of Malcolm X by Les Payne
Looking for Lorraine: The Radiant and Radical Life of Lorraine Hansberry by Imani Perry
Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer’s Enduring Message to America by Keisha N. Blain

Being Black
Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
Black is the Body by Emily Bernard
Eloquent Rage: a Black Feminist Discovers her Superpower by Brittney Cooper
Heavy by Kiese Laymon
How to be Less Stupid about Race by Chrystal Fleming
Hunger by Roxanne Gay
I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown
Men We Reaped by Jesmyn Ward
No Ashes in the Fire by Darnell Moore
Read Until You Understand: the Profound Wisdom of Black Life and Literature by Farah Jasmine Griffin
South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon Line to Understand the Soul of a Nation by Imani Perry
Thick by Tressie McMillan Cottom
When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir by patrice khan-cullors and asha bandele
The Yellow House by Sarah M. Broom

Whiteness
History of White People by Nell Irvin Painter
Mediocre: the Dangerous Legacy of White Male America by Ijeoma Oluo
White Rage: the Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson

Important works by other than Black authors
Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald
Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment is Killing America’s Heartland by Jonathan M. Metzl
Nice Racism: How Progressive White People Perpetuate Racial Harm by Robin DiAngelo
No More Heroes: Grassroots Challenges to the Savior Mentality by Jordan Flaherty
Waking Up White by Debby Irving
White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism by Robin DiAngelo
White Tears, Brown Scars: How White Feminism Betrays Women of Color by Ruby Hamad

Criminal Justice
Chokehold: Policing Black Men by Paul Butler
The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime and the Making of Modern Urban America by Khalil Gibran Muhammad
*Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson
Just Pursuit: A Black Prosecutor’s Fight for Fairness by Laura Coates
Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America by James Forman
*The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
The Rage of Innocence: How America Criminalizes Black Youth by Kristin Henning
They Can’t Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore and a New Era in America’s Racial Justice Movement by Wesley Lowery

Important works by other than Black authors
American Prison: A Reporter’s Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment by Shane Bauer
*Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration and a Road to Repair by Danielle Sered

Education
Blackballed: the Black & White Politics of Race on America’s Campuses by Lawrence Ross
For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood by Christopher Emdin
The Price of Nice: How Good Intentions Maintain Educational Inequity edited by Agelina E. Castagno
Unconscious Bias in the Schools: A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race and Racism by Tracey A. Benson and Sarah E. Fiarman
We Want to do More than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom by Bettina Love
*Why are all the Black Kids Sitting in the Cafeteria: and Other Conversations About Race by Beverly Daniel Tatum

Important works by other than Black authors
Courageous Conversations: Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools by Glenn E. Singleton
Schooltalk: Rethinking What We Say About—and to—Students Every Day by Mica Pollock

Environmental Justice
Black Faces, White Spaces: Re-imagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors by Carolyn Finney
The Color of Food by Natasha Bowens
Farming While Black by Leah Penniman
A Terrible Thing to Waste: Environmental Racism and Its Assault on the American Mind by Harriet A. Washington
Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility by Dorceta Taylor

Important works by other than Black authors
What the Eyes Don’t See: a Story of Crisis, Resistance and Hope in an American City by Mona Hanna-Attisha

Housing
White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding and Segregation in the Age of Inequality by Sheryll Cashin
Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership by
Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

Important works by other than Black authors

The Color of Law: a Forgotten History of how our Government Segregated America by Richard Rothstein
Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond
How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality and the Fight for the Neighborhood by P.E. Moskowitz
Race and Place: How Urban Geography Shapes the Journey to Reconciliation by David P. Leong
Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities by Jessica Trounstine

Health

Black Man in a White Coat by Damon Tweedy
Just Medicine: a Cure for Racial Inequality in American Health Care by Dayna Bowen Matthew
My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem
Unapologetic Guide to Black Mental Health by Rheeda Walker

Important works by other than Black authors

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

Voting Rights

One Person, No Vote by Carol Anderson
Say It Louder by Tiffany Cross
Uncounted: the Crisis of Voter Suppression in American by Gilda Daniels
The Voting Rights War: the NAACP and the On-going Struggle for Justice by Gloria J. Browne-Marshall

Important works by other than Black authors

On Account of Race: the Supreme Court, White Supremacy and the Ravaging of African American Voting Rights by Lawrence Goldstone

Economic Justice

From Here to Equality by William Darity and Kirsten Mullin
The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together by Heather McGhee

Important works by other than Black authors

The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap by Mehrsa Baradaran
Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance by Edgar Villaneuva
The Divide: American Injustice in the Age of the Wealth Gap by Matt Taibbi

White Supremacy

Backlash: What Happens when We Talk Honestly About Racism in America by George Yancey
Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor by Layla Saad and Robin DiAngelo
Racecraft: the Soul of Inequality in American Life by Karen E. Fields and Barbara J. Fields
The Origin of Others by Toni Morrison

Important works by other than Black authors

American Swastika: Inside the White Power Movements Hidden Spaces of Hate 2nd ed. By Pete Simi and Robert Futrell
Everything You Love will Burn: Inside the Rebirth of White Nationalism in America by Vegas Tenold
The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory by Adam Domby
When Hate Groups March Down Mainstreet: Engaging a Community Response by Deborah Levine and Marc Brenman
Anti-Racism
Against Civility: the Hidden Racism in Our Obsession with Civility by Alex Zamalin
Anti-Racism: an introduction by Alex Zamalin
How to be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi
Letters to My White Friends by Das-Devlin Ross
Tears We Cannot Stop by Michael Eric Dyson

Important works by other than Black authors
America’s Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to a New America by Jim Wallis
How I Shed My Skin: Unlearning the Racist Lessons of a Southern Childhood by Jim Grimsley

Poetry and Art: A Sampler
African-American Poetry: 250 Years of Struggle & Song edited by Kevin Young
Young Gifted and Black: A New Generation of Artists – The Lumpkin-Boccuzzi Family Collection of Contemporary Art

Classic Black Authors and Works
Autobiography of Malcolm X
The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin and other Baldwin works
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou and other Angelou works
The Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass - An American Slave
The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. DuBois and other DuBois works
Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston
Works by Angela Davis
Works by Henry Louis Gates Jr.
Works by bell hooks
Works by Audre Lourde
Works by Toni Morrison
Works by Cornell West

This list is a work in progress – both limited by the compiler’s degree of learning and subject to change and expand by the ongoing release of new work. It is best used as a starting point.

Compiled by Rebecca Thompson