



Book Study on Race and Racism

Recent events have once again called our attention to the depth of racial tensions and unrest at home and around the United States. Protest call for change. It is change not only in police reform but in all unjust power structures that, even if unconsciously, protect the interests of white people. We don't see ourselves as racist. But yet, but our citizenry, we are complicit in maintaining these racially biased systems. Dr Robin DiAngelo in [White Fragility: Why is it so Hard to Talk With White People About Racism](#) helps us to become more comfortable with seeing ourselves both as good people and culpable in biased systems. An essential read, her book helps us open ourselves to hearing the others' stories.

Any book that opens our hearts and minds to conversations on race is helpful in our growth as Christians. To that end, we have made a few recommendations along with suggestions for resources to help with discussions. Any group would do well to use the material presented on the National Museum of African American History & Culture to supplement their reading.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness>

The General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church has made a number of great resources available. A course on Implicit Bias is available online for \$20 for any one or group to take. It is entertaining and informative material. This and other references have also been listed in our reading list.

Please feel free to reach out if you would any further questions, or have suggestions, for materials on racism.

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Book Study Timeline

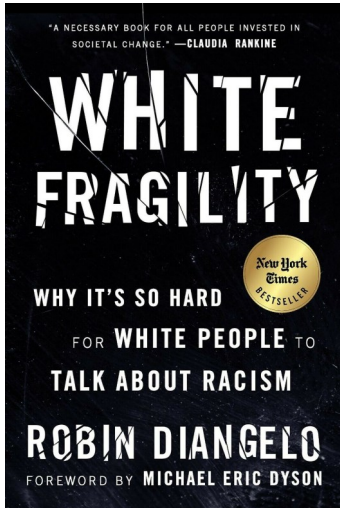
Open Studies on Racism at Carmel UMC

Open Study Period – Now until April of 2021

1. Introduce Reading List with suggestions for supplemental guides and other resources
2. Although any book is helpful in opening our hearts and minds – comprehensive recommended reads include:
 - White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk With White People About Racism, Dr Robin DiAngelo
 - The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, Michelle Alexander
 - History Museum of African American History and Culture
https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/_topics/whiteness
 - Implicit Bias :From the General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church
<https://www.gcorr.org/online-course-implicit-bias/>
 - One other reading selection of your choice which may or may not be from the list
3. Please consider preparing for a book review presentation for other's in the church from the selection of your choice.
4. General discussion perhaps with a panel will be planned for:
 - Sept Discussion panel on Policing in Carmel
 - Nov Our history in Carmel
 - Jan Guest speakers on racism in The UMC
 - March – What Next

Book Study Resources

TOPIC- ON BEING WHITE



Watch this 20 min video.

General Board of Religion and Race

<https://tinyurl.com/y77k5z43>

Watch this 90 min video.

Video Link: Book Discussion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45ey4jgoxeU>

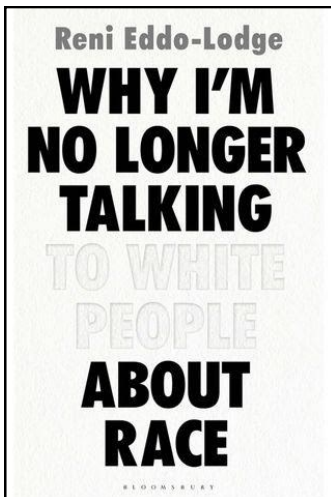
Wrestle with and discuss questions in the study guide.

Readers Guide to White Fragility: Why is it So Hard to Talk to White People

About Racism

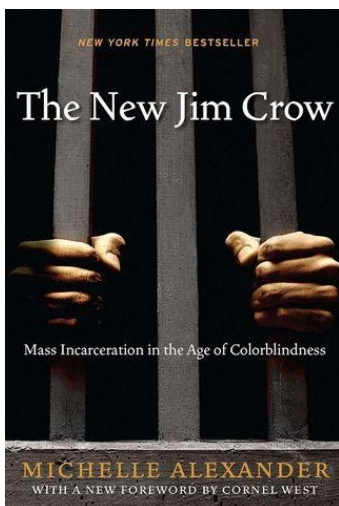
Dr Robin DiAngelo

<https://tinyurl.com/y9lb8k4o>



Gal-Dem called this debut “the black British bible”. It began with a 2014 blog post addressed to those who refused to recognise the structural racism of British society, to those who “truly believe that the experiences of their life as a result of their skin colour can and should be universal.” It’s a dramatic recognition of what she calls “white denial”

TOPIC- INJUSTICE OF CRIMINAL



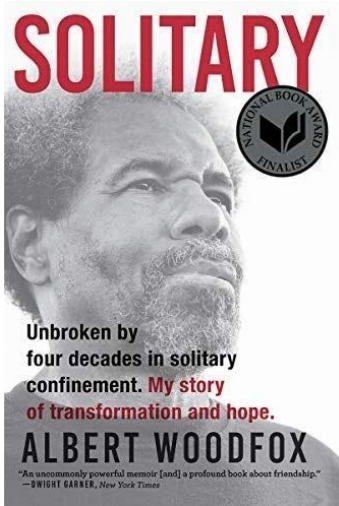
Alexander is an American civil rights lawyer and legal scholar; in her ground-breaking book she analyses the rebirth of a race-based caste in the United States: millions of Americans are locked behind bars and relegated to second-class citizenship by the criminal justice system. Devastating.

Ted Talk Michelle Alexander

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ6H-Mz6hgw>

Book Study Resources

TOPIC- ON BEING WHITE



The extraordinary saga of a man who, despite spending four decades in solitary confinement for a crime of which he was innocent, inspired fellow prisoners, and now all of us, with his humanity

Tracey Mitisak interview of Albert Woodfox

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HcrNceixXI>

FOLLOWUP WORK ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

-Obama Foundation:

<https://www.obama.org/wp-content/uploads/Toolkit.pdf>

An Advocacy Toolkit for Fair, Safe, and Effective Community Policing

- [Building a Movement to End "The New Jim Crow"](#)

An organizing guide by Daniel Hunter



From the cover flap: Based on the real story of a reform school in Florida that operated for 111 years and warped the lives of thousands of children.

"In this bravura follow-up to the Pulitzer Prize-and National Award-winning #1 New York Times bestseller *The Underground Railroad*, Colson Whitehead brilliantly dramatizes another strand of American history through the story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida.

For Trevor Noah's interview of Colson Whitehead and insight into the characters of the book:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LAMA3HsAUA>

TOPIC- PERSPECTIVE

James Baldwin *The Fire Next Time* read with Ta-Nehisi Coates *Between the World and Me*

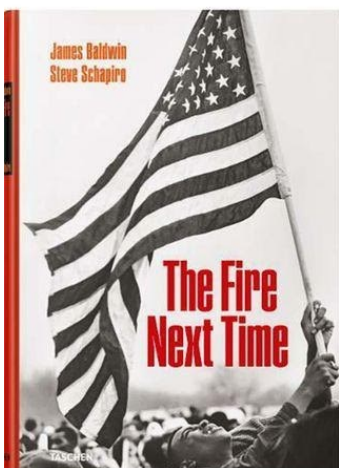
This is a 1963 non-fiction book by James Baldwin. It contains two essays: "My Dungeon Shook — Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation" and "Down at the Cross — Letter from a Region of My Mind". The first essay, written in the form of a letter to Baldwin's 14-year-old nephew, discusses the central role of race in American history. The second essay, which takes up the majority of the book, deals with the relations between race and religion, focusing in particular on Baldwin's experiences with the Christian church as a youth, as well as the Islamic ideas of others in Harlem.

The book's two essays were first published in American magazines in late 1962: "Letter from a Region of My Mind" in *The New Yorker* [1] and "My Dungeon Shook" in *The Progressive*. [2] They were then combined and published in book form by Dial Press in 1963, and in Britain by Penguin Books in 1964. Critics greeted the book enthusiastically. It is considered, by some, one of the most influential books about race relations in the 1960s.[3] It was released in an audiobook format in 2008, narrated by Jesse L. Martin.

The book's title comes from a couplet in "Mary Don't You Weep", a Negro spiritual:

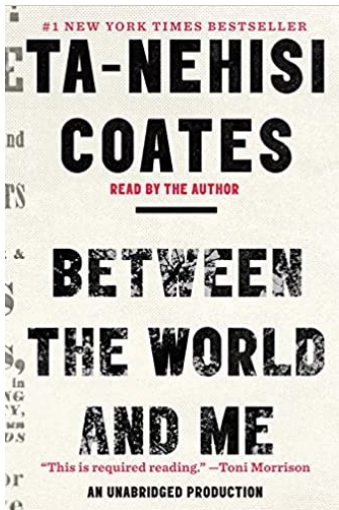
God gave Noah the rainbow sign

No more water, the fire next time[4]



Book Study Resources

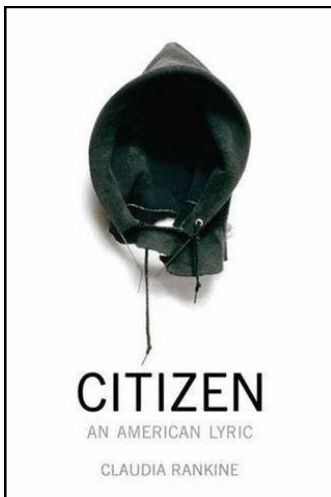
TOPIC- ON BEING WHITE



July 2015, Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote an article on The Atlantic as a modernized version of Baldwin's letter to his nephew called "Letter to My Son", and later published an entire book called *Between the World and Me* that talks about the current state of the Black experience in America.

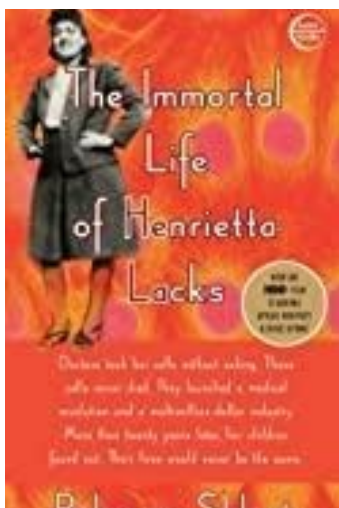
"*Between the World and Me* is a 2015 nonfiction book written by Ta-Nehisi Coates and published by Spiegel & Grau. It is written as a letter to the author's teenage son about the feelings, symbolism, and realities associated with being Black in the United States. Coates recapitulates American history and explains to his son the "racist violence that has been woven into American culture." Coates draws from an abridged, autobiographical account of his youth in Baltimore, detailing the ways in which institutions like the school, the police, and even "the streets" discipline, endanger, and threaten to disembody black men and women. The work takes structural and thematic inspiration from James Baldwin's 1963 epistolary book *The Fire Next Time*. Unlike Baldwin, Coates sees white supremacy as an indestructible force, one that Black Americans will never evade or erase, but will always struggle against."

TOPIC- NONFICTION



"Part documentary, part lyric procedural," wrote Dan Chiasson in the *New Yorker* of this book-length poem which won the 2014 National Book Critics' Circle Award for Poetry. Haunting, personal, closely-observed, Rankine brings contemporary American racial politics into tight focus. "Because white men can't/ police their imagination/ black men are dying."

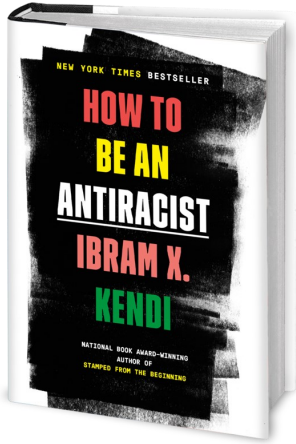
Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, in vitro fertilization, and more. Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance.



New York Times bestseller takes readers on an extraordinary journey, from the "colored" ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to stark white laboratories with freezers filled with HeLa cells, from Henrietta's small, dying hometown of Clover, Virginia, to East Baltimore today, where her children and grandchildren live and struggle with the legacy of her cells. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew. It's a story inextricably connected to the dark history of experimentation on African Americans, the birth of bioethics, and the legal battles over whether we control the stuff we're made of.

Reading group resources, videos, author's notes and interviews available on <http://rebeccaskloot.com/the-immortal-life>

Book Study Resources



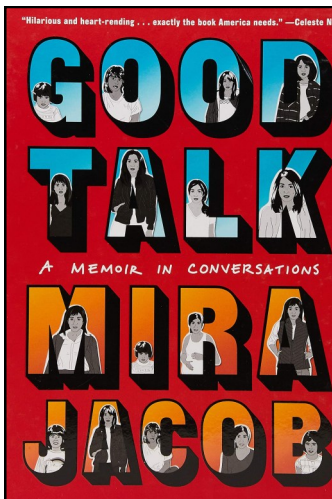
Ibram X. Kendi's concept of antiracism reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America—but even more fundamentally, points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other. Instead of working with the policies and system we have in place, Kendi asks us to think about what an antiracist society might look like, and how we can play an active role in building it.

In his memoir, Kendi weaves together an electrifying combination of ethics, history, law, and science—including the story of his own awakening to antiracism—bringing it all together in a cogent, accessible form. He begins by helping us rethink our most deeply held, if implicit, beliefs and our most intimate personal relationships (including beliefs about race and IQ and interracial social relations) and reexamines the policies and larger social arrangements we support. *How to Be an Antiracist* promises to become an essential book for anyone who wants to go beyond an awareness of racism to the next step of contributing to the formation of a truly just and equitable society.

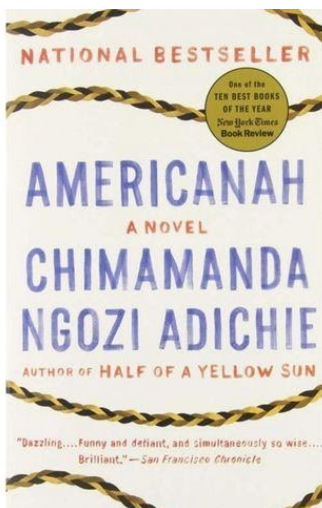
MEMOIR (see also *Solitary* by Albert Woodfox)

Buy with *How to Be An Antiracist Workbook*

<https://tinyurl.com/yavg3flx>



A “beautiful and eye-opening” (Jacqueline Woodson), “hilarious and heart-rending” (Celeste Ng) graphic memoir about American identity, interracial families, and the realities that divide us, from the acclaimed author of *The Sleepwalker’s Guide to Dancing*.



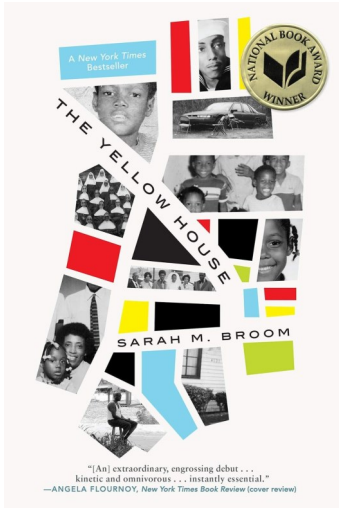
“Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland.”

“An incredibly readable and rich tapestry of Nigerian and American life, and the ways a handful of vivid characters...try to live in both worlds simultaneously...Adichie paints on a grand canvas, boldly and confidently, equally adept at conveying the complicated political backdrop of Lagos as she is in bringing us into the day-to-day lives of her many new Americans...This is a very funny, very warm and moving intergenerational epic that confirms Adichie’s virtuosity, boundless empathy and searing social acuity.”

Discussion Questions and Reading Guide

<https://tinyurl.com/ydd5k85x>

Book Study Resources



In 1961, Sarah M. Broom's mother Ivory Mae bought a shotgun house in the then-promising neighborhood of New Orleans East and built her world inside of it. It was the height of the Space Race and the neighborhood was home to a major NASA plant—the postwar optimism seemed assured. Widowed, Ivory Mae remarried Sarah's father Simon Broom; their combined family would eventually number twelve children. But after Simon died, six months after Sarah's birth, the Yellow House would become Ivory Mae's thirteenth and most unruly child.

A book of great ambition, Sarah M. Broom's *The Yellow House* tells a hundred years of her family and their relationship to home in a neglected area of one of America's most mythologized cities. This is the story of a mother's struggle against a house's entropy, and that of a prodigal daughter who left home only to reckon with the pull that home exerts, even after the Yellow House was wiped off the map after Hurricane Katrina. *The Yellow House* expands the map of New Orleans to include the stories of its lesser known natives, guided deftly by one of its native daughters, to demonstrate how enduring drives of clan, pride, and familial love resist and defy erasure. Located in the gap between the "Big Easy" of tourist guides and the New Orleans in which Broom was raised, *The Yellow House* is a brilliant memoir of place, class, race, the seeping rot of inequality, and the internalized shame that often follows. It is a transformative, deeply moving story from an unparalleled new voice of startling clarity, authority, and power.

OTHER RESOURCES

UM Webinars on Covid-19 and It's Impact on People of Color

Each webinar is about 1 hour.

Week 1

Systemic Racism and Discrimination During COVID-19

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om48LerW11A&feature=youtu.be&t=310>

Week 2

Confined and Vulnerable: Detained & Incarcerated During COVID-19

<https://youtu.be/WvZu4vxzNF4>

Week 3

From the Earth to the Table

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ARNSx46hFM&feature=youtu.be>

Week 4

Study of Implicit Bias –

“What We Don't Think We Think”

Available to do as a group or on your own.

Online Course: Implicit Bias: What We Don't Think We Think

Based off of the popular Implicit Bias Workbook, GCORR has created an online course for anyone who is interested in learning and teaching others about implicit bias.

We invite pastors, teachers, and anyone who is interested in learning and teaching others about implicit bias to take this on-demand online course. This course is designed for you to take at your own pace and includes bonus content specifically for preachers.

The learning engagements included in each section allow for individual work, group work, and optional sermon preparation. All of the learning engagements recognize and lift up the reality that context is known best by those on the ground. Thus, while this course provides multiple entry points for learning about, thinking through, and transforming action regarding implicit bias, it does not contextualize the information for you. Implicit Bias: What We Don't Think We Think honors the contextual wisdom that you and others will bring to this material. Each exercise is an invitation to the sacred journey of discovering with your church and community how God is leading you to use this material faithfully within your context.

From the General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church

<https://www.gcorr.org/online-course-implicit-bias/>