

MLA Community Conversation: Resource List and Notes

White Librarian Work: Doing Anti-Racist Work in Your Library: (6/18/20)

Contact:

Amy Boese, Scott County Library, aboese@scottlib.org

Melissa Prescott, St. Cloud State University, mkprescott@stcloudstate.edu

Carol Jackson, Ramsey County Library, carol.l.jackson@co.ramsey.mn.us

Stacey Hendren, Anoka County Library, Stacey.Hendren@co.anoka.mn.us

Notes in Chat from Part One: Internal Work – Working on Your Own Biases and Assumptions

- Give staff of color the space to safely vent
- Reading books to children can help you think more deeply about race and privilege
- Follow Instagrammers of color, learn about their own experiences with racism (like #blackbirdersweek)
- Great quote: "White supremacy isn't the shark, it's the ocean." Guante
- Important of working on stamina for anti-racist work; white privilege can keep you complacent
- Follow Black writers and speakers on Facebook
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Discuss it in therapy.
- The language of anti-racism can be helpful when working with those reluctant to address racial equity
- More listening... less defending
- Feeling uncomfortable is good for white people
- Brene Brown shares a mantra she repeats to herself when she gets called out/gets it wrong, "I'm here to get it right, not be right."
- Be open to correction and change.
- Do not center yourself, don't tone police, apologize authentically.
- From theater world: "Just take the [director's] note."
- Compensate, compensate, compensate. BUY the book, if they have paypal/venmo/etc and make it available pay the BIPOC you follow for their labor.
- Ideas without action steps are just wishful thinking.

Notes in Chat from Part Two: External Work – Working for Effective Change in Your Organization

- Saying "we don't want to be political" is a slippery slope to neutrality. Libraries are not neutral—we take stances on plenty of other things (patron privacy, open access, broadband access, etc.)
- When we are 'neutral' in structures where racism is systemic, we are upholding white supremacy and other hegemonic oppressive structures
- Specifically in rural areas--before posting BLM signage, we have to make sure that black lives actually matter inside the library. What types of books are on display? Artwork? Hours? Staffing? and muuuch much more.
- Diversity on your library board is important.
- We invested into every teammate taking the IDI and discussing how to keep moving forward.
- Select programming from BIPOC vendors
- It is really easy for admin/the county to ignore one person but much harder when a lot of library staff explicitly meet with library admin about a singular reason (for example changing collection guidelines to make it more equitable).
- Change the color of librarianship. Encourage your teen volunteers to consider librarianship as a career. Allow them to shadow your work. Support circulation staff in their efforts to attend library school by offering money/grants/scholarships/TIME to attend library school. We need to change the profession.
- Shout out to all the library staff and patrons who have worked to end library fines across the state (St. Paul, Rochester, Duluth) because fines hurt access
- Look at library's behavior policy and drill down into looking for implicit biases. Reconsider if/when to call the cops on someone, especially BIPOC patrons.

- Think of yourself as a wedge. Where is that little crack that you can begin to apply some force?
- Going to ask our Friends for funds to make sure we have enough copies of anti-racist materials to fill all the requests for them
- Do we have local BIPOC MLIS scholarships? I know there are national ones.
- The idea of encouraging teens to consider this as a career
- Assist archivists and historical agencies to uncover patterns of racism in communities.
- Given the amount of representational labor BIPOC library workers dedicate and the exposure to oppressive whiteness, perhaps MLA should consider giving free membership to BIPOC members until things change
- Would like to start a conversation somewhere about how we are going to engage with this conversation with our COMMUNITIES, rather than just talking inside our librarian echo chamber. If anyone is interested in that, please feel free to contact me.
- Just want to plug the Gary Sudduth collection in my local branch library - <https://www.hclib.org/about/locations/sudduth-collection>
- Engage with your BIPOC communities. learn from them and make changes based on that... folks will come in to access resources and services and collection that they helped inform. If you don't have that connection and only buy the stuff, folks won't magically appear.

Resources (Recommended by Attendees):

Podcasts:

Scene on Radio's Seeing White, <https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/>

On Being with Krista Tippett: Resmaa Menakem, "Notice the Rage, Notice the Silence", <https://onbeing.org/programs/resmaa-menakem-notice-the-rage-notice-the-silence/>

The Nod, <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/gimlet/the-nod>

Code Switch, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/>

Minority Korner, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/>

"Ebony & Dr. Taiyon J. Coleman on I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO: James Baldwin, White Supremacy & Police Violence" Feminist Frequency Radio, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=Bd0rL2uDt3I>

Books:

Me and White Supremacy by Layla F. Saad (2020)

Stamped from the Beginning - The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi (2017)

The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism by Edward E. Baptist (2014)

Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Debby Irving (2014)

A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota edited by Sun Yung Shin (2016), *Tip: This book is currently available for free via One Book One Minnesota.* <https://thefriends.org/minnesota-center-for-the-book/one-book-one-minnesota/>

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo.(2018)

How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi (2019)

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem (2017)

So You Want To Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo (2018)

What if I Say the Wrong Thing?: 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People by Verna Myers (2014)

Moving Diversity Forward: How to Go From Well-Meaning to Well-Doing by Verna Myers (2012)

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander (2010)

Citizen: An American Lyric by Claudia Rankine (2014)

The White Card: A play in one act by Claudia Rankin (2019)

On the Other Side of Freedom: The Case for Hope by DeRay McKesson (2018)

Not My Idea: A book about Whiteness by Higginbotham (2018)

White Tears Brown Scars by Ruby Hamad (2019)

We Speak for Ourselves: A Word from Forgotten Black America by D. Watkins (2019)

Better Allies: Everyday Actions to Create Inclusive, Engaging Workplaces by Karen Catlin (2019)

Black Is the Body: Stories from My Grandmother's Time, My Mother's Time, and Mine by Emily Bernard (2019)
 How to Be Less Stupid About Race: On Racism, White Supremacy, and the Racial Divide by Crystal Marie Fleming (2018)
 This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work by Tiffany Jewell (2020)
 Good Enough Now: How Doing the Best We Can With What We Have is Better Than Nothing by Jessica Pettitt (2017)
 Slavery's Reach: Southern Slaveholders in the North Star State by Christopher P. Lehman (2019)
 YA Fiction: The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas, Dear Martin by Nic Stone, American Steet by Ibi Zoboi
 Read fiction by Black authors, very eye opening to read different perspectives.

Film and Video:

Race: The Power of an Illusion (2003) (*Tip: Available for free through Kanopy at Ramsey County Library.*)
 "The Impossible Happens Every Day in the Life of the Refugee" by Kao Kalia Yang (TEDX Minneapolis, August 2019),
https://www.ted.com/talks/kao_kalia_yang_the_impossible_happens_every_day_in_the_life_of_the_refugee
 "The Power in Sharing our Stories" by Kao Kalia Yang (TEDX UW River Falls, June 2015),
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0KdPwMNbOA>
 Democracy Now – television news program, <https://www.democracynow.org/>
 13th – Documentary by Ava DuVernay (available for free through Netflix)
 Jim Crow of the North, TPT Originals, <https://www.tptoriginals.org/learn-about-minneapolis-history-of-racial-covenants-in-jim-crow-of-the-north-full-episode/>
 Black film: Do the Right Thing, Da 5 Bloods, Sorry to Bother You, 13th, upcoming one Candyman can be really insightful

Articles/Websites:

"Letter to My Son" by Ta-Nehisi Coates (The Atlantic, July 2015),
<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>
 Black History Recommendations by Dominique Gilliard, <https://dominiquegilliard.com/2020/02/06/black-history-recommendations/>
 Building Tolerance for Feedback - @alexjenny, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CBgK1u4JwR2/>
 On the Cusp of Adulthood and Facing an Uncertain Future: What We Know About Gen Z So Far,
<https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/essay/on-the-cusp-of-adulthood-and-facing-an-uncertain-future-what-we-know-about-gen-z-so-far/>
 Teen Librarian Toolbox: Do a Diversity Audit of your collection - Karen Jensen (2018)
<http://www.teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2018/10/library-journals-equity-in-action-doing-a-diversity-audit/>
 Ready to Lead Community Leadership, <https://www.readytolead.org/>

Academic Reading Suggestions:

Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities by Craig Steven Wilder (2013)
 Topographies of whiteness : mapping whiteness in library and information science (2017)
 Weaponized whiteness : the constructions and deconstructions of white identity politics (2019)
 White privilege unmasked : how to be part of the solution (2019)
 White privilege by Shannon Sullivan (2019)
 White identity politics by Ashley Jardina (2019)
 Interrogating the communicative power of whiteness by McIntosh, Moon, and Nakayama (2018)
 Antagonists, advocates and allies : the wake up call guide for White women who want to become allies with Black women by Catrice Jackson (2015)
 The intersections of whiteness by Kindinger and Schmitt (2019)
 Feeding the other : Whiteness, privilege, and neoliberal stigma in food pantries by De Souza (2019)
 Dying of whiteness : how the politics of racial resentment is killing America's heartland by Metzl (2019)
 White fatigue : rethinking resistance for social justice by Flynn (2018)
 White privilege : the myth of a post-racial society by Bhopal and Alibhai-Brown (2018)
 Critical multicultural perspectives on whiteness : views from the past and present by Lea, Lund, and Carr (2013)

Racism in the neoliberal era : a meta history of elite white power by Hohle (2017)

Myths America lives by : white supremacy and the stories that give us meaning by Hughes, Bellah, Asante (2003)

The white ally toolkit workbook : using active listening, empathy, and personal storytelling to promote racial equity by Campt (2018)

The possessive investment in Whiteness : how White people profit from identity politics BY Lipsitz (1998)

Black software : the Internet and racial justice, from the AfroNet to Black Lives Matter by mcllwain (2019)

The little book of race and restorative justice : black lives, healing, and US social transformation by Davis (2019)

American while black : African Americans, immigration, and the limits of citizenship by Carter (2019)

Antiracism Inc. : Why the Way We Talk About Racial Justice Matters (2019)

Below the Surface: Talking with Teens about Race, Ethnicity, and Identity by Rivas-Drake (2019)

The Black Tax: The Cost of Being Black in America by Rochester (2017)

Erasing Institutional Bias: How to Create Systemic Change for Organizational Inclusion by Jana (2018)

Hostile Heartland: Racism, Repression, and Resistance in the Midwest by Campney (2019)

The inner work of racial justice : healing ourselves and transforming our communities through mindfulness by Magee (2019)

Intersectionality and Higher Education : Identity and Inequality on College Campuses (2019)

White awake : an honest look at what it means to be white by Hill and McNeil

Growing up Working Class Hidden Injuries and the Development of Angry White Men and Women by Gorman (2017)

Beyond The Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of a White Mother of Black Sons Paperback by Lazarre (1996)

Mothers of massive resistance : white women and the politics of white supremacy by McRae (2017)

Rhetorics of whiteness : postracial hauntings in popular culture, social media, and education by Kennedy (2016)

Uprooting racism : how white people can work for racial justice by Kivel (1995)

Whiteness in higher education : the invisible missing link in diversity and racial analyses by Cabrera (2016)

Building the Anti-Racist University by Tate (2018)

Towards the "other America" : anti-racist resources for White people taking action for Black Lives Matter by Crass (2015)

White self-criticality beyond anti-racism : how does it feel to be a white problem? by Yancy (2014)

Beyond the White Negro Empathy and Anti-Racist Reading by Davis (2014)

Good white people : the problem with middle-class white anti-racism by Sullivan (2014)

Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin Banaji (2013)

White kids : growing up with privilege in a racially divided America by Hagerman (2018)

White out : understanding white privilege and dominance in the modern age by Collins and Jun (2017)