

Follen Responds to Racism **Books about Racism in Follen's Library**

The nine titles that follow are the initial purchases for a group of books for Follen's library on racism, each carefully selected to form the core of the collection. If you have a book(s) that you would like to add to it, great! Please email [frr@follen.org] Follen Responds to Racism.

Summary reviews of the books, taken from amazon.com, follow.

***The Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism, and Racial Violence* edited by Chad Williams, Kidada Williams, and Keisha Blain**

This thoroughly remarkable compendium of works about African-American life, edited by the three history professors who started the #CharlestonSyllabus Twitter hashtag, offers solid ground for the oft-requested national conversation about race. Their work firmly connects the dots among slavery, white terror organizations, the Confederate battle flag, and the murders of eight African-American Bible study members in Charleston, S.C., in 2015. ... This solid offshoot of the original online syllabus (a blockbuster bibliographic tool that's also included in this volume) is simply a must-read, both for those already versed in these topics and those just getting started. (Publishers Weekly starred review.)

***Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* by Paul Kivel, 3rd edition**

Uprooting Racism offers a framework for understanding institutional racism. It provides practical suggestions, tools, examples, and advice on how white people can intervene in interpersonal and organizational situations to work as allies for racial justice. Completely revised and updated, this expanded third edition directly engages the reader through questions, exercises, and suggestions for action, and takes a detailed look at current issues such as affirmative action, immigration, and health care. Accessible, personal, supportive, and practical, this book is ideal for students, community activists, teachers, youth workers, and anyone interested in issues of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice.

***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander**

Contrary to the rosy picture of race embodied in Barack Obama's political success and Oprah Winfrey's financial success, legal scholar Alexander argues vigorously and persuasively that [w]e have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it. Jim Crow and legal racial segregation has been replaced by mass incarceration as a system of social control. (More African Americans are under correctional control today... than were enslaved in 1850.) Alexander reviews American racial history from the colonies to the Clinton administration, delineating its transformation into the war on drugs. She offers an acute analysis of the effect of this mass incarceration upon former ...most provocatively, she reveals how both the move toward colorblindness and affirmative action may blur our vision of injustice: most Americans know and don't know the truth about mass incarceration—but her carefully researched, deeply engaging, and thoroughly readable book should change that. (Publishers Weekly starred review.)

***White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism* by Paula Rothenberg, 4th edition**

Vital, eye-opening, and powerful, this unique anthology expertly presents the significance and complexity of whiteness today and illuminates the nature of privilege and power in our society. *White Privilege* leads students through the ubiquity and corresponding invisibility of

whiteness; the historical development of whiteness and its role in race relations over time; the real everyday effects of privilege and its opposite, oppression; and finally, how our system of privilege can be changed.

***Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates**

Widely acclaimed and honored, including by the National Book Award. In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race," a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden? *Between the World and Me* is Ta-Nehisi Coates's attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son.

***The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore**

In 2000, Wes Moore had recently been named a Rhodes Scholar when he read a newspaper article about another Wes Moore who was on his way to prison. It turned out that the two of them had much in common: both young black men raised in inner-city neighborhoods by single mothers. Stunned by the similarities in their names and backgrounds and the differences in their ultimate fates, the author eventually contacted the other Wes Moore and began a long relationship.The author examines eight years in the lives of both Wes Moores to explore the factors and choices that led one to a Rhodes scholarship, military service, and a White House fellowship, and the other to drug dealing, prison, and eventual conversion to the Muslim faith, with both sharing a gritty sense of realism about their pasts. Moore ends this haunting look at two lives with a call to action and a detailed resource guide.

***White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son* by Tim Wise**

With a new preface and updated chapters, *White Like Me* is one-part memoir, one-part polemical essay collection. It is a personal examination of the way in which racial privilege shapes the daily lives of white Americans in every realm: employment, education, housing, criminal justice, and elsewhere.

Using stories from his own life, Tim Wise demonstrates the ways in which racism not only burdens people of color, but also benefits, in relative terms, those who are "white like him." He discusses how racial privilege can harm whites in the long run and make progressive social change less likely. He explores the ways in which whites can challenge their unjust privileges, and explains in clear and convincing language why it is in the best interest of whites themselves to do so. Using anecdotes instead of stale statistics, Wise weaves a narrative that is at once readable and yet scholarly, analytical and yet accessible.

***Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debbie Irving**

Debby Irving's powerful *Waking Up White* opens a rare window on how white Americans are socialized. Irving's focus on the mechanics of racism operating in just one life—her own—may lead white readers to reconsider the roots of their own perspectives—and their role in dismantling old myths. Readers of color will no doubt find the view through Irving's window fascinating, and telling. —Van Jones

***11 Reasons to Become Race Literate: A Pocket Guide to a New Conversation* by Milagros Phillips**

Race literacy changes everything. It changes the way we view ourselves and our nation. Race literacy gives us the proper context in which to ground our conversations on Race. It

touches our heart, and leaves us free to have healthier relationships, and greater compassion for self and other. We don't know what we don't know, but if we open ourselves up to new possibilities, everything changes. Written to be read in under an hour, this book is meant to spark thoughts and conversations leading to new ways of being. ... *11 Reasons to Become Race Literate: A Pocket Guide to a New Conversation*, leads its readers through a journey and a rediscovery of ourselves, our communities, and our nation. This book is for those who find it uncomfortable to have a conversation about race and who could benefit from more information on the subject.