Racism? I Want to Learn. Where Do I Start?

The murders of unarmed African-American people in the USA and the racism and injustice directed toward people of colour here in Canada are beginning to shed a light on problems that go back for hundreds of years. It is hard to know where to start to learn about the important issues surrounding racism and Indigenous peoples. Reading and educating ourselves about these issues is probably the best place to start. Once we begin to understand the history and the problems that marginalized peoples deal with, we can then find ways to get involved and support the work being done to combat racism and help to solve problems faced by people of colour in our own communities. We aren’t called to solve the whole thing, but neither are we free to abandon the work.

Books Dealing With Racism Against People of Colour:

- ‘I’m Still Here-Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness’, by Austin Channing Brown
- ‘White Fragility-Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism’, by Robin D’Angelo
- ‘The Skin We’re In’, by Desmond Cole
- ‘How to Be An Antiracist’, by Ibram X. Kendi
- ‘When They Call You A Terrorist’, by Patrisse Cullors
- ‘Between The World and Me’, by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- ‘The New Jim Crow; Mass Incarceration in The Age Of Colorblindness’, by Michelle Alexander
- ‘Just Mercy; A Story of Justice and Redemption’, by Bryan Stevenson
- ‘Viola Desmond’s Canada’, by Graham Reynolds
- ‘In the Black’, by B. Denham Jolly

Black Voices that might be helpful include:

- Neichelle Guidry - Preacher and Dean of the Chapel, Spelman College
- Chenjerai Kumanyika - Activist and assistant professor, Rutgers University’s Dept. of Journalism and Media Studies
- Lisa Sharon Harper - Speaker, writer, activist, author
- The Root - Black news and media aggregate
- Roxane Gay - writer
- Bree Newsome Bass - activist, writer, artist, consultant
- Wil Gafney - Womanist Bible scholar at Brite Divinity School, Episcopal priest
- Theresa Thames - Dean of the Chapel, Princeton University, preacher, yogi, cultivator of joy
- Gene Demby - host of NPR’s Code Switch
- Rozella White - Author, consultant, and coach
Documentary Films Dealing with Racism Against People of Colour:

- I Am Not Your Negro
- Zero Tolerance
- The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross
- Slavery by Another Name
- Freedom Riders
- Eyes on the Prize
- Journey to Justice
- Remember Africville
- 13th
- Who Killed Malcolm X

Feature Films Dealing with Racism Against People of Colour:

- Do the Right Thing
- Malcolm X
- Selma
- The Glass Shield
- Fruitvale Station
- 12 Years a Slave
- The Book of Negroes

This list is far from comprehensive, but, it is a place to start. If you have suggestions to offer that could be added to this list, please forward them to lorre.calder@sympatico.ca and we will update the list accordingly.

Lorre Calder