

← **Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves**

← Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves

Disclaimer: this is long! You won't read it in a day, but if you commit to reading consistently, you will make your way through it!

On Wednesday, November 9, many of us woke up shocked. Many young people felt robbed of what little idealism about this country they had left. Many older white folks felt confused, or like the country they had lived in their whole lives was maybe not what they thought it was. Others clung to their belief that America is still a fundamentally good country, slowly but surely moving in the right direction. They said: "Not all Donald Trump's supporters believe in his racist rhetoric. We need to humanize the angry white working class." And this, perhaps, isn't wrong. Perhaps they were just fed up with the status quo. But you cannot selectively support a platform like this. Donald Trump's election is a countrywide stamp of approval for his platform of hate and fear.

Now is the time to affirm our support for those whose lives are in danger. Bigots are not in fear for their lives because they are bigots. People of color are. A "difference of opinion" is how you like your coffee, or debates over trade and economic policy. Opinions that dehumanize others, that incite violence against them, cannot be treated as merely "opinions." They must be called what they are: bigotry.

Others have looked for solace by saying to themselves and those around them: "We will be fine." And, for the most part, well-off, older white folks will be fine. But that doesn't mean many, many Americans will be. Many already aren't. Hate crimes are on the rise. Newt Gingrich has expressed his intent to create another House Un-American Activities Committee. Many undocumented immigrants fear deportation. Muslim women and other women of color fear leaving their homes. Marginalized communities fear there will be even less accountability for police brutality, for racist abuse at the hands of private and public institutions and individuals.

We need to be thinking about *how* we are thinking about this election. This sense of comfort, of insulation from the horrors of America, is precisely what this syllabus is meant to disrupt. We, white people, clearly weren't listening hard enough to people of color, to women, to queer people, to immigrants, to Muslims, to anyone who holds a marginalized identity. This did not come as a shock to many marginalized people. Instead, as a friend of mine put it: "I am hurt but my hurt comes mainly from having my fears proven. Not from surprise. I am so angry because there are so many people who needed this result to prove to them the divide of this country instead of listening to the voices of their token friends. Instead of hearing. Instead of trusting." Now is the time to hear. Now is the time to educate and propel that education into action.

Note: Many of these sources are not from traditional news media outlets. This is intentional, as those outlets often times only feature the most heard voices and partially got us into this mess in the first place. In an effort to unlearn systemic racism and understand how we ourselves are complicit, we have chosen a variety of forms of content on top of traditional news articles, including blog posts, scholarly articles, fiction books, movies. We have organized the material thematically and chronologically, so if you are overwhelmed with the length of the document, pick a couple from each section and then move on. I ask you to read through this syllabus with an open mind and heart. If you have any thoughts on additional materials or just in general, please use the comment feature! Thanks.

How can we make sense of this election and move forward accordingly?

We can start by facing the fact that the United States has always been and is still currently a white supremacist state. For many of people in color,

← Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves

[“America will never be ‘Post Racial’”](#) (The Atlantic)

[“The Case for Reparations”](#) (The Atlantic)

[“History white people need to learn”](#) (Salon)

[“How the Government Betrayed a Landmark Civil Rights Law”](#) (Pro Publica)

[“The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism”](#) (Audre Lorde)

How exactly do white supremacy and systemic racism operate? How have we been complicit in reproducing racist ideology?

[“White Privilege”](#) (Peggy MacIntosh)

[“The White Racial Frame”](#) (Joe Feigen, an abridged version of his [book](#) of the same title)

[“Intentions Don’t Really Matter”](#) (Everyday Feminism)

[“The Privilege of Politeness”](#) (Naamen Gobert Tilahun)

[“Objectivity Can Be Oppressive”](#) (Everyday Feminism)

[“Enough with the White Male Rage Narrative”](#) (The Guardian)

[“Here Are 4 Ways to Navigate Whiteness and Feminism – Without Being a White Feminist”](#) (Everyday Feminism)

A history of #BlackLivesMatter

[A Herstory of the Black Lives Matter movement](#) (Feminist Wire)

[5 Ways of Understanding Black Lives Matter](#) (YouTube)

[From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation](#) (Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor)

[Black Lives Matter founders describe paradigm shift in the movement](#) (NPR)

[Black Lives Matter syllabus](#)

How did white liberal culture, as well as systemic racism and white supremacy, directly contribute to Donald Trump’s election?

[“Donald Trump and the Central Park Five: the racially charged rise of a demagogue”](#) (The Guardian)

[“Donald Trump is moving to the White House, and liberals put him there”](#) (The Guardian)

[“5 reasons Trump will win”](#) (Michael Moore)

[“The GOP’s Attack on Voting Rights Was the Most Under-Covered Story of 2016”](#) (The Nation)

[“Republicans and the White Working Class”](#) (Mother Jones)

← Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves

[“The Smug Style in American Liberalism”](#) (Vox)

[2 charts explaining how racism elected Trump](#) (Vox)

[The real reason we have an Electoral College: to protect slave states](#) (Vox)

Reality of life under Trump

[Day 1 in Trump's America](#) (Medium)

[Trump's First 100 Days in Office](#) (NPR)

[Trump's Plan for a Muslim Registry](#) (NYT)

[Repression of freedom of speech under Trump](#) (Pen America)

[Potential Nuclear Consequences of a Trump Presidency](#) (The Nation)

[Why we're afraid](#)

[LGBT rights under attack by a Trump presidency](#) (Slate)

[Increase in gun violence under Trump](#) (The Guardian)

[Steve Bannon is the most dangerous man in American politics in a very, very long time](#) (New Yorker)

[Autocracy: Rules for Survival](#) (New York Review of Books)

Action

[A list of pro-women, pro-immigrant, pro-earth, anti-bigot organizations to donate to](#)

[How to be an anti-racist ally](#)

[Shaun King's 25 part plan to reducing police brutality in America](#)

← Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves

["Anti-Muslim hate will increase. Here is how to not be a bystander."](#)

[How to Financially Protest DT](#)

[How to Protest Islamophobia](#)

[What can Democrats do, if anything, stop DT's disastrous climate plans?](#)

[Black Lives Matter Platform](#)

[The safety pin: a simple but effective show of solidarity](#) (but if you're going to wear the safety pin, actually be willing to stand up!)

[The DJT Resistance](#)

[Stop Steve Bannon, white supremacist, from getting anywhere close to the White House](#)

[Volunteer for the ACLU](#)

[Call your representatives and demand they stand up to DT!](#)

[Resources for non-Black Asians on Anti-Blackness](#)

Longer form:

Non-fiction books

[*The New Jim Crow*](#) (Michelle Alexander)

[*Hillbilly Elegy*](#) (JD Vance)

[*A People's History of the United States*](#) (Howard Zinn)

[*Racism Without Racists*](#) (Eduardo Bonilla-Silva)

[*Dog Whistle Politics*](#) (Ian Haney-Lopez)

[*At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance*](#) (Danielle McGuire)

← Syllabus for White People to Educate Themselves

[*What's the Matter with Kansas: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* \(Thomas Frank\)](#)

[Haymarket Book's reading list](#) (includes books on Islamophobia and American empire, which are topics not adequately represented above)

Memoir/Essay

[*The Souls of Black Folk*](#) (W. E. B. Du Bois)

[*The Fire Next Time*](#) (James Baldwin)

[*The Fire this Time*](#) (Jesmyn Ward)

[*Invisible Man Got the Whole World Watching*](#) (Mychal Denzel Smith)

[*Citizen*](#) (Claudia Rankine)

Movies

13th (available on Netflix)

Requiem for the American Dream (available on Netflix)

Fiction books

[*Beloved*](#) (Toni Morrison)

[*The Bluest Eye*](#) (Toni Morrison)

[*How To Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*](#) (Kiese Laymon)

[*Octavia's Brood*](#) (Walidah Imarisha)

[*Kindred*](#) (Octavia Butler)