

Connecting the past to the present can aid us in understanding some of the reasons leading to racism and to explaining current inequities and structural racism. Knowledge of history can show us the relevance of the past to the present.

SUGGESTED READING

PRE-SLAVERY

-“African Americans in the Colonial Era from African Origins through the American Revolution”
Wright, Donald

-African American life in the English colonies from 1619 - the late 1700's.

FROM AFRICA TO SLAVERY

-“Dreams of Africa in Alabama . The Slavery Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America”

Diouf, Sylviane

-In 1860, 110 Africans were smuggled to America after the slave trade was outlawed. After 5 years of slavery, the freed slaves recreated African life in America.

-“Africans in America. America's Journey through Slavery” (PBS series 1998)

Johnson, Charles/Smith, Patricia

-Jamestown landing to the eve of the civil war. Contains original documents, first hand accounts, illustrations and photographs.

SLAVE TESTIMONIES

-“Remembering Slavery, African Americans Talk About Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation”

Berlin, Ira/Farreau, Marc/Miller, Steven editors

-Interviews of former slaves by the Federal Writers Project in the late 1930's.

-“The Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb an American Slave”

Bibb, Henry

-Autobiography recounting Bibb's bondage, escape and becoming a newspaper editor of the Voice of the Fugitive.

-“The Classic Slave Narratives”

Gates, Henry editor

-Narratives from: Claudah, Equiano, Mary Price, Frederick Douglas and Harriet Jacobs.

-“My Folks Don't Want Me to Talk About Slavery”

Hurmen, Belinda editor

First person narratives of 21 former North Carolina slaves.

-“Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl”

Jacobs, Harriet

-Born a slave in 1814, she hid from her owner for 7 years in a nearby storeroom prior to her escape with her children.

-“To Be a Slave”

Lester, Julius

-Compilation of interviews by the Federal Writers’ Project and the American Anti-Slavery Society.

-“Blacks in Bondage. Letters of African Slaves

Starobin, Robert editor

-Approximately 100 letters written by African Americans during or shortly after slavery.

-“American Slavery as It Is”

Weld, Theodore editor

-Testimonies from freed slaves and active/former slave owners from 1803 - 1895.

FREEDOM

-“Been in the Storm so Long. The Aftermath of Slavery”

Litwack, Leon

-Study of black life in the South from the Civil War to the that century. The book used mostly primary sources.

-“Envisioning Emancipation”

Willis, Debrah/Krauthamer, Barbara

-150 photographs compiled by photographic and slavery historians,

RECONSTRUCTION

-“America’s Reconstruction. People and Politics After the Civil War”

Foner, Eric/Mahoney, Olivia

-Writes about the origins of Reconstruction and the response of blacks and whites to Southern defeat, emancipation and reconstruction policies.

-“Reconstruction, America’s Unfinished Revolution”

Finer, Eric

-Focuses on slaves becoming free workers and interacting with whites based on new class structures and changing racial attitudes/relations.

-“Strong the Road. Reconstruction, White Supremacy and the Rise of Jim Crow”

Gates, Henry

-Explains how emancipation and reconstruction evolved into white supremacy and Jim Crow.

-“The Trouble They Seen, The Story of Reconstruction in the Words of African Americans”

Sterling, Dorothy editor

-Testimonies from 1865-1877 describing the first year of freedom, Freedman’s Bureau, violence, political participation, the black community and black codes.

POST RECONSTRUCTION

-“The Promise of the New South. Life After Reconstruction”

Ayers, Edward

-Living in the South after reconstruction, 1870’s-1906.

MIGRATION

-“The Last Train North”

Taulbert, Clifton

-The true story of a 17 year old migrating in 1963 from Mississippi to St. Louis and his acclimation to the north.

-“The Warmth of Other Suns, The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration”

Wilkerson, Isabel

-Follows the migration of a sharecropper, Harlem civil rights worker and Louisianan migrating to pursue medical studies.

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

-“Growing Up Black, From Slave Days to the Present”

David, Jay

-25 African Americans describe their childhood memories (Maya Angelou, Frederick Douglas, Angela Davis, etc.)

-“Dreaming in Color, Living in Black and White. Our Own Stories of Growing Up Black in America”

Holliday, Laurel

-Testimonies of growing up black.

-“Coming of Age in Mississippi “

Moody, Anne

-Describes growing up in Mississippi in the 1940’s and 50’s in a racist society.

-“When We Were Colored”

Taulbert, Clifton

-Growing up in the segregated south.

BLACK HISTORY

-“100 Amazing Facts About the Negro”

Gates, Henry

-A question and answer format. Example: “what are the most important facts to know about American slavery?”

-“From Slavery to Freedom. A History of Negro Americans”

Franklin, John

-Traces 1,000 years from African civilization, slavery, West Indies slave struggles, Latin America relationship to black history, U.S. Civil War, reconstruction, W.W. 2, Harlem Renaissance up to the 1980's.

-“Black Odyssey. The Afro-American Ordeal in Slavery”

Huggins, Nathan

-Traces the journey from Africa to emancipation.

-“In Their Own Words. A History of the American Negro”

Melton, Milton

Told through letters, speeches and testimony in 3 volumes(1619-1865, 1865-1916, 1916-1966).

CLASSICS

-“The complete autobiography of Frederick Douglass “

Douglas, Frederick

Narrative of the author in 3 volumes(Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and my Freedom and Life and Times of Frederick Douglass).

-“The Souls of Black Folk”

Du Bois, W.E.B

Describes what it is like to be black in America in the beginning of the 20th century. First published in 1903.

-“March”

Lewis, John/Aydin, Andrew/Powell, Nate

-A trilogy in comic book format describing the life of John Lewis.

-“Up From Slavery”

Washington, Booker T

-Describes the author's progression from slavery to the head of Tuskegee Institute.

JIM CROW

-“Remembering Jim Crow.African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South”

-Chafe, William/Gavins,Raymond/Korstad, Robert editors

-An oral history of segregation based on 1,265 interviews.

-“Freedoms Children.Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories”

Levine, Ellen

-testimonies of 30 African Americans in the 1950-1960's segregated south.

-“Trouble in Mind, Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow”

Liteack, Leon

-Documents, 1st person narratives describing black southern life in the late 1900's and early 20th century. Sequel to “Been in the Storm so Long”.

BLACK JEWISH RELATIONS

-“Strangers and Neighbors: Relations between Blacks and Jews in the United States”

Adams, Marianne/Bracey, John editors

-Analysis and documents exploring black- jewish relations in America over the past 300 years.

-“The Quiet Voices; Southern Rabbis and Black Civil Rights, 1880-1990's”

Busman, Mark/Kolin, Berkeley editors

-essays focusing on southern rabbis civil rights work since reconstruction with an emphasis on the civil rights movement.

-“Wandering Dixie. Dispatched from the lost Jewish South”

Eisenfeld, Sue

-The author describes her travels through 9 southern states exploring the history of southern Jews. She writes about jewish confederates and their participation in slavery.

-“Jews, Slaves and the Slave Trade. Setting the Record Straight”

Fever, Eli

-the role of Jews during the Atlantic Slave Trade.

-“The Temple Bombing”

Greene, Melissa

-in 1958, The Temple, in Atlanta, was bombed by white supremacists in retaliation for rabbi rothschild's civil rights activism.

-“Heeding the Call: Jewish Voices in America's Civil Rights Struggle”

Finkelstein, Norman

-Describes the shared unity among both groups.

-“Troubling the Waters. Black Jewish Relations in the American Century”

Greenberg, Chery

-The author describes the black- jewish alliance from the 1940's - mid 1960's.

-“Jews and Blacks,a Dialogue on Race, Religion and Culture in America”

Lerner,Michael/West, Cornel

-examines issues uniting blacks and Jews in the past and their separation now.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

-“Between the World and Me”

Ta- Nehisi Coates

- the authors letter to his teenage son on being black in America.

-“Antiracist Baby”

Kendi,Ibram x.

-A board book about anti racism for toddlers,

-“We're Different,We're All the Same”

Kate's,Bobbi

-explores our similarities and differences.

-“The Snowy Day”

Keats, Ezra

This book features a black child.

-Ezra's Big Shabbat Question”

Brown,Aviva

A self published book(check google) about an interracial jewish boy questioning his rabbi.

-“Always an Olivia”

Herron,Carolivia

-A girl describes her great/ grandma's Jewish African heritage.

-“Lets Talk about Race”

Julius,Lester

-Experiences of a black Jewish for children.

-“The Color of Us”

Katz,Karen

-A celebration of the beautiful colors of children from a 7 year olds prospective.

-“What Lane?”

Maldonado,Torrey

-The experiences of a black boy adjusting to his perception as a threat to others.

-“Sulwe”

Nyong'o, Lupita

-Explains the prejudice of dark vs. lighter skin.

-“Freedom River”

Rappaport, Doreen

-A true story which follows a former slave from 1827-1900 from slavery to becoming a businessman and Underground Railroad conductor.

-“Stealing Home”

Schwartz, Ellen

-A story of a biracial Jewish child in 1947.

ANTIRACISM

-“The Nature of Prejudice”

Allport, Gordon

-A classic study discussing the roots and nature of prejudice.

-“White Rage. the Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide”

Anderson, Carol

-explores the rationale for white rage from the time of reconstruction to President Obama due to African American advancement.

-“White Fragility. Why it's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism”

Diangelo, Robin

-“Explores white identity and superiority/privileges. White fragility results in us denying our privileges and tolerating racism.

-“How to be an Antiracist”

Kendi, Ibram X

-Asks us to reflect about ourselves in a new way. Describes racism, value systems leading to false hierarches/values which intersect with class, geography and perception of others . Includes writers own experiences.

-“Stamped from the Beginning. The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America”

Kendi, Ibram X

-Explores how racist ideas created, spread and enmeshed into American society viewed through the life and times of: Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, W.E.B Du Bois and Angela Davis.

-“How Do You See Us?” Nickerson, Amy

-A personal narrative of racial experiences of a wealthy black family.

-“So You Want to Talk About Race?”

Oluo,Ijeoma

-Guidelines and tips for discussing police brutality, the “n” word, affirmative action, the school to prison pipeline, hair, anger,etc.

-“Caste, the Origins of our Discontent”

Wilkerson,Isabel

-How a caste system affects life in America,India and Nazi Germany. The book describes how the caste system is experienced daily.

-“Black Fatigue.How Racism Erodes the Mind,Body and Spirit”

Winters,Mary

-Discusses black fatigue physically and emotionally and relates racism to issues of health,economics,work,education,social interactions,etc.

-“White Like Me,Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son”

Wise,Tim

- -How White privilege affects employment,education,housing, criminal justice,etc. and ultimately harms whites and decreases the opportunity for social change. Includes personal experiences