Resources on racism and antiracism

It would be impossible to capture the full history of race in the US in one report. Thankfully, we don’t have to: many brilliant writers and thinkers have turned their attention to this country’s construction of race and legacy of White supremacy. Here are just a few pieces of essential reading, watching, and listening. Click the links below to go straight to the resources, or refer to our full resource guide on page 69.

“The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross” on PBS
Henry Louis Gates Jr. wrote and presents this Emmy-winning miniseries that covers the history of African Americans from slavery to present day through interviews, academic debate, and visits to historic sites.

“Seeing White” from Scene on Radio
This podcast series investigates the history of Whiteness: how the conception of a White race formed, how it has transformed, and how it persists as the default.

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
Coates’s novella, written as a letter to his teenage son, gives readers a glimpse into daily life as a Black individual and empowers them with knowledge to confront the present.

“The 1619 Project” by The New York Times
1619 marks the beginning of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. The New York Times reports through multimedia on how the US was shaped by the carnage and economic prosperity resulting from slavery.

Kimberlé Crenshaw’s TED Talk, “The Urgency of Intersectionality”
For a long time, there was no word to describe layered discrimination, which allowed our justice system to overlook the plight of African American women and women of color. Kimberlé Crenshaw explains the term she coined to bring to the surface the intersection of identities.

Women, Race, and Class by Angela Davis
In a series of essays that stretch back in American history to the abolitionist movement, Davis reveals the way that women’s liberation has not only largely promoted the interests of White, middle class women but deliberately excluded the voices of women of color.

Black Stats: African Americans by the Numbers in the Twenty-First Century by Monique W. Morris
Morris’s work uses statistics to paint a fuller picture of the lives of African Americans today, challenging commonly held stereotypes through facts and figures on marriage, arts attendance, voting habits, and beyond.

“Race—The Power of an Illusion” on California Newsreel and PBS
PBS’s interactive webpage complements California Newsreel’s three-part documentary that explores the (not so) basic question: “What is race?”

13th on Netflix
This award-winning Netflix documentary, directed by Ava DuVernay, provides an in-depth analysis of the US incarceration system, which holds a disproportionate number of people of color, and, when you look closely, bears a disturbing resemblance to enslavement.

Stamped from the Beginning and How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi
In his National Book Award–winning work, Stamped From the Beginning, historian Kendi unpacks how racism, an intellectually devised construct, is entrenched and shrouded in US society. He explodes the idea of the “post-racial society” many Americans applaud. In his follow-up book, Kendi urges all to move beyond a basic awareness of racism and commit to building an antiracist society.