

Kendi, Ibram. X. (2016). *Stamped from the beginning: the definitive history of racist ideas in America*. New York: Nation Books

This book completely altered my view of American history. It relates a story brimming with documented facts. Ibram X. Kendi, the author, is a scholar of Black American History and a Professor at American University in Washington, D. C. His 582-page book received the 2016 National Book Award for Non-fiction. A fellow participant in a racial literacy group recommended the book to me. *Stamped from the Beginning: The definitive History of Racial Ideas in America* gave me a historical account of racism that was very different from anything I had learned in school. I realized that I had been ignorant about the historical facts that Kendi presented.

The book covers the stories of five different major figures in American History: Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, W.E. DuBois, and Angela Davis. I was particularly interested in the segment of the book that related to Angela Davis. I remember those years from a very different perspective. I was an 18-year-old college student. I felt terrified by the threat of black revolution. I learned that the politicians of the time wanted me and all white people to fear this possibility.

After reading Kendi's book, I see a very different country, from the one I grew up in. I now see how racism was built into every segment of our society including: health care, housing, education, jobs, income, and available resources. This book showed me how implicit covert racism can be more dangerous than overt racism.

As group therapists, I believe we have a responsibility to have our eyes wide open, to know ourselves, and the society we live in, and to consider the impact of racism on our clients and patients. If we are unaware, we limit our ability to be effective in group work.

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