

## **EGPS Work Group for Racial Equity Resources**

### **Purpose**

To provide resources about racism to professionals who work with groups

### **Websites recommended by the Work Group for Racial Equity**

- **Anti-Racist Alliance** <http://antiracistalliance.com/> a collective of human service practitioners and educators committed to bring a clear and deliberate anti-racist structural power analysis to social service education and practice. Group practitioners could benefit from explanations of how racism formed historically and is manifest currently in society and in interpersonal relationships
- **People's Institute for Survival and Beyond** [www.pisab.org](http://www.pisab.org) offers Undoing Racism programs and workshops to help individuals, communities, and institutions “move beyond addressing the symptoms of racism to undoing the causes so as to create a more just and equitable society.” Group practitioners could benefit from the organization's principles and workshops.
- **The Aspen Institute** [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org) is an educational and policy studies organization that fosters non-partisan leadership on critical societal issues such as race. Group practitioners could learn how to assess racism within organizational structures.
- **The Movement for Black Lives** <http://policy.m4bl.org/> is a coalition of groups across the United States representing the interests of Black communities, created in 2016 in response to sustained and increasingly visible violence against Black communities, with the purpose of creating a united front and establishing a political platform. This collective is made up of more than 50 organizations , with members such as the Black Lives Matter Network, The National Conference of Black Lawyers, and the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. Group leaders could use this site to better understand the six

key demands that the organization sees as part of the problems Black people must address at local, state, and federal levels.

- Colorlines <http://www.colorlines.com> is a daily news site about racial equity. It publishes Race Forward [www.raceforward.org](http://www.raceforward.org) to advance racial justice through research, media, and practice. Group practitioners can examine the pervasiveness of racism in social institutions and how to challenge colorblind racism.
- Equal Justice Initiative <http://eji.org> , founded by death row lawyer and human rights activist Bryan Stevenson, includes reports on the history of Slavery and Lynching in America. Group practitioners could learn about the direct links from American slavery to mass incarceration and capital punishment.

### Online Articles, Essays, Podcasts, Blogs, Videos recommended by the Work Group for Racial Equity

- The Brian Lehrer Show Thirty Election Issues: Issue 23-Facing Whiteness <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/bl> (Search under Topics. Click on Politics, then click on “Facing Whiteness”). Group practitioners could learn about political, educational, and social issues surrounding race and Whiteness.
- Neuroscience and Racism, <http://www.agpa.org> (Search under Continuing Education. Click on E-Learning, then click on Free AGPA Member Library) by Dr. Alexis D. Abernethy, Ph.D., and Dr. Francis L. Stevens about how race-related stimuli is processed in the brain. Group practitioners could learn how to address implicit racism in groups.

- Robin DiAngelo, Ph.D. Anti-Racist Teacher and Writer <http://www.robindiangelo.com> includes copyrighted handouts and bibliography of her work on whiteness and white fragility. Group practitioners could access valuable articles and strategies about unpacking whiteness in group.
- Jay Smooth 2011: TED Talk at Hampshire College, “How I learned to Stop Worrying and Love Discussing Race” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbdxeFcQtaU> . Group practitioners could learn about the value of talking about race in group.
- White Awake [www.whiteawake.org](http://www.whiteawake.org) is an organization with a spiritual orientation, dedicated to promoting racial awareness for individuals and organizations. Group practitioners could utilize their workbook and process.
- “White Debt” by Eula Biss [www.NYTimes.com/2015/12/06/magazine/white-debt.html? r=0](http://www.NYTimes.com/2015/12/06/magazine/white-debt.html? r=0) grapples with issues of moral and material debt. Group practitioners could acquire language to raise these issues within their groups.
- Tim Wise, White Anti-Racist Activist Speaker, Writer, Author, Documentarian [www.timwise.org](http://www.timwise.org) provides an archive of essays and videos. Group practitioners could deepen their understanding of structural racism and whiteness.
- Rudy Lucas, LCSW, CASAC and Christine Schmidt, LCSW-R, New York therapists and co-facilitators of the EGPS Work Group for Racial Equity and many groups focusing on racial identity, awareness, and undoing racism, are interviewed by two Austin therapists Patty Orwell and Sue Marriott in a podcast on racial identity development. See: <http://www.therapistuncensored.com/racial-identity>

## Readings about Race Recommended by EGPS Members

- DiAngelo, Robin (2011), White Fragility. *International Journal of Clinical Pedagogy*, 3 (3) 54-70

This article describes White Fragility as a psychological state that White people often experience when exposed to minimal amount of racial stress. White Fragility is a defensive reaction that triggers both emotional reactions (fear, anger, guilt) and behavioral responses (unresponsive silence or flight). Because White people have been insulated from racial stress the expectation for racial comfort is experienced as a social norm. Learning to sit with racial discomfort and to engage in dialogue about racial situations is essential to building a non-racist society.

Group professionals will better recognize and respond to racial stress when we are aware of the defenses that arise from white fragility that cause us to avoid race talk.

Christine Schmidt, LCSW-R

- *The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. DuBois (1903) and (1994)

Published by A.C. McClure & Co and Republished by Dover Publications

This classic work contains the short stories and essays that form the basis for the modern Civil Rights Movement. He began a thorough sociological thesis on why blacks in the South had the right to a good education, to be treated with equity and justice and had the right to vote. His concept of “double consciousness” is a seminal contribution to all disciplines who examine the notions of Consciousness. His essays offer a unique insight into the state of mind of an intellectually gifted Black man at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as he delivers his eloquent expression of as he says... “What it’s like to be THE PROBLEM.” DuBois fought to resist the eradication of Negro Spirituals by fighting to retain as a vital cultural contribution what he called the “authentic message from the slave to the world.”

Group leaders who have a wish to better understand the “unique” feature of transference/resistance in their patients-of-color will be well served to understand DuBois’ explanation of DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS as a “sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.”

Rudy Lucas, LCSW, CASAC

- *The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin (1962)

Published by Vintage International

Baldwin wrote the eloquent essays contained in this book in the early days of the civil rights movement. He exposes the physical, emotional, and spiritual toll racial injustice claims on lives of Americans - both Black and White. Rather than indicting White people for the racial violence of white supremacy, he showers pity on the white innocence that leads White people, unable to take responsibility for historical racial violence, to live in fear of Black people. Baldwin shatters the myth of whiteness that espouses Christian love, democracy and fairness and reminds us that White people can learn love from Black people who have survived centuries of racial oppression.

Group practitioners would gain insight into the spiritual, emotional, and physical impact of racial injustice.

Christine Schmidt, LCSW-R

- *How the Irish Became White* by Noel Ignatiev (1995) Routledge

As a White female of Irish-American heritage, I found this book important, challenging, and saddening. Using historical facts, individual profiles, and descriptions of the racialized politics, Ignatiev effectively traces the roots of the conflicts between Irish and Blacks. He shows the beginnings of the Irish Involvement in journalism, politics, union organizing, firefighting and policing. I learned about the choices the Irish made in a racialized New World, where to be aligned with Whites, they separated themselves from the Abolitionist movement. In America, the Irish were quick to react, fight and identify themselves White to escape the fate of the Blacks.

Group discussions of this book may evoke many emotions for Irish-Americans previously unaware of their racist history.

Julie Sullivan-Redmond, LCSW-R

- *Are Italians White? How Race is made in America* (2003) Edited by Jennifer Guglielmo & Salvatore Salerno Routledge

This book is a collection of sixteen essays written by mostly Italian-American authors. It is divided into four sections that cover the full range of the Italian immigrant experience from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. During their work together, the two Italian-American scholars Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno, were deeply affected by the murder of an African-American young man by an Italian-American man in Chicago, and the murders of African-American men in Howard Beach, Queens, and Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. They asked the question, “What are we going to do about racism in our communities?” The book gives the reader a deeper understanding of the complexity of the relationships between African-Americans and Italian-Americans. Jennifer Guglielmo wrote that Italian-Americans, who in addition to discrimination had the privilege of whiteness, objectified African-American with the stigma of criminality and distanced themselves to legitimate racist violence and to focus on their own fear. She notes that Italian-Americans relationships with African-Americans have been complicated by a history of “collaboration, intimacy, hostility, and distancing.”

Reading this book helps the facilitator understand that developing cohesion in a group with people who have a complicated history, requires a focus on identifying and respecting where each person is in the process.

Julie Sullivan-Redmond, LCSW-R



- *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* by Toni Morrison (1992)

Vintage Books, A division of Random House

Based on a series of lectures given as a visiting professor at Harvard, Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* argues that the American literary imagination was formed (and deformed) by racial ideology. Exploring works by Poe, Faulkner, Twain, and Hemingway, Toni Morrison illustrates how omnipresent are themes, tropes, and language associated with what she calls "Africanism", a dynamic discourse by which "whiteness" emerges as a contradistinction to the subjugated, savage, and sexualized black American presence. As compelling and creative as her discussions of authors' works are, it is her observations of literary criticism that chillingly find form in the flesh-and-blood "real world". *Playing in the Dark* is remarkable for its relevance and power beyond Morrison's beautiful and subversive words - she demonstrates how privileging a way of seeing "white" is a mindless mimic of a racial superiority. This was an eye-opening read from the beginnings of the "cultural wars" that continue today.

*Playing in the Dark* reminds group practitioners how deftly projection and disavowal can occupy/oppress a group. While this short read may not offer up direct application or direction in clinical work, it did highlight how literature — like group—offer opportunities to "meet the world".

Libby O'Connor, LCSW

- *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide* by Carol Anderson, Ph.D. (2016)

Published by Bloomsbury Publishing

Carol Anderson, an African-American Professor at Emory University, draws a compelling conclusion that white rage is what keeps the embers of racism burning in the United States today. She draws from her vast and exceptionally well-documented historical knowledge to make a clear and convincing argument. There is no rhetoric, no melodrama, no righteous indignation. It is just plain and simple facts told in an easy to read, compassionate, and powerful narrative.

This work will enable group therapists to be more aware and sensitive to the many and subtle ways in which racism is expressed, and the impact it must undermine trust in the therapeutic relationship.

Kathleen Ault, PMHNP-BC, PMHCS-BC, CGP

- ***Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015)**

**Published by Spiegel and Grau**

It is no surprise that James Baldwin inspired Ta-Nehisi Coates. When interviewed during a New York Public Library Podcast, Coates acknowledged that he wanted to write like the master himself. Following in Baldwin's style, Coates writes an epistle to his adolescent son. He wishes to enlighten, educate, and protect his son. He shares his knowledge about the world, his life experiences, and his understanding about what it means to be a Black man in a very dangerous world.

I found myself wanting to understand more about his world - a world I know little about. I quote his words to his son: "Here is what I would like for you to know: In America it is tradition to destroy the black body – it is heritage." These sobering, insightful words awaken something deep inside me. I am horrified by the reality in which many people must live their daily lives. No other writing has made me more aware of the plight of the Black man, woman, and children in this country. Coates is engaging entertaining, provocative and has a powerful narrative style. This is a book I kept returning to, each time determined to better understand his message.

This award-winning work will empower the group therapist to work more effectively with all African-Americans and to be more compassionate and understanding of the barriers that might arise during treatment.

**Kathleen Ault PMHNP-BC, PMHCS-BC, CGP**

- ***Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult (2016)**

**Published by Ballantine Books**

Jodi Picoult's latest novel is about an African-American woman, Ruth Jefferson, whose husband is killed while serving in Afghanistan. Picoult opens the first chapter of the book with a quote from Benjamin Franklin, "Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are." This is a thread woven throughout the novel. Ms. Jefferson is struggling to raise her adolescent son while working as a labor and delivery room nurse. She has had a stellar nursing career for over 20 years until a white supremacist asserts that he does not want any African-American caring for his wife and child. This one hate-inspired, irrational, racist assertion wreaks havoc on Ruth Jefferson's life. During the twists and turns of the narrative, Ruth Jefferson's experience clearly illustrates the impact and consequences of racism. The novel is easy to read, a page-turner, and gut-wrenching. I strongly recommend it for any book club selection.

This book will touch the soul of the group therapist. It gets you to experience the subtle and not so subtle dilemmas, and indecencies that any African-American might have to face because of institutionalized racism in our country.

Kathleen Ault PMHNP-BC, PMHCS-BC, CGP

- ***The New Jim Crow Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander (2010)**

**Published by The New Press**

When I was a college student in the late 1960's and reading a classic text about social stratification in the U.S., I maintained that racial segregation of African-Americans created a caste system for black people in this country. While the laws that legalized racial segregation and Jim Crow practices have been abolished, Alexander discusses the creation of a New Jim Crow.

Michelle Alexander's extensive research illustrates how a permanent social caste system has been created without defining it on the basis of race. "In the era of color blindness" ...we use our criminal justice system to label black and brown men "criminals". We now discriminate against criminals in the same ways that we discriminated against African-Americans during the era of Jim Crow. When you are labeled a felon, you face discrimination in employment, housing, and denial of the right to vote, the right to serve on a jury and even the right to food stamps.

Michelle Alexander's historic book documented the mass incarceration of black and brown people in the United States. This country has the highest rates of incarceration of any country in the world. Alexander demonstrates that mass incarceration in the U.S. is a system of racial and social control and not crime prevention. Mass incarceration has not been driven by crime rates. Black incarceration rates soared whether crime rates were up or down.

Drug convictions accounted for most of the explosion of the incarceration rates. A drug war was waged on black and brown communities. Those arrested during the "drug war" were generally for possession and "those in state prisons for drug offenses had no history of violence or significant selling activity." Those arrested were not major dealers nor were they arrested for dangerous drugs. 80% of those arrested in the 1990's were for marijuana use.

***The New Jim Crow Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander (continued)***

“Studies show that people of all colors use and sell illegal drugs at remarkably similar rates. If there are significant difference in the surveys..., they frequently suggest that white youth, are more likely to engage in drug crimes than people of color.” However, in some states, black men have been imprisoned on drug charges twenty to fifty times greater than white men.

Alexander maintains that nothing short of a social movement will end mass incarceration. This social movement must address the racial divisions that have given rise to mass incarceration. Historically, “poor white and working class whites chose their racial status over their common economic interests with blacks,” which maintained a racial caste system which barely benefited whites but devastated blacks.

Alexander echoes Martin Luther King’s message of building a human rights movement; a movement that would include all people. We would create a society in which all people are valued and have the right to food, housing, health care, and education. We would create a society that values education over incarceration; jobs over jails.

By reading this book, the Bible of the movement to end mass incarceration, group therapists will learn how mass incarceration has maintained this nation’s racial divide and learn about the movement to end this divide.

Judith, C. White, LCSW

**Book:** *Stamped from the Beginning: The definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*

**Author:** Ibram X. Kendi

**Date of Publication:** 2016

**Publisher:** Nation Books, New York

**Why I would recommend this book?**

**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.

**How can this book be useful to groups?**

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.

**Kathleen Ault PMHNP-BC, CGP**

**Book: *Homegoing: A Novel* Author: Yas Gyasi**

**Date of Publication: 2016**

**Publisher: Alfred Knopf, New York**

**Why I would recommend this book**

My daughter urged me to read this book last summer. I started it on my vacation and found it compelling and so engrossing that I had trouble putting it down. I would read every evening and continue until the wee hours in the morning. Once I finished, I immediately started reading it again. The second read was even richer and more rewarding than the first.

*Homegoing* is an epic novel that spans 300 years. It starts by following the lives of two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, born in two very different villages in Africa. It tells the story of their descendants and



**the impact that slavery had on the lives of those that were kidnapped from Africa and brought to distant shores as slaves in a foreign land, and those that remained behind.**

**This is the debut novel of Yas Gyasi. She was born in Ghana, grew up in Huntsville, Alabama and is a graduate and fellow of the Iowa Writer's workshop. *Homegoing* is beautifully written. It is one of those rare finds that you want to share with just about everyone. It is a great book for any book discussion group and has a reading guide to go with it.**

**Kathleen Ault, PMHNP-BC, CGP**

**Title: The Ezra Klein Podcast: *Is modern society making us depressed?***

**Ezra Klein interviews Johann Hari, Author of *Lost Connections***

**Date of Podcast: 4/16/18**

**Publisher: VOX Podcast**

**Recommendation Template:**

**Why I would recommend this book, article, or movie**

**In his new book, *Lost Connections*, Hari advances an argument both radical and obvious: Depression and anxiety are more than just chemical imbalances in the brain. They are the result of our social environments, our relationships, our political contexts — our lives, in short.**

Hari, who has struggled with depression since his youth, went on a journey to try to understand the social causes of mental illness, the ones we prefer not to talk about, because changing them is harder than handing out a pill. What he returned with is a book that claims to be about depression, but it is actually about the ways we've "screwed up" modern society and created a world that leaves far too many of us alienated, anxious, despairing, and lost.

### How would this podcast work in groups

The philosopher, Jiddu Krishnamurti famously said, "It is no measure of health to be well-adjusted to a sick society." So that, then, is the question Hari and Klein consider in this conversation: How sick, really, is our society? This podcast offers group members a way to connect with others by examining ourselves and our society.

Rudy Lucas, LCSW, CASAC

**Book Title:** *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*

**Author:** Edward Baptist, PhD

**Date of Publication:** \_2014

**Publisher:** Basic Books, New York

**Why I would recommend this book**

I have long known that there is more to the legacy of slavery in the United States than I was taught in school. I knew that the legal slave trade ended in 1807 but that the exploitation of people of African descent has never completely ended, as evidenced by the mass incarceration and continued exploitation of people who are identified as black and brown.

Baptist explains how the kidnapping of Africans and the forced labor of those who survived was engineered to produce and re-produce the commodity-generating empire that we call the United States. The truth is that slavery was integral to the birth of American capitalism and so it was written into the US Constitution. The tobacco plantations of Virginia and the cotton plantations of Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana fed the banking and insurance systems of New York and New England. When it became cheaper to force enslaved people to reproduce rather than kidnap people from Africa, the sales and insurance industries exploded with new wealth - all built on the backs of stolen men and women and children. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, slave coffles of chained people were forced to walk from the plantations in Virginia and the Carolinas to the Alabama, Louisiana and Georgia to labor in cotton fields under conditions so extreme that the average death came in less than seven years.

Baptist describes the torture of the whip and the continual suffering. Families of African descent were regularly separated and members were sold on auction blocks. Terror was a tool and trauma was the result. Meanwhile, the insurance industry thrived; bonds were issued on the lives of laboring human beings and the Western world responded to the growth of American capital markets with confidence. Southern cotton built the Liverpool and Manchester cotton markets. The United States exported capitalism, on the backs of the enslaved.

While much of Baptist's research isn't new, the power of the book lies in the details with which he describes the systemic pattern of Black exploitation by every state in the United States. No state was exempt from this abuse of human beings in the creating of a capitalist

empire. Baptist pays a lot of attention to “stealing”. First, stealing people from Africa; then stealing their labor; then stealing their wives and fathers and children; and trying to steal their souls. Baptist writes, “Enslaved African Americans survived forced migration to the cotton South and then shaped the modern world through their labor, survival, and resistance [and this is] crucial to understanding our collective past, present, and future”. (page 426) Baptist shows that slavery wasn’t a footnote in American history but was, in fact, the essence of American capitalism.

### **How this book would work in groups**

The history of race in the United States has shaped our lives and is enacted both consciously and unconsciously in groups. Group leaders would benefit from knowing the true story of this country in order to understand the trauma, resilience, and denial that arise when racial dynamics are present.

**Christine Schmidt LCSW, CGP**

**Book Title: *Slavery by Another Name: the Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II***

**Author: Douglas A. Blackmon**

**Date of Publication: 2008**

**Publisher: Anchor Books**

**Why I would recommend this book**

**As I separate factual U.S. history from myth, I am confronted with a depth, tolerance, and embrace of white racial violence that I hadn't learned in school. White racial violence, sanctioned by state laws, fed the engines of our modern day corporations.**

**This book begins where Edward Baptist's book ends – at the civil war – with the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments that granted equality, rights, and representation to formerly enslaved people. Blackmon describes in horrific detail, the undermining of these rights in order to effectively establish new ways of enslaving black people. Bargaining away federal oversight of the new Constitutional amendments, Southern states created a strong states' rights movement and passed laws known as Black Codes. These codes became the mechanism for terrorizing black citizens, and forcing them to labor in convict leasing programs.**

**Essentially, Black people were re-enslaved. Convict leasing built the great American railways, worked the mines that fed the US steel industry, and built the timber and turpentine industries. Nearly all black men who were arrested in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were “leased” by state and county governments to private corporations. This is the story of four million slaves freed in 1863 and the violent and terrorizing oppression imposed on tens of millions of their descendants. Southern laws were written to criminalize black life so that the supply of convict labor was regularly replenished. Outside of prison, the system of sharecropping ensured that black farmers were constantly in dept to white landowners – and always at risk of imprisonment.**

**The legacy of the states’ rights movements haunts our political landscape today and ensures that white supremacy continues.**

### **How this book would work in groups**

**This book lays bare the legacy of racial violence that continues to haunt our national character. The fears, anxieties, and rage as well as the denial of this violence are internalized in our psyches and play out in our interpersonal relationships. We definitely experience the residue of this historical trauma in therapeutic and social groups.**

**Christine Schmidt, LCSW, CGP**

**Book: *The Persistence of Slavery in the United States and Life***

**Author, David Billings**

**Date of Publication: 2016**

**Publisher: Crandall, Dostie & Douglass Books, Inc.**

**Why I would recommend this book**

**I read this book, laughing through my tears. David Billings is a white-identified Mississippi Methodist minister who writes in the southern tradition of storytelling. He is a dedicated white anti-racist activist, but has some outrageous stories to tell about his path from race ignorant to activist. He weaves his personal narrative around his growing understanding of the true history of white supremacy and compels readers to see that community organizing with an anti-racist conscience is the only way to undo racism. Billings draws lessons from his activism in the Civil Rights movement. He is a core trainer with the Peoples' Institute for Survival and Beyond.**

**How this book would work in groups**

**When Billings writes about community organizing to undo racism, he is writing about working in groups and with groups. He writes about the psychological impact of internalized racial oppression – racial superiority and racial inferiority – that is woven into our self-esteem and coded into our interpersonal relationships. He offers readers many opportunities to pause and consider how each of us has internalized racial oppression. Group leaders would have a**

**deeper understanding of the internalized biases that have been bred by the racial history of this country.**

**Christine Schmidt, LCSW, CGP**

**Book Title: *The Origin of Others***

**Author: Toni Morrison**

**Date of Publication: 2017**

**Publisher: Harvard University Press**

**Why I would recommend this book**

**This book is a compilation of Toni Morrison's, Charles Eliot Norton lectures. Ta-Nehisi Coates, in his searing introduction, describes Morrison's view of American racism as the story of "the creation of aliens and the erection of fences...and why we have come to associate those fences with pigment."**

**Morrison focuses on "othering," the psychological work that maintains power of one group over another. "Othering" is a mental process that delineates people by assigning**



**characteristics that are repugnant and taboo. Morrison hones in on depictions of racial superiority and inferiority, in works that are considered the canon of great American literature. She illustrates how our literature deploys images and language that constrict our view of what constitutes a human being. She shows how “othering” dehumanizes and estranges in order to instill beliefs of white racial superiority. She explains how the invention of the “Other” has been embraced by European ethnic groups to buy into the illusion of power.**

### **How this book would work in groups**

**Our large group identities influence how we relate in small interpersonal groups. We have absorbed many toxic values and devaluations as products of our large groups. It is important to become more conscious of this process.**

**Christine Schmidt, LCSW, CGP**

**Book: *Choke Hold [Policing Black Men]* Author: Paul Butler**

**Date of Publication: 2017**

**Publisher: The New Press, New York, New York, [www.thenewpress.com](http://www.thenewpress.com)**

**Why I would recommend this book**

For several years, I have appreciated Paul Butler's comments and perspective about criminal justice issues on news programs. As a Black former prosecutor with twenty years-experience, a Harvard-educated legal scholar and a Black man who has been falsely accused of a crime, Butler brings a wealth of clear-eyed information about what it is like to be a Black man in the criminal justice system in the United States.

He speaks with authenticity and regret about the role he played in the criminal justice system, obtaining guilty pleas from Black criminal defendants. He writes about the importance of knowing how the system works. He recognizes that, although he was innocent of the crime he was accused of, he could have easily been convicted, if he had not had a good lawyer, who helped him manage his reactions to the stress of the court experience.

Butler describes the many meanings that the title *Choke Hold* have for the black man, including the physical act of the maneuver that has been clearly associated with the death of Eric Garner at the hands of the police. He also records the many ways the *Choke Hold affects* Black men, who are portrayed as "thugs," controlled as "thugs," manhandled during the process of arrest, and perpetrators of violence who live out the *Choke Hold within* themselves. He identifies four "crises" with very different perspectives on the problem: 1. Black Male Behavior 2. Underenforcement of the Law 3. Police Community Relations 4. Anti-Black Racism/White Supremacy. These four crises could be the focus for discussion groups.

Julie Sullivan-Redmond, LCSW-R, CGP

**Book: *Love's Revolution Interracial Marriage* Author: Maria P.P. Root, PhD.**

**Date of Publication: 2001**

**Publisher: The Temple University Press**

**Why I would recommend this book**

Since the Loving Supreme Court decision of 1967, there has been a significant increase in interracial-cultural marriages. Maria P.P. Root, PhD, author of *Love's Revolution Interracial Marriage*, has undertaken a major research project to document the trends in intermarriage.

Traditionally, families have supported love and marriage for their offspring as long as they chose someone of the same race and opposite gender. When sons and daughters defied these norms, many were disowned and ostracized. Recently, more families have been accepting of their children's choices to marry across racial boundaries.

What differentiates those families who are accepting of their offspring marrying a member of a different ethnic/racial group and those families who are opposed to such marriages? Maria Root's research suggests that if "race is part of the cultural capital" of the family, then racial reproduction is an intended product of the family, whether the family is white, black or Asian. Families concerned with future generations may disown racially different in-laws to maintain racial/ethnic purity.

Intermarriage has contributed to greater diversity in our country. People who have intermarried and their offspring have been and will continue to be members of our groups. This book will enable the group psychotherapist to have more empathy with the growing population.

**Judith C. White, LCSW, CGP**

**Books, Articles, and Videos being reviewed by Work Group for Racial Equity Members**

- Brodtkin, Karen, (2010) *How Jews Became White Folks & What that Says about Race in America*, Rutgers University Press
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