

Billings, David. (2016). *Deep denial: the persistence of white supremacy in United States history and life*. Roselle, NJ: Crandall, Dostie & Douglass Books, Inc.

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