

Denormalizing Whiteness for Racial Justice

Created by Genevieve Beck-Roe, AFSC Friends Relations, for use among Friends

Introduction

Demographically, Quakerism within the United States is majority-white, with outliers by region and nuances by meeting. As white Friends do the challenging work of deconstructing racism and white supremacy, there can be a tendency to understand Friends of Color as having a race (and therefore a racialized experience of the world) while white Friends are without a race (and experience the world “normally” or “neutrally”). Instead, this resource guide works to recognize that all experience is racialized, and that there is significant difference between white people’s experiences and the experiences of people of color based on history, power, and privilege. The following resources are grounded in the understanding that whiteness, as well as race in general, is a social construct. Friends Relations hope the following resources, materials, and suggestions will support individuals and meetings interested in incorporating an understanding of whiteness into their racial justice work both inside and outside of Quaker meetings.

4 Posts about Whiteness and Racial Justice from *Acting in Faith*

1. [“The courageous many: Undoing racism as a spiritual practice”](#) by Lucy Duncan
2. [“Quakerism and racism: Reclaiming faith from the wreckage of white supremacy”](#) by Greg Elliott
3. [“Schooled in disconnection: Waking up and struggling for racial justice”](#) by Lucy Duncan
4. [“Liberating faith: A conversation with Rabbi Brant Rosen on decolonizing Quaker and Jewish practice”](#) by Lucy Duncan

10 More Things to Watch/Read/Listen to About Whiteness

1. [“Why Talk About Whiteness?”](#) by Emily Chiariello
2. [“Reflections on the History of White Supremacy in the United States”](#) by Rev. William J. Gardiner
3. [“What Is Whiteness?”](#) by Nell Irvin Painter
4. [About Whiteness](#) from Baltimore Racial Justice Action
5. [Understanding Whiteness](#) from Calgary Anti-Racism Education
6. [Whiteness Project](#), an “interactive an interactive investigation into how Americans who identify as white, or partially white, understand and experience their race”
7. [“White Fragility”](#) by Robin DiAngelo
8. [“White Fragility is Racial Violence”](#) by Amelia Shroyer
9. The Code Switch Podcast, Episode 1: [Can We Talk About Whiteness?](#)
10. [Representation of Whiteness in Media](#) by Danielle Delbert

Workshops and Activities about Whiteness

[Cracking the Shell of Whiteness](#): A Curriculum to Build Capacity for White People to be in Solidarity with People of Color in the Work of Dismantling Racism

This is a series of six sessions for a group to complete together about whiteness. The sessions include homework, group and session objectives, deepening questions, and reflections as a means of organizing group growth and progress.

[Examining Whiteness](#): An Anti-Racist Curriculum

From Rev. Doctor William Gardiner for the Unitarian Universalist Association, this series of nine activities for white people interested in transforming their whiteness to become better anti-racists.

[Whiteness and Racial Justice](#)

This is an online course from Episcopal priest and renowned scholar Kelly Brown Douglas. The course includes video lectures, downloads, and discussion questions to use if using the content in a group. (*Note: This course costs \$10 for six months of use.*)

Queries for Worship Sharing On Whiteness and Racial Justice

Do you think of yourself as having a race? How do you see your personal understanding of race impact how you understand Friends' work for equity?

What actions can you take to support racial justice in your community? How might Spirit be leading you to get involved in the work for racial justice?

How does whiteness show up in your personal life? How does it show up in your meeting, or in the Religious Society of Friends? What are you called to do about whiteness?

6 Suggestions of Where to Go From Here

1. Show a film like [White Like Me](#) during second hour after meeting
2. [Host AFSC's copy](#) of Naima Lowe's "Thirty-Nine (39) Questions for White People" at your meeting/church
3. Get together with others in your meeting and read and discuss one of the pieces on [undoing racism from Acting in Faith](#), or post one of the pieces and your thoughts to Facebook and respond to the responses it generates
4. Start a book group to read one of any number of [popular whiteness theory books](#)
5. Get involved with the [local chapter](#) of [Showing Up for Racial Justice](#), which focuses on bringing white people into multicultural work for justice
6. If there's a group in your meeting interested in doing spiritual deepening work together in addition to engaging in social justice work through accompaniment, become part of AFSC's [Quaker Social Ministry Program](#). Contact Lucy Duncan at lduncan@afsc.org for more information