

Books, Sermons, Articles, Webinars, and Podcasts on Decolonization and How to Decolonize Christianity and the Church

Links are in blue. Publisher and author summaries are in quotations. See my bibliography for more!

[Article: Introduction to Decolonial Theory](#)

Sara Duvisac, OXFAM

This document is an excellent introduction to decolonization by OXFAM, a “global organization that fights inequality to end poverty and injustice.” It “introduces the key concepts of decolonial theory that inform many current calls to decolonize. It provides examples from Latin America, Africa, and North America of how activists have envisioned or realized decolonial futures. These movements led by Indigenous Peoples, people of color, women, and queer people articulate and define the possibilities of decolonial futures. Since decolonial theory suggests multiple futures and not one single solution, this document does not address what decolonizing particular systems, such as international development, should look like. Rather, the document aims to introduce the reader to the tools of analysis that decolonial theory offers, give examples of decolonial theory in practice, and discuss some potential shortfalls of the decolonial framework.”

[Sermon Series: “Decolonizing Christianity, Encountering Jesus”](#)

This sermon series comes from Pres House, a ministry of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. They write, “In the wake of contentious election cycles in 2016 and 2020, the insurrection in January 2021, and the ongoing culture wars around education, abortion, race, and more, our nation has been forced to grapple with Christianity’s connections to white supremacy, nationalism, and violence. It is an uncomfortable fact that Christian churches are often breeding grounds for harmful and dangerous ideas that ultimately result in violence and even death for the most vulnerable members of our society. As we planned our preaching series for the spring semester, we knew we needed to talk about these sobering truths. Conversations and sermons about such issues are not rare at Pres House, but we felt we needed to do something more focused and explicit; something that not only named the dangers of ‘colonial Christianity’ — the kind of Christianity that is rooted in a desire for power and control — but also named how a different, more liberating kind of faith might be possible when we intentionally seek to ‘decolonize’ our faith.”

[Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization](#)

by Steve Heinrichs

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 2019

“For generations, the Bible has been employed by settler colonial societies as a weapon to dispossess Indigenous and racialized peoples of their lands, cultures, and spiritualities. Given this devastating legacy, many want nothing to do with it. But is it possible for the exploited and their allies to reclaim the Bible from the dominant powers? Can it serve as an instrument for justice in the cause of the oppressed? Even a nonviolent weapon toward decolonization? In Unsettling the Word, over 60 Indigenous and Settler authors come together to wrestle with the Scriptures, rereading and re-imagining the ancient text for the sake of reparative futures.”

[“Decolonizing our American Christianity”](#)

by Kaitlin Curtice

Faith and Leadership, faithandleadership.com

In this article, Curtice writes “Harmful ideas of feminine submission and the subduing of the earth are connected in American Christianity and must be decolonized.” Curtice discusses growing up in the Southern Baptist tradition, which emphasized female submissiveness and dominion over the earth, and notes how these ideas have led to the mistreatment of women and the environment. She discusses the way colonialism has hurt Indigenous people and questions if American Christianity can be saved from its violent origins. She includes starting places for the work of decolonization.

[And: The Restorative Power of Love in an Either/Or World](#)

by Felicia Murrell

Whitaker House, New Kensington, PA, 2024.

“This book is an invitation to encounter the lived experience and philosophical musings of another as a human, not as a project or agenda to conquer. Without apology, it embraces humanity and all the emotions, back stories, and history that come along with who we are and who Love is inviting us to be. And: The Restorative Power of Love in an Either/Or World is an invitation to move beyond binaries, beyond hierarchy and comparison to embrace the concept of “AND,” with inclusion and generativity that allow for more than one perspective and/or way of being.”

[Interview: “More than an Ally: We Want to Do More Than Survive” \(CSPAN\)](#)

With Dr. Bettina Love, author of *We Want to Do More Than Survive*

Dr. Bettina Love discusses what it means to be an ally vs. a co-conspirator. Her discussion includes a moving story about the impact of people who chose to be co-conspirators.

[Decolonizing Christianity: Becoming Badass Believers](#)

by Miguel De La Torre

William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 2021.

“How curiously different is this white God from the one preached by Jesus who understood faithfulness by how we treat the hungry and thirsty, the naked and alien, the incarcerated and infirm? This white God of empire may be appropriate for global conquerors who benefit from all that has been stolen and through the labor of all those defined as inferior, but such a deity can never be the God of the conquered.” De La Torre prophetically outlines how we need to decolonize Christianity and reclaim its revolutionary, badass message. Timid white liberalism is not the answer for De La Torre—only another form of complicity. Working from the parable of the sheep and the goats in the Gospel of Matthew, he calls for unapologetic solidarity with the sheep and an unequivocal rejection of the false, idolatrous Christianity of whiteness.” You can find more valuable resources, including articles and books by Miguel de la Torre [on his website here](#).

[Video Interview with Dr. Nicole Truesdell - “Decolonizing Spirituality”](#)

@DonnellWrites was joined by anthropologist Dr. Nicole Truesdell to discuss decolonizing spirituality, abolition work, and the intersections of politics and religion. Dr. Truesdell obtained her Ph.D. in 2011 from Michigan State University in Anthropology, with a focus on race, racism, citizenship, and the nation-state. Her work continues to push the boundaries around the concept of the human and humanity by using a Black decolonial lens to imagine what is and can be possible for a liberatory humanity.

Video Interview with Dr. Miguel de la Torre - [Decolonizing Christianity | The Forum at St. Bart's](#) (YouTube)

The Reverend Dr. Miguel de la Torre, Professor of Social Ethics and Latinx Studies at Iliff School of Theology in Denver explains why it is important to de-couple Christianity and whiteness.

[American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays](#)

edited by Anne Waters
Wiley-Blackwell, 2004.

"This book covers American Indian thinking on issues concerning time, place, history, science, law, religion, nationhood, and art and features newly commissioned essays by authors of American Indian descent. It includes a comprehensive bibliography to aid in research and inspire further reading."

[Discourse on Colonialism](#)

by Aimé Césaire, translated by Joan Pinkham
Monthly Review Press, 2000.

"This classic work, first published in France in 1955, profoundly influenced the generation of scholars and activists at the forefront of liberation struggles in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Aimé Césaire eloquently describes the brutal impact of capitalism and colonialism on both the colonizer and colonized, exposing the contradictions and hypocrisy implicit in Western notions of "progress" and "civilization" upon encountering the "savage", "uncultured", or "primitive." Here, Césaire reaffirms African values, identity, and culture, and their relevance, reminding us that "the relationship between consciousness and reality are extremely complex. . . . It is equally necessary to decolonize our minds, our inner life, at the same time that we decolonize society." A reading of an interview with Césaire by the poet René Depestre is also included."

[Mission in Today's World](#)

by Donal Dorr
Orbis, 2002. Kindle.

"The changing face of the world solidly impacts the nature of mission. Donal Dorr demonstrates why engagement with other religions and cultures demands that missionaries understand the importance of dialogue and also forces issues such as inculturation, the struggle for the liberation of the poor and oppressed, and the need for reconciliation in conflict-torn regions."

[Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 50th Anniversary Edition](#)

by Paulo Freire

New York: Continuum, 2000.

"First published in Portuguese in 1968, Pedagogy of the Oppressed was translated and published in English in 1970. Paulo Freire's work has helped to empower countless people throughout the world and has taken on special urgency in the United States and Western Europe, where the creation of a permanent underclass among the underprivileged and minorities in cities and urban centers is ongoing. This 50th anniversary edition includes an updated introduction by Donaldo Macedo, a new afterword by Ira Shor, and interviews with Marina Aparicio Barberán, Noam Chomsky, Ramon Flecha, Gustavo Fischman, Ronald David Glass, Valerie Kinloch, Peter Mayo, Peter McLaren, and Margo Okazawa-Rey to inspire a new generation of educators, students, and general audiences for years to come."

[Podcast: Code Switch Podcast from NPR](#)

Code Switch is the fearless conversation about race that you've been waiting for. Hosted by journalists of color, our podcast tackles the subject of race with empathy and humor. We explore how race affects every part of society — from politics and pop culture to history, food, and everything in between. This podcast makes all of us part of the conversation — because we're all part of the story. Code Switch was named Apple Podcasts' first-ever Show of the Year in 2020.

[Spirit Outside the Gate: Decolonial Pneumatologies of the American Global South](#)

by Oscar García-Johnson

IVP Academic, 2019.

"Oscar García-Johnson explores a new grammar for the study of theology and mission in global Christianity, especially in Latin America and the Latinx 'third spaces' in North America. With an interdisciplinary, 'transoccidental,' and narrative approach, Spirit Outside the Gate offers a constructive theology of mission for the church in global contexts. Building on the familiar missiological metaphor of 'outside the gate' established by Orlando Costas, García-Johnson moves to recover important elements in ancestral traditions of the Americas, with an eye to discerning pneumatological continuity between the pre-Columbian and post-Columbian communities."

[Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy \(Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquia\), 1st Edition](#)

by Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Eduardo Mendieta, editors

New York: Fordham University Press, 2011.

"Gathering the work of three generations of Latina/o theologians and philosophers who have taken up the task of transforming their respective disciplines, it seeks to facilitate the emergence of new knowledge by reflecting on the Latina/o reality in the United States as an epistemic locus: a place from which to start as well as the source of what is known and how it is known. The task of elaborating a liberation and decolonial epistemology emerges from the questions and concerns of Latina/os as a minoritized and marginalized group.

Refusing to be rendered invisible by the dominant discourse, the contributors to this volume show the unexpected and original ways in which U.S. Latina/o social and historical loci are generative places for the creation of new matrices of knowledge. Because the Latina/o reality is intrinsically connected with that of other oppressed groups, the volume articulates a new point of departure for the self-understanding not only of Latina/os but also possibly for other marginalized and oppressed groups, and for all those seeking to engage in the move beyond coloniality as it is present in this age of globalization."

[After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging](#)

By Willi James Jennings

Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020.

"Theological education has always been about formation: first, of people; then, of communities; then, of the world. If we continue to promote Whiteness and its related ideas of masculinity and individualism in our educational work, it will remain diseased and thwart our efforts to heal the church and the world. But if theological education aims to form people who can gather others together through border-crossing pluralism and God-drenched communion, we can begin to cultivate the radical belonging that is at the heart of God's transformative work. In this book, Willie James Jennings shares the insights gained from his extensive experience in theological education, most notably as the dean of a major university's divinity school - where he remains one of the only African Americans to have ever served in that role. He reflects on the distortions hidden in plain sight within the world of education but holds onto abundant hope for what theological education can be and how it can position itself at the front of a massive cultural shift away from White, Western, colonial, and cultural hegemony."

["Decolonising Epistemologies"](#) (website)

by Alana Lentin

In this blog, Alana Lentin asks "What are the possibilities for social and political critique opened up by the decolonial approach? I shall examine the interconnections between postcolonial theory and the decolonial, uncovering the trajectory that began with Indian subaltern studies and Latin American autonomous social science, for example. I shall also examine the impact of a critical focus on race, gender, and sexuality on the opening out of decolonial approaches. This work will go towards asking questions about the epistemological implications of taking a decolonial approach as well as examining the possibilities for transformative social and political action." Alana Lentin is a Professor of Cultural and Social Analysis at Western Sydney University who works on the critical theorization of race, racism, and antiracism.

[Toward a New, Praxis-Oriented Missiology: Rediscovering Paulo Freire's Concept of Conscientizacao and Enhancing Christian Mission as Prophetic Dialogue.](#)

by Meza, Rosalia Meza

Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2020.

"This book argues that mission is the process of embodying the content and praxis of the gospel, not the transmission of knowledge that keeps an established structure and culture alive (often justified by a specific ecclesiological model). Thus, mission initiates a transformative process of faith, which leads to personal and social transformation. This

work brings into dialogue Stephen Bevans's notion of mission as prophetic dialogue and Paulo Freire's concept of conscientização. The aim is not to discover a method to do mission but to rescue the process that leads to transformation, allowing one to encounter the other where they are while respecting the uniqueness of every person, culture, church, and society. Prophetic dialogue enriched by conscientização (and vice versa) can open new perspectives within missiology and provide a new approach to mission praxis."

[Globalization and the Decolonial Option 1st Edition](#)

by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, Editors
New York: Routledge, 2010.

My one critique of this book is that while the scholarship is phenomenal, it is not particularly accessible. It would still be an excellent resource for a graduate-level course. "This book was published as a special issue of Cultural Studies and is the first book in English profiling the work of a research collective that evolved around the notion of 'coloniality', understood as the hidden agenda and the darker side of modernity and whose members are based in South America and the United States. The project proposes the de-colonization of knowledge as an epistemological restitution with political and ethical implications. Epistemic decolonization, or de-coloniality, becomes the horizon to imagine and act toward global futures in which the notion of a political enemy is replaced by intercultural communication and towards another rationality that puts life first and that places institutions at its service, rather than the other way around. The volume is inter- and trans-disciplinary, with authors writing from many intellectual, transdisciplinary, and institutional spaces."

[Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas \(Transoceanic Series\)](#)

by Madina V. Tlostanova and Walter D. Mignolo

This is again a book with a fair amount of jargon, and it could be argued that perhaps books that aim to teach us about decoloniality might do well to translate their ideas into more digestible language; however, for a book situated within the academic study of decoloniality, this is one of the best! "[This book] is a complex, multisided rethinking of the epistemic matrix of Western modernity and coloniality from the position of border epistemology. Colonial and imperial differences are the two key concepts to understanding how the logic of coloniality creates ontological and epistemic exteriorities. Being at once an enactment of decolonial thinking and an attempt to define its main grounds, mechanisms, and concepts, the book shifts the politics of knowledge from 'studying the other' (culture, society, economy, politics) toward 'the thinking other'"

["All Christians are Bad, confronting the sin of our complicity with white supremacy."](#)

by Robyn Wood

Medium, 21 Feb. 2021

This short article introduces the idea that American Christianity is corrupted by colonialism and white supremacy. She argues that colonialism and white supremacy cooperate with non-biblical theological beliefs within American Protestantism such as penal substitutionary atonement, which are more connected to a desire to control than they are

to the Bible. She calls on Christians to challenge these ideas and dismantle systems of oppression.

Podcast: [Undistracted with Brittany Packnett Cunningham](#)

Brittany Packnett Cunningham is an activist, educator, and popular TV commentator—and a trusted voice for millions of people interested in social justice. She aims her focus on the most pressing issues of our time through the lens of intersectional feminism. From the latest headlines to deep dives with today's most fascinating changemakers, UNDISTRACTED is your weekly guide to the revolution.

Podcast: [Divesting from Hierarchy \(from Jesus has Left the Building\)](#)

This episode features [Jenny Whitcher](#) and [Javon Bracy](#), two ministers from [Juniper Formation](#), a faith community that prophetically reimagines the Church from the margins. Juniper is women- and nonbinary-led, multiethnic, and antiracist, affirming undocumented neighbors, celebrating different abilities, and Open & Affirming LGBTQ+ individuals and families in the life, leadership, and sacraments of the church. We talk about Juniper's digital and physical ministry, their commitment to anti-racist and non-hierarchical structure, and how they recognize all of life together as holy.

Podcast: [How Can the Church Dismantle Patriarchy? \(From "Jesus has Left the Building"\)](#)

Marta & Mandy discuss another big question from church member Levi: the church and patriarchy. As Levi says, patriarchy might be considered the church's "original sin" from which all other forms of oppression stem. How do we turn over the tables in the church and the world to right the wrongs of patriarchy over millennia?

[Patheos website, topic: Decolonizing Christianity](#)

Following the link will take you to a list of articles on decolonizing Christianity from patheos.com. This is a good website to browse on this topic! Articles are included from authors with a wide variety of social locations.

[“Do Not Be Conformed to this Age or #DecolonizelsNotAMetaphor”](#)

By Sharon Fennema, October 12, 2023, United Church of Christ Website

This article offers a strong critique of the ways many people use the term “decolonization” as a metaphor instead of making it about concrete actions to return land and power to Indigenous people. She argues that decolonization is the sacred act of repairing the damage done by colonialism.

Podcast: [Decolonization in Action](#)

“The Decolonization in Action Podcast is a British podcast that interrogates how people are challenging the legacies of colonialism through art, activism, and knowledge especially as people advocate for reparations, restitution, and repair. This podcast is hosted by Edna Bonhomme and co-produced by Kristyna Comer.”

Podcast: [The Decolonial Podcast](#)

“The Decolonial Podcast is a safe space for BIPOC and allies to explore postcolonial legacy and decolonial praxis in the modern world. We work towards dismantling harmful

narratives and creating a more transparent, accountable society through open conversations rooted in self-love and anti-racism.”