**Racial Justice Reading List**

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YA FICTION

*American Street* by Ibi Zoboi (ebook and audiobook)

On the corner of American Street and Joy Road, Fabiola Toussaint thought she would finally find une belle vie-a good life. But after they leave Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola's mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud American cousins, Chantal, Donna, and Princess; the grittiness of Detroit's west side; a new school; and a surprising romance, all on her own. Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola soon realizes that freedom comes at a cost.

*Anger is a Gift* by Mark Oshiro (audiobook)

Six years ago, Moss Jefferies' father was murdered by an Oakland police officer. Along with losing a parent, the media's vilification of his father and lack of accountability has left Moss with near crippling panic attacks. Now, in his sophomore year of high school, Moss and his fellow classmates find themselves increasingly treated like criminals their own school. When tensions hit a fever pitch and tragedy strikes, Moss must face a difficult choice: give in to fear and hate or realize that anger can actually be a gift.

*Black Enough* by Ibi Zoboi (audiobook)

Edited by National Book Award finalist Ibi Zoboi and featuring some of the most acclaimed, bestselling black authors writing for teens today-Black Enough is an essential collection of captivating stories about what it's like to be young and black in America. Black is...sisters navigating their relationship at summer camp in Portland, Oregon, as written by Renée Watson. Black is… three friends walking back from the community pool talking about nothing and everything, in a story by Jason Reynolds. Black is…Nic Stone's bougie debutante dating a boy her momma would never approve of. Black is…two girls kissing in Justina Ireland's story set in Maryland. Black is urban and rural, wealthy and poor, mixed race, immigrants, and more-because there are countless ways to be black enough.

*Monday's Not Coming* by Tiffany D. Jackson (ebook and audiobook)

Monday Charles is missing, and only Claudia seems to notice. Claudia and Monday have always been inseparable-more sisters than friends. So when Monday doesn't turn up for the first day of school, Claudia's worried. As Claudia digs deeper into her friend's disappearance, she discovers that no one seems to remember the last time they saw Monday. How can a teenage girl just vanish without anyone noticing that she's gone?

*Monster* by Walter Dean Myers (ebook and graphic novel adaptation)

This New York Times bestselling novel from acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers tells the story of Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial. Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.

*On the Come Up* by Angie Thomas (audiobook)

Sixteen-year-old Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. Or at least get some streams on her mixtape. As the daughter of an underground rap legend who died right before he hit big, Bri's got massive shoes to fill. But when her mom unexpectedly loses her job, food banks and shut-off notices become as much a part of her life as beats and rhymes. With bills piling up and homelessness staring her family down, Bri no longer just wants to make it – she has to make it.

*The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo (ebook and audiobok)

Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking.

But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers-especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about.

*Riot* by Walter Dean Myers (ebook)

Fifteen-year-old Claire, the daughter of a black father and Irish mother, is caught in the midst of the New York race riots of 1863. Addressing issues of prejudice and class, Walter Dean Myers' stirring novel captures an explosive historical event.

*Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky* by Kwame Mbalia

Best-selling author Rick Riordan presents Kwame Mbalia's epic fantasy, a middle grade American Gods set in a richly imagined world populated with African American folk heroes and West African gods.

*With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo (ebook and audiobook)

Ever since she got pregnant freshman year, Emoni Santiago's life has been about making the tough decisions-doing what has to be done for her daughter and her abuela. The one place she can let all that go is in the kitchen, where she adds a little something magical to everything she cooks, turning her food into straight-up goodness. Even though she dreams of working as a chef after she graduates, Emoni knows that it's not worth her time to pursue the impossible. Yet despite the rules she thinks she has to play by, once Emoni starts cooking, her only choice is to let her talent break free.

*You Should See Me in a Crown* by Leah Johnson

Liz Lighty has always believed she's too black, too poor, too awkward to shine in her small, rich, prom-obsessed midwestern town. But it's okay -- Liz has a plan that will get her out of Campbell, Indiana, forever: attend the uber-elite Pennington College, play in their world-famous orchestra, and become a doctor. But when the financial aid she was counting on unexpectedly falls through, Liz's plans come crashing down . . . until she's reminded of her school's scholarship for prom king and queen.

ADULT FICTION

*An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones

A love triangle between three 30-something black professionals in contemporary Atlanta. Calling it a triangle, however, diminishes its complexity and nuance; this is a book whose characters will whisper in your head long after you’ve put it down.

*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker

Celie has grown up in rural Georgia, navigating a childhood of ceaseless abuse. Not only is she poor and despised by the society around her, she's badly treated by her family. As a teenager she begins writing letters directly to God in an attempt to transcend a life that often seems too much to bear.

*Meridian* by Alice Walker

As she approaches the end of her teen years, Meridian Hill has already married, divorced, and given birth to a son. She's looking for a second chance, and at a small college outside Atlanta, Georgia, in the early 1960s, Meridian discovers the civil rights movement. So fully does the cause guide her life that she's willing to sacrifice virtually anything to help transform the conditions of a people whose subjugation she shares.

*Passing* by Nella Larsen

Two childhood friends, Clare and Irene, both of whom are light skinned enough to pass as white, have reconnected with one another after many years apart. Clare has chosen to pass while Irene has embraced her racial heritage and become an important member of her community.

*The Round House* by Louise Erdrich

Set on the Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota, this is an exquisitely told story of a boy on the cusp of manhood who seeks justice and understanding in the wake of a terrible crime that upends and forever transforms his family.

*Severance* by Ling Ma

A send-up and takedown of the rituals, routines, and missed opportunities of contemporary life, Ling Ma's Severance is a moving family story, a quirky coming-of-adulthood tale, and a hilarious, deadpan satire. Most important, it's a heartfelt tribute to the connections that drive us to do more than survive.

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston

A Southern love story with the wit and pathos found only in the writing of Zora Neale Hurston.

ADULT NONFICTION

*All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson (audiobook only)

In a series of personal essays, prominent journalist and LGBTQIA+ activist George M. Johnson explores his childhood, adolescence, and college years in New Jersey and Virginia. From the memories of getting his teeth kicked out by bullies at age five, to flea marketing with his loving grandmother, to his first sexual relationships, this young-adult memoir weaves together the trials and triumphs faced by Black queer boys.

*Are Prisons Obsolete?* by Angela Y. Davis

Professor Davis seeks to illustrate that the time for the prison is approaching an end. She argues forthrightly for “decarceration”, and argues for the transformation of the society as a whole.

*Chokehold: Policing Black Men*, by Paul Butler

[A]n African American former federal prosecutor shows that the system is working exactly the way it’s supposed to. Black men are always under watch, and police violence is widespread—all with the support of judges and politicians.

*Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*, by Mary L. Dudziak

Soon after the United States' segregated military defeated a racist regime in World War II, American racism was a major concern of U.S. allies, a chief Soviet propaganda theme, and an obstacle to American Cold War goals... In what may be the best analysis of how international relations affected any domestic issue, Mary Dudziak interprets postwar civil rights as a Cold War feature.

*Color of the Law: Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War South*, by Gail Williams O'Brein

Exploding the myth of de facto segregation arising from private prejudice or the unintended consequences of economic forces, Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation.

*The Ethnic Project: Transforming Racial Fiction into Ethnic Factions*, by Vilna Bashi Treitler

In the United States, ethnicity is often positioned as a counterweight to race, and we celebrate our various hyphenated-American identities. But Vilna Bashi Treitler argues that we do so at a high cost: ethnic thinking simply perpetuates an underlying racism.

*Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century*, by Dorothy Roberts

This groundbreaking book ... examines how the myth of biological concept of race—revived by purportedly cutting-edge science, race-specific drugs, genetic testing, and DNA databases—continues to undermine a just society and promote inequality in a supposedly “post-racial” era.

*Fire Shut Up in My Bones: A Memoir*, by Charles M. Blow

“Fire Shut Up in My Bones” begins with the author’s childhood as the youngest son within a turbulent yet essentially loving household in the small, segregated town of Gibs­land, La. It ends shortly after he graduates from college, deposited at the start of what most of us know to be a meteoric career — yet a career that, at least in this context, feels like a resting place after the roller coaster of his maturation. (Patricia J. Williams, *New York Times*)

*From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, by Yeenga-Yamahtta Taylor

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor surveys the historical and contemporary ravages of racism and persistence of structural inequality such as mass incarceration and Black unemployment. In this context, she argues that this new struggle against police violence holds the potential to reignite a broader push for Black liberation.

*Healing Racial Trauma: The Road to Resilience*, by Sheila Wise Rowe

Professional counselor Rowe exposes the symptoms of racial trauma to lead readers to a place of freedom from the past and new life for the future.

*An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (audiobook only)

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz adroitly challenges the founding myth of the United States and shows how policy against the indigenous peoples was colonialist and designed to seize the territories of the original inhabitants, displacing or eliminating them.

*Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor*, by Layla F. Saad

Based on the viral Instagram challenge that captivated participants worldwide, *Me and White Supremacy* takes readers on a 28-day journey, complete with journal prompts, to do the necessary and vital work that can ultimately lead to improving race relations.

*The Mis-Education of the Negro*, by Carter Woodson

The Mis-Education of the Negro is a book originally published in 1933 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson. The thesis of Dr. Woodson's book is that blacks of his day were being culturally indoctrinated, rather than taught, in American schools.

*My Midnight Years: Surviving Jon Burge's Police Torture Ring and Death Row*, by Ronald Kitchen

Written with passion and defiance, My Midnight Years is more than just a memoir—because Ronald Kitchen’s ordeal is not his alone. Kitchen was only one of scores of victims of Jon Burge and his notorious Midnight Crew, a group of rogue police detectives who spent decades terrorizing, brutalizing, and incarcerating men—118 have come forward so far—in Chicago’s African American communities.

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander

With dazzling candor, legal scholar Michelle Alexander argues that "we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it."

*The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, by Thomas J. Sugrue

Thomas Sugrue explains how Detroit and many other once prosperous industrial cities have become the sites of persistent racialized poverty. He challenges the conventional wisdom that urban decline is the product of the social programs and racial fissures of the 1960s.

*A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn

*A Young People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn

Known for its lively, clear prose as well as its scholarly research, *A People's History of the United States* is the only volume to tell America's story from the point of view of-and in the words of-America's women, factory workers, African-Americans, Native Americans, the working poor, and immigrant laborers.

*The Racial Healing Handbook: Practical Activities to Help You Challenge Privilege, Confront Systemic Racism & Engage in Collective Healing*, by Anneliese A. Singh.

*The Racial Healing Handbook* offers practical tools to help you navigate daily and past experiences of racism, challenge internalized negative messages and privileges, and handle feelings of stress and shame.

*Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, by Eric Foner.

*Reconstruction* chronicles the way in which Americans—black and white—responded to the unprecedented changes unleashed by the war and the end of slavery. It addresses the ways in which the emancipated slaves' quest for economic autonomy and equal citizenship shaped the political agenda of Reconstruction; the remodeling of Southern society and the place of planters, merchants, and small farmers within it; the evolution of racial attitudes and patterns of race relations; and the emergence of a national state possessing vastly expanded authority and committed, for a time, to the principle of equal rights for all Americans.

*So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo (audiobook only)

Perfectly positioned to bridge the gap between people of color and white Americans struggling with race complexities, Oluo answers the questions readers don't dare ask, and explains the concepts that continue to elude everyday Americans. Oluo is an exceptional writer with a rare ability to be straightforward, funny, and effective in her coverage of sensitive, hyper-charged issues in America.

*Solitary: Unbroken by Four Decades in Solitary Confinement: My Story of Transformation adn Hope*, by Albert Woodfox.

*Solitary* is the unforgettable life story of a man who served more than four decades in solitary confinement - in a six-foot by nine-foot cell, 23 hours a day, in notorious Angola prison in Louisiana - all for a crime he did not commit.

*The Souls of Black Folk*, by W. E. B. DuBois.

This landmark book is a founding work in the literature of black protest. W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963) played a key role in developing the strategy and program that dominated early 20th-century black protest in America.

*Stamped From the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi (audiobook only)

In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-Black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. Stamped from the Beginning uses the life stories of five major American intellectuals to offer a window into the contentious debates between assimilationists and segregationists and between racists and antiracists.

*Things That Make White People Uncomfortable*, by Michael Bennett.

Bennett adds his unmistakable voice to discussions of racism and police violence, Black athletes and their relationship to powerful institutions like the NCAA and the NFL, the role of protest in history, and the responsibilities of athletes as role models to speak out against injustice.

*This Will Be My Undoing: Living at the Intersection of Black, Female, and Feminist in (white) America*, by Morgan Jenkins.

From one of the fiercest critics writing today, Morgan Jerkins’ highly-anticipated collection of linked essays interweaves her incisive commentary on pop culture, feminism, black history, misogyny, and racism with her own experiences to confront the very real challenges of being a black woman today

*When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, by Paula Giddings.

Paula Giddings’s When and Where I Enter is not only an eloquent testament to the unsung contributions of individual women to our nation, but to the collective activism which elevated the race and women’s movements that define our times.

*When They Call You A Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* by Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele (audiobook)

A memoir by the co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement explains the movement's position of love, humanity, and justice, challenging perspectives that have negatively labeled the movement's activists while calling for essential political changes.