

Owning Our Whiteness:

Materials, Reflective Questions, and Places to Donate

Erin Elizabeth Wehrenberg

www.erinwehrenberg.com

Table of Contents:

Module 1: White Privilege, White Guilt, and White Shame

Module 2: Four Layers of Racism, Introduction to Anti-Black Racism, Model Minority Myth, and Impossibility of Reverse Racism

Module 3: The Weaponization of Whiteness and Exclusivity of White Feminism

Module 4: Anti-Black Racism on Systemic Levels

Module 5: Anti-Black Racism on Interpersonal Levels, Microaggressions, Respectability Politics, and Appropriating Black Culture

Module 6: Diversity vs Inclusion vs Tokenism

Module 7: Intersectionality, Web of Oppression, Global Imperialism and Colonialization, and Capitalism

Module 8: Allyship and Long-Term Commitments to Racial Justice Work

Owning Our Whiteness Module 1: White Privilege, White Guilt, and White Shame

Materials:

[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) by Peggy McIntosh

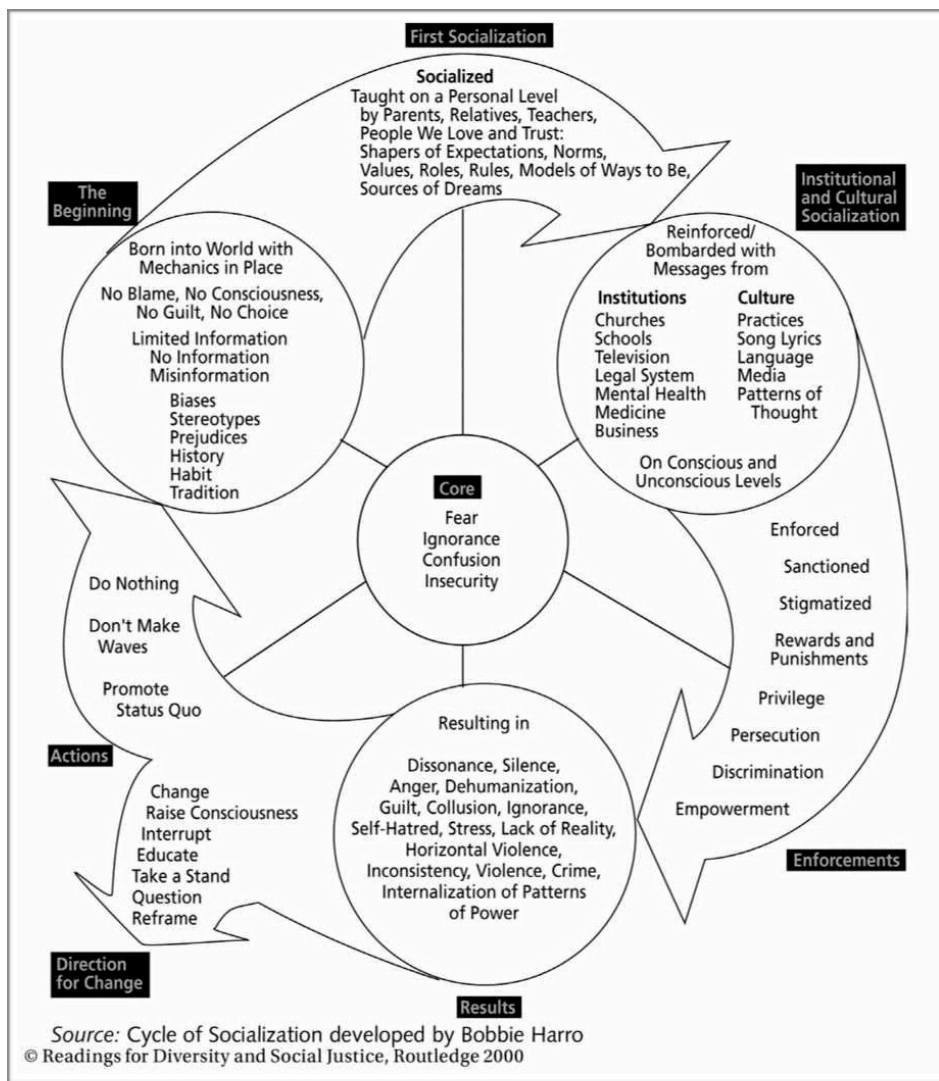
[Beyond Guilt: How To Deal with Societal Racism](#) by Lauren N. Nile and Jack C. Straton

[Understanding White Privilege](#) by Francis E Kendall

If Someone Doesn't Understand Privilege, Show Them This Video [https://](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7im330R4d-Q)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7im330R4d-Q

Cycle of Socialization by Bobbie Harro:



The 8 White Identities by Barnor Hesse

The 8 White Identities

By Barnor Hesse

There is a regime of whiteness, and there are action-oriented white identities. People who identify with whiteness are one of these. It's about time we build an ethnography of whiteness, since white people have been the ones writing about and governing Others.

1. White Supremacist

Clearly marked white society that preserves, names, and values white superiority

2. White Voyeurism

Wouldn't challenge a white supremacist; desires non-whiteness because it's interesting, pleasurable; seeks to control the consumption and appropriation of non-whiteness; fascination with culture (ex: consuming Black culture without the burden of Blackness)

3. White Privilege

May critique supremacy, but a deep investment in questions of fairness/equality under the normalization of whiteness and the white rule; sworn goal of 'diversity'

4. White Benefit

Sympathetic to a set of issues but only privately; won't speak/act in solidarity publicly because benefitting through whiteness in public (some POC are in this category as well)

5. White Confessional

Some exposure of whiteness takes place, but as a way of being accountable to POC after; seek validation from POC

6. White Critical

Take on board critiques of whiteness and invest in exposing/marking the white regime; refuses to be complicit with the regime; whiteness speaking back to whiteness

7. White Traitor

Actively refuses complicity; names what's going on; intention is to subvert white authority and tell the truth at whatever cost; need them to dismantle institutions

8. White Abolitionist

Changing institutions, dismantling whiteness, and not allowing whiteness to reassert itself

Key Terms:

-**Social power***: Access to resources that enhance one's chances of getting what one needs in order to lead a comfortable, productive, and safe life.

-**Privilege***: Unearned access to resources (social power) that are only readily available to some people because of their social identity group membership; an advantage or

immunity granted to or enjoyed by one societal group above and beyond the common advantage of all other groups. Privilege is often invisible to those who have it.

-Social Identity: Membership in a societal group (either target or agent) who experience power and privilege differently based on shared characteristics. These identities are usually not chosen and often informed by social structures. E.g. race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, language abilities, religion, ability status, age, etc.

-Personal Identity: Membership in a group which allows that person to express their own unique personality. Usually chosen and can be changed easily. E.g. football player, musician, engineer, chef, etc.

-Target or Oppressed Identities*: Social identity groups that are negatively valued, considered to be inferior, abnormal, or dependent and given limited access to resources and social power

-Agent or Privileged Identities*: Social identity groups that are positively valued and considered to be superior, “normal”, or independent and have access to resources and social power.

*= taken from Bridges: The National Conference for Community and Justice

Reflective Questions

- When did I “realize” I was white?
- Say, “I am white,” to yourself a few times. What comes up? How does it feel?
- Say, “I am racist,” to yourself a few times. What comes up? How does it feel?
- What are some instances in my life I can think of when I know I ignored race/racial injustice? What do I think I did that?

Suggested Donation:

Homeless Black Trans Women Fund <https://www.gofundme.com/f/homeless-black-trans-women-fund> From their GoFundMe, “This fund was started for a small community of Black Trans women living on the streets of Atlanta, many of whom are also sex workers. We now are not only able to help this community, but this project has grown into a unique opportunity to alleviate the chronic homelessness that exists among Trans people in Atlanta, especially among Black & brown Trans people.”

Owning Our Whiteness Module 2: Four Layers of Racism, Introduction to Anti-Black Racism, Model Minority Myth, and Impossibility of Reverse Racism

Materials:

[Systemic Racism Explained](#) (video)

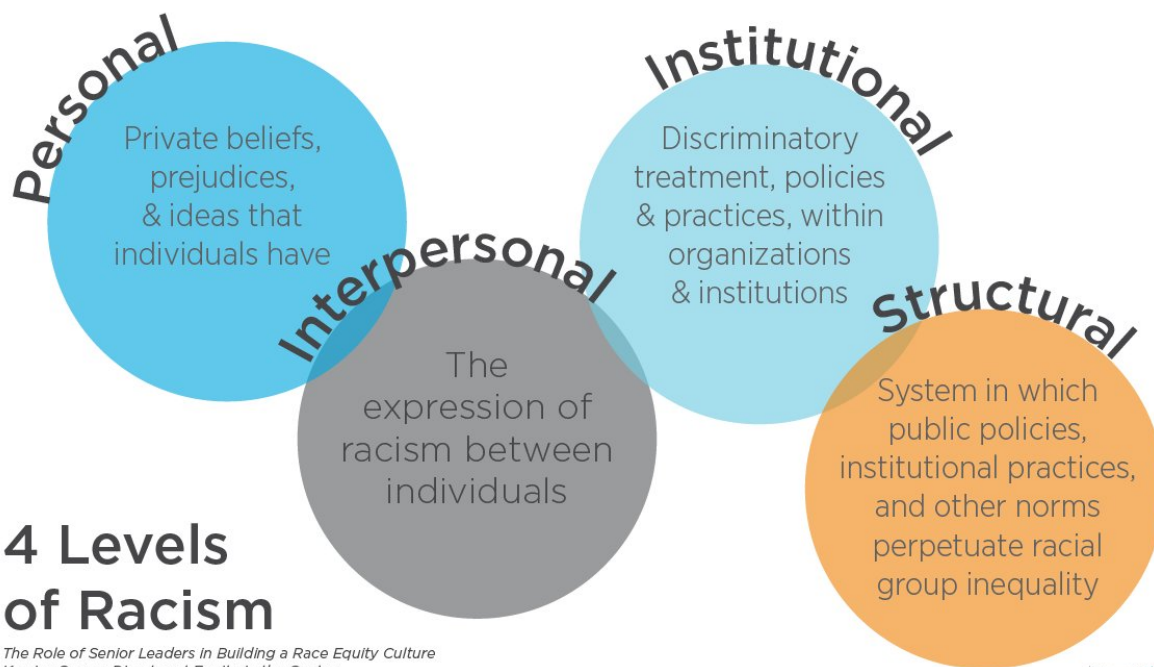
[Racism Harms Black People Most. It's Time To Recognize 'Anti-Blackness'](#) by Ahmed Olayinka Sule

[What Is the Model Minority Myth?](#) by Sarah-Soonling Blackburn

['Model Minority' Myth Again Used As A Racial Wedge Between Asians and Blacks](#) by Kat Chow

[4 'Reverse Racism' Myths That Need To Stop](#) by Zeba Blay

Four Layers of Racism:



Model Minority Myth:

“Model Minority” Myth

The term was coined in 1966 in the *New York Times* to describe Asian Americans, “who despite marginalization, have achieved success”. Only a small number of Japanese immigrants were studied.

Racially divisive: Many credit the creation of this myth by the establishment during the civil rights movement as a way to affirm that “anyone can make it” and maintain status quo (Chou, *The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism*)

Assimilated as a “favorable” stereotype by some

Slide by Tamima Farooqi

Key Terms:

-**Social power***: Access to resources that enhance one’s chances of getting what one needs in order to lead a comfortable, productive, and safe life.

-**Privilege***: Unearned access to resources (social power) that are only readily available to some people because of their social identity group membership; an advantage or immunity granted to or enjoyed by one societal group above and beyond the common advantage of all other groups. Privilege is often invisible to those who have it.

-Prejudice*: A judgement or belief that is formed on insufficient grounds before facts are known or in disregard of facts that contradict it. Prejudices can be learned and unlearned.

-Discrimination*: The unequal allocation of goods, resources, and services, and the limitation of access to full participation in society based on individual membership in a particular social group; reinforced by law, policy, and cultural norms that allow for differential treatment on the basis of social identity

-Oppression*: When an agent or privileged group, whether knowingly or unknowingly, abuses a target or oppressed group. This pervasive system is rooted historically and maintained through individual and institutional/systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice, resulting in a condition of privilege for the agent group at the expense of the target group.

DISCRIMINATION + SOCIAL POWER = OPPRESSION

***= taken from Bridges: The National Conference for Community and Justice**

Reflective Questions

- Regardless of if I agree/disagree now, what are examples of racism I was taught/witnessed in my life?
- How did I see conversations about race/racism being handled/addressed in my life (examples can be both harmful and helpful)?
- Regardless of if I agree/disagree now, what are examples of “reverse racism” I was taught/witnessed in my life?
- Regardless of if I agree/disagree now, what messages did I receive about non-white racial groups in terms of them being superior than/inferior from each other?

Suggested Donation:

[Assata's Daughters](#) From their website: This Chicago-based organization "is a Black-women led, young person-directed organization rooted in the Black Radical Tradition. AD organizes young Black people in Chicago by providing them with political education, leadership development, mentorship, and revolutionary services." This organization is named after Assata Shakur, who was a Black woman member of the Black Panthers/ Black Liberation Movement in the 1970s in the USA. She fled the US after being targeted by the US government and has been in asylum in Cuba since. You can read

more about her [here](#) and I suggest her book Assata: An Autobiography as a wonderful book but also more insight into race relations in the United States.

Owning Our Whiteness Module 3: The Weaponization of Whiteness and Exclusivity of White Feminism

Materials:

[The Racist George Floyd Challenge ?!](#) (video)

[The Death of Emmett Till](#) from history.com

[June 16, 1944 - George Stinney, Age 14, Executed](#) (video)

[When White Women Cry: How White Women's Tears Oppress Women of Color](#) by Mamta Motwani Accapadi

[How White Feminists Oppress Black Women: When Feminism Functions as White Supremacy](#) by Monnica T. Williams

[When Feminism Is White Supremacy in Heels](#) by Rachel Elizabeth Cargle

<https://www.instagram.com/karens.gone.wild/> <-- instagram documenting white women weaponizing whiteness (aka "Karens") for examples

Reflective Questions

- If I had to write a definition of weaponizing whiteness, what would it be?
 - What are some examples of whiteness being weaponized I have seen in my life, in media, etc.?
 - What are some examples of white feminism that I have seen in my life, in media, etc.?
 - Why would white supremacy include weaponizing whiteness and making white feminism so exclusive?
-

Suggested Donation:

[The Okra Project](#) From their website: "The Okra Project is a collective that seeks to address the global crisis faced by Black Trans people by bringing home cooked, healthy, and culturally specific meals and resources to Black Trans People wherever we can reach them."

Owning Our Whiteness Module 4: Anti-Black Racism on Systemic Levels

Materials:

[What Is Systemic Racism?](#) (video examples)

[Race: The House We Live In](#) (video)

[Compared To Majority White Schools, Majority Black Schools Are More Likely To Have Security Staff](#) by Kristen Harper and Deborah Temkin

[Gentrification: Reversal of Historic White Flight Is Creating a New Black Flight](#) by Cecilia Smith

[Food Deserts](#) by Food Empowerment Project

Reflective Questions

- What are examples of anti-Black racism in the systemic level you have seen or been exposed to in my own life/upbringing?
 - What connections can you see about the ways anti-Black racism systems all feed into and uphold each other (housing, incarceration, school funding, food deserts, medical discrimination, wage gaps, etc.)?
 - What are examples of bias/prejudice you have been taught as a white person about anti-Black racism in the systemic level which help contribute to upholding anti-Black racism in the systemic level?
 - In your opinion, why would such obvious examples of racism be allowed to continue for so long? How has this been possible?
-

Suggested Donation:

[NAACP](#) The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is described from their website as, "Founded in 1909 in response to the ongoing violence against Black people around the country, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) is the largest and most pre-eminent civil rights organization in the nation. We have over 2,200 units and branches across the nation, along with well over 2M activists. Our mission is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic

equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.”

Owning Our Whiteness Module 5: Anti-Black Racism on Interpersonal Levels, Microaggressions, Respectability Politics, and Appropriating Black Culture

Materials:

[What is Misogynoir?](#) by Eliza Anyangwe

[What are microaggressions?](#) by Jenée Desmond-Harris

[The Definition, Danger and Disease of Respectability Politics, Explained](#) by Damon Young

[7 Myths About Cultural Appropriation Debunked](#) (video)

[Don't Cash Crop On My Cornrows](#) (video)

[Why Does A Black Butt Only Look Good on White Skin?](#) by Yomi Adegoke

[Code-switching: Survival for Black People](#) by James Woods

[Blackfishing 101](#) by @mengwe on Instagram

[Anti-Black Racism and Colorism](#) by @mengwe on Instagram

[If Microaggressions Happened to White People](#) (video)

Shit White Girls Say To Black Girls [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) (videos)

Reflective Questions

- What are examples of anti-Black racism in the interpersonal level I have seen/ witnessed in my life, in media, etc.?
- Regardless of what you believe now, how did what you read/learned about in the materials for this module challenge what you were taught about interpersonal racism?
- Why have all these examples (respectability politics, microaggressions, cultural appropriation, blackfishing, etc) been normalized in society? Why is it so hard to not seem them as harmful? How does intent vs impact factor into this for us as white people and our access to perpetual innocence via white privilege?
- In your own words, how would you explain why/how all these interpersonal racist examples affect Black people and people of color? Why is it important to be thoughtful and interrupt these as a white person?

Suggested Donation:

[The Loveland Foundation](#) From their website: "With the barriers affecting access to treatment by members of diverse ethnic and racial groups, Loveland Therapy Fund provides financial assistance to Black women and girls nationally seeking therapy."

Owning Our Whiteness Module 6: Diversity vs Inclusion vs Tokenism

Materials:

[Tokenism: The Result of Diversity Without Inclusion](#) by Tonie Snell
[Diversity Doesn't Stick Without Inclusion](#) by Laura Sherbin and Ripa Rashid
[Tokenism vs. Inclusion](#) by Jael Richardson
[8 Ways People of Color Are Tokenized in Non-Profits](#) by Helen Kim Ko
[Resignation Revelations: Why Minorities Quit](#) by Melanie Lasoff Levs
[Academia Isn't a Safe Haven for Conversations About Race and Racism](#) by Tsedale M. Melaku and Angie Beeman
[Tokenism](#) (video)

Reflective Questions

- How would you define diversity, inclusion, and tokenism?
 - What are examples of tokenism vs diversity vs inclusion have you witnessed in your own life, in media, etc.?
 - Last module I had you write about intent vs impact. How would you differentiate between intent vs impact in regards to tokenism and diversity?
 - Based on what we have studied and learned about previously in these modules and what was shared in the materials for this module, what do you think are some reasons why diversity by itself does not work?
 - Even though the articles shared with examples of diversity vs inclusion come from various professional fields, they all cite similar experiences of marginalized people. Why do you think that is? What can that teach us about white supremacy?
-

Suggested Donation:

[Showing Up For Racial Justice](#) ! You can donate [here](#). From their website: "SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals working to undermine white supremacy and to work for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves white people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. We work to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills and political analysis to act for change." Because Showing Up for Racial Justice is focused on white people being responsible for

ourselves, they suggest matching any donation to a Black-led organization. You can find that list [here](#).

Owning Our Whiteness Module 7: Intersectionality, Web of Oppression, Global Imperialism and Colonialization, and Capitalism

Materials:

[Kimberlé Crenshaw: What is Intersectionality?](#) (video)

[What is intersectionality? All of who I am](#) by Roberta K. Timothy

[Difference Between Colonialism and Imperialism](#)

[5 Countries \(Besides America\) with Race Issues | Decoded | MTV News](#) (video)

[How Does Colonialism Shape The World We Live In?](#) (video)

[Map: European Colonialism Conquered Every Country in the World But These Five](#) by Max Fisher

[Colonization and You](#) by Indigenous Youth Wellness (video)

[Imperialism in the Modern Age](#) by Jack Gardner

[McDonalds Cultural Imperialism "I'm Lovin' It"](#)

Reflective Questions

- How would you define intersectionality, imperialism, and colonialization?
 - What are examples of intersectionality that have been mentioned so far in these modules or that you have witnessed in your life, in media, etc.?
 - How does intersectionality play into the global web of oppression? What are some examples where someone's intersectionality of social identities might allow them to move between having power and privilege depending on the context?
 - What are some examples of colonialization and/or imperialism you have witnessed either in your own country or other countries in the world?
 - Based on what you have studied and learned about previously in these modules and what was shared in the materials for this week, how do you see similarities of anti-Black racism and white supremacy frameworks play out in the concepts of colonialization and imperialism as well?
-

Suggested Donation:

[International Rescue Committee](#). You can donate [here](#). From their website: "The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future. In more than 40 countries and in 26

U.S. cities, our dedicated teams provide clean water, shelter, health care, education and empowerment support to refugees and displaced people."

Owning Our Whiteness Module 8: Allyship and Long-Term Commitments to Racial Justice Work

Materials:

[The Danger of a Single Story](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Ted Talk video)

[No More "Allies"](#) by Mia McKenzie

[What We Don't Learn About the Black Panther Party—but Should](#) by Adam Sanchez and Jesse Hagopian

[9 Things Allies Do and Say That Harm Black People](#) by @votedvoices (instagram post)

[White Like Me - White Allies](#) documentary clip (video)

Reflective Questions

- What were the most impactful things you learned information wise (e.g. microaggressions, key terms, four layers or racism, etc) throughout these modules?
 - What were the most impactful things you learned about yourself throughout these modules?
 - What advice would you give yourself and/or other white people about white people working toward racial justice? How can you stay motivated long term to challenge white supremacy?
 - What is your unique reach moving forward? Who do you feel like you can impact the most and how do you plan on doing that? What are actions steps for yourself moving forward?
-

Suggested Donation:

Your choice! :) You can go to [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com) and search for "Black family", "Black woman", "Black assistance", etc and pick one that resonates for you. You can give again to a previously suggested donation from this series. You can donate to an instagram person who you have learned from (most have their donation info in their bios). While organizations are definitely helpful to challenge systemic and institutional racism, donating directly to people is always helpful! This is a way to immediately redistribute resources and making a reoccurring payment is a great way to embody being anti-racist as well.