

Acadia Senior College

Suggested Book List Recommendations from the Racial Justice Committee

Updated January 2022

The books on this list were recommended by members of the committee and the book group and it is their hope that the list will evolve over time, and inspire all of us to expand our understanding of systemic racism.

A Knock at Midnight, Brittany K. Barnett

Begin Again, Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

Black Like Me, John Howard Griffin - Non-fiction story of a white man who colors his skin and travels through the South.

Brown Girl Dreaming, Jacqueline Woodson - Novel in verse describing growing up in SC and NYC.

Call Me American, Abdi Iftin

Carry On by Lisa Fenn- Carry On, another sports related narrative, is about two young, poor and handicapped boys/men from Baltimore and how they create a family for each other, physically support one another, and survive a drug, poor and abandoned inner-city world.

Caste, Isabel Wilkerson - Explores the origins of racial discrimination in the US and abroad and considers the deep roots of injustice in our society.

Freedom Over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life, Ashley Bryan

How the South Won the Civil War, Heather Cox Richardson - Influence of a white oligarchy and competing claims of equality and subordination woven into the fabric of American life before and after the Civil War with particular attention to the postwar influence of the west.

How the Word is Passed, Clint Smith

How to Be an Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi

How to Make a Slave, Jerald Walker

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption, Bryan Stevenson

Me and White Supremacy, Layla F. Saad - Challenges the reader to do the essential work of unpacking biases and helps white people take action.

My Grandmother's Hands, Resmaa Menakem

One Goal, Amy Bass - A sports related narrative and in-depth view of what it is to be an immigrant, black and poor, One Goal is about the Somali community in Lewiston and the Somali young boys/men who go out for the soccer team. It examines their struggles to be accepted, to follow their own traditions of the most popular sport in the world, and their effect on the community.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X as told to Alex Haley

The Children, David Halberstam

The Fire Is Upon Us, Nicholas Buccola - The parallel, sometimes intersecting lives of James Baldwin and William Buckley on the way to their 1965 Cambridge University debate, "The American Dream Is at the Expense of the American Negro."

The Great Work: Our Way into the Future, Thomas Berry - Among other things, Berry is an ecological and spiritually oriented writer. As he says, our main task is to become reattuned to the natural world and with that to the dignity of all life – human and otherwise. He is a powerful and compelling writer.

The Hate You Give, Angie Thomas - Expands understanding of being black in America.

The Hemingses of Monticello, Annette Gordon Reed - About Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemings.

The Sum of Us, Heather McGhee - McGhee points out and documents clearly that, in fact, the grievance-filled true believers (people who feel undervalued by liberals and threatened by people of color), are voting against their own economic and social interests, because systemic racism limits opportunity for everyone but the well off.

The Tradition, Jericho Brown

The Warmth of Other Suns, Isabel Wilkerson - The story of massive south to north migration of the black population.

Underground Railroad, Colson Whitehead

White Too Long, Robert Jones - Makes the case that racism and white supremacy are an essential, ongoing element – if not the predominant ideology – of grassroots, white evangelicalism, both historical and contemporary.