

BLACK HISTORY MONTH READING LIST

Brought to you by 2018 "Conversations on Race" Capstone Course at MCLA

The Bluest Eye - Toni Morrison

Morrison creates a beautiful novel out of a sad tragedy. Morrison creates a character who is a nine-year-old African American girl that wishes she could look and have the privilege that Shirley Temple carries. Although she knows she will never be like Shirley Temple, she still prays.

Invisible Man - Ralph Ellison

In the *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison explains the struggles of being seen versus seeing as an African American. Although you are human, that doesn't mean that you're being recognized. Ellison expresses the reality of how blacks are treated by those who choose to pretend they do not exist.

Their Eyes were Watching God - Zora Neale Hurston

An African American woman in the south in the 1900s shares her story about the struggle that she faced as a woman. From abuse mentally, to abuse physically, Hurston makes sure that the audience can feel what she is writing down so that the reality is taken seriously.

To Kill A Mockingbird - Harper Lee

Harper Lee's book is based during the depression in Alabama. The story is told from the point of view of a young girl named Jean "Scout" Finch. This novel offers tense and realistic happenings during the time of the depression. Although she is privileged, she is willing to learn and remains open minded throughout the entire novel.

Holes - Louis Sachar

Holes is a novel published in 1998. It shares the struggles of young teens at a juvenile detention camp named Camp Green Lake. Being white versus being black was a privilege at the detention camp. They treated the white characters in the book better than they treated the black characters.

Tucson's Mexican Studies Program Was a Victim of Racial Animus

This reading discussed the racial discrimination in an education system that minority groups endure. Even the court system was involved in this and odds were still against the Mexican group population. There was so much animosity towards this program that it was in fact making an improvement in these students' academic learning.

Black like Me by John Howard Griffin

John Howard Griffin writes a book about his experience as transforming himself into a black man. This takes place in Mansfield, Texas in 1959. He undergoes a treatment and takes medication in order to lighten his skin pigmentation, change his eye color and hair texture. While living as a black man, he quickly realize all the access and resources he is denied and all of the aggressions towards him from the white man. When he is around blacks, he is treated with kindness and generosity, however when he is with white people, he gets treated negatively and endures much hatred.

The Racist Housing Policy that Made your Neighborhood by the Atlantic

The racial inequalities that occur in the mortgage industry. Black people are denied access to buy houses. Black people as we see, tend to be the poor, run down communities. In the black communities, the apartments are small and are all lapped up on one another, there is no space. Whereas, in the white communities, there are big houses and plentiful space. Also heavy taxes puts burden upon the poor black people.

"Jumping Monkey Hill" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The misconceptions of Africans from the White American's point of view. Adichie was in a relationship with a white man who had so much assumptions about her all based from common stereotypes directed towards Africans. Her work in literature was rarely featured and white people around her were trying to alter her work and keep it out from exposure.

Judgement Day By Flannery O'Connor

Tanner, an elderly white man from the South, goes to live with his daughter in New York. He thinks he knows how to deal with African-Americans, but when he tries befriending one of his daughter's neighbors, things go wrong.

The Beginning of Homewood By John Edgar Wideman

The narrator is writing a letter to his brother to tell him the story of his great-great-great-grandmother Sybela Owens, who escaped from slavery. She ran off one night with her two children and her owner's son, the father of her children, on a five-hundred-mile journey.

"I, Too" By Langston Hughes

The separate tables and segregated meals indicate the second-class citizenship that racism imposed on Americans of colour. But Hughes' poem urged them to never lose zest, no matter how harsh the insults and indignities faced.

A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah

A book of a boy who was forced to fight in a war, and how he struggled to overcome his ptsd and make friendships and regain trust.

"Equality" By Maya Angelou

Angelou first shames the indifference of the white supremacy that oppresses her. She shows us how racism makes the oppressor blind and deaf to the hurt and suffering of the oppressed. And how artificial 'blindness' dehumanize both the oppressor and oppressed. The pain of this dehumanization is expressed through Angelou's tears.

"The British (serve 60 million)" By Benjamin Zephaniah

Zephaniah demonstrates that varied ancestries and languages infuse vitality into our national life. This does not only help people of colour, it benefits us all. He echoes another great poet, Martin Luther King Jr, in emphasizing that discrimination anywhere is an affront to everyone, everywhere.

["They Are What You Hear in Media Reports: The Racial Stereotypes toward Uyghurs Activated by Media"](#)

This reminded me of the one side story ted talk again because people believe everything that social media says and they refuse to believe anything else. Listen to the people not the internet.

[Riots Racism and Police Brutality: A Never Ending Cycle](#)

This article is about police brutality, and riots about racism and how this is a never ending cycle.

"Easy Living" by Eric Jordan Campbell Oct 2017

A poem about how people telling others who they are and what they are for, how they should live.

All American Boys by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely

[Two teens—one black and one white—face the ugly truth that they are not treated equally by the police. When Rashad goes to buy chips at a bodega, a cop mistakes him for a shoplifter and almost beats him to death. The witness, Quinn, the cop's surrogate son, wrestles with the difficult and complicated truth that sometimes our heroes can be flawed. As the school takes sides, Rashad and Quinn must confront their new realities and face consequences that they never have before. This award-winning book kicks open on an ugly American truism—the skin you're born in dictates how you're treated by the police.]

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

It is written as a letter to the author's teenaged son about the feelings, symbolism, and realities associated with being black in the United States. Coates recapitulates American history and explains to his son the "racist violence that has been woven into American culture.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

This story is a milestone in American literature, a book that has continued to engage readers since its appearance in 1952. A first novel by an unknown writer, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction. The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood," and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be.

Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Irving, D.

In this story Irving writes about her discoveries and how she began to question her long held assumptions about race and culture. "Racism is about bigots who make snarky comments and commit intentionally cruel acts against people of color. Culture and ethnicity are only for people of other races and from other countries."

"Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom" by William Craft

A true story about William and Ellen Craft's escape from slavery. Ellen has to hide both her race and gender in order to bring them both to safety.

"March" by Geraldine Brooks

A fictional story set during the Civil War. It follows a Chaplin through his experience in it. Including his interactions with African Americans and how they are treated. This tells the interesting story of a man against slavery involved in stopping it.

"Bad Feminist" by Roxane Gay

This book is a series of essays ranging in different topics. Race plays an important role in these essays and allows for an opinion of a Black, Gay woman to be heard.

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain

This story is about a boy helping a slave escape. This is their adventures together and is told from the view of the boy.

"Jazz" by Toni Morrison

This book takes place in the 1920s. It involves the reader in African-American history and culture. Told mostly through African-American characters.

A Hundred Thousand Kingdoms by N K Jemisin

This is a fantasy novel that looks at race and class relations in a fantastical kingdom. Yenne struggles with finding out she is a princess, and goes to court, filled with people who look down on her based on where she is from and the color of her skin.

[*Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America* by Bonilla-Silva, E.](#)

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

This book is about Starr Carter, whose friend is shot next to her because he is black. Through the book, we see how police brutality affects individuals and communities as a whole.

Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue by Mackenzi Lee

This book follows Henry Montague and Percy Newton, two teenagers in the 1700s taking a road trip. Percy deals with racism, and how it intersects with being a queer man and an epileptic.

Let's Talk About Love by Claire Kann-

Alice is a black college student who is struggling to come to terms with her asexuality. She is also trying to figure out what she wants to do for a career and how to date her crush, Takumi. This book addresses issues of intersectionality, race ambassadors, and stereotypes.

Beauty Queens by Libba Bray-

A modern adaptation of *Lord of the Flies* told with American beauty queens instead of British boys. The girls struggle to survive and also look at how gender, race, and sexuality has impacted their lives. This book specifically addresses misrepresentation, the danger of a single story, microaggressions, and intersectionality.

The Institutionalist by Colson Whitehead

This book is about a city that is comprised of skyscrapers and elevators used as transportation. The use of the city works as an allegory for segregation and integration.

The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace by Jeff Hobbs

This moving biography recounts the life of Robert Peace, a young man who escaped the streets of Newark, New Jersey, to attend Yale University — only to lose his life after graduating.

Monster by Walter Dean Myers

This novel describes the trial of a 16-year-old African American boy named Steve Harmon, and deals with themes of identity, race, and dehumanization. I read this book when I was much younger and its messages have only gotten stronger as I have gotten older, lately I think about the portrayal of institutionalized racism in our justice system.

Americanah by Chimamanda Adichie

The well-celebrated novel by Chimamanda Adichie is about the experience of Ifemelu and Obinze, young lovers who deal with the issues of immigration differently. Adichie also shows the effect of race in America following post-9/11 to the election of Barack Obama.