

WHITE SUPREMACY

You might know . . .

The Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League designate white supremacist organizations as hate groups.



But maybe you've never thought about . . .

“White supremacy” does not only refer to white supremacist groups. Every white person benefits from and contributes to white supremacy. White supremacy is a deeply embedded cultural imagination that assumes whiteness is the norm or the universal. It is ingrained in our pop culture and media, our religious institutions, our educational institutions, our businesses, our government, and even our language. White fragility is the distress white people experience when even a small amount of racial strain occurs, triggering defensiveness.

“In this country, American means white.
Everybody else has to hyphenate.”

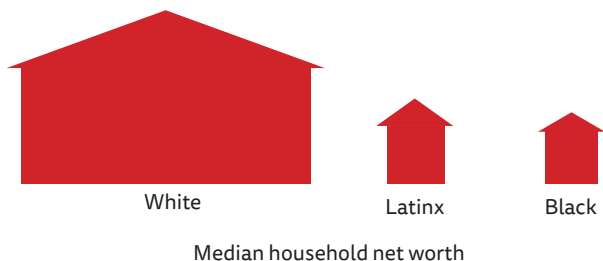
Toni Morrison

Median household income for white people is **\$62,950**, as compared with **\$45,148** for Latinx people and **\$36,898** for Black people.

Source: Statista

The median net worth of white households is **13** times higher than that of Black households and **10** times greater than that of Latinx households.

Source: Pew Research Center



Actors of color cast in movie franchises traditionally dominated by white characters have been met with significant backlash. Recent examples include Michael B. Jordan playing Johnny Storm in the newest *Fantastic Four* movie and John Boyega playing a stormtrooper in *The Force Awakens*.

■ **Microaggression** Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults about one's marginalized identity/identities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Pay attention to the ways that white culture appropriates and tokenizes people of color and Native Peoples for entertainment. Seek out credible movies, books, and television shows that represent the experiences of people of color and Native Peoples.
- Take the Harvard implicit-bias test at implicit.harvard.edu.
- Use your privilege to advocate on behalf of anti-racist policies and practices. Name white supremacy when you see it in the community and institutions you're a part of.
- Start a book group on the topic of racial justice. Begin with these two books: *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* by Joy DeGruy Leary (Uptone, 2005) and *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Spiegel & Grau, 2015).
- Attend an event hosted by people of color (a poetry reading, a community event, worship at a Black church). Have authentic conversations with people of color, and expose yourself to people from diverse communities.

People

Halle Berry was the first person of color to be named *People* magazine's Most Beautiful Person, in 2003.

REFLECTION & JOURNAL SPACE

- Make a list of ten ways you benefit from and contribute to systems of white supremacy.
- What was it like to push yourself out of your comfort zone and attend an event hosted by people of color? What was most uncomfortable about the experience? What did you learn?
- When have you experienced white fragility in yourself or witnessed it in others?

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