

INTERSECTIONALITY TOOLKIT

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TOOLKIT



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

We've written about Housing Affordability, Fair Elections, issues Veterans face, Healthcare and Education, and now you may be asking yourself - why would they want to tackle a tricky subject like this? We've asked ourselves the same thing. Multiple times.

And yet, here we are, trying our best to share what we think needs to be discussed. Even amongst ourselves we found that we have approached this topic from a variety of perspectives and levels of understanding. We've each grown a little, learned a lot, and understand our responsibilities more. Join us as we journey together.

The concept of intersectionality has been around for three decades, but many people haven't heard of it, or if they have, aren't familiar with the meaning. Intersectionality is a complex term that describes the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, class, gender, and more - and how they create overlapping and interdependent systems of advantage or oppression/discrimination. It explains why, for example, black women may face challenges that neither white women nor black men face - because the sum of their intersecting social categorizations can create a more extreme level of discrimination than other women or other black people. It also helps explain why being a white man can bring certain advantages that aren't available to other white people or black men.

We chose to address this issue during Black History Month because we believe that the concept of intersectionality and the increased burdens it places on black people, in addition to other minorities, is often overlooked or ignored. That's something that's easy to do when you're not clear on what exactly intersectionality is and how it works. But we can't limit ourselves to talking about it as just a

IN THIS TOOLKIT

- The origins of the term intersectionality and how its use has evolved in the roughly 30 years since its introduction.
- Identity politics and how sometimes avoiding identity politics isn't as simple as we'd like.
- Feature on a local black activist who had a lasting impact on major legal decisions that shaped the discussion about race in this country.
- Resources for you to form your own opinions and consider new perspectives.
- Spotlight on the NC NAACP's [14-Point People's Agenda](#) to demonstrate how it uses concepts of intersectionality to work towards advances that will benefit black people and society as a whole.

theory of overlapping demographics. It's also about the theory of systemic oppression and how arbitrary social categorizations like race can have a bigger effect than we may realize.

We recognize that, as a group of white women writing this, we will not get it all right. Despite doing our best, we will almost certainly make some missteps here, and may end up inadvertently offending some people. Let us know when we've gotten it wrong, and we'll own it and fix it. It's never easy to publicly make mistakes, but we believe it's better to try to have this discussion and learn along the way, than to not have it at all.

WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

Oxford Dictionary: The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

The term was first used by [Kimberle Crenshaw](#) in a 1989 [essay](#). In her essay, she suggested that black women were discriminated against more than white women or more than black men - that the intersection of both race and gender led to greater discrimination than someone experiencing either gender or race discrimination faced. Crenshaw further suggested that the systems designed to correct inequality - such as the courts - were stacked in such a way that they addressed the inequalities of only the most privileged members of a particular disadvantaged class.

For example, the courts were designed to address gender discrimination singularly. Black women, who may have experienced gender discrimination, but also racial discrimination, were only able to have part of their discrimination addressed. However, the sum of a particular person's experience is greater than the sum of the individual marginalized groups they experience - that is to say, a black woman's discriminatory treatment is often greater than the sum of just the discriminatory treatment of her race as well as her gender.

Examples of marginalized groups that may create intersectionality in a person:

- Women/gender minorities
- Racial minorities
- Ethnic minorities
- People who are LGBTQ+
- People with disabilities
- Economic class
- Criminal history
- And many more groups

This doesn't just apply to the court system, but throughout our society as we see with legislation passed that may try to address one layer of injustice, but doesn't succeed in getting to the heart of the overlapping injustices. The NAACP's People's Agenda identifies some action steps and legislation that can help mitigate these issues. But we also need to emphasize that this is a societal problem as well.

Complicating the idea of intersectionality is that people carry multiple identities, and not all of those identities are marginalized. For example, a disabled man identifies as disabled, which is a marginalized identity, but as a man, he benefits in some ways from being a man. The bottom line is that intersectionality gives us a framework with which to view the different, yet completely valid, experiences that people with differing identities have.

STEREOTYPES AND BIAS

A “[stereotype](#)” is a [cognitive shortcut](#) — that is, it allows your brain to make a snap judgment based on immediately visible characteristics such as gender, race, or age. Your brain is hardwired to make quick calls, and that’s okay. The problem comes when we start to apply those stereotypes beyond that immediate impulse. That’s called “[bias](#),” which is basically a belief that a stereotype is true. For example, the stereotype that girls are bad at math can lead to the suggestion that [some innate difference between women and men](#) leads to this discrepancy. Stereotypes are so ingrained in our society now that the mere understanding that they exist, even when no one in particular may be stereotyping you specifically at that time, is enough to change your behavior. This is known as a “stereotype threat.”

Stereotypes are something we can look to in order to see examples of how intersectionality magnifies the negative experiences of marginalized groups. Black women not only have to deal with stereotypes about women *and* black people, but a specific negative stereotype about black women. Gay men who have more feminine traits and expressions are often faced with specific negative stereotypes that combine discrimination based on sexual orientation together with discrimination based on perceived gender identity - that is to say, being a gay man with feminine tendencies or traits has its own set of stereotypes and slurs - which gay men who do not have feminine tendencies or traits don’t face.

Much of the initial research on stereotypes and bias centered around singular social categories. More recent studies have shown the evolution of this concept with intersectional stereotypes, and the additional impacts and recommendations needed to mitigate or eliminate the multiple threats people experiencing intersectionality face. But this is a complicated issue as shown in this study which examines how [stereotypes can both help and hurt black women leaders](#). “If you are a black woman, you can be an assertive leader as long as you don’t make any mistakes,” Livingston argued. “But the first time you make a mistake, your competence is called into question well before the white woman or the black man.”

[What Can You Do to Combat Bias?](#)

Take the implicit bias test yourself. Visit implicit.harvard.edu and see what biases based on gender, sexuality, age, and race you hold. (Note: *There are ongoing debates about the ability to affect societal change by examining implicit bias. See Resources below for more on this.*)

Admit that you have those biases — It’s okay! We all have them. It’s what you do next that matters.

Keep those biases in mind and take steps to correct them by slowing down and recognizing where they might be coming into play in your life. Are your “gut feelings” about job candidates valid or the product of biases? Are you discounting what a colleague is saying because of your biases? Educators, are biases affecting how you teach, advise, and evaluate students? Parents, are you sending different messages to your sons and daughters? Make an effort to remove a stereotype threat whenever you have the chance.

Expose yourself to different experiences. By stepping out of your usual routines, you might better understand people who are different from you or how stereotypes came to be.

Raise awareness of biases. The first step to changing a problem is admitting you have one — and admitting that society has a problem too. Have conversations with friends. And if you’re a college student, go ahead and [apply for a Campus Action Project grant, sponsored by Pantene](#) to take steps to fight against bias and stereotypes at your school.

EVOLUTION OF INTERSECTIONALITY

Below is a summary of "[Intersectionality - Mapping the Movements of a Theory](#)" explaining the evolution of intersectionality over the last 30 years.

Since 1989, the term intersectionality has dramatically evolved, grown, and traveled across countries. Today, it's used in many areas of social science, both geographically and topically, and continues to evolve to bring new understanding of social dynamics.

Scholars note that while examples of intersectionality are focused on specific instances of social categorizations - like Crenshaw's black women in the United States - that doesn't mean intersectionality cannot apply to other specific instances of social categorizations. The theory applies as much to a white gay disabled man as to a black trans man as to a poor black woman. Some scholars view the utility of the term as an evolving framework - using existing recognitions of intersectionality to help move the conversation forward to other areas that have not yet used intersectionality, but where it could be useful.

Intersectionality of different types of marginalized groups can also help to create coalitions and bridge distances between different types of groups. While each set of intersectionalized identities experiences oppression in a different way, the inherent understanding that marginalized groups all face some sort of oppression from power structures leads to finding common ground between different subgroups.

Intersectionality has been used to address deficiencies in social science research and theories. Race and gender, at times, can be part of the same construction, which can impede a full analysis of issues - for example, typically when addressing racism, psychology has focused on the black man, and when addressing sexism, it has focused on white women. Using intersectionality to identify where

the omission of other combinations of social categorizations takes place can help psychology and other social sciences more fully address complex issues across a broader spectrum.

An example of intersectionality can be seen in the increased human health risk from harmful contaminants for women, children and poorer people in the US. Citizens at a lower socio-economic level often are exposed to higher levels of pollutants where they live, work and go to school. Highways, factories, and waste facilities are typically located in poorer communities, and those citizens inhale and ingest more hazardous substances at higher concentrations. Research documents a higher rate of respiratory diseases like emphysema and chronic bronchitis in these communities.

The way medical and scientific communities calculate the risk of hazardous substances can be discriminatory, as well. Historically, assessments of exposure and risk used a 150lb white male as a "reference model." However, children typically are at greater risk, because they both ingest more contaminants and process them differently than does an adult male. Steps are being taken, slowly, to better protect children's environmental health, but in general we can confidently state that protection standards lag for children and the poor.

Crenshaw, when she created the term intersectionality, didn't intend for it to be a term used exclusively to describe the plight of black women - it was a tool created to examine the dynamics of different and coordinating power structures so that the problems those power structures created could be brought to light and dismantled. As intersectionality has evolved and changed, it has and will continue to create opportunities to bring light to new areas of concern and to provide a framework for closer examination and dismantling of those power structures as well.

IDENTITY POLITICS

Any discussion of intersectionality must include the use of identity politics. Many people are very uncomfortable with identity politics. Some people claim they can't "see" things like skin color, which isn't really true: everyone can see skin color, unless they lack eyesight. Others feel that discussions which separate people into different groups promote division more than collaboration or inclusion, and push back against the use of identifiers like gender or race, preferring to find common ground.

Here's the challenge with those perspectives: it doesn't change the experience of the people who have those identities. A black woman still experiences life and discrimination differently than a white woman. A disabled person who is part of the LGBTQ+ community still experiences life and discrimination differently than someone who is disabled but not a member of the LGBTQ+ community. When people claim they can't "see" certain things, or don't want to acknowledge different identities because they prefer to focus on inclusion, those people erase the experiences of their fellow humans - and that does more harm than acknowledging the differences between fellow humans.

It was this type of situation which started Crenshaw on the path to writing the essay which coined the term. In 1976, a black woman sued her employer, alleging discrimination based on her status as a black woman. Her employer segregated jobs by race and gender. Men were able to apply for some jobs and women for others. Black people were eligible for certain jobs, while only white people were eligible for others. The problem this employee had was that almost all the jobs for black people were the jobs only men were eligible to apply for. Had she been a white woman, she would have had a claim for gender discrimination. Had she been a black man, she would have had a claim for racial discrimination. This employee had a combined claim - both racial and gender discrimination, together.

But she had no ability to sue to correct her unique situation. The court ruled that there was no judicial history of a combined racial and gender discrimination case, and it refused to allow one. Since she could not prove that her experience matched that of white women, because white women were eligible to be hired in accordance with the laws at the time, the court [dismissed the case](#) for gender discrimination. The case for racial discrimination was combined with [another case](#) alleging racial discrimination at the same employer, but it [did not cover](#) the same issues that the case involving black women covered.



Because the existing court system could not find a way to simultaneously acknowledge both identities - being black and a woman - the result was that the experience of black women was erased.

Crenshaw [says the following](#) about identity politics: “[Some] have painted those who practice intersectionality as obsessed with ‘identity politics.’ Of course, as the [case above] shows, intersectionality is not just about identities but about the institutions that use identity to exclude and privilege. The better we understand how identities and power work together from one context to another, the less likely our movements for change are to fracture.”

Spotlight on Pauli Murray

INTERSECTIONALITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

A slight, genderqueer, light skinned black woman, the granddaughter of a slave and the great granddaughter of a slave owner, Anna Pauline (Pauli) Murray lived and breathed intersectional discrimination, and then fought for equality with every fiber of her being. Though almost unknown today, Murray moved in high circles; she was friends with President and First Lady Roosevelt, and worked with President Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King, Jr. She co-founded the National Organization for Women, and was the first female Episcopal priest ordained in the United States. Likely the finest legal mind and activist of the 20th century, her civil rights work, particularly on the [14th amendment](#), shaped 20th century American jurisprudence.



In 1913, three-year-old Pauli first came to live in Durham, North Carolina with her maternal aunt, Pauline Fitzgerald, the sixty-year veteran public school teacher for whom she was named. After her mother's death, Murray's father suffered from mental illness until his violent death ten years later, and her six siblings were split up. Despite the difficulties of her youth, she was well supported by extended family - including a grandfather who had fought for the Union during the Civil War, and moved to the South during Reconstruction to teach newly freed slaves. Her grandfather's and aunt's emphasis on education was pivotal.

When Murray graduated from Hunter's College in New York, she applied for graduate school at UNC, challenging the institution's whites only policy. She lost and it would be another thirteen years before UNC allowed black grad students, in 1955. Undeterred, Murray gained experience teaching and in labor advocacy until she was admitted to Howard University Law School, where she graduated as the valedictorian and as the only woman in 1944. Despite being top of her class, the Harvard Law fellowship typically given to top Howard graduates was denied to her on the basis of her sex. Applying a second time, she was again denied despite a letter of recommendation from President F.D. Roosevelt, whom she had befriended through her engagement in civil rights activism. But "still, she persisted" and went on to get her graduate degree in law from Berkeley, with a master's thesis titled "The Right to Equal Opportunity in Employment".

The term didn't exist then, but today Murray likely would have considered herself transgendered. At one point, she took hormone therapy to suppress her female hormones, and asked for surgery for what she believed were "inverted" male sex organs. Having "passed" as white and male at points in her younger years, she later had publicly well known relationships with women. As she considered herself more male than female, she thought of her partners as heterosexual women. She was also deeply religious, eventually giving up her law career in the early 1970s to become the first female priest ordained in the Episcopal Church in 1977, practicing until her death in 1985.

Her fascinating personal life influenced her activism, and her legal work was a major influence on 20th century law, as she worked on labor, race and feminist issues throughout her life. The majority of her writing focuses on the

broadest applicability of the 14th Amendment. But Murray took it further, applying the amendment to all races and genders. Though examples abound, we'll limit it to her influence on the *Brown v Board of Education* case of 1954, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the *Reed v Reed* case of 1971.

[Brown v Board of Education, 1954](#)

Until the *Brown v Board of Education* case was decided in 1954, "separate but equal" was the law of the land, as decided in the *Plessy v Ferguson* trial. Murray challenged the idea of separate but equal throughout her education, devoting much of her writing to arguing that "separate" of any kind was inherently unconstitutional, as had the lone dissenting Supreme Court Justice, John Marshall Harlan, in the 1896 landmark case. The 14th Amendment begins, "No state shall... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws". Though section two goes on to restrict this to males over 21 years, and exclude non-tax paying Indians, Murray argued its applicability to any person, regardless of sex, race, religion or sexuality. **It was Murray's earlier work, including "[States' Laws on Race and Color](#)" in 1950, that formed the basis for the strategy Thurgood Marshall and other NAACP lawyers took in arguing and ultimately winning *Brown's* case. Marshall called her work "the Bible" of the civil rights movement.** For the first time in over fifty years, separate was declared unequal and unconstitutional.

Civil Rights Era

No stranger to civil disobedience, Murray had been arrested in 1944 for refusing to move to the back of the bus - ten years before Rosa Parks was arrested for the same thing - and had participated in numerous sit-ins while at Howard in the then-segregated Washington, DC restaurants. In 1961, JFK appointed Murray to the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, where she wrote "A Proposal to Re-examine the Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to State Laws and Practices Which Discriminate on the Basis of Sex Per Se." She worked with labor leader A. Randolph and civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the early 1960s, she became very vocal about the lack of female leadership in the Civil Rights Movement. In "The Negro Women and the Quest for Equality" she outlined the relegation of black women, and in a 1963 letter to Randolph she wrote, "I have been increasingly perturbed over the blatant disparity between the major role which Negro women have played and are playing in the crucial grassroots levels of our struggle and the minor role of leadership they have been assigned in the national policy-making decisions. It is indefensible to call a national march on Washington and send out a call which contains the name of not a single woman leader."

We cannot help but think how awed Murray might have been to see credit go to the black women who just saved Alabama. And yet the choice between white male candidates still suggests how much further we have to go for broad and visible representation of black female leaders. Still, it was Murray's influence, her legal scholarship and activism that provided that "Bible" of the Civil Rights Movement.

Reed v Reed

In 1965 Murray and co-author Mary Eastwood published "Jane Crow and the Law: Sex Discrimination and Title VII", drawing concrete disparities between Jim Crow laws, and what she had been calling "Jane Crow" laws since her graduate years, to the derision of her male peers. It was her work where she and Dorothy Kenyon won *White v. Crook*, giving women the right to serve on juries. That same year, 1966, she co-founded the National Organization of Women (NOW). But it wasn't until 1971 that she was directly credited, when Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg named Murray and Kenyon honorary co-authors of her brief for *Reed v. Reed* - the case that decided the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment actually applied to women.

Pauli Murray, before the term intersectionality was even created, challenged the race, gender, religious, political and sexuality norms in her own life and for the benefit of all Americans. What she left is an indelible impact on American jurisprudence. You can support the effort to turn her Durham, NC home into a center for social justice [here](#).

RESOURCES: SYSTEMIC RACISM AND BIAS

There is a vast amount of resources available on many of these topics. We could not possibly include them all in a single toolkit. Check out [StrongerNC.org](https://strongernc.org) and our [Facebook page](#) because we'll have blog posts and other information that will also be useful.

Intersectionality Overview

[Intersectionality](#) - a primer from the Washington Post.

[Introducing Intersectionality](#) by Mary Romero "Through framing, extensive case examples and accessible writing, (the author) illustrates how intersectionality enables us to connect personal troubles to social problems and to see pathways to change for social justice."

[Critical Race Theory](#) by Kimberle Crenshaw "*Critical Race Theory* is a compilation of provocative writings that challenges us to consider the relationship between race, the legal system, and society at large."

—Senator Bill Bradley

Institutional/Systemic Racism

[7 Ways We Know Systemic Racism is Real](#) - Ben & Jerry (yes, the ice cream guys) explain, with sources, how they know that systemic racism is real.

[Institutional Racism is Our Way of Life](#) - US News provides a report on a multitude of studies that show the existence of institutional racism.

[Mapping Inequality](#) - The University of Richmond provides a look at the historical practice of redlining (a practice which prohibited banks from making home loans in certain areas and resulted in the exclusion of black homeowners from those areas) and the extent of the problem.

[How the "Grassroots Resistance" of White Women Shaped White Supremacy](#) - A history of the role white women played in enforcing segregation and the lasting impact of their efforts.

Prejudice/Bias

[We're All a Little Biased, Even If We Don't Know It](#) - the New York Times discusses science showing that everyone has hidden or implicit biases.

[FBI Director Admits 'Unconscious Racial Biases' Exist Among Cops](#) - former FBI director James Comey admits that police carry unconscious racial bias.

[The World is Relying on a Flawed Psychological Test to Fight Racism](#) - while the idea of humans having bias is undisputed, the science behind the "implicit bias" test famously offered by Harvard is questioned.

[Is This How Discrimination Ends?](#) - one of the key architects behind the concept of implicit bias looks for better ways to fix the problem of bias.

RESOURCES: PRIVILEGE AND “GOOD INTENTIONS”

Privilege

Privilege is any characteristic or trait that grants someone a benefit they did absolutely nothing to earn. Privilege can refer to physical traits, social or economic status, and any number of other aspects of a person. Privilege does not mean that someone with a particular privilege has never had to struggle or has never had to face prejudice. These resources will discuss the concept of privilege and how it plays out, especially in terms of intersectionality.

[For White People Who Want the Racist Nightmare to End, We Must Reclaim Our Lives From Anti-Black Racism](#) - the author explains the benefits white people have accrued over the centuries after profiting from the exploitation of black people, and provides resources on how to make changes.

[Yes, You Can Measure White Privilege](#) - a summary of studies showing the extent of white privilege.

[A Guide to White Privilege for White People Who Think They've Never Had Any](#) - the author explains why, even if a white person thinks they've never experienced white privilege, it's likely that they still benefit from white privilege.

[Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person](#) - a common response heard by anti-racists is from low-income people claiming they've never had privilege. This article will help explain the concept of privilege to someone who thinks they can't have any.

[What My Bike Has Taught Me About White Privilege](#) - a great analogy of how white privilege works.

Good Intentions, Hurtful Impact

[Intent Versus Impact: Why Your Intentions Don't Really Matter](#) - a great explanation of how someone can act in a racist/sexist/harmful way without being a racist/sexist/harmful person, and how to handle it when that happens.

[Colorblind Ideology is a Form of Racism](#) - Psychology Today explains why, while well-intentioned, the idea that “I don't see skin color/race” is harmful and a form of racism.

[How White Americans' Hatred of Racism Actually Supports Racism Instead of Solves It](#) - when white people only associate racism with the most extreme forms of it, and won't look at smaller examples or unintentional actions, it perpetuates the problem.

[The New Threat: 'Racism Without Racists'](#) - CNN highlights studies and research showing the ways that well-intentioned words or actions instead perpetuate racism.

[3 Types of Racists That Are More Dangerous Than What You Think A Racist Looks Like](#) - a profile of three specific types of attitudes that carry racist undertones, even with good intentions.

[#NotAllWhitePeople, The Quiz](#) - think you've never done anything even remotely harmful when it comes to race? Take this quiz and be honest with yourself.

RESOURCES: SCHOOLS, MEDICINE AND WEALTH

Racism in Schools

[Your Local Public School is Failing at Addressing Racism - Here are 3 Ways How](#) - examples of the ways that public schools can fail at working to address and eliminate racism.

[Yes, Preschool Teachers Really Do Treat Black and White Children Totally Differently](#) - the author shares the experiences she's had with her children along with studies showing the differences in how black and white preschoolers are treated.

[The Desegregation and Resegregation of Charlotte's Schools](#) - the New Yorker profiles North Carolina's own Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system and the disturbing racial trends.

[Are Black Students More Likely to be Suspended in Your School District?](#) - the News & Observer profiles a project showing major differences in the treatment of black students and white students in schools.

Racism in Medicine

[Challenging Medical Racism and Physicians' Preference for White Patients](#) - ThinkProgress provides a summary of studies showing the extent of racism in medicine and offers ideas for reversing those trends.

[The Disturbing Reason Some African American Patients May Be Undertreated for Pain](#) - the Washington Post examines a study showing flawed ideas of pain between races and the discrimination that results.

[What Happened When I Talked About What Others Ignored - Racism in Medicine](#) - the author explains her experiences as a person of color being treated by doctors and what happened when she talked about it.

[Institutional Racism in US Healthcare](#) - a journal article chronicles the systematic racism prevalent in the healthcare system.

Income/Wealth Disparity Between Races

[America's Financial Divide: The Breakdown of US Wealth in Black and White](#) - a profile about the disparities in wealth between black US residents and white US residents.

[Wealth Inequalities](#) - The Urban Institute breaks down wealth inequalities between races.

[Americans Misperceive Racial Economic Equality](#) - a study shows that Americans think there is a much smaller gap in racial economic equality than the reality.

RESOURCES: VOICES OF COLOR AND ALLIES

Voices of Color

[I, Racist](#) - The author of this sermon won't talk about race with white people any longer.

[Why I'm Absolutely an Angry Black Woman](#) - the author explains the constant barrage of discrimination she faces.

[You Don't Have to Like Me - You Just Have to Believe I'm a Human Being](#) - a black woman writes about why she's tired of being told to be nicer about fighting for racial justice.

[I'm Not Your Racial Confessor](#) - a discussion between black writers about the problems that ensue with white people and the expectations they have about black people educating and reassuring them.

[White Policing of Black Emotions](#) - an explanation of why tone policing, or criticizing the way someone presents information, is harmful to black people.

[What I Said When My White Friend Asked For My Black Opinion on White Privilege](#) - the author explains in great detail her experiences and how they relate to white privilege.

[You're Gonna Screw Up](#) - a black woman offers advice in how to deal with the inevitable mistakes you'll make as a white person learning about anti-racism.

[How to be an Ally: A Guide for Woke White People, White People Who Want to be Woke, and WOC Who Can Empathize](#) - a black woman in primarily white spaces offers advice and suggestions.

White Voices

While we want to elevate the voices of color that are out there and who have written about this issue, we also want to highlight some white anti-racists and reinforce the idea that it's our responsibility as white people to do our own research and also learn from white anti-racists rather than expect people of color to educate us.

[Here Are The Real Reasons Why We White People Struggle to Admit That Racism Still Exists](#) - a white author breaks down the experience of learning about racism and coming to terms with the complex issues and feelings encountered along the way.

[Why I'm A Racist](#) - a white man explains why, despite the fact that he doesn't try to be, he ends up being racist.

[Some Garbage I Used to Believe About Equality](#) - an author explains why much of what he used to believe about equality is really all wrong. Includes perspectives on race as well as gender.

['Not All White People' and Derailing Conversations](#) - the author explains some of the well-intentioned but problematic things white people do in conversations about race.

RESOURCES: MISCELLANEOUS

[Transforming White Fragility into Courageous Imperfection](#) - the author explains how it's better to be courageous and make mistakes in learning about racial justice issues rather than worry about your own hurt feelings.

Book Recommendation: [Waking Up White, by Debby Irving](#) "...a wake-up call for white people who want to consciously contribute to racial justice rather than unconsciously perpetuate patterns of racism."

Miscellaneous

[Hear Something, Say Something: Navigating the World of Racial Awkwardness](#) - a collection of essays from people who have experienced awkward comments about race and how they handled it.

[21 Racial Microaggressions You Hear on a Daily Basis](#) - a collection of racial microaggressions (brief and every day statements or actions that convey negative slights toward the recipient) that people hear on a daily basis.

[Black Lives Matter](#) - Ben & Jerry (the ice cream guys) explain why black lives matter.

[3 Reasons Why Anti-Racism Isn't Code for Anti-White](#) - the author explains how the idea of being anti-white because you're anti-racist isn't really true.

[The 'War on Whites' is a Myth - and an Ugly One](#) - the Washington Post debunks the myth of a war on white people.

[The Fallacy of Reverse Racism](#) - an explanation of why reverse racism isn't really a thing.

[Here's Why 'Reverse Racism' Doesn't Actually Exist in the US](#) - Business Insider explains why the myth of reverse racism isn't real.

CALLS TO ACTION

Change starts with you. Being willing to talk to your friends, neighbors and family about intersectionality is the most important action step you can make. We know these conversations are challenging, but they are too important to ignore any longer.

Remember this is a journey for each of us and we are all starting at different places in this discussion. Be kind to others as they share their stories and perspectives. Understand that while something may not be your life experience, it's important to be empathetic and validate the experiences of others even if they are different from your own. The more you are willing to learn, the better off we will all be. The only way we will move forward is by our willingness to challenge our own assumptions and learn from them.

Here are a few resources to help you get started and prepare for those conversations.

[America's Mission Statement is Our Light Against Bigotry](#) - Psychology Today provides a social science-based method to help us stand up to peers about racism and racist remarks or behavior.

[6 Ways White Folks Can Support Black Lives Matter, Even if You Can't Leave Your House](#) - for those who are disabled, here's a list of ideas to help support this cause (and others) in ways that are accessible.

[How to Easily be a White Ally to Marginalized Communities](#) - a list of steps to take to show up and stand up for members of all marginalized communities.

[11 Things White People Can Do to Be Real Anti-Racist Allies](#) - A diverse group of people of color provide their perspective on how white people can be effective anti-racist allies.

[Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation](#) - a downloadable, six-session guide from Everyday Democracy on facing racism.

[Race and Racism](#) - Intergroup Resources provides a primer and a list of good resources to explore more about race and racism.

[7 Tips for Dealing With Your Unwoke Family and Friends](#) - a list of tips on how to handle the gatherings where friends or family make awkward racist comments.

[Opportunities for White People in the Fight for Racial Justice](#) - a roadmap of where to start and what to do, along with resources, for white people who want to learn how to fight more effectively for racial justice.

[Dear White Friends: Here's How to Support BLM Without Making it About You](#) - advice on how white people can participate in supporting the Black Lives Matter movement.

[Beyond Hesitation](#) - a two-part anti-racism action plan for white people.

MORAL MONDAY MOVEMENT INTERSECTIONAL INJUSTICES

50 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr started the Poor People’s Campaign, to address and mobilize against the [“evils of racism, economic exploitation, and militarism”](#). As we mark off another anniversary of HKonJ in Raleigh, NC, it is helpful to understand why this movement, continued by Bishop Dr. William Barber II, is needed more today than ever before.

The Institute for Policy Studies produced a [preliminary report in Dec. 2017](#) analyzing the original campaign’s four core issues: racism, poverty, the war economy/militarism, and ecological destruction. The report finds that by many measures, these problems are worse today than they were five decades ago.

The report concludes that: “All Americans – regardless of their race, gender, or class – share a common interest in tackling these systemic problems in order to prevent our democracy, our society, and our planet from destruction. To combat any one of these four problems requires changing the underlying structures that have produced all of them. We need to overcome the silos and other divisions that have splintered social movements and hindered their progress. We also need to build the power of the people most affected by these problems to counter those at the top who have rigged the rules in their favor.”

The HKonJ (Historic Thousands on Jones St.) Coalition kicked off its first annual “HKonJ People’s Assembly” in February 2007 when over 3,500 supporters sanctioned and signed the coalition’s “HKonJ 14-Point People’s Agenda” (with detailed action steps). The HKonJ Coalition transformed the 14-Point People’s Agenda into comprehensive reform bills that have been introduced in legislative sessions. A few of their [legislative accomplishments](#) include:

- Successfully preventing the unconstitutional resegregation of Wake County Schools (the largest school system in NC)
- An increase in the minimum wage
- Successful passage of The Racial Justice Act
- Obtained Same Day Voter Registration and extended Early Voting
- Won Smithfield workers their right to unionize
- Helped to initiate groundwork for former Governor Perdue’s “Eugenics Compensation Program Bill.”

After an avalanche of [extreme policies](#) passed during the 2013 NCGA Legislative Session, under the leadership of the NC NAACP, the HKonJ Coalition continued their work under the banner of the Forward Together Moral Movement and organized 13 Moral Mondays and over 25 local Moral Mondays across the state once the session ended.

This nationally known movement led by the [Bishop Dr. William J. Barber II](#) has spread to dozens of states and has inspired people across the nation. The HKonJ Coalition has continued to hold Moral Monday mass demonstrations at the state capitol while also fighting extremist laws and legislators in the courts and at the ballot box. They successfully won three voting rights lawsuits that overturned key aspects of the 2013 voter suppression law and found both the congressional and state districts in North Carolina to be racially gerrymandered and unconstitutional.

NC NAACP 14 Point People's Agenda

1. **All Children Need High Quality, Constitutional, Well-Funded, Diverse Public Schools.** NC must meet its Constitution's requirement of adequate and diverse schools by fully funding [Leandro](#) with transparent accountability and creating special leadership teams in its failing schools.
2. **Livable Wages and Support for Low Income People.** NC must provide livable wages, make sure no person goes hungry and ensure that everyone in need has affordable, accessible childcare.
3. **Health Care for All.** NC must provide its people with health insurance and prescription drugs, while funding public health programs to treat social diseases that plague Black and poor communities including HIV/AIDS, diseases caused by environmental pollution and warming, drugs, domestic violence, mental illness, diabetes and obesity.
4. **Redress Ugly Chapters in N. C.'s Racist History: The overthrow of the bi-racial 1898 Wilmington Government, the sterilization of poor, mainly Black, women from 1947-1977 and the 1979 Greensboro Massacre.** NC must implement the 1898 Wilmington Riot Commission recommendations, [pay damages to the people it forcibly sterilized](#)* and confront hate groups that would violate human rights. (*We are seeing progress on this.)
5. **Expand and Improve Same Day Registration and Public Financing of Elections.**
6. **Lift Every HBCU.** NC must financially support our Historically Black Colleges and Universities to develop equitable infrastructure and programs with doctoral-level leadership for today's challenges.
7. **Document and Redress 200 years of State Discrimination in Hiring and Contracting.** NC must commission historical documentation of its contracting practices with racial minorities to justify constitutional redress.
8. **Provide Affordable Housing and Stop Consumer Abuse.** NC must adequately fund the state Housing Trust Fund for low-income renters, provide vouchers for veterans who cannot find decent housing, expand tax breaks that keep seniors in their homes, and strengthen protections against predatory lending and foreclosures.
9. **Abolish the Racially-Biased Death Penalty and Mandatory Sentencing Laws; Reform our Prisons.**
10. **Promote Environmental Justice.** NC must fight all forms of environmental injustice, promote green jobs, and establish an Environmental Job Corps that will employ young people who did not graduate high school and re-engage them in public service.
11. **Collective Bargaining for Public Employees and Worker Safety.** NC must repeal the state law that prohibits public employee collective bargaining and toughen laws that regulate workplace safety.
12. **Protect the Rights of Immigrants from Latin America and other Nations.** NC must provide immigrants with health care, education, workers rights and protection from discrimination.
13. **Organize, Strengthen and Provide Funding For Our Civil Rights Enforcement Agencies and Statutes Now.**
14. **Bring Our Troops Home from Iraq Now.** NC cannot address injustice at home while we wage an unjust war abroad.

Join the movement and [become a member of the NC NAACP](#) to support these efforts to combat intersectional injustices.