

SUGGESTED READING FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT A MORE INCLUSIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

1. *Slavery by Another Name: The re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* by Douglas A. Blackmon · 2012

In this groundbreaking historical expose, Douglas A. Blackmon brings to light one of the most shameful chapters in American history: an Age of Neoslavery that thrived from the aftermath of the Civil War through the dawn of World War II. Using a vast record of original documents and personal narratives, Douglas A. Blackmon unearths the lost stories of slaves and their descendants who journeyed into freedom after the Emancipation Proclamation and then back into the shadow of involuntary servitude shortly thereafter.

2. *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*
By Heather McGhee · 2021

McGhee embarks on a deeply personal journey across the country from Maine to Mississippi to California, tallying what we lose when we buy into the zero-sum paradigm—the idea that progress for some of us must come at the expense of others. Along the way, she meets white people who confide in her about losing their homes, their dreams, and their shot at better jobs to the toxic mix of American racism and greed. This is the story of how public goods in this country—from parks and pools to functioning schools—have become private luxuries; of how unions collapsed, wages stagnated, and inequality increased; and of how this country, unique among the world’s advanced economies, has thwarted universal healthcare.

3. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*
By Isabel Wilkerson · 2011

From 1915 to 1970, this exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America. Wilkerson compares this epic migration to the migrations of other peoples in history. She interviewed more than a thousand people, and gained access to new data and official records, to write this definitive and vividly dramatic account of how these American journeys unfolded, altering our cities, our country, and ourselves.

4. *Capitol Men: The Epic Story of Reconstruction Through the Lives of the First Black Congressmen*
By Philip Dray · 2008

Reconstruction was a time of idealism and sweeping change, as the victorious Union created citizenship rights for the freed slaves and granted the vote to black men. Sixteen black Southerners, elected to the U.S. Congress, arrived in Washington to advocate reforms such as public education, equal rights, land distribution, and the suppression of the Ku Klux Klan. But these men faced astounding odds. They were belittled as corrupt and inadequate by their white political opponents, who used legislative trickery, libel, bribery, and the brutal intimidation of their constituents to rob them of their base of support. Despite their status as congressmen, they were made to endure the worst humiliations of racial prejudice. And they have been largely forgotten, often neglected or maligned by standard histories of the period.

5. *Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019*
By Ibram X. Kendi, Keisha N. Blain · 2022

Four Hundred Souls is a unique one-volume “community” history of African Americans. The editors, Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain, have assembled ninety brilliant writers, each of whom takes on a five-year period of that four-hundred-year span. The writers explore their periods through a variety of techniques: historical essays, short stories, personal vignettes, and fiery polemics. They approach history from various perspectives: through the eyes of towering historical icons or the untold stories of ordinary people; through places, laws, and objects. While themes of resistance and struggle, of hope and reinvention, course through the book, this collection of diverse pieces from ninety different minds, reflecting ninety different perspectives, fundamentally deconstructs the idea that Africans in America are

a monolith—instead it unlocks the startling range of experiences and ideas that have always existed within the community of Blackness.

6. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*

By Ibram X. Kendi · 2016

In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-Black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. *Stamped from the Beginning* uses the lives of five major American intellectuals to offer a window into the contentious debates between assimilationists and segregationists and between racists and antiracists. From Puritan minister Cotton Mather to Thomas Jefferson, from fiery abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison to brilliant scholar W. E. B. Du Bois to legendary anti-prison activist Angela Davis, Kendi shows how and why some of our leading proslavery and pro-civil rights thinkers have challenged or helped cement racist ideas in America.

7. *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*

By The New York Times Magazine – Created by Nikole Hannah-Jones · 2021

In late August 1619, a ship arrived in the British colony of Virginia bearing a cargo of twenty to thirty enslaved people from Africa. Their arrival led to the barbaric and unprecedented system of American chattel slavery that would last for the next 250 years. This is sometimes referred to as the country's original sin, but it is more than that: It is the source of so much that still defines the United States.

8. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*

By Isabel Wilkerson – 2020 This book points to our entire social structure as an unrecognized caste system. Most people see America as racist, and Wilkerson agrees that it is indeed racist. She points out that we tend to refer to slavery as a “sad, dark chapter” in America when in fact it lasted for hundreds of years—but in order to maintain the social order, it was necessary to give Black people the lowest possible status. Whites in turn got top status. In between came the middle castes of “Asians, Latinos, indigenous people, and immigrants of African descent” to fill out the originally bipolar hierarchy. Such a caste system allowed generations of whites to live under the same assumptions of inequality—these “distorted rules of engagement”—whether their ancestors were slave owners or abolitionists. And the unspoken caste system encouraged all to accept their roles.

9. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

By Michelle Alexander - 2012 Argues that the War on Drugs and policies that deny convicted felons equal access to employment, housing, education, and public benefits create a permanent under caste based largely on race. Argues that the War on Drugs and policies that deny convicted felons equal access to employment, housing, education, and public benefits create a permanent under caste based largely on race.

10. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*

By Richard Rothstein – 2017 Rothstein explodes the myth that America's cities came to be racially divided through *de facto segregation* – that is, through individual prejudices, income differences or the actions of private institutions like banks and real estate agencies. Rather, he makes clear that it was *de jure segregation* – the laws and policy decisions passed by local, state and federal governments – that actually promoted the discriminatory patterns that continue to this day.

11. *Critical Race Theory: Why It Matters & Why You Should Care*

By Victor Ray – 2022 Ray draws upon the radical thinking of giants such as Ida B. Wells, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to clearly trace the foundations of critical race theory in the Black intellectual traditions of emancipation and the civil rights movement. From these foundations, Ray explores the many facets of our society that critical race theory interrogates, from deeply embedded structural racism to the historical connection between whiteness and property, ownership, and more.