

Reference Quotes for How to Be an Antiracist Book Club

1. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, by Robin Diangelo (Beacon Press, 2018). Chapter 5, "The Good/Bad Binary."

While making racism bad seems like a positive change, we have to look at how this functions in practice. Within this paradigm, to suggest that I am racist is to deliver a deep moral blow – a kind of character flaw assassination. Having received this blow, I must defend my character and that is where all my energy will go – to deflecting the charge, rather than reflecting on my behavior. In this way, the good/bad binary makes it nearly impossible to talk to white people about racism, what it is, how it shapes all of us, and the inevitable ways that we are conditioned to participate in it.

2. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). "My Racist Introduction."

But there is no neutrality in the racism struggle...One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist. There is not in between safe space of 'not racist.' The claim of 'not racist' neutrality is a mask for racism.

3. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). Chapter 1, "Definitions."

Definitions anchor us in principles. This is not a light point: If we don't do the basic work of defining the kind of people we want to be in language that is stable and consistent, we can't work toward stable, consistent goals. Some of my most consequential steps toward being an antiracist have been the moments when I arrived at basic definitions. To be an antiracist is to set lucid definitions of racism/antiracism, racist/antiracist policies, racist/antiracist ideas, racist/antiracist people. To be a racist is to constantly redefine racist in a way that exonerates one's changing policies, ideas, and personhood.

4. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). "My Racist Introduction."

"Racist" is not – as Richard Spencer argues – a pejorative. It is not the worst word in the English language; it is not the equivalent of a slur. It is descriptive, and the only way to undo racism is to constantly identify and describe it – and then dismantle it. The attempt to turn

this usefully descriptive term into an almost unusable slur is, of course, designed to do the opposite: to freeze us into inaction.

5. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). Chapter 4, “Biology.”

...in the liberal haze of racial progress... some well-meaning Americans started consciously and perhaps unconsciously looking for other terms to identify racism. “Microaggression” became part of a whole vocabulary of old and new words – like “culture wars” and “stereotype” and “implicit bias”... that made it easier to talk about or around the R-word.

6. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). Chapter 18, “Survival.”

What gives me hope is a simple truism. Once we lose hope, we are guaranteed to lose. But if we ignore the odds and fight to create an antiracist world, then we give humanity a chance to one day survive, a chance to live in communion, an chance to be forever free.

7. *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi (One World, 2019). Chapter 18, “Survival.”

Pain is usually essential to healing. When it comes to healing America of racism, we want to heal America without pain, but without pain, there is no progress.