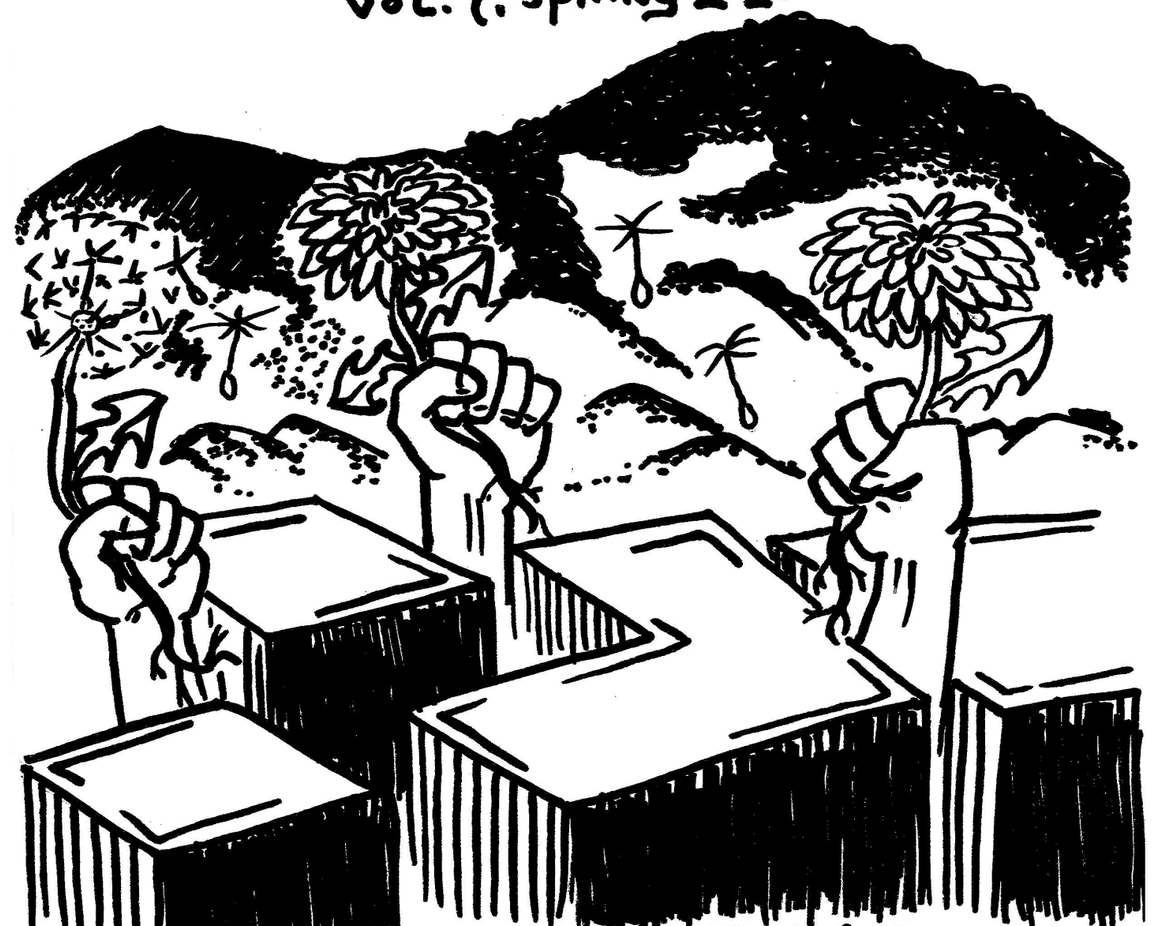
DIABLO'S ADVOCATE

vol. 7, spring 2020



CULTIVATING ANTI-RACISM
in DIABLO VALLEY
since 2016

DIABLO'S ADVOCATE:
CULTIVATING ANTI-RACISM IN DIABLO VALLEY
A PUBLICATION OF DIABLO FOR PEACE
vol. 7, spring 2020

From 2016-2019, Diablo For Peace was a non-partisan intergenerational collective of families of the East Bay Area (in Chochenyo Ohlone and Miwok land, in what is originally known as Saclan) committed to educating one another through constructive discussion, education, collaboration and peaceful activism. Our intention was to create an intergenerational and multicultural community that serves to protect the integrity of the place we proudly call home, and to create a safe environment for all people who feel vulnerable in this era of uncertainty and increased violence.

Although we disbanded in mid-2019, we continue to stand with our community and made this new 2020 version to support the youth and elders coming together in Contra Costa County in the wake of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Miles Hall, and all the other lives we have lost as a nation due to police brutality. We stand in firm solidarity with the movement for black lives.

This zine is a free publication intended for education and discussion. Originally put together through various zines from 2016-2019, we've created a new compilation of works by many writers (all of whom are cited in the Works Cited page). We strongly encourage our readers to seek out the sources provided and share this information with others. This volume specifically focuses on the intersectionality of the racist structure of the prison industrial complex and police violence, and how it coincides with education, health, and the residue of slavery.

Three years later, we find ourselves in the midst of mass mobilization. Massive protests have been organized in cities across the country and we are seeing people coming together to demand a new future. A future focused on social services, mental health, accessibility, and care. A future we can be proud of. All of the readings included in this issue remain painfully relevant to today. We have recently reconnected with youth we worked with during the formation of our group and are excited to announce that we have a new zine in the works – featuring original artwork, writing, and resources put together by local activists. Keep an eye out!

To view our zine archive, please visit:

www.ourpeacecenter.org/diablo-for-peace
www.acorn.wiki/resources

Additional General Discussion Questions

(credit to Showing Up for Racial Justice)

1. Have everyone introduce themselves and say a few words on why they are here and/or any questions they are coming with.

2. What is your mutual interest in ending racism? How would would the world be better for you if we could end racism?

3. What's a mistake you made that you learned from? What allowed you to learn from it?

4. Why do you think we're taught there isn't enough for all of us? Who does that belief benefit?

5. When's a time you took action with other people about something you cared about?

6. How do we make the abuses of the criminal justice system relevant to those who live in areas with lower crime rates?

Works Cited

1. Adichie, Chimamanda N. *We Should All Be Feminists*. 2015.
2. Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. 2010.
3. hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. 2003.
4. Davis, Angela. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* 2003.
5. Davis, Angela. *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. 2015.
6. McIntosh, Peggy. *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.* 1988.
7. Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities*. 1991.
8. Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider : Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984.

Some Local Organizations to Support

Search these groups on Google or Facebook to find more information on how to support them, should you have disposable time or income to do so. Feel free to add more as necessary.

In Diablo Valley/ East Bay
Solidarity Sundays Walnut Creek
Trinity Center Walnut Creek
Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center
East Bay Food Not Bombs
East Bay Shelters
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Racial Justice & Immigrant Rights
Black Lives Matter Bay Area
Black Youth Project 100
Love Not Blood Campaign
Black Organizing Project
Showing Up for Racial Justice
Arab Resource and Organizing Center
Council on American-Islamic Relations
La Peña
Anti-Police Terror Project
Critical Resistance
Berkeley CopWatch
East Bay Community Law Center
Centro Legal de la Raza
Multicultural Institute
Women & LGBTQ Rights
Bay Area Women Against Rape
Access Women's Health Justice
Mujeres Unidas
Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits
Indigenous Rights
www.shellmound.org
www.sogoreate-landtrust.org
Idle No More SF
www.acorn.wiki
Run4Salmon.org
Kanyon Konsulting LLC
Wallmapu Support Committee

Youth
HandsOn Bay Area
Kids for the Bay
Coyote Mountain Nature School
Foundations
The Pollination Project
Walnut Creek Civic Pride Foundation
UC Berkeley Student Organizations
Black Student Union @ Cal
Multicultural Community Center
Bridges
(Re)generation: Indigenous Social Welfare Caucus
DVC Student Organizations
Latino Student Association
Men Of Color Association Club
Queer Student Alliance
Pan African Union
Progressive News Resources
94.1 KPFA
Democracy Now!
News From Native California
Aljazeera
The Intercept
Accounts To Follow (instagram/twitter)
@wc_solidarity
@dvsunite
@contracostacountyforblm
@theblackbayarea
@arlanwashere
@ihartericka
@frontlinemedics

Note by artist: The front cover features a dandelion plant because dandelion is resilient and everywhere: you can often find her breaking through the cracks of concrete. Dandelion root is known to detoxify and cleanse the liver and other parts of the digestive system. These detoxifying properties also benefit the soil they are found growing in. This is our symbol, because we are seeking to detoxify our community of racism, sexism, classism, and xenophobia. The dandelion is also a symbol of hope and potential: It's popular especially among children to blow dandelion seeds to make a wish, consequently increasing growth of future plants.

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FROM We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

"If we do something over and over again, it becomes normal. If we see the same thing over and over again, it becomes normal… If we keep seeing only men as heads of corporations, it starts to seem 'natural' that only men should be the heads of corporations (13).

"Each time I walk into a restaurant with a man, the waiter greets the man and ignores me. The waiters are products of a society that has taught them that men are more important than women, and I know that they don't intend harm, but **it is one thing to know something intellectually and quite another to know it emotionally.** Each time they ignore me, I feel invisible. I feel upset. I want to tell them that I am just as human as the man, just as worthy of acknowledgment (20). **These are little things, but sometimes it is the little things that sting the most (21).**

"Gender is not any easy conversation to have. It makes people uncomfortable, sometimes even irritable... Because thinking of changing the status quo is always uncomfortable (40).

"Some people ask, 'Why the word *feminist*? Why not just say you are a believer in human rights, or something like that?' Because that would be dishonest. Feminism, is of course, part of human rights in general -- but to choose to use the vague expression *human rights* is to deny the specific and particular problem of gender. It would be a way of pretending that it was not women who have, for centuries, been excluded. It would be a way of denying that the problem of gender targets women. That the problem was not about being human, but specifically about being a female human (41).

"Other men might respond by saying, 'Okay, this is interesting, but I don't think like that. I don't even think about gender.'

Maybe not.

And that is part of the problem. That many men do not actively *think* about gender or notice gender. That many men say… that things might have been bad in the past but everything is fine now. And that many men do nothing to change it. If you are a man and you walk into a restaurant and the waiter greets just you, does it occur to you to ask the waiter, 'Why have you not greeted her?' Men need to speak out in all of these ostensibly small situations (42-3).

Adichie, Chimamanda N. *We Should All Be Feminists*. 2015.

Discussion questions:

1. In what other aspects of our community do we see this kind of dismissal of oppression?
2. What other groups might be subject to this kind of oppression?

Mainstream communication does not want women, particularly white women, responding to racism. It wants racism to be accepted as an immutable given in the fabric of your existence, like evening time or the common cold. (130)

So we are working in a context of opposition and threat, the cause of which is certainly not the angers which lie between us, but rather that virulent hatred leveled against all women, people of Color, lesbians and gay men, poor people against all of us who are seeking to examine the particulars of our lives as we resist our oppressions, moving toward coalition and effective action.

Any discussion among women about racism must include the recognition and the use of anger. This discussion must be direct and creative because it is crucial. We cannot allow our fear of anger to deflect us nor seduce us into settling for anything less than the hard work of excavating honesty; we must be quite serious about the choice of this topic and the anchors in twined with in it because, rest assured, our opponents are quite serious about their hatred of us and of what we are trying to do here.

Women of Color in America have grown up with being a symphony of anger, at being silenced, at being unchosen, at knowing that when we survive, it is in spite of a world that takes for granted our lack of humanness, and which hates our very existence outside of its service. And I say *symphony* rather than *cacophony* because we have had to learn to orchestrate those furies so that they do not tear us apart. We have had to learn to move through them and use them for strength and force and insight within our daily lives. Those of us who did not learn this difficult lesson did not survive. And part of my anger is always libation for my fall and sisters.

Anger is an appropriate reaction to racist attitudes, as is fury when the actions arising from those attitudes do not change. To those women here who fear the anger of women of color more than their own unscrutinized racist attitudes, I ask: is the anger of women of color more threatening than the woman hatred that tinges all aspects of our lives?

It is not the anger of other women that will destroy us but our refusals to stand still, to listen to it's rhythms, to learn within it, to move beyond the manner of presentation to the substance, to tap that anger as an important source of empowerment (134).

—

You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness (142).

Discussion Questions:

What are the dangers of making a blanket statement regarding the struggles of "all women"?

What role do white people have in the fight for racial justice?

Why is it important to honor anger?

What are ways in which white supremacy weaponizes the anger of the oppressed?

FROM Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde

"Transformation of Silence"

Each of us is here now because in one way or another we share a commitment to language and to the power of language, and to the reclaiming of that language which has been made to work against us. In the transformation of silence into language and action, it is vitally necessary for each one of us to establish or examine her function in that transformation and to recognize her role as vital within that transformation.

For those of us who write, it is necessary to scrutinize not only the truth of what we speak, but the truth of that language by which we speak it. For others, it is to share and spread also those words that are meaningful to us. But primarily for us all, it is necessary to teach by living and speaking those truths which we believe and no beyond understanding. Because in this way alone we can survive, by taking part in a process of life that is creative and continuing, that is growth.

We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition, and while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us.

The fact that we are here and that I speak these words is an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us, for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken (43).

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As women we have been taught either to ignore our differences, or to view them as causes for separation and suspicion rather than as forces for change. Without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression. But community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist. (112).

Women of today are still being called upon to stretch across the gap of male ignorance and to educate men as to our existence and our needs. This is an old and primary tool of all oppressors to keep the oppressed occupied with the master's concerns. Now we hear that it is the task of women of Color to educate white women — in the face of tremendous resistance — as to our existence, our differences, our relative roles in our joint survival. This is a diversion of energies and a tragic repetition of racist patriarchal thought (113).

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We are not here as women examining racism in a political and social vacuum. We operate in the teeth of a system for which racism and sexism are primary, established, and necessary props of profit.

1. The example given about being ignored in a restaurant is something called a "microaggression." Work alone or together to make a list of microaggressions that you have experienced or witnessed, and answer each item with a solution.

Microaggression	Solution
Example: Being ignored by a waiter when entering a restaurant with a man	Example: The man can ask, "Why have you not greeted her?"

FROM White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, by Peggy McIntosh

DAILY EFFECTS OF WHITE PRIVILEGE

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions that I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographic location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can tell, my African American coworkers, friends, and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place and time of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind or me.
3. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
4. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
5. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
6. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
7. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
8. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
9. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.

...

11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice in a group in which s/he is the only member of his/her race.
12. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.

...

14. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
15. I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.

...

20. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

...

26. I can easily buy posters, post-cards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.
27. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared.

...

35. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.
36. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation

FROM Savage Inequalities by Jonathan Kozol

"One way of establishing the value we attribute to a given group of children is to look at the medical provision that we make for them. … In Central Harlem, notes the *New York Times*, the infant death rate is the same as in Malaysia. Among black children in East Harlem, it is even higher: 42 per thousand, which would be considered high in many Third World nations." (115)

"...In explanation of the fact that white patients in cardiac care are two to three times as likely as black patients to be given bypass surgery, [a Chicago doctor] wonders whether white physicians may be 'less inclined to invest in a black patient's heart' than in the heart of a 'white, middle-class executive' because the future economic value of the white man, who is far more likely to return to a productive job, is often so much higher. Investment strategies in education, as we've seen, are often framed in the same terms: 'How much is it worth investing in *this* child as opposed to *that* one? Where will we see the best return? Although respectable newspapers rarely pose the question in these chilling terms, it is clear that certain choices have been made: Who shall be educated? Who shall live?" (116-7)

"One consequence of medical and early educational denial is the virtual destruction of the learning skills of many children by the time they get to secondary school… Two years ago [1989]... New York City's Office of School Safety started buying handcuffs. Some 2,300 pairs were purchased for a system that contains almost 1,000 schools: an average of two pairs of handcuffs for each school. "It is no doubt possible," the weekly *New York Observer* editorialized, "to obtain improvements in discipline and even in test scores and dropout rates" by "turning schools into disciplinary barracks." But the paper questions whether such a regimen is ideal preparation for life in a democratic nation. (118)

"Handcuffs, however, may be better preparation than we realized for the lives that many of these adolescent kids will lead. According to the New York City Department of Corrections, 90 percent of the male inmates of the city's prisons are the former dropouts of the city's public schools. Incarceration of each inmate, the department notes, costs the city nearly $60,000 a year." (118)

"... according to the Public Education Association of New York…: 'classes for the emotionally handicapped, neurologically impaired, learning disabled and educable mentally retarded are disproportionately black. Classes for the speech, language, and hearing impaired are disproportionately Hispanic.' Citywide, the association adds, fewer than 10 percent of children slotted in these special tracks will graduate from school. Nationwide, black children are three times as likely as white children to be placed in classes for the mentally retarded but only has as likely to be placed in classes for the gifted: a well-known statistic that should long since have aroused a sense of utter shame in our society. Most shameful is the fact that no such outrage can be stirred in New York City."(119)

Discussion Questions (feel free to add your own):

age range were in jail or prison, or on probation or parole. The second study also revealed that the group experiencing the greatest increase was black women, whose imprisonment increased by seventy-eight percent [see citations]. (19)

If jails and prisons are to be abolished, then what will replace them? If we shift our attention from the prison, perceived as an isolated institution, to the set of relationships that comprise the prison industrial complex, it may be easier to think about alternatives. The first step, then, would be to let go of the desire to discover one single alternative system of punishment that would occupy the same footprint as the prison system. (105-6)

Discussion Questions (feel free to add your own):

race.

36. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it had racial overtones.

37. I can be pretty sure of finding people who would be willing to talk with me and advise me about my next steps, professionally.

38. I can think over many options, social, political, imaginative or professional, without asking whether a person of my race would be accepted or allowed to do what I want to do.

...

41. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.

...

46. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.

47. I can travel alone or with my spouse without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us.

48. I have no difficulty finding neighborhoods where people approve of our household.

49. My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.

…

Peggy McIntosh is associate director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. This essay is excerpted from Working Paper 189. "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming To See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies" (1988), by Peggy McIntosh; available for $4.00 from the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley MA 02181. The working paper contains a longer list of privileges. This excerpted essay is reprinted from the Winter 1990 issue of Independent School.

Discussion Questions:

1. If you identify as non-Black or white, what are some privileges you carry in your own 'knapsack'?

2. If you identify as Black, what are some privileges that white/non-Black people have without realizing?

FROM Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement by Angela Davis

"*How would you define "black feminism"? And what role could it play in today's society?*

Black feminism emerged as a theoretical and practical effort demonstrating that race, gender, and class are inseparable in the social worlds we inhabit. At the time of its emergence, Black women were frequently asked to choose whether the Black movement or the women's movement was most important. The response was that this was the wrong question. **The more appropriate question was how to understand the intersections and interconnections between the two movements.** We are still faced with the challenge of understanding the complex ways race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, and ability are intertwined-- but also how we move beyond these categories to understand the interrelationship of ideas and processes that seem to be separate and unrelated (3-4).

"We can't only think about crime and punishment. We can't only think about the prison as a place of punishment for those who have committed crimes. **We have to think about the larger framework.** That means asking: Why is there such a disproportionate number of Black people and people of color in prison? So we have to talk about racism. Abolishing the prison is about attempting to abolish racism. Why is there so much illiteracy? Why are so many prisoners illiterate? That means we have to attend to the educational system. Why is it that the three largest psychiatric institutions in the country are jails in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: Rikers Island, Cook County Jail, and L.A. County Jail? That means we need to think about health care issues, and especially mental health care issues. We have to figure out how to abolish homelessness. ... **This would be a way for people to move away from that notion of bad people deserving punishment and to begin to ask questions about the economic, political, and ideological roles of the prison (23-4)**."

Davis, Angela. Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement. 2015.

Discussion questions:

1. What are your own identities, privileges, and positions of power ? How do they relate to the work you are doing / are engaged in?
2. What connection does Angela Davis make in this excerpt regarding the relationship between the prison industrial complex and how we frame intersectionality?
3. Why is an intersectional framework essential for social justice work? What would be ignored/ overlooked?

FROM Are Prisons Obsolete? by Angela Davis

"Nine prisons, including the Northern California Facility for Women, were opened between 1984 and 1989. Recall that it had taken more than a hundred years to build the first nine California prisons… And during the 1990s, twelve new prisons were opened, including two more for women. [By 2003 there were] thirty-three prisons, thirty-eight camps, sixteen community correctional facilities, and five tiny prisoner mother facilities in California (12-13).

"Why were people so quick to assume that locking away an increasingly large population of the U.S. population would help those who live in the free world feel safer and more secure? Why do prisons tend to make people think that their own rights and liberties are more secure than they would be if prisons did not exist? What other reasons might there have been for the rapidity with which prisons began to colonize the California landscape? (14)

"We thus think about imprisonment as a fate reserved for others, a fate reserved for the "evildoers", to use a term recently popularized by George W. Bush. Because of the persistent power of racism, "criminals" and "evildoers" are, in the collective imagination, fantasized as people of color. The prison therefore functions ideologically as an abstract site into which undesirables are deposited, relieving us of the responsibility of thinking about the real issues afflicting those communities from which prisoners are drawn in such disproportionate numbers. (16)

"It is… important to grasp the fact that the prison as we know it today did not make its appearance on the historical stage as the superior form of punishment for all times. We should therefore question whether a system that was intimately related to a particular set of historical circumstances that prevailed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can lay absolute claim on the twenty-first century. (43)

"'...We hold these truths to be self-evident: all men are created equal…' from the American Revolution [was] a new and radical idea, even though [it] was not extended to women, workers, Africans, and Indians. Before the acceptance of the sanctity of individual rights, imprisonment could not have been understood as punishment. If the individual was not perceived as possessing inalienable rights and liberties, then the alienation of those rights and liberties by removal from society to a space tyrannically governed by the state would not have made sense. (44)

"In order to understand the proliferation of prisons and the rise of the prison industrial complex, it might be helpful to think further about the reasons we so easily take prisons for granted. In California, as we have seen, almost two thirds of existing prisons were opened during the eighties and nineties. Why was there no great outcry? Why was there such an obvious level of comfort with the prospect of many new prisons? (17)

"In 1990, the Washington-based Sentencing Project published a study of U.S. populations in prison and jail, and on parole and probation, which concluded that one in four black men between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine were among these numbers [see citations]. Five years later, a second study revealed that this percentage had soared to almost one in three (32.2%). Moreover, more than one in ten Latino men in this same

While some of these codes were intended to establish systems of peonage resembling slavery, others foreshadowed Jim Crow laws prohibiting, among other things, interracial seating in the first-class sections of railroad cars and by segregating schools." (28)

Discussion Questions:

In what ways do we see voter suppression happening today?

What does Michelle Alexander refer to when she says we have "not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it"?

Why do you think this is not taught as thoroughly in schools? What can be done locally to change this in our local schools?

FROM Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope
by bell hooks

"While it is a positive aspect of our culture that folks want to see racism end; paradoxically it is this heartfelt longing that underlies the persistence of the false assumption that racism has ended, that this is not a white-supremacist nation. In our culture almost everyone, irrespective of skin color, associates white supremacy with extreme conservative fanaticism, with Nazi skinheads who preach all the old stereotypes about racist purity. Yet these extreme groups rarely threaten the day-to-day workings of our lives. **It is the less extreme white supremacists' beliefs and assumptions, easier to cover up and mask, that maintain and perpetuate everyday racism as a form of group oppression.**

"Once we can face the myriad ways white-supremacist thinking shapes our daily perceptions, we can understand the reasons liberal whites who are concerned with ending racism may simultaneously hold on to beliefs and assumptions that have their roots in white supremacy (29-30).

"Often individual black people and/or people of color are in settings where we are the only colored person present. In such settings unenlightened white folks often behave towards us as though we are the guests and they the hosts. They act as though our presence is less a function of our skill, aptitude, genius and more the outcome of philanthropic charity. Thinking this way, they see our presence as functioning primarily as a testament to their largesse; it tells the world they are not racist. Yet the very notion that we are there to serve them is itself an expression of white-supremacist thinking. (33)

"...This was an aspect of white-supremacist thinking that made the call for racial integration and diversity acceptable to many white folks. To them, integration meant having access to people of color who would either spice up their lives... or provide them with the necessary tools to continue their race-based dominance (for example: the college students from privileged white homes who go to third world to learn Spanish or Swahili for "fun", except that it neatly fits later that this skill helps them when they are seeking employment) (33-4).

"Clearly, the most powerful indicator that white people wanted to see institutionalized racism end was the overall societal support for desegregation and integration. The fact that many white people did not link this support to ending everyday acts of white-supremacist thought and practice, however, has helped racism maintain its hold on our culture. **To break that hold we need continual anti-racism activism. We need to generate greater cultural awareness of the way white-supremacist thinking operates in our daily lives. We need to hear from the individuals who know, because they have lived anti-racist lives, what everyone can do to decolonize their minds to maintain awareness, change behavior, and create beloved community (40).**"

hooks, bell. Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope. 2003.

Discussion questions:

1. What are some examples of everyday racism you witness/experience in your community? What are some examples of what you do in your daily life to actively combat racism in your community?

Why do you think it may be difficult for white liberals to talk about race?

In what ways have you upheld white supremacy / racism in your community / circles?

5. What are some ways you can frame issues of race to help others in your life understand? Think intergenerationally and cross-culturally if this is relevant to your experience.
6.

FROM The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander

"Jarvious Cotton cannot vote. Like his father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, he has been denied the right to participate in our electoral democracy. Cotton's family tree tells the story of several generations of black men who were born in the United States but who were denied the most basic freedom that democracy promises-- the freedom to vote for those who will make the rules and laws that govern one's life. Cotton's great-great grandfather could not vote as a slave. His great-grandfather was beaten to death by the Ku Klux Klan for attempting to vote. His grandfather was prevented from voting by Klan intimidation. His father was barred from voting by Klan intimidation. His father was barred from voting by poll taxes and literacy tests. Today, Jarvious Cotton cannot vote because he, like many black men in the United States, has been labeled a felon and is currently on parole (1).

"What has changed since the collapse of Jim Crow has less to do with the basic structure of our society than with the language we use to justify it. In the era of colorblindness, it is no longer socially permissible to use race, explicitly, as justification for discrimination, exclusion, and social contempt. So we don't. Rather than rely on race, we use our criminal justice system to label people of color "criminals" and then engage in all the practices we supposedly left behind. Today it is perfectly legal to discriminate against criminals in nearly all the ways that it was once legal to discriminate against african americans. … We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it. (2)

"In my experience, people who have been incarcerated rarely have difficulty identifying the parallels between these systems of social control. Once they are released, they are often denied the right to vote, excluded from juries, and relegated to a racially segregated and subordinated existence. Through a web of laws, regulations, and informal rules, all of which are powerfully reinforced by social stigma, they are confined to the margins of mainstream society and denied access to the mainstream economy. They are legally denied the ability to obtain employment, housing, and public benefits-- much as African Americans were once forced into a segregated, second class-citizenship in the Jim Crow era. (4)

"This book argues that mass incarceration is, metaphorically, the New Jim Crow and that all those who care about social justice should fully commit themselves to dismantling this new racial caste system. … The colorblind public consensus that prevails in America today-- i.e., the widespread belief that race no longer matters--has blinded us to the realities of race in our society and facilitated the emergence of a new caste system. (11-12)

"Equally worrisome was the state of the economy. Former slaves literally walked away from their plantations, causing panic and outrage among plantation owners. Large numbers of former slaves roamed the highways in the early years after the war. Some converged on towns and cities; others joined the federal militia. Most white people believed African Americans lacked the proper motivation to work, prompting the provisional southern legislatures to adopt the notorious Black Codes. As expressed by one Alabama planter: we have the power to pass stringent police laws to govern the negroes-- this is a blessing-- for they must be controlled in some way or white people cannot live among them [see citations]."