

What Does It Mean to Be White in America? Breaking the White Code of Silence, A Collection of Personal Narratives (2LP EXPLORATIONS IN DIVERSITY) (Volume 1)

By Gabrielle David, Sean Frederick Forbes

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? BREAKING THE WHITE CODE OF SILENCE, A COLLECTION OF PERSONAL NARRATIVES, is a collection that asks just that. While the literature on whiteness has long been dominated by an academic point of view, editors Gabrielle David and Sean Frederick Forbes came to the realization that there was an unmet need for an anthology of personal narratives about race and culture from the perspective of white Americans. In this conception process, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? was born. The first of its kind, this collection of 82 personal narratives reflects a vibrant range of stories from white Americans who speak frankly and openly about race, not only as it applies to people of color, but as it applies to themselves. In answering the question, some may offer viewpoints one may not necessarily agree with, but nevertheless, it is clear that each contributor is committed to answering it as honestly as possible. With an introduction by racial justice educator and writer, Debby Irving, and an afterword by award-winning poet, author and scholar, Tara Betts, the purpose of WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? is to, as Irving points out in her introduction, break the code of silence so that we can engage in frank conversations about race. An invaluable starting point that includes a glossary and a bibliography of suggested reading, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? is highly recommended for students, teachers and anyone else interested in seeking a deeper and richer understanding of race in America. Visit the book's website at whiteinamerica.org to learn more about the book and the contributors.

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Review

These deeply honest personal stories examine the effect and affect of being white which for so many years has meant ignorance or denial of how racism benefits and forges our own Caucasian identity. Reading this important collection, I am reminded of how processing whiteness is a journey although we may all be at different points of discourse, it is still critical to enter the conversation. May this book get people talking. -- Jodi Picoult, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Leaving Time* and *Small Great Things*

The conversations about race in the U.S. have been unnecessarily one-sided and unfairly the burden of people of color. Without the white perspective, indeed white engagement, the struggle for change or even dialogue becomes even more challenging. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? offers a long-overdue response that aims to complete the politicized discourse with this varied collection of exploratory essays that moves beyond expressions of guilt and admissions of privilege. The tones range from moving to provocative, from emotional to intellectual, but their common mission is to break away from apathetic silence and to help examine one the most charged issues affecting this country today. This is a timely and vital anthology. --Rigoberto González, writer, book critic, award-winning poet and the author of *Our Lady of The Crossword* and *Mariposa U*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WHITE IN AMERICA? is a must read by all. This collection of personal narratives provides varied perspectives about being white, white privilege and other counter points that need to be said and read. We tend to see and hear only one side of the discussion about white folks, now it s their turn to make their voices heard. After reading these personal narratives, I believe this book is on track to become a best seller, but more importantly, it will generate discussions and a much needed dialogue about race, and a catalyst for positive change in this country. This may be hopeful thinking, but hope is always a good thing. --Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako) Activist Librarian and Adjunct Lecturer

About the Author

GABRIELLE DAVID is a multidisciplinary artist who is a musician, photographer, digital designer, poet

and writer. She is the executive director of the Intercultural Alliance of Artists & Scholars, Inc. (IAAS), a NY-based nonprofit which she co-founded in 2000, and has served as its Executive Director since its inception. She is also the publisher of the organization's imprint, 2Leaf Press. SEAN FREDERICK FORBES is a professor, scholar and the author of PROVIDENCIA: A BOOK OF POEMS (2013). His work has appeared in numerous journals and publications. Forbes is the director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Connecticut, and teaches creative writing and poetry.

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