White Fragility **References**

Page 10
"Individualism is a story line that creates, communicates, reproduces, and reinforces the concept that each of us is a unique individual and that our group memberships, such as race, class, or gender, are irrelevant to our opportunities. Individualism claims that there are no intrinsic barriers to individual success and that failure is not a consequence of social structures but comes from individual character. According to the dogma of individualism, race is irrelevant."

Page 11
"For many white people, the mere title of this book will cause resistance because I am breaking a cardinal rule of individualism—*I am generalizing*. I am proceeding as if I could know anything about someone just because the person is white." [italics in original]

Page 22
"The racial dogma that circulates in the United States rationalizes racial hierarchies as the outcome of a natural order resulting from either genetics of individual effort or talent. Those who don't succeed are just not as naturally capable, deserving, or hardworking. Ideologies that obscure racism as a system of inequality are perhaps the most powerful racial forces because we accept our positions within racial hierarchies, these positions seem natural and difficult to question, even when we are disadvantaged by them."

Page 41
"One line of King's speech in particular—that one day he might be judged by the content of his character and not the color of his skin—was seized upon by the white public because the words were seen to provide a simple and immediate solution to racial tensions: pretend that we don't see race, and racism will end. Color blindness was now promoted as the remedy for racism, with white people insisting that they didn't see race or, if they did, that it had no meaning to them."

Page 89
"Exploring our collective racial identity interrupts a key privilege of dominance—the ability to see oneself only as an individual. We need to discuss white people as a group—even if doing so jars us—in order to disrupt our unracialized identities."

Page 22
"When I say that only whites can be racist, I mean that in the United States, only whites have the collective social and institutional power and privilege over people of color. People of color do not have this power and privilege over white people."

Page 83
"While everyone of every race holds prejudice and can discriminate against someone of another race, in the US and other white/settler nations, only white people are in the position to oppress people of color collectively and throughout the whole of society. This claim defines racism as a fluid dynamic that changes direction according to each group's ratio in a given space. While a white person may have been picked on—even mercilessly—by being in the numerical minority

in a specific context, the individual was experiencing race prejudice and discrimination, *not racism*." [italics in original]

Page 136
"White men occupy the highest positions in the race and gender hierarchy. Thus, they have the power to define their own reality and that of others. This reality includes not only whose experiences are valid, but who is fundamentally valid."

Page 96
"Carol Anderson, in her book <u>White Rage</u>, argues that 'the trigger for white rage, inevitably, is black achievement. It is not the mere presence of black people that is the problem; rather, it is blackness with ambition, with drive, with purpose, with aspirations, and with demands for full and equal citizenship.'"

Page 113
"Let me also be clear that the term 'White Fragility' is intended to describe a very specific white phenomenon. White Fragility is much more than mere defensiveness or whining. It may be conceptualized as the *sociology of dominance*: an outcome of white people's socialization into white supremacy and a means to protect, maintain, and reproduce white supremacy. The term is not applicable to other groups who may register complaints or otherwise be deemed difficult...." [italics in the original]

Page 112
"White Fragility functions as a form of bullying; I am going to make it so miserable for you to confront me—no matter how diplomatically you try to do so—that you will simply back off, give up, and never raise the issue again. White Fragility keeps people of color in line and 'in their place.' In this way, it is a powerful form of white racial control."

Page 149
"[A] positive white identity is an impossible goal. White identity is inherently racist; white people do not exist outside the system of white supremacy."

Page 91
"[W]e live in a culture that circulates relentless messages of white superiority. These messages exist simultaneously with relentless messages of black inferiority. But anti-blackness goes deeper than the negative stereotypes all of us have absorbed; anti-blackness is foundational to our very identities as white people. Whiteness has always been predicated on blackness.... There was no concept of race or a white race before the need to justify the enslavement of Africans. Creating a separate and inferior black race simultaneously created the 'superior' white race; once concept could not exist without the other. In this sense, whites need black people; blackness is essential to the creation of white identity."

Page 19
"In a society that grants fewer opportunities to those not seen as white, economic and racial forces are inseparable. However, poor and working-class whites were eventually granted full entry into whiteness as a way to exploit labor. If poor whites were focused on feeling superior to

those below them in status, they were less focused on those above. But racial divisions have served to keep them from organizing against the owning class who profits from their labor."

Page 21
"Similarly, racism—like sexism and other forms of oppression—occurs when a racial group's prejudice is backed by legal authority and institutional control. This authority transforms individual prejudices into a far-reaching system that no longer depends on the good intentions of individual actors; it becomes the default of the society and is reproduced automatically. Racism is a system."

Page 24
"Individual whites may be 'against' racism, but they still benefit from a system that privileges whites as a group. David Wellman succinctly summarizes racism as 'a system of advantage based on race.' These advantages are referred to as white privilege, a sociological concept referring to the advantages that are taken for granted by whites and that cannot be similarly enjoyed by people of color...."

Page 28
"[W]hite supremacy is a descriptive and useful term to capture the all-encompassing centrality and assumed superiority of people defined and perceived as white and the practices based on this assumption. White supremacy in this context does not refer to individual white people and their individual intentions or actions but to an overarching political, economic, and social system of domination."

Page 29
"[A]lthough white supremacy has shaped Western political thought for hundreds of years, it is never named. In this way, white supremacy is rendered invisible while other political systems—socialism, capitalism, fascism—are identified and studied. In fact, much of white supremacy's power is drawn from its invisibility, the taken-for-granted aspects that underwrite all other political and social contracts."

Page 59
"[A] romanticized past is strictly a white construct. But it is a powerful construct because it calls out to a deeply internalized sense of superiority and entitlement and the sense that any advancement for people of color in an encroachment on this entitlement."

Page 73
"All people hold prejudice, especially across racial lines in a society deeply divided by race. I can be told that everyone is equal by my parents, I can have friends of color, and I may not tell racist jokes. Yet I am still affected by the forces of racism as a member of society in which racism is the bedrock."

Page 95
"White is a false identity, an identity of false superiority. In that sense, whiteness isn't real. The dream is the 'perfect world', unpolluted by blacks. If whites are to construct this world, blacks must be separated through state violence. Yet they still must exist, for the existence of

blacks provides the needed other against which whites may rise. Thus white identity depends in particular on the projection of inferiority onto blacks and the oppression of this inferior status justifies for the white collective.

To put it bluntly, I believe that the white collective fundamentally hates blackness for what it reminds us of: that we are capable and guilty of perpetrating immeasurable harm and that our gains come through the subjugation of others. We have a particular hatred for 'uppity' blacks, those who dare to step out of their place and look us in the eye as equals."

Page 125
"Racism is the norm rather than an aberration."

Page 129
"As I have tried to show throughout this book, white people raised in Western society are conditioned into a white supremacist worldview because it is the bedrock of our society and its institutions."

Page 153
"The default of the current system is the reproduction of racial inequality; our institutions were designed to reproduce racial inequality and they do so with efficiency."

Page 69
"My psychosocial development was inculcated in a white supremacist culture in which I am in the superior group. Telling me to treat everyone the same is not enough to override this socialization; nor is it humanly possible. I was raised in a society that taught me that there was no loss in the absence of people of color—that their absence was a good and desirable thing to be sought and maintained—while simultaneously denying that fact."

Page 83
"A racism-free upbringing is not possible, because racism is a social system embedded in the culture and its institutions. We are born into this system and have no say in whether we will be affected by it."

Page 5
"This book is intended for us, for white progressives who so often—despite our conscious intentions—make life so difficult for people of color. I believe that *white progressives cause the most daily damage to people of color*." [italics in original]

Page 58
"[W]hen I kept quiet about racism, I was rewarded with social capital such as being seen as fun, cooperative, and a team player. Notice that within a white supremacist society, I am rewarded for not interrupting racism and punished in a range of ways—big and small—when I do."

Pages 16-17
"Historian Ibram Kendi, in his National Book Award-winning work Stamped from the Beginning, explains: 'The beneficiaries of slavery, segregation, and mass incarceration have

produced racist ideas of Black people being best suited for or deserving of the confines of slavery, segregation, or the jail cell. Consumers of these racist ideas have been led to believe there is something wrong with Black people, and not the policies that have enslaved, oppressed and confined so many Black people.' Kendi goes on to argue that if we truly believe that all humans are equal, then disparity in condition can only be the result of systemic discrimination."

Pages 43-44
"Whites enact racism while maintaining a positive self-image in many ways [including] ... attributing inequality between whites and people of color to causes other than racism."

Page 127
"Given that the goal of antiracist work is to identify and challenge racism and the misinformation that supports it, all perspectives are not equally valid; some are rooted in racist dogma and need to be uncovered and challenged." [Basically, this is the central message of the book. Anyone who challenges the assumptions or tenets of the dogma cannot be doing so for legitimate reasons. It must be because the individual is defending his/her white privilege and racist patterns of thought. The book is silent about blacks who reject this fundamentally racist dogma.]