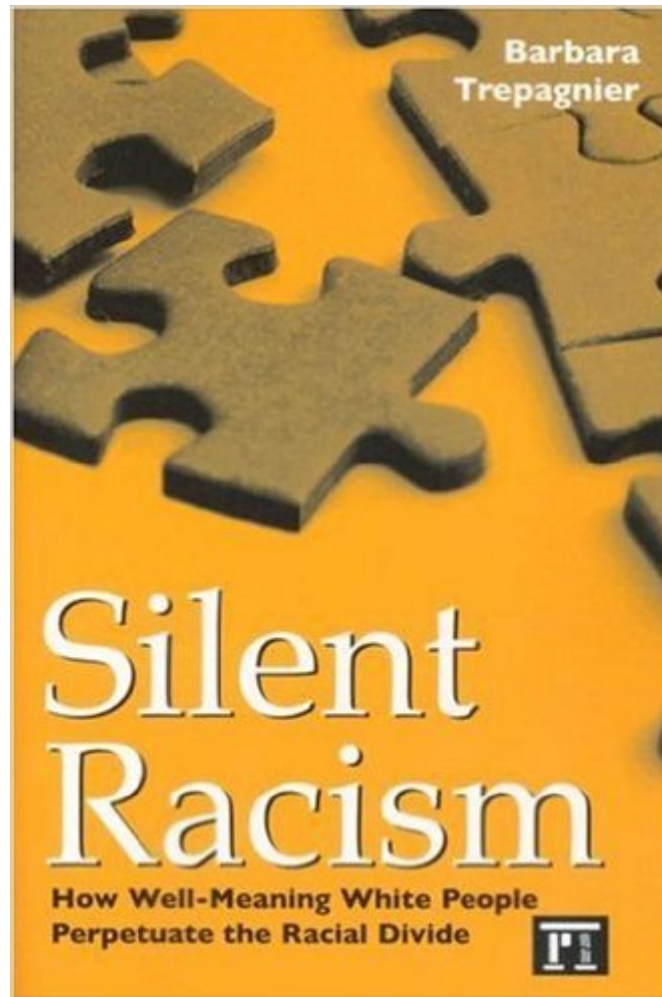


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# Silent Racism: How Well-meaning White People Perpetuate The Racial Divide



## Synopsis

Vivid and engaging, *Silent Racism* persuasively demonstrates that silent racism - racism by people who classify themselves as "not racist" - is instrumental in the production of institutional racism. Trepagnier argues that heightened race awareness is more important in changing racial inequality than judging whether individuals are racist. The collective voices and confessions of "non-racist" white women heard in this book help reveal that all individuals harbor some racist thoughts and feelings. Trepagnier uses vivid focus group interviews to argue that the oppositional categories of racist/not racist are outdated. The oppositional categories should be replaced in contemporary thought with a continuum model that more accurately portrays today's racial reality in the United States. A shift to a continuum model can raise the race awareness of well-meaning white people and improve race relations. Offering a fresh approach, *Silent Racism* is an essential resource for teaching and thinking about racism in the twenty-first century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an amazing book. Anyone concerned about race and racism should read it! Trepagnier's interviews with white women who are "well meaning" and concerned with racism are enlightening. For example, some of the women discussed (oftentimes, somewhat unconsciously) stereotypes that they have about African Americans. The author challenges readers to stop thinking of ourselves and other people as being in the categories of "racist" or "not racist." Doing so discourages us from becoming what Trepagnier refers to as more "racially aware." I encourage people to read the book,

buy it for others, and TALK about the issues it raises. It's one of the ways to increase racial awareness. Given many recent events reported in the media, it's clear that racial awareness is a worthwhile and important goal.

As a graduate student in the field of sociology, I find the ideas presented in this book to be fascinating and presented well. Trepagnier reviews existing theories insightfully and then presents a fresh perspective on a much-discussed topic. In doing so, she offers both compelling evidence for her theories and solutions to the problems she presents. She addresses racism in its most modern form - the hidden, mostly unintentional racism that is within us all and embedded in the very structure of our culture. She does so in a clear, artful manner and without the tedium sometimes associated with books written by academics. I highly recommend this work for students and teachers. As a well-intentioned white woman myself, the book is revelatory. Many whites, myself included, were taught that racism is bad but did not receive a clear definition. The author shows how our blind stumbling about the topic of racism actually contributes to the problem, even if our avoidance is well-intentioned. Trepagnier dissects modern white people's perspective on race at the day-to-day level and eradicates any confusion about what racism is. If you want to be part of the solution to racism, read this book.

It's disconcerting to realize that sometimes my best efforts at NOT being racist have been just that. This book helped me realize the necessity of self-examination to expose those ways in which I'm participating in the racial divide, not by obvious acts of prejudice but by leaving my assumptions unchallenged. This is a very important book.

Silent Racism is an excellent book for the educated public as well as for specialists in the field of race theory. Breaking from much of the past literature in race theory, Silent Racism uncovers an all too often ignored fact in contemporary American life- racism, despite the visible gains made over the last several decades has not gone away. In a sense, racism may have become more problematic as it has largely retreated from the public and visible spaces and found refuge in the hidden and unconscious practices of everyday life. This book powerfully and convincingly demonstrates racism's continuing existence in the most unlikely places. Forcing the reader into a reflexive endeavor, Silent Racism forces even the most well-intentioned citizen to delve into their own actions and language to explore the pervasiveness of a racism that the book argues circulates within us all.

Written by a person who seem to have spent some time studying the subject. She identifies the major issues blocking most people from understanding their internalized feeling about people of color. Although she writes mostly about the relationships between Whites and Blacks, she does state the other people's of color are affected in a like manner. I do wish to point out that the relationship between Native (Indian) Americans and white American society is still predicated on the stereotypical views of the western world. Perhaps it is easier to view what has been done to Native people if this continent is continued to be viewed as empty, or sparsely populated. Then manifest destiny and doctrine of discovery seem to be easier of the social pallet of America. If the world view of Native people is not taken into consideration I doubt that there will be much progress in the relationship status of Native Americans and whites in this country. I believe our society needs to do a lot of work to get over its fear treating Native people, and all people of color, with more dignity

I am using this book as a resource for my MA thesis. This book's author is writing from a sociological perspective but I am using it under the philosophy education umbrella regarding a law that I believe was designed to purely to hold back minorities and poor whites.

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