

Department of Pediatrics
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee
Suggested Reading
(2024)

Poverty and Health Inequity

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

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Poverty, by America

Matthew Desmond

Evicted won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Nonfiction, in which sociologist Matthew Desmond follows several families in Milwaukee through the financial crisis of 2007-2008. In his second work (*Poverty, by America*) Desmond reimagines the debate on poverty, making a provocative and compelling argument about why it persists in America: because the rest of us benefit from it.

The Health Gap: The Challenge of an Unequal World

Michael G. Marmot

Michael Marmot has lead research on health inequalities for over three decades. This 2015 work demonstrates how health is directly related to societal issues, and illustrates how inequities in power, money, and resources lead to inequities in the conditions of daily living and health.

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America

Barbara Ehrenreich

Millions of Americans work full-time, year-round, for poverty-level wages. Ehrenreich joined them in 1998 and soon discovered that even the "lowliest" occupations require exhausting mental and physical efforts. And one job is not enough; you need at least two if you intend to live indoors.

Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis

Robert Putnam

In this 2016 examination of the growing inequality gap and why fewer Americans today have the opportunity for upward mobility, Putnam begins with his high school class of 1959 in Port Clinton, Ohio, drawing on a formidable body of research.

Dying of Whiteness

Jonathan Metz

This 2019 account by a Vanderbilt physician and researcher illustrates how racial resentment has fueled pro-gun laws in Missouri, resistance to the Affordable Care Act in Tennessee, and cuts to schools and social services in Kansas, and the costs of these policies (increasing deaths by gun suicide, falling life expectancies, and rising dropout rates).

The People's Hospital

Ricardo Nuila

Nuila, a physician-writer, follows the lives of five uninsured Houstonians as their struggle for survival leads them to a hospital (Ben Taub) which prioritizes people over profit.

Race and Culture

Between the World and Me

Ta-Nahesi Coates

This 2015 nonfiction book is written as a letter to the author's teenage son about the feelings, symbolism, and realities associated with being Black in the U.S. and won the 2015 National Book Award for Nonfiction.

How To Be an Anti-Racist

Ibram X. Kendi

Kendi's 2019 concept of antiracism reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America. What might an antiracist society look like? How can we play an active role in building it?

Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century

Dorothy Roberts

A decade after the Human Genome Project proved that human beings are not naturally divided by race, the emerging fields of personalized medicine, reproductive technologies, and DNA databanks are attempting to resuscitate race as a biological category. Legal scholar Roberts argues that America is once again at the brink of a virulent outbreak of classifying population by race.

Dying in the City of Blues

Keith Wailoo

Set in Memphis, home of the one of the nation's first sickle cell clinics, Wailoo's narrative outlines the history of sickle cell anemia in the U.S and reveals how treatment and social understanding of the disease has been shaped by the politics of race, region, health care, and biomedicine.

Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present

Harriet Washington

First published in 2007, Washington provides a historical overview of medical experimentation on African Americans, beginning with the earliest encounters between Black Americans and Western medical researchers and the racist pseudoscience that resulted. Moving into the twentieth century, it shows how the pseudoscience of eugenics and social Darwinism were used to justify experimental exploitation and shoddy medical treatment of Blacks, and the view that they were biologically inferior, oversexed, and unfit. New details are also provided about the government's notorious Tuskegee experiment.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent

Isabel Wilkerson

Wilkerson explores how American history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, by exploring eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more.

White Like Me: Reflections on Race From a Privileged Son

Tim Wise

Wise's 2011 personal account examines white privilege and his conception of racism in American society through his experiences with his family and in his community.

Black Health: The Social, Political, and Cultural Determinants of Black People's Health

Keisha Ray

Using real stories from Black people, Ray examines the ways in which Black people's multiple identities--social, cultural, and political--intersect with American institutions--such as housing, education, environmentalism, and health care--to facilitate their poor outcomes in pregnancy and birth, pain management, sleep, and cardiovascular disease.

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies

Resmaa Menakem

Therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of trauma and body-centered psychology.

The Wake Up: Closing the Gap Between Good Intentions and Real Change

Michelle Mijung Kim

With a mix of in-the-trenches narrative and accessible unpacking of hot button issues—from inclusive language to representation to "cancel culture"—Michelle offers sustainable frameworks that guide us on how to think, approach, and be in the journey as thoughtfully and powerfully as possible.

Breathing Race into the Machine: The surprising career of the spirometer from plantation to genetics

Lundy Braun

Lundy Braun traces the little-known history of the spirometer to reveal the social and scientific processes by which medical instruments have worked to naturalize racial and ethnic differences, from Victorian Britain to today. Routinely a factor in clinical diagnoses, preemployment physicals, and disability estimates, spirometers are often "race corrected," typically reducing normal values for African Americans by 15%. An unsettling account of the pernicious effects of racial thinking that divides people along genetic lines, *Breathing Race into the Machine* helps us understand how race enters into science and shapes medical research and practice.

How to Fight Antisemitism

Bari Weiss

For most Americans, the massacre at Tree of Life, the synagogue where Bari Weiss became a bat mitzvah, came as a shock. But anti-Semitism is the oldest hatred, commonplace across the

Middle East and on the rise for years in Europe. So that terrible morning in Pittsburgh, as well as the continued surge of hate crimes against Jews in cities and towns across the country, raise a question Americans cannot avoid: Could it happen here? This book is Weiss's answer.

It Could Happen Here: Why America Is Tipping from Hate to the Unthinkable—And How We Can Stop It

Jonathan Greenblatt

As CEO of the ADL (the Anti-Defamation League), Jonathan Greenblatt has made it his personal mission to demonstrate how antisemitism, racism, and other insidious forms of intolerance can destroy a society, taking root as quiet prejudices but mutating over time into horrific acts of brutality. In this book, Greenblatt sounds an alarm, warning that this age-old trend is gathering momentum in the United States.

Gender and Sexuality

Narrating the Closet: An Autoethnography of Same-Sex Attraction

Tony Adams

Motivated by the death of his partner, Adams redefines the closet as a construct between all people and all sexualities, exploring it at each stage.

How to Survive a Plague: The Inside Story of How Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS

David France

This 2016 work is now considered the definitive history of the successful battle to halt the AIDS epidemic and the grassroots efforts of activists, many of them in a life-or-death struggle, who seized upon scientific research to help develop the drugs that turned HIV from a mostly fatal infection to a manageable disease. Ignored by public officials, religious leaders, and the nation at large, and confronted with shame and hatred, this small group of men and women chose to fight for their right to live by educating themselves and demanding to become full partners in the race for effective treatments.

Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men

Caroline Criado Perez

Imagine a world where your phone is too big for your hand, where your doctor prescribes a drug that is wrong for your body, where in a car accident you are 47% more likely to be seriously injured. If any of this sounds familiar, chances are that you're a woman. This 2019 work shows us how, in a world largely built for and by men, we are systematically ignoring half the population. From government policy and medical research, to technology, workplaces, urban planning and the media, *Invisible Women* reveals the gender data gap.

Immigration

The Far Away Brothers: Two Young Migrants and the Making of an American Life

Lauren Markham

Named one of the best books of the year by the *New York Times* in 2017, Markham follows the Flores twins as they make their way across the Rio Grande into the hands of immigration authorities, and from there to their estranged older brother in Oakland, CA. Soon these unaccompanied minors are navigating school in a new language, working to pay down their mounting coyote debt, and facing their day in immigration court, while also encountering the triumphs and pitfalls of teenage life with only each other for support.

Enrique's Journey: The Story of A Boy's Dangerous Odyssey To Reunite With His Mother
Sonia Nazario

Based on the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper series that won two Pulitzer Prizes, *Enrique's Journey* recounts the unforgettable quest of a Honduran boy looking for his mother, eleven years after she is forced to leave her starving family to find work in the United States. Braving unimaginable peril, Enrique travels through hostile worlds full of thugs, bandits, and corrupt cops. But he pushes forward, relying on his wit, courage, hope, and the kindness of strangers.

Solito: A Memoir

Javier Zamora

At the age of nine, Javier Zamora traveled three thousand miles from his small town in El Salvador, through Guatemala and Mexico, and across the U.S. border to reunite with his parents. Traveling alone amid a group of strangers and a “coyote” hired to lead them to safety, he expected his trip to last two short weeks. Instead, it took months. This is his story.