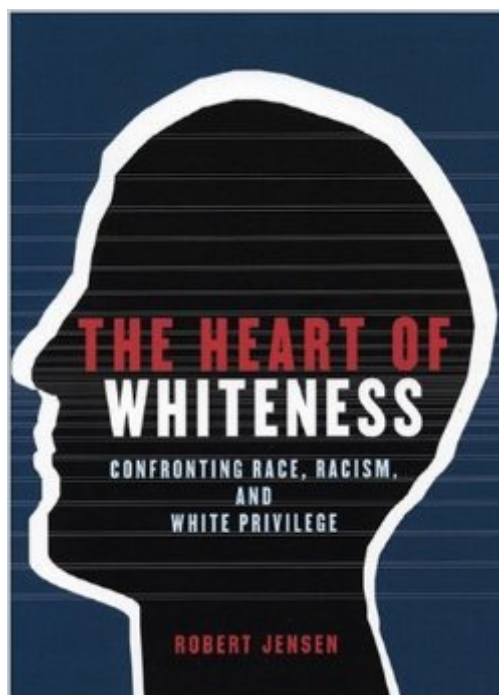


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The Heart Of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism And White Privilege



Synopsis

In *The Souls of Black Folks*, W.E.B. DuBois wrote that the question whites wanted to ask him was: "How does it feel to be a problem?" In *The Heart of Whiteness*, Robert Jensen writes that it is time for white people in America to self-consciously reverse the direction of that question and to fully acknowledge that in the racial arena, they are the problem. While some whites would like to think that we have reached "the end of racism" in the United States, and others would like to celebrate diversity but are oblivious to the political, economic, and social consequences of a nation "and their sense of self" founded on a system of white supremacy, Jensen proposes a different approach. He sets his sights not only on the racism that can't be hidden, but also on the liberal platitudes that sometimes conceal the depths of that racism in "polite society." *The Heart of Whiteness* offers an honest and rigorous exploration of what Jensen refers to as the depraved nature of whiteness in the United States. Mixing personal experience with data and theory, he faces down the difficult realities of racism and white privilege. He argues that any system that denies non-whites their full humanity also keeps whites from fully accessing their own. This book is both a cautionary tale for those who believe that they have transcended racism, and also an expression of the hope for genuine transcendence. When white people fully understand and accept the painful reality that they are indeed "the problem," it should lead toward serious attempts to change one's own life and join with others to change society. Robert Jensen is the author of *Citizens of the Empire*. He is a professor of media ethics and journalism at The University of Texas at Austin.

Book Information

Paperback: 124 pages

Publisher: City Lights Publishers; 10.1.2005 edition (September 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0872864499

ISBN-13: 978-0872864498

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.4 x 7.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (35 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #22,651 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in [Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Anthropology](#) #53 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Minority Studies](#) #69 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > United States](#)

Customer Reviews

Review of *The Heart of Whiteness* For those who choose to take the trip, Professor Jensen has charted a course, in plain English, and with few pretensions, to fuller understanding of the depth of the scars that American racism has left on our humanity. It has infected our individual and collective psyches with a disease that is difficult to overcome: the disease of color prejudice, white privilege, white supremacy, white superiority, and white racism. In the same vein as that of Lillian Smith's "Killing the Dream;" or Tim Wise's "White Like Me;" or indeed with the same skill and moving passion as the F. H. Griffith classic, "Black Like Me," professor Jensen has used his own life experience, and his considerable intellectual skills to shake not just the white conscience, but the conscience of America. And while he cannot be blamed for not solving all the problems he raised, we must all be grateful to him for having the courage to raise them, and for doing so in such a clear-minded, passionate and committed manner. In this short volume, the University of Texas at Austin Professor, Robert Jensen, has demonstrated that he has acquired the necessary self-knowledge (the escape velocity needed to propel himself beyond the orbit of "naïve white supremacy" into the orbit of "fully self-conscious white supremacy") to break away from the comforts of white privilege. This is an important and necessary, but as he so eloquently noted, an insufficient step on the road to overcoming the disease of white privilege, and its larger manifestation, American style white racism.

This is an extremely important book that broaches the biggest problem that confronts the human community and holds back a true utopia (the inability of white people to realize that they are the problem and their inability to come to grips with their evil actions around the world prevents a healthy push forward for us all). Genocide of the Indians, Slavery followed by economic re-enslavement of blacks, repatriation of Mexican Americans, Worldwide colonialism, internment camps for Japanese Americans, dropping nuclear bombs on the Japanese, Vietnam, Iraq, endless police brutality and the mass incarceration of blacks are just a few examples of the psychotic need for whites to exterminate and or control non-whites. These actions followed by whites showing absolutely no remorse and in fact taking pride in their evil actions shows extreme denial and severe psychosis. Racism is a one way street due to the fact that whites created the concept of race in order to categorize all non-whites in their sub-categories and when whites practice racism they are supported by the system of white supremacy that protects them and no one else. Anyone who does something terrible and represses that is setting themselves up for problems. And someone whose relatives are responsible for something horrible affects them on some level if their aware of it. There

is clear shame in the fact that white people try to shield their children from the actions of their ancestors (in detail) and constantly rewrite history painting them as heroes and saviors. It is also reinforced by the fact that in American pop culture all of the heroes are white. Every medium in America supports the idea that whites are superior to non-whites.

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