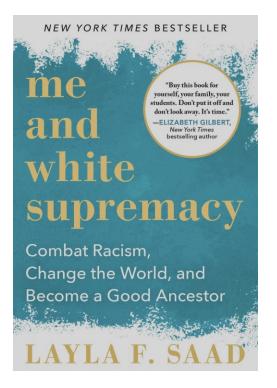


ME AND WHITE SUPREMACY: COMBAT RACISM, CHANGE THE WORLD, AND BECOME A GOOD ANCESTOR



Book Summary:

Intended for Caucasians, this book speaks about white supremacy, privilege, power structures, and other theories and concepts.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains frequent controversial racial, political, and social commentary; alternate gender ideologies; alternate sexualities; and mild/infrequent profanity.

Adult

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Teen Guidance BookLooks Review Rating



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	"All right!" you say. "I get it! Now what do I do?" I am a white antiracist educator. Invariably, the number one question I am asked by a white participant at the end of a presentation is "What do I do?" It may seem a reasonable thing to ask upon realizing that you are complicit in white supremacy. It has been my consistent experience leading antiracist education over the last twenty- five years that most white people don't really want to know what to do about racism if it will require anything of them that is inconvenient or uncomfortable. Building the racial stamina required to challenge the racist status quo is thus a critical part of our work as white people. The entitled demand for simple answers also allows us to dismiss the information if those answers are not forthcoming (" She didn't tell us what to do!"). This is especially arrogant when the demand is made of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). In the era of Google and social media, the information on what white people can do about racism is everywhere, and BIPOC have been telling us what they need for a very long time.	
	I'm Layla, and for (at least!) the next twenty-eight days, I'm going to be guiding you on a journey to help you explore and unpack your relationship with white supremacy. This book is a one-of-a-kind personal antiracism tool structured to help people with white privilege understand and take ownership of their participation in the oppressive system of white supremacy. It is designed to help them take responsibility for dismantling the way that this system manifests, both within themselves and within their communitiesThe system of white supremacy was not created by anyone who is alive today. But it is maintained and upheld by everyone who holds white privilege—whether or not you want it or agree with it. It is my desire that this book will help you to question, challenge, and dismantle this system that has hurt and killed so many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).	
4	This book will help you take a clear look at different multifaceted aspects of white supremacy and how they operate in both subtle and direct ways within you and within others. It acts as a mirror being held up to you so that you can deeply examine how you have been complicit in a system that has been purposely designed to benefit you through unearned privileges at the expense of BIPOC. Many white liberal progressives like to believe that we are in a postracial time in history. But the truth is, racism and anti-Blackness are still alive and well today. BIPOC are suffering daily from the effects of historic and modern colonialism. Right-wing, anti- Muslim nationalism is gaining popularity across the Western world. And anti-Blackness continues to be a form of racism that can be found all around the world. And BIPOC in white-dominated societies and spaces have been at the receiving end of constant discrimination, inequities, injustices, and aggressions. More people with white privilege are learning about racial dynamics and social justice terminologies than ever before. They are awakening to the fact that their white privilege has protected them from having to understand what it means to navigate the world as a BIPOC and to the ways in which they have unintentionally caused harm to BIPOC through racial aggressions.	
5	You will become overwhelmed when you begin to discover the depths of your internalized white supremacy.	



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8	And yet, every time we left the house, every time we went to school, every time we watched TV, every time we connected with the rest of the world, we were interacting with white supremacy. Every day, in little and not-so-little ways, we were reminded that we were "other." That we were less than those who held white privilege. A picture that taught me this: Black girls like me did not matter in a white world. I want to be very clear that though I am a Black Muslim woman, I also have a lot of privilege. I do not live in a white supremacist society. The religion I practice is the national religion of the country I live in. I have socioeconomic, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, neuro-typical, and educational privileges. However, the childhood that I had growing up as a Black Muslim girl in a primarily white, Christian society influenced my self-development and self-concept in negative ways. And as an adult, on the worldwide internet, where more than 50 percent of the world's population spends their time and where I do my work, I am exposed to white supremacy every day. As someone who shares her work with a global audience (the majority of my readers and podcast listeners are in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand), I face the inevitable white fragility that comes with being a Black Muslim woman with a voice.		
12	White supremacy is a racist ideology that is based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to people of other races and that therefore, white people should be dominant over other races. White supremacy is not just an attitude or a way of thinking. It also extends to how systems and institutions are structured to uphold this white dominance.		
13	People often think that white supremacy is a term that is only used to describe far-right extremists and neo-Nazis. However, this idea that white supremacy only applies to the so-called "bad ones" is both incorrect and dangerous, because it reinforces the idea that white supremacy is an ideology that is only upheld by a fringe group of white people. White supremacy is far from fringe. In white-centered societies and communities, it is the dominant paradigm that forms the foundation from which norms, rules, and laws are createdWhite supremacy is an ideology, a paradigm, an institutional system, and a worldview that you have been born into by virtue of your white privilegeBut the subtle and overt discrimination, marginalization, abuse, and killing of BIPOC in white-dominated communities continues even today because white supremacy continues to be the dominant paradigm under which white societies operate.		
14	We must look directly at the ways in which this racist ideology of white supremacy, this idea that white equals better, superior, more worthy, more credible, more deserving, and more valuable actively harms anyone who does not own white privilege. White supremacy is a system you have been born into. Whether or not you have known it, it is a system that has granted you unearned privileges, protection, and power. It is also a system that has been designed to keep you asleep and unaware of what having that privilege, protection, and power has meant for people who do not look like you. What you receive for your whiteness comes at a steep cost for those who are not white.		
15	This work is for any person who holds white privilege. By any person, I mean persons of any gender identity, including gender-nonconforming persons, and by who holds white privilege, I mean persons who are visually identifiable as white or who pass for white. Therefore, this includes persons who are biracial, multiracial, or white-passing People of		



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	Color who benefit under systems of white supremacy from having lighter skin color than visibly Brown, Black, or Indigenous people. While you receive the benefits of white privilege from being lighter skinned or white passing, that does not mean you have had the same experiences as a white person.	
	It is also important to know that this work will bring up some challenging feelings around your internalized oppression against yourself and your marginalized identities and about how you have also been oppressed by a system that only benefits you to the extent that you are able to present or pass as white and be anti-Black.	
25	White supremacy purposely numbs you to the pain that your racism causes.	
	White privilege as a legislative, systemic, and cultural norm has existed for a very long time, but it was women's studies scholar Peggy McIntosh who first coined the term white privilege in her 1988 paper, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies."	
33	White privilege describes the unearned advantages that are granted because of one's whiteness or ability to "pass" as white.	
	My mother was not talking about my race, religion, and gender being inherently flawed, but rather she was pointing out to me that in a racist and patriarchal society, I would be treated differently. It is important to understand that white privilege is separate from but can intersect with class privilege, gender privilege, sexuality privilege, age privilege, able-bodied privilege, or any other type of privilege.	
	Extracted examples from "White Privilege and Male Privilege" include: I did not have to educate our children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.	
37	White privilege is the reward that white and white-passing people receive in exchange for participating in the system of white supremacy—whether that participation is voluntary or involuntary. In order to dismantle white supremacy, you must understand how much white privilege is a key aspect of your life, how you benefit (whether knowingly or unknowingly) from your whiteness, what that means for people who do not receive that same benefit, and how you can dismantle it.	
	"It is white people's responsibility to be less fragile; People of Color don't need to twist themselves into knots trying to navigate us as painlessly as possible."—ROBIN DIANGELO It was not until I began directly writing and talking about race that I realized how deeply white fragility runs in the vast majority of white people.	
	White privilege protects people who are white and white-passing from having to discuss the causes and implications of racism. The privilege of whiteness means that one's day-to- day life is not impacted by skin color, so conversations around racism tend to be shallow and filled with platitudes. If your understanding of racism and white supremacy does not include a historical and modern-day contextual understanding of colonization, oppression, discrimination, neglect, and marginalization at the systemic level and not just the individual level, then	



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	 Here are a few examples of white fragility in action: Getting angry, defensive, or afraid; arguing, believing you are being shamed, crying, or simply falling silent and choosing to check out of the conversation. Calling the authorities (the manager, the police, the social media censors) on BIPOC when you are uncomfortable with what they are sharing about race. I have had my social media posts reported and censored more than a dozen times because of white fragility. 	
	In essence, white fragility looks like a white person taking the position of victim when it is in fact that white person who has committed or participated in acts of racial harm. This desire to be seen as good, by yourself and by others, prevents you from looking at the ways you unknowingly participate in and are a part of white supremacy because of your white privilege. Your desire to be seen as good can actually prevent you from doing good, because if you do not see yourself as part of the problem, you cannot be part of the solution. White fragility makes you dangerous to BIPOC. When conversations of racism arise, you jump into defense mode, making you unable to really hear and understand the pain and challenges of BIPOC. The focus becomes to defend the self (and really, one's white privilege and white supremacy as a whole) rather than opening yourself up to an experience of becoming consciously aware of what your privilege has protected you from. White fragility thus makes you an unreliable ally to BIPOC, because you do not have the resiliency needed to talk about racism. When your BIPOC coworker, friend, or family member shares with you an experience of racism they have been through, you are unable	
	to hear them.	
	In both cases, BIPOC are expected to cater to the white gaze—the white supremacist lens through which people with white privilege see BIPOC—and the comfort level of a person's white fragility when talking about racism. A white person's expression of anger is often seen as righteous, whereas a Black person's anger is often seen as aggressive and dangerous.	
47	In an attempt to avoid the tone policing of people with white privilege, many BIPOC will often subconsciously preemptively tone police themselves in order to avoid having to deal with white fragility.	
	Tone policing also occurs when you judge BIPOC for not conforming to white norms of communication (e.g., being too loud, using African American Vernacular English, or speaking in ways that do not conform with Standard English). Tone policing reinforces white supremacist norms of how BIPOC are "supposed" to show up. It is a way of keeping BIPOC in line and disempowered.	
	Tone policing is both a request that BIPOC share our experiences about racism without sharing any of our (real) emotions about it and for us to exist in ways that do not make white people feel uncomfortable.	
	White silence is exactly what it sounds like. It is when people with white privilege stay complicitly silent when it comes to issues of race and white supremacy. Both types of silencing arise out of white fragility—a fear of being incapable of talking about race without coming apart.	
	White silence is also a defending of the status quo of white supremacy—a manifestation of holding on to one's white privilege through inaction.	



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	Here are a few examples of white silence in action: •Staying silent by choosing not to engage in any conversations about race because of your white fragility.	
	•Staying silent by not attending protest marches against racism like Black Lives Matter or protests for immigrants at risk.	
	 Staying silent when you witness other white people use their white privilege, white fragility, or tone policing against BIPOC. Staying silent by not sharing social media posts about race and racism in your spaces because of the way it might affect your personal or professional life, or simply reposting the posts of BIPOC but not adding your own voice or perspective. Staying silent about your antiracism work for fear of losing friends and followers. 	
	All these spaces are often protected from overt and individual acts of racism while allowing covert and systemic racism to be a part of the accepted culture through white silence.	
	•In schools and educational institutions, students, parents, educators, and administrators can perpetuate behaviors such as tone policing (implicit or explicit), white saviorism, white superiority, and color blindness against students of color. •In spiritual spaces, seekers, administrators, and leaders can perpetuate behaviors such as white exceptionalism, tone policing, and color blindness.	
	Imagine if each time one of these subtle, covert white supremacist behaviors were not reacted to with white silence but instead responded to by people with white privilege using their voices to challenge the culture and demand change.	
	White superiority stems directly from white supremacy's belief that people with white or white-passing skin are better than and therefore deserve to dominate over people with brown or black skin. The most extreme manifestations of this are the KKK, neo-Nazis, and the ideology behind right-wing nationalism. And most liberal people with white privilege are not walking around harboring conscious thoughts like that in their minds. These are the kinds of words that reflect the most extreme manifestation of white supremacist ideology. But just because it is extreme does not mean that lighter versions of this ideology do not exist at more unconscious levels for progressive, we-are-all-one-race, peace-loving white people.	
61	•Words such as savage, monkey, and primitive are what have led to historical and modern-day white saviorism, the myth of the poor Africans who need to be saved by the civilized white people.	
	 Here are a few examples of white superiority in action: Primarily buying from and working with white entrepreneurs and service providers, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Primarily reading books by white authors. Primarily learning from and supporting white leaders, whether political or nonpolitical. Primarily staying on the "white" side of town. 	
66	White exceptionalism is the belief that you, as a person holding white privilege, are exempt from the effects, benefits, and conditioning of white supremacy and therefore that the work of antiracism does not really apply to you.	
67	It is not the right-wing nationalists and overtly proud racists who carry a sense of white exceptionalism. Rather, it is often the white liberals who believe that their progressive ideologies	



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	separate them from the racism of the extreme right. It is the people with white privilege who believe that they are not an impediment to antiracism who carry white exceptionalism like a badge of honor. You have been conditioned into a white supremacist ideology, whether you have realized it or not. You are conferred unearned advantages called white privilege, whether you chose it or not.	
69	White exceptionalism is particularly rampant in progressive, liberal, spiritual white people because there is a belief that being these things makes you exempt or above it all.	
78	So why do we teach children not to see color? More specifically, why is it most often white children and children with white privilege who are taught this idea of color blindness?	
79	In his book Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in Contemporary America, Puerto Rican author, political sociologist, and sociology professor Eduardo Bonilla-Silva writes about the phenomenon of color-blind racism or what he calls "the new racism." In the opening chapter of his book, he writes: Nowadays, except for members of white supremacist organizations, few whites in the United States claim to be "racist." Most whites assert they "don't see any color, just people"; that although the ugly face of discrimination is still with us, it is no longer the central factor determining minorities' life chances; and, finally, that like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., they aspire to live in a society where "people are judged by the content of their character, not by the color of their skin."	
82	So often, white people see themselves as "raceless" or "normal," with everyone else being a race or being other, that they fail to investigate how the idea of color blindness protects them from having to reflect on what it means to be white in a white supremacist society. When you refuse to look at color, you refuse to look at yourself as a person with white privilege.	
85	Though I use the words Black women and Black men for Days 9 and 10 and Black boys and Black girls for Day 11, I invite you to also go beyond the gender binary and reflect on your anti-Blackness toward Black people who are transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming. Black people who identify as LGBTQIA + and gender nonconforming undoubtedly face even more racial abuse, discrimination, and harm than Black people who identify as cisgender and heterosexual.	
88	When Black women are seen as stronger and less worthy than their white counterparts, it is no wonder that this translates into the medical field. As Harris-Perry writes in Sister Citizen, "Therapists are less likely to perceive a black woman as sad; instead they see her as angry or anxious."	
89	It is a term that describes the place where anti-Black racism and sexism meet, resulting in Black women facing oppression and marginalization under two systems of oppression— white supremacy and patriarchy. Misogynoir reflects the work that law professor, civil rights advocate, and pioneering scholar of critical race theory Kimberlé Crenshaw has led on intersectionality.	
90	•Judging Black mothers as being less capable, kind, or loving than white mothers.	
93	"Because white men can't police their imagination, black men are dying." —CLAUDIA RANKINE, CITIZEN: AN AMERICAN LYRIC	



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94	Looking back now, I realize that what I also meant was "You can't be the captain. You're not white."		
95	When Black men's sexuality is not feared, it is often fetishized. Black men are often seen as sexual conquests, there to satisfy the white appetite with their allegedly exaggerated genitalia. They are also sometimes seen as a means to an end—a way to produce biracial babies, a way to feel Black (read: edgier, cooler), or a way to anger white parents who would balk at the thought of their white child being in an intimate relationship with a Black man. A shocking example of this happened in 2018, when two Black men were arrested while quietly sitting at a Starbucks in Philadelphia as they waited to meet a white man for a business meeting. The police were called simply because the two men had not ordered anything (as they were waiting for a friend to show up).		
96	Anti-Blackness against Black men upholds the colonialist white supremacist view of Black men as violent, almost animal-like savages and brutes who are less intelligent than their white counterparts and who pose a threat to white womanhood and to society at large.		
97	That quickening of your heartbeat when you see Black men caused by your fears, that excited fetishizing of Black men as sexual conquests, that note of surprise when Black men are tender and multidimensional with their emotions, and all those ideas you have about Black men that negatively differentiate them from white men are clear signs that you harbor anti-Blackness against Black men. Dig it out today and get to the core of it so you can stop trapping Black men in a white supremacist story of your own making.		
100	As an adult looking back, I can see how daunting it must have been raising Black Muslim children in a society that was anti-Black, especially as a Black mother raising children alone while my father worked at sea many months of the year. We were in a society that treated Black people and immigrants as if we were less intelligent, less civilized, and less worthy of accomplishment and success than everyone else. Further, our findings demonstrate that the Black/ ape association predicted actual racial disparities in police violence toward children." 26 In other words, the study showed that from the age of ten, Black boys are perceived as older and more likely to be guilty than their white peers and that police violence against them is more justified. We have only to look at Black boys like Tamir Rice and Trayvon Martin who were killed because they were not seen as children but feared as Black men who could do harm to anyone at any moment.		
101	Specifically, the study found that, compared to white girls of the same age, it was perceived that: •Black girls need less nurturing. •Black girls need less protection. •Black girls need to be supported less. •Black girls need to be comforted less. •Black girls are more independent. •Black girls know more about adult topics. •Black girls know more about sex. With regard to the treatment of Black girls in the education system, the study suggests that "the perception of Black girls as less innocent may contribute to harsher punishment by educators and school resource officers.		



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	Though we have spent the last few days looking at anti-Blackness, white supremacy has not just hurt and killed Black people. It has also hurt and killed Indigenous people and People of Color (POC) from countries around the world. The enforcement of racist stereotypes in the media and in the collective subconscious is the way in which white supremacy continues to maintain nonwhite people as the "other," the ones who should be feared, ridiculed, marginalized, criminalized, and dehumanized. Racist stereotypes within white supremacy emphasize again and again that those who are not "like us" are different and therefore a threat.	
107	Racism is the coupling of prejudice with power, where the dominant racial group (which in a white supremacist society is people with white privilege) is able to dominate over all other racial groups and negatively affect those racial groups at all levels—personally, systemically, and institutionally. Therefore, though a BIPOC can hold prejudice against a white person, they cannot be racist toward a white person. They do not have the power (which comes with white privilege) and the backing of a system of oppression (called white supremacy) to be able to turn that prejudice into domination and punishment in a way that a white person would be able to if the tables were reversed.	
	•Each group in this list covers many countries and nations, each with its own rich and complex history—both with white supremacy/ colonialism and with one another. Notice any desire to want to treat each group as one flattened group rather than different countries. Remember that white supremacy's aim is to collapse all racial "others" into one group to dominate and marginalize. So for example, though Arab is not synonymous with Muslim, non-Muslim Arabs can experience Islamophobic-type stereotypes because of the media-driven idea that all Muslims are Arab.	
110	Racist stereotypes continue to reinforce the idea that those who do not hold white privilege should not be given that privilege because they are other, inferior, and a threat to white civilization.	
	If subconsciously, you believe that Indigenous people are primitive, or Arabs are terrorists, or Latinx people are drug dealers, then at some level, it makes sense to you when you see it reflected back to you through media messages. And therefore, at some level, it makes sense to you that they face the kind of treatment they face by the educational system, the justice system, the health-care system, the immigration system, the employment sector, and so on.	
	By today, you have probably begun to realize that white supremacy is usually present in some form when you are interacting with someone who does not hold white privilege. There is always a hierarchical power and privilege dynamic at play. At the top of that hierarchy are those with white privilege, holding a position of institutional and psychological superiority. And at the bottom of the hierarchy are those without white privilege, holding a position of institutional and psychological inferiority. This dynamic coupled with violent force is what made slavery and colonization possible.	
116	Often times, the cultural elements that are appropriated are stripped of their original cultural context, meaning, and significance and used in such a way as to serve or pleasure whiteness.	



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	Cultural appropriation shows up in a number of different spheres, including but not limited to:		
	•Fashion: the appropriation of cultural fashion styles, usually by white designers appropriating from BIPOC, and often without credit or attribution to the original culture; the use of blackface symbology.		
	•Hair: the appropriation of traditionally African heritage hairstyles worn on non-Black people.		
	•Beauty: the appropriation of BIPOC physical attributes (e.g., thicker lips, rounder hips and thighs, or darker skin, whether through tanning or Blackfishing).		
	•Spirituality: the appropriation of sacred BIPOC spiritual ceremonies, rituals, iconography, practices, and objects.		
	 Wellness: the appropriation of BIPOC traditional wellness practices and healing modalities. 		
	 Music: the appropriation of Black music styles, often filtered through a white lens (e.g., rap music). 		
	•Cultural holidays and events: cultural holidays and events that perpetuate appropriative practices, such as Halloween costumes or the use of the blackface character Zwarte Piet or Black Pete in the Netherlands for the annual celebration of Sinterklaasavond (St. Nicholas's Eve).		
	•Linguistic styles: the appropriation of AAVE by non-Black people.		
	What makes acts of cultural appropriation harmful is not the desire to share in a culture different from yours. Rather, it is the power dynamic between the dominant and nondominant cultures. Often, the appropriation is accompanied by an erasure of the nondominant culture's origin story of that practice, while the dominant culture is able to profit—whether financially or socially—by the act of appropriation. What is seen as inferior, uncivilized, less advanced, savage, or ugly when owned by the nondominant culture. For example, when white people use AAVE, they are perceived as more woke or cool. When Black people use AAVE, they are seen as ghetto and less educated. Cultural appropriation upholds the white supremacist ideology that white people can take what they pick and choose from Black and Brown people without consequence and that when a person with white privilege adopts something from a Black or Brown culture, they are somehow enhanced because they have adopted something "exotic." Cultural appropriation is collecting the parts of Blackness and Brownness that appeal to whiteness while discarding actual Black and Brown people. Lastly, cultural appropriation rewrites history with whiteness at the center. So for example, though yoga has its roots in India as a spiritual practice, it is now seen as a predominantly white-centered practice that is focused largely on physical health.		
	White apathy arises as a self-preservation response to protect yourself from having to face your complicity in the oppression that is white supremacy.		
	•White feminism (to be covered on Day 22), a type of feminism that centers on the struggle of gender only, because race is not a source of oppression or discrimination for people with white privilege.		
	•The response of #AllLivesMatter or #BlueLivesMatter to #BlackLivesMatter, not understanding that the social justice movement would not have to exist if all lives were treated as if they mattered equally.		



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	This sentiment is what leads to white saviorism—the belief that people with white privilege, who see themselves as superior in capability and intelligence, have an obligation to "save" BIPOC from their supposed inferiority and helplessness.	
	White saviorism is a form of colonialism. It is also a narrative contortion—people with white privilege have historically colonized, harmed, abused, kidnapped, enslaved, and marginalized BIPOC. White saviorism sweeps this under the rug and then rewrites the script.	
	And despite white women experiencing discrimination and oppression under patriarchy, white women also enact discrimination and oppression against BIWOC under white supremacy.	
	"Whiteness is an advantage and privilege because you have made it so, not because the universe demands it." -MICHAEL ERIC DYSON, TEARS WE CANNOT STOP: A SERMON TO WHITE AMERICA	
	White privilege is a bubble that protects you, rewards you with unearned advantages, gives you the belief that you are entitled to be in all spaces all the time, shields you from showing up for BIPOC, and grants you a feeling of authority and power.	
	For real change to happen, you must also challenge systems and work to create structural changes, dismantling white supremacy institutionally as well as personally.	

Profanity	Count
Ass	1
Piss	1
Pussy	1
Shit	3