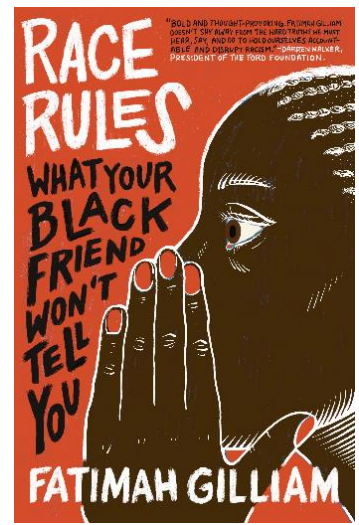


Race Rules: What Your Black Friend Won't Tell You  
By [Fatimah Gilliam](#)

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*Race Rules* Discussion Guide  
January 28, 2024



This information accompanies the book *Race Rules: What Your Black Friend Won't Tell You*. Inside the book, it redirects readers to the author's [website](#) to obtain supplemental information. While this discussion guide isn't one of the additional tools mentioned in *Race Rules*, we're providing it to enhance your experience with this book.

Please use this discussion guide when having conversations about race. It will help you in using *Race Rules* as a tool to expand your understanding of racism, people of color, and how to form stronger cross-racial personal and professional relationships. It will help you kickstart and get conversations started.

We hope you find this information helpful. Thank you for reading this book. In addition to yourself, we encourage you to buy *Race Rules* for your friends, family members, colleagues, and neighbors. Please form discussion groups and book clubs to explore this information. Be brave in disrupting racism!

## About the Author



Fatimah Gilliam is an author, lawyer, consultant, public speaker, and entrepreneur. Her career combines expertise in the law, diversity, human capital, leadership, stakeholder engagement, and negotiations.

Fatimah is a Black woman whose family has been in the United States for nearly 400 years and fought in every American war, including the American Revolution and Civil War.

She began her career as a corporate attorney on Wall Street at Cleary Gottlieb, worked for Citigroup overseeing campus diversity recruiting for all its U.S. businesses, and oversaw corporate partnerships as the Head of Finance and Fundraising for North America for the Nobel Peace Prize-winning United Nations World Food Programme. Since founding The Azara Group, which provides diversity and inclusion, leadership development, negotiation, and strategy consulting services, she has advised Fortune 500 corporations, senior executives leading billion-dollar businesses, and industry thought leaders.

Fatimah holds a law degree from Columbia Law School, a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and an undergraduate degree from Wellesley College.

As a thought leader, she has been interviewed on television (e.g., CNN; CNBC), by news outlets (e.g., Forbes; CNN.com; Toronto Star; Insider; Yahoo! Finance), and by industry publications (e.g., Society for Human Resource Management or SHRM).

Her groundbreaking book *Race Rules: What Your Black Friend Won't Tell You* is her patriotic contribution to America's ongoing dialogue on race.

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### Additional Resources in *Race Rules*

See **Race Rule #26: *Prioritize POCs' Views and Feelings When Discussing Race*** for advice on:

1. Best practices for discussing race.
2. Tips and guidance on what to avoid.
3. Key phrases to skip.
4. Insights on how to navigate conflict in conversations.
5. Strategies for exiting discussions.

The information noted above will help you set the stage to better structure conversations, including thinking through who should be invited and excluded from discussions.

These additional chapters can assist you when discussing race:

- **Race Rule #22**      *It's Not Personal When POCs Don't Want to Discuss Race*
- **Race Rule #23**      *Stop Asking POCs to Explain Racism – Educate Yourself*
- **Race Rule #24**      *Culturesplaining – Stop Telling Me about Me*
- **Race Rule #25**      *Don't Ask about Someone's Name, Ethnicity, or Race*
- **Race Rule #27**      *Be Accountable – Apologize and Make Amends*

The **Preface** has useful information to help understand how to best use ***Race Rules***.

This guidance is available inside the book ***Race Rules: What Your Black Friend Won't Tell You***.

### Questions to Help You Kickstart Conversations with Yourself or with Others in Groups

*This discussion guide does not replicate the advice in the book. Its purpose is to help you process the information in the book and key takeaways. It can help you have internal conversations with yourself and/or discussions with others in a group. You can ask yourself the questions below in one sitting, or break them up over time. Our hope is you will approach these questions over a period of time.*

*Feel free to write these answers down in a journal or a document that you can revisit over time.*

*We encourage you to see these questions as part of an ongoing dialogue with yourself and others regarding issues of race, racism, white supremacy, discrimination, bigotry, opportunity hoarding, upholding the status quo, complicity, silence, and supporting a racialized caste system. We encourage you to return to these questions over time. With groups or on your own, you could divide them up into multiple sessions as the foundation to help incorporate disrupting racism into what should be your ongoing, lifelong journey to dismantle racism and stop the cycle of intergenerational racism.*

1. What hard truths about yourself and racism emerged that you didn't see before reading ***Race Rules***? What truths weren't you admitting to yourself in the past? To others? While you read?
2. What emotions came up as you read ***Race Rules***.
3. What steps will you take to move away from hearts-and-minds ideologies to begin focusing on impact over intent?

4. Do you care if your actions harm people of color? If not, why? If yes, what are you going to do to ensure your words, actions, choices, and behaviors limit harming people of color?
5. Share an instance where you were silent when you recognized something you witnessed was racist. Why didn't you act? How did this impact the person of color? How would you have felt if this happened to you?
6. Do you care about having stronger, more positive, authentic relationships with people of color? If so, what are you going to do to make this happen?
7. Does it bother you if people of color quietly think poorly of you as a white person (due to your choices and behavior)?
8. Do you support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs? Affirmative action? If you don't, then what's your solution to create a level playing field?
9. Do you think white people are the victims of racism? Do whites experience more racism than people of color? Review the chapters below.
  - **Race Rule #3:** *Everyone Is Prejudiced, but Not Everyone Is Racist*
  - **Race Rule #7:** *Acknowledge All White People Benefit from Privilege and White Welfare*
10. Did your definition of racism change? What's the definition of racism? Review the chapters below.
  - **Race Rule #2:** *Race Is a Social Construct, and Racism Is Real*
  - **Race Rule #3:** *Everyone Is Prejudiced, but Not Everyone Is Racist*
11. When reading **Race Rules**, did you take a personal inventory of your beliefs and actions? Or did you focus on the actions of others and how others engage in racism? Which is more helpful in disrupting racism? Review the chapter below.
  - **Race Rule #4:** *Most Racists Look like You*
12. Can white liberals and Democrats be racist? How do they uphold white supremacy?
  - **Race Rule #5:** *White Liberals, Democrats, and Good White People Can Be Dangerous Racists*
13. How much of your views on racism and whether you engage or uphold it is tied to your beliefs in whether racism is good or bad people?
14. As you read the book, did you see instances of when you engaged in racism?
15. How is racism hurting you? The country? Review the chapter below.
  - **Race Rule #6:** *Racism Hurts Whites Too and Causes American Decline*
16. What role has White Welfare played in your life? Review the chapters below for a definition of and to better understand White Welfare.
  - **Race Rule #7:** *Acknowledge All White People Benefit from Privilege and White Welfare*
17. How have you supported White Welfare? Opportunity hoarding?
18. Are any of your decisions to not disrupt racism impacted by any sense of entitlement? Are you being brutally honest in answering this question?

19. How has your life and wealth been improved by racism? White Welfare?
20. If you see race-based unfairness in society impacting wealth and opportunities, what are you going to do about it?
21. What's more important to you – dismantling racism or protecting the status quo?
22. How do your choices uphold racial inequality, wealth gaps, and segregation? Review the chapters below.
  - **Race Rule #29:** *Your Choices about Housing and Schools Are Drivers for Racial Inequality*
  - **Race Rule #7:** *Acknowledge All White People Benefit from Privilege and White Welfare*
23. What are you willing to give up to abolish racism?
24. Which chapters resonated the most with you?
25. Did the book challenge your sense of self? Your self-image? How you were raised? What you thought about yourself and how you've treated people of color in the past?
26. Did **Race Rules** point out feelings and conclusions by people of color about you, your past behaviors, and white people that you didn't know before?
27. How do you react when people of color are angry? Are your feelings about anger expressed by people of color racist? Review the chapter below.
  - **Race Rule #20:** *When POCs Say It's Racist, Believe Them*
28. Do you believe Black lives matter? If so, what are you doing to ensure the safety and security of Black people in your life, community, and workplace?
29. Do you believe you have a different or the same relationship with the police and the government as people of color? Review the chapters below.
  - **Race Rule #10:** *Avoid False Equivalencies—Capitol Siege Was an Insurrection, and Black Lives Matter Rallies Are Protests*
  - **Race Rule #11:** *Black and Brown People Fear the Police—Because Cops Kill Them with Impunity*
  - **Race Rule #12:** *Taking a Knee Isn't a Protest against the Flag nor Veterans*
  - **Race Rule #13:** *Stop Dialing a Cop for No Reason*
30. What were the top 5 things you learned by reading **Race Rules**?
31. What are the top 5 things you will do differently moving forward?
32. After reading this book, what will you do differently when you vote?
33. How did the book's tone and its commitment to telling the unvarnished truth impact your learning?
34. Did you get defensive while reading **Race Rules**? If so, why? How did you navigate your emotions?
35. What did you like about this book?

36. What did you dislike about this book?
37. Do you feel changed by this book?
38. How can the Bedrock Race Rule help you make more equitable decisions? Review the chapter below.
- **Race Rule #1:** *Bedrock Race Rule: Choose to Disrupt Racism Every Day*
39. Name 5 microaggressions that you engaged in over the past week? Month? Year? With a friend? At work? Review the chapter below.
- **Race Rule #19** – *Microaggressions Are Racism*
40. Do you believe you're colorblind? How is colorblindness harmful to people of color? Review the chapter below.
- **Race Rule #18** – *Stop Saying You're Colorblind Because It's Racist*
41. How can you incorporate what you learned in **Race Rules** into your daily life? In your family? At work? In your community? In schools? Into the lives of young people in your life?
42. How can you spread the messages in **Race Rules** with others? How can you champion this book so it helps more people? How will you share knowledge from this book with others?
43. What are you going to do to make sure people of color have the right to vote? If you're not going to do anything, then why? Articulate how voting restrictions and doing nothing about them support white-centered power at the expense of people of color. Review the chapter below.
- **Race Rule #8:** *Oppose White Supremacy—Voting Restrictions Are Racist*
44. Who needs this book in your life?
45. Share 5 ways you've tokenized people of color? Review the chapters below.
- **Race Rule #16:** *Tokens and Having Black Friends Doesn't Mean You're Not Racist*
  - **Race Rule #17:** *End Jackie Robinson Syndrome*
46. If you took breaks while reading, how long did it take you to return to the material? What did you do in the interim to advance your skillset in disrupting racism and becoming a Racism Disruptor?
47. What action steps will you implement to impact policy solutions to disrupt racism?
48. Are you committed to disrupting racism and taking action? If not, why?
49. Is it your job to dismantle racism? If not, why? Review the chapter below.
- **Race Rule #30** – *It's White People's Job to Dismantle Racism*
50. What will you commit to doing today? At the individual level? Community level? Societal level? Review the chapter below.
- **Conclusion** – *Implement Your Personal Action Items Today to Disrupt Racism*