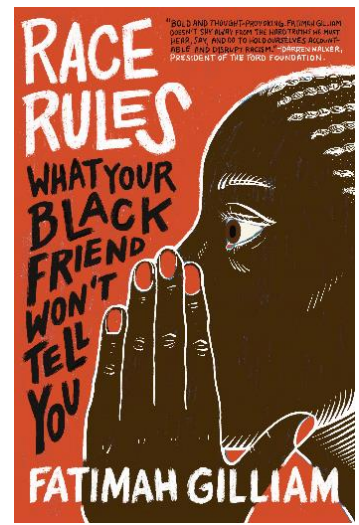


Race Rules: What Your Black Friend Won't Tell You
By [Fatimah Gilliam](#)

Publication Date – January 30, 2024
[Berrett-Koehler Publishers](#)

Importance of Race-Centered Conversations
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.

When discussing race, it's important to keep the focus on race, racism, white supremacy, racial discrimination, and racial bias. Avoid getting sidetracked by distractions discussing gender, sexuality, class, and other isms. Focus strategically on racism, even if exploring intersectionality with race. While other groups are also important, talking about them often cannibalizes topic space. Others become included *at the expense and in lieu of* people of color. They become vehicles for other marginalized groups' progress, and understanding them and solving the negative impacts of racism remain ignored. This information will help you understand the critical importance of having race-centered conversations. This supplements **Race Rule #26: Prioritize POCs' Views and Feelings When Discussing Race**.

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.

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

Importance of Race-Centered Conversations

Ask Yourself – How does introducing other marginalized groups into discussions expressly facilitate understanding people of color and racism? How will it bring you closer to solving the negative impacts of white supremacy and discrimination specifically on people of color?

Conversations get derailed by introducing other “isms” – oppression linked to class, sex, gender identity, sexuality, ability, age, and religion. It's often easier to talk about other groups than tackle intractable racism. But racial progress won't happen without a concentrated and intentional focus. Be vigilant in avoiding discussing other oppressed groups. While they're also important, talking about them often cannibalizes topic space. Deal with them separately. Other groups are included at the expense and in lieu of people of color. Even if exploring intersectionality with race, focus strategically on racism.

The impact manifests in how diversity “solutions” are frequently designed and implemented – with racial discrimination prompting establishing initiatives. Companies often lump everyone together in developing diversity programs – women, LGBT employees, and people of color. With a catch-all, kitchen-sink approach, the net result is people of color don't get the intended access and opportunities for expanded career advancement. They benefit less than envisioned because programs aren't specifically race-focused, undermining success.

However, white women often experience the intended professional upswing. And including LGBT staff often translates into creating opportunities for white gay men. Thus, white women and gay white men advance while employees of color are left behind – in alignment with preexisting institutional racial preferences for whiteness reinforcing the status quo.

This underscores how white women are the biggest winners of affirmative action and not people of color. While the initial catalyst for developing policies is a well-intentioned desire to improve racial diversity and support career advancement for talent of color, the focus deviates from non-whites. Effectively, people of color become vehicles for others' progress.

Therefore, conversations on race must strategically remain race-centered to best counter systemic race-based discrimination. Stay on message. Focus on the hardest topic to solve – racism. Otherwise, we'll never make progress and remain on a hamster wheel headed nowhere new nor transformational.

Don't get distracted. Disrupting racism requires being strategically intentional.