

# READING AND TALKING ABOUT RACE

An Introduction to ALA's Great Stories Club

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

# Webinar Agenda

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[WWW.ALA.ORG/GREATSTORIES](http://WWW.ALA.ORG/GREATSTORIES)

- **Lainie Castle, ALA PPO**  
Program overview and online resources
- **Amber Hayes, ALA ODLOS**  
EDI support for libraries
- **Maria Sachiko Cecire, Bard College**  
Deeper Than Our Skins series
- **Pamela McCarter, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**  
Leading virtual book clubs
- **Q&A**

## GSC: A Literature-based Library Outreach Program

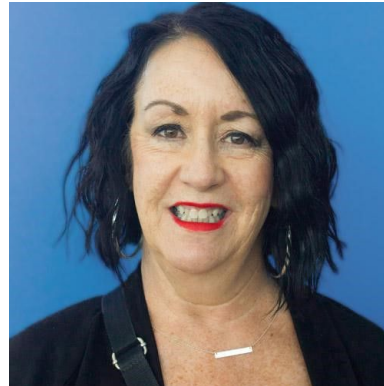
A Great Stories Club program hosted by the **Seattle Public Library, University Branch** in partnership with the **Interagency Academy Alternative High School at UDYC**



# Advisors and Funders



**Maria Sachiko Cecire**  
Bard College



**Wini Ashooh**  
Central Rappahannock Regional Library



**Edith Campbell**  
Cunningham Memorial Library,  
Indiana State University



**Vanessa "Chacha" Centeno**  
Sacramento Public Library



W.K.  
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ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES



## Amber Hayes

Outreach and Communications Program Officer, ALA  
Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services  
(ODLOS)



## ODLOS Mission

- Support libraries in creating responsible and all-inclusive spaces to serve and represent entire community
- Decenter power and privilege
- Facilitate conversations around access and identity
- Use a social justice framework
- Strive to create an association culture where this is everybody's everyday work

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# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Goals

Establish resources and support so libraries and librarians can be effective advocates for the inclusion of all individuals in the life of their community.

Provide safe, respectful space for diverse voices and perspectives.

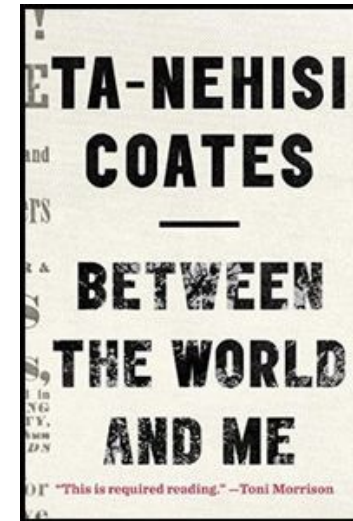
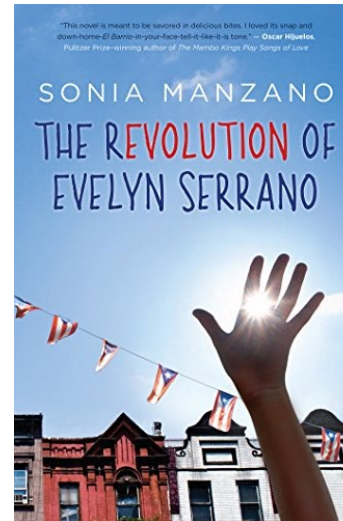
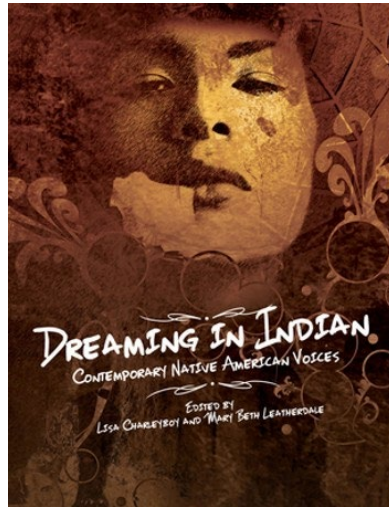
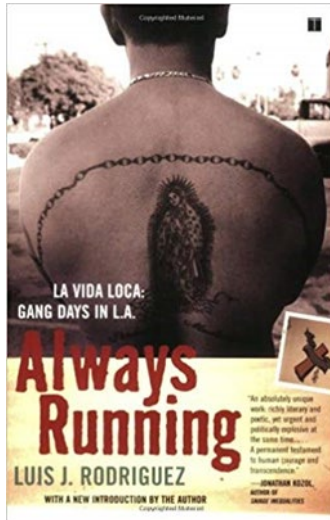
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• ○  
**ALA.ORG/DIVERSITY**  
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**ALA**  
DIVERSITY, LITERACY  
& OUTREACH SERVICES

American  
Library  
Association

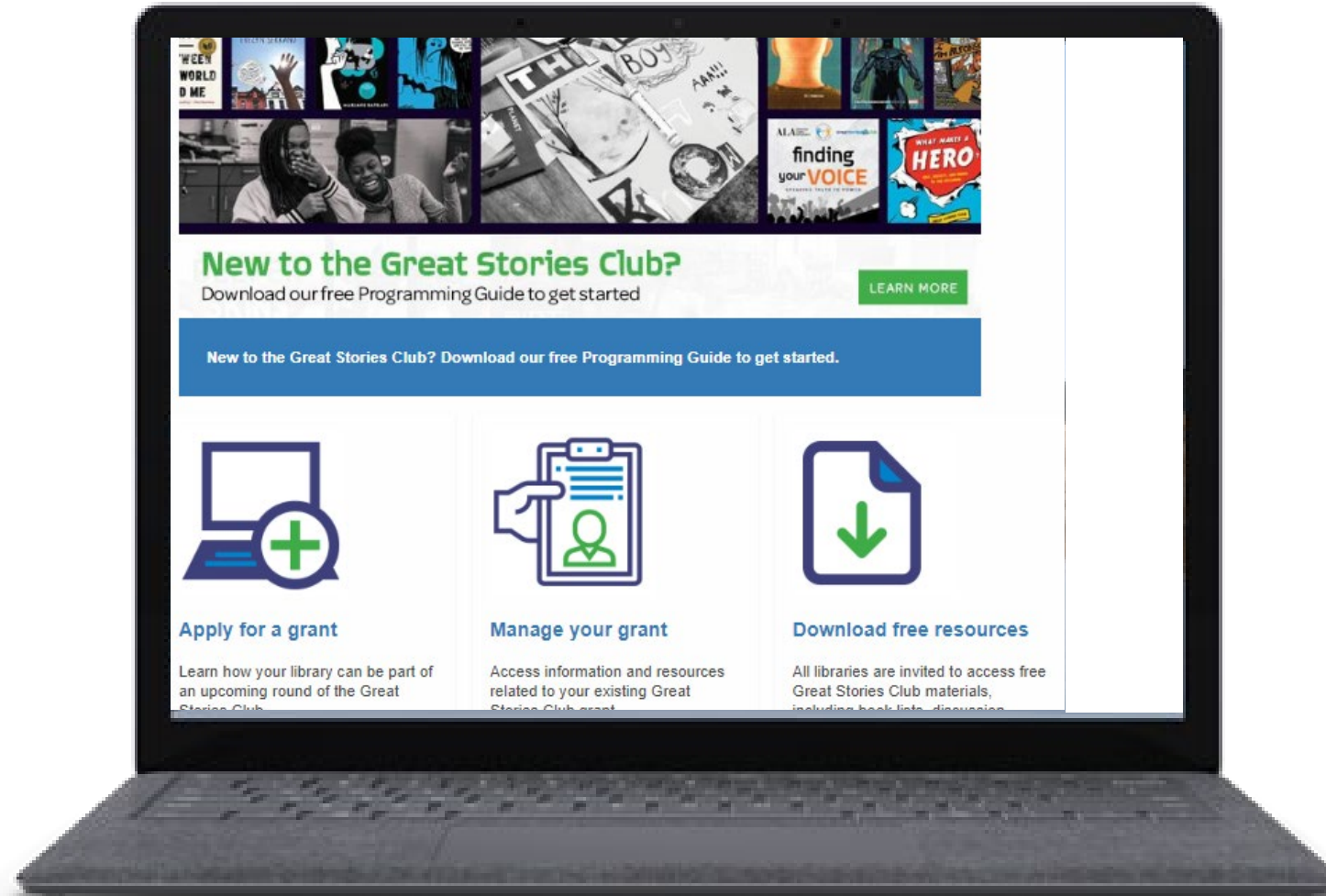


# Deeper Than Our Skins Series



“[These books help us] look beneath the surface of racism in America to reveal how the past is alive in the present. The theme uses powerful stories of oppression, resistance, suffering, and triumph to identify the roots of racialized experience in the United States, and to inspire discussions around how to construct more equitable futures for the people in our nation and world.”

# [www.ala.org/greatstories](http://www.ala.org/greatstories)



## Digital / Print-Ready Resources

- ✓ Series-framing essay
- ✓ Book-specific discussion questions
- ✓ General discussion questions for ALL books



### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT STORIES CLUB SERIES

**MARIA SACHIKO CECIRE**, Director of the Center for Experimental Humanities  
and Assistant Professor of Literature, Bard College

#### TEXTS

- *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices*, edited by Lisa Charleyboy and Mary Beth Leatherdale
- *Mother of the Sea* by Zetta Elliott
- *The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano* by Sonia Manzano
- *Always Running: La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.* by Luis J. Rodriguez
- *The Shadow Hero* by Gene Luen Yang, illustrated by Sonny Liew

# Discussion Questions

*“Is there a scene in this book that describes a racially motivated incident, policy, or set of social norms that reminds you of a similar racial reality today? What is it? Does this happen to the same racial/ethnic group as in the book, or different ones (if others, which)? How does seeing history repeat itself affect how you think about America? Do you think race relations are getting better over time in this country or just changing without much improvement?”*

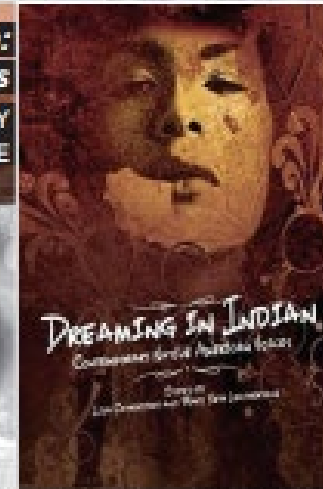
- **DREAMING IN INDIAN:** Indian residential schools (p. 30-1) and the children separated from their parents at the U.S. border and placed in facilities around the U.S.; stereotypes from media (Pocahontas, p. 43) ...

A close-up photograph of two hands, one darker-skinned and one lighter-skinned, shaking in a firm grip. The background is a textured, light-colored surface.

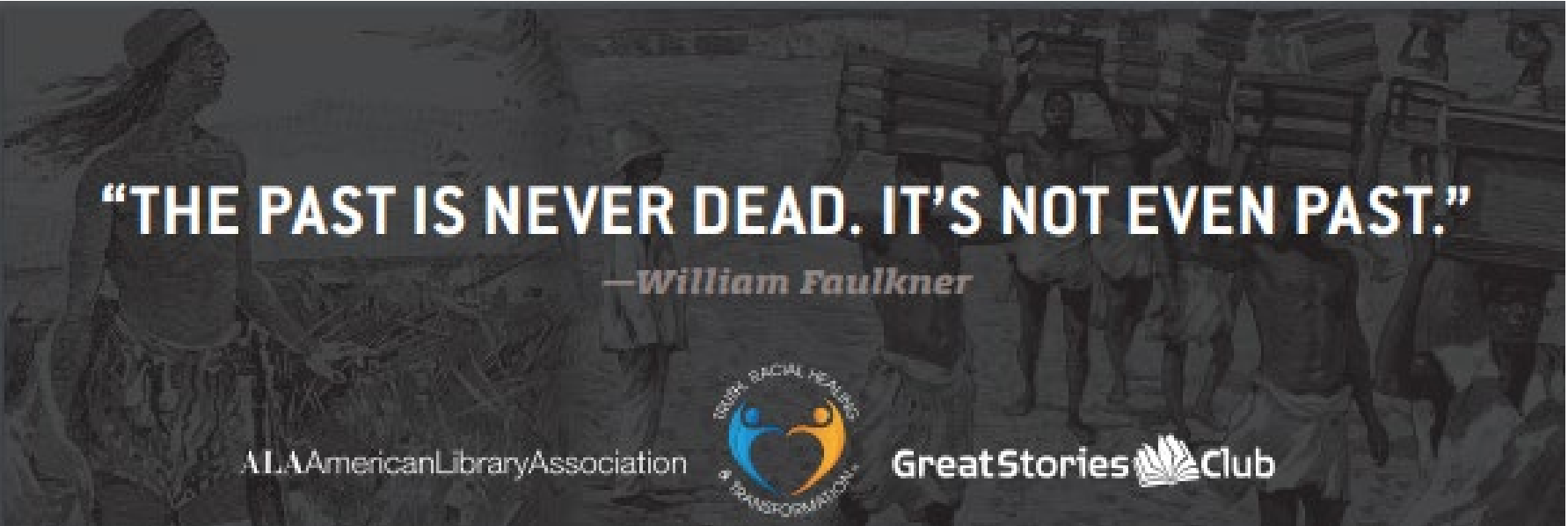
# DEEPER THAN OUR SKINS

*Dreaming In Indian:  
Contemporary Native American Voices*

EDITED BY LISA CHARLEYBOY  
AND MARY BETH LEATHERDALE



The present is a *conversation* with the past

A dark, textured background with a faint, embossed illustration of a Native American man in traditional dress on the left and a group of people in a historical setting on the right.

“THE PAST IS NEVER DEAD. IT’S NOT EVEN PAST.”

—*William Faulkner*

ALA American Library Association



Great Stories  Club

# Resources on Truth, Racial Healing, & Transformation

- ✓ WKKF's TRHT Glossary
- ✓ Resources on Structural Racism
- ✓ Reading Lists About Race and Racism
- ✓ About TRHT: [www.healourcommunities.org](http://www.healourcommunities.org)





# Maria Sachiko Cecire

Director of the Center for Experimental Humanities,  
Associate Professor of Literature, Bard College (NY) and  
GSC National Project Scholar



Maria Sachiko Cecire

Associate Professor of Literature

Director, Center for Experimental Humanities

Bard College, NY

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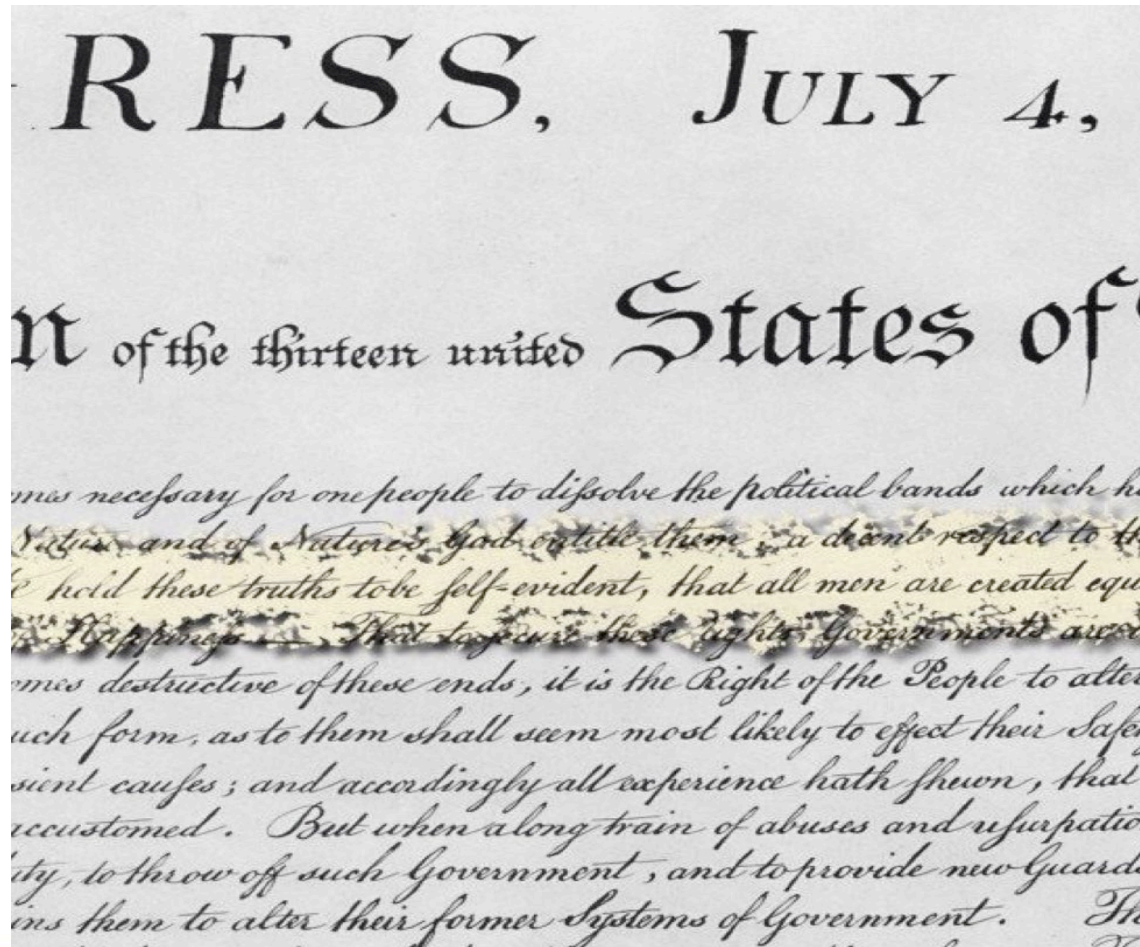
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THE GREAT FORCE OF HISTORY  
COMES FROM THE FACT THAT WE CARRY  
IT WITHIN US, ARE UNCONSCIOUSLY  
CONTROLLED BY IT... HISTORY IS LITERALLY  
PRESENT IN ALL THAT WE DO.

JAMES BALDWIN

## The Declaration of Independence, 1776

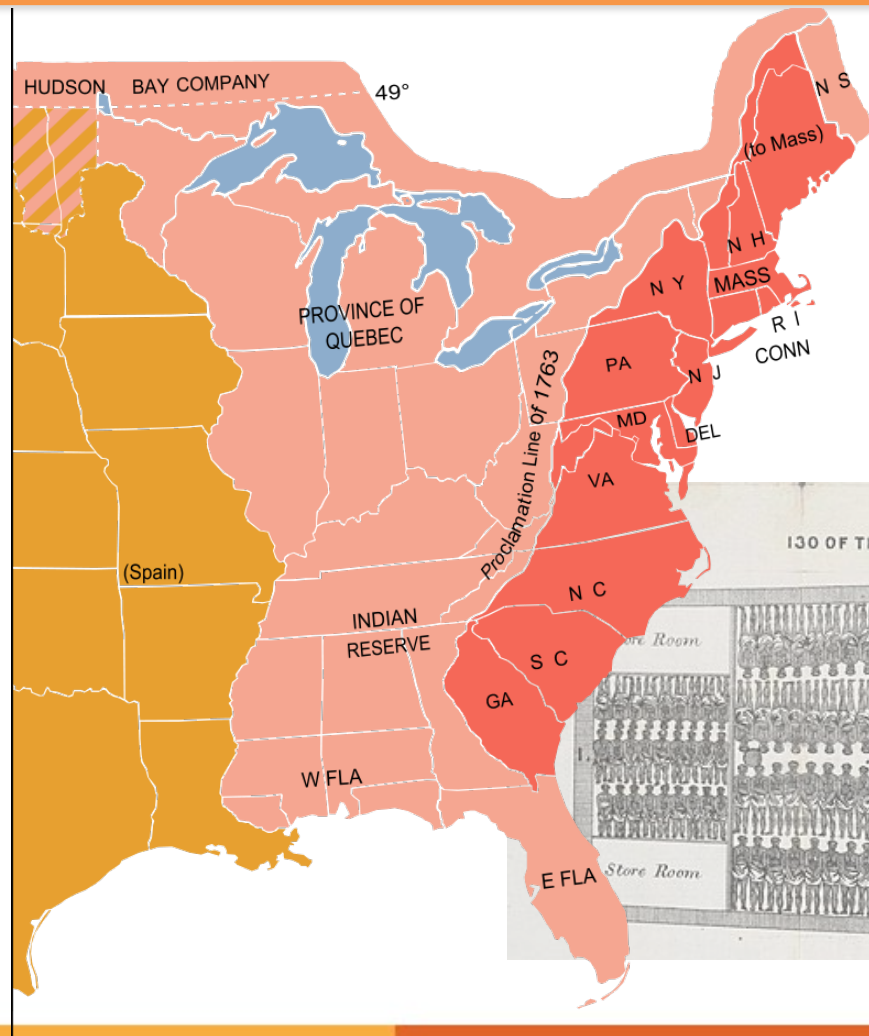


“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are **created equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain **unalienable Rights**, that among these are **Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.**”

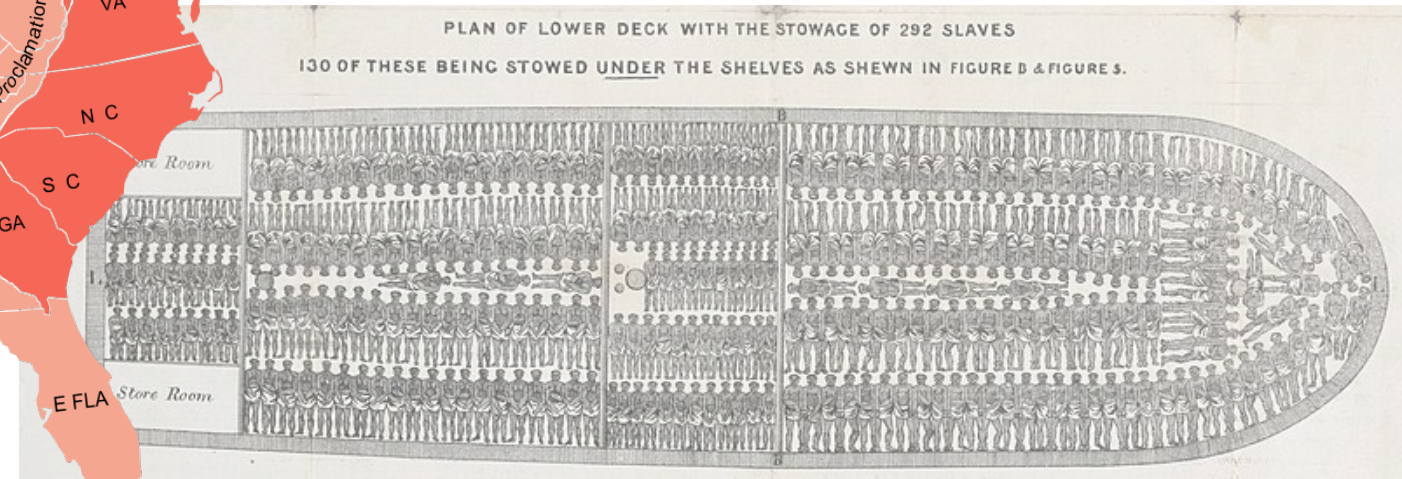
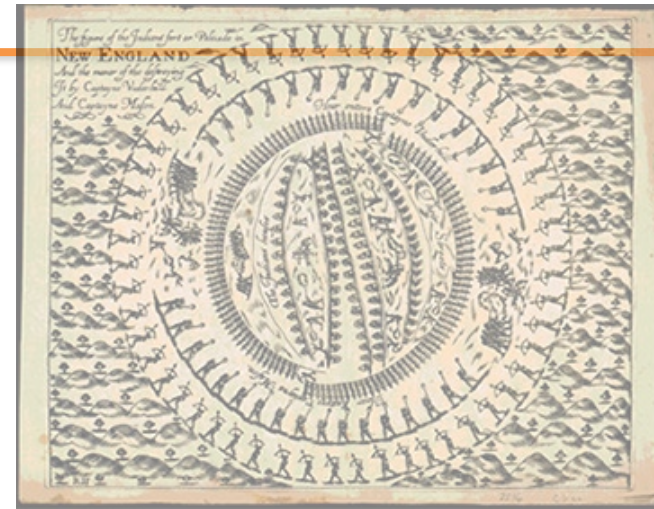
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# Origins: settler-colonialism & slavery



Engraving of colonist attack on a Pequot village, 1637

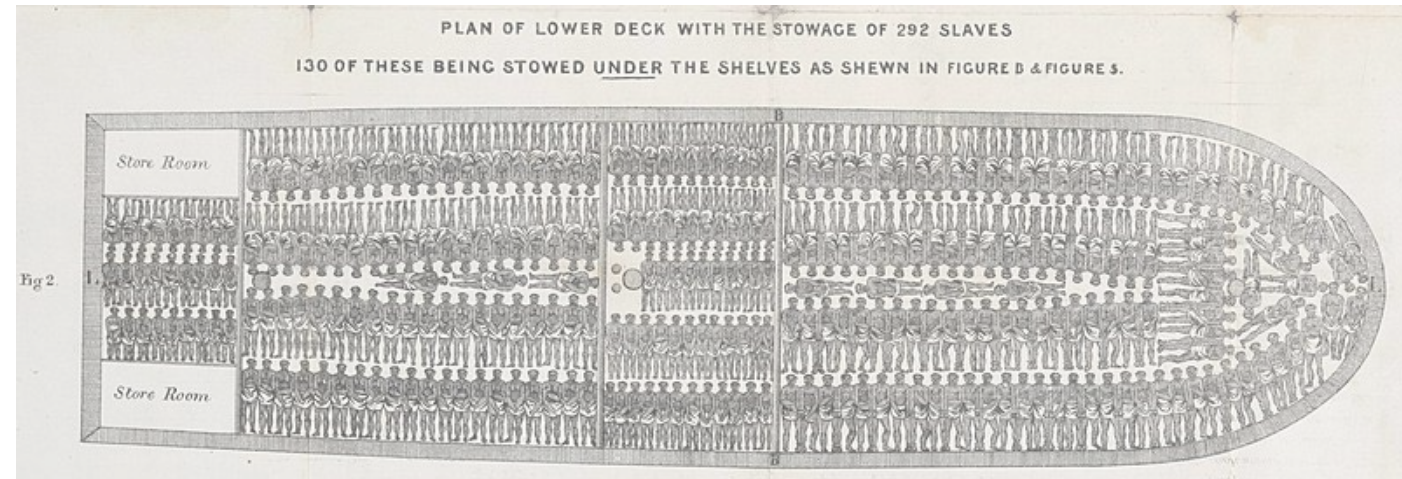
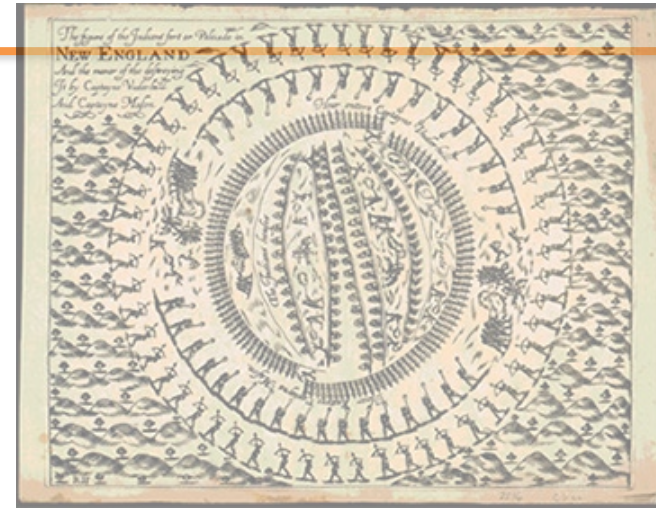


Stowage of a British slave ship, 1788

## Origins: settler-colonialism & slavery

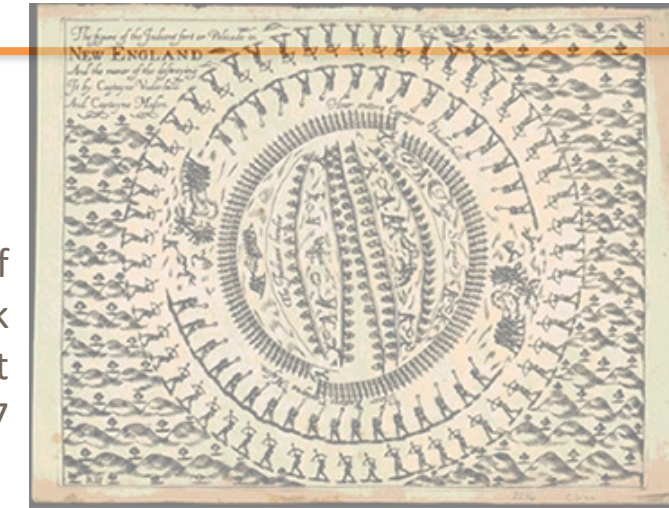
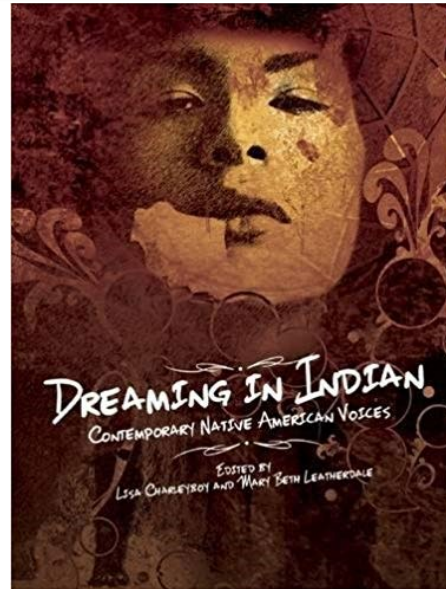


Engraving of  
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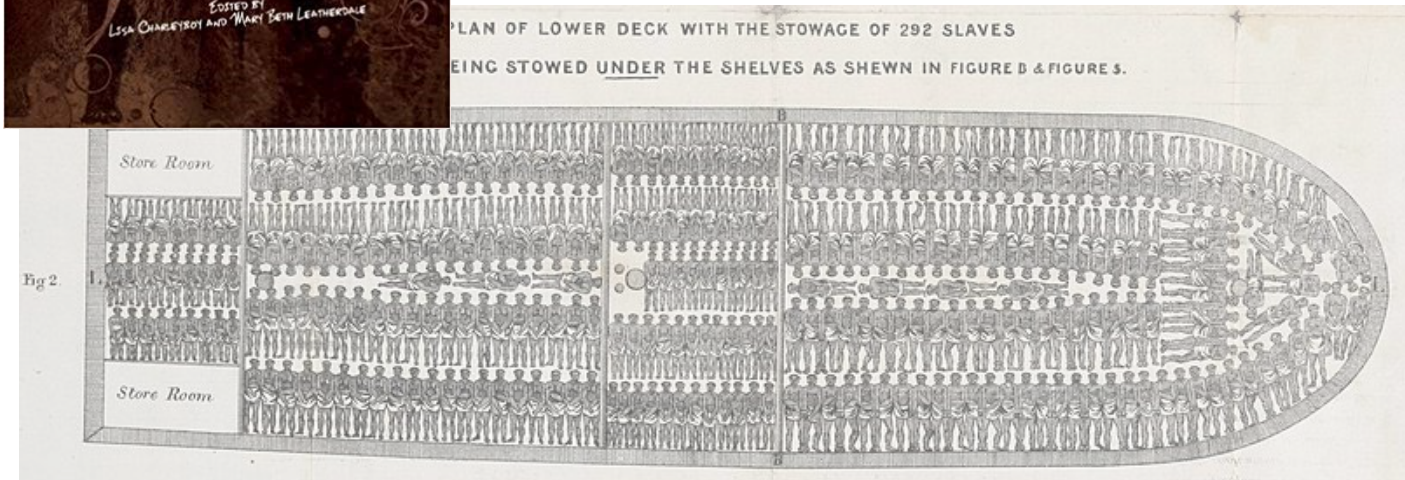


Stowage of a British slave ship, 1788

## Origins: settler-colonialism & slavery



Engraving of  
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Stowage of a British slave ship, 1788



It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, — an American, a Negro ; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

## Black government representation during Reconstruction (1865-1877)

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- **16 Black men** served in the **U.S. Congress**
- Over **600** were elected to **state legislatures**
- **hundreds** more held **local offices** across the South
- Other elected officials included Black **U.S. Senators, state governors, and more.**

## New legal racism: Jim Crow laws from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> c.



“Jump Jim Crow” sheet music, 1832, with Thomas D. Rice in blackface.



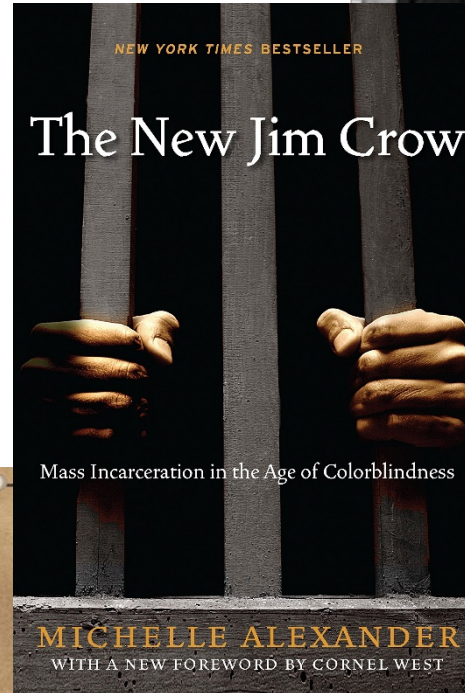
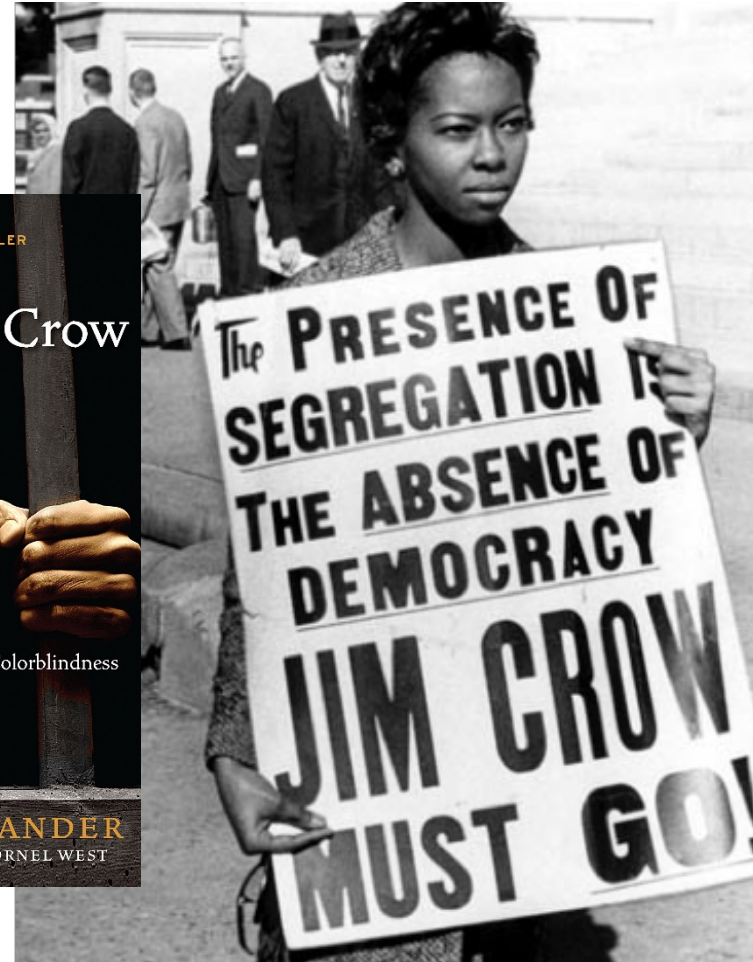
Lonestar Restaurant Association sign, Dallas, TX.



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Lonestar Restaurant Association sign, Dallas, TX.

## Targeted exclusion & internment



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## Targeted exclusion & internment



Japanese-American internment, 1942-45

Political cartoon about the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882

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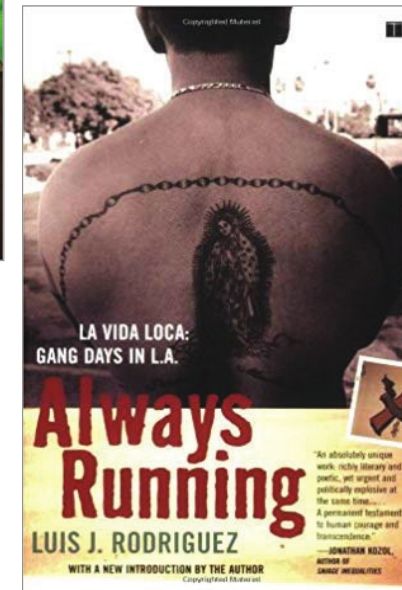
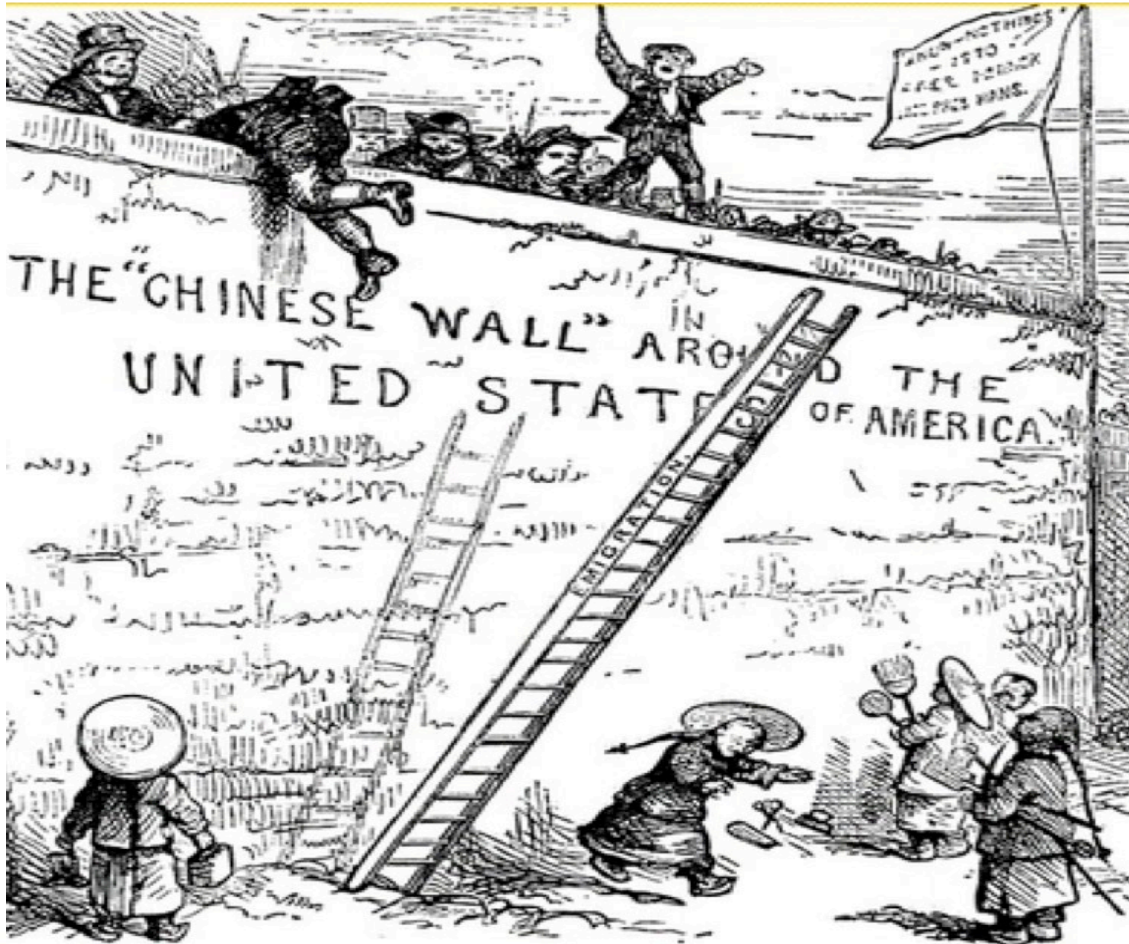
## Targeted exclusion & internment



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## Targeted exclusion & internment



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**Racism isn't a design flaw in this country: it is embedded in our DNA.**

A banner at Fenway Park, Boston, 2017

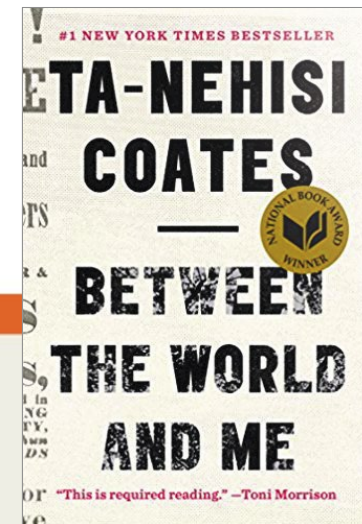
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## The trouble with the American Dream



“For so long I have wanted to escape into the Dream, to fold my country over my head like a blanket. But this has never been an option because the Dream rests on our backs, the bedding made from our bodies.”



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## What can we do to take steps towards healing and meaningful change?

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HISTORY, DESPITE ITS WRENCHING PAIN,  
CANNOT BE UNLIVED,  
BUT IF FACED WITH COURAGE,  
NEED NOT BE LIVED AGAIN.

MAYA ANGELOU

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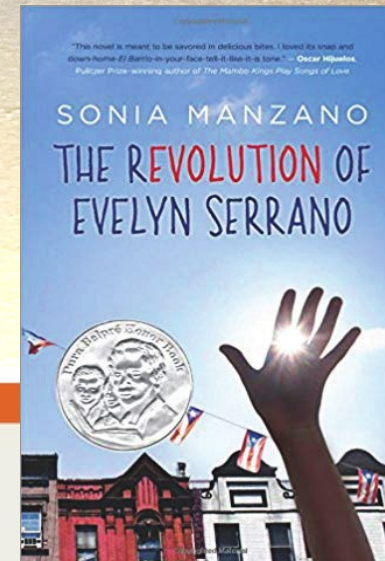


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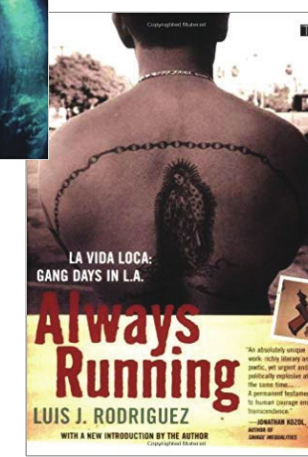
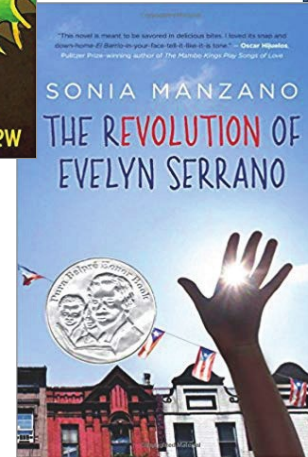
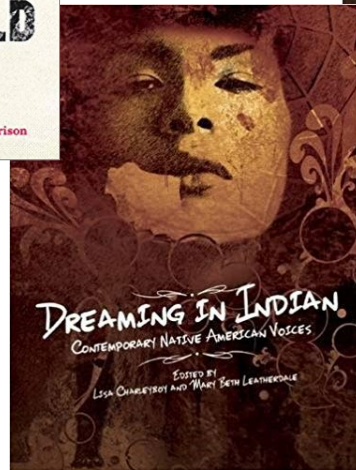
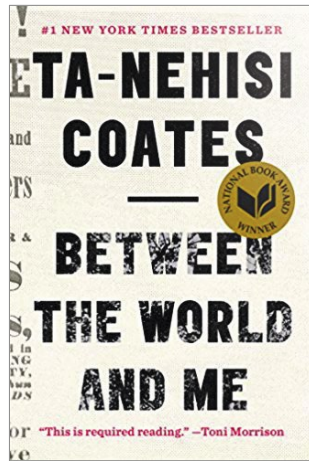
MAYA ANGELOU



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# Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past



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## Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past



### The books in this theme:

- uncover the often-**hidden histories** of the United States' Native, enslaved, and immigrant communities
- reach across time and cultures to affirm our **shared humanity**
- recognize the importance of remembering and recounting **unique origins and narratives**

## Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past

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They empower readers to:

- use knowledge of the past to **understand the present**
- explore their own **intersectional identities**,
- **empathize** with others, and
- identify how to be agents of **racial healing** and **change**.

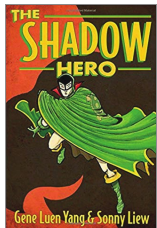
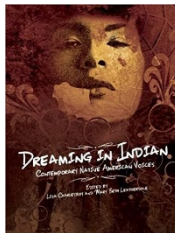
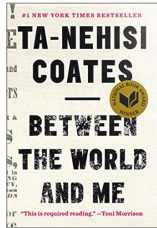
## Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past



As you work together:

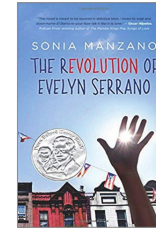
- focus on **specific words, phrases, images, and scenes**
- use these examples to explore **bigger concepts** like race and inequality
- **listen and learn** from your participants, and
- affirm them as the **vibrant intellects** that they are.

## Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past



*If the problem of the twentieth century was, in W. E. B. Du Bois's famous words, "the problem of the color line," then the problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of colorblindness, the refusal to acknowledge the causes and consequences of enduring racial stratification.*

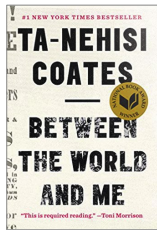
**NAOMI MURAKAWA**



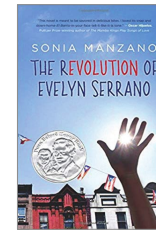
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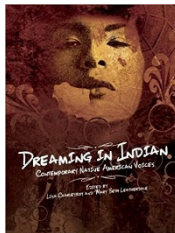
## Deeper Than Our Skins: The Present is a Conversation with the Past



O, let America be America again—  
**The land that never has been yet—**  
**And yet must be—**the land where every man  
is free.



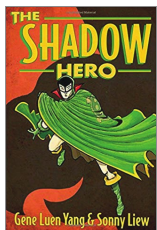
The land that's mine—the poor man's,  
Indian's, Negro's, ME—



**Who made America,**  
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the  
rain,



Must bring back our mighty dream again.



--Langston Hughes, from "Let America Be America Again," 1936

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## Pamela McCarter

Equity Initiative Leader & Library Outreach Coordinator,  
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (NC) and GSC project  
director/book club leader



# Virtual Book Club

## Tips & Resources



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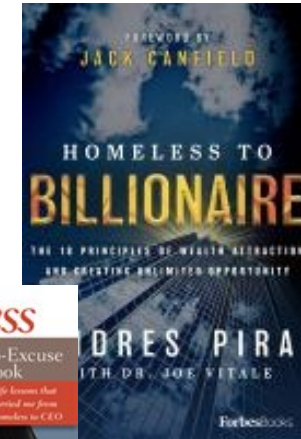
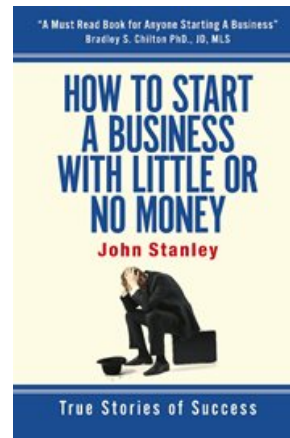
# It's Not That Different From Traditional Book Club

1. Who will be in your book club?
2. Where will you hold the book club?
3. What will you read?
4. How will you keep it going?





Amber  
Broken To Heal Others  
*Art Therapy*



1

# Calling All Readers!



- Existing Book Clubs or programs
- Collaborate with other libraries or organizations
- School PTA/PTSA
- Meet up groups
- Social Media

2

## Meeting Spaces

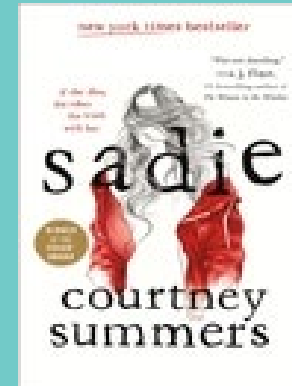
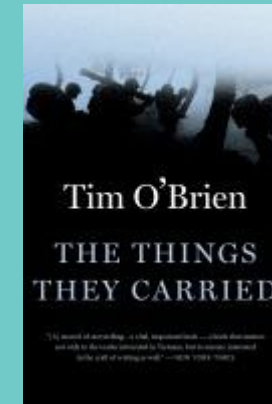
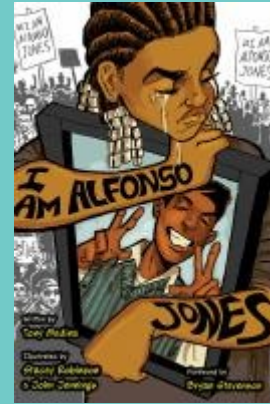
- Zoom
- Skype
- Google Meet
- Flipgrid
- Discord
- Webroom
- 8X8



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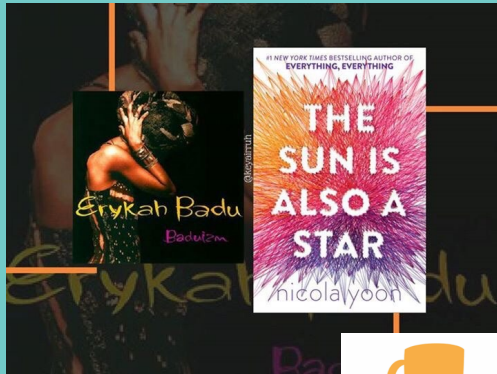
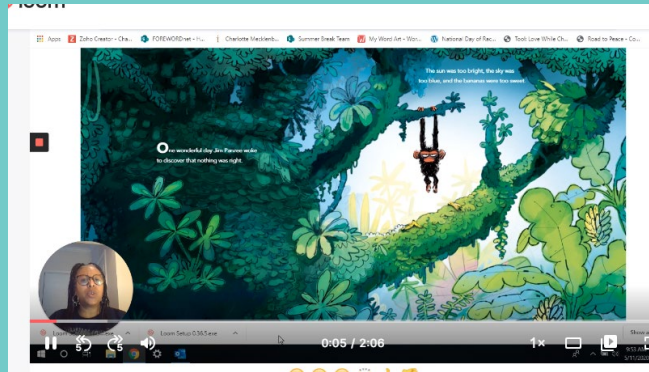
# Book & Questions

- [Bookriot.com](http://Bookriot.com)
- [Supersummary.com](http://Supersummary.com)
- [Goodreads.com](http://Goodreads.com)
- [Bookbub.com](http://Bookbub.com)
- [Booklistreader.com](http://Booklistreader.com)
- [Litlover.com](http://Litlover.com)



4

# More Than Discussion



Judging More Than Just The Cover  
*Books + Writing + Discussion*

- Loom video recording
- Podcasts
- Tedtalks or short films
- Book & Music Pairing
- Compare to Classic
- And more...

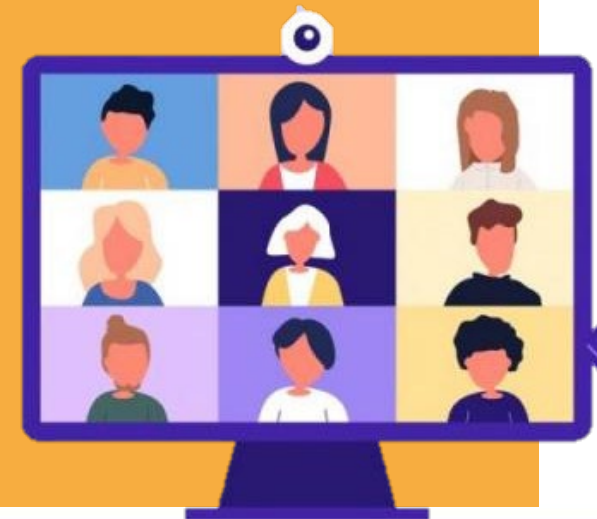
**TED<sup>x</sup>**  
Youth

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# Other Tips

- Test for technical difficulties
- Collect email contact information
- Alert if recording session
- Set expectations
- Remain available after session
- Poll readers for next book





# Questions & Answers

Please submit your questions using Zoom's Q&A feature.

If your question is not answered in the time available, please contact the ALA Public Programs Office staff ([publicprograms@ala.org](mailto:publicprograms@ala.org)) for assistance.

Thank you!