

Racine Public Library Program Announcement
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For Immediate Release
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RACINE READS ANNOUNCES COMMUNITY READ TITLE

Racine –Racine Reads has announced *Privilege, Power, and Difference*, 2nd edition, by Allan G. Johnson as the tenth community read selection. Racine Reads is a community-wide reading project in which residents are encouraged to read the same book at the same time. This project seeks to promote reading and dialog among the people of Racine County.

Allan G. Johnson (Ph.D in Sociology from the University of Michigan, 1972) has been working on issues of social inequality for many years. In this short book, he explores the underlying nature and consequences of privilege in our society. The book follows the author's own journey in very accessible language; in almost every paragraph, the reader will see the world in new and different ways, in everything from economics and employment, to sports and politics. Without making us feel guilty or ashamed, Johnson shows how all forms of privilege exist together, and how each of us is tied to, and affected by, this privilege in our society – whether the privilege comes from our gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability status, or social class." Johnson helps us understand where we fit in a society built on the structure of privilege.

Johnson says, "We are all living deep inside an oppressive legacy of social life organized around privilege, power, and difference. On some level, for example, most people know that gender is tied to a great deal of suffering and injustice, from discrimination and exclusion to violence and harassment to conflict between work and family roles. Millions of women are weary from the struggle simply to hang onto what's been gained, and many well-intentioned men do nothing because they can't see how to acknowledge what's going on without inviting guilt and blame simply for being male. The result is a knotted tangle of fear, anger, blame, defensiveness, guilt, pain, denial, ambivalence, and confusion. The more we pull at it, the tighter it gets.

"Unraveling the knot of privilege begins with getting clear about what privilege really is, about what it's got to do with each of us, and about how everyone can see themselves as part of the process of change toward something better. Based on more than twenty years of work, I try to chart a course organized around three questions:

- What are we participating in and how are we choosing to participate in it?
- How do typical ways of thinking about privilege blind us to what's going on?
- What can we do to make a difference?

"My books, *The Gender Knot* and *Privilege, Power, and Difference* are written from a deeply held belief that privilege and oppression are not inevitable features of human life and that the

choices each of us make matter more than we can ever know. My work offers a practical, compassionate, and readable guide to understanding what we're stuck in and how to search for a way out.”

This book was selected for its emphasis on inclusion, and understanding differences.

Past selections of Racine Reads have been:

Bless me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

Shoeless Joe by William Kinsella

Fist Stick Knife Gun by Geoffrey Canada

Motherland by Fern Schumer Chapman

Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich

Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman

The Day the World Came to Town by Jim DeFede

The Beggar King and the Secret of Happiness by Joel ben Izzy

The Camel Bookmobile by Masha Hamilton

A series of Racine Reads events will be announced shortly.

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