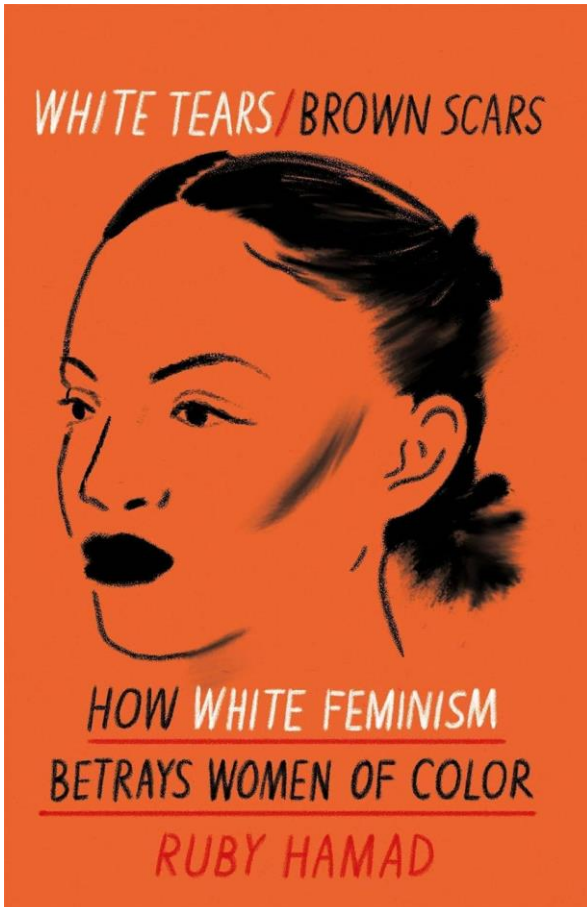


White Tears Brown Scars Reading Guide

Chapter 1

1. Share your thoughts about the author's examples of implicit and explicit bias related to how society responds to racially diverse portrayals of characters within entertainment.
2. The author expresses perspective about entertainment platforms, often sensationalizing stories about femme-identifying women of color (e.g., Lewd Jezebels, Exotic Orientals, Princess Pocahontas). Share your thoughts about how these portals impact racially diverse communities in different ways.



3. The author highlights that the attitudes of white men and the silence of white women have perpetuated the oppression of femme-identifying women of color since the foundation of the United States; share your thoughts on complacency and how this is part of systemic oppression in America.
4. The author shares the history of graphic sexual violence and traumatic experiences of femme-identifying women of color throughout history and across racial groups with the supreme goal of whites to maintain order and purity, and when this was no longer possible, horrific acts to “breed the color out” or handpick those who appeared closer to “whiteness” or those deemed “passable” became the alternative. What impact has past generational trauma associated with colorism had/have across racial and within racial groups today?

Chapter 2

1. The author brings to light the negative stereotypes associated with femme-identifying women of color (e.g., angry sapphires, bad Arabs, dragon ladies, spicy Latinas, angry brown and black women); how might these labels impact the experiences of these populations?
2. The author explains other known stereotypes associated with black and brown femme-identifying communities (e.g., spicy sexpot, mammy); what other isms can you think of that may be associated with these labels?
3. Share what movies, media, news, etc., have you encountered that depict some of the stereotypes and tropes expressed by the author.
4. The author associates the ideology of “binary sex” with white supremacy culture; discuss your thoughts about the correlation.

Chapter 3

1. The author illuminates the ripple effect of the sacredness and purity of white women or the white damsel archetype and the extreme impact caused to communities of color in honor of the preservation. Discuss how this ideology has influenced and shaped legal ramifications in the history of the United States.
2. What setbacks does the author highlight that impacted white women due to the over-protection extended to preserve their sanctity and virtue? Consider the power that white men have/had.
 - a. Discuss how what may immediately benefit one community can negatively impact long-term progress and outcomes for that same community.

- b. What fear did white men have about miscegenation?
3. In what ways did/does the white women perpetuate the damsel?
 - a. The author indicates that the damsel in distress can quickly turn to damsel in defense; what do you think the author meant by this?
4. So often, we think about the active contributors to oppression; what passive, covert, and complacent habits can perpetuate a system of white supremacy? Consider how they have endorsed the egregious behaviors of white men (Supreme Court nominees, politicians, etc.)
5. Discuss more modern labels of white women described as maintaining systems of oppression, e.g., Karens and Permit Patty's.
6. The author states that white people collectively still fear sharing power. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?
7. The author states from the beginning, "race was greened, and gender was raced," indicating that only white men were men and only white women were women. Share your perspective on this statement.
8. The author states, "For women of color to be free of racism and for white women to be rid of patriarchy, it is the damsel who must be dammed." Reflect and share your thoughts about this statement.

Chapter 4

1. The author describes how white women can slip into and out of their oppressed identity. Discuss a time when you have witnessed or taken part in as a white woman what is perceived as chameleon-like identity switching and how this privilege is not accessible to femme-identifying women of color.
2. Discuss the power in the damsel archetype and the reductive archetype associated with women of color.
3. Considering microaggressions, tokenization, gaslighting, white-centric expectations, behavior policing, and the weaponization of white women's tears, how are femme-identifying women of color impacted by these social behaviors in everyday life?
4. The author indicates that we have never had a reckoning with our history as a country (United States) of slavery, colonialism, or imperialism; what would it mean to come to terms with this history?
5. The author alludes to the freedom white women have to express a full spectrum of emotion, and they are limited in how they can express themselves. Discuss a time when you have witnessed or experienced the pressure of emotional labor faced by femme-identifying women of color.
6. The author presents the following words used to describe femme-identifying women of color: toxic, bully, hostile, troublemaker, aggressive, irrational, and divisive. Share a time when you have seen or felt the impact of such words.
7. What is strategic white womanhood?
 - a. What does it mean to deconstruct strategic white womanhood to expose its silent war on femme-identifying women of color?
8. What is biopolitics?

Chapter 5

1. Discuss the concept of whitewashing.
 - a. Discuss the ramifications of whitewashing specific to the Canadian Indian Act and Native/Indigenous membership.
2. The author describes the eraser tactics of white people, seeing themselves as more civilized and superior to people of other races and ethnicities and possessing the characteristics necessary to

“correct” or “save” people of color from their ignorant perception of cultural dysfunction. Describe how cultural assimilation is historically presented in the book and how it occurs today.

3. The author explains how white women must come to terms with the fact that they have been socialized to believe that they know what is best for femme -identifying women of color before a true sisterhood by all is capable. Describe your idea of a sisterhood that embraces all femme-identifying women.
 - a. The author states that white women cannot speak of sisterhood if they enable covert and explicit forms of white supremacy. What hidden and direct forms of white supremacy have you witnessed or participated in?
4. Discuss how white women participated in the day-to-day reality of slavery.
5. What is bigoted feminism, and how did/does it uphold white supremacy?
6. How have white women been given a pass for their roles in history related to racial oppression? What does a “white woman pass” look like today?
7. The author says that until a reckoning occurs, western feminist movements and the concept of feminism are nothing more than an iteration of white supremacy; share your thoughts.

Chapter 6

1. The author highlights that often, the accomplishments of femme-identifying women of color are diluted by the idea that a win for a black or brown femme-identifying woman of color is a win for the collective sisterhood. What harm comes from this notion that what positively/negatively impacts white women impacts all femme-identifying women?
 - a. Why do you think a single identity approach is the typical go-to approach for white women?
2. Why do you think the author describes how visibility does not translate into more access, acceptance, and participation for people of color?
 - a. What do you think is tokenistic inclusion for material change as presented in the book?
3. The author states when describing the oppression experienced by Arab women that there are times when gender must not be considered the “master factor” in decision-making. How does a blanket view of gender impact the plights and social realities of femme-identifying women of color?
4. What would it mean for white women to accept that they are not raceless and that the continued oppression of femme-identifying women of color predicates their racial privilege?
5. Considering civil rights today, discuss how the bifurcation of race and gender minimizes the lived experience of femme-identifying women of color at the intersection of race and gender and how this joint connection impacts their lived experience.
6. The author states, “white women have been able to chip away at the chains that bind them through tools gifted by people of color.” Discuss what you think this statement means.
 - a. Consider affirmative action
7. The author describes the resistance tactics that white women use to avoid accountability for racist acts and their propensity to perpetuate such behavior as if being accused is somehow worse than being subjected to these heinous acts. Discuss why you think the author makes this point.
8. The author states, “whiteness reasserts itself through a white feminist movement.” Share your thoughts about this.

Chapter 7

1. Discuss what “righteous racism” means and what examples were revealed in the reading.
2. Discuss how the author described the role of lower-income whites in the oppression of people of color.

- a. Why do you think lower-income whites who would have benefited from the solidarity of people of color chose to persevere whiteness over their own social mobility?
 - b. How did upper-class whites utilize whiteness to prevent solidarity between lower-income whites and people of color?
3. Converse about the concept of identity politics and how the author describes how whites have categorized this as a divisive approach organized by people of color to persevere the white default.
4. The author expresses how whites have adopted the approach of utilizing issues plaguing the broader lower class to divert attention (gas whitening) from issues of racial inequality, attempting to discredit the prevalence of race as a determining factor affecting the quality of life. Discuss how narratives specific to poverty and class are weaponized to silence conversations about the influence, impact, and experiences caused by racism.
 - a. Discuss the concept of gas whitening
 - b. The author states, "Race is the modality through which class is lived." Talk about the intersection of race, class, and gender.
5. Discuss the concept of selective justice and consequences faced by male-identifying people of color.
 - a. What impact does this system of discrimination have on femme-identifying people of color, especially concerning issues of rape and sexual violence.
6. The author describes how Western society views Arab and Muslim cultures as not being worthy of governmental intervention that would center on the prioritization of human rights due to ignorant assumptions of cultural stereotypes (violence and inferiority). Discuss how these bigoted views lack morality and prolong the suffering of femme-identifying Middle Eastern women.
7. The author states that "whiteness has become so attached to the symbols of privilege, wealth, and status that it no longer even needs European-derived white people themselves to perpetuate it." What do you think this statement means?

Chapter 8

1. The author refers to whiteness as not being just about race. Share your interpretation of whiteness.
2. Physical characteristics concerning Westernized and Eurocentric beauty standards have plagued all communities across the globe. Share how you have seen this develop over time.
 - a. Consider the practice of skin whitening
 - b. Consider marketing
3. The author discusses the caste system and how it went from skin tone as a means for job classification to preference given to lighter complexion. Discuss the concept of colorism.
4. According to the author, European colonization significantly influenced the institutionalization of discrimination based on skin complexion. Discuss examples amplified in the text that resulted from colorism.
5. Discuss the concept of passing. What privileges and disadvantages came/come along with "passing?"
 - a. What does it mean when the author insinuates that this type of privilege can be revoked at any time?
6. The book highlights "identity questioning" and how people of color who may be able to "pass" are sometimes pressured to prove their identity. Discuss the impact of identity questioning.
 - a. How do such acts contribute to racial oppression?
7. Discuss the concept of antiblackness.
8. Discuss the differences between transatlantic slavery and other forms outlined in history according to the text.

9. The author states, "Whiteness can and does exist even in the absence of white people." Reflect and share your thoughts on what this statement means.
 - a. What does it mean to be both target and perpetrator of racial abuse?
 - b. What does it mean when the author says, "appealing to whiteness is intrinsically antiblack?"
10. Discuss the US government's review and consideration of expanding census categories to allow for Arab and other Middle Eastern self-identification. What pros and cons do you see with this change?
 - a. The author discussed how Arab is not a racial or ethnic identity and is more concerned with culture and language. Share your perspective about using racial/ethnic categories within the US, especially when it so poorly captures the wide range of diversity that makes up the world.
11. The author describes that there is both hidden and visible anger and violence orchestrated upon femme-identifying women of color, but the most harmful is silence and marginalization. Do you agree? Why or why not?
12. The author asks the question, will white women choose to keep upholding white supremacy under the guise of "equality, "or will they stand with women of color as we edge closer to liberation? What do you think?
 - a. How do we move from centuries of white women weaponizing their tears to a future where we believe all women?