



3.3 Social solidarity

Key building blocks

After learning about racism as a class weapon, white people may be tempted to overlook their role in upholding racial division. But the Race-Class approach depends on building social solidarity across racial divisions. This requires that white people do the hard work of grappling with their privilege, supporting efforts at repair, and fostering true integration.

- Messages about coming together are not enough. True social solidarity—the kind that involves equally sharing power and esteem—is the only effective antidote to the divide-and-conquer politics that threaten us all.

Anti-racist protip

This video asks people to think about what integration has meant so far. In doing so, it may surface difficult conversations about people's own experiences with integration. White people may be defensive about the idea that they have not been fully welcoming and that many spaces remain marked by cultural norms and power relationships that elevate white people. Many people of color have experiences being one of the few in a white institution and may have a lot (or a little) to say about what that is like. There are some great resources to aid in these sorts of conversations.

But the point here is not to figure out how to build truly integrated spaces. Rather, the point is to shift the thinking of many white people about why they should do the hard work to support real integration. Most often, white people think they should support integration to help people of color and because it's the moral thing to do. Yes on both counts. But as the discussion on interest convergence suggests, that's not enough to build robust support for integration from most whites. Instead, **it's important for white people to understand that they must work toward integration as a matter of their own self-interest, in order to build a multi-racial society that is not vulnerable to divide-and-conquer politics.**

Sample questions	Potential answers
WHAT DOES RACE-CLASS AS A PRAXIS MEAN FOR WHITE PEOPLE?	
<p>1. What is the common response from white people when learning that racism is a class weapon that hurts them, too?</p>	<p>Initially, many white people are relieved to think about racism as something promoted by powerful elites that hurts them too, rather than something that they participate in and benefit from.</p>
<p>2. How does this response actually hinder white people from fully participating in building cross-racial solidarity?</p>	<p>By locating the principal fault for racial division in powerful elites, Race-Class seems to imply that white people need not grapple with white privilege, reparations, or the need to share power and esteem.</p>
<p>3. So how should white people approach Race-Class as a praxis?</p>	<p>Thinking about racism as a class weapon doesn't mean powerful elites are the <u>only</u> engine driving racial division today. Racism remains a pervasive social problem we must all deal with in ourselves and in others. That means white people, too, have their work to do. This work is both a moral requirement, and a pragmatic necessity if we're to build a truly multi-racial movement.</p>
UNITE-AND-BUILD AS A RESPONSE TO DIVIDE-AND-CONQUER	
<p>1. The video says that enduring social divisions make us much more vulnerable to the divide-and-conquer strategy of dog whistling. Why might that be?</p>	<p>When you don't know people of different races, you're much more likely to believe racist stereotypes about them.</p> <p>When our society is segregated, white people may feel they have to defend whatever advantages they have. (We will talk about this in the next video.)</p>

<p>2. Ian says that dog whistling also involves “other ugly social hierarchies.” Can you think of other divisions that have been weaponized by the powerful few as part of their divide-and-conquer strategy?</p>	<p>Some examples might involve the place of women in society, access to abortion, homophobia, transphobia, the mocking of people with disabilities, and religious prejudices.</p>
<p>3. What must we do to really change society’s direction?</p> <p>And if we’re going to have true social solidarity, what does this mean for white people?</p>	<p>More than just talking about joining together, we have to commit to building social solidarity.</p> <p>This means doing the hard work of building bridges to connect with the very people dog whistle politicians constantly tell us threaten our families.</p> <p>White people must grapple with their own racial privilege and support reparations and true integration.</p>
<p>5. In the previous video, we talked about interest convergence. How does it apply here?</p>	<p>White people have their own interest in promoting true integration. Only when they help to build an integrated society will they be free from the threat of divide-and-conquer racial politics.</p>