

A Reading List to Drive the 'Woke' Crowd Crazy

At the beginning of the year, a couple of my coworkers challenged me to join the yearly book challenge on Goodreads. While I am still wrapping up a few of my selections, I'm on track to finish my goal, and it's rewarding to see the finish line in sight.

Having done this challenge, I took notice when I saw another writer, Carina Pereira, [commenting on her](#) Goodreads challenge over at Book Riot. For some reason, I have a hunch that her reading list didn't take the same course as mine, especially in the "woke" category:

On my Goodreads of 2020, I see books about racism, both fiction and nonfiction, books on ableism, books written by trans people and about trans people, the whole LGBTQIAP+ community, in fact, as well as books by Native writers (a first for me). I went out of my way to actively follow BIPOC accounts, carefully choosing which themes I wanted to learn more about; even starting a book club with a friend, to work on becoming a better ally and a better citizen.

In other words, Pereira is marching lockstep with the diversity crowd and can therefore wear her participation ribbon proudly. Only... there seems to be something a bit dissatisfying about doing what everyone else is doing, for Pereira mentions that her book selections were already "on the radars of most of the people" with whom she wanted to share them.

To save Pereira and others like her from repeating this experience in the new year, I've culled a few titles from my own reading lists. They may be a bit shocking to Pereira's sensibilities, but given that they're different from the run-

of-the-mill selections she admits to reading, perhaps she would be open to some true diversity.

Fulfilling the race category, [*Coming Apart*](#), by Charles Murray, examines the true state of white America. Murray finds that, contrary to popular opinion, white Americans are suffering, particularly those who are not among the handful in the elite class. In fact, the decline of religion, family, community, and vocation have spread beyond whites to negatively affect every American, regardless of race, color, or creed.

Meanwhile in the sexual orientation category, I offer three different titles.

[*The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*](#) by Rosaria Butterfield is my first choice. Butterfield, a former English and women's studies professor from Syracuse University, details her journey out of lesbianism. Now a straight, married mother of several adopted children, Butterfield treats the LGBTQ lifestyles and gender identification issues with truth, compassion, and understanding, making this a powerful book regardless of where one stands on issues of sexual orientation.

In relation to gender issues, [*Love and Respect*](#) by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs offers an intriguing take on the differences between the sexes. As science increasingly demonstrates, [*men and women are different*](#), and there is nothing wrong with acknowledging that fact. Navigating such differences, however, is another matter, and finding out how to do so can make a world of difference in a marriage.

Because many sexual mores have been thrown out the window, Charlotte Brontë's [*Jane Eyre*](#) is a refreshing reminder that commitment to sound, moral principles—particularly in matters of marriage and sex—pays off in the end. Postmodern society would likely call Brontë's title character a prude, but the positive effects of Jane's moral uprightness and patience are

hard to argue with.

[Lords of the Earth](#) by Don Richardson is my choice for learning more about native cultures. Richardson's opening chapters portray the harrowing true story of cannibals in the region formerly known as Irian Jaya (now Western New Guinea). Contrary to the idea of the noble savage, Richardson's story exposes the atrocities of pagan cultures and shows the relief that Christianity can bring to oppressed peoples.

Although Pereira failed to offer any titles on capitalism or Marxism, the latter is so popular today that I would be remiss if I didn't recommend [Marx & Satan](#) by Richard Wurmbrand. In a few short pages, Wurmbrand details the darker side of the ideology sweeping our nation, leading the thinking individual to carefully consider the underlying roots of Marxism before giving it a warm embrace.

Diversity is a trend that will likely continue to receive praise and promotion in the coming year. Yet as Pereira's post implies, attempts at diversity are prone to ending in conformity. True diversity lies in working to understand arguments and thoughts often sidelined in today's culture, an endeavor which these selections are sure to help readers achieve.

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