



Questions and Topics for Discussion

White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson

For a printable copy of these questions, visit: beclibrary.org/book-discussion-questions

1. What is “white rage”? How do you think it applies at this moment?
2. Why do you think this term might make people uncomfortable?
3. Anderson's book traces episodes of white rage dating from the Civil War era to the present day. Is the modern manifestation of white rage different from the 1860's version, and, if so, how?
4. Can you think of local examples of white rage or instances you've experienced?
5. Following Anderson's theory, describe an instance of white rage that is not covered in the book. Remember that "white rage" is not the same thing as racism or white supremacy, but a reaction to the (perceived) advancement of African Americans.
6. Anderson argues that white rage has "undermined democracy" and "warped the Constitution." Is white rage—and systemic racism, more broadly—incompatible with democratic principles? Why or why not?
7. What are the voter suppression policies that are apparently so central to white rage?
8. Anderson argues that when there's Black advancement, white rage is activated. What do she mean by that? And in thinking about January 6, what kind of Black advancement have we been seeing in the past couple of months or years to activate what happened?
9. So when does the backlash end? As things stand, when there's a moment of Black advancement, white rage comes to try to steal it away. It feels like a pendulum swinging. How do you think this motion ever stop?
10. What is an important takeaway from this book?
11. Who should read this book? Why?
12. If you could talk to Carol Anderson, what you say to her about her work?

Do you have a good question to add to this list? Contact: reference@blueearthcountymn.gov