

TEN BOOKS TO READ IN JUNE, Bethanne Patrick, Washington Post, June 5, 2020

National protests against police brutality have sparked a surge of interest in books about race and racism. Although it was released two years ago, the No. 1 title on Amazon this week is “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism,” by Robin DiAngelo ([review](#)). Published by Beacon Press, a small nonprofit in Boston, “White Fragility” has become the fastest-selling book in Beacon’s 166-year history. On Monday, the book sold more copies than it typically does in a month — bringing the total to an astonishing 750,000 copies in all formats. Associate director of publicity Caitlin Meyer tells me, “As publishing professionals, we are proud to be part of its success, but we wish the country did not need it as much as it does right now.” ([Listen to an interview with Robin DiAngelo.](#)) DiAngelo is currently writing a new book — tentatively titled, “Niceness is Not Courageous” — about “the need for white people to break with white solidarity in order to better support efforts toward racial equality.” Look for it next June.

“How to Be an Antiracist,” by Ibram X. Kendi, is also selling extraordinarily fast ([review](#)). The book, which came out last year, got its 13th printing this week. Kendi has been a leading commentator on race in America; last week, he testified before Congress about the impact of covid-19 on communities of color ([watch](#)). He won a National Book Award in 2016 for “Stamped from the Beginning” ([review](#)), which Jason Reynolds recently adapted for YA readers in a terrific book called simply “Stamped” ([review](#)). And on June 16, Kendi will release a board book called “AntiRacist Baby,” illustrated by Ashley Lukashovsky. The book, already a pre-sale bestseller, takes readers of all ages through nine steps toward a better world with rhymes such as, “Nothing disrupts racism more than when we confess / the racist ideas that we sometimes express.”

[Libro.fm](#), the audiobook seller used by many indie bookstores, reports a similar surge in interest in titles about race and racism, but unlike print books, audiobooks never run out of stock. Tuesday was the biggest sales day in the company’s history. And every title on its top 10 list addressed race and racism:

1. “How to Be an Antiracist,” written and narrated by Ibram X. Kendi.
2. “White Fragility,” by Robin DiAngelo, narrated by Amy Landon.
3. “Me and White Supremacy,” written and narrated by Layla F. Saad.
4. “So You Want to Talk about Race,” by Ijeoma Oluo, narrated by Bahni Turpin.
5. “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You,” written by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi, narrated by Reynolds.
6. “Between the World and Me,” written and narrated by Ta-Nehisi Coates
7. “Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America,” by Ibram X. Kendi, narrated by Christopher Dontrell Piper.
8. “The New Jim Crow,” by Michelle Alexander, narrated by Karen Chilton.
9. “Hood Feminism,” written and narrated by Mikki Kendall.
10. “The End of Policing,” by Alex S. Vitale, narrated by Michael Butler Murray.