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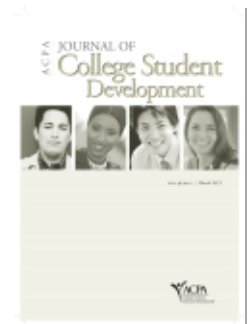
Understanding White Privilege: Creating Pathways to Authentic Relationships Across Race by Frances E. Kendall (review)

Keith E. Edwards

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students tend to engage in nontraditional educational pathways.

The concluding chapter paints a picture of the future community college, highlighting areas where changes will occur, particularly with the emergence of credit for prior learning and MOOCs. Additionally, a focused discussion of the for-profit sector is included as an appendix in the sixth edition, while this information is spread out throughout different chapters of the fifth edition.

At its core, the sixth edition of *The American Community College* remains true to an interpretive analysis that draws upon various data sources and influential pieces in the policy and research literature up to 2012. Compared to the fifth edition, the current one contains valuable modifications as discussed earlier, particularly its new chapter on student progress and outcomes. While the book is not set out to be an intensive review of scholarly work, it could still have benefited from the integration of pieces by the new generation of community college researchers (e.g., Peter Riley Bahr, Rebecca D. Cox, Regina J. Deil-Amen, Jaime Lester, to name only a few) whose recent work has produced compelling evidence on many of the issues covered in the book. On a separate but relevant note, readers interested in a more scholarly and theoretical treatment of contemporary community college issues may find *Understanding Community Colleges*, coedited by John S. Levin and Susan T. Kater (2013), worth reading. Although a comparison between the two texts would appear inevitable, as a faculty member researching and teaching in the area of community colleges, I find them to nicely complement rather than compete with each another.

Written in an accessible and engaging manner, *The American Community College* delivers an excellent, comprehensive sourcebook for information on the many fascinating and complex aspects of community colleges.

The authors carefully revise each edition to accurately and appropriately reflect contemporary trends, issues, and challenges facing these ever changing, responsive, and dynamic postsecondary institutions. It is certainly a worthwhile text for one's collection of practical and scholarly sources on community colleges.

REFERENCE

Levin, J. S., & Kater, S. T. (Eds.). (2013). *Understanding community colleges*. New York, NY: Routledge.



Understanding White Privilege: Creating Pathways to Authentic Relationships Across Race (2nd ed.)

Frances E. Kendall

New York, NY: Routledge, 2012, 240 pages, \$28.65 (softcover)

Reviewed by Keith E. Edwards, Macalester College

Frances Kendall life's work has focused on unpacking her own socialized racism through critical self-reflection, examining White privilege on individual and systemic levels, and helping institutions of higher education become more equitable. Kendall has become a sought after national consultant, facilitator, speaker, and trainer on issues of critical Whiteness, White privilege, and systems of White supremacy in institutions of higher education. In the second edition of her book, *Understanding White Privilege: Creating Pathways to Authentic Relationships Across Race*, Kendall shares her knowledge and wisdom accumulated from this life's work through personal narrative, theoretical and conceptual foundations, and numerous examples of challenges and effective strategies for critically examining the role of Whiteness in the lives of White people and for challenging systems of White supremacy that affect us all.

The first four chapters provide foundational concepts of White privilege explained

in thorough yet accessible writing. In the opening chapter, Kendall begins with a searing personal narrative of socialization, racism, growth, liberation, struggle, and pain through transformative moments in her life as a White person. This deeply personal narrative sets the tone for the rest of the book by being honest without being self-congratulatory or self-deprecating. Next, she examines why White people should critically examine Whiteness by explaining the cost of systems of White supremacy. Kendall explains the costs of systems of White supremacy for both people of color and White people at multiple levels of analysis from the global to the organizational to the individual elements of psychological, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

In chapter 3, Kendall turns to what it means to be White by looking at the social construction of race, the systemic nature of racism, and a sharp examination of how White supremacy is codified in the United States Constitution, court decisions, laws, and public policy. In chapter 4, she defines White privilege and outlines the dynamics of White privilege with data, current events, and personal examples. Kendall then identifies common areas of pushback for those new to or resistant to discussing White privilege. Her strategies focus on responding to resistance in ways that invite greater dialogue, critical self-reflection and understanding without judgment, condemnation, or coddling. Her emphasis on clear and direct personal accountability without shaming is a wonderful model for effective social justice education to address oppression broadly.

The next six chapters apply these foundational concepts to more specific topics related to the intersections of social identities and the intellectual and emotional challenges of unpacking White privilege, engaging in authentic relationships across race, and moving toward change. A new addition in this second

edition is the fifth chapter entitled, “How White Women Reinforce the Supremacy of Whiteness.” Kendall examines the intersections of gender and race as well as the simultaneous experience of dominance and subordination. Her exploration of ways that White women perpetuate racism is as courageous as her suggestions are helpful.

In chapter 6, Kendall dissects various “barriers to clarity” for White people by troubling the notions of colorblindness, viewing race as relational and not also systemic, the concept of meritocracy, and the ways well-meaning White people perpetuate and are complicit with racism. In chapter 7, Kendall cautiously moves to ways that those with an awareness of White privilege can move to taking responsibility and action through deep listening, working through guilt, compassion, examining access to institutional White privilege, and keeping Whiteness explicit. In the next chapter, she shares the challenges to and power of engaging in authentic relationship building across race. In chapter 9, also a new addition in this volume, she discusses the key role of explicitly naming Whiteness in order for White people to address organizational and systemic racism.

In her final chapter, Kendall provides a brilliant and deep analysis of what it means to be an ally, ways aspiring allies fall short, and steps to working in partnership as an ally. She begins by raising the stakes on what it means to be an ally and then examines how to do so in authentic relationships. She then moves to talk about ways that allies can work to make the structural aspects of racism more visible, to be less complicit, and to create more equitable structures. Kendall critically dissects over simplified allyship tied to good intentions and outlines the challenges of trying to be an ally from a position of power and privilege. She then moves to explain the critical self-work need for aspiring allies to work

toward justice, equity, and liberation with courage, accountability, transparency, grace, and urgency. Kendall provides concrete and tangible, although perhaps not easy, ways for aspiring allies to be more conscious, more clear, and more effective working toward addressing systemic racism.

Understanding White Privilege may not be a great entry point for readers who are unfamiliar with the concept of White privilege or are unaware of or in denial of systemic racism. However, for those who have an initial understanding of the concepts of White privilege and want to go deeper, this book provides an in-depth examination of White privilege on the intellectual and personal level. Kendall weaves her own personal experiences, thoughts, mistakes, and emotions together with quotes from academic and activist luminaries in order to explain theoretical and conceptual ideas. She also gives numerous powerful illustrations of both White privilege enacted

and perpetuated as well as stories of growth and hope from her work with institutions of higher education. The real power of the book is in Kendall's direct tone that is neither self-righteous, self-congratulatory, nor self-deprecating. She models how to engage in the deep work of unpacking socialized racism and White privilege on a personal level and works to address systemic racism at the institutional and societal level. She also models holding herself and others accountable with directness, compassion, and authenticity. This is a solid book for those who are looking to take an intellectual knowledge of racism and White privilege to the next level by engaging in the self-work necessary to effectively unpack the dynamics of racism in their own relationships, institutions, and communities. The knowledge, wisdom, and personal examples in this book not only illuminate the obstacles, but also show us a number of paths forward with reminders that how we walk on these paths matters.

