



*Common Read Announcement*

## *How to Be an Antiracist*

### by Ibram X. Kendi Chosen as the MCW Common Read

By Anna Visser, MD-Candidate, 2023  
*Transformational Times* Associate Editor

It took us the entire school year to choose this upcoming year's Common Read selection. Led by then-M4 Sophia Lindekugel, the Book Selection Committee read dozens of books suggested by MCW community members to pick a book that would be timely, readable for a wide audience, and actionable to spark meaningful change. As a lifelong reader and now a member of the Book Selection Committee, I really enjoyed reading books that opened my eyes to topics I had not explored in depth before, ranging from the opioid epidemic, to the Flint water crisis, to the individual and societal impacts of sexual assault.

However, after selecting a book with which we were all thrilled to announce, these plans were pivoted once we noticed, and joined in on, the outcry surrounding the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and far too many others. The MCW Common Read Leadership felt that it was necessary to shift this year's Common Read to one that would center around race and race relations in America, shelving our previous selection for another year.

While the time allotted to select a book was now much shorter after the decision to pivot, many inspiring voices came forward to recommend titles that would spark discussions throughout the MCW community about race. It was humbling to realize that we have been late to join this movement; The MCW Office of Diversity and Inclusion ([ODI](#)), Student National Medical Association ([SNMA](#)), and the Center for the Advancement of Women in Science and Medicine ([AWSM](#)), among others, have been leading MCW for decades towards progress in health equity, workplace climate, and the dignity of every person.

In the end, we wanted as many community voices to be heard as possible for this year's Common Read. We met with key stakeholders, including representatives from the aforementioned groups, to select three books from which MCW would vote. After 548 people weighed in, we are thrilled to have [How to Be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi as the 2020-2021 MCW Common Read.

While I am both elated and terrified to be a Co-Chair for this year's programming, I am confident that the Common Read Leadership and the rest of the MCW community will come together to get our hands dirty and make mistakes so we can learn from those mistakes and take important steps forward in the lifelong journey that is Antiracism.

*Anna Visser is an MD Candidate in the MCW Class of 2023. She serves as an Associate Editor of the Transformational Times. She is Co-Chair of the MCW Common Read.*