

Human Rights, Today!



Handbook: Human Rights, Today! & 30 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) articles Illustrated cards

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01 Human Rights Megaphone

The Human Rights Megaphone is a Human Rights education project that intends to increase influence and provoke actions that encourage change.

Megaphone is a project coordinated by Associação Mais Cidadania which aims, in partnership with INMUNE - Black Woman's Institute and the Human Rights Academy (Norway), to raise awareness among young people, teachers and other educational agents about Human Rights (HR) education. However, it also seeks to promote activism as a way of acting in society in defence of HR and contribute to influencing public opinion and policies in order to promote processes of change in society with regard to discrimination, racism and hate speech.

In 2020, in Portugal, we witnessed aggressions and deaths motivated by hate against racialized people (Bruno Candé being one of those faces), and hate messages written on walls of schools and universities. From then on, the number of demonstrations with racist and xenophobic messages has increased. In a society where people still die because of the colour of their skin, we cannot say that all people are guaranteed their rights. Hate crimes originate in hate speech, and this kind of speech is heard more and more in our society, amely among young people. It is therefore urgent to take action for a change with a positive impact on society.

The partners involved in this project are also the Grouping of Schools D. Dinis in Marvila, António Damásio Secondary School in Olivais, the Psychosocial Technical School of Lisbon (ETPL), and António Sérgio Teacher Training Centre, strategic and fundamental partners in the work with young people and education professionals. It will be together with these institutions that we will act in order to provoke debate and reflection, while creating conditions for young people to act in the defence of social causes, contributing to a fairer and more egalitarian society.

It is fundamental to train strategic actors to promote information and awareness processes on Human Rights, to deconstruct narratives and practices of discrimination, racism and to combat hate speech among children and young people. To promote human rights activism and to promote processes of defence of rights and influence in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

The Human Rights Megaphone is based on four pillars aiming at social change for and with young people. The first is Capacity Building for Professionals/Teachers through accredited training so that, like a megaphone, people who work with young people can take this knowledge into classrooms, youth spaces and cultural centres. The second pillar is Empowerment and Capacity Building of Young People by raising awareness on Human Rights using non-formal education (NFE) methods in the classroom, because as important as listening and reading, is being and feeling. From this process of raising awareness and reflection on fracturing issues, young people will have the opportunity to develop campaigns to defend HR. The empowerment process will also happen through the Academy of Black Young Girls, which will help the participants

learn how to look critically at the oppressions they are subjected to in the hopes of gaining the ability to impact social change, and initiate processes of change by their own hands. Experimentation is the starting point of the process of change and in the defence of Human Rights, but it only makes sense when combined with reflection, in a continuous process of action-reflection-action. Thus, Action and Activism for Human Rights are also pillars of this project. The last pillar is the one of Influence and Advocacy where we intend to influence opinions and public policies, exploring the legal mechanisms that exist for the defence of Human Rights. The aim is to bring together the real actors in day-to-day life and the actors who make the decisions- in order to provide the opportunity for young black men and women to sit at the same table with political decision-makers, whether from the associative or political parties, and create the pressure on them to share the effective impact that the laws, decrees, rules and declarations have on day-to-day life. All of this will be developed while using tools, such as PodCasts, to give visibility to young activists, amplifying their voices and occupying a (digital) space that needs more content about the power that young people have as an engine to transform the world.

This pedagogical manual is a learning and instigating tool for people working with children and young people (13 to 20 years old) to build an education for HR that is also anti-racist, anti-colonial and celebrates diversity. We understand that in the classroom, on the playground, in extracurricular activities, action can and should be taken to dismantle prejudice, racism, discrimination and hate speech.

"We have the right to be equal when our difference makes us inferior, and we have the right to be different when equality mischaracterises us."

Boaventura Sousa Santos

02 Handbook: Human Rights, Today!

1 The Pedagogical Principles that guide this handbook

The activities in this manual were designed according to the principles of youth and adult education and non-formal education, which encompass a number of pedagogical assumptions that we will address below for a better understanding and use of the manual. To speak about youth/adult education is to put the person in the centre of the learning process, and the non-formal education methods are the form par excellence of this kind of pedagogical approach. In this context, the role of the person facilitating these spaces/moments is to inspire, assist and create opportunities for individual and collective learning.

Planning a process for young people based on non-formal education methodologies implies starting from their needs, interests and experience and using a person-centred approach. It is necessary to provide opportunities for self-organised learning, to relate theory and practice, to create bridges between action and reflection and for decisions about what they are doing and how they will learn to be made together. Non-formal education is an organised process with educational objectives, so it is fundamental that each session is carefully planned with the objective of developing personal and social skills and preparing for full citizenship.

Taking into account the above principles, there are some practical guidelines that we consider essential for facilitators to keep in mind when working on these issues with young people:

→ The sessions should be conducted in a space organised in a circle or semi-circle;

→ Activities should not be used just to be fun or interesting; they should be carefully chosen and combined together to result in a planned session with outlined goals to be achieved with the group and while promoting reflection on the action proposed in a specific time period;

→ The facilitator should have previously tested the activities to be developed with the group, preferably by trying them out as a trainee;

→ Becoming a facilitator who uses non-formal education as an effective tool is a process that begins with the educator's own experience and personal reflection on their beliefs and attitudes towards the topics they are about to facilitate. Non-formal education means horizontality and sharing, and it is very important that the facilitator develops awareness and is predisposed to maintain a learning attitude;

→ The facilitator is not a transmitter of knowledge, since the knowledge of trainers and facilitators is partial and contextual. Assuming this can sometimes make us feel insecure or unprepared, the challenge is to learn to deal with and accept that this approach is not compatible with one-dimensional solutions and answers, meaning we are inviting complex and multiple-dimensional views to the discussion;

→ Open learning implies being available to welcome different and dissenting opinions. The mission of the educator is to foster critical reflection;

→ Nobody has all the answers, but what we should seek as human beings is to develop our capacity and willingness to deal with knowledge taking into account multiple perspectives!

"The teacher is, of course, an artist (...). What the educator does in teaching is to enable the students to become themselves".

Paulo Freire

2 A (brief) History of Human Rights

We start this handbook talking about citizenship, anti-racism and hate speech because in today's world, it is almost impossible to open a newspaper or watch the news without Human Rights being mentioned. In focus are often violations and abuses of these rights. Even though Human Rights have become part of our modern vocabulary, many of us do not know what they actually are. How do these rights work and how they influence our societies, especially when we see war happening so close to us?

Human Rights are fundamental rights recognised to all human beings. The basic ethical values behind the idea of Human Rights are human dignity and equality. The notion and belief all human beings should be recognised with certain fundamental rights has an ancient historical origin and was born out of the need to protect individuals from arbitrary abuses, violations and discrimination by those in power. According to the modern notion of Human Rights, the States are primarily responsible for respecting, promoting and protecting the Human Rights of their populations.

The Declaration consists of a preamble and 30 articles, setting out the Human Rights to which people are entitled, throughout the world, without distinction. Article 1 describes the philosophy on which the Declaration is based by emphasising that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Article 2 establishes the basic principle of equality and prohibits discrimination of any kind, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, and so on. Article 3 proclaims the right to life, people's liberty and security - a right essential to the enjoyment of all other rights. Articles 4 to 21 define civil and political rights, while articles 22 to 27 define economic, social and cultural rights. Articles 28 to 30 recognise that all people are entitled to a social and international order in which the human rights set out in the Declaration are fully realised.

3 Some important milestones leading up to the drafting of what we know today as the UDHR:

- 1 August 1944 first meeting of the United Nations Security Council attended by representatives from only 18 countries.
- 2 2nd of September 1945, the year in which World War II ended
- 3 24th of October 1945, creation of the United Nations with the signing of the United Nations Charter, which begins with the sentence: "We the peoples of the United Nations are determined to save future generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold suffering to mankind".
- 4 10th of December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted, as amended by 50 countries.
- 5 It is currently composed of 193 member states.

4 Facts about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (and some that almost nobody knows...)

→ Only when China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States of America signed the UDHR, did it come into force.

→ The Declaration of Human Rights was almost called the Declaration of the Rights of Man until Indian delegate Hansa Mehta who served on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in the years 1947-48 suggested that the declaration have a more universal and inclusive language by changing the phrase "all men are born free equal" to "all human beings..."

→ There is not just one UN headquarters, there are two, one in New York in the USA and one in Geneva, Switzerland.

→ Only one woman was at the meeting where the writing of the UDHR began, it was Eleanor Roosevelt of the USA who said:

"After all, where do Universal Rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet these are the individual's world; the neighbourhood in which he lives; the school or university he attends; the factory, farm or office in which he works."

→ It took more than 80 meetings, more than 160 corrections to arrive at the 30 articles of the UDHR.

→ There were no votes against the UDHR but there were 8 abstentions (Soviet Union, Belarus, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa).

→ It has been translated into over 520 languages worldwide and holds the Guinness World Record as the most translated document in the world.

→ Of major criticism is that it is not a legally binding document and was written by mainly northern nations raising the question of whether it is therefore truly "universal".

5 Citizenship & Human Rights

We see Human Rights as a starting point for a dialogue on social cohesion, social norms, rights and responsibilities, privileges and oppression, discrimination and violence.

More and more we hear polarized discourses; the world is experiencing not only a climate crisis, but a crisis in several domains that are often transmitted in a simplistic way and through fake news.

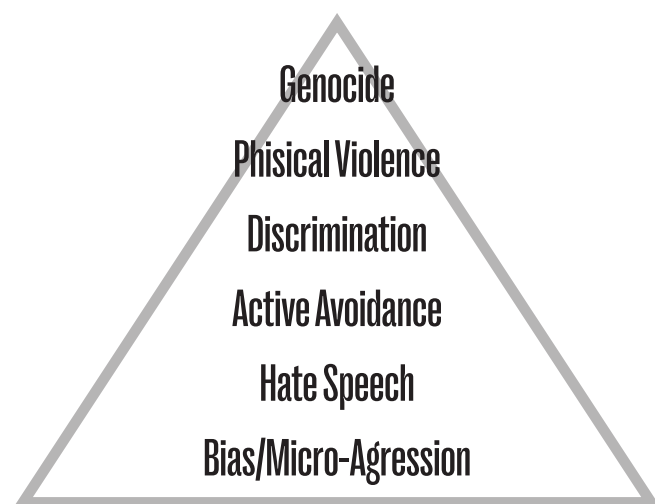
There are groups taking up power that do not defend the values of democracy, there are political groups that use the rules of democracy to rise to power and change the terms of a rule of law. There are changes we need to make, and the first step to change is access to information and awareness.

That is why we need to increase discourse about the relationship between Human Rights and the mechanisms of systematic oppressions that do not allow social mobility of specific groups in classrooms. We need to understand and act on what is happening in the world, on the threats to the rule of law and act on the risks of the loss of freedom of expression. To do so, we will use the deck of illustrated cards from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with which we will address issues that are present in the daily lives of young people, such as racism and hate speech, helping to promote an informed debate, constructive discussions and the deconstruction of prejudices.

6 Human Rights and Anti-Racist Education

Anti-Racist Education differs from the struggle against racism in the sense that it is invested in its prevention in addition to its combat, in the deconstruction of the systems that perpetuate racism. It is also committed to the creation of new narratives that demonstrate the historical but also everyday realities of black people in a colonial, racist and xenophobic context.

To talk about racism we have to talk about stereotypes and prejudices. We know that stereotypes are negative representations that all people make about different groups of people. They are also resistant to time because they are entangled in the social fabric, cultural conceptions and national identity and belonging. Stereotypes are also reductive and simplistic generalisations of reality. When stereotypes lead to the creation of prejudices that disseminate and legitimise negative ideas about certain groups of people, these can result in violent actions and even the death of people from these groups. Therefore, being aware of our prejudices is the first step towards combating them.



7 Human Rights and Hate Speech

We often don't recognise hate speech when it is happening. It is often regarded as harmless. However, it can have harmful consequences for the group and/or person targeted by it. Often the line between violent speech and physical violence is thin, and raising awareness of hate speech is often difficult because it allegedly endangers people's freedom of expression.

It is difficult to define, hate speech, firstly because the definition appears in different areas, it is very politicised and exists in our culture which normalises violence. However, in 2015, the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance drafted the definition:

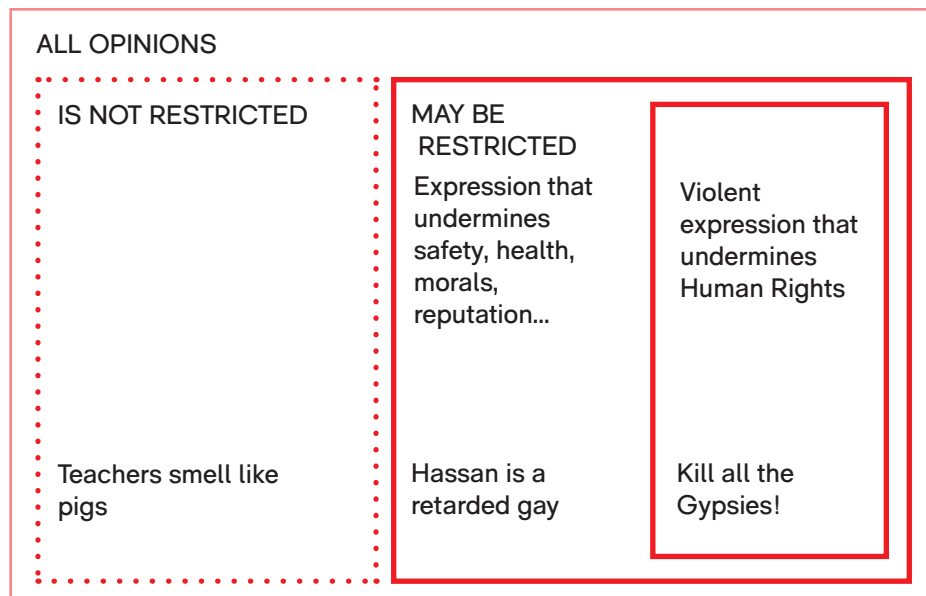
"Hate Speech advocates, promotes and/or incites any and all forms of depreciation, hatred, vilification of a person or a group of people as well as any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatisation or threatening with regard to that person or group on the basis of "race", skin colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, language, religion or beliefs, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics or status." (Council of Europe 2015:3)

What this definition promotes is seeing beyond what seems to be neutrality or micro-aggression as something that can be ignored and continued, and can be expressed in any way, i.e. through insults but also in films, images, thus achieving the naturalization of violence and the systematization of violence through narratives that repeat and legitimize these same discourses. This is why it is so important to build narratives based on Human Rights to construct alternative ways of thinking and living in society that question, deconstruct and invalidate the dominant public discourses, thus giving legitimacy to counter-narratives, creating safe spaces for all people and strengthening ideas of diversity, inclusion and acceptance.

It is important that we never forget that, hate speech may not lead to physical violence but all physical violence starts with hate speech.

Concerns about freedom of expression often arise because we feel that a lack of it undermines our ability to participate fully in society. Debate is important but it is also important that there is a balance between expressing feelings and thoughts and safeguarding the rights of any other person.

THE LIMITS OF FREE SPEECH



Hate/Mild Intolerance

Extrem Hate

8 The illustrated cards of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

There are 30 articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In a context where we see the escalation of hate speech and racial violence, the outbreak of wars, a refugee crisis and a climate crisis, the relevance of this work becomes greater- especially when we realize that mainly young people are not aware of their rights or of the tools used to learn about them.

These cards have simple illustrations, designed for an introductory work of reflection and awareness raising with children and young people on the themes of Human Rights, discrimination, racism and hate speech.

They can be used individually or in a deck, in the context of formal, non-formal or informal education. Following our suggested activities or creating more and new activities.

03 Activities

involving the use of the UDHR illustrated cards

→ What right is this?

Aim:

To understand the difference between civil rights, political rights, social and economic rights; to raise awareness of the universality of human rights.

Duration:

50 minutes

Recipients:

no limit to the number of group members

Materials:

Illustrated cards, pens and cardboard or large sheets of paper or board, tape and glue, copies of the simplified UDHR

Guidelines:

Introduce the differences of the various types of rights: CIVIL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC by dividing the sheet or board into four and spread the illustrated cards of the articles of the UDHR. Then invite the group to separate the cards by type of right using tape and glue. After, divide the group into four and instruct them to find an example of violation of this type of human right and present it to the large group. At the end, hand out the simplified UDHR.

- 1 Right to Equality
- 2 Freedom from Discrimination
- 3 Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
- 4 Freedom from Slavery
- 5 Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
- 6 Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
- 7 Right to Equality before the Law
- 8 Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
- 9 Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
- 10 Right to a Fair Public Hearing
- 11 Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
- 12 Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
- 13 Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
- 14 Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
- 15 Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change it
- 16 Right to Marriage and Family
- 17 Right to Own Property
- 18 Freedom of Belief and Religion
- 19 Freedom of Opinion and Information
- 20 Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- 21 Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
- 22 Right to Social Security
- 23 Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
- 24 Right to Rest and Leisure
- 25 Right to Adequate Living Standard
- 26 Right to Education
- 27 Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
- 28 Right to a Social Order that Articulates the UDHR
- 29 Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
- 30 Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

Food for thought:

Why do you think there are more rights of one kind and fewer of another? Is there a hierarchy of rights in which some are more important than other? Relate everyday life to each of these types of rights and think about why they exist.

Tips:

Do this activity together with the exercise

WHAT IS YOUR POSITION?

Ideas for action :

Find different civil society associations that work on the different types of human rights.

→ What is your position?

Aim:

To understand the difficulty of reaching consensus on HR; to develop discussion and argumentation skills; to promote respect and open-mindedness.

Duration:

50 minutes

Recipients:

no limit to the number of group members

Materials:

Illustrated cards, tape or string, list of sentences, agree and disagree poster

Guidelines:

Introduce the theme of consensus, imply that it is something difficult to achieve. Let them know that it is difficult to reach a consensus on what human rights are or are not, but also that it is a challenge to decide the universality of them. While this is happening, the facilitator spreads out the illustrated cards and explains that there are 30 articles. Invite the group to look at the cards and read out the articles on each card. Next, tell them that you will read out a list of phrases while creating an imaginary line with the group, drawn with either tape or string, in the centre of the room (or the space where they are standing). Instruct them that they should stand to the left if they agree or to the right if they disagree with the phrase. After reading the sentences one at a time, encourage discussion among the group and allow people to reposition themselves after hearing the arguments from both sides. At the end, invite the group to give their opinion and evaluate the exercise.

Food for thought:

Did you find it difficult to position yourself? Did you feel that there was something you couldn't make a decision on? To those people who changed their position: Why did you do so? Would it be possible to agree on human rights? Do we need more rights?

Tips:

If the group is too big, divide it into smaller groups. All sentences can be changed and/or adapted.

Ideas for action:

Together with the group, draw up personal and group commitments for human rights with a set date.

Example sentences::

- Some people naturally have more rights than others.
- The right to rest and leisure time is a luxury that only rich people can afford.
- It is not the role of the state to make sure that people do not go hungry - it is the responsibility of the people.
- The problem of racism is a black people's problem - black people are the ones who should fight racism.
- Some women complain about machismo, but sometimes they are the ones who provoke it with their behaviour and attitudes and are also chauvinistic.
- It is more important to have a house, food, and basic needs than to have freedom of expression.
- Jokes are not discrimination - we must have the freedom to say what we feel like.
- For people to have rights they must have responsibilities - there are rights that some people should not have because of the crimes they commit.

→ What can we do about it?

Aim:

To understand the responsibility of state authorities in the promotion and implementation of human rights; to discuss where each person's duty lies.

Duration:

50 minutes

Target Group:

5 to 30 participants

Materials:

Illustrated cards, board or sheet of paper.

Guidelines:

Start by brainstorming. Initiate a discussion on whose responsibility it is to implement Human Rights in a country- all suggestions should be noted on a board/sheet of paper. Use the opinions expressed to conclude that it is international human rights law that defines the obligations that states have to respect. Next, show the various illustrated cards from the UDHR to the whole group (you can choose some of the cards or use them all). For each card, ask: What right the card represents.? What should the state authorities do to implement these rights? What about civil society organisations? What can we as citizens do?

Food for Thought:

Was it difficult to identify the responsibility of the authorities to ensure each human right? What about your own role? Who has performed the worst in fulfilling their role to ensure human rights: people or the authorities?

Tips:

It may help the group to understand the role of each agent in fulfilling Human Rights. Reflect on how all people can make a difference in the implementation of their rights.

Ideas for action:

Get in touch with a local grassroots organisation/association working on human rights and find out how the group can contribute.

04 Conclusion

In the work to change mentalities of a patriarchal, discriminatory, violent, colonial society, where oppressions are many and few people are aware of their privileges, this manual aims to be a tool to introduce these issues in the work with children and young people. That is why it is based on the certainty that everyone can do something to bring about a positive change and that children, young people, adults can create and reinvent the world- making it a better place for all people.

The Handbook Human Rights, Today! is intended as a flexible and guiding resource for professionals who want to reflect and find out more about how to involve young people and inspire them to act as active citizens in a global world.

There are things we can start doing right now:

→ Read, watch films and find resources for Anti-Racism. The previous suggestions are just a start to the vast library that exists on these subjects.

→ Understand that the personal is political and the way we position ourselves, knowing the history, helps us fight prejudice and violence.

→ Reflect on how to incorporate anti-racist topics in the daily activities with young people.

→ Not to choose silence but to choose action, such as always speaking out against acts of racism and xenophobia.

→ Invite civil society organisations to talk to children and young people about these topics.

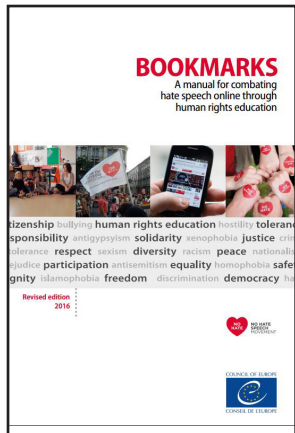
→ Create safe spaces that are culturally and racially representative.

We often feel afraid. We may feel that we don't have the preparation or the time to address these issues that are never simple or easy. So, it's important to start somewhere and have the courage to take the first step...

...because any person has a preponderant role in the construction of a more just, solidary and egalitarian world.

Here are some suggested readings.

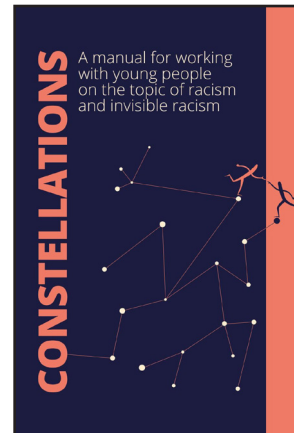
Manuais para uma educação para os Direitos Humanos:



Bookmarks – A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education Matia Losego (coord. trad.). (2015)



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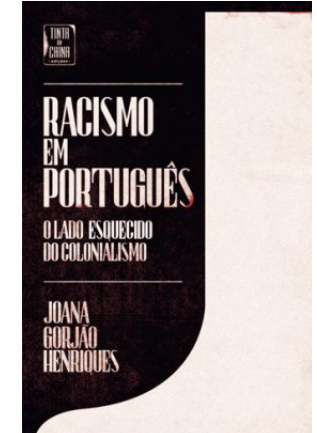
Reading Suggestions:



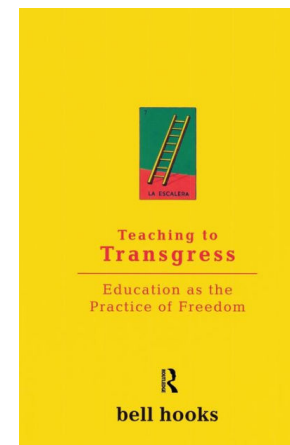
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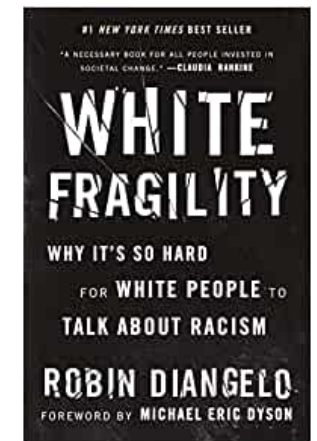


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"Never doubt that a small group of conscientious and committed citizens can change the world; in fact, that is all that has changed it."

Margaret Mead