

Why Race Still Matters

'Why are you making this about race?' This question is repeated daily in public and in the media. Calling someone racist in these times of mounting white supremacy seems to be a worse insult than racism itself. In our supposedly post-racial society, surely it's time to stop talking about race? This powerful refutation is a call to notice not just when and how race still matters but when, how and why it is said not to matter. Race critical scholar Alana Lentin argues that society is in urgent need of developing the skills of racial literacy, by jettisoning the idea that race is something and unveiling what race does as a key technology of modern rule, hidden in plain sight. Weaving together international examples, she eviscerates misconceptions such as reverse racism and the newfound acceptability of 'race realism', bursts the 'I'm not racist, but' justification, complicates the common criticisms of identity politics and warns against using concerns about antisemitism as a proxy for antiracism. Dominant voices in society suggest we are talking too much about race. Lentin shows why we actually need to talk about it more and how in doing so we can act to make it matter less.

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