

# WHISPERING BLACK

code talk for whites



## How whitewashing racial discussions perpetuates the myth of race.

In *Whispering Black* Molly Secours addresses the hushed tones often used by those classified as white whenever referring to race. She also illustrates how avoiding meaningful racial discussions only furthers the divide between whites and non-whites—thereby maintaining the benefits of ‘white privilege’ and the injustices of white supremacy.

Citing from her chapter in the book “*Should America Pay: The Raging Debate Over Slave Reparations*” (Harper Collins 2003), Secours outlines the ‘Big Five’ deflections (excuses) that whites often use to *not* talk about racial injustices:

- “I didn’t have slaves”
- “I’m not racist”
- “It’s only going to divide us more”
- “Slavery is over, let’s move on and forget the past”
- “Minorities already receive preferential treatment — what about me?”

Secours then exposes the “code talk” common among many whites that promotes stereotypes, racist policies and behaviors and fosters complicity.

- With compassion and humor Secours explores how those classified as white shy away from honest racial discussions and how we can (and should) accept responsibility for contributing to continued racial inequities without becoming defensive, resentful and feeling blamed.
- By honestly examining our thoughts, behaviors and history regarding race, Secours excavates the origins of our biases and deepens our understanding so that we can more consciously change our actions and strengthen our commitment to social justice.

*More and more I find young people both unaware and uncaring about the history of our racist culture and its contemporary implications. How refreshing it is to have Molly Secours both aware and caring, writing and speaking with authority and passion about a shameful past that must not be forgotten.*

— John Seigenthaler, Chair Founder and President, Vanderbilt University First Amendment Center

*Molly Secours is a brilliant speaker and pamphleteer whose eloquence makes her a powerful spokesperson for progressive American values. Hers is a voice of righteous reason, speaking truths that are difficult to hear for those who find solace in self-deception.*

— Ellis Cose, Contributing Editor *Newsweek Magazine* and author of *Bone to Pick* and *Envy of the World*

## Other lectures include:

### White Washing Racial Prejudice:

The racist language of history and the 'code speak' used by whites to perpetuate the system of white privilege. (includes 10 minute video)

### The Bootstrap Fallacy:

How political conservatives slash social programs by advocating the popular myth that everyone must "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." Who has the boots and what about the broken bootstraps?

### Welcome To My Hood: Arts & Activism:

How art can be used to affect social change and public policy. (includes 21 minute screening of Secours' documentary "Welcome To My Hood")

### What Color is the Jailhouse? :

Minority Youth and the Juvenile Justice System. (video screening optional)

### White Like Us:

Secours teams up with author/speaker Tim Wise to identify the unearned and unfair advantages of being white in America.

*Molly Secours is the finest public speaker I have heard in ages. What she has to say is substantive, rhetorically potent and free of unsupported assertions. She has fine command of the language and an engaging presence. Truly a rara avis.*

— H. Jackson Forstman, Dean, Emeritus,  
The Divinity School Vanderbilt University

*Molly Secours practices the best kind of identity politics—the kind that puts a premium on 'politics' and recognizes that our identities are not birthrights but the positions we choose to take. Molly's identity is clear and unambiguous: call her an anti-racist freedom fighter committed to giving white privilege a black eye.*

— Robin D. G. Kelley, African American Studies  
Historian, Columbia University author of  
*Freedom Dreams:  
The Black Radical Imagination*

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## ABOUT MOLLY:



As a writer/filmmaker/talk-show host, Molly Secours cuts to the core of social injustices. Without mincing words Secours tackles issues with clarity, humor and compassion.

Since 1995, Ms. Secours writings have been published in numerous newspapers, magazines and internet publications. She has appeared on local and national radio and television talk shows to discuss issues of racism, juvenile justice, white privilege and reparations for slavery.

As an Advisory Board Member of Fisk University's Race Relations Institute in Nashville TN, Secours presented a proposal before the United Nations in Santiago Chile and attended the United Nations in Geneva Switzerland. As a journalist, Secours covered the World Conference Against Racism in Durban South Africa in August 2001.

As a filmmaker Secours has written, produced and edited documentary videos related to various social justice issues and recently founded a program called Youth Voice Through Video (Y.V.T.V.) wherein she teaches video making to juvenile offenders and incarcerated youth in a Nashville prison.

As a strong presence in the community, Secours has used her skills as a writer and orator to challenge state and local officials as well as members of the community. She is also host of a Nashville, Tennessee based social justice television program called "The Not Just Talk Show."