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## "White Like Me" film kicks off series

Bria Lamonica

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## “White Like Me” film kicks off series

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Bria Lamonica (<https://mainecampus.com/author/blamonica/>)

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On Tuesday, Feb. 19 in the Bumps Room of the Memorial Union, students gathered to enjoy Chinese food and watch the film “White Like Me.” The showing was the first of the new “Dine-In Discourse” series hosted by the University of Maine Women’s Resource Center (WRC).

“White Like Me” is an hour-long film which discusses racism and privilege in America. The movie was created and hosted by Tim Wise and directed by Scott Morris. Wise is an anti-racist educator from Nashville, Tennessee. The title for the documentary was based on the movie “Black Like Me,” where a man used dyes and UV rays to disguise himself as a person of color. He does this in order to attempt to understand racism by posing as someone from a different race and experiencing the other side of things. It also focuses on many points that are raised in Wise’s 2004 book titled, “White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son.”

“Our events are aimed to be community building as well as educational,” Co-director of the WRC, and fourth-year women’s, gender, and sexuality studies student, Julia Haberstick said. “In honor of Black History Month, we decided to discuss white privilege.”

Wise posed the question “What is white privilege?” at the beginning of the film, which was a theme consistent throughout the entirety of the movie. Wise deals with, and attempts to answer many complex questions related to racism and inequality. He uses video footage from the 20th century in order to help explain these questions. Stories of Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders shaped the essence of the film, adding historical perspective and making the movie more of a documentary. The WRC handed out sheets with discussion questions for audience members to think about during the movie, and they also helped to guide the discussion which followed the film.

Wise interviewed professors and scholars who have studied white privilege and race, including Charles Ogletree, a professor from Harvard Law School, and author Michelle Alexander. The film begins with an excerpt about Wise’s personal story and experiences with racism and tells viewers that white privilege is something that everyone needs to recognize and address, especially those who benefit from it.

“We try to engage students in important discussions of human rights and social justice. Difficult conversations are a part of building a better world,” Haberstick said. “We hope these discussions will spark people’s interest or make them think about things in a new way.”

The series was inspired by The Office of Multicultural Student Life’s “Lunch and Learn,” and this month’s film showing was chosen in honor of February being Black History Month. Next month, the WRC will be showing the film “Who’s Counting? Marilyn Waring On Sex, Lies And Global Economics” in honor of Women’s History Month. The WRC is located in the Union and offers many services for members of the UMaine student body.

"We're a student-run center, most of our crew is made of volunteers. We're a safe space on campus for people of all identities to come for your reproductive and sexual health needs," Haberstick said. "A lot of what we do is inform students on their local reproductive health centers, domestic violence services, where to find LGBTQ+ healthcare and more."

To learn more about the WRC or Dine-In Discourse, please visit <https://umaine.edu/womensgenderandsexualitystudies/campusresources/> (<https://umaine.edu/womensgenderandsexualitystudies/campusresources/>).

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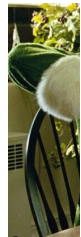


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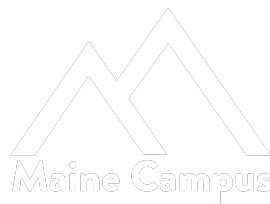
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