

Revisit an audience favorite while you shelter-in-place.

[View this email in your browser](#)



Not Quite White: *Arabs, Slavs, and the Contours of Contested Whiteness*



Eight years ago, Silk Road Rising released our first documentary film, *Not Quite White: Arabs, Slavs, and the Contours of Contested Whiteness* (24 min, 8 sec), directed by Jamil Khoury and Stephen Combs. We believe it is as relevant today, if not more so, than it was in 2012. Therefore, we're choosing to share it with our Silk Road Rising community in hopes that it inspires reflection, sharing, and conversation during this period of self-quarantine.

Not Quite White expands the American conversation on race by zeroing in on whiteness as a constructed social and political category—an elusive concept that historically played favorites, advantaging Northern and Western European immigrants over immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe and the Middle East.

Inspired by Jamil Khoury's short play *WASP: White Arab Slovak Pole*, *Not Quite White* integrates scenes from *WASP* alongside interviews with Arab American and Polish American academics who reflect upon contested and probationary categories of whiteness and the use of anti-Black racism as a "whitening" dye.

On Whiteness A Video Essay



In his video essay *On Whiteness* (16 min, 9 sec), released in 2012, Jamil Khoury explores the meanings and ramifications of whiteness, its promises and lies, beneficiaries and victims, and his own complicated relationship to whiteness. He also speculates on the future of whiteness and ongoing efforts to redefine the very concept.

"When I first wrote this video essay, I understood my racial identity as existing along a 'not quite white' spectrum. And yet, as a beneficiary of white privilege and status, I believed it important to reference myself as white several times throughout the essay. However, this distinction felt then as it feels now: dishonest and ahistorical. Just as referring to myself as a person of color feels dishonest.

"I am, in most people's eyes, white appearing. Therefore, I am afforded the awards and accolades bestowed on white people, and particularly on white men, in the United States. In a sense, I've pretty much hit the jackpot. And while I would never apologize for how I happen to 'look,' I would also never deny my mixed Arab and Slavic heritage—and that Arabs, despite what the US Census Bureau may or may not say, are not white. In fact, according to Pew Research Center, Arabs are 'despised' in this country, rarely a signifier of whiteness. For many of us, an absolute binary of white/non-white can not work. Nevertheless, the histories of whiteness are also a part of my histories. I must own and struggle with them accordingly."

—Jamil Khoury, October 3, 2017

www.NotQuiteWhite.org

#RacismIsAVirus



Our partners at the [Consortium of Asian American Theaters & Artists \(CAATA\)](#), informed us yesterday that there have been over 650 reported incidents of racist and xenophobic attacks in the US against people of Asian backgrounds. Silk Road Rising joins CAATA in condemning these

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)[RSS](#)

attention to these attacks on social media under the hashtag #RacismIsAVirus. Hate crimes and discrimination should always be reported to local authorities, such as a local Human Rights Commission.

The following organizations are collecting and disseminating data relating to these attacks:

- [Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#)
- [STOP AAPI HATE](#)
- [OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates](#)

Read More About the #RacismIsAVirus Movement

Copyright © 2020 Silk Road Rising, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).