

Critical Race Collective (CRC)

SECOND CRITICAL RACE SYMPOSIUM: THE IMPACT OF SYSTEMIC RACISM AND COVID-19 IN HIGHER EDUCATION

When: Thursday, April 15, 2021, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Where: Virtual, Webinar, Zoom

The Critical Race Collective (CRC) Community of Scholars, an interdisciplinary group of faculty who apply critical race theory to research, teaching, and activism, will host the second Critical Race Symposium, a virtual two-day event, on the application of critical race theory to research, teaching, and scholar-activism. Beginning Thursday evening and continuing most of the day Friday, the event will feature research presentations, an invited moderated panel discussion, an invited community presentation, and invited keynote talks from nationally renowned scholars.

Registration is required to attend. For questions on the Critical Race Symposium, email Shaina Destine at sdestin1@utk.edu. Please register by Friday, April 16, 12:00 p.m.

Invited Speakers



Keynote Talk: Dr. Whitney N. Laster Pirtle, “Applying Critical Race Theory, Racial Capitalism, and Structural Gendered Racism to Covid-19 Pandemic Inequities.”

Whitney N. Laster Pirtle is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and McArthur Foundation Chair in International Justice and Human Rights at the University of California, Merced (UC Merced). She received her B.A. from Grand Valley State University, and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Vanderbilt University. At

UC Merced, she has affiliations with Public Health and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies departments and directs the *Sociology of Health and Equity (SHE) Lab*. Her research explores issues relating to race, identity, inequality, health equity, and Black feminist praxis. She is currently completing a book manuscript that explores the formation and transformation of the “coloured” racial group in post-apartheid South Africa and continues to produce research on racial disparities in Covid-19, and recently published a piece in *Gender & Society* titled “Structural Gendered Racism Revealed in Pandemic Times.” In addition, her co-edited volume *Black Feminist Sociology: Perspectives and Praxis* is forthcoming with Routledge Spring 2021. She won the 2020 A. Wade Smith Award for Teaching, Mentoring, and Service from the Association of Black Sociologists.



Keynote Talk: Dr. Della V. Mosley, “Scholar-Activist Lessons Learned through Academics for Black Survival and Wellness.”

Della V. Mosley is an Assistant Professor in the American Psychological Association (APA) accredited Counseling Psychology Program in the Psychology Department at University of Florida. She created and leads the Wellness, Equity, Love, Liberation, and Sexuality (WELLS) Healing and Research Collective. She is the cofounder of Academics for Black Survival and Wellness (#Academics4BlackLives). Dr. Della is a Black, queer feminist, scholar, activist, and healer committed to liberation. Her research focuses on facilitating the wellness of Black and/queer and transgender People of Color (QTPOC) and is undergirded by Black feminist-womanist-paradigms and liberating methods of inquiry. She uses practical, evidence-based, and culturally mindful approaches to fight oppression and facilitate healing and liberation of Black and QTPOC folx. She has published in top-tier journals, has been invited to speak internationally, and is engaged in radical social justice advocacy work. Dr. Della is an APA Minority Fellow, co-authors the Psychology Today blog, “Healing through Social Justice” with the Psychology of Radical healing Collective, and recently served as the Presidential Task Force Co-Chair for the American Psychological Association Society of Counseling Psychology.



Special Guest Moderator: Dr. Jioni Lewis, Panel Discussion “How to Disrupt Racism and Anti-Blackness in Academia.”

Dr. Jioni Lewis is an Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology at the University of Maryland, College Park in the Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education. Her research is focused on investigating the influence of discrimination on the mental and physical health of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), with a specific focus on the impact of gendered racism on women of color, as well as radical healing, coping, and resilience strategies. She has received several national awards for her scholarship and advocacy, such as the 2019 Emerging Contributions to Research Award from the Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity, and Race and the 2020 Emerging Leader for Women in Psychology Award from the American Psychological Association.



Community Talk: Dr. Enkeshi El-Amin and The Bottom, “Radical Community Engagement”

Presented by the UT Critical Race Collective (CRC) Community of Scholars. Additional support from the Division of Diversity and Engagement, Office of the Provost, and the Africana Studies Program.

Critical Race Symposium REGISTER HERE!

(Please click the link to complete this form.)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, April 15, 2021

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM: Dr. Whitney N. Laster Pirtle Keynote Talk – *Applying Critical Race Theory, Racial Capitalism, and Structural Gendered Racism to Covid-19 Pandemic Inequities*

Friday, April 16, 2021

10:00 AM – 11:20 AM: Dr. Della V. Mosley Keynote Talk – *Scholar-Activist Lessons Learned through Academics for Black Survival and Wellness*

11:30 AM – 12:50 PM: Symposium Session 1 – Critical Race Theory in Educational Practice

Tracking the Early Stages of the Disciplinary Gaze among Students Experiencing Childhood Adversities – Dr. Andrea Joseph, College of Social Work, Nashville Campus

Adverse childhood experiences can impact a child’s emotional and behavioral development. Left unaddressed, the psychosocial effects of ACEs can significantly impact a student’s academic progress and well-being. In addition, the long-standing over-surveillance of students of color through racially disproportional school discipline demonstrates how constructions of race and gender impact how students are perceived by educators. Using data from the 2017-2018 National Survey of Children’s Health, this study uses logistic regression to examine teachers’ surveillance of students with four or more ACEs. Our overarching research question was, are schools more likely to call the homes of children of color with ACEs for problems

exhibited at school? Findings indicate racialized disparities in the reporting practices of schools among their students with ACEs.

A Universal Language?: Racism and the Genesis of the National Black Music Caucus – *Dr. Loneka Wilkinson Battiste, Music Education*

At the 1972 convention of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), the National Black Music Caucus (NBMC) was formed. This protest group was created by Black music educators who were responding to the dearth of Black music educators in the planning and on the program of the convention. A recent review of articles in the *Music Educators Journal*, the main journal of MENC, and interviews with founding members of NBMC reveal racist beliefs among leading members of MENC that led to the 1972 protest group's genesis. This paper addresses racism and the marginalization of Black members of MENC leading up to the 1972 Conference and the subsequent response to the group's formation by NBMC and MENC.

Assessing Systemic Inequity: Diversity, Whiteness, and Teacher Education – *Dr. Ashlee Anderson, Theory & Practice in Teacher Education*

At the same time that K-12 student populations in the U.S. are becoming more and more racially and linguistically diverse, the teaching force remains predominantly white and monolingual English-speaking, a *demographic divide* that has serious implications for all students, especially those who identify with cultures/experiences that may be unfamiliar to their teachers. With this presentation, I explore the complexities of this so-called *demographic divide* using critical race theory (specifically, interest convergence theory) as the primary lens of analysis. I also trace how the language of diversity is often coded in both economic and democratic terms, the result of which is a watered-down and whitewashed understanding of the term that does little to critically engage demographic trends.

11:30 AM – 12:50 PM: Symposium Session 2 – Critical Race Across Academic Fields

Gentrification Discourse as Abstract Liberalism – *Dr. Jessi Grieser, English and Linguistics*

What is Religious about Race? – *Dr. David Kline, Religious Studies*

While the concept of race is often connected to “secular” ideas of biological human difference developed under 18th and 19th century discourses of scientific classification, it has thoroughly religious roots. This talk will trace the importance of Christian theological understandings of “peoplehood” for the western invention of race, showing how the race concept first emerges as a theological category meant to enforce western Christian ideas of political and social order. I will also show why understanding Christian theological accounts of redemption is crucial for understanding the contemporary context of American racism.

Essentially Unprotected – *Prof. Sherley Cruz, College of Law*

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American public has relied on “essential” low-wage workers to provide critical services and keep the public safe. Decades of exploitative

employer practices and neglect from the federal government have left frontline low-wage workers essentially unprotected. Many of these workers are people of color and recent immigrants who have been disproportionately impacted by the virus due to structural racism and socio-economic barriers. This is particularly true in the meatpacking industry, where a legacy of poor working conditions, exploitation, and lack of federal oversight has resulted in industry wide COVID outbreaks, thousands of infections, and over 200 deaths. By applying a critical race theory lens and centering the story of the first worker to die after contracting COVID-19 at one of the world's largest meatpacking plants, the presentation unpacks the practices, policies, and frameworks that allow U.S. meatpacking plants to place profits over the lives of Black and Brown workers while the federal government turns a blind eye.

Black Travel Movement: Systemic Racism Informing Tourism – Dr. Stefanie Benjamin, Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Management

The Black Travel Movement (BTM), a collective of Black travelers in the United States, continues to emerge and empower Black travelers to share authentic counter-narratives. Many of these travelers made the transition and began companies that now make up the BTM. However, the tourism industry continues to perpetuate a landscape steeped in systemic racism. Adopting a critical race theory storytelling method and informed by whiteness studies, nine interviews from BTM leaders, direct quotes from predominately White workshop participants, and lived experiences were used to create a collective story of how race and ontological views influence the tourism landscape. As evident with the collective story, discrimination and racism continues to create inhospitable experiences for Black travel leaders within the tourism industry.

1:00 PM – 1:50 PM: Dr. Enkeshi El-Amin and The Bottom Invited Community Talk – Radical Community Engagement

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM: Dr. Jioni Lewis Moderated Panel Discussion – How to Disrupt Racism and Anti-Blackness in Academia

In this panel discussion moderated by Dr. Jioni Lewis, several faculty members will discuss how to disrupt racism and anti-Blackness at the University of Tennessee (UTK). The panel discussion will: (1) provide an overview of racism and anti-Blackness at UTK; (2) discuss current issues with racism and anti-Blackness at the university; and (3) highlight how faculty, staff, administrators, and students can disrupt racism and anti-Blackness at UTK.

Dr. Robert D. Bland, History and Africana Studies

Dr. Dawn Duke, Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures

Dr. Michelle Christian, Sociology

Dr. Tina Shepardson, Religious Studies