



University News



March 30 Symposium Will Focus on "Race and the Post-Civil Rights South"

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The second annual Scholars in Critical Race Studies conference, "Race and the Post-Civil Rights South," will be held on Friday, March 30, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the University of Memphis' Fogelman Executive Center, Room 315. The conference is free and open to the public.

The symposium will begin with a panel on post-civil rights culture, which will examine a variety of contemporary media. Erica R. Edwards, assistant professor of Africana Studies at Williams College, will review the "Memphis" episode of the recently revived television series *The Twilight Zone*, arguing that the city of Memphis serves as a site for mourning and also for staging a "post-civil rights family values politics."

David Magill, assistant professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, will discuss the role of cultural memory in recent African - American literature, including novels by Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker. Michael Ralph, assistant professor of anthropology at Cornell University, will explore the economic critique implicit in lyrics from rapper Nasir "Nas" Jones and lines from the film *Belly*.

The segment "Post Civil Rights Activism: Educators and Activists" will be led by Bill E. Lawson and Bert Bornblum with a lecture entitled "Righting Civil Wrongs: Jewish Activists and Educators in the Post-Civil Rights South." Lawson is a distinguished professor of philosophy at the U of M; he will discuss his relationship with Dr. Ernest Manasse, professor of philosophy at North Carolina University in the 1970s.

Bornblum is a Memphis resident, scholar, activist, and businessman; he will discuss the civil rights struggle in Memphis in the pre- and post-civil rights era.

The keynote speakers for the conference will be Kenneth W. Warren, Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Chicago, and Adolph Reed, professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania. Warren, author of *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism* and *So Black and Blue: Ralph Ellison and the Occasion of Criticism*, has long focused on how debates about literary form and genre reflect and shape discussions of political and social change. Of Reed's six volumes, four focus on the post-civil rights era, including *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon: The Crisis of Purpose in Afro-American Politics* and *Class Notes: Posing as Politics and Other Notes on the American Scene*. He currently is developing a new interpretation of the relation of race and class in shaping U.S. inequality and political struggle.

The conference is sponsored by the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, U of M Public Service Funds, the Bornblum Judaic Studies Program, and CAS Academic Enrichment Funds.

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