

***The Obama Phenomenon: Race and Political Discourse in the United States Today, April 3-4, 2009.***

The historic election of Barack Obama to the presidency of the United States and the implications of that event for the nation were the subjects of a major conference sponsored by the Hooks Institute at the University of Memphis. Scholars from around the nation explored expressions of thought and public reaction to persons and events associated with Obama's candidacy, including media images of Barack and Michelle Obama, the potential impact on minorities of President Obama's proposed public policy agenda, the use of Islamophobia against Obama, the question of the "post-racial society," and interpretations of the Obama candidacy by critical race theorists.