




Seeing Beyond the Veil
Race-ing Key Concepts in Political Theory

Thursday, November 8 - Friday, November 9, 2018

Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island



**SEEING BEYOND THE VEIL:
RACE-ING KEY CONCEPTS IN POLITICAL THEORY**

*Thursday, November 8, 2018 - Friday, November 9, 2018
Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island*

Presented by

The Department of Political Science
www.brown.edu/academics/political-science/

The Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America
www.brown.edu/race

The Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women
www.brown.edu/research/pembroke-center/



BROWN

For political theorists working on race the present moment appears somewhat paradoxical: on the one hand we are witnessing the success of avowed white supremacist and xenophobic political projects, while on the other hand scholarship on race in political theory is not only thriving but is one of the areas producing some of the more exciting critical theoretical interventions in the field. How should we make sense of this? Historically thinkers from “subaltern” or marginal traditions vis-à-vis dominant Western political thought have struggled with the question of whether grappling with certain political and philosophical problems, such as “race” requires abandoning established concepts in political theory and starting anew. Black queer feminist theorist Audre Lorde’s famous axiom that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” is today expressed in calls to decolonize political theory. In this conference, we assess the status of work on race in political theory by bringing together leading theorists who, drawing on the archive of black political thought, have made powerful interventions that have reshaped the way in which we think about key philosophical concepts such as justice, freedom, democracy, sovereignty, etc.

This conference marries the resources of black political thought to an interrogation and reconstruction of key concepts in social and political thought. Rejecting hermeneutical closure, we invite the participants to think of the key concepts in political theory as the site of “symbolic action”—that is, as structures that enable, constrain, and/or reconfigure the ethical and political life of the community. The key concepts of political theory are therefore not merely part of a theoretical language that swings free of practical action; rather, they create the context in which we live out some forms of life rather than others, even as they also call us to forms life that insist, in Ralph Ellison’s language, “upon being made flesh.”

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2018

Pembroke Hall, Room 305, 172 Meeting Street

8:45 am - 9:05 am	Breakfast reception	12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch break
9:05 am - 9:15 am	Introductory Remarks Juliet Hooker , Professor of Political Science, Brown University	2:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Democracy and Capitalism Chair: Bonnie Honig , Nancy Duke Lewis Professor of Modern Culture and Media and Political Science, Brown University Presentation: “Hidden in Plain Sight II: Temporalities, Frictions and Ruptures” Michael Dawson , John D. MacArthur Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago Presentation: “The Spectre of Race: How Discrimination Haunts Western Democracy” Michael Hanchard , Professor and Department Chair of Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania
9:15 am - 10:30 am	Can We Occupy Liberalism? Chair: Sharon Krause , Royce Family Professor of Teaching Excellence, Professor of Political Science, Brown University Presentation: “Blackening 'Blackened-Up' White Liberalism” Charles Mills , Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center Presentation: “African American Individualism: From the Heroic to the Relational” Jack Turner , Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Washington	3:15 pm – 3:45 pm	Coffee break
10:30 am - 10:45 am	Coffee break	3:45 pm – 5:00 pm	Black Feminism and Racial Justice Chair: Tricia Rose , Chancellor's Professor of Africana Studies, Associate Dean of the Faculty for Special Initiatives, Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America, Brown University Presentation: “Spectacular Death, the #metoo mundane and Intimate Justice” Shatema Threadcraft , Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College Presentation: “Is There Racial Justice in Participatory Democracy?” Ainsley LeSure , Assistant Professor of Politics at Occidental College
10:45 am - 12:00 pm	Republicanism in Black and White Chair: Melvin Rogers , Associate Professor of Political Science, Brown University Presentation: “Western Republicanism, White Sovereignty” Barnor Hesse , Associate Professor of African American Studies at Northwestern University Presentation: “The Liberty of the Moderns and Post-Moderns: The Republicanism of Publius and Toni Morrison” Stephen Marshall , Associate Professor of Political Theory in the Departments of	5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Reception

African and African Diaspora Studies and
American Studies at the University of Texas
at Austin

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2018

Alumnae Hall, Crystal Room, 194 Meeting Street

8:45 am - 9:15 am Breakfast reception

9:15 am - 10:30 am Freedom

Chair: **Andre Willis**, Willard Prescott and Annie McClelland Smith Assistant Professor of History and Religion, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Brown University

Presentation: "On Radicalizing the Black Radical Tradition"

Neil Roberts, Associate Professor of Africana Studies and Faculty Affiliate in Political Science at Williams College.

Presentation: "No Glory in Freedom: Harriet Jacobs beyond the Narrative of Slavery"

Jasmine Syedullah, Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology at Vassar College

10:30 am - 10:45 am Coffee break

10:45 am - 12:00 pm Race and Dissent

Chair: **Alex Gourevitch**, Associate Professor of Political Science, Brown University

Presentation: "(In)Civility"

Candice Delmas, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Political Science at Northeastern University

Presentation: "Civil disobedience, race, and American Exceptionalism"

Erin Pineda, Assistant Professor of Government at Smith College

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch break

2:00 pm - 3:15 pm

Black Protest from Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter

Chair: **Brian Meeks**, Professor and Department Chair of Africana Studies, Brown University

Presentation: "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience"

Alexander Livingston, Assistant Professor in the Department of Government at Cornell University

Presentation: "To Dream a World: Radical Imagination, Black Feminist Pragmatism, and the Movement for Black Lives"

Deva Woodly, Associate Professor of Politics, The New School

3:15 pm - 3:45 pm

Coffee break

3:45 pm - 5:00 pm

Mourning and the Politics of Loss

Chair: **Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg**, Director of the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, Professor of Comparative Literature and Italian Studies, Brown University

Presentation: "Mourning, Pessimism, Narcissism"

David McIvor, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Colorado State University

Presentation: "Grief and Black Politics"

Juliet Hooker, Professor of Political Science, Brown University

5:00 pm - 5:10 pm

Closing remarks

5:10 pm - 6:00 pm

Closing reception

PRESENTERS

A-Z by last name. Includes title, day, and time of presentation.



Michael Dawson

Paper Title: “Hidden in Plain Sight II: Temporalities, Frictions and Ruptures”

Thursday, 2:00 pm

Michael C. Dawson is the John D. MacArthur Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. His research interests include black political behavior and public opinion, political economy, and black political ideology. His first two books, *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics* and *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies*, have won multiple awards. Recent books include *Not In Our Lifetimes: The Future of Black Politics*, and *Blacks In and Out of the Left*. Recently with Megan Ming Francis Dawson launched a nationwide, multi-university project to study the intersection of race and capitalism. He is the founding director of the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at the University of Chicago. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2006 and in 2017 he was the first awardee of the American Political Science Association’s Hanes Walton, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award for the Study of Race and Ethnic Politics.



Candice Delmas

Paper title: (In)Civility

Friday, 10:45 am

Candice Delmas is an assistant professor of philosophy and political science at Northeastern University, and the associate director of the Politics, Philosophy, and Economics Program. She received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston University, an M.A. in philosophy from Georgia State University, a Master 2 in ethics and politics from Université Paris IV Sorbonne, and a B.A. (Licence and Maîtrise) from Université Paris X Nanterre. Her work in moral, social, political, and legal philosophy has appeared in many

academic venues. Her book, *A Duty to Resist: When Disobedience Should Be Uncivil*, is forthcoming at Oxford University Press.



Michael Hanchard

Paper Title: “The Spectre of Race: How Discrimination Haunts Western Democracy”

Thursday, 2:00 pm

Michael Hanchard is Professor and Chair of the Africana Studies Department at the University of Pennsylvania, and director of the Marginalized Populations project. His research and teaching interests combine a specialization in comparative politics with an interest in contemporary political theory, encompassing themes of nationalism, racism, xenophobia and citizenship. His books include *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1945-1988*, *Party/Politics: Horizons in Black Political Thought* and most recently *The Spectre of Race: How Discrimination Haunts Western Democracy*. He has held membership in the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton and visiting scholar and professorship positions at Harvard University, Universitaria Candido Mendes, the Universidade de Sao Carlos, the University of Cartagena, the Instituto Gramsci, the University of Ghana, the University of Vienna, and Sciences Po in Paris.



Barnor Hesse

Paper Title: “Western Republicanism, White Sovereignty”

Thursday, 10:45 am

Barnor Hesse is Associate Professor of African American Studies at Northwestern University. He received his PhD in Government (Ideology and Discourse Analysis) at the University of Essex. His research interests include post-structuralism and political theory, black political thought, modernity and coloniality, blackness and affect, race and governmentality, conceptual methodologies, postcolonial studies. He is co-author of *Beneath the Surface: Racial Harassment*, editor of *Un/settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas*,

Entanglements, Transruptions and author of *Raceocracy: Black Politics and the Western Political* (forthcoming, Duke University press).



Juliet Hooker

Paper Title: “Grief and Black Politics”

Friday, 3:45 pm

Juliet Hooker is Professor of Political Science at Brown University. She is a political theorist specializing in racial justice, multiculturalism, Latin American political thought, and Black political thought. She is the author of *Race and the Politics of Solidarity* (Oxford, 2009) and *Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos* (Oxford, 2017), which was a recipient of the American Political Science Association’s 2018 Ralph Bunche Book Award and the 2018 Best Book Award of the Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Section of the American Political Science Association. She is currently working on a book tentatively titled: *Black Grief/White Grievance*, which explores the role of grief and grievance in contemporary racial politics in the United States.



Ainsley LeSure

Paper Title: “Is There Racial Justice in Participatory Democracy?”

Thursday, 3:45 pm

Ainsley LeSure is an assistant professor of politics at Occidental College. She specializes in the subfield of political theory and her research and teaching interests include contemporary political theory, democratic theory, feminist theory, and the philosophy of race and racism. Her current book project *Racism Is in the World* traces how the over-emphasis of the inner states of individuals in explaining the tenacity of racial injustice in the contemporary moment actually blinds us to the racial dynamics that are unfolding before our very eyes. Largely, through the political thought of Frantz Fanon and Hannah Arendt, the book advocates for a worldly account of racism that emphasizes the impact and significance of what people say and do in the world as the key to developing, not only better explanations

for why racial injustice persists, but better strategies of political and social intervention to end it.



Alexander Livingston

Paper title: “Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience”

Friday, 2:00 pm

Alexander Livingston is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government and Fellow at the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University. He is the author of *Damn Great Empires! William James and the Politics of Pragmatism* (2016), as well as numerous articles and chapters on democracy, race, religion, and American political thought. He is currently writing a book on the genealogy of civil disobedience and the politics of nonviolence in the U.S. Civil Rights and antiwar movements.



Stephen Marshall

Paper Title: “The Liberty of the Moderns and Post-Moderns: The Republicanism of Publius and Toni Morrison”

Thursday, 10:45 am

Stephen Marshall is Associate Professor of Political Theory in the Departments of African and African Diaspora Studies and American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *The City on the Hill from Below: The Crisis of Prophetic Black Politics*. His current research focuses on the political and cultural legacies of slave owning.



David McIvor

Paper Title: “Mourning, Pessimism, Narcissism”

Friday, 3:45 pm

David W. McIvor is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Colorado State University. David W. McIvor received his BA in Political Science at Western Washington University and his MA and Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University.

His primary research interests are in contemporary political theory and democratic theory with a particular focus on critical theory psychoanalytic theory and deliberative democratic theory and practice. He was also a co-editor of *Democratizing Deliberation: A Political Theory Anthology* published by the Kettering Foundation. McIvor's first book, entitled *Mourning in America: Race and the Politics of Loss*, was published by Cornell University Press in 2016.



Charles Mills

Paper Title: "Blackening 'Blackened-Up' White Liberalism"

Thursday, 9:15 am

Charles W. Mills is a Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center. He works in the general area of social and political philosophy, particularly in oppositional political theory, with a focus on race. His first book, *The Racial Contract* (1997), won a Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Award for the study of bigotry and human rights in America. He is also the author of: *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (1998); *From Class to Race: Essays in White Marxism and Black Radicalism* (2003); *Contract and Domination* (with Carole Pateman) (2007); *Radical Theory, Caribbean Reality* (2010); and *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism* (2017).



Erin Pineda

Paper title: Civil Disobedience, Race, and American Exceptionalism

Friday, 10:45 am

Erin Pineda is Assistant Professor of Government at Smith College. She received her doctorate in Political Science from Yale University (2015). Her research interests include the politics of protest and social movements, African American political thought, critical race theory, the long civil rights movement, radical democracy and 20th-century American political development. Prior to coming to Smith College in the fall of 2017, she was Provost's Postdoctoral Scholar in

Political Science at the University of Chicago, and a faculty affiliate of the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture.



Neil Roberts

Paper Title: "On Radicalizing the Black Radical Tradition"

Friday, 9:15 am

Neil Roberts is associate professor of Africana studies, political theory, and the philosophy of religion at Williams College and President of the Caribbean Philosophical Association. Roberts received a BA in Afro-American Studies and Law & Public Policy from Brown University and his MA and PhD in Political Science from the University of Chicago with a specialization in political theory. His present writings deal with the intersections of Caribbean, Continental, and North American political theory with respect to theorizing the concepts of freedom and agency. In addition to being former Chair of the Williams Religion Department and Chair of CPA Publishing Partnerships, he is the author of the award-winning book *Freedom as Marronage* (University of Chicago Press, 2015) and the collaborative work *Journeys in Caribbean Thought*. His most recent book is titled *A Political Companion to Frederick Douglass*.



Jasmine Syedullah

Paper title: "No Glory in Freedom: Harriet Jacobs beyond the Narrative of Slavery"

Friday, 9:15 am

Jasmine Syedullah is a black feminist political theorist of abolition, as well as co-author of *Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love, and Liberation* (North Atlantic Books, 2016). She is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology at Vassar College, and starting in Africana Studies as an Assistant Professor of Prison Studies at Vassar College in Fall of 2019. Her current research intervenes in the field of political theory to ask how the carceral logics of modern freedom are challenged by captive black women's demands for abolition. She holds a PhD in Politics with a designated emphasis in Feminist

Studies and History of Consciousness from University of California Santa Cruz and a B.A. from Brown University in Religious Studies with a focus in Buddhist Philosophy.



Shatema Threadcraft

Paper Title: “Spectacular Death, the #metoo mundane and Intimate Justice”
Thursday, 3:45 pm

Shatema Threadcraft is an Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College. She was the 2017-2018 Ralph E. and Doris M. Hansmann Member at the Institute for Advanced Study.

Her book, *Intimate Justice: the Black Female Body and the Body Politic* (Oxford University Press, 2016) won the W.E.B. Du Bois Distinguished Book Award from the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, the American Political Science Association’s award for the best book on race, ethnicity, and politics, and the National Women’s Studies Association Sara A. Whaley Award for the best book on women and labor, all in 2017. Her article, “Intimate Justice, Political Obligation and the Dark Ghetto” (*Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2014) was awarded the American Political Science Association’s 2015 Okin-Young Award, which recognizes the best paper on feminist political theory published in an English language academic journal in 2014. Her research has been supported by Harvard’s Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Ford Foundation, the American Association of University Women and the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance and Abolition.



Jack Turner

Paper Title: “African American Individualism: From the Heroic to the Relational”
Thursday, 9:15 am

Jack Turner is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Washington. He specializes in American political thought, critical

race theory, and democratic theory. He is the author of *Awakening to Race: Individualism and Social Consciousness in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2012). With Melvin L. Rogers, he is editing *African American Political Thought: A Collected History* (Under contract, University of Chicago Press). His articles have appeared in a wide variety of journals, including *Political Theory*, *Raritan*, *Modern Intellectual History*, and *Polity*. His most recent publication is “Douglass and Political Judgment: The Post-Reconstruction Years,” in *A Political Companion to Frederick Douglass*, edited by Neil Roberts (University Press of Kentucky, 2018). He is writing a new book entitled *Existential Democracy: Death and Politics in Walt Whitman*.



Deva Woodly

Paper Title: “To Dream a World: Radical Imagination, Black Feminist Pragmatism, and the Movement for Black Lives”
Friday, 2:00 pm

Deva Woodly is Assistant Professor of Politics at the New School. A former fellow of the Institute for Advances Study (2012–2013), she is the author of *The Politics of Common Sense: How Social Movements Use Public Discourse to Change Politics and Win Acceptance* (Oxford 2015). Her current book projects are *#BlackLivesMatter and the Democratic Necessity of Social Movements*, an examination of the ways that social movements re-politicize public life in times of political despair, and *What We Talk About When We Talk About the Economy*, a broad investigation of American economic discourse and its implications for politics and policy in the post-Great Recession era.

