

THE CONNECT

A Center for Critical Race Studies Newsletter



MAY IS AAPI HERITAGE MONTH HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RISE IN ASIAN HATE

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ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

On March 16, 2021, a gunman targeted three Asian-run spas in the Atlanta area, killing eight people and reigniting public outcries against the rise in anti-Asian acts of violence which have been steadily increasing since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the killer confessed that his motive was to eliminate sexual temptation, the reality that his sexual desire was projected onto Asian-run spas reveals that his motives were not only sexist, but also racist and classist. It is the blanket assumption that spas where Asian women earn a living are sites of sexual deviance that is inherently harmful. This remains dangerous whether or not the women were engaged in actual sex work.

Shortly after the shootings, Michael Eric Dyson penned an op-ed in *The Washington Post* asking the poignant question, "[Why don't we treat Asian American history the way we treat Black American history?](#)" In the article, Dyson explains that although American discussions of racism tend to pinpoint Black Americans as the default minority group, the impact of systemic racism on Asian Americans throughout history has been equally egregious. This [timeline](#) published in *The New Yorker* details anti-Asian rhetoric and legislation dating back to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which targeted Chinese women by preventing their immigration to the U.S. because they were deemed prostitutes – a foundational ploy that contributed to the present-day hypersexualization and fetishization of Asian women.

Fast forward to 2020, when a novel coronavirus upended life as we knew it and irresponsible and tactless leaders in need of a scapegoat began to refer to COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus" or "kung flu," and the trickle-down consequences are acts of violence and hate emboldened by nationalism and ethnocentric ideology. This ideology erases the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to our country. The purpose of **AAPI Heritage Month** is to commemorate those contributions and the resilient histories of AAPI Americans who have persisted in spite of systemic racism and oppression. As we approach this month on the heels of a string of violence against Asian Americans, we encourage you to dedicate time and space to learning about, listening to, and advocating for the AAPI community. A good place to start is by visiting <https://stopaapihate.org/>.



CCRS BIDS FAREWELL TO FOUNDING FELLOW DR. STACIE CRAFT DEFREITAS

CCRS Director Dr. Vida Robertson pays homage to Dr. DeFreitas, who will join the clinical psychology graduate program at Prairie View A&M University as the Director of Clinical Training in June.

On behalf of the Fellows, affiliates, students, and community partners of the Center for Critical Race Studies, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Stacie Craft DeFreitas for her tireless and unwavering commitment to the Center. As one of the eight founding Fellows, Dr. DeFreitas has time and time again provided the leadership, strength, and character needed to forge a place where the champions of justice could find safety, solace, and friendship.

Thank you, Stacie, for daring to dream of a space where scholarship and activism converge into the now imaginable. We will ever be grateful to you for your impressive scholarship, immeasurable dedication, and unrivaled consideration of our fragile, vexing humanity.

Of course, we always knew that your genius and strength would take you far in life; yet we are still deeply saddened that these admirable qualities would also take you away to other college campuses and into other chapters not yet written. We are forever indebted to you for all you have done and all you have yet to do in the name of the desperate, defenseless and the forgotten. Never forget that UHD is your home and we, your CCRS family, await every opportunity to welcome you back.

Thank you and best wishes in your new role, Dr. DeFreitas!

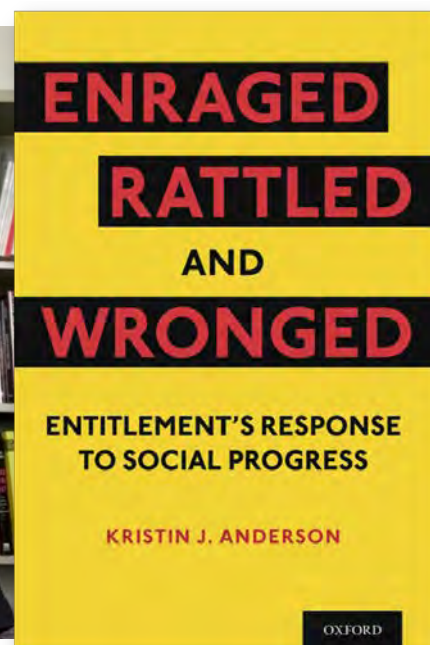
CHECK OUT THESE CCRS CONVERSATION STARTERS



This semester, the Center for Critical Race Studies had the honor of hosting cultural critic and scholar of race, gender, and sexuality, **Dr. Jeffrey McCune**, as our **2021 Scholar-in-Residence**. In March, McCune joined the Center and our community partners for a series of virtual talks and conversations exploring the theme, "**Begin Again: A New BIPOC Manifesto**." As is tradition for the Scholar-in-Residence, McCune sat down with CCRS Fellow Dr. Sucheta Choudhuri for the **Scholar Interview** and to discuss his research, writings, and more. This lively conversation is a must-watch and spans topics from Kanye West and Kim Kardashian to Black masculinity, sexuality and sexual discretion, and the Black church.



In March, UHD English professor and CCRS Fellow Daniel Peña penned a letter of recommendation for **The New York Times Magazine** on **The Joys of Biking at Night**. In the piece, Peña reflects on how the joys of the night ride allows one to feel present in their own body again, and particularly against the backdrop of a raging global pandemic. For a special treat, you can also listen to the renowned writer read his words at the link.



COMING SOON: FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

DR. KRISTIN J. ANDERSON JUST WROTE THE BOOK ON ENTITLEMENT

STACIE CRAFT DEFREITAS, PH.D.

INTERIM DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

The next installment of the CCRS Faculty Fellow Spotlight series will be held in May. Dr. Stacie Craft DeFreitas will interview Dr. Kristin J. Anderson about her forthcoming book, ***Enraged, Rattled, and Wronged: Entitlement's Response to Social Progress***, which will be published by Oxford University Press and available to purchase in June.

Anderson's first book, ***Benign Bigotry: The Psychology of Subtle Prejudice*** (Cambridge, 2010) is an examination of the psychological research on prejudice and bigotry. Her second book, ***Modern Misogyny: Anti-Feminism in a Post-Feminist Era*** (Oxford, 2015), investigates gender discrimination and sexism.

In her newest book, Anderson, a UHD professor of psychology, examines how psychological entitlement works to maintain inequality in the United States. ***Enraged, Rattled, and Wronged*** explores entitlement's role in a variety of contemporary dilemmas including gun violence, white fragility, toxic masculinity, internet trolling, anti-queer legislation, voter disfranchisement, authoritarianism, and white women calling the police on African Americans.

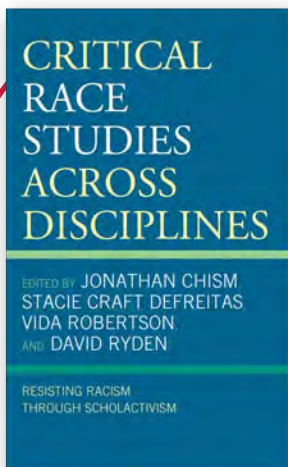
Anderson argues that entitlement is a key feature of those who fear and resent social progress; the entitled are not used to having to adapt to changing circumstances and are therefore ill-equipped to adapt to demographic shifts, changes in jobs, and adjustments required to combat climate change. Anderson's book will help readers understand the uphill battle that marginalized populations must endure in their fight for equality and the profound consequences of entitlement to our society.

If you have questions that you would like to have asked during the interview, send an email to dfreitas@uhd.edu by May 14th with the subject line "CCRS Scholar Spotlight."

You can also check out [the previous CCRS Fellow Spotlight](#) in which Dr. Chuck Jackson interviewed Dr. DeFreitas about her book, ***African American Psychology: A Positive Psychology Perspective***. In the mean time, stay tuned to CCRS social media to be the first to know when Dr. Anderson's Spotlight Interview drops.

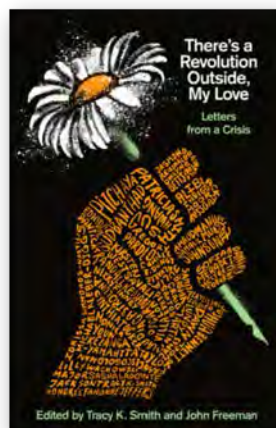
The CCRS Summer Reading List

A list of books written by or featuring CCRS Fellows

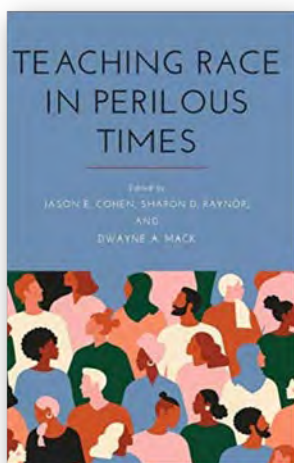


Featuring essays by Black and Africana scholars from a range of disciplines including history, literature, education, religion, and psychology, and edited by CCRS Fellows Drs. Jonathan Chism, Stacie Craft DeFreitas, Vida Robertson and David Ryden, **Critical Race Studies Across Disciplines: Resisting Racism through Scholactivism** accentuates the expansion of Critical Race Theory beyond legal studies. It posits that scholar-activism, or scholactivism, a firm commitment to liberation and social justice, is a central thread that unites critical race studies scholars across disciplines. Scholars who embrace the scholactivist agenda hope to understand the roots of anti-Black racism and to actively oppose all forms of oppression. Drawing on CRT, the volume contends that race and racial thinking permeate various institutions and influence American culture and life.

At the height of the political unrest that shaped the summer of 2020, CCRS Fellow and English professor Daniel Peña penned the compelling "**Letter From Houston: Let These Protests Bring Light to America.**" In this anthology, Peña's voice joins some of the most treasured writers today in an inspiring collection of letters, essays, poems, reflections, and screeds. **There's a Revolution Outside, My Love: Letters from a Crisis** is an extraordinary effort from a group of extraordinary writers designed to highlight the challenge and hope of these extraordinary times.



In this highly anticipated anthology on teaching issues of race and racism in U.S. college classrooms, CCRS Fellow and assistant professor of communication Dr. Felicia Harris contributes, "**Multiple Pedagogies Required: Reflections on Teaching Race and Ethnicity in the Intercultural and Intergenerational Classroom,**" a narrative and inspiring account of learning how to teach while at one of the nation's most diverse universities in the most diverse city in the United States. **Teaching Race in Perilous Times** is the latest installment in the SUNY series, Critical Race Studies in Education, and offers a multidisciplinary collection of essays in which contributors examine how teachers can respond productively to emotionally charged contexts, recognize the roles and pressures that faculty assume as activists in the classroom and focus a timely lens on the shifting racial politics and economics of higher education.



Planning to add these to your summer reading list?
Share your favorite quotes and highlights using
#CCRSSummerReads on Twitter and Instagram!

UHD
Center for
Critical Race Studies

Dr. Kristin Anderson
Professor of Psychology

Dr. Jonathan Chism
Assistant Professor of History

Dr. Sucheta Choudhuri
Associate Professor of English

Dr. Stacie DeFreitas
Interim Associate Dean, College
of Humanities and Social
Sciences

Dr. Felicia L. Harris
Assistant Professor of
Communication Studies

Dr. Chuck Jackson
Associate Professor of English

Dr. Creshema R. Murray
Special Assistant to
the President

Mr. Daniel Peña
Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Vida Robertson
Associate Professor of English
and Humanities

Dr. David Ryden
Interim Dean, College of
Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr. Antoinette Wilson
Assistant Professor of Psychology

LET'S CONNECT

If you have resources, stories, or inspiration you would like to share with the CCRS community, please e-mail CCRS@uhd.edu.

