



Second Tuesday Race Forum

Topics & Descriptions

April 2014 – AIDS/HIV in the Communities of Color

We don't hear much about AIDS and HIV in communities of color, or talk much about them either. Yet they are growing problems that deserve open and honest dialogues to give our communities information that is very much needed and address the resistance to dealing with it. The April discussion will be an opportunity to get your questions answered and understand the basics of this health challenge.

Our guests who will lead us in dialogue will be Ms. Penny DeNoble and Mr. Brent Dysart. Penny DeNoble is the Founder and Director of the community-based organization The Issue of Blood Outreach and Consulting Services. Its purpose is to bring awareness, education and information to the communities at large about prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and unplanned pregnancies. She sits on the Board of the Greater Denver Interfaith Initiative, volunteers for the Denver-Colorado AIDS Project, Positive Women's Network-Colorado, and member of the Mayor's HIV Resources Planning Council.

Brent Dysart has been president of Rocky Mountain CARES, the second largest AIDS service organization in the Denver area. He was appointed the HIV Resources Planning Council in 2008 by then Mayor John Hickenlooper, and served as a board member of the Boulder County AIDS project in 2011. Both Mr. Dysart and Ms. DeNoble have been living with and advocating for HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Carroll Watkins Ali received her Ph. D. in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology. She is the author of *Survival and Liberation: Pastoral Theology in African American Context*. Dr. Watkins Ali is currently the Executive Director of the Greater Denver Interfaith Initiative and founder/CEO of Watkins Ali & Associates, a marketing, management development, training and technical assistance firm. In addition to lecturing and teaching throughout the country, Dr. Watkins Ali also devotes part time to a private practice in pastoral psychotherapy.

March 2014 – Updating “The Talk”

It is well documented that the world is a rough place for young men of color. We seem to be witnessing increasing danger for these young men as more people start to shoot them with impunity. Laws like Stand Your Ground are providing legal cover for those who feel “threats” coming from boys of color.

Black parents have a long tradition of having conversations with their children on how to navigate, survive, and be safe in a white culture. This has been called “The Talk.” In the



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March meeting we will look personal histories of The Talk and explore how it has evolved and needs continuous revision to stay relevant. We will look at how all parents seek to protect their children with instructions for staying alive.

February 2014 – What Is Really Happening to Denver’s Homeless Neighbors?

We have invited PJ Damico to organize the meeting this month to focus on being homeless in Denver. Here below is PJ's description of his plans for our conversation.

Now 9 years into the 10 year Road Home to End Homelessness there are more homeless people living on the streets of Denver than ever before except that they continue to disappear. As Triangle Park and Eddie Mestros Park were recently made off limits to the homeless community, they have literally no place to go. If they dare try to sleep in public they face the very real threat of being arrested. How do we end homelessness? This is really the wrong question. What is Denver’s responsibility as a civic community to create intentional spaces and opportunities for our indigent neighbors? This is the conversation that remains critical to our collective well-being. We will facilitate an open dialogue with a few of Denver’s neighbors who reside in the shadows outside of plain view and look to them for insights on how to become a more humane city.

I would encourage participants to listen to the following Open Letter to the Mayor from my good friend, musician and activist, Molina Speaks.

<http://www.theartistslens.com/open-letter-homeless-in-denver/#.UuhpqEbn9D8>

January 2014 – Neutralized or Obsolete?

For January I have been thinking about discussing how our culture seeks to neutralize movements that fight oppression by creating heroes and putting them on pedestals. It is timely to observe how this has been done to Dr. Martin Luther King and see the similarities with President Nelson Mandela.

Witness the ritual recitations of the “I have a Dream Speech” each January. What is learned or unlearned by keeping the focus on this beautiful speech? Also notice how Mandela has been celebrated almost exclusively as the peace maker with very little examination of his prior positions.

We will look at how the privileged elites use this hero worship and explore how it fits in the stages of a social movement.

December 2013 – 12 Years a Slave Debriefing



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British director Steven R. McQueen has recently released “**12 Years a Slave**,” an exceptional and riveting film about one of the key defining periods of America’s past. It is based on the true story of Solomon Northrup, a free black man from Saratoga, New York, a talented musician and crafts person, who was kidnapped in 1841 and enslaved for 12 years. The narrative of his odyssey was published in 1853, a year after Northrup’s release.

The movie is drenched with historical details, emotional complexity, and harsh realities that govern the everyday comings and goings of regular slaves. And it can be a draining experience to watch it. Our December 17 discussion will be led by **Dr. Bob Atwell**, past national president of the Association of Black Psychologists and a regular participant in our conversations. We hope you will come be a part of the debriefing about the film and the discussion about how so many elements of those days impact us now.

November 2013 – The Stress of Being Invisible

One consequence of racism is that we are conditioned to not really see each other. It is as if the genes that naturally control empathy got switched off. In the November discussion we will explore this through the poetry of our friend Norma Johnson, a healer, inspirationalist and visionary consultant. Norma will share with us her *Poem for My White Friends: “I Didn’t Tell You.”* Then we will discuss and unpack its many dimensions.

Norma says, “It seems that the more we talk about race, the more we keep uncovering about ourselves, each other and our society. This poem was a cry from my heart to speak to a deeper level to my white friends and to attempt to relay to them, some of the difference in the way our lives play out. I was honored to be able to present this poem at the 2013 White Privilege Conference in Seattle earlier this year. It seems my poem created quite a stir. Since then, diversity facilitators, educators and individuals have been using this poem to teach and to share with others. I’m grateful it is creating an atmosphere for reflection and discussion about race for so many people.”

A copy of “I Didn’t Tell You” is attached to this message. We ask that you print it and bring it to the discussion so that you can make notes during the discussion. And here is a link to Intersections Radio interview and poem presentation. During this half hour show there’s a dialogue with Dr. Eddie Moore, Jr., Dr. Dena Samuels and Daryl Miller about microaggressions, and a guest poetry reading by Norma Johnson.

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/intersectionsradio/2011/10/11/intersections-radio-microaggressions>

October 2013 – Educating Young Men of Color

From our discussion last month about Trayvon Martin’s shooting, we have a heightened awareness of the vulnerability of young men of color in our society. With school to prison pipelines, over policing, gang violence, broken homes, and limited economic



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opportunities, these young men are like an endangered species. But that's not the only story to be told. There are so many places where young men of color are being nurtured.

We are pleased to have as our guest this month Dedrick Sims, Executive Director and founder of the Sims-Fayola International Academy. The school's mission is to graduate globally competent, college-ready males who possess the knowledge, skills and habits of mind necessary to succeed and contribute in the 21st Century global environment.

Mr. Sims will give us insights from his extensive background in education on ways to successfully teach children of color students, especially boys, in our current environment. He will help us understand the importance of cultural connections and messages to teaching children of color. And he will share with us some lessons he has learned that can and should be more broadly applied in all schools.

Think about what you see as the true purpose of education and join us for a stimulating evening of conversation.

September 2013 – Justice in the Age of Trayvon Martin

During this summer so many significant events have happened that directly connect to the Second Tuesday Race Forum topics we explore. The Supreme Court issues a ruling that deeply affects the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The country celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. And a jury acquitted George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin. Our September discussion will be about the state of justice at this point in America.

It seems that events are swirling in many directions. A federal judge has ruled that New York's stop-and-frisk tactics are unconstitutional. The Justice Department has made adjustments to the sentencing disparities for crack and powdered cocaine. The Attorney General has announced a scaled-back use of mandatory minimum drug sentences for "low-level, nonviolent" drug offenders. And he has set parameters for the federal government not to interfere with state laws legalizing the use of marijuana.

Does any of this represent a fundamental shift about arbitrary imprisonment in the United States? What are the challenges that remain to create a just society?

July and August 2013 – summer break, no meetings

June 2013 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2013 – Generations Apart: Black Women's Attitudes about Race and Social Justice



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The leader of our April meeting will be Dr. Carolyn Love. She recently completed a study on racial attitudes of black women from different generations. Here are her thoughts about the discussion:

Since the beginning of slavery in the United States, black women have been actively involved in the creation and formation of black civil society. The abolitionist, civil rights and black women's club movements challenged white supremacy and created institutions that fought for political, social, and economic justice. Historically, black women have engaged in the struggle for group survival while at the same time fighting for institutional transformation to eliminate or change discriminatory policies, practices, and procedures. With each passing generation black women have led efforts of resistance against racial discrimination, class exploitation, and gender bias.

However, with each passing generation the construct and meaning of race has changed. Immigration, color-blind ideology, post-racial, and post-civil rights attitudes influence the meaning and relevance of race. While some black women have moved into the middle class and beyond, the majority of black women remain poor and the objects of gender discrimination. The purpose of this study was to examine how race influenced the activities of black women from three different generations. Given black women's role in the creation of black civil society, I wanted to know what were the contemporary attitudes about race held by black women - - and how relevant was race in their role as leaders of social justice issues?

We will dialogue about the results of the study and your impressions of the "younger" generation and their commitment to social justice work.

I would ask that you think about these three questions in preparation for our discussion.

1. What are your thoughts about how the Gen-X and Millennial generations view race?
2. How committed to social justice work do you believe the Gen-Xers and Millennials to be?
3. If you had the opportunity to talk to someone in the younger generation (Gen-X or Millennial) what would you tell them as it pertains to the struggle for civil rights?

April 2013 – Canceled due to snow storm

March 2013 – The Legacies of Slavery – Part 2

Last month we identified numerous customs, behaviors and institutions that still exist which were used to maintain slavery. This discussion this month we will continue and add to the array of legacies that need to be addressed if we hope to transform society.

Here is a sample of items that were discussed in February.

- Slavery laid the foundation for the modern international economic system.



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- Africans' economic skills were a leading reason for their enslavement.
- The founding Constitution of the United States was a slavery document, giving Southern states an incentive to adopt it by defining captured Africans as three-fifths of a person for purposes of apportionment in order to give the South greater voting influence.
- The Second Amendment was part of the incentive to get Southern States to adopt the Constitution. State militias functioned as slave patrols, and the South feared that a Federal government would not allocate military resources to put down slave rebellions.
- The educational system functions like a caste system which is becoming increasingly more segregated, teaches conformity, and destroys creativity in most students.
- The brutalization and psychological torture of slaves was designed to ensure that plantations stayed in the black financially.
- There has been a lasting psychological damage to African Americans. While hating the oppressor, many have taken on the oppressor's ways towards others. This is internalized oppression.
- Slaves were treated as commodities because they were considered property. Consumerism now treats everyone as a commodity.
- The wealth gap between whites and blacks, the result of slavery and government policies, has yet to be closed. In fact it continues to grow wider, 20 to 1.
- In celebrating the election of a black president we affirm old distinctions, the one drop rule, the foundation of the slave system in America.
- Religious settlers came to find freedom for themselves and immediately took it from the Native Americans and created slavery of Africans. Christianity has been a major tool of capitalists for creating systems of domination and oppression.
- Slavery was not totally abolished by the Thirteenth Amendment. It is still legal as punishment for crimes.
- The system of mass incarceration has its roots in the genesis of the prison system at the end of the Civil War, and as accelerated by the Republican Southern Strategy.

February 2013 – The Legacies of Slavery – Part 1

In February we start the first of a two month discussion to identify the legacies of slavery that still exist today. Michelle Alexander says in *The New Jim Crow*, "It may be impossible to overstate the significance of race in defining the basic structure of American society."

Tom DeWolf and Sharon Morgan write in *Gather at the Table*, "The legacy of slavery is a combination of historical, cultural, and structural trauma that continues to touch everyone in American society today. Historical trauma is passed on generationally when harm that happens to a group of people has not been addressed and repaired to the degree possible. Cultural trauma results when attempts are made to eradicate all or a part of a



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culture or people. Structural trauma is inflicted when systems and laws maintain the injustices and inequities of the past.”

The objective of February’s conversation will be to identify part of the vast array of customs, behaviors and institutions that still exist which were used to maintain slavery. These will be specifics that will provide new insights as we remember the 150th anniversary of Civil War events.

January 2013 –Stories of Race in the Family

The January topic takes a look at the early stories about race we learned from our families. Humans use stories to connect with each other and help us explain who we are. They can also be used to identify and exclude “the other.” When did you begin to suspect that the stories you learned about race were not entirely accurate? What impact did this narrative have on you? What is the story you would tell now?

This discussion is a precursor to the visit from Tom DeWolf (*Traces of the Trade*) and Sharon Morgan (founder of OurBlackAncestry.com) later this month. They recently released their book “*Gather at the Table: The Healing Journey of a Daughter of Slavery and a Son of the Slave Trade.*” Tom and Sharon speak candidly about racism and the unhealed wounds of slavery. Committing to cross the threshold of each other’s personal space, they meet and spend time with one another’s families and friends. Over a three year period, the pair traveled thousands of miles through 21 states in the Deep South, Midwest, and North, to visit ancestral towns, cemeteries, plantations and antebellum mansions, working towards healing the wounds of racism.

Save the dates for these two public presentations:

Tuesday, January 29 at 7 PM
University of Denver, Craig Hall

Wednesday, January 30 at 7 PM
Park Hill United Methodist Church
With a response from Dr. Vincent Harding
Meet the authors at 6:30

Also, you should have received a separate message that our facilitator, Harold Fields, will receive a 2013 Martin Luther King Jr Humanitarian Award. The award will be made during a community reception and concert by the Colorado Symphony Orchestra that is held annually to celebrate Dr King's life and work, on Tuesday, January 15th, 2013 at Boettcher Concert Hall in the Denver Performing Arts Complex. The concert and awards ceremony will be preceded by a buffet in the lobby of the Boettcher Concert Hall.

December 2012 – Meeting canceled



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The evening of our regularly scheduled meeting for December, the second Tuesday, December 11, is an unusually busy one at Park Hill United Methodist Church, including the East High School Music Concert. The church and parking will be very crowded. Rather than reschedule to another evening, we have decided to CANCEL our meeting for December.

We will miss being together, but think this is the best alternative. We will have another message soon with our plans for January.

November 2012 – The Impact of Changing Demographics on Race Relations in America

In the discussion this month we will take a look at how the demographics of the country have changed so dramatically since its creation, especially in the last two decades. What are the roots of the fear and optimism that were reflected in the just-finished election? Are the markers of racism used during the official time of segregation still valid when People of Color are on track for becoming the majority? What's on the horizon for helping America realize its dream?

For additional thoughts please take a look at comments on “Making America America” by Dr. Vincent Harding at

http://cdf.childrensdefense.org/site/MessageViewer?em_id=29821.0&dlv_id=28521

October 2012 – Is It Always About Race?

It often happens that when the racial aspects of a situation are discussed, there will be people who feel like a “race card” is being played. In our sessions we have explored the reality that race is part of the fabric of institutional life in our culture, and has become hidden to many. But is it the only or primary factor of domination that needs to be addressed?

The October discussion will open with a video discussion between Bill Moyers and Angela Glover Blackwell. Blackwell has spent her adult life advocating practical ways to fulfill America's promise of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” for all. Now, with our middle class struggling, poverty rising, and inequality growing, the founder and chief executive officer of PolicyLink, an influential research center, finds reasons for hope in the face of these hard realities. She sees optimism in the fact that so many of these issues are on the table at the same time.

We will look at the concept of “intersectionality” and the possibilities it brings to help us build a better future.

September 2012 – Twice as Good, Half as Black



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The September discussion will take a look at the flood of race baiting messages and attacks that have been pervasive in the current election campaigns. Racial and cultural clues are being invoked, both subtle and blatant. We see a wholesale abandonment of truth in political ads.

Many generations of black parents have told their children that to be accepted and successful in American they have to be twice as good as the whites they are competing with. These parents have been updating this advice to include lectures on appearing to be as nonthreatening as possible. How has that worked out at the personal level, national level, and political sphere? Is it enough in this culture?

What is really happening here? Is this business as usual? What are the dire consequences for America? Join us for our September “catch up” discussion.

July and August 2012 – summer break, no meetings

June 2012 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2012 – The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in America

John Riley is currently the Coalition Coordinator for the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition. Previously he served as the President of the CCJRC Board of Directors. This work at CCJRC culminates over 30 years of public service in Colorado Youth Corrections and related non-profit work. John is committed to reducing the use of mass incarceration in Colorado. John's simple goal is to shrink the size of Colorado criminal justice systems and move the savings to treatment, K-12, and college/vocational programming.

Another of our members, **Lisa Cisneros**, will co-present with John. Lisa is the Executive Director of Coloradans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. is instrumental in day to day operations and the organization of the group's political influence. With ten years' experience working as a paralegal for criminal defense, and extensive knowledge of both the court and political systems, Lisa continues to work tirelessly on high profile death penalty cases.

This topic was conceived by our planning committee to have more conversation on the social and institutional dynamics – i.e., how the system works – following up on our previous conversation about Michelle Alexander's book "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness". These two presenters will be capable moderators for our conversation.

April 2012 – Immigration, Part 2



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Our plan for this meeting is to continue our conversation from last month around the "Immigration Issue". We are hosting guests from the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition to follow-up. Julie Gonzales who is a lead organizer there will bring along some folks who can tell us about how the immigration laws and enforcement have impacted their lives. After their panel members have told their stories, we will have some time for conversation.

Those of us who were at last month's meeting did learn a lot about ourselves and got some information in this area. We have a chance this month to go deeper on the issues and our personal response to them.

March 2012 – Immigration, Part 1

Our monthly meeting for March is next Tuesday the 13th. Our plan for this meeting is to delve into our beliefs, feelings and thoughts around the "Immigration Issue".

We will share these among everyone who is attending using a circle conversation where everyone takes a turn saying what they want to say for a short period of time while everyone else listens. We will scribe notes on what each person said on flip charts so that when we have completed the circle we will all be able to see the sum of all the comments. If there is time then we will open the conversations for follow-up comments and dialog.

We are using this style of meeting give each and every person a chance to talk and see what our collective ideas are. We do not hope to get to any kind of consensus, but only to give us all lots to think about. So none of us has to try and convince everyone else, and each of us can say what they want to.

Next month we will host guests from the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition to follow-up. Julie Gonzales who is a lead organizer there will bring along some folks who can tell us about how the immigration laws and enforcement have impacted their lives. So, our conversation this month will prepare us to next month's meeting.

February 2012 – A Nigerian Immigration Experience

On Tuesday, February 14th, members of the Park Hill United Methodist Church Nigerian community will be joining us. They will be sharing their immigration and assimilation experiences, and suggesting ways that we might be helpful during this election year, 2012. We know that immigration laws will be on 'the agenda' for candidates.

On a biennial schedule, (every other year), the Nigerian community provides a special Worship experience for the congregation.

January 2012 – Attended Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award Ceremony



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December 2011 – Warmth of Other Suns

Those members who attended the presentation/conversation last week with Isabel Wilkerson will lead us as a panel to talk about the event and her book *The Warmth of Others Suns, the Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

Won't you please join us, and bring your stories of how your family was involved in or affected by the great migration.

November 2011 – Freedom Riders Film

We have two special guests this month. Facing History Program Associate, Helen Frazier and Acting Director, Kristina Drinkwine will facilitate an interactive (partial) screening of the PBS American Experience film, *Freedom Riders*. In its entirety, the documentary is nearly 2 hours long. We will clip-out some sections of the film and take advantage of opportunities to share our thoughts that come up.

We encourage you to share the film with your families -- you can watch the film online from the PBS website. On November 8th, we want to experience the richness all our voices bring to this important part of American history. For those of us who remember that summer, it will bring up memories of one of the seminal episodes of the Civil Rights movement. For those of us who are younger, this will be a opportunity to learn some important history in a very special way.

October 2011 – What's hard and what's good about talking about Racism

The second fall season meeting of the TC Race Group will be held tomorrow, October 11, at 7 PM in the downstairs meeting room at Park Hill United Methodist Church. And of course you are invited!

Barbara Nichols and Clietta Terry will moderate our discussion on the following:

What's hard and what's good about talking about racism? Why?

This question for our discussion is posed by Lee Muh Wah in his new book, "Let's Get Real".

September 2011 – Who Do You Assume I Am?

As you may know Harold Fields is taking a much deserved sabbatical from his leadership of the TC Race Group for a year. A planning committee of volunteers met in August and intends to provide the leadership for the group going forward. So, this email is coming to you from an unfamiliar email address, an account we have set up at Google Mail to keep the communication going. We have also planned an interesting topic for the first fall meeting, and hope for cool weather and your vigorous participation after a great summer to make for a valuable meeting.



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Our topic for the meeting is the question, “Who do you assume I am?” We want share our stories of navigating the ins and outs of racial identity as a way of understanding better the realities of racism in America. We will talk about our own racial identity and about our perceptions, and their accuracy, of folks we know. To get your juices up for this topic, have a look at the attached article from the New York Times from several weeks ago, “Preconceptions”, by Toure.

Harold Fields Sabbatical starts Sept. 2011

July and August 2011 – summer break, no meetings

June 2011 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

After we have eaten we will have a program. Performance artist **Lucifury** will present a poem he is writing especially for Juneteenth. And, **Anneliese Gretsich** will tell us about her anti-racism organizing efforts at Colgate University where she is attending, that she started in response to some ugly expressions of racism on campus. We also invite those of you who also want to share your spirit in celebration of Juneteenth to "take the stage".

May 2011 – Lessons Learned

There are two months to go before the end of this season’s discussions. And it also brings me personally to the point where I am going to take a long-needed sabbatical. It is time for me to reflect, do research, and write about what I have learned and discovered on this journey.

Let’s use the May discussion to review and explore what you feel you have found out about race and its impact on culture, economics, politics, religion, and relationships. Over the years we have looked at so many areas and developed a language to talk about it. This is a perfect time to celebrate where we’ve been and encourage each other.

To stimulate your thinking I want to share two items with you. The first is an article published on huffingtonpost.com April 27th, “Loudly Against the Language of Racism.” You can find it at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lorraine-devon-wilke/loudly-against-the-langua_b_852920.html

Next, I am including some quotes from the late Manning Marable. His most recent book, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*, has opened up quite a bit of discussion for those interested in knowing more about the history of the Civil Rights movement.

April 2011 – Is Sex Discrimination Still a Problem?



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Arguments were made last month at the Supreme Court about the largest sex discrimination suit in the workplace. The heart of the case is about women who say they've consistently received fewer promotions and less pay than their male colleagues. Do you feel that we are still dealing with substantial double standards and misogyny in our culture? Or have women reached the tipping point in the long fight over equal pay for equal work? Come share your experiences and perspective.

March 2011 – Lessons and Insights from the Michelle Alexander Events

February 2011 – Continuing the Conversation

Last month we had a deep conversation where we looked at a real-life situation from a variety of perspectives. We will continue the theme of finding a way to keep someone engaged in a conversation about race in a supposedly post-racial world.

January 2011 – Race R Us

Happy New Year everyone! Art Linkletter used to have a popular TV show that had a feature called “Kids Say the Darndest Things.” It is still true that people say the darndest things, especially when it comes to race. It's fairly common these days that racial attitudes are expressed in coded and very subtle ways. Sometimes people repeat things they have heard others saying without thinking about it. The discussion this month will be a skill building session where we identify some of the common expressions that have racial subtexts and develop strategies for how to engage others at a deeper and meaningful level.

December 2010 – How the Founding Fathers Planted and Cultivated the Seeds of Racism in the American Ethos

The Declaration of Independence, The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights compose the cornerstone of America. Each proclaims Natural Rights. Each declares all men equal. With this enlightened philosophy undergirding the American ethos, how did race enter the picture? Why did the Founding Fathers deny black people inclusion? How did the Founding Fathers rationalize their actions? How was black exclusion achieved? What ramifications still exist in contemporary America?

During the evening discussion, pertinent contents from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution will be reviewed. Also a peek into the backgrounds of some of the Founding Fathers will be explored to trace sources of present racial attitudes and practices.

Our special guests and presenters will be the members of The Write Group: Jane Taylor, Wallace Tollette, and Gwen Scott. These ideas come from their recently published book – *“Blacks Through the ‘Ayes’ of Our American Presidents.”*



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November 2010 – What Does Healing Look Like?

The American society has evolved to extremely adversarial in so many aspects. An election often is framed in such negative terms that it not only demonizes candidates from different parties, but attempts to exploit differences in ethnic groups, religion, sexuality, income, and place of origin. How much deeper do the seeds of mistrust and fear go as a result of these periodic rituals? Can the fabric of society endure the cumulative effect of this kind of stress?

In the November discussion Dr. Vincent Harding will lead us as we consider what healing looks like. What do we need to do to heal as individuals, groups, communities, cultures, and as a democratic society? Does healing reset us to a previous condition or move us to a different place? Dr. Harding is an historian, author, activist, and friend who has participated in movements for compassionate justice and nonviolent social change since the late 1950s. He is professor emeritus of Religion & Social Transformation at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. In collaboration with his late wife, Rosemarie Freney Harding, Vincent was deeply involved in the life and work of what he chooses to call The Southern Freedom Movement. In that setting the Harding's worked closely with Martin Luther, King Jr. and other Movement leaders.

To stimulate our thinking for this discussion, Dr. Harding would like for us to read a recent essay of his, "Midwifing a New America." It is a challenging metaphor for the work that we can engage in now and in the future. Please find it at this link:

<http://boggsblog.org/2008/11/09/midwifing-a-new-america/>

October 2010 – How Race Benefitted the Founding of America

This is not an easy concept to wrap your mind around. Yet race is an essential element to the economic success of the fledgling nation. The October meeting will take a look at the evolution of how colonial America dealt with the moral contradiction of "all men are created equal" and the centrality of slavery to its economy. We will view part of the PBS documentary "Race: The Power of an Illusion" and focus on the stories Americans invented to rationalize holding these opposing ideas at the same time.

This month will find us preparing for another election that continues to deal with the lingering effects of this contradiction. In November we will continue the discussion by getting some perspective from Dr. Vincent Harding.

September 2010 – End of Summer Review

It never fails that so much has happened in the country during our summer breaks. This year is no exception. Since we last got together there have been controversies over Arizona SB 1070, Dr. Laura's words, The Muslim Mosque in New York, Shirley Sherrod's firing, Glenn Beck's rally, the Oscar Grant trial, and the court ruling on



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Proposition 8 in California. Just this week I even heard of a Christian group in Florida planning to burn copies of the Quran.

What is really happening here? Is this business as usual? Is there a pattern that we should identify? Join us for our September “catch up” discussion. This will be a very interesting year!

July and August 2010 – summer break, no meetings

June 2010 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2010 – The New Jim Crow

We will examine the ideas in Michelle Alexander’s book, “*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.” As the United States celebrates the nation’s “triumph over race” with the election of Barack Obama, the majority of young black men in major cities are locked behind bars or labeled felons for life. Jim Crow laws were wiped off the books decades ago, but today an astounding percentage of the African American community is warehoused in prisons or trapped in a permanent, second-class status – much like their grandparents before them, who lived under an explicit system of control. Alexander argues that we have not ended racial caste in America. We have simply redesigned it.

April 2010 – Emotional Aspects of Discussing Race – Part 2

This month will be a continuation of our previous look at the role emotions play in developing, shaping, and changing racial attitudes. We will see clips from the video “*The Way Home*,” which is the prequel to last month’s video. We will hear from a group of 64 women (8 of them we saw last month) who came together to share their experiences of oppression through the lens of race.

One reviewer said, “This work goes beyond a basic awareness of racism to explore the subtle, rarely acknowledged roots of self-hatred and lack of understanding among even the most progressive people.”

March 2010 – Emotional Aspects of Discussing Race

Our discussion will use the video “*Light in the Shadows*” as the focal point. The video presents a frank talk about race among 10 women. They are of Indigenous, African, Arab, European, Jewish, Asian, Latina and mixed race descent. With clear language, open hearts, and a willingness to engage – even when it gets hard – these women travel over roads that show why valuable discourse on race is so often laden with emotion, distrust, and misunderstanding. They demonstrate the gift of honesty.



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February 2010 – Developments in Brain Science Impacting Our Understanding of Race

Neuroscientists are rapidly learning more about the brain. How does cognitive science deepen our understanding of the processes of individual and societal transformation? During this session we will consider recent findings about how the brain functions and how this information can inform efforts to promote racial equity.

January 2010 – Wearing Hijab

In the Western world we don't always get accurate information about Islam. It is easy to hold on to myths about the faith, the culture, and people who follow it. Our perceptions are shaped by media and too often fear. The discussion will include the screening a film produced by Dr. Mary Ann Watson.

December 2009 – Making Choices Within “The Club” Membership

What happens once membership in The (Race) Club is no longer “invisible” and a growing awareness of its actuality permeates one's thoughts and perceptions of the world they have been functioning in all their life? How do we reinvent who we are from that point forward? How do we recreate our positions and our perceptions of ourselves within the society? What are the blocks, fears and rewards of changing membership status?

Meredith Dabbert and Norma Johnson will facilitate our discussion for December.

November 2009 – Membership in the Club, continued (planned)

November 2009 – Ft. Hood Shootings and Implications for Muslim Americans (actual)

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month's Starpower simulation. This exercise was probably the most interactive and energetic session we have ever had. It gave us an experiential, gut-level and powerful awareness of stratified societies. The exercise gave us valuable insights to discuss in depth the topic originally planned for last month, “Membership in the Club.” We will explore how systems of inequality are maintained by looking at the formal and informal mechanisms of social control.

October 2009 – Membership in the Club

In a hierarchical society social, religious, educational and ethnic organizations maintain participation on the basis of the “in group” and the “other.” Essentially they are like joining a club with rules and standards of behavior. For the October meeting we will explore the dynamics of participating in the “Race Club.” What must you do to maintain good standing in the club? How are the rules enforced? Can you be expelled? Are the rules the same for everyone?



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September 2009 – Teachable Moments

I hope you have had a pleasant summer during our break. Since we last met it seems like there has been quite an increase in turmoil, controversy, and division. We've also seen a number of "teachable moments" that present opportunities for us to learn from each other. The question is whether the country has taken advantage of these moments or handled them with gestures that avoid taking us to a transformative place. We will revisit some of these incidents and look at them in depth.

July and August 2009 – summer break, no meetings

June 2009 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2009 – Day to Day Survival

For the May discussion we will focus on situations that you face in everyday life or questions you would like to raise for the group. It will be an opportunity to get feedback and valuable insights from the collective wisdom and experiences of people who consciously think about race and its impact on our lives.

It's your agenda. Please bring your questions and ideas.

April 2009 – Defining Post-Racial America

Is a post-racial America an imaginary country? The April discussion will focus on the measurements or yardstick we can use to identify progress toward this goal. We will discuss our view of the necessary steps left to achieve the goals that have been elusive, but appear to be on the horizon.

March 2009 – Screening Traces of the Trade and Author Visit

The March meeting will be a two part event. First we will have a public screening of the documentary "Traces of the Trade." This is the story describing how descendants of the DeWolf family discovered they were part of the largest slave trading dynasty in American history. One of our former members, Holly Fulton who used to live in Denver, is a member of this family and is part of the documentary.

Part 2 will be the following Saturday morning as a combined event with the Johnson Lecture Series. Thomas DeWolf will be here to discuss his part of the Traces journey and explore the complicated impact of the hidden history of the slave trade, how historic traumas of the past continue to reverberate today, and the need for honest dialogue within our nation, a nation, he describes as "desperate and ready for healing."

February 2009 – Evolving Racialized Images in the Media



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Movies and TV shows are big business in America. When exported around the world, they may be the only images of people of color some countries get. In our February meeting we will explore some of the stereotypes and archetypes that have been used as formulas for whites and people of color in the media. We will take a look at messages these images convey, the complexities they represent, how they are changing, and what we can do to make them better.

Joining us in the conversation will be filmmaker/director Donnie Betts and Lisa Kennedy, *Denver Post* film critic. They have unique perspectives and experiences to share with us.

January 2009 – Defining an Ally: How Can We Support Each Other?

When building relationships we look for people who can say, “I’ve got your back.” January’s topic takes a look at how we build support for individuals and groups. What does a white ally do or say? What does a white ally NOT do or say? How can People of Color be allies for whites? Come discuss these important questions for coalition building.

December 2008 – You Are Here. Now, where’s that?

We have all been in a large mall or shopping center and seen the colorful maps containing the “X” that says “You are here.” That’s when you look around to figure out where “here” is and get oriented so you can move on.

We have the same challenge when it comes to figuring out the racial landscape. Many things have changed. Much remains the same. The country is on the move. Remarkable new milestones have been reached. How do we make sense of the important achievements that have been made with its relationship to the history and structural nature of racism in our culture? This month we want to create an updated analysis of the racial environment as a way of supporting continued progress.

November 2008 – The Election of a New President

At the time this announcement is written, people all across the nation are standing in line to vote for the next president, local offices, and ballot issues. We don’t know the final outcome, but are sure that whatever happens, the results will be historic.

I have heard a number of people fear that this will be the end of the America they knew. Others are hopeful that the election will represent a big step in the fulfillment of a long overdue promise of becoming the America we hoped for.

I hope you will come with your thoughts on what you would like to see happen in this country as a result of this election. What are the challenges for bringing the country together after such a long and difficult campaign? What have you experienced during this campaign?



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October 2008 – How the Wealth Was Won

Recent reports confirm what we already know: the wealth gap between blacks and whites grows dramatically. Misery indices in the Black community -- poor and useless educational preparation, mass unemployment, low-quality housing stock, disintegrating communities, and failing families -- are rising.

This month we will critically examine “individualist” explanations for wealth inequality, and look at its historical roots. We will do an interactive exercise that will help us develop a structural analysis for some of today’s current conditions.

September 2008 – Defining Patriotism

Since we last got together the country, and especially Denver, has come alive with political activity. We will spend some time reflecting on recent election news.

This is also a time when thoughts of patriotism are very strong for so many people. It is not clear that patriotism means the same thing in all segments of society. For some reason, black people’s patriotism is often suspect and under a microscope. Recent examples are the challenge to Barak Obama’s patriotism over a flag pin, or Michelle Obama’s comment about being “really Proud” of her country, or locally, Rene Marie’s performance. Yet Jesse Helms, former North Carolina Senator, died an unrepentant segregationist, and was called a patriot.

So how do you define patriotism? Does one size fit all?

July and August 2008 – summer break, no meetings

June 2008 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2008 – The National Reaction to Rev. Jeremiah Wright

Stephen Stills in his song “For What It’s Worth,” says “Something’s happening here. What it is ain’t exactly clear. . . Stop, children. What’s that sound? Everybody look at what’s going down.”

The current controversy over the snippets taken from Jeremiah Wright’s sermons reveals a lot about America. How can we get to the substance behind the sizzle? How is it that centuries of truth and history can be ignored, even turned upside down? Is this another example of how our experiences shape such different understanding of events? Are there generational perspectives that we don’t understand? What exactly is going on here beyond the political theater?



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This month we will take some time to explore more about the hidden world of race as exposed by this controversy. Please take a look at Bill Moyers' reflection a week after his interview with Rev. Wright was broadcast where he asks the question, Was it really what Jeremiah Wright said, or was it because he's black?

April 2008 – How Do We Talk About Race in America & Obama's Race Speech

Since our last meeting we have heard Barack Obama give one of the most significant speeches by a politician in decades. Many of you expressed an interest in discussing the speech and the storm that surrounds it.

What did you think of the speech? Did it open up a national space for dialogue? Are people predisposed to a set of racial beliefs that can change? What are the ways we talk about race in public and in private?

March 2008 – Complexities of Repair: “Banished”

Our discussions have highlighted the need to repair the injustices that have been perpetrated on People of Color in this society. Some of these are historical, and some continue to happen. Some injustices are structural, and others are at a personal level.

But the solutions are not simple or obvious. The long-term impact of racism has a very complex impact on everybody in the country. We will look at excerpts from the documentary “Banished” to explore some of the issues that get raised when we attempt to repair historical wrongs. This program tells the story of three counties that violently expelled African American families from their towns a century ago – and the descendants that return to deal with this history.

February 2008 – Sundance Review / White Redemption

This month I want to share with everyone the highlights of the Sundance Film Festival where *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* was premiered on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This was followed by a week of activities in Denver with Thomas DeWolf, author of the companion *Inheriting the Trade*. Many of you were present at the presentation and book signing on the 31st. We will talk about your impressions and insights Tom DeWolf shared with us.

In the second half of the evening we will look at a discussion Bill Moyers had with Shelby Steele in January. Last month Dr. Vincent Harding encouraged us to hold Barack Obama accountable as he seeks to bring a torn nation together. Shelby Steele sees Obama as a symbol of redemption for whites, as a means of absolution from our troubled racial past. He raises a series of ideas that deserve critical review and analysis.

January 2008 – Dr. Vincent Harding: Catching Up with Martin Luther King Jr.



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The American culture loves heroes, putting them on pedestals and enshrining bumper sticker images of their memories. As we approach the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, the culture thinks he is safely dead. But that is not true for our January guest Dr. Vincent Harding, founder of The Veterans of Hope Project at Iliff. King collaborated with Dr. Harding to write the famous Riverside Church speech calling the nation into consciousness about the Viet Nam War.

Dr. Harding will challenge us to see King as a messenger for unfinished business, far from the idea that the battle for Civil Rights is over. In his newest book of essays, *Is America Possible?*, Dr. Harding says that the most authentic American dream is of a nation that does not yet exist. He encourages us to be audacious and creative in our thinking about what it takes to catch up with King.

Dr. Harding says he is "obsessed with our nation's need for more practice in the healing art of democratic conversation." He invites us to join him in the conversation next month, resisting the temptation to be only an audience, practicing the healing.

December 2007 – More stories

In our December meeting we will continue a discussion about "roots." There are two kinds of roots. One is the foundation for establishing the race group 10 years ago – telling the stories that help us understand each other. We have been fortunate to add many new voices to our meetings recently. And that means we need to take time periodically to share our personal stories and racial histories. This is a part of the process that has grounded our group and made it possible for us to be respectful to each other and really hear each other.

The other focus on roots will be to continue the review of the "**Historical Development of Institutional Racism**" paper written by Robette Ann Dias. This is a critical review of the pattern of legislation and government actions that have supported racism and supremacy throughout the history of the United States. It connects the dots that are necessary for us to see if we are going to seriously devise strategies for repairing and healing the systems that affect us all. I hope you will have time to read more of the document we sent you last month.

November 2007 – It's Not Over Yet – the Historical Development of Institutional Racism

The November discussion will be focused on a look at the history of how institutional racism has developed and continues to be maintained. This is one of the most powerful papers I have ever seen that make it possible to connect the dots and see the larger pattern that is enshrined in the culture. It has been said that in order to see the truth you must also see the lie that hides it.



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And to quote Dr. Phil, “the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.” So this will be a critical analysis that’s a necessary step to make changes on our way to wholeness.

I hope you will take some time to read as much of the attached working paper as possible before the meeting. There is a reference at the bottom of page 4 to an accompanying chart. It is the last page of the document. You will find it very helpful to pull this chart out and keep it handy as you read the document.

October 2007 – The Holographic Nature of Supremacy

The theories of quantum physics teach us about the undivided wholeness of all things. For example, every portion of a hologram contains the image of the whole. This month we will use these ideas to consider how patterns of supremacy and dominance are reinforced in aspects of daily life.

September 2007 – The Race Changing Room

For several years we have discussed a wide variety of issues around race and society. Hopefully these discussions have given us the ability to recognize racism, disparity, and domination systems.

This season we will focus on how to **repair** the damage that has been done by generations of inequality. We will spend time creating a common vision about liberation and the future we want. This will involve work sessions where we will create tools to help us make the next steps in reaching this goal.

So put your thinking caps on. What’s your vision? How do we get there? What are the practical steps along the way?

July and August 2007 – summer break, no meetings

June 2007 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2007 – White Privilege Conference Reports

There were 14 of us associated with our discussions who attended parts or all of the White Privilege Conference from April 18 – 21. It was like being on steroids to be able to interact with the 1,100 people who came, including so many who are notables in the work of anti-racism. This month many who attended will share and talk about their experiences in Colorado Springs.

Come and get a sense of the exciting and fresh perspectives that motivated and moved conference attendees.



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April 2007 – The Levels of Racism

For the April meeting we will look at 3 different levels of racism and how they relate to each other. These levels are, personal, internalized, and institutional. Often people in our society do not make a distinction between them. And this makes it difficult to understand how racism works and how all of us are affected by it.

Please read the attached allegory which provides some insights about this cultural reality.
Levels of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and a Gardner's Tale

March 2007 – A Racial Check Up: Clara Villarosa Visits

For the March meeting we will have the pleasure of having Clara Villarosa with us. She was the founder of this racial dialogue along with Joyce Meskis almost a decade ago. After leaving Denver she moved to New York and founded her second Hue Man Bookstore in the heart of Harlem. Clara will share with us her view of the state of race relations in New York.

In recent months there has been a troubling stream of racist banter by public figures. It is becoming more common for bigoted gaffs to be dealt with by some kind of “rehab.” At the same time there is evidence that much more harmful things are being said behind closed doors. What’s going on? Does this signal a new era of insecurity and bigotry? Or is it a consequence of not dealing with our entrenched racial history?

Come participate in this racial “check up” to gauge where we are making progress, and where we are not – both locally and nationally.

February 2007 – White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversation

This month we will take a look at the definition of privilege and how it shows up in everyday life. This does not apply solely to racial categories. This discussion should expose some of the perks and serious advantages that come from privilege, and establish some strategies for how to leverage privilege to benefit those who do not have it.

January 2007 – Obamamania: What’s the Significance of His Popularity?

Senator Barack Obama is enjoying an amazing amount of popularity these days as people try to encourage him to run for President. Is he ready? Is America ready for a leader who is not a white male? What needs to happen to make the country ready? What’s behind his popularity?

We will take a look at the reaction to Sen. Obama and see what story it tells us about America.



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December 2006 – Politics and Psychology of Disposability: Waging a War On (Of) Terror, Dr. Dahlia Wasfi

The December race group discussion continues the theme of The Politics and Psychology of Disposability. The topic is “Waging a War on Terror.”

655,000 innocent people dead: That is the conclusion of the latest cluster sample survey published in the Lancet this past October. Though the methods were scientifically sound, the results were dismissed as inaccurate. What if 655,000 Americans had been murdered? What if the dead were primarily Christians? or white? or spoke English? What if the dead were people we could identify with? Would it be genocide? What have we learned?

Our guest is Dr. Dahlia Wasfi, a nationally known speaker and activist. Born in the United States to an American Jewish mother and an Iraqi Muslim father, she lived in Iraq as a child, returning to the U.S. at age 5. She graduated from Swarthmore College with a B.A. in Biology in 1993 and earned her medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1997. Dr. Wasfi has made two trips to Iraq since the 2003 "Shock and Awe" invasion to visit her extended family. She returned from a three month stay in Basrah in March 2006. On April 27th of this year, she testified at a Congressional Forum to provide her eyewitness account of life in Iraq. Based on her experiences, Dr. Wasfi speaks out against the negative impact of the U.S. invasion and the need to end the occupation.

November 2006 – Politics and Psychology of Disposability: Gov. Richard Lamm’s speech on How to Destroy America

The November Race Group discussion will be a continuation of the theme on The Politics and Psychology of Disposability. This month we will discuss a speech given by former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm, “I Have a Plan to Destroy America.” Gov. Lamm has given a number of thought provoking talks. This one has been widely circulated on the Internet. Take a look at the speech included in this message and see how you feel about his points. We will look for the deep values behind this way of thinking. Is it true that the interests of the non-white minorities are a threat to America? Which America?

October 2006 – Politics and Psychology of Disposability: Prison system of Colorado

Our October Race Group discussion will be a continuation of the theme on The Politics and Psychology of Disposability. This month we will look at the nature of the prison system in Colorado. Increasingly it has become the institution that has to deal with the social problems we have pushed to the side. How does the dramatic growth of this system reflect our values and connections with each other?



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Christie Donner and members of the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition will be present to give us valuable insights to how our prison system works and responds to citizen demands.

September 2006 – Politics and Psychology of Disposability: Hurricane Katrina aftermath

September's Topic will be part of a series on "**The Politics and Psychology of Disposability.**" Increasingly our culture is operating out of a sink or swim way of thinking. The move toward unencumbered individualism and the all-encompassing logic of the market has a terrible price for far too many people. We will take a few sessions to examine how this plays out in several areas where people are treated like throw-away commodities:

- Hurricane Katrina aftermath
- Welfare reform
- Immigration
- Prosecution of the "war on terror"
- Gentrification of neighborhoods
- A booming prison system

July and August 2008 – summer break, no meetings

June 2006 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

May 2006 – Immigration: A complex cultural issue

The May discussion will focus on immigration. This is a complicated issue in America. How do immigration policies reflect a nation's vision about itself? How does today's struggle compare to the civil rights movement of the 60's? What are the underlying values in the current debate?

April 2006 – Coming to the Table Conference, meeting with descendants of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings; and "CSA: The Confederate States of America"

In January 28 people attended an intensive 4-day conference called "Coming to the Table" at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA. This initiative was an effort to involve direct descendants of slavery, black and white, in exploring their unique role in addressing the legacy of slavery on a personal and societal level. The intent was to create a shared experience in which African American and white descendants whose ancestors were linked by a "slave/slave owner" relationship can look at the history of slavery and its legacy through the stories of their families.

It was developed by the descendants of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings along with the Hairston's, both of whom were present. Holly Fulton and Harold Fields were invited



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to this historic event. Along with David Works, a Jefferson descendant, they will talk about the powerful experience they shared at the next race group discussion on April 11th.

Come learn about the effects of unresolved trauma on this nation and some of the ways the Coming to the Table initiative seeks to heal us all.

We will also discuss the movie “CSA: The Confederate States of America.” This mock documentary explores what could have happened if the South had won the Civil War. When you see the film you will see how difficult it is to separate an imaginary fiction from the reality of this nation’s history coming out of it’s foundation of slavery. It is currently showing at the Tivoli. Please take an opportunity to see it before the meeting if possible.

March 2006 – Playing the Sexual Race Card

Relationships are complex. Throw in race and things get more difficult. What comes to mind when it is said that someone played the race card? We will take a look at the intersection of race and relationships and sex. The focus will be on interracial dating and marriage. We will take a look at a clip from the new movie “Something New.” It was written, produced, and directed by African American women and is about a successful black woman facing some challenging dating issues.

February 2006 – Black/White Reactions to the O.J. Verdict

Our discussion in January got started with Mary Matalin’s strange declaration that the current civil rights leaders are racists and are enslaving their brothers. This led to us taking a look at the vastly different white and black reactions to the O.J. verdict. Consequently, we never got around to the planned topic!

January 2006 – Who Gets to Be White

Are we becoming a nation of minorities, or will there be an effort to maintain power and the status quo for whites by redefining racial classifications? We will take brief survey of how the courts have changed the definitions of race over time to establish and maintain dominance. And we will also look at some of the major compromises in establishing the Constitution and this country that directly elate to race.

December 2005 – Becoming a White Ally

As part of our series on Whiteness, this month's discussion will focus on White Allies. Nicole Phardel will speak about what it means to be an ally in the fight against racism and how she has defined this concept through research for her doctoral paper "White allies, White role models: Learning to live an antiracist agenda." We will be exploring our notions around experiencing or enacting White ally behavior, times where



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White folk fail to act as allies and why, the costs and benefits of ally behavior, and the supports to foster and maintain this identity in our society.

November 2005 – White Identity Development

Many white people have been socialized into unconsciously thinking that “race” is something that other people have. This leads to an often unexamined assumption that being white is the “normative way of being human.” On November 8, the Tattered Cover Group will examine these assumptions and explore the meaning of whiteness, particularly in the United States. The session will include a brief examination of the history of whiteness and will feature a panel discussion by John Ferguson, Dawn Loge and Phil Campbell who will share their stories regarding what it means to be white.

October 2005 – Afrocentricity – Who are the African descent people? [Dr. Robert Atwell]

The presentation will be led by or own Dr. Robert Atwell. Bob was recently elected the national president of the Association of Black Psychologists. He has a great response to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina posted on their web site www.abpsi.org. Click on President’s Message to see it.

Starting in November there will be a three-month series on whiteness that will give us an opportunity to explore values, attitudes, and its historical and legal formulations. The topics will be

November: White Identity Development

December: Becoming a White Ally

January: Who Gets to be White According to the Law

September 2005 – Joint event with Jonathan Kozol

This month we will not be having our regular meeting. Instead, we have the opportunity to meet Jonathan Kozol, who will be at the Tattered Cover to present and autograph his new book, *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*.

Mr. Kozol’s presentation starts at 7:30. The Tattered Cover expects a crowd for this signing and will begin handing out numbered free tickets for the event at 6:30, one ticket per person in line. Tickets are used to access the open seating in the event room and later for a place in line should you want to purchase a book and have it signed by the author. At popular signings people often come earlier than 6:30 to form a line to get a ticket.

Mr. Kozol has kindly agreed to meet briefly with our group before his presentation. If you wish to meet with him, please arrive in the reception area by 7 p.m. so we will all be assembled by the time of his arrival at 7:10 p.m. It’s advisable that you get your ticket for the event and save a seat for yourself in the event room before you come to the



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reception area. Bring a sweater or some object to leave on your seat in the event room, then proceed to the reception area behind the staircase (up the ramp and through the double doors, which will be open). When the reception is over, you'll be able to return to the event room and take your seat.

July and August 2005 – summer break, no meetings

June 2005 – Annual Juneteenth celebration

The Emancipation proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863. But it took more than two years for the slaves in Texas to hear of it (no CNN). They finally got the news on June 19, 1865, which became the day of celebration for black folks in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Alabama, and other neighboring states. Juneteenth was made an official state holiday in Texas in 1972. It is celebrated today with parades, picnics, parties, and other cultural gatherings in over 200 U.S. cities. In addition, Juneteenth was chosen as the annual starting date for National Black Bookstore Week.

May 2005 – *Traces of the Trade* documentary about the journey of healing for descendants of America's largest slave trading family

This month we will see the most current progress made on the documentary, *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*. Filmmaker Kaatrina Browne tells the story of her Rhode Island ancestors, the largest slave-trading family in early America. DeWolf family descendants were filmed as they retraced the notorious Triangle Trade route to uncover a family's, a region's, and a nation's hidden past and, as white Americans, to engage in dialogue with each other about the contemporary legacy of slavery.

Two of these descendants, Holly Fulton and Keila DePoorter, have been active in our discussions at the Tattered Cover. Harold also had an opportunity to meet with the family in Bristol.

When completed, *Traces* will be used as a dialogue catalyst on issues of white privilege, individual and collective responsibility, and repair. The session will show a compelling assembly of scenes to stimulate peer exchange on ways to inspire dialogue among white citizens that fosters understanding about their history as one intertwined with the history of slavery and racism.

This rough assembly received glowing reviews at the National Conference of Dialogue and Deliberation convention in Denver. Keila and Harold will present it in Austin at the Americans for the Arts convention in June.

April 2005 – Changing the Racial Narrative [Dr. Tink Tinker]

Every society has its defining stories and cultural markers. The American narrative is a mixture of conquest and opportunity, of refuge for some and oppression for others, a



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cycle that passes on the inheritance of privilege or poverty. Our guest this month, Tink Tinker, has written, “All of us live in an imagined, thought-up world – a social and mental construct. Our task is either to imagine the future of this world into existence together or let it be imagined for us and to play out the roles that others will impose on us.”

Professor Tinker will share his perspective of the narrative that has been dominant in American culture so far, his views on the symbolism that Columbus Day has for this country, and ideas on what needs to happen to bring us back into balance.

Tink Tinker, an enrolled member of the Osage (ni u kon’shka wazhazha) Nation, is Professor of American Indian Cultures and Religious Traditions at Iliff School of Theology, where he has taught for nearly twenty years and brings an Indian perspective to a predominantly euro-american school. Tink has been an activist in urban American Indian communities for most of three decades. He is on the leadership council of the American Indian Movement of Colorado and volunteers as director of the Four Winds American Indian Survival Project.

He is author of *Spirit and Resistance: American Indian Liberation and Political Theology* (Fortress Press, 2004); *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Genocide* (Fortress Press, 1993); co-author of *A Native American Theology* (Orbis Books, 2001); and co-editor of *Native Voices: American Indian Sovereignty and Identity* (University of Kansas, 2003).

March 2005 – The Oscars, Oprah, and New Age Racism

The impression you get from award shows and the entertainment media is that our racial problems have largely been solved. Is this reality? Is there a careful strategy to promote this belief in white America? This month we will look at some of the tensions between different perceptions of current reality.

February 2005 – Unconscious Influences on Racial Attitudes

This month we will discuss some of the things that unconsciously impact our thinking about race. What we think or say we believe does not necessarily match what we do all the time.

For those of us with Internet access, please take 10 or 15 minutes to take an online test about associations with race. The link is www.implicit.harvard.edu/implicit.

The results will be totally confidential and known only to you. We will discuss the nature of the results we get for the group on Tuesday night. Once you get to the Project Implicit site, and then click on the Race IAT link.



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December 2004 – The Elephant in the Room: What racial issues are not being discussed in America?

We will continue our discussion from last month and take up the additional topic, “What racial issues are not being discussed in America?”

November 2004 – Healing from a Difficult Election: Breaking the Cycle

By the time of our next meeting, we just might know who the next president is going to be! The election season has been long and seemed especially nasty in the final days. No matter who wins, the question becomes what happens next and how do we heal after all the finger pointing at all levels. Come join us as we try to figure out if what we’ve learned about racial healing can be applied to healing the nation.

October 2004 – Preventing Another American Apartheid: Japanese American internment camps [Marge Taniwaki]

Definitely not a “model minority,” Marge Taniwaki will speak about spending her early years in one of the ten main US concentration camps for Americans of Japanese ancestry during WWII. Her nearly four year long imprisonment, along with 120,000 other Americans of Japanese ancestry, strongly informs her subsequent political activism. Marge will also read from her poetry and short-stories about growing up Asian in America.

September 2004 – Revisiting our stories

Our September 14th meeting will focus on sharing the stories that have brought us together to talk about race.

July and August 2004 – summer break, no meetings

June 2004 – Juneteenth Celebration

May 2004 – Brown v. Board of Education

It has been 50 years since this Supreme Court decision. Some school districts are more segregated today than they were back in the 1950s. How has this historic decision *really* changed America? Do we still believe in the public education system? Why do we have such disturbing educational achievement gaps between white kids and minority kids? A background article is attached to this announcement.

April 2004 – Gays, Civil Rights, and the Black Community [Rev. Gil Caldwell]



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Rev. Gil Caldwell will be our resource person for the evening. This certainly has become a flashpoint in American life these days. Two background articles are attached to this announcement.

March 2004 – Racism and Textbooks

Taking Practical Steps

The March meeting will focus on two topics that got the most votes from our brainstorming meeting two months ago. We generated over two dozen ideas that would make a difference in race relations. The most popular ideas for follow up were:

1. Rewrite textbooks with a world view and world scholars. Our interest was to correct historical errors, tell the truth about our own history, and give a voice to the cultures that have been invisible to the dominant society.
2. Create a society in which all cultures are respected, valued, and celebrated. What practical steps could lead to bringing about Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community?

Please give some thought to these ideas and some of the actions that would contribute to making them happen.

February 2004 – Col. John Mosley and the Tuskegee Airmen

Our guest this month will be Colonel John Mosley (Ret.). He will discuss his experiences as one of the Tuskegee Airmen who gained fame and admiration for their bravery during WWII. Col. Mosley will also talk about his perspective on civil rights progress since that war.

The movie "The Tuskegee Airmen" is scheduled to show at 6 PM on the History Channel on Saturday, February 7. Check your local cable listing for the appropriate channel number.

January 2004 – That Vision Thing – The Future of Race Relations

Last month we took a historical look at race relations. In January we will explore "That Vision Thing," as one president called it. The discussion will focus on hopes and vision for the future of race relations.

We will take another look at the "Journeys of Race and Culture" wall chart, this time more specifically at the part of the spectrum where diversity and community are valued. What is your vision? How do we get there?

December 2003 – The Negro in America, 1963

In our December discussion we will take a look back at a special issue of Newsweek magazine from July 1963. It's a special report on "The Negro in America." What was



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the attitude of the country expressed in the press at the zenith of the civil rights movement? What issues were on the minds of the people? We will take a look at what has changed in 40 years, not changed, or morphed into another form.

Copies of the issue were passed out to those who attended the last meeting.

November 2003 – Out of Country Experiences

November's race group discussion will take a look at our "Out of Country Experiences". What cultural differences have you observed during your travels outside the USA? Were racial interactions different from what we frequently see? People in other countries may have a variety of assumptions and beliefs about human relations. What can we learn from the world community? Think about your recent or past travel experiences and share them with us. Sue Weinstein just returned from South Africa. Holly Fulton and Bill Peebles were recently in France. Hopefully we can share our insights.

September 2003 – How do whites feel about race and affirmative action? Plus a tribute to Barbara Reed

August 2003 – African American Research Library tour

Please attend a special tour arranged for the Race Group:

On Tuesday, August 12, 2003 the tour begins at 5:30 p.m. (we should be finished before 7p.m.) at the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library, 2401 Welton Street. Parking is free on the North side of the building. This tour replaces our regular August meeting.

July 2003 – Race: The Power of an Illusion, hour 2

Our society provides a constant supply of discussion material with respect to race. Since we got together in June we have witnessed the death of two major players in the civil rights struggle. There have been controversial Supreme Court decisions. We will have celebrated two symbolic freedom holidays: Juneteenth and the Fourth of July. And two documentaries have shown that celebrate our journeys, shed light on hidden or forgotten history, and raise critical issues about our future and relationship to a past that still impacts major aspects of American life. Two of our friends, Art Jones and Rachel Harding, were consultants to the powerful "This Far By Faith."

On July 8th we will discuss some of the concepts presented in the second hour of the documentary "Race: The Power of an Illusion." Here are some things to think about:

* Where did the idea of race come from?

* Why was it not slavery but freedom and the notion that "all men are created equal" that created a moral contradiction in colonial America, and how did race resolve that contradiction?



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* What role did beliefs about race play in removing Cherokees to west of the Mississippi? in the colonization of Mexican territory, Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico? Have we fully abandoned those policies?

Attached are interviews with two of the historians appearing in the documentary that shed some light on the time period: Thedea Perdue from the University of North Carolina and Ira Berlin from the University of Maryland.

June 2003 – Juneteenth Celebration / Helen Littlejohn’s poetry

We will be having our usual wonderful party with good folks, good food and good conversation. And, Helen Littlejohn will be our guest artist featuring a selection of poetry.

May 2003 – The Relationship of Race and Religion [Rev. Gil Caldwell / Dr. Phil Campbell]

On Wednesday, May 7th, we will explore the topic “The Relationship of Race and Religion.” Phil Campbell, as the pastor of a multi-cultural congregation, will share his insights and lead us in a discussion including related questions such as:

**Is religion part of the solution to racism and racial injustice, or does it contribute to the problem?

**How is it that persons who worship the same God can maintain diametrically opposed viewpoints?

**Did the same faith motivate the civil rights movement and the segregationist resistance?

**How did both opponents and proponents of apartheid draw upon the same tradition to bolster their position?

**Are people created in God’s image, or do religious people create their God in their own image?

**Does belief in God or a higher power sustain commitment to a cause and encourage participation in the struggle, or does it foster quietism and invite people to focus on heaven rather than earth?

**Are these questions particular to Judeo-Christian religious traditions, or are they universal queries? What do you think?

Come and join the discussion during this special Wednesday installment of the Tattered Cover Race dialog!

April 2003 – Stories

This month we will continue with our stories.

March 2003 – What is happening to integration? / Lani Guinier



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The topic for March is “What is happening to integration?” How has the society benefited from integration? In schools, churches, the workplace, housing, and politics? What has been lost by integration? Is it being dismantled?

Lani Guinier, professor at Harvard Law School, spoke at Metro State College on February 24 about “Institutional Inequality and People of Color.” She offered some fresh insights to affirmative action and some background on the University of Michigan case currently before the Supreme Court. We will discuss some of these ideas at our next meeting. Enclosed are some notes Harold took during the presentation for your review.

February 2003 – What’s changing in the culture?

This month we will take a look at how our nation is progressing with race relations. There are many dimensions to this complex issue. We will look at the dynamics on the personal, corporate, local, and national levels, as well as within our own group. There has been a flurry of documentaries and events recently. What have we learned as a culture? What is changing? What more needs to be done?

January 2003 – America’s “Trent Lott moment”

What does it mean for America to have a “Trent Lott Moment”? At our next meeting we will look at the significance of this event and the opportunities for meaningful dialogue it could bring to this country. What does Bill Frist mean when he says he wants to bring healing to the situation? If he is serious, what advice would you give him?

December 2002 – Race and Gender

We will look at the intersection of race and gender at our next discussion. Where have you seen issues that are common to race and gender? Have you learned lessons in one area that can be applied to the other?

November 2002 – Stories

We will return to the telling of our stories.

October 2002 – Africans in America, Dr. Mary Ann Watson

This month’s meeting will be facilitated by Dr. Mary Ann Watson. We will discuss a brief video she created: “Africans in America: The Unfolding of Ethnic Identity”, a study of 5 immigrant families who came from Africa and the intersection of American culture with their lives. We hope to have some of these families at the discussion.

September 2002 – Direct interaction with each other



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At this meeting we will continue our personal stories.

In preparation, Harold asks us to consider the following statement: “Although the opposite of knowledge is undoubtedly ignorance or the lack of knowledge, the more dangerous alternative is the presence of wrong thinking or misinformation. We want to expand our knowledge, or get rid of areas of ignorance or wrong thinking in our discussions, by direct interaction with each other.”

August 2002 – Journeys of Race and Culture wall chart / Hue Man Harlem update

At this meeting we will take another look at the “Journeys of Race and Culture” from multiple perspectives. If you have your lap chart, please bring it with you.

Also, come and get an update on the opening of the Hue-Man Book Store in Harlem from Harold’s trip to New York. Clara sends her best wishes to everyone.

July 2002 – Patriotism

We will continue our discussion about difficult topics with a focus this month on patriotism. Phil Campbell will facilitate the discussion.

June 2002 – Juneteenth

May 2002 – Secrets and Honesty: Difficult topics in racially mixed groups

At our last discussion in April we took a survey of difficult topics to discuss in racially mixed groups. You will see the list at the end of this note.

One of life's lessons seems to be that growth usually comes with some discomfort and struggle. We agreed to deal with a number of these topics. I have confidence that our trust in each other and sense of community has grown so that we can honestly share our feelings and thoughts about some of these issues.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

TOPICS FROM THE GROUP:

- * Economic disparity is hard to talk about
- * Reparations
- * Slavery & reparations
- * Black men - White women



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- * Black hair care
- * Is it possible to talk about genetic predispositions without being racist? (i.e., black domination of athletics)
- * Asking the group if we are working too hard at being too comfortable and preserving the comfort zones.
- * Differences of relating with African Americans and Africans (recent immigrants) in the U.S.
- * What I talk about with white people that I'm afraid to open up about black people is how hard it is to stay out of trouble. That is, if I do "X" it is bad and if I do "Y" it is wrong too. (I'm whining)
- * It is hard to talk about internalized oppression of people of color. White people often misunderstand this and hear it as "blame the victim".
- * Allowing the anger of African Americans to be expressed without either getting defensive or trying to negate it.
- * Trust them that they can understand me emotion or hatred.
- * Anxiety/hesitancy in using a descriptive word to designate race.
 - Black
 - African American
 - Afro-American
 - Person of color
 - Colored person
 - Negro
- * What are white people supposed to do/not do with the term "nigger"?
- * When I pass a black person on the sidewalk, he or she most often says "How ya' doin'?" Is this the equivalent of "How are you?" or "Hello"?
- * Telling my story of growing racial awareness and confessing my racist upbringing. This is hard in mixed company when we don't know each other well.
- * My continuing racism
- * It is hard to talk frankly with coworkers of color about racial injustices when other white coworkers are present. It seems to be OK between the two of us, but when a third person joins in, the topic is changed to sports, etc. I wonder why.



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- * Remnants of racism that rear their ugly heads.
- * To admit that sometimes I'm aware of wanting black people to like me, that I think I relate to them differently because I hope they'll like me.
- * Shame/guilt regarding the past and keeping the dialogue open and two-way.
- * I have a shame and fear. White Shame. I hear lots of stories about what other white people have said or done that is hurtful, ignorant, racist. And I keep being afraid I'll make more mistakes too.
- * Forgiveness
- * Do integrated schools provide better education for either black or white children?
- * Why don't black folk return?
- * The race problem may never be solved

April 2002 – Secrets and Honesty: Difficult topics in racially mixed groups

Secrets and Honesty: We will have an interactive discussion about things that are still difficult to discuss in racially mixed company.

October 2001 – Durban racism conference

What happened at the Durban, South Africa NGO conference? Or what didn't happen? Have recent events changed the need for the focus on racism and discrimination?

Come and meet with Janet Barrett and Fannie Fiddmont who both went to this historic conference. Join us in a timely dialog about what they learned and how to apply it for our times.

March 2001 – Healing the Soul of Racism, Dr. L. Robert Keck at Iliff

Workshop topics:

King of the Racial Hill (Reducing the influence of hierarchies in society)

Upgrading to First Class Means Bigger Airplanes (Conferring privilege on everyone instead of taking it away)

Looking into the Sexual Mirror of Race (The role of sex in creating racial and human underclasses)



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Chairman Greenspan in the Next Millennium (Defining an economy based on the value of people, not just capital)

The Profit in Giving it Away (Putting more emphasis on making a better world, not a more profitable one)

Why Fire Trucks Are Usually Red (The interdependence of people, nature, and systems on Earth)

Mickey D Meets the Maassai (Embracing different cultures)

Accept These Beliefs or Else (The role of religion in supporting culture and racism)

When Second Place is the First Loser (Rethinking winner-take-all decision making)

When Justice is Just a Lock Down (Moving toward a system of restoration)