

# The El Paso Corporation Lecture Series

## Department of Comparative Cultural Studies

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

# RACE

## Are we so different?

**OCTOBER 26, 4:00-5:30 PM**

"The Changing Face of Houston: Tracking the Demographic Transformations Through 30 Years of Houston Surveys."

Stephen Klineberg  
*Professor, Department of Sociology & Co-Director, Kinder Institute for Urban Research, Rice University*

During most of its history, this city was essentially a biracial Southern town dominated and controlled by Anglo males. Houston's world changed forever with the oil-boom collapse in the 1980s. The region recovered from the recession to find itself in the midst of a restructured economy and a demographic revolution. We review the findings from three decades of the "Kinder Houston Area Survey" (1982–2011) to measure these remarkable transformations and to consider their implications for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

**NOVEMBER 2, 4:00-5:00 PM**

"We Fulani Are Not From Here: Race, Place, and Constructing Identity"

Andrew Gordon  
*Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Houston*

Fulani peoples appear in 15 countries in Africa mostly between 7 and 15 degrees latitude north of the equator. Ethnographers and historians record that Fulani tended to think of themselves as morally superior and justified in taking control, in jihads and political leadership. Focusing on one country, Guinea, I explore how the Fulani imagination of "racial" and cultural identity orients political ambitions and inter-ethnic relations.

**NOVEMBER 2, 5:00-6:30 PM**

"Chasing Tornadoes: the Role of Government in Detroit Race Relations, 1943-1968"

Tyrone Tillery  
*Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Houston*

I examine the new ideological consensus emerging in academia that undermined racial shibboleths used to rationalize African American second-class citizenship. By the late 1940's many American sociologists, social and physical anthropologists, geneticists and other social scientists had turned from the study of distant societies to take a closer examination at the social and caste stratifications that characterized American Democracy. Destroying such myths as a polygenetic origin of man, innate inferior black intelligence and so on, these scientists provided the intellectual underpinning for "environmentalism" which ushered in a period of social engineering race relations and civil rights until the 1960's riots. Important for my too big manuscript, is that this new scientific consensus on "race" helped push the recognition of the duty and role of government in improving race relations and supporting civil rights. Though in the end...obviously not successful.

**NOVEMBER 9, 4:00-5:30 PM**

Some Unintended Consequences of the Standards-Based School Reform Movement

Gary Dworkin  
*Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Houston*

The standards-based reform movement in primary and secondary education, with its calls for clear indicators of public school accountability, has appeared in many forms among the developed and less developed nations of the world. In the United States it first took the form in a call for more testing and heightened teacher and student standards during the era of A Nation at Risk (1983) and more recently as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and Race to the Top in 2009. The reforms often have called for increased student testing to determine the effectiveness of public education and some have draconian consequences for schools and school staff. This presentation seeks to highlight the underlying assumptions of policy makers that have led to practices with severe unintended consequences for schools, teachers, and students—especially those children who do not have home advantages. School reform policies have caused many schools and school personnel to "game the system" in order to appear to boost student achievement and thereby avoid the governmental sanctions associated with low school performances. Such "gaming" can exacerbate the educational disadvantages of minority children and those from low-income families.

**NOVEMBER 16, 4:00-5:30 PM**

"Dear Dago": The Politics of Prejudice"

Nancy Young  
*Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Houston*

World War II is supposed to be the "Good War" where the United States fought to preserve and protect democracy abroad against the totalitarian threat. At home the story was very different. While liberals advocated for legislation eliminating the poll tax and making lynching a federal crime, southerners in Congress obstructed these efforts. The rhetoric from these southern Democrats revealed a racist mien that was unapologetic, bold, and hateful. This paper argues congressional obstruction of civil rights reform became a key component limiting liberalism in the transition from the New Deal to the postwar era.

**NOVEMBER 30, 4:00-5:30 PM**

"Effemiphobia: Intersections of Race, Gender Presentation, and Sexuality"

Brandon Mack  
*Graduate Student, Department of Sociology, Texas A & M University*

Effemiphobia is the negative feeling towards effeminate gay men by other gay men. It has impacted the way people view the intersections of race, gender presentation and sexuality. It has also impacted the ways in which gay men interact with one another and form subcultures in response to their views on effeminacy and their own sexuality. In this workshop we will discuss effemiphobia and the ways it has impacted the gay community and the differences between how effemiphobia has impacted gay communities of color and spawned subcultures within the gay community.