

Reaching Across: History, Humanities & the Promise of America

Tuesday July 12 – Wednesday July 13

The Rizzo Center, Chapel Hill OR **Virtual (Via Zoom)**

Tuesday, July 12

10:15 – 10:30 Coffee & Snacks for In-Person Attendees

Log On & Chat Introductions for Virtual Attendees

10:30 – 11:00 **Welcome**

Christie Norris | Director, [Carolina K-12 at UNC-CH](#)

11:00 – Noon **Prius or Pickup? How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide**

[Dr. Jonathan Weiler](#) | Author, Teaching Professor, UNC-CH

In an increasingly polarized society, liberals and conservatives seem to occupy completely different worlds. What has contributed to such separate systems of values? And, how are we to overcome our seemingly intractable differences, both in our classrooms and in our own personal lives? In this session, Dr. Weiler will discuss the psychological impulses that give rise to our different worldviews, how politicians manipulate our mindsets for their own benefit, as well as some suggestions for how we might begin the process of “reaching across.” (Participants will receive a copy of Dr. Weiler’s co-authored book, *Prius or Pickup? How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America’s Great Divide*.)

Noon – 1 pm Lunch, Discussion & Book Signing

- **Virtual attendees can log off for the lunch break; please log back on by 12:55 pm.**
- **A signed copy of the book will be mailed to virtual attendees post-event.**

1:00 – 2:30 **Rhythmically Reframing & Reclaiming Relationships Through the Arts**

[Dr. Sonny Kelly](#) | Performer & Educator

What role do the performing arts play in bridging our divides and in healing our nation? How can you use performance strategies, from rhythm to poetry, to build relationships in your classroom and create a space where controversy and discomfort are welcome parts of a learning community? After two years like no other, in a time when everything seems divisive, how can we reconnect, reframe and reclaim our classrooms as courageous spaces of teaching and learning? Dr. Kelly will lead us in considering how simple performative techniques can provide inspiration for students to tell their own stories, connect, and feel part of a classroom community ripe for discussing challenging past and present issues and events.

2:30 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 3:45 **Our Story is Told Through Our Plates: Southern Foodways**
Dr. Joanna Sierks Smith | Associate Director for State Outreach, [Carolina Public Humanities](#)

Food is not only important for health and life, it is also intricately tied to history, culture and memory. In fact, diverse cultural combinations and people throughout history to present have served as the backbone for the South's assorted cuisines. Food has also played a role in everything from protests to transformations throughout Southern history. This session will examine the richness of southern foodways, reminding us of the sometimes-overlooked power of "reaching across" the table.

3:45 – 4:00 Break

4:00 – 5:00 **The Sounds of Freedom, From Slavery to Civil Rights**
[Mary D. Williams](#) | Performer & Adjunct Professor, Duke Center for Documentary Studies

There is something about music that seems to bring us closer to each other, often connecting us as a community. This is true today, and it is true historically, even throughout some of the most difficult periods of our past. With a look (and listen!) to a combination of spirituals and protest songs, vocalist Mary D. Williams will help us understand the role music played from enslavement through the Civil Rights Movement, illustrating how music provides an effective entry point for uniting us as we examine history. (*Listen to Mrs. Williams on [NPR](#) or read about her work in this [Walter Magazine](#) feature.*)

5:00 – 6:00 Break and Check-In for Overnight Hotel Guests

Virtual attendees can log off until Day 2, as logistics do not allow for streaming the remainder of the evening's events.

Evening Events (In Person Attendees Only)

Please plan to arrive at [Morehead Planetarium](#) (250 E Franklin St., Chapel Hill) no later than 6:10 PM. Parking is available in the lot in front of Morehead (carpooling is encouraged), or, meet in the lobby at 6:00 for a shuttle van. The van will return you after dinner.

6:15 – 7:15 **Private Showing of Tales from the American South at Morehead Planetarium**
Featuring a discussion with the film's creator, [Dr. Bill Ferris](#) | Professor Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill, Author, & Film Documentarian

What does it mean to be from, to live in, and/or teach about the American South today? The region is a geographical entity, an expanse of complicated history, a place in the imagination, and the homeland of diverse and distinct people and cultures. The American South is often shrouded in romance and myth, and its historical and modern-day realities are intriguing, complex and even controversial. We will end our day exploring these themes with a private screening of the 22-minute full-dome film "Tales from the American South," a cinematic tour of the American South which highlights how

the power of story can help bridge our divides. We are honored to be joined by the film's creator, Dr. Bill Ferris, for a discussion after the showing. ([Read a feature on Dr. Ferris & his belief in the power of story, from The Bitter Southerner, here.](#))

- 7:30 – 9:00 **Dinner, Discussion & Closing Remarks at 411 West**
- **Bridging the Divide: The Role of History, Humanities & Teachers in Healing America** | [Dr. Lloyd Kramer](#), Director, [Carolina Public Humanities](#) & Professor of History, UNC-CH

Wednesday, July 13

- A full breakfast is included for overnight guests starting at 7 am.
- All overnight guests will need to check out in the morning before our 8:45 am start, or during the morning break at 10:30 am. (Simply leave your key in your room and remove your personal belongings, which can be stored in our workshop room or in your vehicle's trunk.) Feel free to [leave a small gratuity](#) in your room for housekeeping if you choose.
- Coffee & continental breakfast items will also be available outside of our seminar room for everyone.

Virtual participants should log on by 8:40 AM.

8:45 – 9:15 Morning Reflections

9:15 – 10:30 **Teachers and the First Amendment**
[Dr. Tori Ekstrand](#) | Associate Professor of Journalism and Media, UNC-CH

With educators under attack, what role does the First Amendment play in the face of new state laws limiting its boundaries? And how might you go about engaging your own students in understanding the First Amendment more deeply in a time riddled with divisiveness and controversy? What are the opportunities and challenges? With a focus on what the law is, students can be led into closely examining free expression and the nature of its legal and ethical boundaries. In this session, Dr. Ekstrand will discuss the First Amendment specifically in terms of teaching and public schools, as well as how to teach the 1A in this particular historical moment.

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 12:15 **NC Native Communities 101: Meet your NC Native Communities and Discover Native Educational Resources**

[Jesalyn Keziah, MSW](#) | Community Engagement Program Officer at UNC's American Indian Center & member of the Lumbee Tribe

North Carolina is home to 8 Tribes and 4 urban Indian organizations, and the state's past and present is rich with Indigenous histories & cultures. As educators, how can we ensure we are providing accurate, culturally-relevant information in our classrooms, in a way that facilitates knowledgeable, informed, and responsive students? In this session, we will work to gain a richer understanding of contemporary American Indian communities around the state, work to dispel stereotypes about Native American people, and form an awareness that can better serve both Native and non-Native

students and families in the future. You'll also receive lots of excellent resources for use directly in your classrooms.

12:15 – 1:15 Lunch

Virtual attendees can log off for the lunch break; please log back on by 1:15 pm.

1:15 – 2:45

Creating a Classroom Culture for Deliberation, Discourse & Debate

[Dr. Kevin Marinelli](#) | Executive Director, [Program for Public Discourse](#) & Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, UNC-CH

When we teach students how to think critically and constructively engage in discourse, it not only strengthens teaching and learning, but also our democracy and our public lives. In this session, Dr. Marinelli will discuss how to set classroom ground rules for discussion as well as explore argumentation modules for use with your students.

2:45 – 3:00

Break

3:00 – 4:15

Where Do You Stand Within The Continuum of Change?

[Michael Williams](#) | Curator of the [Continuum of Change](#) exhibit, Founder of the [Black On Black Project](#), Partner and Consultant in [Initiative 1897](#)

John Lewis wrote in *Across That Bridge* that “It is only through examining history that you become aware of where you stand within the continuum of change.” Join educator, curator, & consultant Michael Williams as he discusses [Continuum of Change](#), which uses artwork and community dialogue to examine the centuries-long inequities that communities of color have faced, while elevating the stories of Black men and women who have, despite adversity, ushered in change throughout North Carolina’s history. Ultimately, we’ll explore how art and discourse can bring us together to examine our past, understand our present, and create the future we want.

4:15 – 5:00

Reflections & Closing



North Carolina
humanities

This program is made possible by funding from the [North Carolina Humanities](#), a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#). This event is part of the national [“A More Perfect Union” initiative](#), which administered and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.