

CRITICAL THUG



Critical Race Theory & *The Hate U Give*

Life of the Scholar – Multidisciplinary
Conference

Gardner-Webb University

March 30, 2019

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NEIGHBORHOOD CHAT

- YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oX8Hv0ImG4Y&t=70s> (Watch until 1:00.)
- Tupac describes the “thug life” as something that is “glamorous” and he perpetuates this idea so other young men will become interested and take on this lifestyle.
- Neighborhood Chat: What is your definition of a thug? Do you agree with Tupac’s take on the “thug life” being a glamorous life? Has the perpetuation of this “glamorous” life led to the killings of unarmed black men and the increased hostility against police brutality? Are there any characters in *The Hate U Give* that maintain this lifestyle.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY (CRT)

- Critical Race Theory studies and seeks to transform the relationship among race, racism, and power.
- CRT considers some of the same issues that the conventional civil rights discourses take up but places them in a broader perspective.

Source: Delgado, Richard and Stefancic, Jean. *Critical Race Theory*. New York University Press. 2017.

DELGADO & STAFANCIC' – BASIC TENETS OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Everyday racism is a common, ordinary experience of people of color (POC) in the United States.

- Racism is the normal way society does business. Also, racism is difficult to address or cure because it is not acknowledged.

“Interest Convergence” or material determinism.

- Racism advances the interests of both white elites and working-class whites.

Race is socially constructed.

- Race and races are products of social thought and relations.

Differential racialization

- Ways that the dominant culture racializes different groups at different times in response to shifting needs such as the labor market.

Intersectionality

- Identity is mixed and complicated. Race intersects with class, sex, sexual orientation, and political alignment.

Voice of Color

- Many CRT theorists believe that minority writers and thinkers are in a better position to speak about racism because they experience it directly.

APPLICATION TO LITERATURE

PURDUE OWL



APPLYING CRT TO LITERATURE MEANS MORE THAN IDENTIFYING RACE, RACISM, AND RACIALIZED CHARACTERS IN FICTIONAL WORKS.



RATHER IT (IN A BROAD SENSE) PLACES HEAVY SIGNIFICANCE ON “EXAMINING AND ATTEMPTING TO UNDERSTAND THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FORCES THAT SHAPE HOW WE AND OTHERS PERCEIVE, EXPERIENCE, AND RESPOND TO RACISM.”



CRT SCHOLARS USE LITERATURE AND OTHER HISTORICAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS AS “EVIDENCE OF AMERICAN CULTURE’S COLLECTIVE VALUES AND BELIEFS”.

WE WILL FOCUS ON 2 OF CRT'S TENETS

- Racism is a common, ordinary everyday experience for POC.
 - Intersectionality

TERMS TO KNOW

- CRT – Critical Race Theory
- T.H.U.G. – *The Hate U Give*
- POC – people/person of color
- Microaggressions – refers to the seemingly minute, often unconscious, quotidian instances of prejudice that collectively contribute to racism and the subordination of racialized individuals by dominant culture.



RACISM AS ORDINARY, EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE FOR POC

“...WILL REMAINED HIMSELF IN HIS NEW WORLD. I SLIPPED UP AND SAID I WISH I COULD BE LIKE THAT AT SCHOOL. CHRIS SAID “WHY CAN’T YOU...?” (THOMAS 83)

RACISM AS ORDINARY

- T.H.U.G. explores police brutality, highly how society constructs victims like Khalil as criminals (Johnson & Neville 132).
 - “Once upon a time there was a haze-eyed boy with dimples. I called him Khalil. The world called him a thug” (Thomas 442).
- “Williamson Starr doesn’t use slang—if a rapper would say it, she doesn’t say it, even if her white friends do. Slang makes them cool. Slang makes her “hood”. Williamson Starr holds her tongue when people piss her off so nobody will think she’s the ‘angry black girl.’ Williamson Starr is approachable. No stank-eyes, side-eyes, none of that. Williamson Starr is nonconfrontational. Basically, Williamson Starr doesn’t give anyone a reason to call her ghetto” (Thomas 71).

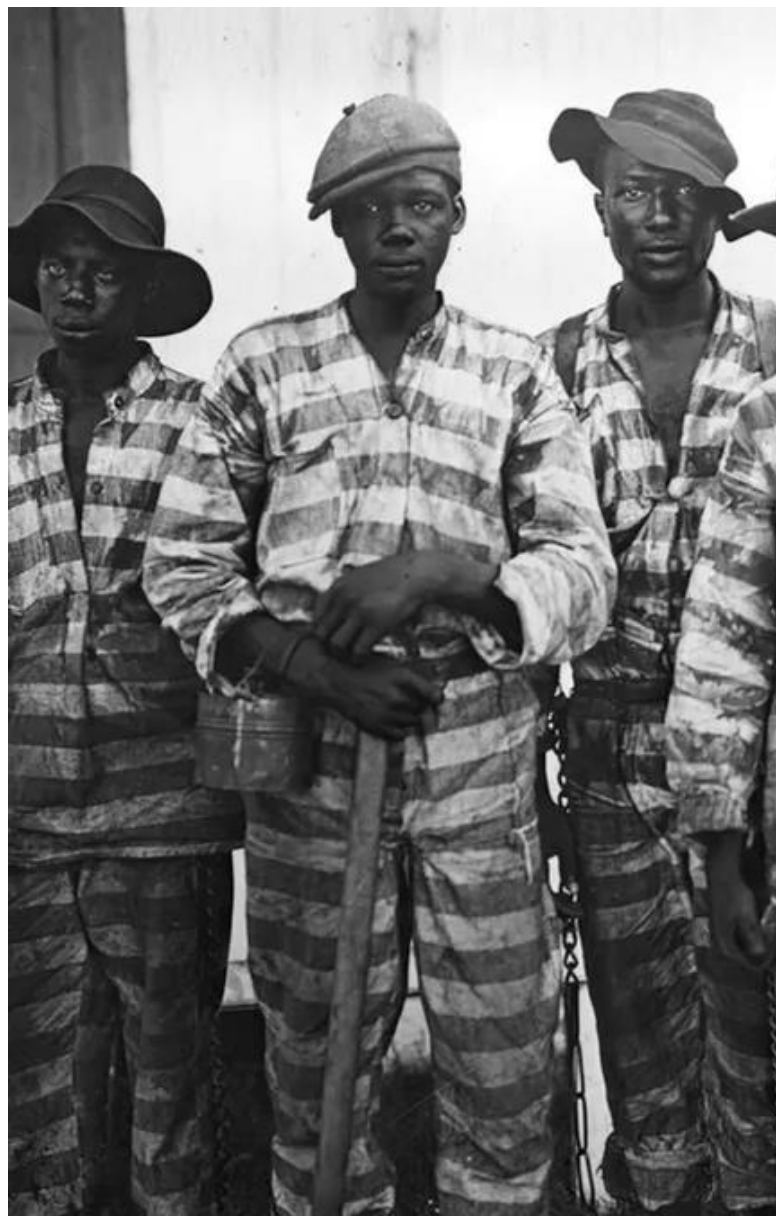
AM I NEXT?

#LIVINGWHILEBLACK

#DININGWHILEBLACK

#BREATHINGWHILEBLACK

#HANDSUPDON'TSHOOT

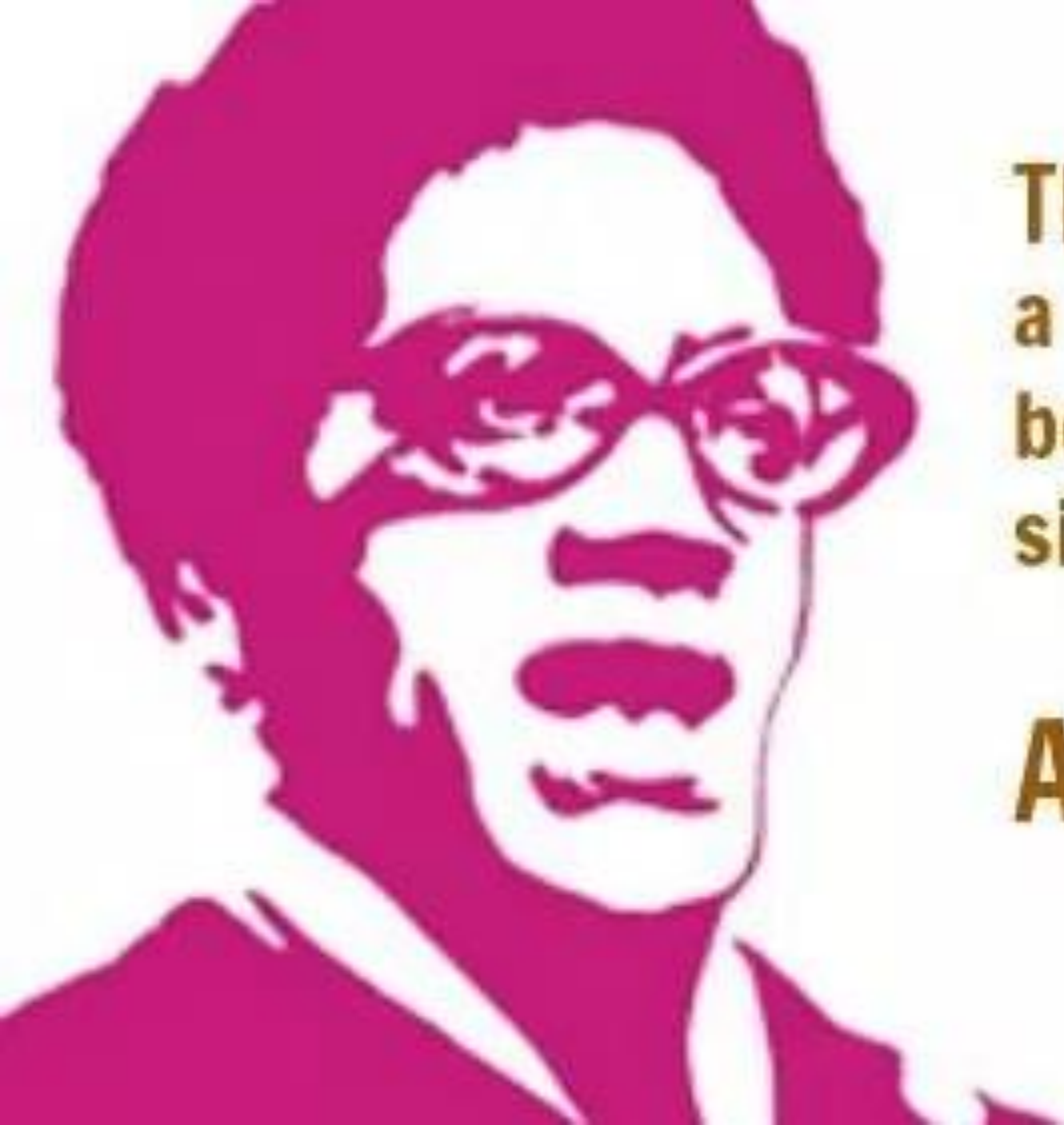


RACISM AS ORDINARY (CONT.)

- “‘Anyway, Chris,’ Seven says, ‘Devante’s got a point. What makes his name or our names any less normal than yours? Who or what defines ‘normal’ to you?’” (Thomas 401).

An abstract graphic design featuring several overlapping circles in various colors: dark blue, orange, light blue, lime green, yellow, and teal. A horizontal line in shades of purple and grey runs across the top. A dark purple rectangular bar is at the bottom, containing the word 'INTERSECTIONALITY' in white, uppercase letters.

INTERSECTIONALITY



**There is no such thing as
a single-issue struggle
because we do not live
single-issue lives.**

Audre Lorde

FRAMING & INTERSECTIONS

- Author – black, female, and other identities
- Main character – black, female, and other identities

CHRIS (STARR'S BOYFRIEND)

- White
- From an upper-class background
- “I can’t lie, we get the ‘why is he dating *her* stare that usually comes from rich White girls. Sometimes I wonder the same thing” (Thomas 83).
- “A cop as White as Chris had pointed a gun” at her (Thomas 83).



CRT QUESTIONS TO PONDER



Does *T.H.U.G* effectively use the CRT tenet of intersectionality show how complex identities further “complicate issues in American society?”



How can racism be combated to ensure equal representation and access to fundamental rights to all members of American society?

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- Racism as an ordinary, everyday experiences confronts and challenges the everyday notion that racism is a thing of the past or something that only occurs in special, extreme situations in the present.
 - CRT sees racism as day to day business of society.
 - Intersectionality brings to light the way individuals hold complex identities across gender, language, ability, class, sexuality, and other markers of difference.

REVIEW

T.H.U.G. L.I.F.E

*The Hate You Give Little Infants F***s Everybody*

- Tupac Shakur

WORKS CITED

- Delgado, Richard and Stefancic, Jean. *Critical Race Theory*. New York University Press. 2017.
- Johnson, Ashley and Neville, Mary L. “Using Counterstories to Critique Racism: Critical Race Theory, *Beloved*, and *The Hate U Give*”, in *Teaching the Canon in 21st Century Classrooms*, edited by Michael Macaluso and Kati Macaluso.
- Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give*. HarperCollins Publishers. 2017.