



“Makes Me Wanna Holler:” Race in America
A course of study on systemic racism and the Black experience to cultivate anti-racists.
Dr. Michael W. Waters, Creator and Lead Facilitator

In a 1961 interview, James Baldwin (1924-1987), the iconic 20th century Black public intellectual and author, stated:

To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a state of rage...almost all of the time — and in one's work. And part of the rage is this: It isn't only what is happening to you. But it's what's happening all around you and all of the time in the face of the most extraordinary and criminal indifference, indifference of most white people in this country, and their ignorance. Now, since this is so, it's a great temptation to simplify the issues under the illusion that if you simplify them enough, people will recognize them. I think this illusion is very dangerous because, in fact, it isn't the way it works. A complex thing can't be made simple. You simply have to try to deal with it in all its complexity and hope to get that complexity across.

There are few concerns of greater complexity in American society than the issue of race. Biologically, race does not exist. It is a social construct employed exclusively to exploit bodies for pleasure and profits. Most Americans only discern race on a surface level at best. They are unaware of the extent to which race has shaped and continues to shape all American institutions, including our religious spaces.

This course will seek to take a deep dive into America's racialized histories to gain greater awareness of how these histories continue to shape our present and our future. Through lectures, class discussions, readings, and documentaries, students will become more knowledgeable of the complexities of the rage-inducing realities that Black people face each day so that they might emerge as antiracists committed to eradicating these continuous brutalities and horrors.



Dr. Michael W. Waters is the founder and Lead Pastor of the Abundant Life African Methodist Episcopal Church in Dallas, Texas. As a pastor, professor, author, activist, and social commentator, Waters' words of hope and empowerment inspire national and international audiences. Featured in *EBONY Magazine* among America's emerging leaders, his work and ministry has appeared on ABC Nightline, BBC Newsnight, CBS This Morning, C-SPAN, Last Week Tonight with John Oliver, MSNBC, National Public Radio, The NBC Nightly News, PBS Newshour, the Today Show, and VICE on HBO among other media outlets. He has addressed such esteemed bodies as American Airlines, Duke University, the Smithsonian National Museum of African

American History and Culture, the United States House of Representatives, and the World Methodist Conference. His accomplishments have been officially entered into the United States Congressional Record and are archived at the United States Library of Congress. Waters is the author of several national award-winning books including *Stakes Is High: Race, Faith, and Hope for America*, winner of the prestigious National Wilbur Award in Non-fiction, the forthcoming children's book *For Beautiful Black Boys Who Believe in a Better World*, and the forthcoming *Something in the Water: A 21st Century Civil Rights Odyssey*. He earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees with honors at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. The recipient of numerous honors and award recognitions, Waters was awarded the 2019 Peacemaker of the Year Award by the Dallas Peace and Justice Center. He is also the recipient of Southern Methodist University's Distinguished Alumni Emerging Leader Award.



Yulise Reaves Waters, Esq. is Deputy Director of the Lone Star Justice Alliance. She oversees the program and team development, partnerships management, and community engagement aspects of the Transformative Justice model in the Second Chance Community Improvement Program (SCCIP—pronounced “skip”) in Dallas County and in the Rehabilitative Interventions and Supports for Emerging Adults Program (R.I.S.E.) in Williamson County. Previously, Waters was a Dallas Assistant City Attorney where she co-founded SCCIP - the first-ever specialty court for young adults in the State of Texas - which was awarded the 2018 National Association of Drug Court Professionals' Equity and Inclusion Award for “excellence and leadership in demonstrating and promoting cultural proficiency in treatment court services.” Waters holds B.A. degrees in English and

Spanish (both magna cum laude), a B.B.A. in Organizational Behavior and Business Policy (magna cum laude), and a Juris Doctorate, all from Southern Methodist University, and is currently enrolled in the Executive MBA program at Cox School of business at SMU where she is a Forte Fellow. She is a member of the Inaugural Emerging Leader Board at the Dedman School of Law, which recognizes graduates over the last twenty years who have “a strong record of leadership in the legal profession and a proven commitment to public service.” Waters holds memberships in the Juvenile Law, Criminal Justice, and Collaborative Law Sections, and is a member of the Leadership Dallas Class of 2020. Nationally, her commentaries on race and justice have been featured on syndicated radio and in major U.S. city newspapers. Waters is the recipient of numerous honors and award recognitions including the *Dallas Business Journal* “40 Under 40.” In 2020, Waters was selected to receive the Distinguished Alumni Emerging Leader Award from the Dedman School of Law at Southern Methodist University.

The Waters are the first married couple in Southern Methodist University history to each individually receive Distinguished Alumni Awards. They are the proud parents of three children and are presently expecting a fourth child.