Why We Still Need to Talk About Race – A Film by Robert Gray

Lansing Community College, Antioch Full Gospel Church, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, and The Catholic Community of St. Jude
Lansing Community College, Health and Human Services Building, Rooms 024-025

Please join us in viewing and discussing the film “Mobile in Black and White” by Robert Gray, Joel Lewis, and Brian L. Butler in four segments on four consecutive Tuesday evenings. This film is designed to promote discussion of structural and institutionalized racism in America as told through the community of Mobile, Alabama. Please join us at 6:30pm each evening for light refreshments prior to the viewing of each film segment and discussion.

March 17th 6:30pm to 8:30pm - “Why We Still Need to Talk About Race”
This segment is designed to address the so-called elephant in the room. It is a topic many people are very passionate in their insistence that we do not need to talk about it, no one is comfortable talking about, and a difficult conversation. Nonetheless, race is an issue that continues to affect the fabric of everyday life in America. Robert Gray, one of the producers, will be joining us this evening.

March 24th 6:30pm to 8:30pm - “Race in the Twenty-First Century”
This segment is intended to address the issue of what has been called “structural racism.” The concept of racism is typically thought to involve individual attitudes and actions, and for the most part, this form of racism is far less significant than it had been forty or fifty years ago. This does not mean that racialized inequities built into the very structures of our society do not have profound and detrimental impacts on people’s lives and opportunities. De-segregation is tolerated, but not embraced.

March 31st 6:30pm to 8:30pm - “Racialized Structures”
This segment continues to examine structural racism. It looks at two central issues connected to race relations in Mobile—the lynching of Michael Donald by the KKK in 1981 and the city’s annual Mardi Gras celebration. The segment also looks at how institutional inequities in the education and criminal justice systems lead to inequities in the lives and opportunities of people of color. The segment’s central message is that all of these structural inequities are historically based, as well as historically situated. This means that as individuals, we are not directly guilty of or responsible for the existence of these inequities, but it also means that we should be responsible for making sure they do not perpetuate for future generations.

April 7th 6:30pm to 8:30pm - “Toward Equity”
This is the final segment of Mobile in Black & White and is intended to serve as both a conclusion and a call to action. It continues the look at education as a central, structural issue that leads to inequitable outcomes for communities of color. The segment also features many of the people in the earlier segments giving bits of advice to all of the people on what can be done to improve race relations.

About the producer - Robert Gray is the Manager of Faculty Development in the Innovation in Learning Center at the University of South Alabama. He has taught English at USA, Troy University, and Michigan State University. He holds a PhD in Instructional Technology from the University of Alabama, and his third book of poetry, Jesus Walks the Southland, is upcoming from Negative Capability Press. His primary professional interests are teaching and learning in higher education, online course development, and video production, but the primary learning objective in all of his teaching concerns the development of intellectual and social consciousness.