American Studies Program
2016 Christie Lecture
Matthew Frye Jacobson

Addressing the challenges of narrating the nation’s Civil Rights history after the King assassination in 1968, examining American political culture’s complex and contradictory patterns of persistent racism and robust anti-racism, both of which have been on full display in the Obama years.

From the Black Panthers and Nixon to Obama and the Tea Party: Interpreting the ‘Post’ of ‘Post-Civil Rights’

Jacobson is the past president of the American Studies Association and the William Robertson Coe Professor of American Studies, History & African American Studies at Yale University.

He received his Ph.D. in American Civilization from Brown University and is the author of What Have They Built You to Do?: The Manchurian Candidate and Cold War America (with Gaspar Gonzalez), Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America, Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917; Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race, and Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States. He is currently at work on his sixth book, Odetta’s Voice and other Weapons: The Civil Rights Era as Cultural History, and on several web- and film-based documentary projects, including “At the Crossroads of Hope and Despair: America after the Crash” and A Long Way from Home: The Untold Story of Baseball’s Desegregation.

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