

Juneteenth Transcript

CJC: Happy Independence Day Rosemary!

RF: Happy Independence Day to you too Courtney.

CJC: Yes, finally my independence day. What I see as a truer independence day of this country is being recognized broadly as a day of rest and leisure. Which perhaps was one of the wildest dreams of my enslaved ancestors that were forced to labor in the fields, industries, and houses of this country. I think it is important to acknowledge Juneteenth does not mark the beginning of equity or a post-racial society. After the end of chattel enslavement of those of African descent we see the creation of Black codes that lead to increased policing and disproportionate incarceration rates. Shoot...increased policing and disproportionate incarceration rates are a major issue in this country for Black folks. So the fight for equity still continues today.

RF: Yes, I'm grateful that Juneteenth is being uplifted and recognized by more people and places in this country. Currently, 47 states in the US and the District of Columbia recognize Juneteenth as an official state or ceremonial holiday. In the wake of protests following the death of George Floyd in 2020, there was a push from both the private and public sectors to recognize Juneteenth as a paid holiday. Although legislation has been introduced in Congress, Juneteenth still has not been approved as a paid federal holiday. But that hasn't stopped several companies like Adobe, Mastercard, Lyft, Postmates, Quicken Loans, Square, Uber, Best Buy, Target, J.C. Penney, The New York Times, The Washington Post and Vox Media to announce Juneteenth as a paid holiday for their employees. This year even more companies and organizations are following suit. This year is the first year that the University System of Maryland recognized Juneteenth as a paid holiday, and my mom, who works for a non-profit organization in New York City, told me the other day that her employer has recognized Juneteenth as a paid holiday too.

CJC: While Juneteenth is slowly receiving the recognition that it deserves as a holiday; I imagine that a high percentage of Americans have no idea what the holiday is about or how it impacts more than just Black Americans.

RF: Over 150 years ago, on June 19th 1865, Union Army General Gordon Granger informed the enslaved folks of African descent in Galveston, Texas that the Civil War had ended and their freedom was a reality. This marked the creation of the Juneteenth holiday which gets its name by combining the month of June and the date of the 19th. As a result, Texas was the first state to recognize the Juneteenth holiday and starting in 1966, celebrations were held annually across the country to mark Black freedom and independence. Unlike the 4th of July – a federal holiday since 1870, Juneteenth and the celebration of the end of chattel slavery in the U.S. does not receive the same national recognition or feelings of collective emancipation from oppressive forces.

Courtney: So we have mentioned chattel slavery twice and some listeners may not even know what that means. Chattel slavery is a permanent type of slavery. Unlike indentured servitude, chattel slavery extended for one's lifetime and also resulted in the enslavement of future generations. So the system of chattel slavery in the US was designed to have no end, was created to impact the descendants of all those enslaved, and treated the enslaved as property that could be bought and sold.

From a reading of Frederick Douglass' 1852 speech, What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July? I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the

immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity, and independence bequeathed by your fathers is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn.)

Rosemary: That was a reading from Frederick Douglass' What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July? It was recently read by five of Douglass' descendants for an NPR video. What Douglass attempts to convey to his all-White audience during his 1852 speech is that the 4th of July does not represent independence for this nation. At the time of his speech and for an additional 13 years, White citizens were able to celebrate freedom from oppressive forces while the vast majority of those of African descent were enslaved and viewed as property.

CJJ: while Juneteenth did not eliminate oppression, Black codes and other oppressive laws were created to limit Black prosperity, Black folks in the U.S. managed to create thriving communities, educate each other, and continue to make monumental advancements throughout U.S. society. Black history is not simply a story of enslavement and oppression, Black history does not start and stop there.

During this episode of The Table, we will be joined by 3 phenomenal Black ladies who will discuss what Juneteenth means to them and how they choose to honor this celebration of liberation.

Rosemary Ferreira

I wanted to start off with y'all introducing yourselves so Danielle can we start with you? Can you tell us about who you are?

Danielle Harris

Hi thanks for having me, my name is Danielle Harrison. I'm the associate director at the University of Maryland, Baltimore Community Engagement Center and identify as an African American.

Rosemary Ferreira

Awesome thank you and Krishna can you also share a little bit about?

Chrishna Williams

Sure, I'm Krishna Williams. I'm the director of alumni relations at the School of Social Work and I am a Black woman.

Seante Hatcher

My name is Shante Hatcher. I'm the associate dean of continuing professional education at the School of Social Work and the owner of Merge LLC. Find me at readyssetmerge.com and I identify as a Black woman.

Rosemary Ferreira

Fantastic, thank you so much.-We are excited to celebrate this holiday of Juneteenth and so we wanted to start our conversation today around what is the meaning of Juneteenth for you? What does that signify for you? And Courtney Let's start with you.

Courtney Jones Carney

Yeah, for me, Juneteenth is Independence Day, not just my Independence Day as a Black woman, but Independence Day for the U.S. I think that a lot of times we are concentrating on the 4th of July and really recognizing that as independence but not really thinking about the fact that there were still folks of African descent that were enslaved within this country, so the 4th of July was not independence for everyone. It does not mark independence for everyone and still Juneteenth isn't able to mark Independence Day for everyone, but it's still a better way to establish that folks are free and able to, by law for the most part, move freely and gain their independence. What about you Danielle? What does it mean to you?

Danielle Harris

Similar to Courtney come for me, it was more of an accurate depiction of what liberation could mean in in America, so for me, I didn't learn about Juneteenth until I was probably in college, and even when I was in middle school and I started to kind of line up the numbers I was learning in terms of independence and then when slavery was well officially abolished but as we know that wasn't actually abolished until 2 years later. I didn't have anything, a frame of reference, to know if there was a celebration. So learning about that in college, I was excited to learn about it, but saddened that I hadn't heard about it until I was you know a young adult so for me it's just a really important holiday in in a time in which I think as states or in institutions are now recognizing Juneteenth, we can start to definitely educate others and especially at a younger age about the significance of the holiday.

Courtney Jones Carney

Krishna let's hear from you what's Juneteenth mean to you.

Krishna Williams

Sure, I mean honestly just like Danielle... well probably not just like Danielle 'cause, I think she knew before me, but I didn't have a clear understanding until probably like about 20 years ago, where my daughter's godparents, they would celebrate and because that was her godparents so then I was introduced to it, but I don't remember during Black History Month. I definitely don't remember in school and I'm a you know, I'm a Gen X so I just don't remember these things being taught or talked about so I had no clear understanding, but you know, I think now that I do know, of course I did my own research, but it does also... it is a celebration, but it also then highlights the pain of it all right, and so for me, it was a little challenging to have... you want to celebrate of course, you know, we know how to have a good time about anything it don't matter what it is right? But it does bring, when you read the entire you know history of it, I don't know... it just also brings up the pain of it all. But you do try to come just being Black alone in America, you do try to focus on the joy around it even if it's a painful experience.

Rosemary Ferreira

I think similarly to Danielle and Krishna I didn't hear about Juneteenth until later on in my life, until like adulthood, and I wanted to bring a question up around why do you think that is like why is it that we're learning about Juneteenth really for a lot of folks last year June 2020 was the first time that they heard of Juneteenth because so many corporations like on Twitter or folks on social media as well talking

about Juneteenth. And so it seems like for a lot of folks this is a new holiday can y'all share a little bit about why is it that we don't learn about these parts of Black history?

Danielle Harris

I was thinking actually about this earlier today. There is this book called *Lies My Teacher Told Me* I forgot the name of the author but it basically talks about American history in a way in which most textbooks when you're in elementary, middle, and high school just don't talk about and it just talks about the textbook industry and it was really interesting about how the way textbooks are sold and stories are portrayed really depends on the region but then also usually the victor is the one who's going to tell the story and not to say that we weren't well we were oppressed, so it's really I think now it's becoming more common where you are hearing the full picture of what has happened in history, but one thing I remember that, they were talking about in the book is that for English teachers and math teachers, let's say our professors when you're in college, you expect that at a certain point, at the bare minimum, people have the same understanding of like English and grammar and like math, you know like the sciences, but when it comes to history a lot of professors were saying that it's really a mixed bag as to what or how someone was educated and I just recall in my textbook growing up, you know in high school, maybe one chapter was designated to like the Black experience and maybe a couple paragraphs about a couple things here and there, and then my father made the comment that when he was in school like when he was in school in the 50s and 60s there was like a paragraph about slavery, you know so it didn't really go in depth. So I think you know, definitely exposure, really with the various textbooks and just how you know curriculums are based, but I think now history is becoming more inclusive, which is definitely a positive step. There is definitely like room for growth and continued room for growth, but I definitely think that is a big portion of it.

Krishna Williams

So I would say that I think for me when I think about it generationally I just don't know how good of a job each generation has done with the next one right and I think that we can leave it to the educational system, but we already know the flaws there. And I think that I often question as a community did we often do ourselves a disservice by not remembering almost? 'cause I mean, you can't forget the pain the pain still lives on but I think that in order to kind of move through or move past it, you didn't then often forget to share what the stories are right. So I mean, I was pretty much I mean, my mom is considered a Boomer and I always refer to generations because I think that's how I can make the connection with all of this. For me and my generation, my mom was a young mom, but I was basically raised with my grandparents and so even then I don't remember these stories like any stories about... I didn't hear about some of my grandfather's experiences and things that he dealt with being in army, being discriminated against not, being able to be a pilot like he wanted to, he was a French interpreter... like I didn't know these things until I was older. But I mean, these are the stories and then that was later on towards when he was gone, now he's passed away and I just like we didn't... there wasn't not a real transition to, I feel like, in each generation we couldn't really rely on this system and I think when we start talking about how folks did it. Our ancestors did it, I think they did a better job, but then somewhere along the way we just almost just forgot and so these things just weren't to me passed on in that way, and celebrated in that way. 'cause I mean should we have been celebrating this a long time ago? No doubt. But what we didn't know what to be celebrating because the focus is normally the slavery part of it and not really the liberation side of it and what that really looked like for all of us, so I

just feel like we kind of missed out some of that because we were relying on the system, but that we knew was not set up for us.

Courtney Jones Carney

Yeah, so there's an African proverb "Until the lion learns to write every story will always glorify the hunter" and so really thinking about that and connecting back to what Danielle said earlier, you know the hunter is telling the story, many of the stories about history in this country, in the U.S. are really steeped from white experiences right so using that white lens to tell the story and would you tell a story that paints you in a picture that isn't beautiful right? And so we're seeing textbooks that are currently used that talk about enslavement as if it were indentured servitude, as if folks were sharecropping right? Instead of talking about the fact that it was chattel slavery, that was passed down through ancestry. And that there were laws put into place to ensure that if you had one Black drop of blood in you, you were Black so that you would remain property for generations right? And so no it doesn't feel good, I wouldn't think for folks who are white to talk about all this unhappiness, like all of this negativity that is a part of the U.S. history and I think that that's really important, too, is to recognize that this is a part of U.S. history, where too often things that impact individuals of color get talked about as like their American history. This is Black folks history. This is AAPI folks history right. This is Latinx American history and it's like no this is American history. Let's paint this full picture of what it means to be American and to live in America and that can't only be from this white lens, so I think that that's probably part of the reason to get back to that original question why so many people haven't heard about Juneteenth is because it didn't matter to folks who were writing textbooks. It wasn't their experience. So why would they talk about it? Why would they know about it and why would they do that research? And so luckily for me I am the child of a history teacher, she's retired long retired now, so they go on Facebook recently, what were the perks of your parent's jobs? Textbooks and maps so I got to come home from school and have my mom 's curriculum. I think that that kind of shapes what you know to Krishna's point but then also thinking about like is it the responsibility of Black folks who are dealing with so much structural and systematic oppression to constantly have to educate ourselves when sometimes people are just trying to survive right? So I don't think the onus should be just on us like absolutely I think it's important for us to teach American history and Black American history and our own houses, but then our children should also be learning this in mainstream education. And just one more thing... This year alone like in this past year, there was a Utah school that sent home permission slips and students were able to opt out of Black History Month curriculum. I don't know of a permission slip ever being sent to my house, where I got to opt out of learning about you know what led to the 4th of July right like I've never had an option. I learned it because that's American history and so it's clear that American history of People of Color gets treated in a very different way. Krishna, you want to get in there?

Krishna Williams

Yeah, I was gonna respond because it's to that point, I mean, you're right. That is often the problem that we are responsible for all of that for us right? We can never just show up right? Show up, be seen. We have to find ways to better ourselves on the umpteenth level. We have to come correct in every situation we're in. We gotta know our history, past the history down like it's... There is too many things that we are responsible for just in being. Just in being Black. So I appreciate you bringing that point up that you know, we should be able to show up and hear about us and be seen in these history books 'cause you're right, it's not just Black. It's not Black history. It's American history and the fact that... The

problem with America and this is probably a little off topic, but the problem is that because it's all about the perception right? We wanna look a certain way, appear a certain way, so you showing up and talking about slavery oh no no that's in the past oh no no everything is in the past when it comes to the hurt and pain and suffrage of a people. And so that's but that's how we wanna look and appear to the world that we are bigger and better than what we claim to be. And really what we are is all that we never do internal work. It's all external so of course, it's not gonna show. You're not gonna see any of our history in it, because that shows all of the wrongs that have been done right, so I totally agree.

Danielle Harris

And then to add to that you know, I was just sitting here thinking about how other countries have handled atrocities to part of their citizens and you think about South Africa and you think about Germany and the United States has a real difficult time with just making it I don't even know even know how to say them to make it right. You know, but it's just even with what we're seeing now with a lot of people being or kind of protesting different teachings like critical race theory. It's like the alternative is if we don't talk about it we're just going to have another generation of adults who are going to be interacting with you know in really diverse settings, and for all the reasons that Krishna just mentioned like it does become exhausting for People of Color or other marginalized communities when no one when you kind of have to constantly deal with microaggressions, which sometimes... Or just aggressions which sometimes intentional or not, it happens and so it just it just blows my mind with the level of discomfort some people might have with teaching people American history because America as we know they always say it's a melting pot, but you know you just can't just talk about only certain aspects of it because the reality is I mean, it is what it is, and so, if it makes you uncomfortable to even talk about it think about the people who've experienced it and think about the situation that you're going to be you know, having the next generation or just even current people just ill prepared. So that's my little soapbox speech about that.

Seante Hatcher

What Danielle was saying like even before we can work on reconciliation like can we just get a real acknowledgement, not just a thing or I'm sorry from a president, but just like know that it's woven into everything that we do when we teach things whatever it's just part of what happened here.

Krishna Williams

I was gonna say to with Seante was saying about the acknowledgement and and honestly the real acknowledgement is not steeped and you know it's not about feeling sorry for anybody or putting the blame on this current generation. We already get it like no no not you specifically owned slaves, we get it, but the real acknowledgement is when it shows up in policies and these laws like that's where it shows up because the problem is that's the problem, that if you can't even acknowledge that you benefited off of white supremacy, you got at least start there like that's the real, the realness of it all but we can't even get to that point because people don't want to own that right? And so, it's just that's if you can start with that and then understand what it means and how a system has been created to keep folks down, like that's just 101 you know what I mean, but we can't even get to that place because you know, people get worked up about that. You know, I see people, crying on TV about critical race theory. I'm just like girl, you living in Iowa girl what? What's wrong with what? Who has hurt you? Nobody you living a life.

Seante Hatcher

And they don't even know what it is.

Krishna Williams

Right.

Rosemary Ferreira

Let's stop there. So, what is critical race theory and why is it garnering so much media attention? Well critical race theory or CRT is a framework that is based on the idea that race is a social construct that is deeply embedded within the legal system. CRT was developed within the field of legal studies in the 1970s and 80s, but has now been utilized in various disciplines to examine the ways in which the social, economic, and political systems of the United States create and maintain inequities based on race.

Four states, Idaho, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, have recently passed legislation that limits how teachers discuss racism and other forms of oppression. For example, the Tennessee legislation states that schools cannot teach that "an individual, by virtue of the individual's race or sex, is inherently privileged, racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or subconsciously." If schools violate these laws, the state can withhold public funding. There are now a total of 15 states that have passed or are seeking to pass similar legislation. These legislators and public officials point to Critical Race Theory and argue that it is divisive, destructive, and a threat to the country. Teachers across the country fear that these laws are backlash for the anti-racism initiatives that arose from Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020. As one teacher put it in an article from Education Week, "It basically says, 'We know what's going on in society in terms of police brutality, but ... don't bring that conversation into your classroom.'"

Let's go back to Krishna as she continues to share her thoughts on Critical Race Theory.

Krishna Williams

Because you know what because that's then rooted... they have that now rooted in politics right. They politicize that so now it becomes that so but anyway, that's what I would say. But anyway that's why I was there.

Courtney Jones Carney

And while you mentioned like things being rooted in politics. Just even thinking about how there was so much attention to Juneteenth in 2020 and a lot of that sparked because then President Trump was planning a rally in Tulsa on Juneteenth right and it's like you know shot out, I guess because hey, I don't know if you knew it, but you made the whole buzz about Juneteenth that perhaps would not have been there because the timing was totally off. There was no acknowledgement no real knowledge, no like did like there was no forethought to this probably isn't a good date to one, host a rally but two, to host it to host it in Tulsa of all places. You know, thinking about all of the Black people who were murdered in Tulsa during a riot and so I think that yeah, definitely this is all connected to politics, and then the way that we that white folks end up learning about this holiday in particular, Juneteenth and other aspects that impact People of Color, in this situation Black people, is when it gets tied to politics.

Rosemary Ferreira

Okay, let's stop here again and provide some more context about Tulsa and why Trump choosing to hold a rally there on Juneteenth was triggering for a lot of people. This year is the 100th-year anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre, one of the deadliest riots in U.S. history. On May 31st and June 1st 1921, mobs of white residents of Tulsa, Oklahoma attacked Black residents and businesses of the Greenwood district. The Greenwood district was known at the time as Black Wall Street for being one of the wealthiest Black communities in the country.

The massacre began because of allegations that a Black teenage boy had sexually assaulted a white woman on an elevator. Groups of white Tulsans, some of whom were given weapons by city officials, attacked Greenwood, burning down and looting over 1400 homes and businesses. While official numbers recorded 36 people died as a result of the massacre, historians estimate that the number may have been as high as 300 people. On May 20th of this year, 2021, Viola Fletcher, an 107-year old survivor of the Tulsa massacre testified before members of the House Judiciary Committee calling for the country to officially recognize the massacre and to demand reparations for the damages ensued by the riots.

In our interview, Danielle connects the lack of education on historical moments like the Tulsa massacre to the failure of political leadership to recognize the significance of these moments.

Danielle Harris

And so that that that is a great illustration how I also didn't learn about the Tulsa riots until I was in college and so again if it makes you think about the state of American history because if no one in that room knew about two of these major you know big events? How how? Do how do we even get here and that's problematic, as well. Even though you know Donald Trump acknowledged Juneteenth, it's like but there is still is, disconnect and then to have uh a position on a national level and let something like that happen. I'm not gonna get into whether or not, that was intentional or not, but I'm just saying like those two dates and just kind of the merger of those two... It's highly problematic.

Krishna Williams

But doesn't that just like speak to just this country in general. You know it often is this like this is how they show up often where it's no it's not even just acknowledgement, but just like I mean, simply reading the room. Like Black folks ain't got no choice but to read the room. I know that's bad English. But we ain't got no choice but to read the room because that's how we have to show up that way. And I can think what some of the history or the lessons that I was passed on to me is how to show up right? My grandma don't have no bad shoes, don't... like this whole long list of how you need to present yourself and that's even before you even go in and say anything just the actual presentation. But whereas for other folks they can show up any way they please, lack of education, mediocracy, don't have to have the degree. This is how you can show up in a world where we have this level, higher level that we have to aspire to every day. So I understand folks tired of you know all of that and it's like people just be like no, I don't feel like it. This I'm coming with my crab legs and asks me if I want to buy crab legs with my EBT card again and watch see what happened.

Courtney Jones Carney

James Baldwin spoke about how... How you go from crab legs and EBT cards to James Baldwin, but we're gonna do it, so James Baldwin talked about the ways that like white people didn't see him didn't

see Black people and that Black people had to watch every move of white people basically to learn how to survive. You had to watch these movements to figure out if you were safe or you weren't safe like you had to read the room. And I think that that brings up this point that, like the country's national narrative, like the experiences they don't reflect the historical or the lived experiences of everyone who's in the U.S. and so, based off of our social identities, folks are experiencing this country in indistinctly different ways. And so when folks have so much privilege, they don't even have to think about reading the room. That's not even a forethought, but folks who are heavily scrutinized it's just pressure all day, every day to constantly read the room and react in a way that's going to allow you to survive. Go ahead Seante.

Seante Hatcher

I'm just going to say that I think there is a part of reading the room that that we... that people who are considered white right because everybody who calls themselves white wasn't always white, that they do know how to read the room when their people when their ancestors came here, they figured out how to be a part of this whiteness. Was it flipping their hair? Was it talking English was it eating English or American food and leaving their culture to the wayside? They gave up a lot of things to join the cool kids at the lunch table, which we call whiteness. And they gave that stuff up and so even when they say like my ancestors didn't own slaves and all of these things but you joined this. What you are known by the people, you hang with, you are all... you are now a part of this group because you have taken on the privilege and you now even call yourself white so you are a part of that and they have read the room and they joined in gladly to get all of the privileges.

Krishna Williams

No, I totally agree and that's a great point about like you do what you need to do to survive and that's what that looked like right, but you had a skin color that allowed you to do so, for the most part. And so it's almost selective. You know it's this idea that you know whiteness is better in all facets. But any skin, any melanin is like Courtney was saying in the beginning about the one drop. You know any remnants of Blackness in you put you back down or lowers you, you know, whatever in the in the caste system as Isabel Wilkerson talks about like and so immediately so you know how to elevate yourself because we can talk about folks that are all the skin folk ain't kinfolk who also read that same room and said you know what I need to connect with that person because that part this is where the power sits. And it didn't matter about whatever else and whatever other folks were doing, but this is what I need to get here. And then sometimes it is showing up in whiteness. I don't have to look it. But I can just show up like that. And if I identify with those people and if I connect with those people that don't no matter if they talk about me behind my back. No matter what they say would sometimes in your own face, but it didn't matter because you sold out all of that for the whiteness and that's really what it is.

Courtney Jones Carney

But it seems like to me like it's reading the room only in one way like going in one direction and so that's reading the room, so that you can figure out how to achieve whiteness, how to fake it till you make it how to be accepted, how to get folded into whiteness and then I guess when you get folded in like do you, do you stop reading the room? Like are you only reading the room in order to survive but not necessarily recognizing those experiences of other folks. But it seems to me like the concentration is on

figuring out how you aspire towards whiteness constantly not understanding the experiences of folks across social identities that are not white.

Courtney Jones Carney

I'm going to you know switch gears just a little bit to kind of bring us back to Juneteenth and so what are your thoughts on what could or should institutional and national recognition of Juneteenth look like? Seante do you want to lead us off on this?

Seante Hatcher

Oof so I definitely do think that there and I, I think this is where I came in around just some historical pieces and understanding what it is I still think we're at that point where we need to make sure that everyone knows what it is, and why it needs to be celebrated as an American holiday right. Then I still... there is a piece of me and I don't I... I'm hesitant to say it but I do feel like there is this needs to be a day of not atonement for some, but uh definitely a day of work for some, like they to get out here and try your hand at something new. Get into the Black culture, maybe do some volunteer work at some at some places, if you want to make some lemonade for some Black people, that's cool too. I'll take mine with a lot of ice. That's a joke, but I do think we do need to start with the education and one of the things when we talked about the United States being a melting pot and it really doesn't, we don't all somehow melt together like it's more like a salad bowl, where everybody kind of do their own thing, is try to join in and learn and like learn and be a part of and grow yourself use this time to grow yourself in and understand more about the Black community.

Courtney Jones Carney

I like this idea of a Juneteenth Day of service, specifically with lemonade or sweet tea. I like sweet tea. Krishna what are your thoughts on what this could look like either at an institutional or national level?

Krishna Williams

Yeah, and we need regular sugar, not raw. I'm just saying we don't I mean, it's just not so.

Seante Hatcher

No agave!

Krishna Williams

We don't really it don't, it don't really it don't mesh. We don't... Anyway, okay so I think you know, I had heard something interesting last year doing Pride Month about and some of the leaders in the LGBTQ community were concerned about the commercialization of pride right? 'cause then you walk past every store and they were you know your pride shirts and you know the rainbow like everything so they were a little concerned about that and I was like well, but this isn't it's the point of it not the commercialization, but the point of it getting out there and everybody recognizes that that's what June is right, and so, but in the process of that I was saying thinking to myself, that is a first step, but because we live in a capitalistic society it's always going to be commercialized. People's pain and suffering will always be capitalized on and incentivized in some way somebody, may not be you in the community, but someone so and then a little kickback the community will get right, whoever endured the pain and suffering, sometimes right. But I think to Seante's point, it always is going to be an individual thing see

because when you put in policies in place in any organization or you start somewhere we celebrating holidays and all that kind of stuff. Yeah, we get excited about that because yay, we're being acknowledged or another community yay we're being acknowledged. But it's really about the individuals who don't honestly care about any of this, yeah, they may see it, they may pass by, but it's always the individual work that makes the most difference because you can't change... you can put policies in place, but if someone in there who is making the decision is bias or prejudiced or has any bitter racist whatever, what difference does it make? So I'm all for the individual work for folks like that's where it starts. What you doing in your home? What are you teaching your children? That's where we start so I don't care you can put Juneteenth shirts all around. We can have a big celebration every year, but it doesn't matter if tomorrow when I go into work and somebody making policies that's against Black and Brown people then what is it all for? It's just another T shirt and another day for me to have my crab legs, which I'm all here for but we need the policies in place so that's when the real change on an individual basis.

Courtney Jones Carney

Policies, day of service, individual work, lemonade, sweet tea, crab legs.

Seante Hatcher

We almost had a whole meal. Come on Danielle, bring us home with the potatoes or something.

Danielle Harris

I mean, first of all I was going to start off with I mean, I would like a half and half light on ice if there is anyone listening who's not from the Baltimore or Maryland area, that's an Arnold Palmer. Krishna that was hard to follow because I was going to start off talking about I want to walk into Target. My goal setting would be Hobby Lobby, I want to see a Juneteenth flag. I wanna see... I wanna see it all but then, all that, like the balloon was like popping in the air was coming out Krishna for good reasons. And so it almost made me think about I was, I was looking at you know us and for many of us who don't know us a lot of us also on this podcast happen to be social workers, and for social workers we have to do continuing education to maintain your license if that's what you want to have you license. So we have to you know every 2 years. You know shout out to the governing board like you going to have to do these 40 hours. You know there's all this, this, this there's... learning never stops and you need it in order to just make sure you're evolving as a social worker and I think... that may be ingrained institutionally for various institutions. It has to maybe like a... I would love to see like in continuing education component where people just have to learn about other populations and other and other issues, I mean. If in yes aspect, I'm saying like you know you really have it's it's I think for for people who are in marginalized. I think always teaching the word marginalized. But just for the sake of kind of being on the same page like you have to go above and beyond, to try and find information to share with others and especially like youth, I know like for the youth my life, whether it's my godchildren or my niece and nephew. It's like in my mind, and you know you know their parents also they do an amazing job with you know, finding stories that are going to reflect their history, but also I shouldn't have to always go to... I should be able to walk into the Barnes and Noble or a major outlet. You know major retailer and find what I'm looking for I shouldn't always have to go to like a pan African Cultural Center. They're always it's it's needed, but then also I mean, it's like we should just be you know access to history and just and stories should should not be this hunt so I would just love to see just it, you know, especially with Juneteenth. You

know things also not just having to be relegated to this like June but just like this being able to access stuff without having to without having anyone have an excuse as to a barrier as to why they can't get information. And then that also might minimize people asking what should I read or what should I do and it's like well there's also, Google. But then also it's like if you can just walk into like a book store or major places where more people are well versed then that's also half the battle. And I would like you know potato salad.

Courtney Jones Carney

I don't like potato salad oh goodness. I don't like mayonnaise, so there's that, so you know, I think that, like as we think about potentially like being able to walk into any store and find the books that you need and the shirts that you need that represent Juneteenth, I think will also be really helpful if those products were made by Black people and the profits went to Black people, but if it's just about going onto a Black woman's craft group in Facebook and picking all of the ideas and then making items that mimic that without acknowledging who did the work, who came up with the ideas, and also giving them their coin, then I don't want those items right. So I think that it's really important that we balance that to major corporations that are white owned should not financially benefit from Juneteenth, like they just I just don't think that they should so we need to figure out ways that Black folks are guaranteed to get their money every day, but especially on Juneteenth.

Danielle Harris

You make an excellent point I think about Apple and how they attempted to make a special watch band for a Black History Month and that was a big flop for a lot of reasons. Number one the band was kind of expensive and then you had to it... so to your point. It's like OK, so you're raising awareness I guess for Black History Month with this Apple with this band for your watch and then you can purchase like certain faces, but where is that money going? Are you reinvesting it back into Black startup tech companies? Are you raising money to hire... Apple doesn't have to raise money... but like to hire more people. But it's how are you investing that money back? Because certainly if I buy if you know, I have Apple Watch. I mean, I would certainly love to buy a band and maybe buy a loop base but who is it benefiting?

Seante Hatcher

Yeah, no Kente cloth on Capitol Hill. We don't need that. That's not helpful. But when we were talking about education it made me think of this other series that I was listening to where they incorporated the Dakota war into the curriculum to learn about the annihilation, really genocide of the Native, the Native people in Minnesota, and they were going to different classrooms and learning about like listening to the teachers teach it and one teacher was just in there like yeah, well the Indians... and she said Indians, the Indians didn't know how to handle conflicts, so they all they knew was to fight and that's how the war started and so the Americans just had to answer back and it was like whoa okay so you don't know, and this is the teacher teaching like 3rd graders, and so even when we were going back to Krishna said about even when we try to implement like a day of learning or day of service, if the people if the implementation is not correct, people will still not get the right information and so I mean that's another thing, too, to look at if we're just talking about you know how to make it successful is to make sure that that people are teaching the correct history even if it's uncomfortable that they're doing that.

Courtney Jones Carney

So I want to ask one final question, and so we live in a culture that include cancel culture and some people are for it and some people aren't so with that in mind what do we do with 4th of July? Danielle?

Danielle Harris

I'm glad you asked. Say less. So I was just thinking before this podcast, scouting my thoughts and 4th of July has been difficult for me, I would say as I learned about Juneteenth and then the more I learned at that college about well, just so much it. It's hard to and I think we mentioned we talked earlier, it's hard to see or and celebrate independence because, like who's independence. And I'm also an American but that's not it's not independence for me. My ancestor's were still in the field so I I don't celebrate 4th of July. Historically, I obviously recognize that's you know when the you know signed the Declaration of Independence, even though there are people here before us. But that's a whole other conversation. So for 4th of July, I mean, I think for a lot of people actually set up this is going to be a personal choice. But yeah, it's really difficult, and it still continues to be one of those things where as soon as I walk into stores and that's all I see, or the 4th of July, you know, celebrations or like the decorations and everything you know and a lot of a lot of patriotic sayings, but it was It's just It's rooted in the suppression of my people so. Yeah, I mean it. It's definitely something it's definitely a challenge, so yeah, that that's wrong man. I I don't know if that's ever gonna change for me I think I'm just gonna have to just really uplift Juneteenth because to me, that's more accurate. As you know, as mentioned by someone else before like there's still other you know oppressed people that even to this day, they're on paper, I guess legally free, but are they really? But I I think I'm just gonna have to start kind of normalizing Juneteenth celebrations.

Seante Hatcher

I think it's part of that you know double bind having these conflicting ideas. You know, we could eat crab legs, we just won't be happy about it on the 4th of July. We'll just do it at home at the table quietly. But I think you know living in the U.S. it's always that right? Whether or not like I love Broadway plays and I like Hamilton, but when you know what the real history, Hamilton and what they were about like uh? Can I just like put that part to a side and just really enjoy the music? Can I just do that? And you know working for large white institutions but then they were like ooo who couldn't get in and you know Thurgood Marshall and all you know like it's always this push pull of like I'm here, but am I really here? They don't want me here, but I'm here anyway, type of feeling. 4th of July is just another one, I mean, it's always gonna be for me just like everything else in the United States, you do as much as you can and you try to just let the other part sit on the side for a little bit until you ready to address it because we can't just say well. I can't even remember who was the person that said to like be Black in America, that was James Baldwin, too, is to be enraged like it's always that so sometimes you pick up the rage and you ready to do something with it and other times, you're just like ah, I don't have the energy today.

Krishna Williams

No, I totally agree with that I you know, I hadn't really given 4th of July much thought outside of it being a day off. And if it's on Saturday and they gave you Friday off. I do like that. But other than that. I don't give it that much thought in terms of the connection with Juneteenth. I hadn't really thought that really through and you know, I Seante's point its just one of those things like you just gotta choose your

battles you know. I I don't know and I don't know where we go from there and and it's just so many things and I think one of the things you had were talking about earlier Courtney I think you were going to ask us to address with just that whole thing about you know what it means to be Black and do you have to pick up every man thing and run with it like I don't know it It often causes me concern about having to acknowledge all of these things, run with all these things be a part of every movement be. You know stand on this do that, like it just. For self care purposes, it's exhausting and so that I have to give that some thought. But I'm glad you brought that to us 'cause I just didn't really give it a lot of thought about 4th of July again outside of it being a day off. But I can appreciate but I think and when I look at it when I think of it in light of Juneteenth. It does make me appreciate Juneteenth more though. I will say that because that is a true acknowledgement of what we needed I feel like as a community and so that does make me reflect more on that.

Danielle Harris

And I will say, I mean it like I'm not gonna be hosting anything. It's very rare like if something like I'm that person. I mean, I'll roll through and get a plate and I'm gonna tell you why I don't celebrate 4th of July. You know there's articles about people like that and I... hey, I'm one of those people, but you know I'm going to get my plate and I'm telling you like hey, you know it's opportunity.

Krishna Williams

Wait, are you the person passing out pamphlets at the July 4th party?

Danielle Harris

I mean I'm gonna get my plate, I'm gonna get my plate but I'm gonna tell people like you know I don't celebrate this so...

Krishna Williams

No, that's what you do Danielle. You come up with a little pamphlet, like you got a little brochure you pass out. I'll say this is why now I'm gonna get my plate, but let me tell you you need to look at this.

Danielle Harris

Now, you know, per the things that we are planning, I actually do have a little pamphlet so I might have to start and it was pulling up...

Krishna Williams

I knew it!

Danielle Harris

Pulling it from my purse, you know.

Seante Hatcher

I'm just gonna wear my Juneteenth shirt on the 4th while I get my plate. I mean...

Danielle Harris

There you go.

Courtney Jones Carney

That's what I was going to say. My family and I, we roll up on the 4th of July in our shirts that say Independence Day and have a line through them and then say Juneteenth so that's how we operate.

Danielle Harris

And that's the work that's, that's the work that we're doing.

Krishna Williams

That's the work you do. No, you're right. That's what we do. So you can be in protest even while enjoying crab legs. And I'm...

Courtney Jones Carney

Absolutely.

Danielle Harris

What is it? Yeah, what is it like the participant protester? Yeah, yeah.

Seante Hatcher

Look, I'm a 4th of July... I'm not an ally. I'm just I'm adjacent.

Krishna Williams

Look, we gotta get creative out here, right? Like it's crab legs on the line! Lemonade!

Courtney Jones Carney

Well, you know, I think that there's a lot of speculation on what our ancestors' wildest dreams would be, but of course, many of us can agree that it would be a day of rest. And so, if the 4th of July offers a day of rest and not working. I'm going to take that and I'm also going to take those crab legs.