



Society for the Study
of Social Problems
In Pursuit of Social Justice

Poverty, Class, & Inequality Division Newsletter

Fall 2020

Message from the Chair

Dear PCID Community,

Earlier in our Spring 2020 newsletter, I wrote: "Wherever you are and however you are coping with your current circumstances, I hope that you are finding strength in your various communities." My hope remains the same for each of you today, the day after Election Day, in the middle of an increasingly out-of-control pandemic.

In this newsletter, there is good news to share from our Division members! You will also find an essay by PCID member Korey Tillman as well as a Call for Papers and the opportunity to nominate yourself or another member to run for the 2021-2023 Division Chair position.

Please feel free to contact me (ekg@unm.edu) at any time should you have questions about PCID or SSSP. In the meantime, I wish you all safety and health.

Best,

Elizabeth Korver-Glenn, Ph.D.

Chair, PCID

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Member News

Articles, Essays, Chapters

- Cabin, William. 2020. "Lost in Translation: The *Jimmo* Case as Policy Implementation Failure." *Home Health Management and Practice*.
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- Ceron-Anaya, Hugo. "Privilege and Space." In, Storey, Sheehan, and Bodoh-Creed (eds.), *The Everyday Life of Urban Inequality: Ethnographic Case Studies of Global Cities* (2020) Lexington: Lanham, Pp 149-165.
- Hogan, Richard and Carolyn Cummings Perrucci. 2020. "Earnings Inequality in 2016 among Anglos, Latinxs, and Blacks." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 42(3):363-380.
- Howell, Junia and Elizabeth Korver-Glenn. Forthcoming. "The Increasing Effect of Neighborhood Racial Composition on Home Values, 1980-2015." *Social Problems*.
<https://academic.oup.com/socpro/advance-article/doi/10.1093/socpro/spaa033/5900507?guestAccessKey=3f763018-8869-4fd9-ba21-987daa73e324>
- Korver-Glenn, Elizabeth, Sylvia Emmanuel, Mary E. Campbell, and Verna M. Keith. 2020. "Media Consumption and Racial Residential Preferences." *Social Science Quarterly* 101(5):1936-1950.
- Kurwa, Rahim. 2020. "The New Man in the House Rules: How the Regulation of Housing Vouchers Turns Personal Bonds Into Eviction Liabilities." *Housing Policy Debate* 30(6):926-949.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/GUAG4KEFQPGTYXW4U2CV/full?target=10.1080/10511482.2020.1778056>
- Kurwa, Rahim. 2020. "Opposing and Policing Racial Integration: Evidence from the Housing Choice Voucher Program." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*. <http://doi:10.1017/S1742058X20000211>
- McLeskey, Matthew H. "Film Review: *The Era of Neoliberalism*." *Teaching Sociology*.
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- Perucci, Carolyn Cummings, Mangala Subramaniam, and Robert Perucci. 2020. "Gender and Publication in Two Longstanding Sociology Journals, 1960-2010." *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* 57(1): 25-47.
- Serrão, Rodrigo. 2020. "Racializing Region: Internal Orientalism, Social Media, and the Perpetuation of Stereotypes and Prejudice against Brazilian Nordestinos." *Latin American Perspectives*. DOI: 10.1177/0094582X20943157.
- Serrão, Rodrigo, and João Chaves. 2020. "Immigrant Evangelicalism in the COVID-19 Crisis: Reactions and Responses from Brazilian Evangelical Churches in Florida."

International Journal of Latin American Religions. DOI: 10.1007/s41603-020-00111-5.

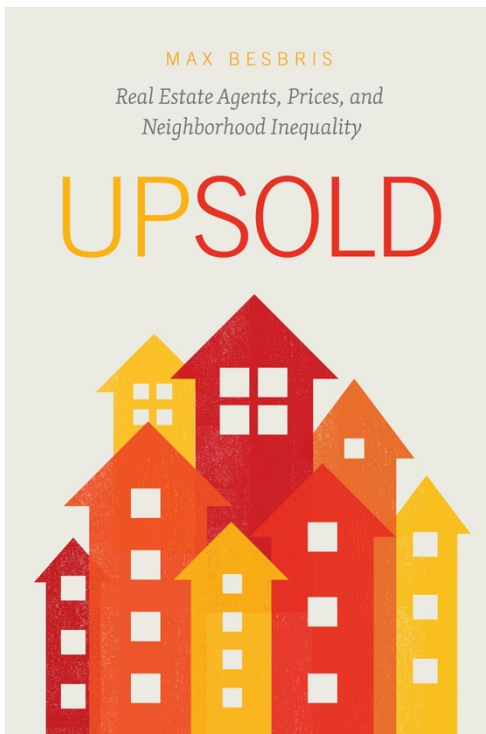
Tillman, Korey. 2020. "Involuntary Servitude." *The Sociological Review*.
<https://www.thesociologicalreview.com/fiction-involuntary-servitude/>

Awards

Matthew McLeskey's presentation submission, "The Epidemiological Causes and Consequences of Neighborhood Stigma," was awarded the Best Scientific Abstract Award (\$500), at the 11th International Conference on Stigma, a conference aimed at practitioner education and advocacy (<http://www.whocanyoutell.org/2020-conference/call-for-abstracts-2020/>). The conference runs 11/16-11/20.

Books

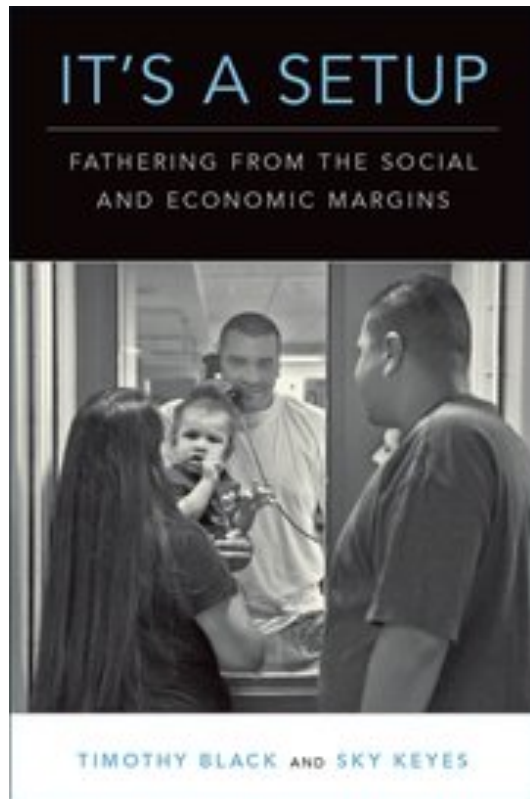
Besbris, Max. 2020. *Upsold: Real Estate Agents, Prices, and Neighborhood Inequality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/U/bo56555421.html>



In this book, sociologist Max Besbris shows how agents successfully upsell, inducing buyers to spend more than their initially stated price ceilings. His research reveals how face-to-face interactions influence buyers' ideas about which neighborhoods are desirable and which are less-worthy investments and how these preferences ultimately contribute to neighborhood inequality. Stratification defines cities in the contemporary United States. In an era marked by increasing income segregation, one of the main sources of this inequality is housing prices. A crucial part of wealth inequality, housing prices are also directly linked to the uneven distribution of resources across neighborhoods and to racial and ethnic segregation. *Upsold* shows how the interactions between real estate agents and buyers make or break neighborhood reputations and construct neighborhoods by price. Employing revealing ethnographic and quantitative housing data, Besbris outlines precisely how social influences come together during the sales process.

In *Upsold*, we get a deep dive into the role that the interactions with sales agents play in buyers' decision-making and how neighborhoods are differentiated, valorized, and deemed to be worthy of a certain price.

Black, Timothy and Sky Keyes. 2020. *It's a Setup: Fathering from the Social and Economic Margins*. New York: Oxford University Press.
<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/its-a-setup-9780190062224?lang=en&cc=us#>



The expectation for fathers to be more involved with parenting their children and pitching in at home are higher than ever, yet broad social, political, and economic changes have made it more difficult for low-income men to be fathers. In *It's a Setup*, Timothy Black and Sky Keyes ground a moving and intimate narrative in the political and economic circumstances that shape the lives of low-income fathers. Based on 138 life history interviews, they expose the contradiction that while the norms and expectations of father involvement have changed rapidly within a generation, labor force and state support for fathering on the margins has deteriorated. Tracking these life histories, they move us through the lived experiences of job precarity, welfare cuts, punitive child support courts, public housing neglect, and the criminalization of poverty to demonstrate that without transformative systemic change, individual determination is not enough. Fathers on the social and economic margins are setup to fail.

Call for Papers – Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change

Call for chapters, Volume 46

RSMCC offers scholars an opportunity to submit their research for possible inclusion as a chapter in one of the leading sources of research and theory-building in the field. This volume will focus on race and ethnicity, but we welcome submissions appropriate to any of the three broad foci reflected in the *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* (RSMCC).

While Volume 46 will be open to all submissions, one section will be devoted to movements for racial equity and the operation of race in social movements. For the remaining chapters, we particularly welcome research examining the role of race and/or ethnicity in conflicts and social change. The recent and global racial justice protests, led by Black Lives Matter, offer many important avenues for examining the continuing significance of race, and we encourage analyses of this movement, as well as the role of the intertwined concepts of race and ethnicity in social movements more broadly. We also encourage submissions examining these issues in social change organizations beyond those considered protest groups.

About the Series

RSMCC is a fully peer-reviewed series of original research that has been published annually for over 40 years. We continue to publish the work of many leading scholars in social movements, social change, nonviolent action, and peace and conflict studies.

RSMCC enjoys a wide library subscription base; all volumes are not only published in book form but are also available online through [Emerald Insight](#) via subscribing libraries or individual subscriptions. This ensures wider distribution and easier access to your scholarship while maintaining the book series at the same time. This title is indexed in Scopus, and volumes from this series are included in the Thomson Reuters Book Citation Index.

Submissions

To be considered for inclusion in Volume 46, papers must arrive by December 31, 2020. Earlier submissions are especially welcomed. Initial decisions are generally made within 10-12 weeks. Manuscripts accepted for this volume will have gone through double-blind peer review.

Send submission as a WORD document attached to an email to Lisa Leitz, RSMCC editor-in-chief, at rsmcc@chapman.edu. For initial submissions, any standard social science in-text citation and bibliographic system is acceptable. Remove all self-references in the text and in the bibliography. Word counts should generally not exceed 12,000 words, inclusive of supplemental materials (abstract, tables, bibliography, notes, etc.). Include the paper's title and an unstructured abstract on the first page of the text itself. Send a second file that contains the article title, the unstructured abstract, and full contact information for all authors.

Call for Nominations – Poverty, Class, and Inequality Division Chair, 2021-2023

PCID is currently looking for members who are interested in running for the Division Chair position (2021-2023). If you have questions about the position and/or are interested in nominating yourself or another PCID member, [please let current chair Elizabeth Korver-Glenn \(ekg@unm.edu\)](mailto:ekg@unm.edu) know by December 1, 2020.

Renew SSSP Memberships for 2021!

Please consider renewing your SSSP membership for 2021! Your membership helps keep our division and the Society healthy. It also assists our collective efforts and mission to promote social justice! As a reminder our division mission is to: "to identify the individual, neighborhood, and societal-level factors that produce class structures, create systemic and individual inequalities, and produce and entrench social problems such as unemployment, poverty, homelessness, and hunger, and limit access to food, housing, health care, education, and employment. Our research and scholarship also brings to light and educates about the institutional and structural barriers that limit and hinder the life chances of the sick, old, young, poor, disadvantaged, oppressed and

excluded citizens in all societies. Through our community service and activism, we raise awareness about oppression, exclusion, injustice, persecution, and discrimination.”

To **renew your membership**, visit:

<https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/255/fuseaction/sspmember.portal/userid/-1>

If you are in a financial position to do so, please also consider sponsoring other prospective or current members for next year. If you are interested in sponsoring another member, please contact Michele Koontz at mkoontz3@utk.edu.

“Involuntary Servitude,” by Korey Tillman

The following essay was written by PCID member Korey Tillman, a Ph.D. student in sociology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and NSF Graduate Research Fellow. The essay can also be read here: <https://www.thesociologicalreview.com/fiction-involuntary-servitude/>

“Aggh!”

A gasp, almost inaudible, escapes my mouth as I try to catch the breath I lost to a dream turned sour. The sound oscillates off the concrete walls of my cell, slowly fading away like the image of two mirrors opposing each other. My bed sheets, balled up in the corner of my thin twin size mattress, apparently running from the cold sweat that emerged in my sleep. I stand up in order to stretch, and the aged floors remind my bare feet that no matter the season, my cell has never been quite warm enough for comfort. The early morning sun peeks over the horizon and peers into my cell, creating an amber ambiance that allows shadows to move freely. Judging by the sun and the corrections officer on duty, it can’t be any later than 5:30 in the morning. Anxiety and excitement control my thoughts, for today is the day I am to be released.

When my cell opens at seven o’clock, I’ll be a free man—or what’s left of one, after 30 years in prison. All of this time, and for what, marijuana? What’s the harm in smoking in an empty parking lot? There’s a murderer on my cellblock, do we deserve the same fate? I know the prosecutor had it out for me and seeing all of those charges stacked up against me, taking the plea deal was the correct move—right? Well, it’s water under the bridge now. I can’t wait to see my niece. Does she remember that I’m coming home today? Shoot, does she even remember me? She was only five years old when I got locked up. But what about food? Yes, stir-fry! That’s the first thing I’m going to eat when I get out of here. I hope that restaurant on Ferguson Road is still open.

“Please CO, I need medical, please!”

The distressed words barrel through my thoughts, erasing the queue of inquires I have about life on the “outside.” But why is Tusk yelling for the CO?

No response.

Tusk insists. “CO it’s urgent, I just coughed up blood, I need medical! Please!”

The CO replies. "Tusk, it's a quarter past five. I'll tell the CO that's replacing me in fifteen minutes that you need medical, and then you'll go."

The next fifteen minutes seem to inch by as Tusk chokes on his coughs and agonizes in excruciating pain. The sound of Tusk's despair wakes the rest of our cellblock, whom, like I, become invested in the situation's outcome.

When the new CO has barely taken his position, Tusk shouts. "Hey CO, may I please receive medical?!"

I feel the pain in every word.

The new CO shot down his request, yelling, "Tusk, shut up your whining over there before I give you something to whine about!"

Surprised, Tusk replies, "But the last CO told me that you were going to let me go to medical."

"Oh, clearly we must have a problem" the new CO fires back. Jolting from his seat, the new CO marches diligently down the hall, his chair still rocking in the past. On the walkie-talkie he says, "126-45, Tusk is having an issue. I'm requesting immediate backup."

Within seconds, a militia of CO's stampede past my cell. The sun sizzles. The amber ambiance now an evil red as the CO's rise from the east, planning to set upon Tusk's cell. A hateful murmur follows.

Desperately, Tusk coughs up, "But I was only asking for medical."

His words are palpable. He repents for a crime he has somehow committed. There is scuffling and striking, and then I no longer hear the problematic cough. The sun turns violent. It gives up its nomadic tendencies and takes residence above our cellblock. A red haze emanates from our cells and painted the halls.

"He's dead."

Somberly mentioned by a member of the militia, it is the catalyst in a ripple of anger that permeates through the hall. A tornado of curses, thrown toiletries, and revenge engulf our cellblock. The militia retreat and plan their escape from the victorious, yet tragic, confrontation. Explaining to the nurses that Tusk killed himself, the CO's start to take his body to the coroner. The sun moves on. The blue of the sky replaces its presence. Tusk passes my cell on an uncovered stretcher carried by two COs, his skin bruised the color of the sky. His eyes lay open like a dishonorable soldier, looking into each of our cells while his soul turns in shame. Albeit lifeless on the stretcher, he doesn't seem at peace, but rather, like arguing with himself trying to figure out how he could have written a better end. His body, just like his painful coughs, disappears into the sky where the hallway once was.

"Christopher, let's go! It's seven o'clock."

The CO's words fill my lungs with a precarious angst that causes me to exhale in jittery preparation of my long-awaited departure. My cell is a cell no longer. It transforms into

the chamber where pinballs await launch. The CO's words coil around my legs and put a novel spring in my step. But, as I near the prison's gates, a fear encumbers me, each step exploratory, with the same investigative determination that pushed Lewis and Clark further west. And there she is, my niece. Across the street from the gate, arms folded while leaning with her back against her car. In a grey blazer with the sleeves rolled up, accompanied by black slacks. Her dark glasses on the edge of her nose as if prepared to jump. The shadow under her eyes looks like the result of reading for years in dim light.

I whisper, "Hey Hilary."

The words fall at my feet. In prison those words would have circumnavigated my cellblock. Remembering my freedom, I try again.

"Hey Hilary!"

Her right foot, that had been tapping nervously, ceased as she rose from the car to give me a hug.

The car ride is a sensory overload. My ears bombarded with joyful chatter and the sound of people who could make their own decisions. My eyes perceive a lie. After 30 years, I thought the city would look older, but instead it is refreshed with new condos and restaurants. I forgot what riding in a car felt like. With the windows down, the wind caresses my face with both hands—like a spouse who has just seen their partner for the first time after a military deployment. Between reacquainting my senses with freedom, Hilary and I discuss what I missed in the last 30 years. I am astounded.

"Wait, how much does Oprah make?"

"So, you mean to tell me that marijuana is legal in some states?"

"I still don't understand how Facebook isn't a photo Album..."

"A McIntosh is an apple, but now it's a computer?"

Upon arriving at her house, tired from all the information, I retreat to the couch.

Hilary turns on the tea kettle, then walks past me and says, "Be careful not to be a slave on the outside."

"Please don't joke like that," I retort.

"I'm serious, money is enslaving. I'm a lawyer, and I work long hours so I can pay off my student loans. I'm a slave to money."

The hotplate on which the kettle sits starts to glow.

"Take professional football players for example. They make more money than you or I can imagine, but they allow themselves to be traded and sold. Why? Because they are slaves to money."

Over her shoulder I can see smoke escape from the kettle—it is warming up.

“Look at my mother and father. Together their incomes are below the poverty line but they play the lottery every day. It’s a paradox, their hope for riches prevents them from saving and investing their money wisely, hence perpetuating their poverty. Because...”

I finish her sentence. “They are slaves to money!”

Does money really control all of our lives? No way. We do the things that we love to do and just happen to get paid for it, right? Of course, Hilary loves being a lawyer. But what about the lady who pumped our gas on the way here, does she love her job? My mind is a room full of dark green chalkboards that fill with questions, equations, and symbols. I switch from chalkboard to chalkboard, trying to understand this new concept presented to me. I jump—almost off the couch—from the startling and intruding whistle of the tea kettle. In one melodic stroke, the sound of the tea kettle wipes every chalkboard clean and I sit on the couch even more exhausted. The growling in my stomach reminds me of the stir-fry that I promised myself earlier.

Absent-mindedly, I turn to Hilary, pouring herself a cup a green tea, and say, “I’m going for a walk.”

Approaching Ferguson Road, my stomach jumps in the anticipation of eating stir-fry, like a child on Christmas morning about to open their first present. The street buzzes with activity. It fills with people moving in every direction like a high school prom. Women laugh over cups of coffee. Teenage boys dash across the street (in front of cars) to meet with friends. Children shout rhymes to determine who the designated tagger is. Cars trade honks and the latest music from the radio. Everyone seems to be outside. I see the restaurant straight-ahead at the corner as a man selling cigarettes catches my attention.

“Hey, cool cat, can I hit you with a cig?” he says smoothly.

A man, almost six foot, with the beginnings of a potbelly. He’s the color of dark mahogany, wearing jeans and a black t-shirt that reads *Live Free* in bold white letters. Packs of cigarettes traded like stock in prison and after being in there so long I eventually picked up smoking as a habit. His words are tempting, but after the conversation I had with Hilary, it is his shirt that makes me approach.

He spoke first. “What’s happening, Slim.”

Ashamed of my habit, I utter, “Can I have one cigarette please?”

After I hand him my money, he realizes he doesn’t have enough change.

He smiles at me and says, “No need to get your hair twisted, Slim. Let me holla at my partner down the road and I’ll get you your change.”

He pops his head up, in the manner of a wild meerkat that has just heard danger, and produces a whistle like a cowboy winding up to throw a lasso.

He shouts, “Hey, get over here!”

It seemed that his words floated past the man across the street—also selling cigarettes—and hit a young white woman with blonde hair. Her head snaps back, as if the words were a ball that had just hit her in the nose. Appalled that anyone would throw something at her with such force and directness, she seems offended. She quickly flags down a nearby patrol car and explains her side of the incident. Not noticing this at all, the two cigarette salesmen traded bills and handed me my change.

As we all prepared to part ways we hear, “What’s the problem here?!”

Two officers run up to the suave cigarette salesman. An image of Tusk’s lifeless eyes flash into my head. Suddenly I could hear the sirens of a firetruck in the distance.

“Do you think it’s okay to whistle at women?” an officer roars.

“Hey, no need to ruffle your feathers brother, I wasn’t whistling at her,” he responds.

“What are you doing on this corner?”

“Just tryna earn a quick buck to afford my truck.”

“Looks like loitering to me,” the second officer interlopes in a conniving way.

“You’re right, I think it is,” smirks the first officer as they shove the cigarette salesman to the ground.

The first officer puts the cigarette salesman into a chokehold. The sirens of the firetruck get closer and louder.

“I can’t breathe.”

The suave cigarette salesman squeezes out his words like the last bit of toothpaste exiting its tube. As the man gasps for air, the words *Live Free* fade into his black shirt. Blood vessels crawl up and cling to the whites of his eyes the way moss attaches to tombstones. Slowly everything goes silent. No more kids playing tag. No more women laughing over coffee. No more honks or radio hits. The only sound was that of the firetruck. The sirens are ear-piercing and conquer every other noise. In a last effort for salvation the cigarette salesman reaches out and grabs my ankle. His desperate grip weakens as death pervades his body. When I looked down at his face, I see our resemblance. I can’t stop staring but I have to back away, slowly. Back away until I can no longer feel connected to the criminal act that was being committed by those sworn to protect us from crime. I step backwards until I reach the curb and slip, falling into the street. Falling into the sirens of the firetruck that has now reached this tragedy unnecessarily inflamed. The firetruck races to catch me before I hit the ground. Maybe the firetruck taking my life might spare the life of the cigarette salesman. The closer the firetruck, the faster my fall. My head is spinning, faster than the truck’s lights. I close my eyes and await the impact.

“Aggh!” I gasp, and wake in a cold sweat. “What happened?” I ask my friend as I look around.

"Bad dream. But don't worry about it. I just got some good marijuana that we can smoke. Also, I found an empty parking lot so my mom won't be mad about the smell. You in?"

I rub my eyes and the room comes into focus. A plate of half-eaten stir-fry from my favorite restaurant sits on the table in front of me. I yawn as I rise from the couch and stretch my arms above my head. The TV displays "Game Over" in bold white letters with a black background, a reminder of my failed attempt at Super Mario Bros. My friend tosses my jacket as we head for the door.

"I don't know, that dream really spooked me."

"Bro, don't worry about it. You need to live free."

Exegesis

This is a story of the nightmare embodied by many Black individuals who experience the far-reaching consequences of the criminal justice system in the US. It is inspired by two true and tragic moments. First, a story given to me by eldest brother, who is currently incarcerated and witnessed correctional officers murder an individual on his cellblock during his first week in prison. Second, the violent ending of Eric Garner's life—a dark reflection of the current killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and countless others. This story illustrates how imprisonment and policing are used as mechanism to induce terror and cement a racial caste system in the US (**Charshee** 1993). Although this story focuses on the experiences of a Black man, racialized punishment engulfs the lives of Black women, trans, and non-binary individuals. This story blurs reality and a dream to express how Black individuals in the US never fully wake up from the nightmare of racial violence and oppression.

Alexander (2010) shows how the War on Drugs was a war against Black bodies that led to the expansion of mass incarceration and its collateral consequences—the new Jim Crow. Christopher, the protagonist, is a casualty of that war. As Christopher attempts to buy a cigarette, he witnesses a murder that shows the continuity of racial violence seeded in the nation's founding, carried through Jim Crow, and contemporarily persistent. Drawing from the life and death of Emmitt Till, the deadly altercation between the police and the cigarette salesman details how perceptions of Black men as hyper-sexual and hyper-masculine, has resulted in their death throughout the history of the US.

As the reader moves from Christopher's prison cell to the cigarette salesman's death, there is a thread of racial capitalism (**Robinson** 1983) for the reader to pull on and follow. Robinson posits that race and racism occurred before the advent of capitalism. Therefore, racism and capitalism are inextricable. First, Christopher is released from prison, a place designed to exploit Black bodies. Then he learns from his niece, Hilary, that in football—another system that exploits Black bodies—players are traded and sold akin to enslavement. Racial capitalism explains how these ostensible disparate systems find a common ground on anti-Black exploitation.

This story explores intersectional thought by asking the reader to think through how various axes of oppression, such as, race, class, and sexuality, interact to produce the fatal outcome a character like the cigarette salesman (**Crenshaw** 1989; **Collins** 2002; **Choo and Ferree** 2010). Through an intersectional

framework this story asks one large and sweeping question, how can you wake up from a nightmare if you did not know that you were asleep?

Korey Tillman is a doctoral student in Sociology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and a current NSF Graduate Research Fellow. He is the co-creator of the Twitter movement and hashtag, #SocAF. His research interests include mass incarceration, policing, abolition, empire, and feminist epistemologies.