

Listening to Racial Justice



CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Podcast Title: *DecarcerationNation* – Episode 113 Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia - August 23, 2021, 59 minutes

Podcast Link: <https://decarcerationnation.com/113-dr-nneka-jones-tapia/>

Summary: Josh Hoe, a formerly incarcerated, and now freelance writer, and criminal justice reform advocate, interviews Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia. Dr. Jones Tapia is a clinical psychologist and Managing Director of Justice Initiatives at Chicago Beyond, and previously the warden of Cook County Jail in Chicago. She was one of the first psychologists in the nation to lead a correctional facility. She is passionate about mental wellness, criminal justice reform, and supporting young people who have experienced trauma. She recently published a paper titled “Harm Reduction at the Center of Corrections” (Square One Justice) and she discusses the many aspects of harm introduced to inmates, inmates’ families, staff, and correctional officers in the current criminal justice system. She describes her life story leading to her training in psychology and advocacy in the criminal justice system (from DecarcerationNation show notes). It is a powerful listen, leaving one inspired to work toward reducing the harms embedded in the criminal justice system in any way we can.

Podcast Title: 1A.org (National Public Radio) – *Life in Prison Gets a New Chapter* - October 26, 2021, 31 min.

Podcast Link: <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/25/1049005528/life-in-prison-gets-a-new-chapter>

Summary: “Ear Hustle” is a podcast created and produced in the San Quentin State Prison in California. It originated in 2017 when Nigel Poor, a visual artist and photography professor at California State University teamed up with an inmate, Earlonne Woods, highlighting experiences and daily realities of life inside prison. The 1A host interviews these producers of the podcast, and their new book, [This is Ear Hustle: Unflinching Stories of Everyday Prison Life](#). After his prison sentence was commuted in 2019, Mr. Woods continued his podcast with Ms. Poor, and is an advocate for repealing the Three Strikes law in California.

Podcast Title: *Black and Blue* – June 24, 2021, 41 minutes

Podcast Link: *Into America With Trymaine Lee* <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/into-america/id1499906821?i=1000526712514>

Summary: After George Floyd’s murder, police departments across the country faced criticisms of systemic bias and a failure to reflect the communities they patrol, and so many worked to enact. But diversifying efforts have been underway for years inside the Miami Police Department. Roughly a quarter of all officers in Miami PD are Black, which is a much greater percentage than the city’s overall Black population. Over the past year, Black officers have been pushing for even more reform within the department. One of those officers is Sergeant Stanley Jean-Poix, President of the Miami Community Police Benevolent Association, the second oldest Black police union in the country. Jean-Poix joined the force over 20 years ago with the goal of enacting change from within the department. He led a fight against the former police chief Jorge Colina, alleging he oversaw a department that treated Black officers unfairly, and let racist cops slide. Colina resigned last year.

But can true change come from the inside? James Valsaint, a Miami-based artist and activist, doesn’t think so. Valsaint was born in Little Haiti, one of the neighborhoods that Sgt. Jean-Poix patrols. His interactions with the police growing up were not positive, whether the officer was Black or White. Valsaint got active following the killing of Trayvon Martin; he joined the Dream Defenders, who fought against Florida’s Stand Your Ground law, and later helped to organize actions in Miami following George Floyd’s murder. For Valsaint, defunding the police is just the first step on the long march to police

abolition. For these 2 men, the goal of reducing police violence against Black Americans is shared, but they see different paths forward. Trymaine brings these two men together for a frank and challenging conversation on the progress and limitations of police reform. (From Episode Notes)

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Podcast title: *Know Your History* – July 1, 2021, 29.1 minutes

Podcast link: Into America With Trymaine Lee

[https:// Into America: Know Your History on Apple Podcasts](https://intoamerica.com/podcast/know-your-history)

Summary: Trymaine interviews Kimberle Crenshaw, a UCLA and Columbia law professor and co-founder of **Critical Race Theory**. Critical Race Theory is a way to study and scrutinize the intersection of race and law, and is primarily taught in law school. It is a way of understanding how laws have embedded race and racism into our country. The term has been falsely used by many on the political right to frighten parents into believing it is being used in social studies and anti-racist trainings to teach their children to hate themselves and their country. Many republican-led states across the country are introducing legislation to ban it from being taught in public schools. Professor Crenshaw warns of a much more alarming aspect of this culture war. “When we start dictating what can be taught, what can be said and what it is, we are well, well, down the road towards an authoritarian regime,” she tells host Trymaine Lee. Crenshaw explains the origins of Critical Race Theory, and how this backlash mirrors the ugliest parts of America’s racial past.

Podcast title: *The Folk Devil Made Me Do It* - Code Switch (National Public Radio) - Episode 300, September 1, 2021, 38 minutes

Podcast link: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/code-switch/id1112190608?i=1000533974950>

Summary: Gene Demby hosts an in-depth discussion of moral panics and its application to the current rage about schools and Critical Race Theory. This podcast discusses the sociological aspects of perceived moral issues leading to widespread panic and changes to social and political policy. The host and his guests explain the intersection of racism and education is particularly vulnerable to moral panic, with the issue of Critical Race Theory in schools being the most current.

Podcast title: *Southlake* (NBC News) – 6 episodes plus a bonus episode, August 30, 2021 – October 4, 2021, approximately 40 minutes each

Podcast link: [Southlake on Apple Podcasts](https://nbcnews.com/podcast/southlake)

Summary: “ Beautiful Southlake, Texas, seemed too good to be true – until a video emerged of white high school students chanting the N-word. But it was the school district’s plan to confront racism that really sent residents on the warpath. Hosted by reporter Mike Hixenbaugh and correspondent Antonia Hylton, Southlake is a six-part series about belonging – and backlash – in an American suburb.”

This is a lengthy podcast because of multiple episodes, however, well worth the deep dive into how fear of Critical Race Theory being taught in schools divided residents in a wealthy town. Recommended listening after the above podcast and the previous podcast in the October Lux.

CURRENT EVENTS

Podcast Title: *Was Will Smith Protecting Black Women?* – March 31, 2022

Podcast Link: Into America With Trymaine Lee, 31 minutes

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/intoamerica/id1499906821?i=1000555807309>

Summary: During the 2022 Oscars’ ceremony, Will Smith shocked the world by striking Chris Rock on stage, after the comedian made a joke about Smith’s wife, Jada Pinkett Smith. Social and mainstream media immediately blew up with reactions and comments about the episode. However, did those reacting to the incident look deeper into the life experiences of Will Smith and the Black experience in general, especially experiences of Black women? Activist Jamira Burley weighs in with Trymaine and gives a deeper view of the incident many White people may not have considered.

Podcast Title: *Buried Secrets: America's Indian Boarding Schools Part 1* – October 15, 2022, approximately 50 minutes

Podcast Link: Reveal News - <https://revealnews.org/podcast/indian-boarding-schools-part-one/>

Summary: This podcast is a two-part collaboration with ICT (formerly Indian Country Today), in which the painful legacy of boarding schools for Native children is exposed. These schools were part of a federal program, often run by the Catholic Church, designed to destroy Native culture, identity, and spirituality, with the stated goal to “kill the Indian and save the man.” Native reporters explore the role the Doctrine of Discovery and the Catholic Church played in creating U.S. policy toward Native people, and take us to the Red Cloud Indian School on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Surviving students of boarding schools are interviewed, and reveal the impacts these policies and schools had on Indian people not only in the past, but directly impact ancestors of the survivors today (summarized from show notes/transcripts).

POLICING AND RACIAL INJUSTICE

Podcast Title: *Mississippi Goddam: The Ballad of Billey Joe*, October 16 – December 4, 2021 (7 episodes), approximately 50 minutes each.

Podcast Link: Reveal - <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/reveal/id886009669?i=1000538750182>

Summary: “Sometimes one story can tell you everything about race and justice in America. Reveal’s new series, “Mississippi Goddam: the Ballad of Billey Joe” is that story. With a title inspired by Nina Simone’s civil rights anthem, Reveal weaves the history of the criminal justice system with the case of a Black high school football star who died during a traffic stop with a white deputy.” (From the podcast show notes).

This 7-part series discusses the reporting by Al Letson, an investigative journalist of Reveal, over a 10-year period. Al investigated the 2008 death of Billey Joe Johnson in Lucedale, Mississippi by interviewing family members, federal investigators, coroners, and psychologists, and reviewed the extensive case file provided by Billey Joe’s sister. The story has twists and turns and is particularly effective in hooking the listener into the emotional turmoil that is this case. This is a must-listen for those interested in the intersection of policing and race in this country.

Podcast Title: *Into America: The Essential Kerner Commission Report*. August 26, 2021. 31 minutes.

Podcast Link: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/into-america/id1499906821?i=1000533179528>

Summary: In 1968, the Kerner Commission wrote, "white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto." Here's how they reached a conclusion that still rings true today.

Podcast Title: 347. *Rethinking 'safety' in the wake of Uvalde* - June 1, 2022, 33 minutes

Podcast Link: (NPR) [Code Switch: Rethinking 'safety' in the wake of Uvalde on Apple Podcasts](#)

Summary: In the wake of mass shootings increasing in frequency in the US, people are often left in search of solutions to the violence, and ways to feel safe again. Almost inevitably, conversations about the role of police are front and center in these solutions. The podcast host interviews Alex Vitale, an author and sociologist, who argues that many spaces in US society over-rely on the police to prevent problems that are better addressed through other means. Doing so can prevent us from properly investing in resources and programs that could make the country safer in the long run. He presents data that show the presence of guns and resource officers in schools does nothing to increase school safety, and is detrimental to students of color, enhancing the school-to-prison pipeline. This podcast touches on many subject areas related to racial injustice and is a must listen! (Adapted from show notes)

POLITICS

Podcast Title: *These Polls Ain't Loyal* – November 10, 2022, 32 minutes

Podcast Link: Into America (host Trymaine Lee) <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/into-america/id1499906821?i=1000585749182>

Summary: Trymaine sits down with Jason Johnson (American political scientist, commentator and writer, associate professor of communication and journalism at Morgan State University) and Cornell Belcher (American writer, pollster, and political strategist, founder of Brilliant Corners Research & Strategies) after the 2022 mid-term elections. Together they discuss results of the mid-term election as they are known so far, and what it all means for Black people. They review the early polls and what they got right (and wrong), about the Black vote. As usual, Trymaine shines a light on the voting process in America from the Black perspective and leaves the listener with thought-provoking views on the future for all Americans.

Podcast Title: *Christian Nationalism's Influence On American Politics* – July 11, 2022, about 33 minutes

Podcast Link: [Christian Nationalism's Influence On American Politics: 1A : NPR](#)

Summary: “Sociologist Andrew Whitehead defines Christian nationalism as ‘cultural framework that is all about trying to advocate for a fusion between Christianity – as they define it – and American civic life.’ “The podcast host interviews Whitehead and 2 others (Jemar Tisby – bestselling author, national speaker and public historian of race and religion, and racial justice advocate; Katherine Stewart - an investigative journalist who writes about issues related to the separation of church and state). Discussion centers around the recent re-emergence of White Christian Nationalism as a movement and how it influences basic American life, racial justice, politics, and religion. **Note:** The Racial Justice Team will be presenting a series of Adult Forums this month on WCN. We encourage your attendance!