

GRADUATE COLLEGE

DEFENSE NOTICE

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The following dissertation presentation is scheduled and open
to those in the University community:

Edorah J. Frazer, Candidate

Robert Nash, Ed.D., Advisor

Doctor of Education

Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

March 19, 2008

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

2nd Floor Conference Room

Allen House

Title: Unlearning Racism: A Candid Self-Study by a European American
Educational Leader

ABSTRACT

Racism damages all of us. It threatens the lives of some, it degrades the integrity of others, and it saps our resources and threatens our peace as a nation. Racism in the United States takes place on multiple levels: within and between individuals, in our cultural milieu, and in our social institutions. In this dissertation, I describe ways in which I have both encountered and perpetrated racism personally and professionally as an educator. I then explore ways in which racism can be unlearned by individuals and dismantled institutionally, particularly in the arena of education, so that our nation can be liberated from this most crippling disease.

As a European American woman raised in affluence, my story is about unearned privilege on several levels, and my research asks the question of what I can responsibly do about that. However, my upbringing and the ongoing influences of mainstream America ask very different questions about dominant status; namely, what can one do *with* it? And how can one get more? This tension between power and responsibility forms the context for an examination of privilege in this scholarly personal narrative about unlearning racism.