Who is Black?
Who is Indian?
State/Federal Acknowledgement
and the Politics of Racial Purity

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Dr. Coleman will discuss the politics of racial purity in state and federal acknowledgement policies for American Indian populations with known or perceived black ancestry. Racial purity, as first defined by whites and later adopted by many tribal nations, means the absence of blackness, and remains an implicit aspect of the state and federal acknowledgement processes. It has proven troublesome to many tribes in the East where extensive interracial intimacies among blacks, whites and Indians occurred. Using case studies, Coleman will focus on the questions, how do notions of racial purity affect state and federal acknowledgement processes? How has it influenced historical and contemporary views of the social phenomena of Black–Indian relations, Black–Indian familial ties, and “Black Indian” identity?

This Lecture is part of the African and African American Speakers series and is also sponsored by the Center for Indian Education in the School of Social Transformation

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4:30pm in West Hall, Room 135