

Department of Anthropology, Indiana University

The Skomp Distinguished Lecture Series



Leasho Johnson, 2017

CAN BLACK LIVES MATTER IN A BLACK COUNTRY?

Dispatches from Jamaica

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12:30pm

Connect to Zoom:

<https://iu.zoom.us/j/93931854674>

This presentation will interrogate a relation. It probes the project of security (the protection of whiteness, class hierarchy, and heteropatriarchy) in relation to the desire for safety ("having somebody"). In probing this relation within a context in which police violence and extrajudicial killing are not typically seen as part of the global phenomenon of anti-black racism, it seeks to contribute to a conversation in which raciality is not tethered to physicality, but instead is grounded in both historical-ideological and onto-epistemological phenomena that produce whiteness as the apex of humanity. I will argue that while security is imagined and enacted transnationally and globally (but is nevertheless authorized through and in the name of the state), safety is grounded locally and requires the intimacy of trusting relationships. And I will suggest that a new elaboration of sovereignty – rooted in non-linear temporality, what Glissant has called "circular nomadism," and non-utility – can disrupt the disavowals and deferrals that undergird imperial Being, and can create the conditions for meaningful forms of accountability.