



August 29, 2009

NKU hosts anti-racism lecturer

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Tim Wise, a noted anti-racism lecturer, writer and activist, will lecture based on his book, "Between a Barack and a Hard Place: Racism and White Denial in the Age of Obama," at Northern Kentucky University on Monday.

"In the context of this book, white denial is the belief by many whites that the election of President Obama has eradicated racism in our country," said Michael D. Griffin, program coordinator for NKU's Office of African-American Student Affairs. "On the other hand, the racial divide continues to persist in every almost facet of our society."

Wise gives a fresh commentary on white privilege and race relations in our country, said Griffin.

"Tim Wise will provide an analysis of President Obama's historic campaign and election and its subsequent impact on race relations in our country," Griffin said. "(He) contends in spite of this historic event and presidency, racism remains a serious cancer in our society."

Griffin said the Office of African-American Student Affairs decided to invite Wise to continue the a dialogue around two questions: What does President Obama's presidency mean for race relations in our country? And are we really in a color-blind, post-racial society?

"Tim Wise is one of the premier anti-racist activists and scholars of our time," said Griffin. "He has a unique clarity in addressing contemporary issues of social injustice. Unlike others, Tim Wise challenges everyone, especially white Americans, to fight oppression and issues of social injustice."

Wise is the 2008 Oliver L. Brown Distinguished Visiting Scholar for Diversity Issues at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. The honor is named after the lead plaintiff in the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision.

Griffin said hearing Wise is good preparation for students.

"Speakers, such as Tim Wise, provide our students with a diversity of unconventional perspectives that they may not encounter anywhere else," said Griffin. "I believe that substantial exposure to this diversity of ideas about the most pressing and important issues of our time uniquely prepares our students for life after graduation."

The event will be held at the NKU Student Union room 107A from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. Monday. It is free and open to the public.
