

The Department of Religion at Emory University Presents:
Africana Approaches to African American Religious History
Lecture Series

Feb 14 – Ras Michael Brown | Mar 19 – Danielle Boaz | Mar 26 – Jason Young | Apr 4 – Tracey Hucks



Dr. **Danielle Boaz**
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of **Africana** Studies
University of North Carolina

MAR
19, 2019

4:30 PM

Rita Anne
Rollins
Bldg. 252

Voodoo Rites and Human Rights:
Race, Rumor, and Ritual, 1863 - 2019

From the nineteenth century to the present day, outsider perceptions of African-derived spiritual practices have played a central role in debates about the extension of civil rights and liberties to persons of African descent in the Americas. This presentation will explore the origins of the most common word used to stereotype African American and other African-based spiritual belief systems: "Voodoo." It will discuss the evolution of the term over the last 150 years through case studies of the popular interpretations of "Voodoo" during significant historical moments such as Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement. Through this discussion of "Voodoo," we will explore how rumors and stereotypes of African rituals have formed a barrier between African Americans and the enjoyment of human rights, both historically and in the 21st century.