

Dr. Jasmine Harris

Author of "Black Women, Ivory Tower"

Associate Professor, University of Texas, San Antonio

March 13, 2024

[5:00 pm] [Dr. Pam Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

We're back again with an all new #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures w/your hosts @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil & @DrPamLuster. This week, we're excited to chat w/@DrHarrisJay about her work and new book #BlackWomenIvoryTower. Welcome Dr. Harris!

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Thank you! Looking forward to a fruitful conversation! [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Thanks for being here!

[5:05 pm] [Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q1 @DrHarrisJay. As you engage in equity-focused work, what is your walk-up song or anthem?
@DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Cozy - from Beyoncé's Renaissance album. It took me a long time to feel comfortable in my skin in higher ed. So many Black women who spend years here deal with that kind of imposter syndrome. We don't have the time or space to develop as white folks. It's tough /1. [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

It feels like an anthem of strength and support. "Might I suggest you f*ck with my sis" - that's a call to action, a commitment to community. Two things necessary to combat racism./2 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

[@Beyonce](#) knows the call to action. She's an [#EquityAvenger](#) [#cozy](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

"She's a god, she's a hero She survived all she been through Confident, damn, she lethal Might I suggest you don't fuck with my sis 'Cause she comfortable" <https://youtu.be/wfa2r1atfQ>

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

All of this! We have to enter higher education from a position of strength - or it will kill us. That's one of the biggest lessons I've learned as a Black woman in this profession. [#equitychat](#)

[5:11 pm] [Dr. Keith Curry \(@lamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q2 @DrHarrisJay. What drove you to become a professor and operate in the same system that you experienced oppression? Was there a defining moment or experience that catalyzed your journey to engage in this work? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I honestly didn't do my homework before grad school. I loved school - thinking/learning. But my contact w/Black profs was limited so I didn't know getting a PhD meant being A Professor. Grad school gave me language to explain racism. I just wanted to keep doing that. [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Anyone wondering about the power of higher education...[#Language2Explain](#)

[5:18 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Q3 @DrHarrisJay. You created a supplemental discussion guide for your book to assist in thoughtful and ongoing discussion. Who do you hope will use these and how? What do you most hope readers of the book will walk away with? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I hope admins, faculty & Black women students use the discussion guides for [#BlackWomenIvoryTower](#) to talk about the inequalities and violence we experience on campus that are often reduced to whispers in hallways & conversations in closed offices. /1 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Institutional racism in higher education is a public problem. Change will only come publicly. /2 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Inequalities and violence are too often reduced to whispers in hallways & conversations in closed offices...yes. yes. Grateful you made a tool to help take these discussions out of the shadows

[5:25 pm] [Dr. Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q4 @DrHarrisJay. What tools and resources do you offer to your students to begin advocating for themselves and other Black women in white spaces in the academy and beyond? @DrPamLuster @IamKeithCurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I give my students transparency by talking about how/when I've had to advocate for myself as Black woman faculty, and also when I did not advocate for myself as a Black woman student. None of this is easy and we do students a disservice by pretending that it is. /1 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

We really do...especially as we think about the lack of representation of faculty members, Black and other faculty of color. Sharing counternarratives and lived experiences is the only way to change the system...to genuinely cultivate the next generation of educators.

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

This is the perspective of [#BlackWomenIvoryTower](#) If we don't share our stories, we can't create change in a system committed to ignoring the obvious racial and gendered inequities in higher ed. [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I also give my students the tools to assert their knowledge in spaces where it will be constantly challenged. I taught an Intersectionality course last year where students wanted to confront the incorrect uses of the term they encountered in everyday life. /2 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

So, we started every class with experience sharing and techniques for teaching in real world discussion. The students found it just as valuable as reading and discussing the text. It may them feel strong. Armed with knowledge. /3 [#equitychat](#)

[5:32 pm] [Dr. Curry \(@IamKeithCurry\)](#)

Q5 @DrHarrisJay. You're helping build an African American Studies program in one of the most contentious & conservative states re: legislation & book banning. How would you describe the stakes of your work? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Despite conservative rhetoric there are <130 Black Studies programs at US schools. Many graduate fewer <10 students/year. So, keeping these programs running has always been difficult. The stakes don't change because of who's in power. It's always life & death for us. [#equitychat](#)

[5:39 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Q6 @DrHarrisJay. How do you navigate self-care while doing this work amidst the current national climate? What practice would you recommend to other #EquityAvengers? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Self-care is about rest for me. We take on a lot of trauma in this work, so we must also rest. Physical rest, emotional rest, & psychological rest. Sometimes that means reading a good novel, taking a long walk, or seeing a movie. /1 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Say no to things to make time for rest. We didn't create these racist systems and we cannot kill ourselves trying to transform them. /2 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Any good novels lately?! I need some psychological and emotional rest too...Glad you've got a self-care routine. Love that the [#cozy](#) anthem continues..."I love myself, goddam (cozy, cozy)"

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I love trashy detective mysteries. Currently reading: Doing Hard Time.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Oooh, thanks for sharing! Better than the trashy things I like! (And I mean novels...I know how y'all think!)

[5:46pm] [Dr. Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q7 @DrHarrisJay. To do this work, we must continue learning and partnering with others. How do you educate yourself and who is informing your practice? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Read, read, read. There's great work on the construction & impacts of systemic racism- especially in higher ed. It's impossible to read everything, but I try to read as much as I can. /1 [#equitychat](#)

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Patrica Hill Collins work, both her focus on the importance of Black feminist perspectives, theories, & method, as well as her theory of classrooms as the arbiters of citizenship (national & communal). /2 [#equitychat](#)

[5:53 pm] [Dr. Curry \(@iamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q8 @DrHarrisJay. We all have a vision of the future we want to live in. What is your freedom dream for higher education and what gives you hope for its future? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

I dream of a system of higher ed w/flat power structures & anti-racist policies that reject its racist origins. The focus on DEI, book bans & attacks on faculty do offer hope. We're doing something right to draw such public unhinged vitriol. So, the work continues./1 [#equitychat](#)

[6:00 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

TY @DrHarrisJay for joining us on #EquityChat @CollegeFuture. We encourage all to checkout #BlackWomenIvoryTower! Join us next week as we host Dr. Lisa Petrides @lpetrides, CEO & Founder @ISKME. Until next time - @iamkeithcurry @DrTammeil @DrPamLuster @equityavengers OUT!

[Dr. Jasmine Harris @DrHarrisJay](#)

Thank you for having me! If folks want to read more about my thoughts institutional racism in higher ed pick up [#BlackWomenIvoryTower](#) available everywhere books are sold! <https://t.co/oUJDiMn4RN>

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

Im looking forward to it! Thank you so much for joining us [@DrHarrisJay](#)!