

Florida Humanities Speakers Directory



Engaging Speakers



Compelling Topics



Thought-provoking
Discussions



Martha R. Bireda

Scholar, Reenactor

Martha R. Bireda, Ph.D., is Director of the Blanchard House Museum of African History and Culture, located in Punta Gorda, Florida. For over 30 years, Dr. Bireda has consulted, lectured, and written about social issues related to race, gender, class, power, and culture. Dr. Bireda's articles will explore and examine critical issues past and present that impact our global society. She believes that awareness and recognition of the universality of social issues can contribute to the resolution of problems that affect all societies, and confirm our human connectivity. Dr. Bireda is the author of the forthcoming book, *A Time For Change: How White Supremacy Culture Hurts All Americans*.

Programs Available

The Jim Crow Era

This program provides an overview of the Jim Crow era and its continued influence in the collective American mind. Jim Crow laws and customs will be examined; stereotypical images of blacks presented. The Jim Crow laws that existed in Florida will be discussed.

Pandemics and Protests: America in 1919 and 2020

In this program, the ways in which the social climate of America in 2020 mirrors that of 1919 will be explored. The similarities and differences as well as the factors influencing the social conflicts in each year will be examined.

Powerful Doctoring Women

Grannies and midwives were powerful "doctoring women" who provided the foundation of healthcare for enslaved African Americans in Florida. Listen, learn, taste, smell, and touch as one such woman named Pearl shares the plants and herbs that kept enslaved Africans healthy on the Bellamy plantation.

The Little Town That Unity Built

Punta Gorda, a small town on Florida's Southwest coast, has the distinction of having the state's second oldest population. The town has another lesser known but significant distinction as well. Punta Gorda has been characterized as having a "unique sociology" due to its early biracial settlement and development. In this lecture, we will examine the five factors which contributed to this biracial unity and to a "shared prosperity" experienced by all residents despite the presence of Jim Crow. As a result, the beginning of Punta Gorda serves as a model for demonstrating the power of biracial unity.

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Program Format:

• Virtual

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