**NEW Lecture • NEW Topic**
(Not included in our Fall 2016 Class Schedule!)

**Straight Talk about the Nword**

**Instructor:** Dr. Neal A. Lester
**Friday, October 14, 2016**
**10:15 to 11:45 a.m.**
**Mercado, Bldg. C, Room 135**
**ASU Downtown Phoenix campus**
**502 East Monroe Street, Phoenix, AZ, 85004**

**Lecture:** Like no other word in the English language, the Nword spawns leading news headlines particularly when celebrities utter it: comedian Michael Richards, Dog the Bounty Hunter, John Mayer, Mel Gibson, and others. This word shows up in American childhood rhymes and ditties, in minstrel songs. It punctuates some rap songs, is euphemized, buried in mock funerals, and bleeped from media broadcasts. This presentation is an opportunity to hold under a critical microscope this single word described as “the most inflammatory, shocking and historic word in the English language.” The presentation considers the word’s “continually shifting use” through the complex discourse of American race relations.

**Instructor:** Dr. Neal A. Lester is a Foundation Professor of English and Founding Director of Project Humanities at Arizona State University. He has been a Professor of English at Arizona State University since 1997, having taught previously at the University of Alabama and the University of Montevallo. His areas of specialization are African American literature and cultural studies. Dr. Lester earned his B.A. in English at the State University of West Georgia. He took his M.A. and Ph.D. in English at Vanderbilt University and is the first African American to receive the doctorate degree in English at Vanderbilt.

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