



## GRADUATE EDUCATION DAY 2019

### **AMANDA COWAN**

**Master's Student, Communication and Journalism**

#### **Mixed Race Identity in New Mexico**

In the United States, post-racial ideologies ask us to forget race as a central factor of inequality and discrimination. Often mixed race identities are framed as examples of a post-racial society because they demonstrate a disruption of typical understandings of race. However, studying the construction of mixed race identities can be used to critique post-racial logics. As a theoretical tool, mixed race studies reframes how race is historically understood and allows us to “identify the circulation of power” (Nishime 2017, p 16) in the United States. This study will focus on the experiences of mixed raced people in New Mexico. In New Mexico identities are influenced by multiple forces of colonialism resulting in different circulations of power which in turn produce different understandings of race. This is an important distinction from past mixed race theories that often focus on black/white racialization. Therefore, this project explores how the convergence of colonized races and spaces create complex identities. Specifically, I will analyze how the state's unique identity politics can problematize US dominant ideologies of racial identity, challenging black/white binaries of mixed race, narratives of mixed race exceptionalism and conceptualizations of passing.