

The GES Department cordially invites you to join us for our Virtual Seminar Series

Wednesday, October 7th at Noon ET

WebEx code can be found at <https://ges.umbc.edu/ges-seminar-series/>

# Rise of the Black Butterfly

**Dr. Lawrence T. Brown**

Visiting Associate Professor, Population Health Institute  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

The world gasped in April 2015 as Baltimore erupted and Black Lives Matter activists, incensed by Freddie Gray's brutal death in police custody, shut down highways and marched on city streets. The Black Butterfly refers to the fact that Baltimore's majority-Black population spreads out on both sides of the coveted strip of real estate running down the center of the city like a butterfly's wings. In his research and publications, Lawrence T. Brown reveals that ongoing historical trauma caused by a combination of policies, practices, systems, and budgets is at the root of uprisings and crises in hyper-segregated cities around the country.

Putting Baltimore under a microscope, Brown looks closely at the causes of segregation, many of which exist in current legislation and regulatory policy despite the common belief that overtly racist policies are a thing of the past. Brown persuasively argues that, since urban apartheid was intentionally erected, it can be intentionally dismantled. The Black Butterfly demonstrates that America cannot reflect that Black lives matter until we see how Black neighborhoods matter.

*Lawrence T. Brown is the proud grandson of Mississippi and Arkansas Delta sharecroppers and preachers. From 2010 to 2019, Dr. Brown worked at Morgan State University in the School of Community Health and Policy where his research examined the impact of historical trauma on community health. In June 2018 he was honored by OSI Baltimore with the Bold Thinker award for sparking critical discourse regarding Baltimore's racial segregation. In September 2018, he was named #61 in The Root 100 – an annual list of the most influential African Americans ages 25 to 45. His first book, The Black Butterfly: The Politics of Race and Space in America, will be published by The Johns Hopkins University Press in January 2021.*

