

Sixth Annual Conference
Critical Race Studies in Education Association
<http://www.crseassoc.org>
May 31-June 2, 2012
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY

**Race, Citizenship, Activism, and the Meaning of Social Justice for the 21st Century:
The Legacy of Professor Derrick Bell**

Call for Proposals

We dedicate the 2012 conference to the memory and legacy of Professor Derrick Bell. Legal scholar and theoretician, educator, mentor, and social justice activist, Professor Bell, in words and deeds, provided a transformational model of change agency for others to emulate. Bell's work and personal stances against systemic injustice forged a courageous, professionally ethical path to guide those who wish to do more than discuss social justice, but to make institutional changes happen. The evolving field of critical race studies owes an invaluable debt to Bell's legacy that can only find satisfaction from current and emerging CRT scholars-practitioners strengthening their dedication to challenging and changing inequitable power structures and systemic biases that hinder the full development and participation of all who seek to rise from the bottom of the well. Bell's example of ethical decision making and willingness to make personal and professional sacrifice constitute the best tradition of what it means to use critical race theory as more than an intellectual exercise or as a popular, sexy, scholarly flavor of the month. Calling oneself a critical race scholar must mean more than using the language and concepts in writing for publication; it must have deeper values and meaning that mirrors the legacy Bell's life and work represented. Preparing for the 2012 conference, we should wrestle with the following questions: What does it mean to teach, write, and live as a CRT scholar? What outcomes and results of that work justify the risks and sacrifices it might take to transform institutions, systems, and/or society? Are CRT scholars, practitioners, and theoreticians willing to pay those costs?

From the beginning of CRSEA, the combined spirit of action and theory, or praxis, has provided a unique space for current and emerging scholars to delineate themselves from those who might find a faddish attraction to CRT rather than a sincere commitment to anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-colonialist thinking and professional practice. We salute and honor Professor Bell's legacy through this organization's words and deeds and hope that our efforts find favor with his and other civil rights-human rights soldiers who blazed the paths we now attempt to walk.

This year's conference focuses on race, citizenship, and the meaning of social justice in the 21st century. We enter the 2012 presidential election year having witnessed a rise in disingenuous and delusional rhetoric pushing post-racial discourse as various national policies exacerbate racial inequities and corporate ideologies foment economic injustice. Many fundamental national issues deserve attention such as economic justice, democracy for elites (1%) versus everyday people (99%), quality education based on social and economic justice principles, and the cold reality that what we do and how we do it matters beyond our personal benefit. The issues we hope to confront at the conference recognize that the concept of participatory democracy must gain significance over a corporate-owned version of globalized democracy, which values profits over people. We recognize the inherent injustice in policies that promote quality education for a select few while feeding the masses the lowest forms of learning at the cheapest price. This conference seeks to elevate the centuries old discourse regarding America's complicated and conflicted political, economic, and cultural values that manifest in how we think, talk, write, and work in the name of exploitation, abusive power, and human oppression, or in the name of equality and fairness.

Conference Strands

I. **Activism Inside and Outside of the Classroom** – This strand opens the discourse on the power and influence of democratic activism on education. It includes the importance of examining notions of the common good and public voices that shape public education across all educational levels. How has the discourse on activism (social, political, economic, pedagogical) in education been shaped by Critical Race Theory and its affiliated perspectives such as LatCrit, AsianCrit, etc.? What role should educators-scholars play in leading and/or supporting action research projects informed by CRT? How does community activism for social and economic justice influence educational policies and practices?

II. **CRT, Popular Culture, and Social Media** - If we accept that CRT lenses hold the potential to help reveal the hidden curriculum of popular culture and the media, how can educators/scholars/activists understand popular culture or the media as part of social change? How can they comprehend and use popular culture, the media, or social media to share and enhance their activist positionality in the profession and in our communities?

III. **P-20 Education Policies, Practices, and Power** - Proposals in this strand examine critically conscious teaching and learning methods and programs that result in successful change processes. Using a CRT lens, this strand invites a range of P-20 issues such as, analysis of economic inequity of educational opportunities, disproportionality, zero-tolerance policies, No Child Left Behind, culturally relevant activities and programs that lead to success for marginalized students (all levels), diversity-related programs and policies in higher education settings, and new conceptual and/or practice based challenges to embedded systemic bias and discrimination. What power dynamics emerge from CRT that hold potential to change educational (P-20) systems?

IV. **Intersectionality, Citizenship, Immigration, and the Politics of Belonging** - Proposals in this strand extend the CRT discourse to research and practice issues concerning how interrelated dimensions of personal identity, collective identity, and notions of belonging influence teaching and learning and community engagement. How might questions of citizenship, residency, and who belongs in American society intersect with race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, language, and/or state and national policies?

Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

Appropriateness of topic connected to the conference theme, methods, theoretical perspectives, significance, design, and connection to research or practical knowledge base. Proposals should target one of the conference strands.

Proposal Word Limits:

*500 words for an individual paper, performance, or poster (non-faculty) presentation. Poster presentations are restricted to non-faculty participants (i.e., community members-activists, students (high school, undergraduate, masters level, doctoral), and people meeting these descriptions are welcome to submit proposals for other types of presentations.

*1000 words for a panel proposal (describe each paper on the panel), and the same limit for a Town Hall meeting (specify the roles of facilitator(s) and recorder(s)). Each proposal must have a reference page, which does not count as part of the word limit.

Participants on an accepted panel or individual paper must submit their conference registration fee before the creation of the final conference program or forfeit their presentation slot.

For more information, including the submission link, visit: <http://www.crseassoc.org/>

Proposal Submission Opens: January 1, 2012

Proposal Deadline: February 14, 2012

Proposal Review Begins: February 15, 2012

Notifications: March 15, 2012