

The 7th Annual Critical Race Theory in Education Conference
Scarritt Bennett Center, Nashville, Tennessee
May 29 - June 1, 2013

Call for Proposals

Democracy, Public Education, and the *Shifting* Politics of Race:

CRT 'Tools' for Remembering the Past, Reflecting on the Present, Revolutionizing the Future

In November 2012, the U.S. witnessed a historical shift in the U.S. political landscape with the re-election of President Barack Obama. For the first time in history, a U.S. President was elected to office without the majority white vote. For some, this outcome reflected the growing significance of People of Color in the U.S. electorate. For others, it is a reminder that the country remains heavily divided along racial and ethnic lines. The changing racial and ethnic demographics of the U.S. (including those that do not have the "legal" right to vote), calls an urgency to address race in America and develop strategies for dismantling the structures of racism that mediate the lives of People of Color. Public education, shaped by public policy and politics, remains the primary vehicle to transmit, instill, and perpetuate complex and problematic formal educational processes for the vast majority of youth and young adults in the United States. These institutions must remain relevant to the ideals and ideas of democracy in how and why they function, especially in Communities of Color and across marginalized spaces. For critical race scholar-activists in education, this too is a challenge that deserves our attention and strategic responses. This past year, we witnessed the insidious nature of contemporary racism and racist nativism emerge in educational policy. For example, in January 2012, Tucson Unified School District suspended the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program in Arizona despite solid research that found the program to increase academic success among its students. In October 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court heard the *Fisher v. University of Texas* case, where white plaintiff Abigail Fisher made the familiar claim of "reverse racism" to challenge undergraduate public university admissions policies. In November 2012, the Virginia state Board of Education manufactured a new set of educational goals, which have higher expectations for Asian and white students than for Black, Latinas/os and students with disabilities. These are only a few of the many instances of the complex ways in which race is articulated, understood, and enacted in education.

As we move further into the second decade of the 21st century, critical race scholar-activists in education have an opportunity and responsibility to reflect on where we are in our quest for racial justice in education. In a revisiting a twenty-year history of CRT in the law, Kimberlé Crenshaw (2011) proffered the need to "join the generative movements of CRT to the contemporary challenge of post-racialism" (pg. 1301). Crenshaw's timely analysis speaks to our challenge to interrogate the limits of contemporary racial discourse that minimizes the role of race, thereby denying substantial racial barriers exist, linger, and persist in shaping society. Moving forward as CRT scholar-activists in education necessitates articulating a critical rigor to create a space where we can theorize, strategize, and take action on accounting for the salience of race and racism in (re)producing disparate educational outcomes for Communities of Color.

Therefore, we call for thoughtful proposals that engage a critical exploration of racism within the context of the shifting social, historical, cultural, and political meanings of race in the U.S. and abroad. We strongly encourage proposals that provide strategies for dismantling racism, or CRT "tools" to utilize in our battle for racial justice.

This year, we strive to create an intentional intergenerational, international, and interdisciplinary critical space that seriously considers the voices and experiences of Communities of Color, from progressive, anti-racist scholar-activists. Therefore, we invite a range of inter-institutional, intergenerational, interdisciplinary, and international proposals that involve youth, scholars, community activists, and/or organizations. All of the strands encourage conceptual intersectionality and we hope to see that reflected in the proposals.

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Strand 1: Community Organizing & Activism strand centers the work and research of grassroots people to push back against inequitable structures. Rather than take a stance that snubs the political insights of marginalized groups, CRT espouses a commitment to authentically engaging these insights. This strand provides a critical space to discuss the limits of and opportunities for university scholars, educators, and graduate students to engage in this work in partnership with community members/activists and not simply assume the power to speak for or on behalf of those communities.

Strand 2: Immigration, Language & Power strand examines the multiple discourses surrounding language and race. How might the increasing numbers of multilingual students in schools beautifully complicate traditional constructions of race? What are the implications for where we are now in how we talk about language, power, and race for how we arrive at the types of equitable and just educational contexts for immigrant and/or multilingual young people?

Strand 3: Advancing CRT “Tools” strand focuses on the importance of praxis and the need to develop the skills and competencies of a CRT toolbox. What are the recent conceptual, theoretical, methodological and practical developments of CRT that expand our capacity to explore dilemmas and tensions of considering race with class, gender, immigration, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, language, disability and other social-cultural intersectionalities and positionalities? How do we approach and complete this work within particular spaces?

Strand 4: Educational Policy & Practice strand examines policy issues across the educational pipeline, from early childhood education to higher education. For example, proposals can address the racialization of alternative certification programs in teacher education programs, the racial realities of the school to prison pipeline and policy implications, the shifting discourse on affirmative action, urban school funding, or the educational implications of state and federal versions of the DREAM Act.

Proposal Submission Guidelines

Proposals of no more than 750 words should be submitted through the designated link on the CRSEA website, www.crseassoc.org, by January 31, 2013. Accepted presenters will be notified by March 1, 2013. When submitting the proposal use a title page and include the following on it: paper or workshop title, author(s) name(s), affiliation, and full contact information for all presenters, preferred session format (see below), and the strand your proposal addresses. Formats for proposals include: individual papers, workshops, or posters. Please note that due to limited presentation slots, we will not be accepting proposals for formats such as panels or symposia. Because we wish to provide adequate time for all accepted presenters, we strongly recommend that no more than two co-authors should appear on any individual paper proposal. This will allow adequate time for those particular presenters to share their work when that accepted paper is grouped with another accepted paper to share a common session time slot. Workshop proposals should contain no more than three facilitators and each accepted workshop session would have up to 75 minutes to work with their audience. All workshop proposals must include a description of collaborative and/or interactive elements and clearly focus on facilitating an engaged process with participants working on the specific issue or topic. Please note that all participants on an accepted proposal **must remit their conference registration fees before the creation of the final conference program or forfeit their presentation slot.** Therefore, conference registration must be paid by April 26, 2013.