Examining Brown at 50

Abra Feuerstein

As the 50th anniversary of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision banning segregated schools approaches, it is useful to examine the current state of our schools and the effects of this decision. In many ways *Brown* was a stunning success and though action on desegregation was initially delayed much progress was made during the 1960s and 1970s. During this period southern schools went from being the most segregated to the most integrated in the nation. In addition, other minority groups that were commonly discriminated against in the public school system were able to gain greater access to public education including special education students and those who could not speak English. Since this period, however, the trend toward desegregation has stalled and has even been reversed in many areas. According to Gary Orfield, court decisions including *Milliken v. Bradley* (1977), *Board of Education of Oklahoma v. Dowell* (1991), and *Missouri v. Jenkins* (1995), “reflect a quiet but severe erosion of Brown” (Orfield, 1996, p. 50). In these cases, the Supreme Court ruled that efforts to draw suburban and inner city children together such as redistricting and busing were unconstitutional, unless the suburbs could be held directly accountable for the existing segregation. These cases seriously eroded efforts to desegregate urban schools and represent a retrenchment from the commitment to integration represented by *Brown* (Kozol, 1991).

One measure of segregation used by researchers is the exposure of minority students to whites. Table 1 below, included in a recent report from Harvard’s Civil Rights Project, shows the percentage of white students in schools attended by the average black student, 1968-2000.

![Graph showing percentage of white students in schools attended by average black student, 1968-2000.](image)

Tricia Rose Visits Bucknell
Lisa Britt

On September 8, the Bucknell community had a chance to blast Snoop Doggy Dog in the LC Forum.

No, it wasn’t a misplaced frat party. It was a part of Dr. Tricia Rose’s lecture on Identity and Community in Hip Hop. The event was the 17th Annual Black Experiences Lecture co-sponsored by the R/GRC and the University Lectureship Committee.

Tricia Rose is Professor of American Studies at the University of California at Santa Cruz. She specializes in 20th century African-American culture and politics, social thought, popular culture and gender issues.

Her well-attended lecture at Bucknell was focused on the problems of the representations of blackness in the rap industry, as well as the need for open intellectual discourse in the highly polarized realm of hip hop theory. Her lecture was entertaining, provoking, and inspiring. Students and faculty alike were eager to ask questions and meet Dr. Rose after the lecture.

Rose finished the night by signing copies of her two books. Black Noise (1994) explores the culture of rap music, and is among the first pieces of scholarly writing dedicated to hip hop. Her most recent book, Longing to Tell: Black Woman Talks About Sexuality and Intimacy (2003) is a compilation of firsthand oral narratives that challenges the silencing of Black female sexuality in literary history.

Women’s September 11th: Rethinking International Law

Catharine MacKinnon, the 9th Spielman Lecturer, delivered what she labeled a "hard talk". It was hard because it evoked the individual pain and collective memory of September 11, and it was also hard because she brought attention to violence against women at a time when our society lives in deep denial about the pervasiveness and systemic character of women's subordination. Dr. MacKinnon's life's work has been dedicated to breaking that denial.

In comparing the violence of September 11, 2001, to the ongoing violence against women, Dr. MacKinnon laid out two critical analytical points developed within global feminist movements. First, that violence against women is systematic and pervasive. It is not a series of isolated or random events. Violence against women is sustained by value systems and social structures throughout the world that degrade and subordinate women daily in small and large ways. The consequences of these systems and structures are not trivial. In the US, MacKinnon told us, the number of women who die at the hands of men every year (mostly their intimate partners) is approximately the same as the number of people who died on September 11, 2001. This leads to the second critical issue, posed in the form of a question: Why is this state of affairs for women not addressed by official authorities with an appropriate sense of urgency? When feminist activists contend that men's daily violence ought to be a violation of international law, they are told that international law is designed to control official acts and applies primarily to official entities. The fact that the existing structure of international non-state actors attacked a civilian target-- has not stopped the US from responding on a wartime scale to the September 11 attacks. Economic and social resources have been mobilized in a way that they have never been mobilized to address violence against women. "Shatteringly and indelibly clear," says MacKinnon, "is that the losses of September 11 are real to power in a way that women's extermination and terror by men have never been." MacKinnon challenges us to make real to power the losses that women as a class suffer every day.
Symposium on 1960s Girl Singers

On September 27th, Bucknell University hosted a symposium entitled "1960s Girl Singers." The focus of this symposium was on the phenomenon of girl groups and solo girl singers. The research presented was a response to the trend in music histories of the 1960s to focus solely on the so-called "British Invasion" (Beetle and Rolling Stones, chiefly) or male Motown groups and solo singers such as Smokey Robinson and the Miracles and Marvin Gaye. The featured presentations (topics included Tina Turner, Dusty Springfield, Lulu, Sandi Shaw, Cilla Black, The Crystals and The Blossoms, vocal techniques, Marianne Faithfull, and Brenda Lee) placed the singers within the historical context of the 60s and within critical frames of race, gender, class, adolescent development, and postcolonialism. Invited speakers included Susan East of McMaster University, Canada; Patricia Juliana Smith of Hofstra University, NY; Jacqueline Warwick of Dalhousie University, Canada; Norma Coates of University of Wisconsin; Laurie Stras of Southampton University, UK; Robynn Stilwell of Georgetown University, Washington D.C., and Annie Randall of Bucknell University's Music Department.

Brown at 50 (continued from page 1)
entitled, "A Multiracial Society with Segregated Schools: Are We Losing the Dream?" demonstrates the changes in the percentage of white students attending schools attended by the average black student.

Also, statistics make it clear that there are increasingly fewer black students in majority white schools. Data on Latino students in public schools are similar and suggests that segregation for this growing population is also on the rise.

These trends toward greater segregation are troubling on a number of fronts, including the strong relationship between segregation and poverty. According to the Civil Rights Project, "half of the students in schools attended by the average black or Latino student are poor or near poor. By contrast, less than one in five students in schools attended by the average white student is classified as poor." (p. 35) This isolation is problematic given the abundant research demonstrating that poor schools often intensify educational inequalities between students because they lack adequate funding and resources including qualified teachers (Natriello, McDill, and Pallas, 1990).

Thus, as we approach the 50th anniversary of Brown, what we find is a largely incomplete project that continues to hold promise for millions of students attending increasingly segregated schools. However, the project remains controversial. Many opponents of desegregation argue the merits of neighborhood schools and local control. Citing the isolation that minority students feel when integration is forced upon them, these critics take exception to the idea that black children must be allowed to attend public schools with white children in order to get an equal education. Proponents of desegregation, on the other hand, continue to argue that segregation keeps minority students in isolated high-poverty schools that are often unable to prepare them for college or improved employment opportunities.

The controversies and trends cited above, as well as the continued influence of Brown on educational institutions of all types, underscore the importance of revisiting this important decision. In order to support faculty efforts to teach and learn about the Brown decision, several faculty members in the departments of Education and History, with the support of the President's Office, the Provost's Office, the University Lectureship Committee, the Race Gender Resource Center, the Dean of Students Office, the Residential Colleges, and the Central Susquehanna Valley Intermediate Unit have developed a symposium examining the Brown decision from several vantage points. This program combines a series of speakers, panel discussions and films for the purpose of exploring the historical foundation of Brown; the changes that took place across the country in the aftermath of Brown; and continuing problems with the unequal treatment of various types of students. The events begin on December 2nd, at 7:00 pm in the Gallery Theater with a showing and discussion of the documentary, "The Road to Brown." These events continue into the spring semester with visits from speakers, educators, and activists including PBS featured educator and activist Robert Moses on Monday, January 26th at 7:00 pm in the LC Forum, and author Melba Beals, who has written about her experience as one of the "Little Rock Nine" who first integrated Little Rock High School in 1957 one Tuesday, April 6th at 7:00 pm in the Vaughn Literature Auditorium.

References:
Fellowships

Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS). The Martin Duberman Fellowship.
This fellowship is open to applicants from any country doing scholarly research on the lesbian/ gay/ transgender/bisexual/queer (LGBTQ) experience. The fellow may be asked to participate in CLAGS’s Colloquium Series the following academic year to present her/his research project. Application deadline: November 15, 2003. Contact: (212) 817-1955, email <clags@gc.cuny.edu>, Website <www.clags.org>.

Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS). The Joan Heller-Diane Bernard Fellowship in Lesbian and Gay Studies.
This fellowship supports research into the impact of lesbians and/or gay men on U.S. society and culture. The fellow may be asked to participate in CLAGS’s Colloquium Series the following academic year to present her/his research project. Scholars conducting research on lesbians are especially encouraged to apply. There will be two fellowships awarded. Application deadline: November 15, 2003. Contact: (212) 817-1955, email <clags@gc.cuny.edu>, Website <www.clags.org>.

Center for Ethnicities, Communities and Social Policy, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities.
Proposals for three-year resident fellowships are being called for the project “Ethnic Identities and Transformations: The Meaning and Experience of Ethnicity in the 21st Century.” In 2004-2005, the theme will be Cultural Production, Cultural Memory and Ethnic Conflict. Application deadline: January 15, 2004. Contact: Karen Sulpizio, Bryn Mawr College, 101 N. Merion Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-2899, (610) 526-5030, fax (610) 526-7476, email <ksulpiz1@brynmawr.edu>, Website <www.brynmawr.edu/ethnicities>.

Center for the Study of Genders and Sexualities and the American Communities Program, California State University, Los Angeles. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities.
This program has invited applications for two postdoctoral fellowships for the project “Becoming and Belonging: The Alchemy of Identity in the Multiethnic Metropolis.” The theme for 2004-2005 will be gendered labor and the global marketplace. Two fellowships will be offered: one yearlong (September to June) and one half year (February to June). Application deadline: January 15, 2004. Contact: Alejandra Machevsky or Richard T. Rodriguez, California State University, Los Angeles, 5151 State University Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90032-8100, (323) 343-5639, fax (323) 343-6440, email <rodr111@calstatela.edu> or <anarch@calstatela.edu>, Website <www.calstatela.edu/academic/al/dev/rockefeller.htm>.

Department of Sociomedical Sciences, Columbia University, New York, New York. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities.
This program is inviting applications for two yearlong residential fellows with regards to the “Program for the Study of Sexuality, Gender, Health and Human Rights.” They seek applicants conducting innovative interdisciplinary work (academic, policy or activist) on the intersecting themes of sexuality, gender, health and human rights in domestic or international concerns. Application deadline: January 15, 2004. Contact: Carole S. Vance, Department of Sociomedical Sciences, Columbia University, 722 West 168th Street (Room 945), New York, NY 10032, (212) 305-5656, fax (212) 305-0315, email <csv1@columbia.edu>, Website <cremnet.columbia.edu/dept/gender>.

Latin American and Latino Studies Program, University of Illinois at Chicago. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities.
This program invites applications for “Latin American and Latino Studies Program, University of Illinois at Chicago. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities.” For 2004-2005, they are seeking a senior fellow on Latino migration and transnationalism in Chicago and the Midwest. Application deadline: March 1, 2004. Contact: Fellowship Coordinator, Latin American and Latino Studies Program, MC 219, 1525 University Hall, University of Illinois at Chicago, 601 South Morgan Street, Chicago, IL 60607-7115, (312) 996-2445, fax (312) 996-1796, email <gai1@uic.edu>, Website <www.uic.edu/ las/latamst>.
Calls for Papers, Proposals, and Presenters

Abstracts should be submitted that relate to any aspect of the African and African American experience. Subjects vary. Submission deadline: November 15, 2003. Contact: Dr. Lemuel Berry, Jr., Executive Director, NAAS & Affiliates, PO Box 325, Biddeford, ME 04005-0325, fax: (207) 839-3776, email <naasconference@earthlink.net>, Website <www.naas.org>.

Annual Conference on Lavender Languages and Linguistics, February 13-15 2004
Three days of conversation about language, broadly defined, in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer people’s lives. Please submit proposals for individual presentations or organized sessions before December 1, 2003. Contact: The Planning Committee c/o Dept. of Anthropology, American University, Washington DC 20016. Phone: 202-885-1831. email: wlm@american.edu. Website: <http://www.american.edu/lavenderlanguages>.

Proposals for papers, presentations and sessions are welcome with their point of reference the lived experience of class. All presentations should be accessible to an interdisciplinary audience. Among many, “The Mosaic of Class, Race, and Gender” is a conference theme. Submission deadline: December 15, 2003. Contact: Michael Zweig, Director, Center for Study of Working Class Life, Department of Economics, SUNY, Stony Brook, NY 11794-4384, (631) 632-7536, email <michael.zweig@stonybrook.edu>, Website <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/CAS/wcm.nsf/pages/papers2>.

The European Association for American Studies is calling for papers that discuss the multiple manifestations of Chicano studies. The proposal can be in either English or Spanish. Submission deadline: January 15, 2004. Contact: Jesus Lerate de Castro, Facultad de Filologia, Departamento de Literatura Inglesa y Norteamericana, c/ Palos de la Frontera, s/n, 410004 Seville, Spain, email <jlerate@siff.us.es>, Website <http://www.eas.info/events/chicano.htm>.

This special issue centers on transnational feminist analyses of gender, sexuality, and state/nation. Manuscript entries should be 25-30 pages long, include $10 submission fee. Submission deadline: January 31, 2004. Contact: Professor Christine Williams, Editor, Gender & Society, Department of Sociology, Burdine 352, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712.

The program committee invites proposals for panels and papers on this theme. The committee welcomes the use of differing session formats, including workshops, roundtable discussions, and multimedia as well as traditional papers. The conference also welcomes sessions which address the topic through the lenses of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. Submission deadline: March 1, 2004. Contact: Janine Lanza, Coordinator, North American Labor History Conference, Department of History, Wayne State University, 3094 Faculty/ Administration Building, Detroit, MI 48202, (313) 577-2525, fax (313) 577-6984, email <ao1605@wayne.edu>.

This special issue will utilize critical race scholarship to engage whiteness as a politically meaningful construct in need of analysis, contestation and transformation. Submissions of empirical and theoretical work are welcome from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary viewpoints. Submission deadline: June 15, 2004. Contact: Mary G. McDonald, Miami University, 204C Phillips Hall, Oxford, OH 45056, (513) 529-2724, email <mcdonamg@muohio.edu>.
Fall 2003: Coming Events

Tuesday, October 21
7:30 pm, LC Gallery Theatre
Third Tuesday LGBT Film Series: The Sun of Us

Tuesday, October 28
11:30-1pm, LC Walls Lounge
Women's and Gender Studies Luncheon
"Study Abroad Opportunities in Women's and Gender Studies"

Thursday, October 30
4:00 pm, LC Forum

Saturday, November 1
8am-1:30pm, Rookie Chem.
Student Symposium on Sacred Places

Monday, November 3
Gallery Theatre, LC
Women's Resource Center Film Series: SlimHopes, 12pm & 7:00pm

Thursday, November 13
4:30pm, Willard Smith Library
Race/Gender Faculty Colloquy
Glyne Griffith, English Department, "The BBC Caribbean Voices Radio Program and the Development of Caribbean Literature."

Monday, November 17
3:00pm, Carnegie 208

Tuesday, November 18
7:30 pm, Gallery Theatre
Third Tuesday LGBT Film Series: Different for Girls

Monday, December 1 through Monday, December 8
Samek Art Gallery
World AIDS Day and the display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt
Each of the more than 44,000 colorful panels in the Quilt memorializes the life of a person lost to AIDS.

Tuesday, December 2
7:30pm, LC Center Theatre
Brown at 50 Symposium. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education (1954) brought about major changes in national and social policy and focused the nation on the issue of racial discrimination in public education. This series will explore the historical meaning of this decision and the contemporary issues that have occurred as a result.

Film and Discussion - The Road to Brown
This documentary film outlines the NAACP's legal strategy leading up to the Brown Decision and the contribution of Charles Houston - "the man who killed Jim Crow". Part of the Brown at 50 Symposium
Spring 2004: Coming Events

Monday, January 26
7:00pm, LC Forum

Robert Moses, "Radical Equations, Civil Rights From Mississippi to the Algebra Project". Moses, a central activist during the civil rights movement, has returned to Mississippi to teach math to descendants of the sharecroppers he helped mobilize 40 years earlier. Moses argues that "the most urgent social issue affecting poor people and people of color is economic access...[and] economic access and full citizenship depend crucially on math and science literacy."
Part of the Brown at 50 Symposium

Tuesday, February 17
7:00pm, LC Forum

Panel Discussion: Bucknell Alumni Discuss the Challenges of Urban School Reform. Part of the Brown at 50 Symposium

Thursday, February 19
4:00pm, LC 241 A&B

Race/Gender Resource Center Faculty Colloquy
Nina Banks, Department of Economics, "Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander: Economist First"

Tuesday, March 9
7:30pm, LC Forum

Women's and Gender Studies Lecture
Cynthia Enloe, Professor of Government, Clark University. Enloe's work explores the ways in which local and international militarizing processes privilege certain men and certain forms of masculinity. She traces the thinking and strategies of women activists as they attempt to create

Tuesday, March 30
7:00pm, LC Forum

Gary Orfield, "Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Repeal of Brown v. Board of Education".
According to Orfield, much of the progress for black students since the 1960s was eliminated during the past decade. He offers a look at the growing gap in quality between the schools being attended by white students and those serving a large proportion of students of color, which is the very issue Brown sought to address in 1954.
Part of the Brown at 50 Symposium

Tuesday, April 6
7:00pm, Vaughan Lit Aud.

Melba Patillo Beals, "Warriors Don't Cry"
Melba Beals has played a significant role in civil rights history, especially as it is connected to education. Melba Beals was one of the original "Little Rock Nine" and has written a compelling book, Warriors Don't Cry, chronicling her experience integrating the Little Rock schools.
Part of the Brown at 50 Symposium

Tuesday, April 13
4:30PM, LC 241 A&B

Race/Gender Resource Center Faculty Colloquy
Emek Ucarer, Department of International Relations, "Trafficking in Women and the European Union: Shifting Frames, Sifting Outcomes"
Race/Gender Resource Center Staff

- Co-directors:
  Elizabeth Crespo, crespo@bucknell.edu, 3C Marts Hall, x73475
  Susan Reed, sreed@bucknell.edu, 3A Marts Hall, x73474

- Secretary:
  Martha Shaunessy mshaunes@bucknell.edu, 3B Marts Hall, x71360

- Student Interns:
  Liisa Britt, lbritt@bucknell.edu, 3B Marts Hall, x71545
  Sarah Wilson, swilson@bucknell.edu, 3B Marts Hall, x71545