

5th Annual Conference on Equity & Social Justice

2012 Conference Theme:

Reclaiming Education: Considering What “Counts” in Teaching and Learning toward Social Justice

April 28, 2012

State University of New York at New Paltz, NY

Conference Proposals due January 25, 2012

<http://www.equitysocialjustice.org>

Invited Keynote: CHRISTINE SLEETER

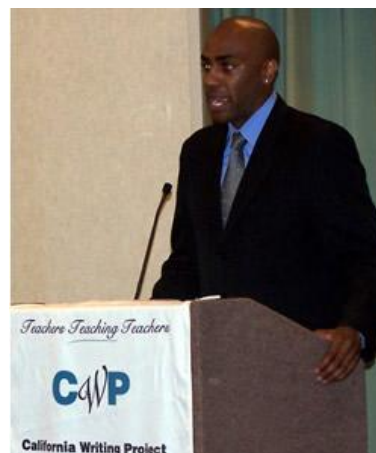


Christine E. Sleeter, PhD. (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1982) is Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies at California State University Monterey Bay, where she was a founding faculty member. She is currently President of the [National Association for Multicultural Education](#), and previously served as Vice President of Division K (Teaching and Teacher Education) of the American Educational Research Association. Dr. Sleeter has published over 100 articles in journals and edited books. Her recent books include *Teaching with Vision* (with Catherine Cornbleth, Teachers College Press, 2011), *Critical Multiculturalism: Theory and Praxis* (with Stephen May, Routledge, 2010), and *Doing Multicultural Education for Achievement and Equity* (with Carl Grant; Routledge, 2007). Her research focuses on anti-racist multicultural education and teacher education, and currently she is developing a new area, critical family history. Awards for her work include the American Educational Research Association [Social Justice in Education Award](#), the American Educational

Research Association Division K Legacy Award, the California State University Monterey Bay President's Medal, the National Association for Multicultural Education Research Award, the Central Washington University Distinguished Alumni Award, and the American Educational Research Association Special Interest Group on Critical Examination of Race, Ethnicity, Class and Gender Senior Scholar Award.

Invited Keynote: ERNEST MORRELL

Ernest Morrell is a writer of poems, plays, essays, novels, and academic books, book chapters, articles, reviews, and encyclopedia entries. He is also Professor of English Education and Director of the Institute for Urban and Minority Education (IUME) at Teachers College, Columbia University. For over a decade he worked with adolescents, drawing on their involvement with popular culture to promote academic literacy development. Morrell is the author of three books, *Linking Literacy and Popular Culture: Finding Connections for Lifelong Learning* (Christopher-Gordon) and *Becoming Critical Researchers: Literacy and Empowerment for Urban Youth* (Peter Lang), and *Critical Literacy and Urban Youth: Pedagogies of Access, Dissent, and Liberation* (Routledge). Morrell's research has been sponsored and awarded on several occasions including receiving the outstanding dissertation award from UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Education and being awarded a postdoctoral research grant from the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Morrell received his doctorate in Language, Literacy, and Culture from the University of California at Berkeley. He will be Vice President of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) as of November, 2011.



Conference Theme Description

Albert Einstein stated, “Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.” Despite the current movement toward reducing teaching and learning to measurable bits of information that can be easily evaluated, ranked and published, educators know better. Teaching and learning – like any social endeavor – are complex and multifaceted; the impulse toward reductionism must be resisted. People are more than data points. This assertion is relevant beyond education and connects to contemporary inequities in U.S. society. Chris Hedges (2009) explains:

Human beings are not commodities. They are not goods. They grieve and suffer and feel despair. They raise children and struggle to maintain communities. The growing class divide is not understood, despite the glibness of many in the media, by complicated sets of statistics, lines on a graph that chart stocks, or the absurd, utopian faith in unregulated globalization and complicated trade deals. It is understood in the eyes of a man or woman who is no longer making enough money to live with dignity and hope.

Corporate and political leaders are implementing reform initiatives that are increasing inequity and weakening the ability of educators to promote social justice. These reforms are centered, to a great extent, on a belief in the meaningfulness of numbers attached to test scores – despite the fact that neither the numbers nor the tests can be demonstrated as statistically significant. More and more, assessment data are being used to prove that public schools and teachers are failing, a belief that opens the doors for privatization and standardization – both established enemies of equity and social justice. How can educators resist the onslaught of standardization?

In our conference this year, educators can draw strength and build on one another’s knowledge and experience. To that end, we seek proposals from educators whose experiences speak to the notion that people are more than data points and that learning is more than penciling in bubbles.

The Conference Committee invites proposals on all topics relevant to Equity and Social Justice.

This year’s conference will have 6 strands. When submitting proposals, annotate the strand you are submitting to and the type of proposal format you are requesting. Submitted proposals will be peer reviewed by the Conference Committee. Proposals should address one of the following strands:

- **Education**
- **Critical Race Studies**
- **Critical Youth Studies**
- **Urban Education & Community Partnerships**
- **“Othering”**
- **Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights**

Education

Proposals in this strand might address the following questions:

- What kinds of data are meaningful in the quest for social justice through education?
- How is standardization affecting pre-service and in-service teachers? Students? Administrators? School systems? What it means to be educated? How does standardization relate to our society?
- How might the experiences of students and teachers in alternative settings inform traditional classrooms?
- How are efforts to achieve social justice and equity affected by the current reforms?
- What is measured by standardized assessments? How can alternate forms of assessment reveal learning not measured by standardized assessments?
- What are the effects of assessment and curriculum standardization on student learning and teaching?
- How can educators use data and alternative forms of assessment to resist the negative effects of standardization?

Critical Race Studies

The notion of a post-racial era has as a result of the nation's first Black President, Barack Obama. Many believe racism does not exist in contemporary times, thereby dismissing the challenges experienced by Black and Brown citizens. We invite papers and workshops by researchers, educators, and scholars who critically examine racist practices, policies, micro-aggressions and other forms of oppression as it relates to critical race studies and transformative solutions in the following areas:

- K-12 Education
- Higher Education
- Sociology
- Teacher Education

Critical Youth Studies

This strand invites scholars from a wide variety of disciplines whose research explores contemporary discourses about childhood and youth from a critical perspective. The theme provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary dialogue, and seeks to engage historians, philosophers, and cultural and media critics, among others, in conversations that focus on the representation of young people in academic and popular discourses. Throughout American history, adults have circulated images of youth that are manipulative, hostile, and damaging. More often than not, young people are portrayed in these adult-generated discourses as either passive victims or aggressive perpetrators; rarely, however, are they depicted as being productive and capable agents in their own right, and even less frequently are they granted access to the means of representation that construct and disseminate these images. Additional work from scholars from a number of disciplines who are concerned about the ways in which the rights of youth, their ability to create and maintain selfhood, and their opportunities to express an emergent independence are compromised in contemporary U.S. society. In addition, this session invites scholars whose focus of inquiry explores the cultural practices of young people themselves, especially those that highlight how young people engage in acts of social and political resistance.

Urban Education & Community Partnerships

The relationship of community partnerships in assisting urban community transformation is explored in this strand. Possible questions and research topics include: How are partnerships begun? How can equity and social justice be cultivated in relationships between community partners and urban schools? Can the goal of urban transformation really occur?

“Othering”

The “Othering” strand is soliciting papers and sessions from scholars and practitioners in a wider range of disciplines whose work captures how constitutive forces and cultural practices inside and outside of schools led to the marginalization of students and other social actors on the structural axes of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and/or disability. This phenomenon builds one’s positive identity at the expense of someone else, the “other”, and leads to differentiation and separation (“us” vs. “them”). The impact of “othering” on equity and social justice, ways in which this issue has been researched, and strategies that have evolved from the research, will be explored. The track also calls on educators, researchers, and students to share theoretical insights, empirical data, pedagogical strategies, and cultural work that have the potency to ameliorate oppression against the “Other” as well as have the power to remake schools and other social contexts on the ideals of equity, social justice and democracy.

Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights

The Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights strand invites papers and sessions that address information and teaching strategies about the Holocaust and other genocides as defined by the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (1948) as well as varying definitions by university scholars and researchers. Papers and sessions should assist practicing and future educators, historians and scholars in understanding the cultural, political, economic and religious forces behind genocide by engaging in comparative study of genocides of the past and present and by examining the singularly horrific crime of the *Shoah*. Presentations should provide educators with the necessary tools to present information on the Holocaust and other forms of genocide in an age-appropriate manner so that students the political, social and religious issues that give rise to acts of genocide, and how the lessons of history impact and inform possible responses to the genocides that exist presently.

PROPOSAL FORMATS

Individual Proposal: (75 minutes)

The Conference Committee welcomes individual paper proposals, with the understanding that those accepted will be grouped together around common or overlapping themes. Presenters will have approximately 15 minutes to present or summarize their individual papers. A 150-250 word abstract of the paper will be peer reviewed for acceptance to the conference.

Symposium Proposal: (75 minutes)

The Conference Committee welcomes proposals for a symposium. A symposium is typically composed of a chair and discussant and three to five participants who present or summarize their papers. Each symposium is organized around a common theme. A 150-250 word abstract of the symposium will be peer reviewed for acceptance to the conference.

Panel Proposal: (75 minutes)

The Conference Committee welcomes proposals for a panel discussion. A panel discussion is typically composed of three to six participants who discuss their scholarly work within the context of a dialogue or conversation on a topic or theme related to the conference. Typically, each panelist is given 10-15 minutes to discuss the topic, present theoretical ideas, and/or point to relevant research. A chair should be identified who introduces the panel and frames the issues and questions being addressed. In addition to the chair, we encourage (but do not require) organizers of panels to include a discussant who responds to the comments of the panelists. A 150-250 word abstract of the panel discussion will be peer reviewed for acceptance to the conference.

Alternative Format and Special Interest Groups (75 minutes)

Alternative proposals that do not fit into the above categories, such as workshops, performances, video and multimedia presentations, and round-table dialogues, are encouraged. We also welcome proposals for the organization of special interest groups. A 150-250 word abstract of the panel discussion will be peer reviewed for acceptance to the conference.

Proposals must include:

- Names and affiliations of presenters
- Conference Strand
- Presentation Format

SUBMIT ALL PROPOSALS TO: Julie Gorlewski at gorlewsj@newpaltz.edu

CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS

Dr. Julie Gorlewski
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