Ian Haney Lopez

By “remembering” race, the UF Race Center seeks to place issues of race at the fore.

The last year has been a busy one for us as we crossed the five-year threshold. This newsletter showcases the new roots the Center has planted and the old soil we are fertilizing. This year we held our first annual Griot Race, Law and Justice Oral Competition. We invited law students to participate in a debate on the subject of race-based hate speech.

This spring we honored Judge Stephan Mickle for his ten years on the federal bench. Judge Mickle, the second Black graduate of UF’s law school, is truly a legal pioneer.

In 7 Questions, a regular feature of the newsletter, Professor Laura Gomez offers some deeply-reflective responses about race studies.

We have sponsored some wonderful events, including a Race Relations Panel, a powerful lecture by professor Ian Haney Lopez (Berkeley) and a provocative one by professor Angela Mae Kupenda (Mississippi College).

Spring Lecture 2007
Ian Haney Lopez

U.C. Berkeley law professor Ian Haney Lopez gave the 2007 Spring Lecture. His talk, “A Nation of Minorities: Race, Ethnicity, and Reactionary Colorblindness,” offered a powerful and incisive critique of colorblindness:

Colorblindness from a legal standpoint must be understood not as an Ideal, but rather as a policy, as a technique, a way of moving forward to a racial future. It needs to be evaluated in terms of the specific policies that it would prescribe. In that sense, contemporary colorblindness is reactionary—it is an effort in terms of what it would end (affirmative action)—to preserve the status quo.


Haney Lopez teaches Constitutional Law, Equal Protection Clause and Race, and Race and American Law.
Stephan P. Mickle pulled into the driveway of his parents’ house as a young man, ready to sell his beloved red Chevy Malibu.

Selling this car marked the defining moment when Mickle’s parents realized he was serious about attending law school and no longer wanted to be a social studies teacher, his mother Catherine said. This decision to sell his car helped pave the way for Mickle’s unprecedented career.

Since then, a decade of service as a U.S. federal judge in the Northern District of Florida has been just one of Mickle’s many contributions to the legal system — contributions the Race Center honored in March. More than 160 people attended the full-house event, held at the UF-Hilton.

UF dignitaries, faculty, staff and students, community members, local politicians, friends and family of Judge Mickle came to celebrate his achievements.

Judge Mickle, a man of many firsts, has the respect of his peers, co-workers and the legal community for being an outstanding judge. In 1965, he was the first African American to receive an undergraduate degree from UF (political science). Five years later he was the second African American to graduate from UF’s law school. Mickle later joined the UF law faculty as an assistant professor. He was also the first African American attorney to establish a law practice in Gainesville. Judge Mickle was the first African American man to receive UF’s Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1999.

After running his own law practice for seven years, Mickle became the first African American county judge for Alachua County. He served as a judge in Florida’s Eighth Judicial Circuit in 1984 before becoming the first and only African American lawyer from the Eighth Judicial Court appointed to the First District Court of Appeals.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton nominated Mickle to the federal bench. His nomination was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Mickle has always been a leader and advocate for equal justice. “In September of 2009, I will have been a judge for 30 years,” Mickle said at the program. “During that time, I have seen the good, the bad and the ugly, yet every day I go to work and I look for the good in people.”

“I really appreciate all that the Race Center and law school have done, and it’s the kind of thing I feel humbled by,” Mickle said. “I am thinking to myself that, ‘I did this stuff,’ but it didn’t seem as significant at the time, and now I can see what they are talking about.”

Welcoming remarks were made by Race Center Director Katheryn Russell-Brown, Levin College of Law, Dean Robert Jerry and UF President J. Bernhard Machen. Professor Kenneth Nunn talked about the history of race at UF; Professor Sharon Rush discussed some of Judge Mickle’s court decisions. Professor Elizabeth Rowe shared some personal reflections on Judge Mickle’s mentorship. She also presented a surprise video tape of Harvard Law professor Charles Ogletree congratulating Judge Mickle on his service. Fort Lauderdale lawyer and first African American UF law graduate, W. George Allen, shared some stories and insights; Black Law Students Association President Jonathan Blocker discussed Judge Mickle’s legacy on today’s law students of color. Aaron Green spoke about his decades-long friendship and work with the judge. Following brief remarks by Judge Mickle, Professor Russell-Brown presented him with a clock as a symbol of his time at UF as a student and educator and to honor him for bearing witness to the changing times at the university since 1962.
CSRRR RACE FORUM
A Series of Unfortunate Events? A Look at Race
by Neil Warren Blackmon (UF Law ’08)

In February 2007 the UF Race Center hosted a forum on race, “A Series of Unfortunate Events? A Look at Race.” The discussion focused on how we discuss race in public settings. Florida State Sen. Anthony Hill, who lobbied early on for the creation of the Race Center, offered opening remarks.

A panel discussion addressed a series of high-profile, race-related incidents that marked 2006 and the early months of 2007, including Rosie O’Donnell’s “comedic” caricature of Asian Americans, Michael Richard’s “N” word rant and Don Imus’s race and gender slurs against the Rutgers women’s basketball team. Panelists included UF’s Yuko Fujino (sociology), professor Faye Harrison (anthropology and African-American Studies), professor Milagros Pena (sociology and women’s studies) and professor Kenneth Nunn (law).

Yuko Fujino critiqued O’Donnell’s stereotypical characterizations of Asians. O’Donnell’s remarks were made on The View. Fujino noted that the audience’s response to O’Donnell’s caricature was laughter. Further, there was “no response to the remarks until Asian-American viewers deemed it inappropriate and protested.” To Fujino, the absence of loud protests against O’Donnell’s remarks reflects a common thorn in our national dialogue on race — the omission of Asian-American voices. “When we talk about race, particularly Asians are often left out of the discussion — a discussion which has become binary, or at most a Black, White and Latino triad discussion.”

After observing that the discussion on race in America is often a constricted one, anthropology Harrison noted that there is still “a great deal of denial about race and racism in this country. The denial happens at the level of individuals who lack knowledge, sensitivity and live lives sustained by class and racial privilege. It is also evident in the language, practices and policies, both domestic and foreign, of our democratically elected government.” According to Harrison, policies such as the promotion of diversity management and colorblindness, “deny the severity of present day racial inequalities and the extent to which they are perpetuated by institutional and structural means.” These polices continue to operate to the systemic disadvantage of people of color, and the discussion of these issues, Harrison remarked, is one of non-engagement — both on the right, which has implemented many of these policies in the current administration, as well as on the left, evidenced by the liberal deconstruction of welfare policy as we knew it and affirmative action. Harrison warned that until we address these types of institutional inequalities within the American dialogue on race, we will not be able to dismantle racism in America.

Milagros Pena asked, “Are we going forward with race issues or are we going backwards?” She argued that the militarization of minority communities by law enforcement is a theme that continues today and stalls minority progress. One specific example of militarization is along the Mexico-US Border, beefed up in the wake of 9/11. Despite the fact that research indicates that most 9/11 security issues along the borders came from Canada, U.S. immigration policy has been to militarize the southern border and identify it as a dominant threat to national security. “Sept. 11 is important to highlight,” Pena said, “because it is an example of how contemporary political discourse has used fear to increase fear regarding the ‘Other.’”

Professor Nunn addressed the media fascination with Barack Obama as well as the broader issue of the state of our national conversation on race. Noting that we have not gotten “beyond” race, Professor Nunn stated that the fascination with Obama’s racial status reflects a contemporary racial paradigm. When Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Delaware) described Obama as “bright, clean and articulate,” he was expressing a dominant White view. If Blacks fit within a particular racial framework, they may be accepted as part of the mainstream.

According to Nunn, this species of race-talk can be juxtaposed with events that are intended to display a false sense of concern for race and racism. Initial outrage at Seinfeld star Michael Richard’s “N word” episode, “is a means for convincing ourselves in contemporary political discourse that we have concern regarding racism that we really don’t have.” It gives a false sense of racial enlightenment — the events never lead to a discussion or interrogation of the structural racial issues.


Asim commented on the media’s obsession with Obama’s racial “authenticity.” Asim then traced the controversial remarks of Sen. Biden back to the author of the Declaration of Independence,

continued on page 5
7 Questions for
Laura Gomez

1 Why study race?
What interests you about race?
My family (and especially my father, who was a community and university activist in the 1960s) instilled a strong sense of social justice and Chicano identity in me, but I often took for granted my racial identity during my childhood in the 1970s in Albuquerque, where I was usually in majority Mexican-American neighborhoods and schools. It wasn’t until I went off to college at Harvard that I directly confronted racial exclusion and injustice. There were few Chicano students, and we worked actively with Puerto Ricans, other Latinos, Blacks, Asians and other students who perceived themselves as outsiders (to date myself, we called ourselves “the Third World coalition”). In the classroom, I took courses in African-American studies and sociology in an effort to make sense of how Chicanos fit into the American racial order (mind you, there wasn’t a single U.S.-born Latino on the Harvard faculty.) It was doing the research and writing for my senior thesis that made me want to become a scholar and teacher. Twenty-five years later, I feel like I’m still trying to figure things out, most recently by exploring the topic of where Mexican Americans fit in a book entitled Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race. Ultimately, it is the complexity of race in the U.S. that I continue to find compelling as a subject of study.

2 How do you incorporate race into your teaching?
I am lucky enough to currently be teaching two courses that allow me to share my passion about race and racial injustice — Constitutional Rights and Race and the Law in American History. The constitutional law course is the second required course in UNM’s constitutional law sequence and, of course, race is in many ways at the center of the analysis of equal protection and even quite prominent in the First Amendment unit. The other course is great fun because it brings together undergraduates, grad students in the College of Arts and Sciences (where I have a quarter of my faculty appointment) and law students. I use a fantastic casebook — Race and Races: Cases and Resources for a Diverse America, edited by Juan Perea, Richard Delgado, Angela Harris, Jean Stefancic and Stephanie Wildman. Its greatest strength is in its truly comparative analysis, weaving together America’s racial complexity in the past and present as it has involved African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans and Latinos.

3 Can you suggest a book for “beginners” — those who are interested in reading about race but don’t know where to begin?
Revealing my own biases as a result of my training in sociology, I recommend two books written by sociologists: Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World by Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, and Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva. I am a strong believer in inter-disciplinary scholarship, and I think law students and law professors benefit immensely from reading in the social sciences and the humanities.

4 What book or article caused you to think about race in a new way?
Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s book, Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s (first published in 1986, then in a second edition in 1994), was the first book-length manuscript that foregrounded the social construction of race — the idea that, rather than having any inherent meaning or social significance, race is historically contingent and given meaning by persons, institutions and social processes. This idea is one of the fundamental ideas of the Critical Race Theory movement within legal scholarship. Indeed, the idea that race is socially constructed has become common-sense, even to the point that it has been co-opted by judges and scholars on the right who (wrongly) argue that the socially constructed nature of race makes it less relevant today.

5 What’s the best part of your job?
I try not to take for granted the good fortune of being a university scholar — it’s a wonderful job. For me, two important features of the job are its autonomy and dynamism. It’s great to be at the stage of starting a new project and know that one really can write about whatever one chooses. Like all jobs, this one has its downside (grading exams and faculty meetings rank among them), but the cyclical nature of the job minimizes them; one can’t get too bogged down because things change every semester and there’s always summer “vacation” to look forward to (even though it usually means working even harder to finish that article or book.)
6. What are you reading now?
I just started reading Conquest by Law: How the Discovery of America Dispossessed Indigenous Peoples of Their Lands by Lindsay Robertson. It is an historical analysis of one of the legal cases read by all first-year law students (in property) and also regarded by many as one of the most unjust cases in American law — Johnson v. M’Intosh (1823), the Supreme Court case announcing the principle of “the discovery doctrine” and paving the way for the displacement of Native Americans from their homelands.

7 What's your take on how the legal academy is doing with regard to incorporating race into the curriculum? What grade would you give it?
We are certainly moving in the right direction; things are much better than when I attended Stanford Law School in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Efforts like those of the University of Florida’s Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations and UCLA’s Critical Race Studies Concentration (which I co-founded), to name just two entities, have helped legitimize and institutionalize the study of race in the legal academy. But we have still largely failed to penetrate mainstream legal education as judged by indicators such as the content of best-selling casebooks in the first-year curriculum. Compared to schools of thought such as law and economics, we have had very little success in staffing law faculties and the bench, for example. I’d give the legal academy a B- for integrating race, but a D+ for taking what we’ve learned about race beyond the academy.

Professor Gómez joined the UNM faculty in fall 2005, with a joint appointment at the Law School and in the American Studies Department. She is a native New Mexican. For more information about professor Gómez go to: http://lawschool.unm.edu/faculty/gomez/index.php.

From the Director, continued from page 1

With the help of professor Wendy Brown Scott (North Carolina Central), we have completed our first On Point: A Curriculum Guide. This online resource provides legal, social science and documentary references on a topic of importance to the legal community. The focus of the inaugural guide is research on Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. We are also pleased to announce the 2008 Evan Yegelwel Fellow, Jana Wasserman (3L).

Please note that starting with this issue, our newsletter will be published in the fall.
Among other things, we hope that this schedule change offers uplift to the beginning of the new academic year. Please join us in our work.

A Series of Unfortunate Events, continued from page 3

Thomas Jefferson, who in 1775 wrote that he “had never encountered a Negro who had ever uttered a thought above the level of plain narration.” Asim argued that Jefferson’s remarks were invaluable to the narrative of race in contemporary America.
As a result of the entrenched narrative that Blacks are inarticulate, when the media is presented with people of color such as Barack Obama, it typically treats them as representing the exception.

Asim argued that the dominant conception of Obama speaks to something much larger than the candidate. The very conception of Blacks’ struggle for equality and respect derails the goal. One important battleground in this struggle, Asim noted, is the use of the N-word epithet.
Citing the rise in the use of the epithet by younger African Americans who are speaking to one another, as well as the prevalent use of the word in hip-hop culture, Asim noted that “One of the most curious paradoxes of the past few decades is the phenomenon of Blacks, only recently allowed to romp freely in a language that has often betrayed them, dallying with that language in a way that threatens the legacy of all those whose words and deeds challenged the national narrative; those whose efforts, in effect, wrote Black Americans into existence.” Following an elegant tracing of the history of African American struggle, including the landmark movements of Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, Asim remarked that these struggles did not deploy the N word. Asim concluded, “In the 21st century, to subsist on our former masters’ cast-off language strikes me as an immense, inscrutable and bizarre failure of imagination.”

While Asim conceded that the deployment of the N word may have its place in personal space and in certain endeavors, in the public space, he said, the word — and the White perception of the word’s ties to “gangsta culture” that celebrates immorality and criminality — risks abandoning the moral high ground so critical in the success of earlier trailblazing social movements and struggles. This connection to commodified gangsta culture, he said, keeps alive the very image of Black depravity that the dominant White majority feeds on.
Ultimately, though the effort to change White perceptions of Blacks is an exhausting one, and though social struggle by people of color still relies a great deal on their own hard work, talent and ingenuity, Asim reasoned, “Blacks’ image will always be understood by the ability of the dominant group to evolve beyond its crippling prejudices — but Blacks imagination and ability to evolve is equally important.” Because the N word is such a powerful stereotype, Blacks must walk a fine line between critically engaging the word’s history and not reaffirming the systematic dehumanization the word historically represented and the negative images it continues to evoke.
1905 Buckman Act establishes Florida Agricultural College. Act specifies that UF "shall admit no person other than white male students."

1920 S.D. McGill, an African-American attorney from Jacksonville writes the UF College of Law expressing interest in an extension course. McGill is referred instead to Florida A&M University.

1946 Ulysses Kenisy and Elliott Robbins apply to UF Law School and are denied admission per Florida law forbidding African American admissions.

1946–1958 85 African American students apply to the University of Florida and are denied admission.

1949 Virgil Hawkins and William T. Lewis are denied admission to UF Law School.

1954 Brown v. Board of Education decided by the U.S. Supreme Court ordering public schools desegregated "with all deliberate speed" by 1956. School segregation is ruled unconstitutional. In a companion decision to Brown the University of Florida is ordered to admit Virgil Hawkins. Florida resists the ruling. Virgil Hawkins brings his case before the Florida Supreme Court five times and the United States Supreme Court four times. Segregation in Florida continues well into the early seventies.

1957 Florida Supreme Court upholds Virgil Hawkins' denial of admission to the Law School. Justice Stephen O'Connell, who later served as the university's president, concurs in the decision.

1958 Hawkins withdraws his application to UF Law School in exchange for the desegregation of UF graduate and professional schools; he attends New England School of Law.

1959 George Starke is the first African American to be admitted to the UF Law School. He attends under police protection for the first few weeks and eventually withdraws after three semesters.

1959 The College of Law celebrates its 50th anniversary.

1960 Evelyn Moore (Mickle) is the first African-American graduate of UF Nursing.

1961 Leonard George and Willie Jackson become the first African American football players signed at UF.

1962 W. George Allen is the first African American to receive a degree from the UF Law School.

1963 The first African American undergraduate (seven students, including Stephan Mickle) register at UF.

1964 1964–1965 Stephan Mickle is the first African American to earn an undergraduate degree from UF (political science). Center for African Studies established at UF.

1965 Stephan Mickle is the second African American to graduate from UF Law School.

1967 The Black Law Student Association (BLSA) is established at UF and named after W. George Allen.

1968 The Black Student Union (BSU) is established at UF.

1969 Track athlete Johnnie Brown is the first African American at UF to compete in an intercollegiate sport.

1970 Stephan Mickle becomes the first African American to earn an undergraduate degree from UF (political science).

1971 The College of Law celebrates its 50th anniversary.

1972 Stephan P. Mickle becomes the first African American to establish a law practice in Gainesville. He also joins the faculty of the College of Law as an assistant professor.

1973 The Black Law Student Association (BLSA) is established at UF and named after W. George Allen.

1974 The African American Studies Program at UF begins.

1978 Michael Moorehead begins tenure at Levin College of Law, first African-American full professor.

1979 Evelyn Moore (Mickle) is the first African-American female graduate from UF Law School.

1980 The Black Student Union (BSU) is established at UF.

1985 William Moorehead is the first African American law professor to teach at UF.

1986 Evelyn Moore (Mickle) is the first African American female elected UF Student Government president.

1987 Virgil Hawkins is admitted to The Florida Bar and begins his law practice 27 years after he first applied for admission to UF Law School.

Stephen C. O'Connell becomes the sixth president of the University of Florida.

Evelyn Moore (Mickle) is the first African-American graduate of UF Nursing.

Black athlete Johnnie Brown is the first African American at UF to compete in an intercollegiate sport.

Student Union (BSU) is established at UF.

Spencer Boyer is hired as a visiting professor and is the first African American to teach at UF law school. He leaves abruptly after receiving threats.

Leonard George and Willie Jackson become the first African American football players signed at UF.

American Studies Program at UF begins.

African-American students stage a sit-in at President O'Connell’s office to protest policies regarding minority students and are suspended and arrested on O'Connell's orders.

"Black Thursday" protest: When O'Connell does not yield to BSU demands for amnesty for the suspended students, almost one-third of UF's African-American students and several faculty members leave the university.

Congress investigates charges of racism at UF, AAUP censures and suspends membership of the University of Florida because of academic freedom.

Cynthia Mays is elected UF's first African American Miss Homecoming.

An increase in the number of minorities at UF is made possible through the federally-funded Legal Education Opportunity Program.

Virgil Hawkins is admitted to The Florida Bar and begins his law practice 27 years after he first applied for admission to UF Law School.

Stephan P. Mickle becomes first African American Alachua County judge.

The Black Honor Society, Beta Eta Sigma, is founded on UF campus.

The Office of Graduate Minority Programs at UF is established by the Graduate School.

Associate Dean Kenneth Nunn resigns in protest over the law school’s lack of commitment to faculty diversity.

The Florida Board of Regents approves the implementation of One Florida, Governor Jeb Bush’s plan ends race and gender preferences in college admissions in the state of Florida.

The Levin College of Law celebrates its 100th year.

UF commemorates the 50th Anniversary of racial integration.

Virgil Hawkins dies at the age of 81. He is posthumously reinstated to The Florida Bar.

The law clinic at the Levin College of Law is named in memory of Virgil Darnell Hawkins, a crusader for civil rights.


The Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations is created at the Levin College of Law.

Professor Kenneth Nunn is appointed associate dean for Law Center Affairs at the Levin College of Law.

UF faculty awards its first posthumous degree to Virgil Hawkins with the unanimous consent of Faculty Senate and Board of Regents.

African-Americans at the University of Florida by Betty Stewart-Dowdell and Kevin McCarthy is published.

The Independent Florida Alligator newspaper prints a cartoon featuring Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice using the N-word towards rapper Kanye West. Backlash endured for weeks on the UF campus, eventually garnering an apology from the paper.
New and Noteworthy

Race Relations in America: A Reference Guide with Primary Documents
Thomas J. Davis
Greenwood Press, 2006

From the publisher
“America has struggled with racial issues since its birth centuries ago. In this pivotal study of racism in the United States, over 90 primary documents provide compelling evidence of how race has affected and shaped our country throughout the years. Documents include excerpts from speeches, letters, pamphlets, books, essays, newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, government reports, congressional debates, laws, and court decisions.”

Opening the Floodgates: Why America Needs to Rethink its Borders and Immigration Laws
Kevin R. Johnson
New York University Press, 2007

From the publisher
“Seeking to re-imagine the meaning and significance of the international border, Opening the Floodgates makes a case for eliminating the border as a legal construct that impedes the movement of people into this country. Kevin R. Johnson offers an alternative vision of how U.S. borders might be reconfigured, grounded in moral, economic and policy arguments for open borders. Importantly, liberalizing migration through an open borders policy would recognize that the enforcement of closed borders cannot stifle the strong, perhaps irresistible, economic, social and political pressures that fuel international migration.”

The Stanford Law Chronicles: Doin’ Time on the Farm
Alfredo Mirandé
University of Notre Dame Press, 2005

From the publisher
“In the midst of a long and distinguished academic career, Alfredo Mirandé left his position as professor of sociology and chair of ethnic studies at the University of California, Riverside, to attend law school at Stanford University. This book is both an extraordinary chronicle of the events in his life that led him to make this dramatic change and a comprehensive, first-person account of the law school experience, written by a person of color. Mirandé delivers a powerful and moving critique of the obstacles he encountered and of systematic attempts to strip him of his identity and culture. He also reflects on the implications of an increasing number of women and minority law school students for law and legal education.”

Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race
Laura E. Gómez
New York University Press, 2007

From the publisher
“In both the historic record and the popular imagination, the story of 19th-century westward expansion in America has been characterized by notions of annexation rather than colonialism, of opening rather than conquering, and of settling unpopulated lands rather than displacing existing populations. Using the territory that is now New Mexico as a case study, Manifest Destinies traces the origins of Mexican Americans as a racial group in the United States, paying particular attention to shifting meanings of race and law in the 19th century.”

Race Law Stories
Rachel F. Moran and Devon W. Carbado, editors
Foundation Press, 2008

From the publisher
“Race Law Stories brings to life well-known and not-so-well known legal opinions — hidden gems — that address slavery, Native American conquest, Chinese exclusion, Jim Crow, Japanese American internment, immigration, affirmative action, voting rights and employment discrimination. Each story goes beyond legal opinions to explore the historical context of the cases and the worlds of the ordinary people and larger-than-life personalities who drove the litigation process. Each story illuminates the role that the law has played in both creating and combating racial inequality.”
Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America
David M. P. Freund
The University of Chicago Press, 2007

From the publisher
“Northern Whites in the post–World War II era began to support the principle of civil rights, so why did many of them continue to oppose racial integration in their communities? Challenging conventional wisdom about the growth, prosperity and racial exclusivity of American suburbs, David M. P. Freund argues that previous attempts to answer this question have overlooked a change in the racial thinking of Whites and the role of suburban politics in effecting this change. In Colored Property, he shows how federal intervention spurred a dramatic shift in the language and logic of residential exclusion — away from invocations of a mythical racial hierarchy and toward talk of markets, property and citizenship.”

New from CSRRR
On Point Bulletin: Hurricane Katrina and its Aftermath

On Point Bulletin: Hurricane Katrina and its Aftermath

A Curriculum Resource Guide

Prepared by
Wendy Brown Scott, Professor of Law
North Carolina Central University School of Law
Durham, North Carolina

and
The Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations
University of Florida
Levin College of Law
Gainesville, Florida

On Point Bulletin: Hurricane Katrina and its Aftermath

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New from CSRRR
On Point: A Curriculum Guide

The UF Race Center is pleased to announce the publication of On Point: A Curriculum Guide. We have designed this as a resource tool to support race-based curriculum development. For this, our first On Point, we focus on Hurricane Katrina. The hurricane and its aftermath raise a broad range of issues — legal, social, economic, health, political, racial and regional. Much has been written about Katrina, and this guide is intended to be representative rather than comprehensive. With the superb guidance of Professor Wendy Brown Scott, North Carolina Central School of Law, we have included approximately 150 references, including books, law reviews, social science, health and public policy articles, Web sites and documentary films. It is our intention that this publication serve as a helpful resource.

On Point: A Curriculum Guide can be viewed and downloaded directly from the Center’s Web site at www.law.ufl.edu/centers/csrrr/events.shtml.
We weren’t sure what to expect when we sent out notices last fall announcing the Griot Race, Law and Justice Oral Competition. Would law students jump on board or shy away from an invitation to talk about race in a public forum? We were pleased to find out that students were eager — in fact, hungry — to participate in the competition.

The Griot Justice competition highlights race as a legitimate focal point for socio-legal inquiry. We designed the competition to support the development of legal oratory and research skills with the goal of promoting racial justice. One of the central aims of the contest is to have students work together to address thorny issues of race. With this goal in mind, the Griot Justice competition is a team, rather than an individual competition. We view the work of race as a joint enterprise — one that requires commitment, audacity and teamwork.

This year’s topic involved race-based hate speech. Students were given a hypothetical and asked to take on the role of an attorney and asked to instruct and advise members of a local school board about controversial T-shirts worn by White, Black and Latino students were wearing to school.

Ten teams signed up to participate in the Griot Justice competition, which was held in February. The three-judge panel consisted of UF College of Education Dean Dr. Catherine Emihovich, UF Law professor Juan Perea and UF graduate student Angelique Nixon. First prize was awarded to Jonathan Blocker and Lorna Cobb ($2,500); second prize went to Gloria Bowens and Johann Smith ($1,500); and third prize was given to Megone Gordon and DeMone Lee ($1,000).

To read the hypothetical and learn more about the Griot award, please visit www.law.ufl.edu/centers/csrrr/

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2008 Yegelwel Fellowship Recipient

Jana B. Wasserman

Jana B. Wasserman (3L) has been awarded the 2008 Evan J. Yegelwel Fellowship. The fellowship award provides a UF law student with a stipend and summer work experience at the Anti-Defamation League’s state regional office in Boca Raton.

Ms. Wasserman, a University of Florida graduate (B.A. in Criminology and English), is conversant in American Sign Language. She is interested in developing advocacy skills to assist individuals with hearing disabilities and the deaf to ensure that they have proper legal representation.

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Griot Race, Law and Justice Oral Competition

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To read the hypothetical and learn more about the Griot award, please visit www.law.ufl.edu/centers/csrrr/
Kupenda Lecture:
The State as Batterer? Race and Family Law

In February the UF Levin College of Law’s Center for Children and Families and the CSRRR co-sponsored a talk by professor Angela Mae Kupenda. Kupenda gave a provocative lecture comparing the relationship between the state and the African American community to that of a batterer and victim of abuse.

Kupenda has taught at the Mississippi College of Law since 1995. Her areas of expertise include constitutional law and civil rights. Kupenda, who graduated first in her class from the Mississippi College of Law, also has an MBA from the Wharton School of Business.
Mission Statement

The Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations (CSRRR) is committed to de-stigmatizing race in America. With the objective of fostering communities of dialogue, the Center embraces historically and empirically based thinking, talking, teaching and writing on race. To this end, the Center creates and supports programs designed to enhance race-related curriculum development for faculty, staff and students in collegiate and professional schools. Of the five U.S. law schools with race centers, the CSRRR is uniquely focused on curriculum development.

Vision

The CSRRR is an academic research and resource center. The Center’s mission will be met through the work of various groups engaged in a wide range of activities. This work includes:

• Producing, supporting and highlighting race-related scholarship within and beyond the UF community
• Gathering, analyzing and sharing historical and contemporary knowledge about race and race relations
• Developing and supporting — through teaching, research, writing and workshops — race-related curricula for collegiate and professional schools
• Fostering non-stigmatizing ways of discussing issues of race and ethnicity, including African Americans, Latino/as, American Indians, Asian Americans and Whites.

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