



U.S. Education Law and its Human Rights Impact on Racial Minorities

American University Washington College of Law
 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Room 603,
 Washington, DC

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

6:00- 8:00 pm Film Screening of "Beyond Brown: Pursuing the Promise"
 WCL, 6th Floor Student Lounge

Thursday, February 22, 2007

8:30 am Registration

9:00 am Introductory Remarks

Associate Dean **Mark Niles**, American University Washington College of Law
Ogochukwu Ekwuabu, President, Black Law Students' Association

9:15 am Overview of the Legal History of Equal Educational Opportunities in U.S. Public Education System

Professor **Mark Gross**, American University Washington College of Law

10:00 am Coffee Break

10:15 am Discrimination in Public Education: Intent v. Impact

Speakers: Prof. **Darren Hutchinson**, American University Washington College of Law;
Gay McDougall, UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues, United Nations Commission
 for Human Rights; Prof. **Maurice Dyson**, City University of New York.
Moderator: **Hadar Harris**, WCL Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law

11:45 am Lunch Break

12:00 pm Keynote Luncheon Discussion: "What Do You Do With An Obsolete Slave Labor Force?: African Americans And The Human Right To Education"

Guest Speaker **Carol Anderson**, Associate Professor, University of Missouri-Columbia and
 author of the critically acclaimed book Eyes Off the Prize: the United Nations and the
 African American Struggle for Human Rights.

1:30 pm Stories from the Street: The Call for Equity in Washington, DC Area Schools

Speakers: **Carole Ann North**, English Teacher, Anacostia High School; **Marc Borbely**,
 Founder, FixOurSchools.Net; **Brenda Bell**, Sophomore, Ballou Senior High School; and **Eric
 Moe**, Language Access Coordinator, Legal Services of Northern Virginia.
Moderator: **Sherry Weaver**, Director of Diversity Services, Washington College of Law

3:00-4:00 pm Reception

*Sponsored by the Black Law Students' Association, the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law,
 the Latino/a Law Students' Association, and the South Asian Law Students' Association*

In 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act* in an effort to close the achievement gap in public education. While a system of accountability was a welcome initiative, some argue that the Act's discriminatory impact on racial minorities has only exacerbated the problem. While domestic civil rights law requires intent as a necessary element for proving discrimination, the disparate impact of a law or policy on a racial minority is sufficient grounds for discrimination under the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). As the U.S. government prepares to submit a report on its implementation of CERD to the UN this year, the Center will host a day-long conference to discuss the U.S.'s obligations under CERD to recognize the disparate impact of U.S. Education law on racial minorities, including a panel discussing the practical implementation of these theories in an urban school setting such as the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. Join us as we explore the tension between US domestic law and international obligations regarding race and education.

Join us on the eve of the conference for a special screening of the PBS documentary "Beyond Brown: Pursuing the Promise," which explores some of the various education reform initiatives communities have used to address racial inequalities. On May 17, 1954, in its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the doctrine of "separate but equal," ending legal segregation in American education. Fifty years later, how close is America to fulfilling the promise of Brown?

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