

## **On the continuing local and global interest in the pro-active education solutions to reducing youth violence from the Black & Latino Policy Institute**

Earlier in the year, I received an e-mail from First Class Talent, LLC (FCT) regarding a request by the Rotterdam, NL Muslim organization SPIOR to locate me. SPIOR had also hired FCT to bring author, peace advocate, and a former white supremacist Christian Picciolini to speak during their Nov. 3-4 conference on countering violent extremism in Muslim youth called, Crossing Oceans: Beyond “Us and Them.” Also speaking is Mr. Mohamed Elibary, a former US government official now specializing in advising Muslim organizations.

SPIOR wanted me to present the globally recognized Black & Latino Policy Institute (B&LPI) concept paper on how education and other pro-active solutions can be used to reduce youth violence. The event consisted of: 1) a mini-conference with SPIOR board members and Islamic organizations; 2) a work-shop with Rotterdam young adults; and, 3) a meeting with local and national policy makers, police, and other institutions and organizations including the representatives from the US Embassy located in the Hague which co-sponsored the events.

In addition to my Nov. 3-4 conference presentations:

- On Nov. 5, I spoke to the youth during their weekly evening study group at the Centrum de Middenweg Mosque.
- On Nov. 6, in Utrecht, NL, I met with Mathew Rich-Tolsma of Rise Beyond ([www.risebeyond.org](http://www.risebeyond.org)) a global consultancy focused on building collaboration with and between organizations.
- On Nov. 7, I spoke with members of a small neighborhood Bosnian mosque.
- Later in the evening of Nov. 8, after attending Friday prayer services at Centrum de Middenweg Mosque, I was invited to dinner and discussions on urban education in the US and Netherlands with local social scientist Prof. Iliass El Hadioui and his new book *Switch and climb: About the switching behavior of students and the climb on the school ladder in a metropolitan environment*. The similarities between the challenges US educators face regarding bi-cultural students/families and those *Switch and Climb* reveal about the conflict among home, school, and street cultures is not accidental since both US and NL systems confuse education with assimilation. This is a neo-colonial mindset reducing life choices of students to a false binary: conform to the mainstream to be successful in society, or keep your cultural identity and risk failure. <sup>1, 2</sup>

Here's the link to information on the Rotterdam event:

- Preview 2019 SPIOR conference, Crossing Oceans: Beyond “Us and Them”  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Review-2019-SPIOR-Crossing-Oceans-Beyond-Us-and-Them.pdf>

The concept paper I discussed is the internationally recognized and published B&LPI document, "They say we're prone to violence, but it home sweet home': The Praxis of Hip Hop, Self-Actualization, and Democratic Education for Addressing the Roots of Violence." View it here: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/The-Praxis-of-Hip-Hop-Levels-of-Human-Power-Self-actualization-and-Democratic-Education-for-Addressing-the-Roots-of-Violence.pdf>

This is the same B&LPI concept paper delivered during the:

- 2007 World Education Forum Panel Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2008 Rouge Forum Conference Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY
- 2010 Human Rights Day Celebration Indiana State University, Terra Haute, IN
- 2012 International Democratic Education Conference Caguas, Puerto Rico
- 2013 The Infonomics Society sponsored International London Conference on Education <sup>3</sup>
- 2014 Association for Humanist Sociology Midwest Regional Meeting University of Indianapolis
- 2014 The African Academic Research Forum (AARF) requested the paper be presented during the South African International Conference on Education held in Pretoria <sup>4</sup>
- 2014 African Studies Association Conference panel covering the topic, “Rethinking Violence in the African Diaspora: City of Indianapolis as Case in Point” Indianapolis, IN
- 2015 The paper was selected for publication in the peer-reviewed *International Journal of Cross-*

### *Disciplinary Subjects in Education*

- 2016 US Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program sponsored a dozen visitors from Europe and North Africa concerned with youth violence International Center of Indianapolis and the Indiana Youth Institute were the local sponsors
- 2017 Spirit & Place Festival "Culturing for Non-Violence" Indiana Interchurch Center Indianapolis
- 2018 "Cultivating a Lifestyle of Non-Violence" The Center for Interfaith Cooperation Indianapolis

Some topics covered during my SPIOR presentation were:

- recognizing the global human rights of children,
- education for liberation
- neo-liberalism and the privatization of public education,
- de-colonizing public education and teacher preparation
- culturally sustaining pedagogy,
- education for citizenship/civic literacy,
- student voice/youth voice,
- youth participatory action research (YPAR),
- White Supremacy/Eugenics,
- THUG LIFE pedagogy,
- re-inventing adolescence,
- equity vs. equality,
- ending systemic racism,
- standardized testing as whiteness,
- urban schools as sites to contest social toxins via an anti-poverty curriculum,
- police relationships,
- A Learner's Bill of Rights,
- Indy's Stop the Violence student-created Youth Bill of Rights,
- a pedagogy recognition,
- critical pedagogy,
- urban students as neo- indigenous,
- the assets of global youth culture/hip hop,
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs,
- 5 levels of human power,
- violence and aggression,
- self actualization,
- how the coloniality and "normalcy" created dis/ability,
- media literacy,
- Rites of Passage,
- "We can have social change without art,"
- Education Cities/ Excellent Centers for self actualization,
- Transformational Community Schools,
- schools as political sites perpetuating inequalities, and
- learning to read and graduating high school as a political act.

1. <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Resisters-Rejectors-and-Ridas-How-to-make-urban-schools-work-for-disengaged-students-and-critically-conscious-teachers.pdf>

2. <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/What-is-a-high-quality-education-for-urban-students.pdf>

3. Organizers received 2,910 papers from 106 countries. After a double blind peer review, 611 papers were accepted. From this review, the B&LPI submission was one of 150 papers finally accepted for presentation.

4. See <http://aa-rf.org/home/> Of the 126 papers sent to organizers, only 52 were selected to be presented as full papers after double blind peer-reviews by 25 university professors from across Africa. The B&LPI paper was distinguished by being selected for presentation as the Keynote Address for the final day of the conference. <http://aa-rf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/SAICE-2014-Proceedings.pdf>

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