



Library podcast

Dr. Edwin Nichols: Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline & Beyond

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[00:00:36] I'm so pleased to see you. Good evening.

[00:00:39] My name is Davida Ingram and I'm the public engagement programs manager at the Central Library. So tonight's program is made possible with support from the Seattle Public Library Foundation.

[00:00:51] But it's made possible because of community.

[00:00:54] So well we thank you profusely for coming out is because in these rather remarkable times that we're living through we know that we'll get through them together. And so a library is a space for community. I also want to extend a special thanks to our community curator Mary Flowers. We are absolutely thrilled to have Dr. Edwin J Nichols here.

[00:01:19] And it would not have been possible if Mary hadn't picked up the phone and call to see if we can make this evening possible. But I also want to say a special thank you to people who do work quietly and effectively. And these are community members who are doing work to address the ways that institutional racism flowers in our society particularly when it comes to prisons. So if you happen to be someone who is looking at over incarceration and the ways it intersects with institutional racism. Thank you so much for your work. Libraries are always free and open to all. And this program is the beginning of our year round exploration of Criminal Justice. We hope you will join us in this conversation. Again we are excited to have Dr. Edwin Jane.

[00:02:08] What I have to say has done some pretty pioneering work on looking at cultural difference and racial justice. I had the pleasure of listening to him speak earlier today and I really love the way he talked about the fact that when we are able to work together and think about cultural difference we can all be on the same page so we have a community member who is going to introduce him more formally. But I'd like to just share a little bit more about Dr. Nichols. Dr. Nichols has a very extensive resume. So Dr. Edwin J. Nichols is a clinical industrial psychologist working an organization

development. He is the director of Nichols and Associates Inc. An Applied Behavioral Science firm affecting technology transfer to organizations based on principles of philosophy basic and behavioral science. His home Mark paradigm. The philosophical aspects of cultural difference. He provides services to Fortune 500 corporations foreign governments national government agencies associations Health and Mental Health Systems. His commitment is to help organizations achieve systemic congruence through cultural competence thus assuring the value added the competitive edge and an increased market share. Dr. Nichols was the first African-American chief at the National Institute of Mental Health. His tenure was 9th 1969 until retirement in 1989.

[00:03:40] We're so very happy he didn't retire for real. He last served as director for technology transfer from 1974 to 1977 Dr. Nichols was a visiting professor at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria after developing norms for an ideal Nigerian children. He established the children's clinic for a psychological assessment and evaluation. As associate director Cleveland Jobs Corps Center for Women. He introduced the concept of place as a totally therapeutic milieu. He taught psychiatry at my hearing Medical College, Nashville. There he developed the nation's first adolescent day hospital where clients were mainstreamed into the public junior high school system. At Kansas Neurological Institute an affiliate of the miniature foundation Topeka. He demonstrated dance therapy as an intervention model for model for severely retarded and the extremely physically challenged. Have a very remarkable man here tonight. Thank you. I also want to mention that Dr. Nichols will present and he will be followed by a panel. The panel will feature Video Flora Barlow Gerald Hank Hassan. Janet Jones Preston Willard Jamerson John Page and Daryl Massey. And with no further ado I would like to bring John Page up to introduce Dr. Nichols. Applause

[00:05:16] Good evening everybody. How ya doing. We are in for a treat so so why don't we Miss Nichols right. It's not Dr. Nichols It's Nichols It's how you answer this phone. Nichols and so Dr. Nichols Nichols. Started coming into the black prisoners caucus and doing work with us and one of the first things he said was

[00:05:46] You know I got to make this like a monastery right.

[00:05:52] Like you know we can talk about systemic stuff right. You can do some stuff. To begin to heal and make this a therapeutic community right.

[00:06:04] You know we come out of there organizing in prisons. It's been going on it to be honest as organizers that I don't really think we value right organizing that's been going on inside of prisons over the last 40-50 years.

[00:06:17] The model for how we can do some work out here where he talked about making it a monastery. But he also. He he laid that foundation for four for therapy. Right. And so forth. We do a lot of work with prosecutors and you know is seems to be an absence. Of hard hit folk get their wood made folk right so folk don't really hold that. You know unless you're middle class and you've got a high powered attorney. Want to take that by Dr. Nichols and his work with the BPC fizzle. He goes to

Mass every morning. Right. And I just found out that he on a personal note he wrote me when I was in prison just last time wrote me sent me books. Right. We had a journal going

[00:07:05] Around some dynamics that was playing out with me. But they seem to be endemic to black man right. We talk about how his. Prison the School to Prison Pipeline pay plays out and Dr. Nichols had firsthand experience with white. Guys in prison finding some education funding some academic excellence. Right. Really access and it high level education doing high level work in a horrible dehumanizing environment. And he brought a lot of humanizing and a lot of value

[00:07:43] Not only to us as individuals but to our organization and to organize and work. So without further ado I introduce Nichols.

[00:07:59] Good evening. First I want to thank all of you for the invitation to come to share concepts and ideas with you. And this is a little different than I ordinarily type of work that I do. I generally have four to eight to 10 to 12 hours to do something. And you're giving me 40 minutes. So it's gonna be good. OK. On the first sheet that you have it says your survival

[00:08:30] in today's global marketplace requires systemic congruence in organizational structure through cultural competence in leadership. Now when you have time and you read this page through. It will give you an idea of the issues that are prevalent for organizations as they're trying to prepare for a new workforce. And a change in how work is done in this country. So previously we had factories and people graduated from high school and went to work in a factory they made enough money to buy a home. And they stayed there until they retired. But as you will see in the second paragraph on this page those conditions and situations have changed and many of the jobs that we came that we had previously in the country is now being done by automation and by different frames so when you get a chance read that it's sort of an introduction into how I work when I'm working with corporations or spending a full day. The reverse side of that has my education at the bottom. You can see where I went to school and all the crazy things that I did. You'll also see a book that I wrote with another person. And the reason that I wrote this book with another person was because Dr. Bruce Jones is a full professor at an endowed chair and 20 master's degree researchers so everything that I said or thought they were able to research it and give a reference I could never have afforded that luxury. So I wrote worked with him and he used my ideas too in all aspects of education- policy, planning curriculum and so on. So I'm very proud to have had the opportunity to work with him. Now take the page that says terms a lot of these things you can read on your own and I'll give you a few examples of them when we talk about cultural competence it is the capacity to extract from others and accept the uniqueness of their problem solving skills. The important word there is to accept.

[00:11:04] We don't all solve problems in the same way. But if you insist that there's only one way to solve a problem then you waste time in everyone trying to come around to your way of thinking. So the uniqueness is to accept the differences in problem solving skills. We have the differences in problem solving skills because we have different epistemological models. That is we know things differently. Now if you want to change a society and since we're talking about school to prison pipeline if we're going to change that. Then socialization is the process of change. I define socialization on

your paper as concepts principles and ideas of a society. That had been reinforced to become the status quo. Television is the principle socialize her in our country. And very quickly we're becoming we're becoming aware that there is another socialization mechanism which is called what yes social media see with tweets and so on. Out in the socialization process with television and also with social media it takes an idea and it repeats it over and over and over and over again until it becomes for us reality. Now what is important in this is that. If you are a child being raised in the United States or an adult or very old person our television tells us that acts. Of what are normal. Yes. And that you resolve a conflict with a what. Then why would we be upset. When there is so much gun violence throughout the country. Because we are constantly saying that violence is normal. I look at any television program you want to start with a murder and it goes from there. There anything that's exciting has at least one explosion.

[00:13:18] And several gun battles while children see these things and they are imprinted with the idea of violence. It continues throughout all of our life. I won't have time to go in all the details but my mother in Detroit Michigan died at 98 when she was 92. She was still driving. She drove to the store got her groceries she came back and this young man came running up and she was carrying the groceries. And in that neighborhood for as long as she lived there it was like some young man coming to help the grandmother figure takes the groceries in the House semicolon however comma. He was coming to take her purse. So he knocked her down and my mother is a total barbarian. Four foot eleven. Ninety two pounds size two shoe. But he bit off more than he could chew. So as she's on top of him pummeling him he. Pulls out a what. Cracks her wrist. Now when I go home. And I'm all upset I'm yelling at my sister to make my mother move like my sister could make my mother do anything fantasies in Nichols head. My mother says to me this is the. This is only the second time I had been mugged. I've lived in Detroit all my life. This is only the second time I have been mugged. Just the 92 years old and she accepts violence as what. The rest of the prepositional phrase is at gun point. So what I'm sharing with you is this socialization in our culture about violence is from the cradle to the grave. Now

[00:15:14] How can you change that. Well socialization is a tool. It can be used positively or negatively so a humorous thing to use as a tool in terms of socialization for Americans is I asked the question how many of you have lived visited or traveled overseas at some point or another. Wherever you were

[00:15:39] With a room this close this war this long. What would have overwhelmed by now. Yes odor armpits and feet. It would have staggered you by now. And cigarette smoke. Do you smell any one in here. Stick around. Don't be bashful.

[00:16:01] We have people from every place in the world right in this room. In America we both tolerate piercings tattoos anything that you want to do except we don't tolerate odor because we have been what socialized and the socialization is that Americans are older less

[00:16:22] Others maybe clean. We grant that but they are not odor free and we are odor free. Now how did we get to be odor free. It is the socialization every commercial that you see everyone is

saying what. There is a couch in the basement. It's been slept on the dogs have been on. There's food spilled on it. And finally in revolt the couch stands up and says I must be what fabreezed. Yes. OK. So the tool of socialization may be used in any way that you want to use it as a negative or as a positive. What gets in our way. Our cultural bias. So now look at the cultural bias and let's see what that is cultural bias is the formation of ideas that are imprinted and shaped to form the self. So what happens when we are born our parents take one or two ideas and they imprint them into us to make us who we are. In essence we are born without glasses but by the time we're about three and a half years of age our families have permanently fitted us with a set of lenses through which you see the world with the rest of your lives. So that no matter where you look when you look how you look you're looking through the lens of your cultural bias. These lenses then are thickened by your immediate around surroundings your church your school whatever it is that socializes you. Further. So by the time you're an adult. You have. Thick lenses thick lenses can connote impaired vision. I wear tri focals I have impaired vision anyone out there that is wearing tri phonecalls

[00:18:18] We claim that we see the world clearly but how is this accomplished. Clear clearer clearest. And we are viewing the world with great greater greatest layers of distortion. Yet we think clarity. Because the glasses are fixed. We cannot excoriate them from our eyes. That is we cannot exculpate our cultural bias but we can learn to transcend and the best way to think about transcending is spearfishing. The fish is right there you see it right there but if you try to impale it where you see it what happens. Miss. A thousand times but you still want. Miss. This until you learn how to transcend from where it see it or you see it or to where it actually what is. So the idea of cultural bias. We cannot

[00:19:15] Completely remove it but we can learn to transcend it. So what is an example of that here. The best example I can give for United States population. Histeric is to ask the Christians in the room to respond

[00:19:33] So all the Christians in the room get ready to respond. Whom among you was raised as Lutheran or Anglican Episcopal all the Anglican Episcopal Lutherans please raise your hand. You were certainly told about those Catholics weren't you. All right whom the bank was raised Catholic you know about the protest and don't your. Are there any Baptist in here. Yours is truly salvation. You will be in heaven shouting and rejoicing. Other Christians will be on long queues just waiting to get in. Now why are the Baptist so affirmed to this belief. Because the Baptists believe there is only one valid form of Christian baptism which is total immersion.

[00:20:18] But the Seventh Day Adventist give you immersion and so do the Mormon semicolon. However a comma that is not to the satisfaction of the Baptist the Baptists require that you stand in the water which is symbolic of death. They carry you backwards into the water your nasal cavity and sinuses fill with water you feel you've been waterboarded and they bring you back. Now if that is valid baptism what happens to the other Christians in the room who have just been sprinkled

[00:20:52] Oh it's a terrible sad day. Now you see we're. Laughing. But those differences any other place in the world about religion is the occasion of what. Troubles. You see in Ireland. The Hindus the

Muslims the Shia the Sunni and those are occasions for violence and killings but in this country that cultural bias has been what

[00:21:20] Transcended for the greater good. The admonishment that I give so we can continue to have that as our part of our cultural bias in the United States is to admonish you about

[00:21:33] You don't want to develop attitudes of anti-Islamic phobia. You don't want that. You don't want to be an anti-Islamic. The reason that we are very often socialized to think that way is because we have not read the Quran. You can read it in a month a few hours each evening you can read it if you read the Quran then you will not be subject to the crazies of a few individuals that say I am doing this in the name of the Quran has nothing to do with the Quran. Just like when people read the New Testament. Some of the crazies were going around killing people on account of. Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland all reading the same book. It had nothing to do with Christianity. It had to do with power so what I'm sharing with you is if you read the Quran. For those of you that are Catholic Saint Luke writes the most versus about Mary the Mother of Christ

[00:22:31] But they only number less than 20 in all of the New Testament. But in the Quran there is a whole book on Mary. She's called Miriam and her whole life is discussed there. So that's the advantage that I gave you admonishment so that we will continue to be a country that is free of religious bigotry and bias.

[00:22:55] Now. Very quickly. Go to the last paragraph. To the second sentence and this is what Nichols thinks in terms of how I developed by paradigm. Human difference comes out of multigenerational responses to the basic human need to survive. And what. Yes. Previously I. Took this as an idea in philosophy you have to connect it to ideas to Jung's collective unconscious memory but the way philosophy always precedes science. I was giving you this information and then science has caught up with it and epigenetics. Epigenetics. Now tell me. That behavior can be affected by events in previous generations which have been passed on through a form of genetic memory. You see. So. That's a way of saying that these philosophical constructs and ideas that I give you. I developed and now we have the science corroborating what I talked about there. OK. All right. Now these things are in terms of different geographical settings. Various resources. And environmental factors what I'm doing is I take you as a specific ethnic group and I take you all the way back to the origin of that group. And I ask in order for that group of people to be alive next spring. What did they have to do to survive and thrive in that environment at that time. So that's the way I see the process. Now. What I'm going to ask is that I'm looking for the essence of ethnic difference. So in a group like this there's some people that may not be clear about what I'm talking about in terms of an essence three steps very silly. But if you play them we will always know what essence is.

[00:25:04] Step one. Close your eyes. Step two envision a noun. Step Three we discuss it. Are you ready. I can't hear you. OK. Step one. Close your eyes. Now if you're peeping or your eyes are open you're paranoid and there is treatment for that. Step two envision a chair perhaps even your most favorite chair. Step three open your eyes. Now had we taken Polaroid snapshots of what each person had seen those pictures would all be watched from each other. Yet when we collected that big pile of

pictures and we gave each pile of pictures to each person in this room each person in this room would identify each picture as a what. Chair. Now how is that possible. Who is the mathematician. What's the probability of that. But the reality is you have understood the very essence of Chairness. And you would not confuse it with the essence of a table. Even if I go and sit on the table. Does that change its essence it still remains a what. Chair In spite of the fact that I defiled its essence. So we're going to look at the essence of ethnic difference now in classical philosophy. We also talk about accidentals. So if something has Chairness, then it accidental would be that the chair was upholstered. It might swivel it might recline it might even be on wheels but it's still a while. So when I talk about. An essence of ethnic difference and you're thinking about I'm not like that you are philosophically a what. An accidental. Yes.

[00:27:04] Nothing personal.

[00:27:07] All right. Well let's we're going to look at t what aspects in philosophy do I use right. I use axiology which is a study of values. Epistemology the way of knowing. And logic the way of raising to an answer there is competition for resources and insights and resources gain societal acceptance which is acts theological ethics I won't go into that right now because that's a little we'll do it another time but the excess unrealistic reality to survive and thrive. Promulgate individual individualistic acts. Among what group of people. Europeans now how is that. Well in European culture we always want to know who is number one. Who is the very best. Who is unmatched how many people are they just one. All right. You are a great football team just won the World Championship. It's a team isn't it. A lot of people dead it went worked very hard to make that win. Is that correct. But in Western culture we ought to only want to know who is the what. The most valuable player. And that's the one that gets to go to Disneyland.

[00:28:38] All right. In the African experience it is collaborative and you see Cole meaning two so the highest value

[00:28:50] is the relationship on a one on one basis. It's a collaborative relationship. In Asian culture it is collective. People concentrate and think in terms of a collective in Native American culture. It is communal. Now what is the difference between collective and communal communal requires governance. So whenever you have a group of Native Americans you always have a tribal council. Ok. All right. Now let's turn the page over and at the bottom of the page it says the psychological aspects of cultural difference and whose name is there. You can read it. Go ahead. Dr. Edwin Nichols.

[00:29:42] So this means that this is the world according to whom. You. Yes this is my world. If you want yours go on write your own book. Ok.

[00:29:53] This one is my. Ok. All right. In your left hand column. We have the ethnic groups of people that came to this country coming out of Europe. Out of Africa. Out of Asia and the Native American. Those are ethnic groups. Now you have a phenomena which is called. A collective of people who are not an ethnic group but they share an ethnic worldview. They share what. An ethnic worldview. Latino

Latina. Arabs are collectives that are not an ethnic group but they share an ethnic worldview. To be Latino Latino you can be white or black or Native American or Hosie Wong or Fujimori and still be white. Hispanic. Or Latino Latina. So it's not an ethnic group. Then. What is necessary to share an ethnic worldview. A catastrophic event that changed everything for your group of people forever forced to speak another language exclusively and forced to convert to a new religion. If your forbearers were subjected to colonial Spain. You were forced to speak Spanish exclusively and forced to convert to Catholicism then you identify as Latino Latina because your ancestry comes from the Incas the Mayas the Aztecs and the Caribbean. Where slavery was a reality. And the colonial experience was real. Arabs also share an ethnic worldview.

[00:31:37] When you go to Morocco you see little blond children running around. Their hair gets darker later but as you go across North Africa you get to Sudan. And the people have so much melanin in their skin when they smile. The teeth are very bright white. But their gums are black. That's so much melanin in their skin. These are all Arabs. You go up the coast of Asia Minor you get to Lebanon and you start going into the interior with Syria and Iran and Iraq. And you begin to see people with green eyes hazel eyes and then finally blue eyes. How did they get up in here and how can they all be Arabs.

[00:32:18] Well their forebears were subjected to the Islamic wars of conversion. They convert to Islam and they use Arabic exclusively. That's why you have people with two factories but that the third look at the Kurds Islamic words of conversion convert to Islam. But they don't speak what quite exclusively. Arabic.

[00:32:39] They are Kurdish. So the Druze the Syrians and others in that area are comparable. Ok. Now we go to axiology. In the world according to Nichols in European culture the highest value is in the object of the acquisition of the object. In the African Latino Arab construct the highest values in the relationship between people and in the Asian culture Polynesian culture the highest value is in the cohesiveness of the group. At a native culture the highest value lies in oneness with the Great Spirit so if the highest value lies in the object. How are we going to

[00:33:22] analyze that? We're talking about member to the object. What I ordinarily do

[00:33:32] Is see Oh it's working wonderful technology.

[00:33:39] What I do ordinarily is to bring people up to the front and we go through it but I don't have that kind of time so we're gonna have to do it from here. All right. If I place you as a group of Europeans in a time capsule and send you back. I sent you back. Fifteen thousand years ago because that is the only time that you could actually occupy Europe because it's the end of the last. What. Ice Age because previously we're just on the borders. But now you can actually go into the interior. Fifteen thousand years ago. Individuals begin to go. And in that European setting. If a man and his wives were going to be alive next spring. He would have to do some things like. Have enough what for them all to

[00:34:28] Be alive next spring they'd have to have enough, What? Food. So what I'm doing is I'm equating. Food. With the philosophical concept. The what. Object. Now. In north central Europe 12000 years ago. Can you plant seeds and grow food in the months of September October November. What about December January February

[00:34:58] March April May in May. In Minnesota the ground is still what. At that's the same latitude as Germany. So in European culture you have nine months in which you can grow nothing. How long then is the European growing season. How long. Three. If you don't get everything done in three months all of you face what. With no second chance. That's extremely harsh isn't it. But it's the reality. Now what do I want you to learn from that experience centuries ago about behavior for people who survived and your gene pool is here today. Because people that didn't do it their gene pool is not here. Okay. This is the week to plow. What do you have to do. Plow. Look at this very stately white male right here. Does he look like the type of person that would be willing to walk behind a urinating defecating fluctuating horse in the mud to plow. But this is the week to what. What does he have to do. Plow. When. Now.

[00:36:19] Or he ends up what. Dead. Ok.

[00:36:27] Let's take that behavior. It says in European culture where there's a task to be done. You must do it when. Now.

[00:36:36] Or you have consequences. So let's take that same situation and and put it in terms of your boss your boss says I want the deliverable by close of business today. or you're in deep trouble. And the reason is you missed. So what. We missed the deadline to see how collective unconscious memory brings back these terms to us. You missed the deadline. And as far as he's concerned that's the end of it. Well I'll bring it in tomorrow. I'm working on it. I don't need it because you missed the what. Deadline. You see how powerful these things are. Now this is not your culture. We have some problems. European culture is very punctual. And everything is done on time. Some cultures do it in time. And some do it in time and some do it with time. All right now let's go to another group and see what happens there. If the highest value lies in the relationship. Member to Member what it is saying in essence is that people see themselves as equal and if we see ourselves as equal because the highest value is in the relationship. And you do something that treats me as less than equal you have treated me with what. Disrespect.

[00:38:21] And that destroys the relationship. Because you have destroyed the axiological reference.

[00:38:29] So what happens is if you go to a prison or jail and you ask the young man why did you kill your cousin brother best friend. They say man he was. He disrespected me. He treated me with what disrespect. And there is nothing left in terms of a relationship. Now in your work area if you have people that have worked together and one is perceived as having treated the other with disrespect you've got some serious problems because that person will come to you and say I can't work with her anymore.

[00:39:02] Now you can assign me any place here you want to I'll do any but I ain't working with her no more.

[00:39:07] And you're saying well why get over it. Well you see the difference between object where you can get over it and relationship where it's all over. You see these these realities in the work environment.

[00:39:23] Ok. Now it's very important that you understand that because when we talk about police and the interaction with young blacks. It is they're all very often perceived that the police officer says I outrank you. And I can tell you what to do. Well we work in situations in European structure it's hierarchical. If you outrank me you can tell me what to do. But the reality is in that hierarchy telling me what to do. I give deference to you being able to tell me what to do. But I expect you to treat me as what. Equal. Because to do differently would be to treat me with what. Disrespect. And there is no relationship. Now. Very quickly let's look at Asian culture. I'm going to blame what you're going to see on this machine because what I'm going to be doing is you're going to see dyslexic Chinese. Ok.

[00:40:22] So if the highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group before we can get there we've got to get the Chinese to Asia. So we go. Persia Afghanistan Pakistan. The vast Mongolian desert. And then we get to Korea where you have thirty thousand year old cities which is twice as long as there was even a Europe. You see what I'm saying then off out the Korean peninsula off to the Japanese home islands and some people go all the ways down to the Philippines. So that's the migratory track. That's the northern one this other one goes out of Africa into Arabia into southern India and then from India you drop down to Indonesia and then finally into Australia. And we have genetic studies now that show that the Aborigines from Australia. Actually come out of India and the Tamil part of India pretty much so let's see what happens in this migratory track.

[00:41:19] When you when the Asians were making that migratory trek from Point A to Point B in the desert could they be assured they would find everything here that they wanted and needed. What's your answer. When you move from one place to another. Inevitably somebody forgets something. Did you bring the grain. Well no I thought you did. Oh no I didn't. Well she did. Well no she didn't. How long are we going to survive with that kind of behavior. We can't. So what's the name. What the Asian culture did was to rely on its metaphysical symbolism. The what. Yes. These are male forces and female forces in balance. And harmony and they keep the group cohesive, they keep the group what? Now let's examine. Our male forces greater than female forces. Our female forces greater than male forces. No they have to be in what with each other. Balance and harmony. And that keeps the group. What. Oh he said All right. Now let's see what happens. What they said was We will ascribe function based on gender. So these are tasks that men will do. And these are tasks that women will do the men do what they're supposed to do. Women do what they're supposed to do. We are in balance and what. Harmony and we can keep the group one cohesive. So what are the functions of maleness. What I have learned is if I write in traditional Chinese. This is the Chinese word for male. And if you're desperate and you're looking for the restroom. This is a sign either you race into or not. Ok. It's a very important thing. It's terrible to be in China looking or you can't read a thing. Not not that you even know where the bathroom is. It's terrible. But if you know this sign you'll be Ok. All right. Now what.

[00:43:25] When you look at the etymology of this word you have two words. This is the Chinese word for field like a rice field. And this is the Chinese word for strength or labor. And it's symbolic of the horse. The function of maleness is that the man works in the what. Field. And he earns the what. Food.

[00:43:54] He has fulfilled his obligation. And who controls the money. Women. So you didn't know that you thought Chinese women were oppressed all the way to the bank with all the money.

[00:44:10] Ok. Now it's very important that you understand that we have perceptions about others that are called transubstantial errors. Transubstantial errors. These are areas that we make because we're viewing the world through our lens and trying to define them as opposed to seeing them as they are themselves. So in the Asian culture of the highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group. What constitutes groupness in the Asian culture? Not doing too well let me try this again.

[00:44:49] A little better. In essence, this is the Chinese word for group two symbols are here. This one is king and this one is Xi. So in order to have groupness you have a leader and what. Followers.

[00:45:14] Now. In any time you look at another language you have to stay not with the primary interpretation but a secondary tertiary quite a level of interpretation. So sheep are conformist animals. So what you have here is conformity within the hierarchy will keep the group what. Cohesive. All right. Now you have all these people in the group and you expect them to all act in one way to one purpose and one goal. Then in order to do that you have to have the people come to a what in the decision making process. Consensus. How do you write consensus in traditional Chinese and what is the etymology of the word. This is the Chinese word for voice. And this is the Chinese word.

[00:46:01] For heart. In Asian culture. Whether it's China or Japan or Korea.

[00:46:12] In order to come to a consensus your affect and intellect your voice and your heart must say the what. Consensus. How many times have you said something with your voice. You not being with your heart. In my field that is called passive aggressive behavior. It's a form of mental illness can be treated with psychotherapy and little medication.

[00:46:37] Are you going to work with me on the project. Call me.

[00:46:44] Are you coming to my program. I'm going to try as hard as I possibly can to get there. These are all things said with the what. The voice had not meant with the what heart. Chinese say we don't play that what you say with your voice. You've got to being with your heart now what is very interesting to me is when you combine voice I'll try to do a little better. And heart

[00:47:12] That is the Chinese word for intent. So if I know how you think and feel I know you're what intent.

[00:47:21] So is. Each of us say we are going to work seven days a week twelve hours a day to bruise a thousand five favorite widgets does anyone have to be awakened to get to work on time. Does anyone complain about working overtime. No because we set with our voice and our heart our affect and intellect. We all share the same intent. Now we're ready for the last part of the calligraphy. We can now come together. That's unity or come together and we can speak through one. Mouth. Then we can be conformists in the hierarchy. Remember the other symbol. So there we are. This is the essence of Asian culture. Very quickly I'm going to give a Native American and then we're going to see how those apply to the pipeline.

[00:48:06] Ok. In Native American culture. Native Americans always look all the way over to logic at the very bottom for Native American you see sets of 4 and 3 form the whole. So in native culture to have wholeness you have a set of four those that travel on two. Those who travel on four those who travel with for the person Fins those who travel with wings and feathers. That's my set of what. Now I need a set of what those who travel under the earth on the earth above the earth. This is wholeness but in order for it to be a part of the native axiology. They have to have oneness with the Great Spirit. So a great spirit is way up here and you begin to have oneness all of these seven innaties the Great Spirit way up here

[00:49:00] Now if you have one this with a great spirit up here will you ever do anything down here to hurt harm damage or destroy. No. Because you have oneness with a great spirit. Now if you look at that does that look like native jewelry. Is there cosmology you see how it's expressed. Ok now this is very important because. In native culture you have to have a totally ecological balance system to receive all the blessings from the Great Spirit. But if you have people that come on your land and they cut down trees they float things roll the logs down the slope and pollute the stream then you could never come to total ecological balance. So rejoice Native Americans were going to place you on the reservation. Is the reservation large enough to be ecologically balanced. No. Ok. So you get all the sociological issues that happen when people are crowded conditions but they said. By solemn treaty is our is our area a sovereign nation. And the U.S. government said yes. And so they decided to put what on their reservations. Casinos. But when the federal government found out they were making twenty two thousand dollars per family per annum they did work to the rules. Changed them. Isn't that interesting. Ok. Now very quickly I want to share something with you. That addresses all these value systems that we talked about. When you go in terms of school to pipeline to prison then these values are violated.

[00:50:52] So let me share that with you. Some years ago in New York City. They had a procedure which was called Stop and Frisk ultimately it was found to be illegal. Ok. Because it violates constitutional rights. But it was in existence for some eight years or more. And finally through counting and measuring which is the European way of knowing they realized that you had more counted measures account and I'm sorry. Stop and Frisk accounts number of people that had been stopped than the total population. You see what I'm saying. In other words the area in which they were doing stop and frisk. If you had a thousand men. Then you had incidents of 2000 or 3000 stop at risk which means several people were stopped and frisked numerous times. And that was racial profiling. So I want to share with you how that comes about. What are the psychological ramifications on the psyche

of African-American men after being stopped and frisked by the New York police. The 4th Amendment of the United States Constitution states the right of the people to secure their persons house papers and effects against unreasonable search and seizures shall not be violated and no warrants shall issue then. Now here's the sentence that the French call la phrase accés {French} the sentence that kills you but upon probable cause that's la phrase accés {French}. Supported by oath affirmation particularly describing the place to be searched and the personal things to be seized.

[00:52:47] Now. Based on that phrase the American legal system for case law. Over time has developed a body of legal precedents which tend to obfuscate the rights of the little man on the streets so from the eject objective perspective of police. There are two messages. One police control the streets. Why? for public safety to the police stop and frisk. Why? To prevent crime and catch criminals. You see the rationale for each one of the things that you're talking about. However the subjectivity of police in processing the policy of stop and frisk can be arbitrary and capricious. So whenever I use words I always write the definition down when something is arbitrary it comes from the Latin average or to make a judgment about something so arbitrary is determined by chance. Whim or impulse. Not limited by law. It can be despotic. Ok. Now let's look at capricious impulsive. Unpredictable. If you are stop police you see that. From the perspective of many African-American males. The police stop and frisk is arbitrary and capricious. And the vernacular for blacks saying well why did the police officers stop you. I was driving black. While driving black. Philosophically. Many in the black community have come to accept the concept that the very essence of blackness in the eyes of white beliefs connotes that that. We're getting and the best way to and what happens is there's a negative concept about blackness.

[00:54:57] And it goes into their deprive their shiftless they're lazy they're dangerous they're liars they're cheaters and they're thieves. All of these things are attributed blackness. So you're here in the library. Go to the dictionary and look up the word white and look up the word black and you see all the things in the dictionary that are connoted it as blackness and you see also things that whiteness whiteness is virtuous and blackness is of course the worst that it could be.

[00:55:22] All right. The issue becomes problematic. When the white public acts. On these constructs toward African-Americans at a conscious or unconscious level the psychological literature describes these as micro aggressions toward blacks. Offered on a daily basis. Blacks experience some form of micro aggression. Black male enters the elevator and the white woman clutches her what? Purse. Yes. Blacks enter into a store and they are followed around by the store what? Clerks what is the assumption. They're here to White steal what? All right. A black Harvard lawyer or a black PHD is praised for being articulate. Why wouldn't you be articulate? Blacks being asked. How could you afford to buy that? I work everyday just like you do. Blacks being told. Oh you're so very nice, easy and clean. What is that saying the rest of them are white stinky, dirty and ugly. You see what goes on. These are all called micro aggressions as a black your next in line to be served. A white walks up out of line and gets what. Priority. And that's because you're the invisible man. Syndrome. Black space for doing a good job. Well I really didn't think you could do that. You see these are all put downs and they're called what micro aggressions. Now what you need to know about micro aggressions is that they are cumulative. That means they what. Build and build and build. And then. Someone else says

another micro aggressions just slight. And you explode. Because that was the last what. The last straw and of course when you go before the personnel and HR they say why on earth would you explode over a little thing like that. Well they don't realize that's the culmination of a series of what micro aggressions. Now this is what happens. When young men are stopped by police. They are for things that we experience whether we're young or old. The first is fear. The next is powerlessness. The third is humiliation. And the fourth is anger. So let's look at those very quickly. Fear. You have been in the position for stop and frisk. Is laughter spread. What does that position connote. You're subject to being what. Raped.

[00:58:27] Just the position. Am I going to be hurt or killed by the police or the police. Plant evidence or they can justify their behavior. You're seeing things on television that you never saw before. Blacks have been telling you all the time. That's true. You've said it can't be true. But now we have visualization of things like that. So after we get past fear we get to powerlessness. There is nothing that I can do or say to defend myself. We thought he was reaching for a weapon and we watched. In self defense. Humiliation.

[00:59:08] Here I am in my neighborhood in front of all my community being forced to lean against the wall. Bend over spread my legs apart and cops are feeling all over me. The psychological symbolism suggests what. Rape. the New York Police Department was found guilty of. ASADA must act with a mop stick on a Haitian prisoner making this stop and frisk takes place in the presence of my friends, my church, my club, my gang, my relatives, my mother, my father, my sister, my brother, my cousins and everyone is powerless to help me if they say anything or ask any questions about the legal rights they too can become what. Remember the woman was asking for help and the police beat her up and arrested her interference with and insubordination to police authority. And the humiliation I had been publicly violated and disgraced. I have been what? Dissed. Within the African-American community the most egregious act is to treat someone with disrespect because it destroys the relationship. Finally anger. How dare you treat me this way. How dare you disrespect me as a man. Then there are coping skills what you do with all that anger. One is you swallow the anger. And you displace the hostility on your family in domestic violence. The other is you turn the anger upon the self. And you become depressed. Then you self medicate with alcohol or drugs. And the last is to turn the anger outwardly and it's a violent attack on police. It's a form of suicidal behavior it's because you have been filled with micro aggressions plus the crowning event. Stop and Frisk. It becomes too much to bear. I ain't taking this crap no more. Ok. And he explodes and attacks the police knowing they cannot win and that he may even be what. Killed. So these are some of the psychological things some of the emotional things that happen. When you don't recognize that the highest value for one culture is in the white. And if you are seen to be treating the person. As not equal you have treated them with what. And you have destroyed the relationship. Thank you.

[01:01:54] Applause Thank you for your warm applause for Dr Nichols. We're transitioning our program and I just want to give you a sense of time so we all can be together and how the next part of the program is going to go is I'd love to have our panelists come up and I'd also like to have our moderator. I believe that moderator is going to be John. Who did our introduction and then if we can also have our panelists join us on the stage. One of the things that happens in our auditorium is that

every now and again our AV is a little bit finicky so we depend on our crowd to let us know if we need people to speak into the mike. Can we depend on you to let us know if you're hearing ok. And this is a good time. How are you all feeling about the conversation. Is it engaging. As so my sense is that in order for us to have a decent conversation with the panel and also to be able to have Q and A I wanted you to have the right expectations I think we'll be able to do about three or four questions for the Q and A. But I'd also love for you to use social media to chime in with questions and then we'll see how that goes. Sounds like a plan.

[01:03:05] Thank you. So we'll just start with introductions right.

[01:03:10] And so I'm gonna ask each panelist maybe you start with Lydia and work our way this way. Just introduce yourself and what's your relationship to tonight's topic.

[01:03:23] My name is Lydia Flora Barlow and my relationship to the topic for this evening is both personal. I had a brother who left high school ended up in prison and hung himself there in despair over the conditions that he experienced. I have been funding higher education in prison as a tool for liberation as well as upon re-entry for a number of years. I am the sponsor of the black prisoner Caucus one of the sponsors at Stafford Creek and I am also a appointee of the governors to the statewide re-entry Council.

[01:04:15] Good evening. I'm Janet Jones Preston and I first went to Monroe as a student at the University of Washington in the 80s and then in the late 90s I went back and became a sponsor of the Black Business Caucus and I also worked for Seattle Public Schools for 30 years and two months.

[01:04:45] And during my employment with Seattle Public Schools I was also a sponsor so I started taking educators to Monroe and in my retirement I still take educators to Monroe penitentiary. I also have founded a school in Castle Ghana which is right outside of Accra and we have two hundred and sixty students that are low income students and they are learning to analyze, synthesize and evaluate with English as a second language and they are proof positive. That poverty is not a boundary for disabler of students to be able to become successful. Because all of our students you have to take a proficiency test to pass and go to high school and only 20 percent of Ghanaian students go to high school and we've never had a student that didn't pass the test to qualify to go to high school. So we've got a model of what works. And in working in the school system I see that

[01:06:00] It's not the children. The children don't have the problem and they're not deficient. They come into the system bright intelligent and eager and the system destroys their productivity.

[01:06:15] So in taking educators to the prison they are learning about their deficiencies in the school system in Washington state so they can do better and improve.

[01:06:35] Let me follow her. My name is Gerard Henderson.

[01:06:40] I've served two and a half decades in prison since I was 18 years old I went in from high school. I was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. The first man in history to stay to ever get out of prison after being sinister died seven years ago applause. So I'm a product of the school to prison pipeline. Today I serve I will meet him in prison of course I served as I had the pleasure of serving as president of the black prisons caucus when Janet and all these others came up into the prisons and everything to open up the gates and here I am and all the work we've been doing. And also today I serve as president of the NAACP for Seattle as well as Alaska auditor Washington. So I come into his work and associated with his work because it wasn't that the prison teachers to prison system taught me anything it did everything but that. And of course I relied heavily on folks in the community, library, books everything that I could get my hands on to read to get a concept. But I lived the experience enough to know it. I might not have a PHD but I have a little big understanding about what our system would do to young black boys and now even young women as well. We don't want to miss out on what he's doing to the women as well to recognize this and the impact it has on mothers, fathers, young babies and families so when I speak about this publicly the system is doing exactly what it was designed to do from hundreds of years ago exactly what it's designed to do. So my goal is to be involved in this work to make sure they recognize as what Dr. Nichols described it and understand how to communicate with folks in positions of power to recognize the biases of their own to own it and to make sure they make a difference and no longer relying on a system to fix itself or allow our community buildup to fix it because that's what communities are for.

[01:08:31] How are you guys doing this evening. All right.

[01:08:35] My name is William Jefferson and what brings me to this work. I can echo some of the very same sentiments that Mr. Gerard Henderson has referred to.

[01:08:45] But honestly before I even go to any of that I want to just honestly say thank you to everybody that's on this panel to Mary Flowers, Andre Franklin brother the today and also to Dr. Edward Nichols for man all the work that you do. Seriously. APPLAUSE. Yeah it's an honor and privilege to be up here, behind these scholarly individuals.

[01:09:17] Dr. Edwin Nichols. He came inside of Monroe where I was incarcerated at I believe it was the year 2010.

[01:09:27] Where I had the amazing experience of getting acquainted with Dr. Nichols and he kind of gave some of the understanding that he provided tonight.

[01:09:38] But like he said he had a little more time so I was I was pleased to receive that information and that information opened on my mind, my eyes. And also my future because when you go into prisons like idea six weeks after turning 13. And you end up doing 20 years you have no understanding about what you're going to do beyond those circumstances. And you came in what a beacon a light and a beacon of hope. And allowed me to see that I can't get out here and make a difference but I can begin with myself. And in that particular set and they made me really realize for myself and meaning of any individuals who come from some of the disparaging backgrounds that we

have come from. I realize I was claiming they represent in the wrong hood like I used to be in the streets and being a part of a particular you know sub group or subculture. But when I when I seen as individual another individual such as himself it made me understand that now it's time to represent my neighborhood. Now it's time to represent fatherhood and now it's time to represent brotherhood. Now it's time to represent love. And in that moment I understood instead of being in a state pen I could have been in Penn State opened up the genius inside of me. And so do that upon my return back to society three years ago. Hit the ground running. You know where and roll right into school got another degree working on one as well right now out of UDUB. Working vigorously in a community. And so now I'm out working in South King County where young people between ages of 12 and 24 and trying to make sure that some of those similar roadblocks that were present in my life are dissipated in their lives. So that's what brings me to this to this to this work.

[01:11:43] So the next question so we're gonna skip to number three so when you think about moving beyond the school to prison pipeline.

[01:11:53] What type of approach would you like to see. I'm starting this and so it will start when we start with William.

[01:12:02] What do we like to see there. There's a lot as a lot to unpack.

[01:12:07] But I would like to really begin to see as the truth being told. There's a lot of

[01:12:13] fallacies a lot of untold you know truth. A lot of lies that are out there being disseminated about people that are continuing to keep a certain group of people in a position of privilege.

[01:12:27] And there's even some biases that I have to even address even in my maleness right.

[01:12:33] I can't really even truly even address the privilege that I receive as a male if I don't address the overwhelming or over arcane biases that come with when it comes to racism. I can't even begin to truly address some of the side effects of some of the symptoms but due to the understanding that Dr. Nichols has helped me provide was meaning you came up to Monroe and used and you talk to us from. You said I think you said from a sociologist perspective you said some people get so hardy and caught up on their degrees and what they accomplish. And I want to stay in a particular role. He said I'm a clinical psychologist. I'm not even here this time but I'll let you know it almost. I'm willing I'm comfortable enough to even step outside of my role so let me know that she was first willing to address even some of your own things. And so now I'm willing to do the same thing. So in order to break someone I cycle to to fast to be tall. And part of that was it even shadow of some of my even my belief system. Anybody in here is familiar with the empty DNA or mitochondrial DNA. Are you familiar with the properties and what a host. That is the life form to everything that that creates life. Everybody has the empty DNA in them right. Male and female but the only population that they study is in a female because it is transferred to males and other females through the females so they study it to the women in every population in every house in every ethnic group major ethnic group they

studied in the women and it was stagnant in every female except for black women or African women meaning it mutated.

[01:14:11] And so when I had this conversation with one of my buddies and he actually said on a spiritual context if I were to actually where do we all come from I would say God right. But then some people will say where was your substantial. I mean where's your tangible belief. I'm your tangible evidence to that to that to that premise that you all but then when I look at the evidence that is even inserted into black women that in your DNA you mutate you don't stagnate meaning everybody comes from you. So the truth has to be told in so many different levels in order to shattered his lies and we're talking about it erupt and not only disrupt them but erupt in a school to prison pipeline. There's so much truth that needs to be brought. Because when I if I were to learn those things growing up as a black male about the geniuses and the wonderfulness that my people had brought it allow me to look at myself and my community from a whole different set of lens. Thank you.

[01:15:07] You know I mean before I go anywhere else I'm a but I'm a history buff because I know that whatever happened to voice got definite got to happen again particularly if you don't pay any attention to it. And I go back through history thinking about our educational system. It was within my grandmother's lifetime which is not too far to go that for a black person to pick up a book. They will lose their lives. And he used to be illegal for a young black child to branch out to even learn to read which explained to me they knew that the moment that child learned to read and gain that knowledge that child would become a threat. And they are not going for that. That allowed them to keep in power. So that was fundamental number one and number two it really took an act of congress and the military for black folks to even get into the school system. And even when we allowed in this school these clues school did not even want us there. So they told me two things one that you're not going to curtail your academic or curriculum to curtail towards this child because you don't really want them there anyway. And then at the same time you dropped them out failing them kicking them out doing everything else which is a way of saying under my way to get them out of the schools because the more knowledge that kid gains the more threat that kids become.

[01:16:16] Hence Barack Obama. Two. Even though these kids are in these schools the curriculum never adjusted to our way of learning as Dr. Miguel described in early. I'm sitting there watching this I'm saying that if I've got a child that speak Spanish and I know I can only take it teaching English the best thing for me to do is rather than trying to teach this kid a language that he or she can understand go find the person that can. And those are things that where community comes in to the place to where I am says who's been fighting this battle for at least 300-400 years I'm done with that fight. I'm not even looking at the system anymore. I'm looking for our community for us to say we are going to create the curriculum we are going to provide the resources. We're going to start doorways because I learned despite my teachers I did learn not to remove as much as I learned like a Mary Flowers my auntie my uncle, my neighborhood, my home, things like that my favorite people in my life that taught me provide me books, set me books every day.

[01:17:14] Those were the people that taught me when people said Joe what was your favorite teacher. It wasn't the ones that work in the Education Department. It was the was that my neighbor

who lived through my eyes, my experience and so when you see that kind of approach like we debate that's gone on in America right now common core every other type of core there is to create a measuring stick on how these kids going to learn but they haven't changed or figured out a way to how keen to learn in order for you to know how to teach what just stupid within itself.

[01:17:42] But these are the people that got the PHD that works in these systems that we rely on. And when it fails we go back to them to fix the problem that they created. So that's our fault. That's not their fault. That's our fault. The second piece is critically piece and this is some that I learned a long time ago that a UDUB Professor said to me Gerald is common sense.

[01:18:02] Think about the school to prison pipeline that in your first four years you learn to read and your next eight years you read to learn. So if you didn't learn to read your first four years

[01:18:15] Then how are you going to read learn over your next eight which is graduation. And you know what they do at that point when they do the test to determine that you don't have the ability to read at fourth grade they are to read automatically calculate you as a failure and rather than invest in reading core. They invest in a prison cell. They literally use fourth grade reading scores to determine how many prisons best they're going to build over the next five years. But they'd rather invest. 500 million dollars in a school than 500 dollars for a tutor.

[01:18:48] This show you the way that they're looking at us as a people as a society and as a community. And it's no coincidence it's no coincidence that our dropout rates matches our incarceration rates. As well as our slave rates. That's no coincidence. So when I say that the system is doing exactly what's designed to do it should you should not be surprised because the system is actually succeeding. It's us that do not understand what it was designed for.

[01:19:23] What I'd like to see number one change. Number two. Teach to the students learning style. Number three have authentic relationships and partnerships with the parents. All parents. Number four. Teachers being able to opt out of teaching students they are not comfortable with fear the students or the parents. They should be able to opt out of teaching those students because they can't do it proficiently. Number five, teachers not being allowed to teach students they know nothing about. The race, the creed, the religion. If they don't know anything about the student's background if they don't know anything about and have no relationship whatsoever with certain races they shouldn't be able to teach those students. They should be forced to teach the students looking at the strengths of the students their families and their race. Number seven they should be made to teach the history of all races. Giving all students pride in where they come from. And number eight they should address a social basic and emotional needs of all students. That would be a start.

[01:21:03] There we go.

[01:21:05] My comments about this come from looking at things that work inside one of the black prisoner caucus education groups teach at Collin Bay and then also as a mother of an African-American son who left the public schools and went into a private school where the method of

teaching was designed for children who were not thriving in the public schools. And so what I see. At Cleland Bay is an education program that was organized by the men themselves, the method of teaching is communal in the sense that they have no man left behind model. So as a course it's begun even if it's a correspondence course or if it's a course where they simply want to learn the topic without it being a formal course they develop their curriculum. And as they're learning it that grew. Doesn't move forward until they've been able to explain it to each other. So in that way it's not the individual thrusting forward it's the group moving forward. The same group has negotiated their own contracts with colleges for tuition they interview their own faculty and they consider themselves faculty so they hire their instructors as opposed to them being the objects of instructors and the measurement for me for success really is this relationship to a sense of liberation.

[01:22:52] And I have not seen as a funder.

[01:22:56] I go to a number of different prisons in this state. And then as a person who's been Foundation president for higher education at one of the colleges locally.

[01:23:09] I watched different education models and this idea of the subject belonging the material itself belonging to the people who are learning it is a critical part of this. And I would say that. The parallel for my son was being in the public schools and beginning to get phone calls about him being disruptive and about I got one phone call saying he'd stolen something he'd actually gone to the lunch line twice. All of this language being used about him. Almost criminalizing his behavior theft for going through the line he should have gone through the line twice but using language like theft for that. And so we put him in an environment where while they didn't choose their own curriculum they still learned in community.

[01:24:05] And he moved up five grade levels in mathematics in a two year period. And this was somebody wasn't interested in mathematics but he was simply not looked at as an an an individual that could either fail or not fail and so for me structurally there's a way in which

[01:24:32] Shifting the focus from the individual to group learning is critical. And one of the prisons where I saw this done I saw the community college that was at the prison that was struggling to. Teach GED level courses approach the group the Black prisoner caucus group and said can you help us reframe our curriculum so that we can get the same results that they're getting.

[01:25:02] And I'm quite excited about this method that I'm seeing and it comes out of the very kind of organizing of the People's Institute. The black prisoner caucus which you guys both have been part of as you have so I think that there are methods out there that deliver results that can't be simply duplicated they're not programs they have to grow organically but they're pretty spectacular. As we move into the Q&A section so to folks have questions. So I'm wondering if the someone on the panel or maybe all of you can address the connection between our achievement gap with African-American males being the fifth worst in the country.

[01:25:45] And specifically the two gentlemen how they went about restoring their voting rights once they got really the voting rights. But I'll let him do that again.

[01:25:54] Oh this is this is the President Madam President Barack Obama. You know the question what it was you're quite questions about the two gentlemen like we restore their voting rights

[01:26:06] And I'm let that the professional ask the other part. I'd like after my twenty three years of course when I came home the governor gave me a pardon. But she also gave this caveat saying well you can't vote for eight years.

[01:26:20] So my very first vote was just recently as this year. The first time I had a chance to vote and I'm 48 years old. And when you believe it Trump was an option. But I'm sorry I was not supposed to. But usually you know I mean obviously they make it hard for you. You have you automatically get it and get a thing in the mail you have to county fill out your paperwork to require saying that I'm no longer on active supervision or parole. We fought for years because what they established saying that originally that even though you out on parole you're still technically under DLC and then he imposed his legal financial obligation finally that you could never pay off for the next hundred years. So we'll just two years ago that they changed the law. Thank God for all the fine from the community folks out here to say since you own all the DLC. Now believe me I had to pay being on parole as long as you owe. You no longer monetary obligated to be able to be able to vote but that's and being that I'm the head of the MWC. That was the foundation for us one hundred and nine years ago because the system is tried to prohibit our ability to vote because that was our power. And of course and if you read the 13th Amendment to the Constitution it was clear to me what it said that slavery in this country is hereby abolished comma hypothesis.

[01:27:37] Except for those convicted of a crime. So what do you think they told the slave master to do so.

[01:27:44] That's why we champion that. That's why I personally do geo TV work and on the street get folks to know because believe it or not a lot of ex-felons coming out of prison don't even know they had the right to vote. And it's just as simple as filling out your document putting it in and manage it. I was so proud it took me 48 years as a black man to finally be able to cast my ballot. And no I didn't do it in the mail. I went to the election place. I wanted to boot.

[01:28:12] I could definitely second that. It was it was. It was an honor and a pleasure to be able to exercise the right. That so many people always fought hard for. And also later life on the line. To be able to do that. So it was the only unfortunate part is that it came in this particular election. I wish I had the opportunity to vote for Barack Obama. Yes, as my president stated you know how that aspect is laid out in regards to the achievement gap or the lack of achievement on the part of African-American males. We know that as Mr. Gerard Henderson stated that the system

[01:28:54] Is working because it's based upon how it's been designed to work.

[01:28:58] So it's not perplexing that we see that there is such a disparity in number between the achievement gap when it comes to African-American males and the rest of the population here in his state it's even that even when I was attending Bellevue College even though I has a high success rate of graduation but in particular for African-American males it took everybody on average about maybe three years to acquire their degree but it took about seven years for African-American males to acquire the same degree. Why. Because we have the same educational system in place. We can't expect for improvement in our society to occur if our schools are not improving. Right now we are still being I guess you can say we're still being there is the litmus test is still being provided in terms of how to the structure of mathematics as applied in school. The system that we currently have was based upon in the 1950s in terms of the curriculum. It hasn't changed.

[01:30:01] And it was looking for rocket scientists. So if you didn't qualify it actually made sense why you didn't qualify because we're looking for people who qualified to be rocket scientists so as Lydia and everybody else stated the curriculum must become more culturally relevant. And this system is failing us because it's not designed for us.

[01:30:20] If you would take your papers it says the philosophical aspects of cultural difference look at epistemology in Western culture. How do you know it is through counting and measuring. And the way you are taught in school is based on the philosophical work of Democrats or Democracies depending on your pronunciation. He told us that things are made a very small particles and he call those small particles atoms. And so these small atoms become whole parts become the whole. Count measure parts become the whole and then you produce material in a text or in a written paper that is linear and sequential. When you are looking at the African-American child his way of knowing is what we call intuitive or he uses symbolic imagery and the concept of rhythm rhythm doesn't mean copying your hands it means bio rhythms. So I will transliterate symbolic imagery and rhythm into Western thinking. You go to the physician. He listens to the rhythm of your heart. If your heart is out of rhythm it is not functioning properly. He gives you an EKG and you see these little symbols on the paper which connote whether the heart is functioning properly. So this is a different epistemological model but it's very appropriate now in the African-American culture we are holistic thinkers. And in terms of methodology it is critical path analysis. So what you have operative then is you have a holistic picture which is get to get the big picture and critical path analysis is cut to the chase. So when you have students in a classroom you are following the top line. Then you're sequential parts to the whole. The little boy is given a part and each little boy recognizes. Part 1 Part 2 Part 3. And he puts it together to roll but in the African-American context when he gets the part he thinks that is the whole.

[01:32:43] Because he's thinking holistically and he can't get all these little holes like ball to juggling in the air together.

[01:32:50] So at the end of the semester practically two thirds in the way he recognizes that he's been given parts and not a whole he starts churning in the homework.

[01:33:00] The teacher says that's how did you get the right answer. From home did you what? You must be doing what? Cheating. See the negative words. And she then challenges him. Well tell me

how you did it? Which is what is the methodology which you came to this. At eight years old in the third grade he's not able to say I use critical path analysis. But the question at the end of the textbook in the arithmetic textbooks they have all the steps for teachers because many of them don't do arithmetic do well. So you have seven steps

[01:33:51] Critical path analysis says that the little black boy. You step one step four and step seven and solved the problem using critical path analysis. It is not necessary to do steps two, three, five and six. But if you cannot prove it to me in my epistemological model then there is something wrong.

[01:34:18] Thank you. I was hoping that one or all of you might speak briefly to the idea of. Reform versus abolition as it plays out with the construction of the New Youth Jail and where that might tie in to ideas of interrupting and or stopping the school to prison pipeline. Specifically answering that question like What do we do with kids who engage in violent or absolutely destructive behavior?

[01:34:59] First of all we've got to stop this huge failure. We can't let this invest in his youth that it's got to go.

[01:35:04] We've got to stop it. APPLAUSE It's gotta go.

[01:35:09] And I've been so proud of the movement first of all think about it this way that obviously we feel that there's a need of it because they highlight and exaggerate that crime go to the community not considering all the good stuff that's gone out there too. So media has a lot of stuff that goes with that. Cause I label it is not as bad as we are portrayed. In fact there's more crime in white neighborhoods particularly in black neighborhoods. They just only show us when there's a gun involved except for the police to that clearly I'm in favor of.

[01:35:36] I know that there are some dangerous people walking the street. Hell I did 20 years with a lot of that I was like oh my for real. But those people yes they need to be where they are. But we should not be invested in incarceration as much as we should be invested in education so that two hundred and forty million dollars can go a long way and use the money to build a cultivation center rather than a jailhouse for our youth because what is said to our youth is that you will an investment lock me up but you can't give me a scholarship to go to school because my parents I can't afford to go to school like this college tuition. Some of the question as earlier like what is stopping this creation of this formation of people like the education gap for work resources and access. Rich folks and go to college for free. Poor folks can even get a degree get no resources no scholarships available to them but for the middle class you got the access you've got tutors you've got everybody that provide all the necessary materials for you as an issue that by the time you walk out of college is almost paid for for the young kids of color. All you got is a criminal record because you just spent three years and that you've jail. Now I do know there's a couple of things going on right now particularly at the end when she feels fine for a number one trying to stop this jail. Number two that no more automatically declined to wear a kid depending on what crime he or she commit. They automatically go to the adult jails and they only been doing that for kids of color. So they are pushing at this year. So these things

all play a part. And what we need to do. There there's no accountability to the school system. When students leave the 5th grade. And they cannot read, write, spell do basic math. And have

[01:37:22] good oral communication skills. They're not going to be successful. And for African-American and Latino and children of color. When they don't have those skills leave in elementary school. They're going to end up more than likely in the penal system because they're going to stop going to school when they get to high school because they can't fit in because they can't survive and going to the prisons for as long as I have. I can say most students

[01:37:57] That stop going to school that's when the crimes began. When they stopped going to school. And students that are doing well in school don't usually stop or if they can find anything that interests them to keep them inside the school building during the school hours. That would be a deterrent to prisons. So I would say hold the schools accountable. There's no rewards. And there's no consequences. To teachers, and to principals, and to administrators. Nobody holds the school system accountable for the failures of students and the students who get into trouble after they stop going to school. So if people would put pressure on the schools to do a better job and force them to make the changes necessary. Otherwise it's status quo and the kids will continue to get in trouble because they'll continue to stop going to school because they'll continue to fail. So my question is as a young person of color who has experience feeling like people haven't respected my learning process and because of that kind of what you were talking about the. Ask how I came to and then they ask you know in any anyway is like feeling disrespected in the relationship does end up

[01:39:41] Hindering my ability to learn from that individual just because I feel like hurt.

[01:39:46] But how would you recommend as a young person. How would you recommend I get through situations like that or other people in other young people like me get through situations like that because it's not we're not in prison yet but we still experience those things

[01:40:04] and we still need to learn how to get through them. You have to recognize. That persons that are beneath you

[01:40:18] cannot disrespect you. It's only a person at your level or above. So when you experience disrespect. You look at the person as the source from which they come. Poor home training. Poor mother-child relationships. Poor self-esteem that they feel they must attack you and disrespect you. So when you when you look from the perspective of that away looking down then they are not touching you with their behavior so you have to consider the source from which it comes. And it's terrible and it's unfortunate they have the poor home training or the lack of it that they have and should feel sorry for them. Because their level of discussion does not what? Touch you

[01:41:21] When they go low you go high. That's your

[01:41:29] So we're talking about prisons. Go ahead. Talk about prison. Somebody asked a question about reforming. And abolition. Right.

[01:41:40] We would say it's a crisis of imagination. So we have a doggy daycare, daycare for dogs. We build jails for young people. That's a crisis of imagination. What you said is really powerful because I think that

[01:42:00] If you start with abolition as the idea and then use your imagination to get there and instead of starting with the assumption that prison is needed then there's no imagination needed. Right.

[01:42:10] So I consider myself a prison abolitionist but I also don't think that I know all of the answers right about how we get there but we start with that as a value and then to the you know again thinking about parenting and my own experience inside of the school system when I was young. Understanding yourself in the flow of time and what your broader goals for liberation or for your life are strike me as really important and as an African-American woman. It has struck me that through much of my life being able to hold on to my own communal story about where it came from, where I'm going and what this particular incident or bump or dis amount of disrespect meant.

[01:43:05] I'm old enough to have not been served in restaurants as a child.

[01:43:08] I'm old enough to have been and that wasn't an uncommon thing. I'm old enough to

[01:43:15] Have been in cars more than once where someone that was for something really routine we were stopped and frisked. And I think just holding onto your mind is really hard and I know Dr. Nichols spoke about micro aggressions and I didn't know about aggressions but I think that this the question that she asked this strategy of holding on to your your sense of proportion and your sense of self when it happens over and over and over again is extremely difficult. But I think for my generation we had a strong sense of where we were going.

[01:43:52] And I think that that's something in our community that I see us consistently refreshing with ourselves.

[01:43:59] And I think it gives strength to our youth. I want to. Applaud. Back to this gentleman's question about the New Youth Jail. Obviously to ask like you know is it really tears at me. I want people to kind of think about like the effectiveness of institutions like. How do you can really determine the effectiveness of the institution is by would it massively produces on a continual.

[01:44:30] Right. How it affects the people majority of the time not just some other time. What you're looking at is in my case and Mr. Henderson's case is what happened some other time. Very very minute of us will to walk off a 20 year sentence a will to return to society in the conditions that we are in when the system says otherwise. So the majority of the people who come into contact with that system

[01:44:57] It's a broken system it is designed to continue to keep people broken. So any time you have 200 million plus dollars being thrown at a particular institution you can expect that they are looking any investors looking for a return on that investment.

[01:45:15] You can expect looking for a return on investment I will just on a panel with saddle bird any we're just talking about and I'm quoting him here because I wrote it down he said where instead of outsourcing justice to the courtroom we provide a community just as alternative.

[01:45:31] But in one sentence as you say it is but then you propose a bill to say that I support the development of a new institution that we will. We know that the system is broken. It's so broken it's a failed system and majority of people come into contact with that system reset a vague meaning that they get out only to return in worse conditions than they were when they first came in contact with it. How can you with a clear conscience propose to support such a bill. And we're talking about some of our most amenable people that can change their lives. We're talking about the young population not people who miser like concrete all mixed up that permanently set these people values are still growing.

[01:46:12] So when we're talking about the proposal of incarceration it's something that we need to look at ourselves and whistling up you're saying that it's ok to lock up anyone at any given time knowing that the system is is broken is broken.

[01:46:31] Thank you so much for this wonderful conversation. Can we give a warm round of applause for our panel.

[01:46:40] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.