



C | L | A | S | S ACTION

Building Bridges Across the Class Divide

Hampshire Mini-Class Conference –Sept. 20, 2007
Franklin Patterson Hall
3:30-8:00 P.M.

3:30-4:30 Opening
4:45-6:15 Workshops
7:00-8:00 Closing-Where Do We Go From Here?

Keynote Presentation: What's Class Got to Do With It?

Keynote Presenter: Felice Yeskel, Ed.D.

Felice is the Director of Class Action, a national, non-profit working to end classism. Felice is a Founder and was the Co-Director of United for a Fair Economy. She comes from a working-class Jewish family from New York City's lower east side. She is on the faculty of the Social Justice Education Program, at UMass, Amherst where she founded and directed The Stonewall Center: A LGBT Resource Center for over 20 years. She is currently editing a special issue of the journal Equity and Excellence in Education on ***Class and Education***, it will be out in 2008. Felice is the co-author of ***Economic Apartheid in America***, published by The New Press in the fall of 2000; a second edition came out in the Fall of 2005.

Workshops

The Race/Class Connection

In the United States, class has been racialized. A greater percentage of people of color are adversely affected by the rules of the economy. Yet racism keeps people whose economic self-interest is similar from uniting to change the conditions. Bill Fletcher, president of TransAfrica and former union leader, writes, "Class is the faultline of US society, and race is the trip wire." Are race and class inextricably intertwined, or is it possible to tease them apart? Does race trump class or does class trump race? Where and how do we even start talking about all of this? Join Rhonda Soto, Class Action's Race/Class Intersections Program Coordinator to explore the race/class connection.

Facilitator: **Rhonda Soto**

Rhonda is Class Action's Race/Class Intersections Program Coordinator. Rhonda is bi-racial and grew up in Harlem, NY. She was a single mom on welfare and started college when she was 31 years old. She has lived the race/class connection.

The Complexities of Class

It's kind of a no-no in the United States to talk about class. Our country's supposed to be classless — this is one of our great national myths leading to much confusion and mystification. Felice Yeskel, Class Action's Executive Director, will lead an interactive workshop on the complex dimensions of class. We will look at the language of class, class indicators, different frameworks for understanding class, the nuances of class, class cultures, and how to speak about class on campus and off.

Facilitator: **Felice Yeskel, Ed.D.**

Felice Yeskel, Executive Director of Class Action and Co-Founder of United for a Fair Economy comes from a working class Jewish family from New York City's lower-east side. She is an educator and activist and the co-author of *Economic Apartheid in America*, a 2nd edition was published by The New Press in the fall of 2005.

Becoming a Class Ally

What does it look like some one with privilege (i.e. with money, connections to institutional decision-makers, many choices, extensive formal education) to be an ally to low-income and working class people authentically, thoughtfully and powerfully? In this interactive workshop Class Action founder Jenny Ladd, will help participants think positively about how they can stand with working class and poor people against classism. We will explore how to create effective social change, on campus and off, by collaborating with low-income/working people and by leveraging our own personal, social and financial resources for the good of the whole.

Facilitator: **Jennifer Ladd, Ed.D.**

Jenny, was a founder and served as co-director of Class Action; she comes from a white, academic, agnostic, upper-class family from Cambridge, Massachusetts and inherited money at 21. She is an educator, wealth counselor, and donor organizer.

Making Class Matter

Given the often-invisible nature of social class in academic and interpersonal discussions, it can be an overlooked factor in one's day-to-day experiences. This session will give you the opportunity to explore your class background and consider the ways it influences your experience at Hampshire—academically and socially. This session is open to all regardless of class background and/or current class position.

Facilitator: **Rachel Rybaczuk**

Rachel Rybaczuk grew up poor in Miami. She is a Hampshire alum and current graduate student in the Sociology department at UMass-Amherst. Rachel was an Intern with Class Action.