



Cornel West

Lectured at Siena on January 22, 1998

“Transforming America: Racial Consciousness, Community Action, and the Common Good”

The eleventh annual lecture was given by Cornel West on January 22, 1998. West, a noted theologian and philosopher and a prominent democratic socialist, blends drama, knowledge, and inspiration - drawn from his roots in the African American Baptist church - as he calls upon us to share in his faith in the prospect of “radical amazement.” As a prominent new “public intellectual,” he insists that we consider race and other issues of “the landless, propertyless, and luckless” as inseparable from the problems of American society as a whole.

A native of Tulsa, Oklahoma, he grew up in Sacramento and was deeply influenced by the black Baptist church (his grandfather had been a preacher) and the Black Panthers, whose office was nearby his boyhood church. He graduated from Harvard, magna cum laude, and received his M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton University. He taught at a number of distinguished institutions, including Union Theological Seminary, Haverford College and Princeton, before moving to Harvard as Professor of Afro-American Studies and Religion.

He is the author of twelve books, including *Prophecy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity*; *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life*, written with bell hooks; the two-volume *Beyond Eurocentrism and Multiculturalism*; *Race Matters*; *Keeping the Faith: Philosophy of Race in America*; *Jews and Blacks: Let the Healing Begin*, co-written with Michael Lerner; and *The Future of Race*, co-authored with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. He is a frequent contributor to periodicals, including *Monthly Review*, *Critical Quarterly*, *The Nation*, *Tikkun*, *New York Times Book Review*, and the *New York Times*.