



Lani Guinier

Lectured on January 27, 2000

“Equality and Justice for the New Millennium”

The thirteenth annual lecture was given by Lani Guinier on January 27, 2000. The first black woman tenured professor at Harvard Law School, Lani Guinier is an activist as well as a scholar. Prior to her appointment to the Harvard faculty, she worked for more than a decade as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the U.S. Department of Justice, after which she joined the Law Faculty at the University of Pennsylvania. Having had her views on democracy and voting rights widely misinterpreted when she was nominated for Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, she drew upon her training in communications to found Commonplace, a national center to connect citizens, communities, and ideas, and Racetalks Initiatives, a project to create opportunities for multicultural problem solving and collaboration.

As a child of a mixed marriage, with an African American father and a Jewish mother, Guinier learned to appreciate the complexities of life and the way race both matters and doesn't matter in a person's life. She grew up in a working class neighborhood in Queens and attended New York City public schools. She graduated from Radcliffe College and Yale University Law School, where she was a classmate of the president and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Among Guinier's many honors and awards are the Champion of Democracy Award from the National Women's Political Caucus and honorary degree from Swarthmore College, Hunter College, Spelman College, and Northeastern University Law School. A popular speaker on college campuses, she is a frequent contributor to national law reviews as well as opinion and editorial pieces in publications such as *The New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and *The Washington Post*. She is the author of *The Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy*, *Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice*, and coauthor of *Becoming Gentlemen: Women, Law School, and Institutional Change*.