



D.R.

Randall.L.Kennedy
USA

Affirmative Action

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The author

Randall L. Kennedy, born September 10, 1954 in Columbia, South Carolina is an American Law professor and author at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is the Michael R. Klein Professor of Law and focuses his research on the intersection of racial conflict and legal institutions in American life. He supervises written work and accepts press inquiries regarding the topics of contracts, freedom of expression, race relations law, civil rights legislation and the Supreme Court.

Through numerous appearances on the lecture circuit, Kennedy continues to promote debate on hot-button racial issues in the public arena. "If you are socially isolated" he told Regan Goode in *The New York Times*, "you are more vulnerable to stereotypes and myths, you won't have the opportunity to have conversations with someone who has a different social background than you." While many critics have attempted to use Kennedy's work to advance their own agendas, he has retained his academic independence. "Against black pessimists" wrote Galston and Wasserman, Kennedy argues that substantial progress has been made toward the ideal of color-blind justice. Against complacent whites, he argues that there is still a long way to go." The relationship between white and black America, Kennedy noted, remains one of America's most perplexing problems." Obviously there are all sorts of ethnic, racial conflicts in American society," Kennedy told Smith, "but there's one that is deeper than all the others and that's white/black racial conflict."

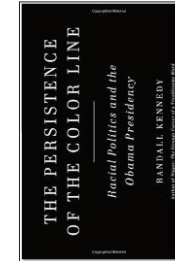
Kennedy currently serves as a Trustee of Princeton University.

Bibliography

- The Persistence of the Color Line: Racial Politics and the Obama Presidency*** (Pantheon, 2011)
- Sellout: The Politics of Racial Betrayal*** (Vintage,2009)
- Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word***, Pantheon (Vintage, 2003)
- Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Marriage, Identity and Adoption*** (Vintage, 2003)
- Race, Crime, and the Law*** (Vintage, 1998)

Zoom

The Persistence of the Color Line: Racial Politics and the Obama Presidency (Pantheon, 2011)



Renowned for his insightful, common-sense critiques of racial politics, Randall Kennedy gives us a shrewd and penetrating analysis of the complex relationship between the first black president and his African-American constituency.

Kennedy tackles such hot-button issues as the nature of racial opposition to Obama; whether Obama has a singular responsibility to African Americans; the differences in Obama's presentation of himself to blacks and to whites; the challenges posed by the dream of a post-racial society; the increasing irrelevance of a certain kind of racial politics and its consequences; the complex symbolism of Obama's achievement and his own obfuscations and evasions regarding racial justice. Eschewing the critical excesses of both the left and the right, Kennedy offers an incisive view of Obama's triumphs and travails, his strengths and weaknesses, as they pertain to the troubled history of race in America.

Press

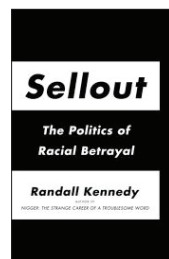
" A provocative and richly insightful new book . . . A breath of fresh air."

Brent Staples, ***The New York Times Book Review***

" A powerful and ruminative book. . . . Kennedy has long been among the most incisive American commentators on race. His books . . . seem to be carved from intellectual granite, yet they have human scale. . . . So resonant and so personal. . . . Pay attention too to this book's many ringing sentences."

Dwight Garner, ***The New York Times***

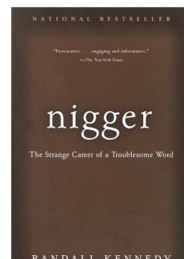
Sellout: The Politics of Racial Betrayal (Vintage, 2009)



In this incisive and unflinching study, Randall Kennedy, author of *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*, tackles another stigma of America's racial discourse: "selling out." He explains the origins of the concept and shows how fear of this label has haunted prominent mem-

bers of the black community—including, most recently, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Barack Obama. *Sellout* also contains a rigorously fair case study of America's quintessential racial "sellout"—Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. In the book's final section, Kennedy recounts how he himself has dealt with accusations of being a sellout after meeting fierce criticism at Harvard upon the publication of his book, *Nigger*.

Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word (Pantheon Vintage, 2003)

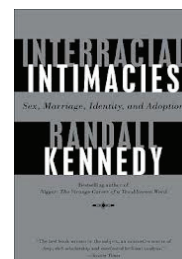


It's "the nuclear bomb of racial epithets," a word that whites have employed to wound and degrade African Americans for three centuries. Paradoxically, among many black people it has become a term of affection and even empowerment. The word, of course, is nig-

ger, and in this candid, lucidly argued book the distinguished legal scholar Randall Kennedy traces its origins, maps its multifarious connotations, and explores the controversies that rage around it.

Should blacks be able to use *nigger* in ways forbidden to others? Should the law treat it as a provocation that reduces the culpability of those who respond to it violently? Should it cost a person his job, or a book like *Huckleberry Finn* its place on library shelves? With a range of reference that extends from the Jim Crow south to Chris Rock routines and the O. J. Simpson trial, Kennedy takes on not just a word, but our laws, attitudes, and culture with bracing courage and intelligence.

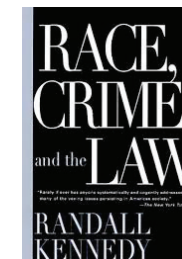
Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Marriage, Identity and Adoption (Vintage, 2003)



In *Interracial Intimacies*, Randall Kennedy hits a nerve at the center of American society: race relations and our most intimate ties to each other. Writing with the same piercing intelligence he brought to his national bestseller *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*, Kennedy here challenges us to examine how prejudices and biases still fuel fears and inform our sexual, marital, and family choices.

Analyzing the tremendous changes in the history of America's racial dynamics, Kennedy takes us from the injustices of the slave era up to present-day battles over race matching adoption policies, which seek to pair children with adults of the same race. He tackles such subjects as the presence of sex in racial politics, the historic role of legal institutions in policing racial boundaries, and the real and imagined pleasures that have attended interracial intimacy. A bracing, much-needed look at the way we have lived in the past, *Interracial Intimacies* is also a hopeful book, offering a potent vision of our future as a multiracial democracy.

Race, Crime, and the Law (Vintage, 1998)



"An original, wise and courageous work that moves beyond sterile arguments and lifts the discussion of race and justice to a new and more hopeful level." Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

In this groundbreaking, powerfully reasoned, lucid work that is certain to provoke controversy, Harvard law professor Randall Kennedy takes on a highly complex issue in a way that no one has before. Kennedy uncovers the long-standing failure of the justice system to protect blacks from criminals, probing allegations that blacks are victimized on a widespread basis by racially discriminatory prosecutions and punishments, but he also engages the debate over the wisdom and legality of using racial criteria in jury selection. He analyzes the responses of the legal system to accusations that appeals to racial prejudice have rendered trials unfair, and examines the idea that, under certain circumstances, members of one race are statistically more likely to be involved in crime than members of another.