

activists willing to take risks. That was the engine for her success with ‘deep organizing’, and her source of hope for campaigns to come.

Raising Expectations is a welcome tonic to the worrying direction in which unions are headed. Its embrace of bottom-up organizing has the potential to renew the labour movement, something I experienced first-hand when similar strategies were used during the CLC's recent pension campaign. Without question, “deep organizing” requires work. It requires resources, is far more time-intensive, and harder than letting consultants do the heavy lifting. But rather like junk food, nothing substantial gets produced from such shallow efforts. It is time unions rolled up their sleeves, mobilized their members, and tapped the potential of workers’ power. Our unions, our communities, and our children deserve nothing less.

James, Carl E. 2012. *Life at the Intersection: Community, Class and Schooling*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, ISBN 978-1-55266-470-4. Paperback: 18.95 CAD. Pages: 136.

**Reviewed By Kimalee Phillip**  
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Despite many communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) experiencing ongoing socio-economic problems, somehow, the community of Jane and Finch stands out in the minds of Torontonians and the broader Canadian public. By centering his book on what has been labeled as one of Toronto’s most ‘troubled neighbourhoods’ — Jane and Finch — Carl James does an extraordinary job of applying a critical race and class analysis to the realities faced by those living within that neighbourhood, confronting and complicating the ways in which that community and its members have been constructed by mainstream Canadian media and the general public, as different from Canadian values, morality and lawfulness. James uses these realities and stereotypes to illustrate to the reader that communities such as Jane and Finch can and do rise above the racist, classist and monolithic boxes to which they are typically confined.

James divides this short book into six main chapters where he touches on issues such as the labeling and stigmatization of the Jane and Finch community to the significance and meaning behind physical space and how that affects ideologies and shared perceptions and goals. He also focuses on the use of educational programs within the community; the importance placed on education by members of the community; the media’s portrayals of violence that further concretize the pathologies associated with

communities such as Jane and Finch and concludes with a discussion around the need for a community-centred approach to creating and providing educational programs.

It is important to note that although I refer to the Jane and Finch community in the singular, throughout the book James reminds us of the ongoing intricacies and pluralities of identities present beyond the traffic intersection, reminding us that though the media has branded Jane and Finch as a 'black community', that there in fact exists a diverse set of people from various ethnic backgrounds who call Jane and Finch their home.

One of the things that should be appreciated about his approach is its consistent engagement with self-reflective methods that call into question his socio-political location and his choice – even responsibility – to tell these stories. This engagement, for instance asking community members questions such as 'am I the person to write this book?', should be a critical part of the writing and research process of any scholar-activist who truly acknowledges accountability and responsibility to the community that they are writing about. Acknowledging that this story is not about him, James also endeavours to include the stories of people who lived or continue to live in Jane and Finch while reminding the reader that even those who identify as being 'from the community' can contribute to the stereotypes and stigmas that negatively label the community and its members.

The media, as James has illustrated, has consistently labeled Jane and Finch a community to 'get out of' and not necessarily a community where one can aspire to live, grow up and raise a family. By filtering the types of stories and histories that exist and are used to identify the community, it becomes easier to recognize the exemplary students and others who make it out of the community while simultaneously demonizing the community that produced them. This individualizes issues and mitigates attention placed on the systemic barriers and structures of oppression that contribute to the root causes of the inequities faced by the community such as racism, poverty, under-funded education, limited community resources and low-wage, precarious jobs.

One of the common and most persistent themes within the book is the attention placed on education as a social equalizer of sorts. It is true that many immigrant families whose members originate from the Global South identified higher education as an unquestionable priority but many of the young people, even when they acted as though education was not important, acknowledged the significance of post-secondary schooling. However, according to James, the current educational system is based on Western, Euro-centric standards that fail to validate the cultural, economic, political and social realities of the students who identify as anything other than white, middle to upper class, and who speak English as a first language. To illustrate the limitations of the current educational system and the general public's resistance to anything that poses as an alternative, James relies on testimonials from students and educators. These testimonials identify power imbalances experienced within the classroom, the disassociated relationship between

curriculum taught and the realities faced by students beyond the school. The testimonials also show that race is not the sole factor behind whether a student feels supported and identifies with a teacher.

Life at the Intersection calls for an urgent intervention of critical pedagogical tools; equitable curriculum that reinvents the standards used and is unafraid of shifting the curriculum based on students' individual needs; as well as a community-centred approach to education that faces head-on issues of social class, poverty, politics and the material realities that contribute to ongoing inequitable distribution of resources and wealth in students' lives and communities. An issue that James touches on briefly but that perhaps needs further exploration is the anger and frustration faced by students. These concerns must be addressed without further delegitimizing students' feelings. These feelings, typically characterized as 'scary' and undesirable emotions such as anger and pain, need to be validated and dealt with in productive ways that contribute to material improvements for those feeling oppressed? This needs to be part of the critical pedagogical methods that James calls on us to engage with.

Dayan, Colin. 2011. *The Law is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, ISBN 9780691070919. Hardcover: 29.95 CAD. Pages: 343.

**Reviewed by Darren Pacione**  
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The primary intellectual-political project of Colin Dayan's *The Law is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons* challenges how law constitutes identity, particularly the permeability of notions of legal personhood. Using Haitian lore of law and dogs, and American common law legal histories of persons, slaves, zombies, and apparitions, Dayan, an American Studies and Humanities professor provides a language through which the permeability of life, death, and civil disability may be (re)understood and reframed. Such discussion urges the consideration of the legal thresholds between what is inside and outside of the person (mind and body), the community (society and exile), and the law (norm and exception). Thus, in the context of the Anglo-American legal system, the modern boundaries of civil, political and legal life and death are troubled to expose historical lineages of systemic abuses and normative practices stemming from the antebellum to the modern period.