This 'action plan' was presented as part of a talk by Craig L. Wilkins entitled *Saving (G)Race* at the 2nd biennial PARSE conference 2017 *EXCLUSION*, University of Gothenburg, on November 15th. He suggests a list of 13 points in total containing acts and strategies to facilitate access to higher education institutions for students that so far remain excluded or encounter barriers. He lists 6 for the excluders – that would translate into institutional positions – and 7 for the excludees – that would translate into students not being admitted or struggling to stay in and conclude studies. Although in his talk he presented a case study that focused *race*, the list he proposes is relevant for any student group that remains marginalized in accessing higher education institutions.

He writes: "Here are the 13 points I outlined in my talk. <u>Do note</u>: this is a final draft, not the transcript of the talk..."

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THE EXCLUDERS

Craig L. Wilkins

1. **STUDENT ACCESS:** I began at the high school level for a reason, as it is one of the most critical areas for dismantling systemic exclusion, and it's a passive one; one easily addressed. Students simply don't know what's possible or if they do, why it should be of interest to them.

> A.   A strategy in this area should include developing material – a brochure, webpage or other media material – that specifically targets underrepresented students, providing both historical and current information about the possibilities of a career in architecture. Send material to the overworked guidance councilors, art teachers and the like. Ask the current students to assist – if not develop – the material. Make it a standing course or activity, like developing the school journal, or better yet, provide funding for it as a work/study job.
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> B.   In addition, target existing students on campus as well. It is clear that they are already college material; perhaps they haven't found a career path. Why not introduce them to the field?
>
> C.   Systematically track and evaluate the effort and adjust. One size does not fit all and diligence is required when trying something new.

 Any effort in this area must begin with this simple, but fundamental, point: **IT MUST BE RELEVANT TO THE LIVES OF THOSE WHOM YOU RECRUIT**. Not to what you *THINK* should be relevant, what you *WANT* to be relevant, but what is *ACTUALLY* relevant.

2. **CURRICULUM ACCESS:** Foundational courses that set the tone for what is worthy of note and admiration need to take a long, hard look at the body of work it covers. The traditional reasoning – that reliable material about those outside the mainstream did not exist – is no longer are valid, if it ever was. Educators must be encouraged to find it. Read it. And teach it in class. Educators must overcome the difficulty of ascribing validity to a knowledge base different from their own. This is particularly true in studio, where boundaries are set that reinforce certain cultural positions with which they feel comfortable to the exclusion of all else. One way to approach such difficulties is to examine why the boundaries have been placed where they are, what type of work can be expected to emerge from within these constraints, and what that will mean for the students that must operate within these boundaries, particularly marginalized students.

3. **ANCILLARY ACCESS:** Eliminating exclusion is work – hard work – but if it is something deemed of value, it simply must be done. There is no other way. How can instructors properly educate students without being able to discuss with them or refer them to work that will make the critical cultural connection? Equally important, how can educators expect other students to respect the work if you do not refer them to those other practitioners just as easily as they are referred to practitioners that embody their own cultural connection? There can be little argument in this regard.

4. **PART TIME ACCESS:** If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten. Be serious about eliminating exclusionary outcomes at both the student and faculty level. Be aggressively proactive, self-reflective and critical about it. Don't wait until someone lands on your radar screen. The search to identify potential applicants must begin now – whether there is a position available or not – and it must be ongoing. The time to consider the pool is not when the position is announced – it's before. Make a list of potential adjuncts to pull from and in the construction of that list, to do the hard work of identifying and securing a reflective representation of the world at large? Creating teaching teams with senior faculty to develop potential talent pools.

5. **FULL TIME ACCESS:** There are basically two factors departments use when evaluating potential faculty for hire: one is potential – what one might do in the future – and the other performance – what one has done in the past. Both are legitimate factors for making hiring decisions; however, often the two become confused in the hiring process when dealing with applicants of color. In discussions with colleagues on these committees, we have observed that often occurs is faculty of color are often judged on performance – the work they have produced – where other applicants are often judged on potential – the work they might produce. You may be saying "So what? What's the big deal?" Well here's why this is unfair: When this condition occurs in the same pool of applicants, it is clear everyone is not being judged on the same criteria. The rules for evaluation shift. Potential is speculative. Performance is not. Thus, one criterion for evaluation allows for interpretation and subjectivity – in other words, room for discussion and prediction. The other does not. Performance just is. You either produce or you do not. Now, no one is arguing that these two criteria are better or worse. What we are saying is committees should choose one and stick with it. You can't hire someone based on potential and then justify it by saying the other candidate's performance was not quite up to par. That…is the very definition of hypocrisy.

6. **SUPPORT ACCESS**: Once admitted or hired, expectations must become more realistic and specific.

> A. Assumptions of representation, research, coursework must be in line with the goal of creating frameworks that replace exclusionary structures and tactics as a collective body
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> B. The success or failure of a specific faculty of color is not indicative of all faculty of color.
>
> C. A particular, culturally-specific research agenda remains "tenure worthy" and does not reinforce a marginal status.

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THE EXCLUDED

1. **BE SEEN**. Make your field – and consequently, yourself – visible and available to those who just might chose it over a policeman or fireman at an early age. See it as an opportunity to educate and cultivate a potential employee and client base. For me, it's architecture; for you, it may be something else.

2. **SPEAK.** Find or make opportunities to speak in public about what you know. Propose a topic, a panel discussion or exhibit to libraries, civic organizations, community centers, local art centers, museums, etc; that's an opportunity for these institutions to present something different. It is part of their mission to provide such events. Take advantage.

3. **CREATE.** Help construct a pipeline for future practitioners of color. Start or assist a high school program; perhaps start a program or propose a course at a community college. Both are great ways to increase not only the potential pool of students for 4- and 5-year university programs, but also increase the pool of adjunct or full-time eligible educators.

4. **CRITIQUE.** Make a list of your specialties for university reviews and their potential lecture series. Send to every school you can comfortably reach. Then, find out when reviews are held and go. Often.

5. **SPONSOR**. Send a kid to a local or national convention in the field. Buy a subscription to journal for a HS art class. Visit and discuss it.

6. **RECORD**. Museums and universities often conduct oral history projects. Tell your story. Get a copy. Post on your personal, office or a new website, YouTube, etc. Send to educators at all levels.

7. **PUBLISH.** We need to disseminate work to each and every audience.

   A. *Newspapers* – Write Op-Ed pieces, letters to the editor, perhaps a column for your neighborhood or community paper or offer to be the architectural critic for a university or minority-owned newspaper, etc.

   B. *Journals* – School journals. Web journals. Blogs.

   C. *Books* – Monographs, even if self-published.

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