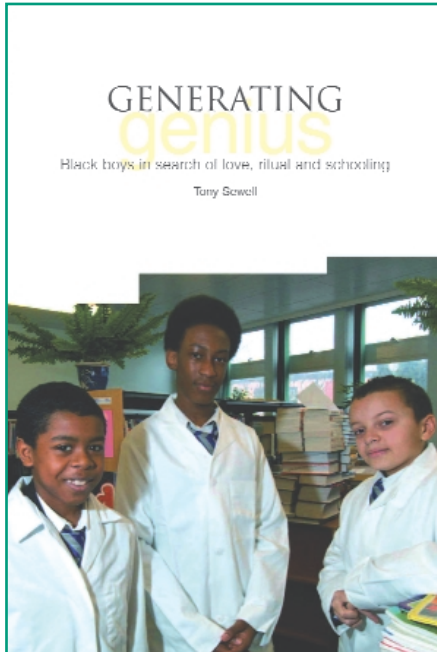


PRESS RELEASE



'Don't blame black boys' failure on racism' says black academic Tony Sewell

In his new book, **GENERATING GENIUS – Black boys in search of love, ritual and schooling**, Tony Sewell looks far beyond the notion that institutional racism is responsible for low attainment at school.

He argues that Black boys, like all young males, have instincts of sex and violence and that these instincts need to be transformed into a positive force. The book shows the ways in which this can be done – by providing boys with a framework of love, ritual and schooling.

Generating Genius is Tony Sewell's triumphantly successful project, which he and boys who attended describe in this book. Black boys in England spent their summers at Imperial College in London, and Jamaican boys attended summer schools at University of the West Indies. All came from tough schools and all the British boys are now embarked on university.

Dr Sewell drew on new research from schools in Jamaica and – uniquely – in Samoa where boys are failing too, which showed how concerted and consistent interventions have turned around the lives of pupils. These approaches inform the *Generating Genius* project. One is intellectual rigour – the 12 year-olds in the project worked at a level demanded of 18 year-olds. Another is that such rigorous demands are accompanied by caring and reliable support and exciting physical and cultural pursuits.

Ultimately, the project is about teaching Black boys how to succeed in a system that seems to work against them. Sewell doesn't quite let teachers off the hook, nor does he deny the reality of racism and its impact on boys' lives. What makes this book indispensable for all who work in education or are preparing to do so is the key strategies he outlines for schools and teachers to cultivate the genius within their students and help Black boys to grow a skin not of resistance but of resilience.

Dr Tony Sewell divides his time between England and Jamaica. He is Director of the Science, Maths and Information Technology Centre in the department of Educational Studies at University of the West Indies, Mona. UK educational consultant and columnist on the *Voice*, he is author of the acclaimed *Black Masculinities and Schooling*, published by Trentham in 1997.

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