

Against the odds

Biography

ELLIS COSE
Host, Executive Producer, Writer

Ellis Cose is executive producer, host and writer for *AGAINST THE ODDS*, a multimedia documentary series that profiles individuals who have overcome tremendous adversity. After the successful launch of a pilot program last year, the series debuts this April 2009 with four hour-long radio documentaries on public radio stations. Public Radio International (PRI) is distributing the series nationally.

A leading observer of our times, Cose is a best-selling author, educator and contributing editor (since 1993) for *Newsweek* magazine. He is a former chairman of the editorial board and an editorial page editor of the *New York Daily News*. Cose began his journalism career as a weekly columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times* – becoming, at the age of 19, the youngest editorial page columnist ever employed by a major Chicago daily. He is also a popular campus lecturer and public speaker.

In addition to having served as a columnist, editor and national correspondent for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Cose has been a contributor and press critic for *Time* magazine, president and chief executive officer of the Institute for Journalism Education, chief writer on management and workplace issues for *USA Today* (where he has also served as an occasional columnist and member of the board of contributors) and a member of the editorial board of the *Detroit Free Press*. He has also been a fellow at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University, at the National Research Council/National Academy of Sciences, a senior fellow and director of energy policy studies at the Washington-based Joint Center for Political Studies, and a consultant to the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations.

In November 2006, the Institute for Justice and Journalism at USC's Annenberg School published Cose's *Killing Affirmative Action: Would Ending it really Result in a Better, More Perfect Union?*. That report examined California's ten year experience living with Proposition 209, the measure that ended affirmative action in the public sector of California.

Cose's *Bone to Pick: On Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Reparation and Revenge*, was published by Atria (a Simon and Schuster imprint) in April 2004. The book is a wide-ranging look at a number of societies – the United States, Ghana, South Africa, East Timor, and Peru among them – and their ways of coping with cruelty and pain.

In May 2004 the Rockefeller Foundation issued *Beyond Brown v. Board: The Final Battle for Excellence in American Education* – a major report authored by Cose on the legacy of the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* school desegregation decision and the current challenges facing American educators.

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Ford Foundation

The Daniel & Joanna S. Rose Fund



The Goldman Sachs Foundation

The Envy of the World, an in-depth essay on the state of black men in America, was published by Washington Square Press (an imprint of Simon and Schuster) in 2002 and has appeared on several bestseller lists, including the *Essence* magazine list, where it was number one. *Newsweek* featured the book on its cover and National Public Radio produced a special program based on it. The paperback edition was published in January 2003.

Highlights of additional books, writing and notable projects by Cose include:

The Best Defense, his debut novel published by HarperCollins in September 1998;

Color-blind: Seeing Beyond Race in a Race-Oriented World published in January 1997 and also excerpted in *Newsweek*;

Editing an essay collection entitled *The Darden Dilemma* published by HarperCollins in March 1997;

Rage of a Privileged Class, a book-length essay on race in America, published by HarperCollins in January 1994;

A Nation of Strangers, a history of American immigration, published by William Morrow and Co. in 1992.

Cose is a judge for the New York Public Library Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism. He has received fellowships or individual grants from the Ford Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.

He has won numerous journalism awards – including the University of Missouri medal for career excellence and distinguished service in journalism, two Clarion awards, and four National Association of Black Journalists first place awards. He was granted the first place 2009 award for commentary from the New York Association of Black Journalists. In 2006 he won a Unity award for commentary and also shared in a first place award from the Society of Professional Journalists. In 2004 Cose was named the first recipient of the newly inaugurated annual Vision Award from the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education.

He was also named winner of the 2003 award for best magazine feature from the National Association of Black Journalists as well as the winner of two New York Association of Black Journalists' first place 2003 awards for commentary and magazine features. In 2002 he was presented the New York Association of Black Journalists' lifetime achievement award.

A Chicago native, Cose holds a B.A. in psychology from the University of Illinois, Chicago and a master's degree in Science, Technology and Public Policy from George Washington University. He resides in New York City with his family.

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