

Editor's Note

The articles in this volume share a common retrospective focus, but they can be clustered around two themes. Two articles deal with theoretical and or conceptual aspects of Ethnic Studies whereas the other three are about specific ethnic/racial groups.

The lead article by Jack Eller, "Anthropology and Ethnicity: From Herder to Hermeneutics," reviews the evolution of the study of ethnicity in the discipline of anthropology. He points out that the early focus in anthropology had been on the so-called traditional or primitive societies; however these societies have been incorporated within the state systems and have become "ethnicized" as he puts it. Thus anthropologists have had to readjust their thinking. Some anthropologists focus on the study of ethnic boundaries and inter-ethnic relations in those new states. Others develop new theories for the study of ethnicity itself. These theories range from ethnicity as a primordial phenomenon to ethnicity as a socially constructed concept.

The next three are the group focused articles by Kanellos, Bloom, and Jones.

Nicolás Kanellos' article deals with the development of ethnic minority consciousness in the Spanish-language press in the Southwest and the role some leading activist journalists have played. He presents a rather comprehensive review of the developments in each of the states from Texas to California.

The activist journalists, according to Kanellos, saw themselves as advocates of the Mexican origin people in the Southwest.

They promoted cultural pride among the people while they also defended and asserted their civil and property rights.

The article by John Bloom examines how Native American students in the Indian boarding schools managed to use sports, among other things, to express their Native American identities. That these students succeeded is, indeed, a triumph of the human spirit because the boarding schools were dedicated to the destruction of the native cultures. It is interesting to note that one of the unintended consequences of the boarding school era was the rise of pan-Indianism.

David Jones describes particular scenes in two films. “*Daughters of the Dust*” by Julie Dash and “*Malcolm X*” by Spike Lee. His analysis focuses on ideological and gender resistance aspects of the films. “Both films,” he says, “combine images of an African past with an American present using a pattern of historically specific myths and tropes.” African American spectators have, on the whole, found these films meaningful. Jones points out, however, that other commentators like bell hooks, for example, see “*Malcolm X*” as a “Hollywood” “style” film with “predictable images of urban anger.” Jones demonstrates the well-known fact that Hollywood is not willing to make films that are culturally different for economic and cultural reasons.

The last article by Beate Baltes reviews various shortcomings of multicultural education workshops. Baltes describes research findings that show that such workshops are ineffective and have led some educators to regard multicultural workshops as passing, educational fads. Others, who are more cynical, see them as vehicles for some people with political agendas. However, Baltes points out that the research is not overwhelmingly negative as many detractors allege. She suggests specific methods for making those workshops meaningful for educators in general and school teachers in particular.

Jonathan A. Majak
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse