

## **Editor's Note**

This issue of the journal takes a comparative look at the intersection of schooling, language, identity, and public policy as they impact ethnic minority population groups both domestically and internationally. In the first article Amara Holstein examines the social and political fallout of the recent anti-bilingual education initiative in California. Claimed by many as being anti-immigrant and anti-Hispanic, Holstein contends that this initiative falls within a broad, historical lexicon of nativist sentiment and backlash intended to disempower Hispanics and other linguistic minorities in the United States. Her analysis also focuses on the personal voices of California Hispanics and their ambivalency towards this particular initiative.

Churchill and Churchill compare and contrast the perspectives of and approaches to bicultural and bilingual education taken by Canada and the United States. The authors provocatively touch upon the differences between the two nations in terms of language and educational policy. The Canadian model looks upon bilingualism as a defining quality of their national identity as opposed to the models of the U.S. and other nation states who look upon bilingualism and multilingualism as an assault upon their national character.

Barbara Birch in her study of pragmatic prescriptivism describes the cultural and political conflicts which occur when

school policy becomes the arbiter of proper linguistic form within the classroom. She maintains that recent policy actions taken by the Oakland School Board to include the use of ebonics within the formalized school setting have inadvertently acted to unleash deep seeded language prejudices and racism which have long existed within the American social fabric. Her thesis gives credence to the fact that the educational arena will increasingly become a stage for competing political ideologies and a battleground for ethnic and identity inclusion.

In his work Jack Thornburg presents a case study of the Latino community of Aurora, Illinois, and the various strategies of engagement and resistance which the community undertakes to combat institutional and social forms of racism. He advocates that true ethnic and cultural inclusivity necessitates direct civic action and political mobilization in education, business, and local politics.

Dawkna and Mc Kinney's examination of the 1994 Luster & McAdoo study reinforces the fact that social norms as well as community and familial value structures differentially impact the academic achievement of Euroamerican and African American adolescents. Among African American youth maternal education and family values toward education appear to be the primary determinants which insure student success and aspirations for continued education while Euroamerican students are more affected by socio-economic status and peer group culture. This particular assessment gives renewed hope to those who would argue that strength of family and parental outlook in many instances can account for student success despite poverty and environmental conditions.

In the final article Helen Lock provides us with an insider's perspective of a young, African emigre who upon entering a British boarding school finds herself in the rapidly changing social and cultural landscape of post World War II England. In this article Lock gives a personal and compelling account of the African diaspora and how immigration from previous colonial possessions are increasingly transforming the social dynamics of Britain and other former colonial powers. This particular narra-

tive also reflects upon the ability of the individual to attain personal empowerment within the educational process by redefining her own identity while still retaining the “blackness” and “Africanness” of her cultural base of strength.

This edition of the *Ethnic Studies Review* presents a broad range of viewpoints and policies that reflect the changing ethnic and cultural patterns occurring on a global scale. Mitigation of ethnic conflict and the promotion of cultural pluralism are greatly influenced by governmental policies, political ideologies, and educational strategies that consciously seek to include and appreciate the contributions of diverse ethnic and linguistic groups. The field of ethnic studies will increasingly rely upon comparative studies and analyses to fully assess and understand the historical and socio-psychological dynamics of race and ethnicity within U.S. society and its institutions.

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