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STUDIES  
REVIEW**

**Fair Access**

**2003  
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## The National Association for Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies Review (ESR) is the journal of the National Association for Ethnic Studies (NAES). ESR is a multi-disciplinary international journal devoted to the study of ethnicity, ethnic groups and their cultures, and intergroup relations. NAES has as its basic purpose the promotion of activities and scholarship in the field of Ethnic Studies. The Association is open to any person or institution and serves as a forum for its members in promoting research, study, and curriculum as well as producing publications of interest in the field. NAES sponsors an annual spring conference.

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# ETHNIC STUDIES REVIEW

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National Association for Ethnic Studies

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Volume 26, Issue 2

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## Fair Access

General Editor: Fayette Turner

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

In its larger contexts the topic of this issue of *Ethnic Studies Review*, "Fair Access," has many referents. In 2004 we are marking the fiftieth anniversary of *Brown v Board of Education* which stated unequivocally that separate but equal systems of education did not and could not exist, and yet equal education for all our children still does not exist. Recent reports detail that in many urban areas school systems are at least as segregated as prior to the *Brown* decision, and all levels of government seem satisfied with that status quo. We watch with astonishment as over six hundred people are being detained by the United States Government without charges against them or access to lawyers at Guantanamo. We witness at the moment of Haiti's celebration of its 200th anniversary of independence not only the mysterious removal of the democratically elected President of Haiti but also the continual refusal to grant refugee status to fleeing Haitians while it is granted to Cubans almost automatically, thus creating great inequities in immigrant access. We decry the Patriots Act passed by the Congress of the United States at the instigation of the Bush Administration that whittles away at the freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution. We know that many do not have access to health care in the United States. These and other issues of fair access must be our daily concern.

Ashton Wesley Welch gets at the heart of the issue of fair access in his discussion, "Ethnic and Racial Definitions as Manifestations of American Public Policy," which concerns the formation of laws made to exclude or include. He shows that efforts that find their way into law with the purpose of excluding any given part of the citizenry are very precise so that those who are enforcing exclusion, that is denying fair access, can act with legal authority. Interestingly, those areas in civil society that are inclusive do not need close definition or precision. They are more or less unremarkable. Welch uses these categories to discuss the history of American laws on race and ethnicity.

Adrian J. Lottie and Phyllis A. Clemens Noda tackle one of the most divisive problems in the United States: the issue of Affirmative Action. Their discussion of those who attack affirmative action points to the failure to appreciate the contributions that have been brought to the country by people of color and calls for a coalition to work against these exclusions. As we know affirmative action is far from new—for examples, in the past if a student's parents graduated from a given institution, that student was (is) certain to be admitted to that institution no matter his or her scholarly achievements; moreover veterans have received bonus points on civil service examinations, a detriment to females. Affirmative Action is a vital step in promoting the diversity in education important for the health and progress of the whole society.

Joseph F. Sheley's "Centering Race- and Ethnicity-Related Issues in Social Sciences Curricula" concentrates on the issue of diversity which he calls a "truly important component of social (re)organization and change and thus a major source of social friction." Sheley sees the need for students of the social sciences to be knowledgeable about the value of diversity and



finds that schools offering masters and doctoral degrees are requiring very few courses that take up this issue. This is again a matter of fair access to provisions of our society.

In Harriet Joseph Ottenheimer's "From Cousin Joe to the Comoros: Orthography and the Politics of Choice in Africa and African America" beautiful and interesting experiments in accessibility are presented. Ottenheimer in working on a study of blues singing in New Orleans became acquainted with a singer known as Cousin Joe. The two developed a teacher-student relationship and a friendship and worked out an exchange that gave both access to their individual objectives: hers to understand the blues; his to write an autobiography.

Ottenheimer's second adventure came from fieldwork done with her husband in the Comoro Islands off the Indian Ocean coast of Africa. Here, finding that they could not communicate with the native peoples either in French or Swahili as they had envisioned, she developed a Shinzwani-English dictionary arrived at through working with the inhabitants, much as she had worked with Cousin Joe. All parties again gained accessibility to knowledge and expertise that had previously been outside of their possibilities.

In a different vein Celeste Fisher and Carole Wiebe discuss in "Race, Sex, and Redemption in *Monster's Ball*" the opportunities or lack thereof of honest and successful interracial sexual relationships being portrayed in film. They demonstrate how too often scripts having to do with interracial couple end up showing how the white person is relieved of bigotry and racism through the good offices of the black person. The authors explore the question of what, in this kind of situation, is left for the black person. It turns out that the expectations of that person have to be minimal. Again it is a matter of accessibility.

As this issue of Ethnic Studies Review goes to press we are witnessing the continuing denial of equal rights and fair access for same sex couples. While the Civil Rights Movement should have expanded far enough at this point to make this a non-issue, there are some who would like to keep the movement at a standstill so that peoples' energies cannot be spared for other urgent matters. The issues of fair access demand our perpetual vigilance. As Walt Whitman put it, "If they are not yours as much as mine, they are nothing, or next to nothing."

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Correction: ESR 2002 Volume 25 Issue 2, "Immigration: A Special Issue," p. 48, line 2 of Pegge Vissicaro's and Danielle Cousins Godfrey's article, "Immigration and Refugees: Dance Community as Healing among East Central Africans in Phoenix, Arizona" should read "That approach defines an etic view..."

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# **ETHNIC AND RACIAL DEFINITIONS AS MANIFESTATIONS OF AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY**

**Ashton Wesley Welch  
Creighton University**

Official definitions of race and ethnicity in American law reveal a great deal about public policy in an environment of ethnic pluralism. Despite some ambiguity over who is black or Hispanic or an Aleut, relatively few people fall between the wide cracks in the American patchwork of identity classifications. Those cracks, however, tell us a great deal about the ambivalence of the American polity toward ethnicity.<sup>1</sup>

Laws, regulation, guidelines, and judicial opinions are social artifacts that provide evidence about how a society deals with certain perceived problems. Laws are designed to serve social purposes and change as the purposes change; the specific form they may take reflects a need for congruence between laws as instruments of policy and the purposes of policy. A survey of laws on race and ethnicity suggests three different policy aims: (1) laws mandating separation and disparate treatment, (2) laws prohibiting disparate treatment, and (3) laws encouraging aggregate changes in ethnic representation. Each purpose has had a

corresponding form of definition. If the purpose of a law is to mandate diverse treatment of individuals based on race or ethnicity, the law must be quite precise about who falls into which category, because an administrator is expected to make clear distinctions in individual cases. Hence, it is not surprising that laws on race became more precise following the abolition of slavery, especially as segregation hardened in the post-Reconstruction South, and that segregation laws contained quite precise definitions. On the other hand if a law is intended to *prevent* differential treatment, there is much less need for specifying who is what; in fact, legislators are likely to be very uncomfortable about definitions. Finally, when laws are intended to mandate aggregate changes in ethnic composition in social institutions—employment, education, or political participation, for example—there is a need for workable generalizations upon which aggregate data can be collected, but not a need for accurate determination in each individual case. Hence, loose definitions that work more or less well (Hispanic surnames, for example) may be all that is considered necessary to achieve the overall goal, in spite of their under- and over-inclusiveness in individual cases.

These three models reflect, roughly, the historical development of American laws on race and ethnicity, but the correspondence is punctuated with transitions and inconsistencies. Our interest is in the policy implications of each model, rather than in trying to impose or infer a strict sequential order. But public policy is not a “seamless web” or a rational ordering of rules. Just as the American polity and decision-making process is fragmented, disorderly policy results reflect the inconsistent aims of competing communities. The current peculiar mixture of elaborate guidelines and awkward definitions reflects the society’s ambivalence between non-discrimination (color-blind) and affirmative action (color-conscious) policy goals. Indeed, it is the simultaneous existence of the second and third models which makes the contemporary American approach to race and ethnicity so complex.

Furthermore, a close look at ethnic policy reveals the importance of “who is what,” but also of “which groups counts.” Why do African Americans and Hispanics count as minorities for purposes of the 1965 Voting Rights Law but not Hasidic Jews? Why

are there affirmative action programs for Asians and Hispanics but not for Arabs and Irish? Obviously it is a matter of perceived needs and priorities. There is absolutely no logic in dividing America's population into White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian, as though the terms were exclusive and comprehensive; the distinction is purely a matter of convenience. For some purposes, a simple separation may be all that is necessary—"white" and "nonwhite." For other purposes we separate out the so-called "white-ethnics" and count Southern and Eastern Europeans as minorities. At some times Asians are classified together; in World War II, it became crucial to distinguish Japanese from all other Asians. In some parts of the country "Hispanic" means Mexican-American, in other parts Cuban or Puerto Rican, and in other parts there are too few to make a difference. In most of the United States, "black" will do to delineate African Americans from Whites; in parts of the East coast, it can be useful to distinguish "native" Blacks from West Indian Blacks. In most of the states, Alaskan natives are just that; in Alaska public policy purposes can require more precise categories. A similar paradigm can be posited for Hawaii between Hawaiians and Native Hawaiians. In short for public policy purposes ethnicity is politically defined, and ethnological precision simply does not matter. Words, like tools, reflect the needs of the people who use them; where all we need is a meat axe, we are not likely to find surgical scalpels.

## II

By far the most extensive use of race and ethnicity in American law has been to enforce racial separation and to perpetuate a complex social hierarchy. Such laws seem to serve two closely related purposes. Some are intended to ensure separation—anti-miscegenation laws are the most obvious; in addition, laws requiring racial segregation in schools, facilities of transportation and accommodation are of this type. Second, laws may be aimed at preserving the inferior status of minorities by mandating, inferior treatment—for example, laws requiring certain acts of social deference by Blacks towards Whites, laws preventing Blacks from attending certain schools and universities, voting, serving on juries or entering certain professions, or laws

prohibiting Asians from owning land served this purpose. Given the pre-eminence of race in the American experience, the great bulk of both kinds of law deal with the relationship between whites and nonwhites.

Laws stipulating the proper relationship between the races were adopted very early in the colonial period. These formative policies reflect a quite unself-conscious belief in white superiority and an acceptance of hierarchy as part of the nature of things. The early status of Africans was ambiguous; most arrived as slaves, but African slavery was not recognized as a legal institution until around 1640. The first such laws, therefore, were concerned with regulating the social status of blacks and creating the institutions of slavery. By the first years of the eighteenth century, extensive codes regulated occupation, residence, and marriage. The Revolution did not create any dramatic change in this kind of law, except that they became more elaborate as the practice of slavery became institutionalized in Southern and border states. As slavery was abolished in the North it was replaced by segregation laws. Reconstruction changes were extremely short-lived. The most extensive use of racial definitions in American law is a post-Reconstruction phenomenon, beginning with the Black Codes and elaborated more extensively in a half century of Jim Crow laws, which persisted well past the midpoint of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Seemingly ignorant of the expanding process of *mestizaje* much less of the mixing of Africans and Europeans already rooted in Spanish America, at the beginning of their settlements in America the English did not foresee any need to define race; it seemed too obvious to need definition. Africans begot Africans in the New World as in the old in the same way that English begot English in both worlds, and racial distinctions were seen as an unambiguous part of the order of nature, but the occurrence of unions between Blacks and Whites in British America created a need for racial definitions. The first response was the adoption of anti-miscegenation laws; they were already on the books in Maryland and Virginia by the 1660s. The majority of the colonies enacted statutes designed to outlaw not only marriage, but also any sexual relations between Whites and others. Allowing for variation from colony to colony, such statutes also provided for



punishing ministers who conducted interracial marriage ceremonies, enslavement or banishment of white women who entered proscribed marriages, payment of double fines by those who engaged in interracial fornication, and placement of the offspring of interracial sex into the slave status of the mother if the mother was black and into enslavement if the mother was white. In general the penalty was far more severe on the black partner than on the white one, and, needless to say, extra-legal enforcement was far more Draconian than anything found in the code-books.<sup>2</sup>

Laws were powerless in the face of human nature. Interracial unions continued to occur and thus forced Euro-Americans to reconsider their understanding of race. According to a chronicler of the colonial period, Virginia was “swarming with mulattoes.” What had seemed simple and unambiguous became clouded by gradations and complexities. The response to this complexity displayed two contradictory impulses, a simultaneous desire both to recognize and to deny these ambiguities. On the one hand almost every state wrote into its laws some official definition of the gradations of race; on the other hand the same laws obliterated any significance of those gradations by collapsing the categories back to “white” and “nonwhite.” The gradations ranged from the use of the term mulatto to define persons of black and white parentage to the more elaborate Louisiana code that delineated degrees of whiteness through seven previous generations.<sup>3</sup>

Fluctuations in the U.S. Census racial classifications are especially instructive. They remind us that the definition of who was black has been determined from the beginning by Whites. Even though the colonies had legislated degrees of blackness and Whites and Blacks had been identified in every census, beginning with the first one in 1790, it was only in 1850 with the Seventh Census, that the Bureau of the Census made a distinction between mulattoes and Blacks. The 1850 Census classified the population as white, black, or mulatto, although there were no instructions for defining “mulatto.” In contrast to the modern census a person did not identify his or her category; rather it was left to the enumerator to determine. In the 1870 and 1880 censuses mulattoes were officially defined to include

“quadroons, octoroons, and persons having any perceptible trace of African blood.” The interest in specificity reached its height in the 1890 Census. The enumerators were instructed:

Be particularly careful to distinguish between blacks, mulattoes, quadroons, and octoroons. The word ‘black’ should be used to describe those persons who have three-fourths or more black blood; ‘mulatto,’ those persons who have three-eighths to five-eighths black blood; ‘quadroon,’ those persons who have one-fourth black blood; ‘octoroons,’ those persons have one-eighth or any trace of black blood.<sup>4</sup>

It is not at all clear how enumerators were expected to gather this information, and its useless complexity was abandoned after 1900 in favor of the simplified classifications, “black” and “mulatto.” The mulatto category was dropped in 1920, and from that year forward anyone with any perceptible Black African ancestry was simply defined as Negro. These determinations were made by census enumerators until the 1960 census, which then rested the determination with the head of household responsible for filling out the census form.<sup>5</sup>

These examples demonstrate an inconsistency of racial policy within the first model. States were making quite explicit and elaborate racial distinctions and then negating them by treating persons of all gradations as black. North Carolina, for example, carefully defined mulattoes as persons with one-sixteenth Negro ancestry and then proceeded to classify mulattoes as Negroes for the purposes of its law.<sup>6</sup> Louisiana is quite instructive. Recall the detailed provisions in the state’s law. Also recall that *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the case in which the Supreme Court gave constitutionality to the doctrine of separate but equal, involved a Louisiana law which required racially separate railroad accommodations, and that Homer Plessy’s challenge was based in part on his objection to Louisiana’s classifying him as black since he was seven-eighths white.<sup>7</sup> Clearly the elaborate distinction of Louisiana’s laws served no ascertainable purpose.

The general pattern of these laws is quite clear. The real interest was not in determining who was black but who was not white. What emerged was an algorithm for distinguishing Whites and nonwhites. The Alabama code is typical: “. . . the

## Welch—Definitions

word “negro” includes mulatto. The word “mulatto” or term “person of color” means a person of mixed blood descended on the part of the father or mother from negro ancestors, without reference to or limit of time or number of generations.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the clearest attempt to make a simple distinction between white and nonwhite is found in the Georgia code, which provides that

All Negroes, mulattoes, mestizoes, and their descendants, having any ascertainable trace of either Negro or African, West Indian, or Asiatic blood in their veins, and all descendants of any person having either Negro or African, West Indian, or Asiatic Indian blood in his or her veins shall be known in this state as persons of color.

and

The term ‘white person’ shall include only persons of the white or Caucasian race, who have no ascertainable trace of either Negro, African, West Indian, Asiatic Indian, Mongolian, Japanese, or Chinese blood in their veins. No person, any of whose ancestors [was] . . . a colored person or person of color, shall be deemed to be a white person.<sup>9</sup>

Since “Chinese, Japanese, Mongolians . . .” were not white, it is no surprise to find the Supreme Court upholding local decisions to assign a Chinese student to a Negro school.<sup>10</sup> The “white” classification remained always the most exclusive.

Above all the attempt to be precise reflects the needs of a society that classifies people according to race. Laws that required separation and disparate treatment were intended to be applied to individuals in specific instances. Segregation laws provide an excellent example. If railroad conductors were to know whom to assign to which railroad cars, they needed fairly precise guidelines for knowing whom to seat where. Indeed a mistake was a cause for collecting damages.<sup>11</sup> If laws were to prevent Blacks or Asians from attending white schools, serving on juries, holding certain federal jobs, patronizing places of public accommodation, or regulating issues of family and criminal law, then officials needed guidelines that could be applied in individual cases. Mathematical or scientific certainty of degrees

of race was not only necessity but it was presumed to be possible. By virtue of judicial pronouncement, a litigant could enter a courtroom as a black person and leave as a mulatto or white person. For example in *Jones v. Commonwealth*, Isaac Jones successfully appealed his sentence of almost three years for marrying a white woman contrary to “the peace and dignity” of the Commonwealth of Virginia whose law forbade marriage between “Negroes” and Whites and defined a Negro as a person with “one-fourth or more negro blood.” Mr. Jones asserted that he had less than one-quarter black blood. Although the court found that Jones was a “mulatto of brown skin” and that his mother was a “yellow woman,” it found that the Commonwealth was unable to establish the “*quantum* of negro blood in his veins.” The precept, “anyone who is not white is colored,” although imperfect, did minimize ambiguity.

Clearly, most of the laws precisely defining race are artifacts of the segregation era. But since law is not a “seamless web,” we find vestiges of these kinds of definition in an era when their policy function is far from obvious. Two decades ago, a dispute arose over Louisiana’s law requiring anyone of more than 1/32 African descent to be classified as black. Louisiana’s 1/32 law is of relatively recent vintage; until 1971 the law had relied on “common repute” for racial classifications; the return to the older form was intended to eliminate racial classifications by gossip and inference. In September of 1982 Mrs. Susie Guillory Phipps, having discovered that her birth certificate classified her as Colored, petitioned to have her classification changed to White, to reflect “her true status as a Caucasian.” The state objected and produced an eleven-generation genealogy tracing Mrs. Phipps’s ancestry back to an early eighteenth-century black slave and a white plantation owner. Mrs. Phipps’s argument centered on the inappropriateness of applying racial designations to individuals accurately and the impossibility of determining racial ancestry precisely to meet judicial standards of evidence. In this curious case and the anachronistic issue it represents the U.S. Supreme Court sided with Louisiana.<sup>12</sup>

Although the black/white distinction has been most pervasive, clearly Blacks have not been the only nonwhites. The definition of Asian-Americans has a history of its own, centering

largely on naturalization and immigration challenges. The Naturalization Act of 1790 provided that only free white persons could become citizens, and in spite of numerous changes over the years, including providing for the naturalization of persons of “African nativity,” Asians continued to be ineligible for citizenship until the Second World War. In the late nineteenth century both Chinese and Japanese did enter the country, but they could not be naturalized to be citizens unless they were “white.” Asians sought naturalization under the existing standards, but always as Whites. For example, in 1878 Chinese were denied citizenship because “a native of China, of the Mongolian race, is not a white person.” Then in 1922 a legally resident Japanese petitioned for naturalization, arguing that he met the color requirement. Associate Justice George Sutherland, speaking for the Supreme Court, explained that “white” did not refer to color but to membership in the Caucasian race. A few months later in the case of a “Hindu” appealing the denial of his petition for citizenship, again speaking for the Court, the same Justice Sutherland was unimpressed by the fact that Indians are Caucasians; “white,” he declared, refers to color, not to race. Thus within the space of one year the Court had ruled both that “white” meant the Caucasian race and not color and that it meant color and not the Caucasian race. In both cases the Asian petitioners were denied citizenship with a naturalized immigrant from England writing the majority decision.<sup>13</sup>

Judges even ventured to involve themselves in the question of proportion of nonwhite “blood” which might render one ineligible for citizenship. In 1934 Justice Benjamin Cardozo, speaking for a unanimous Court, offered the following dictum regarding non-Caucasians:

Nor is the range of the exclusion limited to persons of the full blood. The privilege of naturalization is denied to all who are not white (unless the applicants are of African nativity or African descent); and men are not white if the strain of colored blood in them is a half or a quarter, or, not improbably, even less, the governing test always being that of common understanding.

Twenty five years earlier, another federal judge had ruled that a “person, one-half white and one-half of some other race, belongs

to neither of those races, but is literally a half-breed.”<sup>14</sup>

Following the rulings that Asians were racially ineligible to become American citizens, Congress in 1924 prohibited the immigration of “persons ineligible for citizenship.” The Chinese had been denied entry previously by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and Japanese immigration had been severely limited by the Gentlemen’s Agreement with Japan in 1907. Furthermore those Asians already resident in the country were subjected to segregation in schools, hospitals, and housing and to exclusion from the mainstream of employment and public affairs. The removal of some 250,000 Mexican-Americans and perhaps an equal number of Mexicans to Mexico during the Depression and the internment and relocation of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War exemplified this kind of policy. Even when explicit racial classifications were all but removed from the law in the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952, immigration quotas accomplished the same result by severely restricting the number of nonwhites allowed to enter the country.

To many Americans Southern and Eastern Europeans were nonwhites. The great waves of immigration during the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century created a patchwork of ethnic minorities and complex patterns of ethnic discrimination; however, except for immigration matters such discrimination did not become embodied in official policy. Distinguishing the various kinds of “white ethnics” in a legal code would have been infinitely complex and politically disastrous; moreover, it was unnecessary. Ethnic separation and disparate treatment could thrive quite well as the unofficial practice of both public and private institutions.

The characterization of the Hispanic population has shifted from nationality to race to ethnic group. In 1821 when Mexico won its independence from Spain, Americans did not consider Mexicans to be a separate race; they were white, and until 1930 the U.S. Census Bureau’s interest in Mexican-Americans, as in most immigrants, was in counting the foreign-born population. The classification “Mexican” was used to designate only those persons born in Mexico or their children. In 1930, however, the Census Bureau placed the term, “Mexican,” under the general rubric “other races,” which also included Native Americans,

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Negroes, and Asians. In one stroke Mexicans became another race, hence nonwhites. This was the first time that a nationality was formally recognized as a race. In addition census enumerators were instructed to classify as Mexicans all persons of Mexican ancestry regardless of number of generations in the United States. This designation evinced unfavorable reaction from the government of Mexico as well as the U.S. State Department, and was replaced in 1940 by a classification based upon the Spanish language –whether Spanish was the mother tongue or not. Hispanics thus became a linguistic minority. Coding instructions of the 1940 Census directed that “Mexicans were to be listed as White, unless they were definitely Indian or some other race than White.” In 1950 the Spanish surname definition was introduced, and at the same time, such people were now classified among Whites –“white persons of Spanish surname.” Mexicans were now white ethnics. Other Latinos also became Whites consistent with the 1960 Census which provided that “Puerto Ricans, Mexicans or other persons of Latin descent [were] to be classified as ‘White’ unless they were definitely Negro, Indian, or some other race.” The reclassification was significant for some groups: for example, during the Second World War the U.S. military classified Puerto Ricans as another race, which translated to mean they were not white. Under that policy, the U.S. Army had placed Puerto Ricans in segregated facilities, even on the island, and the U.S. Navy refused to accept any of them into its ranks.

In the meantime states also struggled with categorizing Latinos. For example, guided by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* which held that approximately one-fifth of Mexicans were Whites, approximately two-fifths were Indians, and the balance had African, Chinese and Japanese heritage, an Indiana appellate court ruled, in *Inland Steel Co, v. Barcena*, that a Mexican was not necessarily white. In contrast, *Independent School District v. Salvatierra* (1930) and in *Hernandez v. State* (1952), Texan courts ruled that Mexicans are white.

By the middle of the twentieth century this intricate patchwork of racial and ethnic delineations and the policies they implied were long overdue for rethinking. Global events, including the horrific racial policies of Nazi Germany and

apartheid South Africa, nationalist movements in the colonial world, and ideological competition for the allegiance of the newly emergent states, as well as domestic developments led to the evolution of a new model of minority relations policy.

### III

Over a period of perhaps twenty-five years (roughly from the 1940s through the 1960s) the focus of laws on race and ethnicity changed from an intention to mandate separate and disparate treatment to the forbidding of separation and disparate treatment. Segregation laws were repealed or ruled unconstitutional; federal executive orders, administrative guidelines, and statutes were enacted to forbid discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Private employers, schools, and other institutions erased racial identifications from their records, often replacing them with covert codified substitutions. Race and ethnicity became taboo subjects: one was no longer Mexican, but a "person of Spanish descent," no longer a Jew, but a "person of the Hebrew persuasion." Many felt uncomfortable with Negro; "black" or Afro-American or African American became preferable. In the same way, "Native American" rose as an alternative to Indian. Clearly consciousness of race and ethnicity had not diminished; on the contrary it was probably enhanced by the "civil rights" movement.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act is the most important national policy statement of this type. Title II forbids discrimination in places of public accommodation on the basis of race, color, national origin, or religion; Title VI does the same thing for employment, adding sex as a prohibited classification. Religion is briefly defined in the Act, but not one word indicates what race, color, or national origin mean. We suggest two explanations for this silence –both plausible and both probably accurate. First, the silence indicates, as already suggested, a real discomfort with these classifications in an era in which the thrust is to get away from classifying. More significantly it is not particularly important to define race and ethnicity precisely in a law which forbids discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity. If restaurant owners are forbidden to refuse service on the basis of race, it is not important that they know who is or who is not black. Nor



need law enforcement officials know.

A statute, of course, is only a general policy statement; for its details and its applications, we need to consult judicial interpretations and the guidelines of agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Office of Management and the Budget (OMB). As expected, race is virtually undefined. EEOC guidelines on race indicate only that “An employee may be included in the group to which he or she appears to belong, identifies with, or is regarded by the community as belonging.”<sup>15</sup> The term “national origin,” however, did seem to raise some provocative definitional issues. Simply prohibiting discrimination on the basis of national origin failed to give adequate direction to employers. To begin with the words do not mean exactly what they say. “National origin” does not mean the individual’s own national origin; it refers to the national origin of his ancestors—roughly, to his ethnicity.<sup>16</sup> This ambiguity engendered considerable litigation because (despite the words of the law) it is quite permissible to exclude foreign-born non-citizens from numerous kinds of employment opportunities,<sup>17</sup> as some members of the military discovered as recently as during the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

It took a number of years to develop an understanding of “national origin” discrimination, and numerous questions remain unanswered. The EEOC does not provide a clear definition of “national origin,” but an unissued version of a guideline draft suggests the following:

Discrimination based on national origin shall be defined broadly to mean: (1) Discrimination based on the country from where an individual or his forebears came; (2) Discrimination against an individual who possesses the cultural or linguistic characteristics common to an ethnic or national group.<sup>18</sup>

The elements of “cultural and linguistic characteristics” necessitated further distinctions. EEOC guidelines were elaborated by rules prohibiting the following practices:

(1) Denial of equal opportunity to persons married to or associated with persons of a specific national origin; (2) Denial of equal opportunity because of membership in lawful organizations identified with or seeking to pro-

mote the interests of national groups; (3) Denial of equal opportunity because attendance at schools or churches commonly utilized by persons of a given national origin; (4) Denial of equal opportunity because one's name or that of one's spouse reflects a certain national origin.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore English language requirements, and height and weight requirements, if not job-related, may unlawfully discriminate against national minorities. Neither may an employer use appearance as a reason for refusing employment if appearance is associated with a particular national group. Nor may ethnic harassment (ethnic jokes and slurs, for example) be permitted to create a hostile work environment for a minority employee.

All of these guidelines are phrased as "Thou Shalt Not"; they attempt to tell employers what they may not do. Behind this form is a particular view of discrimination. It reflects a belief that discrimination is a discrete, individual, act which can be prohibited as simply as any other crime. Once these disagreeable practices were eliminated the remaining condition would be one of equal opportunity. This notion reflects a "melting pot" view of the American dream, in which race and ethnicity were to become irrelevant to individual achievement. Defining ethnicity was unimportant—even repugnant—because ethnic distinctions should be unimportant. This was a compelling vision; for many, it remains so. As a guideline for public policy, however, it did not work.

Discrimination turned out to be not a discrete act, but a systemic process. Racial and ethnic classifications could be obliterated from the record, and their effects remain untouched. Countless other characteristics—wealth, residency, educational attainment, English language proficiency, for example—could easily stand in the place of race or ethnicity, and produce the same exclusions. As early as the mid-1960s observers began to realize that we might need racially or ethnically conscious solutions to racial and ethnic problems. In the words of Associate Justice Harry Blackmun, "In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently. We cannot—we dare not—let the Equal Protection Clause perpetuate

racial supremacy.” Consequently, as the policies changed, so did the ways of defining race and ethnicity.<sup>20</sup>

#### **IV**

Since discrimination is systemic, it needs systemic solutions. Above all solutions required not only individual prohibitions but policies aimed at affecting the opportunities of minorities in the aggregate. This development can be observed most clearly in the employment and political policies, because both affect large numbers of people, and because they have produced detailed and profuse guidelines, regulations, and judicial decisions.

The simple kind of discrimination—the individual, intentional act which the 1964 Civil Rights Act sought to prohibit—turned out to be very difficult to prove. The complainant assumes the burden of proving that the employer intended to discriminate. A clever employer with any sophistication can obscure such intent by adopting apparently neutral criteria which have a racially or ethnically disproportionate impact. Hence, to combat discrimination in practice, it becomes important to focus not on intent, but on the impact of an employment practice. Employment criteria (tests, educational attainment, English language, for example) which adversely and disproportionately affect ethnic minorities are considered “inherently suspect”; their use shifts the burden of proof from the complainant to the employer, making the employer responsible for defending the validity of his criteria by demonstrating their relevance to actual job performance.<sup>21</sup>

Not only in employment but also in voting, education, and other areas, policy developments reflect a shift in emphasis from the individual act of intentional discrimination to a focus on the aggregate effect of a practice and the designing of aggregate solutions. The 1965 Voting Rights Act, as amended, was adopted explicitly because earlier attempts to remedy discrimination through individual challenges had proven unsuccessful. Voting discrimination against minorities, ranging from ingenious legal subterfuges to physical harassment, had long been an intrinsic element of the political process in many areas. The Act outlawed the devices that had been designed to exclude minorities from the franchise (poll taxes and literacy tests, for example). More important, it provided that where voter registration was below

fifty percent, and where such devices had been used, the low registration would be presumed to have resulted from intentional acts, and would thus trigger special scrutiny of any changes in electoral procedures by the Justice Department.<sup>22</sup> As with federal employment guidelines the triggering mechanism is disproportionate impact on minorities, and the goal is to produce aggregate results. From aggregate remedies it is only a small step to aggregate programs such as affirmative action, which mandate that some preference be given to minority candidates in order to enhance the aggregate representation of these groups in the workplace, school, or voting district.

This change in policy raises some fascinating issues. In order to show disproportionate impact, one must be able to collect some comparative data about the proportions of minority members in the challenged institution and in the population as a whole. Thus it becomes important again to have definitions of race and ethnicity. Furthermore, the kinds of definitions needed are different from those required previously. One no longer needs individually precise algorithms but workable heuristics for collecting aggregate data. Who can claim minority status now becomes crucial. Politically it becomes extremely significant who counts as "white" and who counts as a minority and how the minorities are grouped together. In the end pursuing a technical question like definitions of race and ethnicity leads to some of the fundamental issues of American pluralism.

The ability to make a negative impact claim depends upon the availability of ethnic data. Hence, which groups are included in which categories and how the groups are defined become politically important. Race remains the most crucial. Whereas previous definitions of race sought some kind of objective criterion, contemporary models rely much more heavily on self- or community-identification. The Census Bureau prefers self-identification, augmented by some simple guidelines in case of ambiguity:

The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by respondents; it does not denote any clear-cut scientific definition of biological stock. Since the 1980 census obtained information on race through self-identification, the data represent self-

classification by people according to the race with which they identify. For persons who could not provide a single response to the race question, the race of the person's mother was used; however, if a single response could not be provided for the person's mother, the first race reported by the person was used. This is a modification of the 1970 census procedure, in which the race of a person's father was used. . . .

The category 'Black' includes persons who indicated their race as Black or Negro, as well as persons who did not classify themselves in one of the specific race categories listed on the questionnaire, but reported entries such as Jamaican, Black Puerto Rican, West Indian, Haitian, or Nigerian.<sup>23</sup>

The most detailed definitions available on race and ethnicity are those used in Federal Contract Compliance, which requires employers to maintain records on the race and ethnicity of job applicants. "The Glossary of Terms" in the compliance manual includes the following definitions:

American Indian or Alaskan Native –A person with origins in any of the original peoples of North America who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Asian or Pacific Islander –A person with origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian sub-continent, or the Pacific Islands. This includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Republic, and Samoa.

Black, not Hispanic origin –A person with origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa who is also not of Hispanic origin.

Hispanic –A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South American, or Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

White, not of Hispanic origin –A person with origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East who are not of Hispanic origin.<sup>24</sup>

Behind these definitions lies a subtle theory of ethnicity as a geographic phenomenon. Each definition is phrased in terms of the

geographic origins of the person's ancestors. The notion that an individual has "origins" other than his or her place of birth appears vague if not mystical. Moreover it seems unsatisfying to conceive of ethnicity only in terms of the national roots of one's ancestors. Some groups—Irish-Americans, or Mexican-Americans—may indeed think of their ethnicity as related to the country of their ancestors' origin; however, such a conceptualization gives great consternation to ethnically conscious Jews of diverse geographical "origins." Secondly, it seems to misconceive the essential phenomenon of black ethnicity. "Origins in Africa" are probably not at the heart of the subjective experience of black ethnicity as much as perceptions of a shared history in America and obvious distinguishing characteristics such as color.

Furthermore the obvious vagueness of these definitions is extremely instructive. It is quite easy for persons of mixed ancestry to fall through the cracks in the definition, the creation of the Biracial category in the 2000 Census and in a number of recently enacted state laws notwithstanding. For example how does one classify a person of mixed Asian and European parentage? The answer is that it does not really matter. Since these guidelines are used for collecting aggregate data and the making of aggregate policy, no treatment of any individual should depend on whether he or she is classified Asian or White. Occasionally, there may be infuriating injustices, such as intentional misclassifications in order to take advantage of minority-sensitive programs. But the point of these guidelines is really not to assure individually equal treatment (that goal is still handled under the non-discrimination model) but to promote general changes in minority representation.

One is reminded of Aristotle's admonition not to demand more precision than the subject requires. Race, biologists suggest, is purely a statistical concept which makes no sense as applied to individuals. Group definitions therefore become the only kind possible. Hence the search for individually applicable definitions would be futile. Ethnicity also refers to the shared attributes of groups and thus characterizes individuals only in their group relations.

If one is going to challenge and to change practices based on their impact on minorities, comparative data must be avail-

able. But data is collected about some groups and not others, and the way that the human population is classified is as politically significant as it is arbitrary. Certainly no anthropologist could justify treating Hispanic as parallel with Black, White, and Asian. The point is that Hispanics are listed separately because they have a unique position in the American experience, and thus are regarded as minorities. We can understand the importance of this inclusion by observing its political significance in a concrete instance. In 1973 the city of Denver was accused of segregating its public schools. Whether the charge could be substantiated depended upon whether Hispanic students were counted as white or nonwhite for the purpose of school assignment. If Hispanic students were counted as white, the school district did not appear to be segregated, but if they were considered minorities (along with blacks), the system appeared quite segregated. The Supreme Court's handling of this issue gives an idea of its policy significance.

[A] word must be said about the District Court's method of defining a 'segregated' school. Denver is a tri-ethnic, as distinguished from a biracial community. The overall racial and ethnic composition of the Denver public schools is 66% Anglo, 14% Negro, and 20% Hispano. The District court in assessing the question of de jure segregation in the core city schools, preliminarily resolved that Negroes and Hispanos should not be placed in the same category to establish the segregated character of the school . . . . Later, in determining the schools that were likely to produce an inferior educational opportunity, the court concluded that a school would be considered inferior only if it had a "concentration of either Negro or Hispano students in the general area of 70 to 75% . . . .

We conclude . . . that the District court erred in separating Negroes and Hispanos for purposes of defining a 'segregated school.' We have held that Hispanos constitute an identifiable class for purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment. But there is also much evidence that in the Southwest Hispanos and Negroes have a great many things in common . . . . [T]hough of

different origins, Negroes and Hispanos in Denver suffer identical discrimination in treatment when compared with treatment afforded Anglo students. In that circumstance, we think petitioners are entitled to have schools with a combined predominance of Negroes and Hispanos included in the category of 'segregated' schools.<sup>25</sup>

Not only who is a minority but also who is not a minority is significant. Since "minorities," for all practical purposes, are limited to blacks, Asians, and Hispanics, it is virtually impossible for so-called "white ethnics" to make adverse impact claims. Because separate figures are not kept for Poles, Italians, Jews, Arabs, etc., they lack the comparative data to show that they have been disproportionately excluded from employment or other opportunities. Joseph Alegretti, an ethicist and labor law specialist, writes:

[D]isparate impact requires statistical proof of the effect of the effect of an employment practice on the plaintiff's group in comparison to other groups. Compiling the needed statistics is not a problem for black or female or Spanish-surnamed plaintiffs. However, the absence of necessary statistical information presents a nearly insurmountable barrier to a person of Polish, Irish, or Russian ancestry who wishes to bring a disparate impact case. The reason for the dearth of information is simple: no governmental agency requires employers to compile data on the national origin of employees. The EEOC's reporting forms such as the EEO-1 limit their categorization to five groups: black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, and white. Persons of European or North American origin are classified as white. The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedure of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) affirmative action guidelines . . . adopt the same classified scheme.

Likewise, the 1970 census included questions on race and Spanish origin, but the only question concerning other ethnic groups was one that asked the country of origin of one's parents. Thus the Census



Bureau does not compile the ethnic identity statistical information that is necessary to bring a disparate impact claim.<sup>26</sup>

One of the more intriguing instances of this morass was raised by an attempt under the 1965 Voting Rights Act to redraw the electoral district boundaries in New York City in order to enhance the voting strength of blacks and Puerto Ricans. To do so a predominantly Hasidic electoral district was split and its voting strength seriously eroded. The Supreme Court upheld this procedure as a legitimate effort to correct the disabilities suffered by minorities. Hasidim may be a minority, but for purposes of the Voting Rights Act they were simply “white.”<sup>27</sup>

Considerable controversy also arose over the inclusion of Asian-Americans among disadvantaged applicants in the University of California special admissions program challenged in the *Bakke* case. In spite of ethnic discrimination Asian-Americans achieved high rates of admission to professional schools even under regular admissions procedures; hence, some argued that their inclusion in the special admissions program unfairly disadvantaged other minorities.

Clearly there is no simple answer to deciding which minorities are minorities in American society. The difficulty of selecting some minorities in a pluralistic setting was quite well stated in the *Bakke* opinion by Justice Powell:

[I]t was no longer possible to peg the guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment to the struggle for equality of one racial minority. During the dormancy of the Equal Protection Clause, the United States had become a nation of minorities. Each had to struggle—and to some extent still—to overcome the prejudices not of a monolithic majority, but of a “majority” composed of various minority groups of whom it was said—perhaps unfairly in many cases—that a shared characteristic was willingness to disadvantage other groups. As a nation filled with the stock of many lands, the reach of the Clause was gradually extended to all ethnic groups seeking protection from official discrimination . . . .

The concepts of ‘majority’ and ‘minority’ necessarily reflect temporary arrangements and political judg-

ments . . . . [T]he white 'majority' is itself composed of various minority groups, most of which can lay claim to a history of prior discrimination at the hands of the state and private individuals. Not all of these groups can receive preferential treatment and corresponding judicial tolerance of distinctions drawn in terms of race and nationality, for then the only 'majority' left would be the new minority of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. There is no principled basis of deciding which groups would merit 'heightened judicial solicitude,' and which would not.<sup>28</sup>

The *Bakke* decision is profoundly ambivalent. On the one hand the Court plurality rejects the contention that any group of minorities can lay claim to permanent minority status and special solicitude at the expense of individual fairness. On the other hand the plurality recognizes that racially and ethnically sensitive programs are necessary to achieve the social diversity that a pluralist society purports to value. Both of these positions were re-enforced by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor with her decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger*.<sup>29</sup> These cases reflect much more than the Court's ambivalence, rather the dilemma of an entire society caught between two competing models of minority relations.

Current legal definitions of race and ethnicity thus reflect a profound ambivalence toward ethnic and racial classifications. Americans are caught between the model of individual justice implied by the non-discrimination model and the competing desire for a racially and ethnically just society. They deeply value the color-blind nondiscrimination model with its rejection of ethnic classifications as irrelevant and repugnant. And yet, valuing results, they recognize that a pluralistic society can only be achieved by effecting changes in the way minorities are represented in various sectors of American life. Classifying is, at best, a necessary evil. The need for aggregate solutions implies a need to classify; hence definitions are constructed. The definitions, however, are almost absurdly vague. Definitions phrased in terms of "origins in" an area reflect a discomfort with any but the most open-ended classifications. Even more indicative of this uneasiness is the insistence on self-identifications rather than the "objective" criteria of the early model (percentages of

“blood,” for example). In short, the imprecision of current definitions of race and ethnicity is entirely appropriate, reflecting as it does a pluralist society’s well-grounded discomfort with classifying and categorizing the human population.

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## THE SUPPRESSION OF DIVERSITY

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Is it a systematic strategy or a mutation of millennial fever that drives the escalating challenges to the civil rights of this nation's racial, linguistic, and national origin minorities? Increasing juridical, legislative, and popular assaults on affirmative action policies coupled with the sometimes less heralded emergence of a de facto U.S. language policy are sweeping through the states. These activities draw on a consistent repertoire of approaches from the invocation of the very language and concepts of the civil rights movement to the isolationist "buzz-words" of early twentieth century advocates of "Americanization." In an effort to legitimize their efforts this new breed of assailants has lifted the terms "equality of opportunity," "color blind," and "merit" directly from the lips of civil rights heroes of the past, retrofitting concepts that resonate from the very core of the civil rights movement into an arsenal of weapons that threaten the extinction of that movement. In that same vein opponents of bilingual education have reached further back into our history dredging up de-contextualized quotations from icons of American

history to evoke nostalgia and patriotism and to resuscitate the fear of the dissolution of national unity in the wake of the infusion of diverse languages and cultures. The introductory portion of this article treats the failure of anti-civil rights movements to acknowledge either the rich cultural legacy of people of color or the deeply engrained cultural and political limitations that this nation has imposed on their civil rights. We discuss the re-packaged language of equality and equity used by these movements and their success and attempts at success in reversing the progress of civil rights at the polls and in legislatures across the nation. We next examine the anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual movements sweeping the U.S. today, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources including data from the the 2000 U.S. Census to track current anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual/English only developments among the states to demonstrate the coexistence of these developments in those areas where people of color are concentrated.

### **Retrofitting the Language of Civil Rights**

The concepts of equality and equity adopted by the Civil Rights Movement have been recrafted by anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual education groups and individuals to highlight what they term "anomalies in policy." Pointing to the inherent inequality in affirmative action policies, opponents argue that these policies have generated unfair practices and a rejection of the hallowed vision of equal opportunity. Yet interestingly when equality issues relate to immigrants, particularly immigrants whose populations are predominately people of color, many of those invoking the hallowed language of the civil rights movement are the targeted people of color and to some extent those traditionally associated with civil rights.

This exploratory effort asserts that the invocation of civil rights and "melting pot" concepts to legitimize the anti-affirmative action and English-only offensive are in actuality camouflage for an agenda which may feature the maintenance of the white majority's economic and cultural hegemony. Utterances of such



anti-affirmative action/anti bilingual education champions as former presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan's 1996 pronouncement of "cultural war," which resurrects fear-mongering threats of racial suicide and the extinction of the Nordic element due to immigration, gets closer to the core of the agendas of many of these movements. In addition we argue that in any event the proposed public policies that purport to address inequality are at best poorly designed.

One way to shed light on these apparently covert agendas and their public policy implications is to demonstrate associations between the anti-affirmative action movements and the persisting and increasingly pervasive anti-bilingual/English only movements particularly when focused on people of color. If for example geographical, demographic, socioeconomic, racial, political, or partisan associations or patterns can link these movements, they may indicate a somewhat cynical agenda that capitalizes on America's deep-seated racial and class prejudices. In investigating three decades of initiatives and popular referenda, Gamble found substantially more success among initiatives and referenda that restricted civil rights or that could be identified as anti-civil rights than among initiatives and referenda in general. It should be noted that these successes included measures targeted at policies that affected people of color (245-269).

Reflecting on the history of race relations in the U.S., we easily can become skeptical of those who assert that they want a fair and open equal opportunity system while espousing and systematically implementing anti-affirmative action and English-Only policies. This is especially so in light of U.S. race relations history and when coupled with the apparent negative impacts these policies may have on people of color. If additionally attempts to restrict cultural practices and educational access also are focused on policies that are most likely to affect people of color, concerns arise as to whether the true motives may be some form of white majoritarian hegemony. If for example these movements tend to surface in geographic areas where there are significant numbers of people of color, they may support a "white hegemony hypothesis." Certainly the crass and empty nature of the implementation of these movements lends support to a cynical interpretation of the motives behind these move-

ments and brings into question whether or not these movements are in essence just plain old-fashioned racism in disguise.

Supporting this view is the apparent dismissal of the historical backgrounds, the rich cultural and linguistic heritage and the contributions of the affected peoples. For example one element that seems to be consistently lacking in both the anti-affirmative action movements and the anti-bilingual and/or English only movements is a lack of appreciation for or inclusion of the historical backgrounds of the affected people. These policies are undertaken without the consideration and integration of that history into the proposed policy. The language of the recently passed (200-1) initiative in the state of Washington vividly demonstrates this policy approach. It reduces the civil rights of people who have suffered centuries of discrimination to a mere thirty-seven words:

The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education or public contracting (Bronner, A12).

Additionally this language appears to presuppose that the effects and practices of history no longer exist; hence the policy will result in a "homogeneous" equality for all of society. History, current practice, and current conditions surely demonstrate the folly in using this type of simplistic but disarming approach to solving civil rights problems and ensuring true equality and equity of access to the opportunities and benefits of this nation whether on the career path or in the classroom.

## **AFRICAN AMERICANS, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

### ***African Americans and N Dimensional Racism***

Perhaps one way to understand the African American experience is to develop an appreciation for the term *N-dimensional racism* or racism in all knowable dimensions of life. By *N-dimensional racism* we mean a collection of historically observable phenomena that would be associated with the psychological, social, cultural, economic, and/or political dimensions of life. By social we mean having to do with group inter-

actions; by cultural we mean having to do with values, mores, norms, socialization patterns, folkways, practices, artifacts, arts, languages, and manners; by economic we mean having to do with the allocation of resources; by political we mean involving government or its policies. We argue that there are subsets associated with each of these dimensions and that racism can be identified and observed within each of these subsets. For example a Jim Crow law could be a specific instance of a type of racist action associated with a legislative body, which is a subset of government. The observation of the Jim Crow law then would be an example of racism in the government dimension. Additionally we argue that *N-dimensional racism* requires that in all observable dimensions and subsets of dimensions we can find historical observable evidence of racism associated with the African American experience. This phenomenon is perhaps best expressed in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* in which he describes his treatment by a white family who kept him as a ward of the court during his childhood:

...They all liked my attitude...and I soon became accepted by them as a mascot...it never dawned on them that...I was a human being..." (26-27).

This dehumanization is the result of centuries of deliberate efforts to strip African Americans of all that would make them human. Every dimension of African American life was historically and deliberately restricted in order to control African Americans and use them for profit. African Americans during slavery had "no standing in courts, they could not sue etc ... could be easily killed by whites ... could not buy or sell goods... had little or no access to education ... were constantly under surveillance ... and were sexually exploited..." (Franklin, 187-202). Advocates of anti-affirmative action policies argue that African Americans would be treated equally and have the same opportunities as their European-American counterparts. Again a brief look at history belies this assumption. During the period after the Civil War African Americans suffered from the Jim Crow syndrome in the north and across-the-board social, economic, and political inequality in the south. Writing in the 1940s Gunner

Myrdal found that African Americans occupied the lowest rung of America's caste/class ladder.... He noted that African Americans were not "fully participating citizens in the political process..." that "various schema were used to control the African American vote..." and that "economically African Americans suffered an inferior existence... [that was] substandard, second class and minimally rewarding"(61-62). A half century later at the threshold of the next millennium the legacy of these problems lingers on.

Vestiges of racism remain as obstacles to the progress of African American, to national origin language minorities, and to the success of all of Americans. African Americans still carry the stigmas and indignities associated with being African American. Many dimensions of race and racism that affect African American progress have been commented on by others such as Claude Anderson and Andrew Hacker but apparently have eluded the anti affirmative action proponents. Hacker (1992) cites housing (a physical – geographical dimension), love and romance(an emotional dimension), and crime and schooling(quality of life and survival dimensions) as having a severe negative impact on and yet a constant presence in the African American community. Anderson (1994) cites culturally defined limitations affecting African American progress such as a lack of valuable social and economic linkages which deny African Americans access to important resources and are partly the result of U.S. public policy.

Another assumption by those who espouse anti-affirmative action policies is that the institutions of society will function the same for everyone especially in this Post Civil Rights Era. For example Peter Wood, an associate provost at Boston University, writing in *National Review* against affirmative action in the latest rendition of the Adarand Constructors v. Pena case, argues that "... racial stereotypes and occasional institutional disadvantages associated with race are the throwaway stuff and yard sale clutter of the past." Wood further states that "...the problem with people of color is that they do not have a culture of ambition that would foster learning." Wood continues, "The real alternative to affirmative action is to challenge the cultural traditions that excuse, foster, and perpetuate an ethic of hostility to formal

learning" (3-4). Wood, as do many anti-affirmative action advocates, presupposes that the problems of minority achievement are the result of minorities of color themselves and that the institutions of American society are more or less bereft of barriers to mobility.

Yet some scholars have found that by studying the political system from an African American perspective, new insights as to the functioning of the political system are possible. Rogers Smith found challenges to the liberal democratic paradigm by studying the status of racial minorities (549-566). He found that when studying minorities in the traditional liberal democratic paradigm scholars and policymakers often treat race as an exception to the paradigm, an anomaly that needs correcting. He argues that racism is a part of that paradigm and that we really face multiple political traditions which is why challenges to civil rights and the liberal paradigm resurface and most likely will resurface throughout U.S. history. Likewise Lucius Barker suggests that by studying the African American experience, we can uncover "the limits of the political system" (1-13). He states that traditional approaches to politics such as electoral politics may be ineffective where African Americans are concerned. These two observers confirm Lawrence Cahone's view that to understand a system one might be well informed to "focus on the margins" (16-17), again something that appears to be lost on the proponents of color blind equal opportunity policies. The observations identified by Smith, Barker, and Cahone clearly suggest that the political system may function differently when experienced by minorities. Obviously under such conditions designing policies with a broad brush that presupposes a normal functioning of the political system potentially is fraught with hazards which ultimately may result in increased inequality between the races.

### **Equal Opportunity and Anti-Affirmative Action**

In addition to the historical burdens and failures of the political system that African Americans and other minorities face, they also are burdened and confronted with those who have power and yet make or advocate uninformed policy that necessarily negatively targets and impacts them.

The concept of equality itself is, especially in a capital-

ist free market economy, potentially quite complex and requires a great deal of analysis to understand. As discussed above, *N dimensional* racism includes the economic sphere, and in a free market context we tend to view equality in economic terms having to do with the allocation of society's resources. In fact the debate over equality usually centers on opportunities that could be construed as economic or at least opportunities that themselves could lead to economic opportunities. Job opportunities, admission to schools, and public access are typical battle grounds over issues of equality, especially where racial groups are involved.

When these conflicts occur, there is a strong tendency to view equality in simplistic terms (Lottie, 33-54 and Verba et al., 94). Viewing equality in these simplistic terms and then developing public policy initiatives based upon these views, however, constitutes an often high risk and erroneous strategy which ignores the impacts and implications associated with *N dimensional* racism. The microeconomic theoretical assumptions contained in these proposals are often ignored, and proponents often fail to take into account the richness and philosophical distinctions that are possible and relevant when examining issues of equality and in particular when dealing with people of color. They fail to consider, for example, the notions of differing means, prospects, and opportunity that are a result of *N-Dimensional* racism (Bok and Bowen, 1 and Rae et al., 64-80).

One way to begin to appreciate and understand the relevant issues when dealing with equality is to observe some basics about equality. Rae et al. offer some potential bases and typologies for examining issues associated with equality. They describe three main ways of conceiving of equality: simple subject equality that is between individuals; segmental equality in which individuals are broken into groups of two or more with equality within each group, and bloc regarding equality that is between groups. They then subdivide these into many types of equalities. Although the complexity and length of their analysis precludes a comprehensive discussion of it in this work, nevertheless some simple points in it are useful to

consider. In their discussion on equal opportunity they distinguish two types of equal opportunity: one requires that different groups have the same chances of obtaining equality; the other requires that different groups have the same means or resources to obtain equality. Although these particular distinctions clearly do not exhaust the debatable issues regarding equality, they do assist us in understanding two obvious but critical issues about equal opportunity. Different groups often do not possess the same prospects or means of obtaining equality; therefore any public policy solution addressing the problem of inequality, especially inequality between the races, that does not consider these differences runs the risk of resulting in inequality. For example prior to affirmative action the number of minorities in middle class occupations was less than one half of what it became by the late 1990s (Bok and Bowen, 10). The significance of this societal impact is not just the reality of a type of racial equality but also the "perceptions of the equality of possibilities" among racial groups (Bok and Bowen, 12). This insight alone suggests that we should not necessarily promote affirmative action as now practiced as a policy but that we should be far more careful in framing equality oriented policies and the debates surrounding them. At the very least we should consider many of the myriad components of equality and how they might inform us about actual impacts on society. The current rash of movement towards anti-affirmative action policies tends to ignore these complexities resulting in poor and uninformed public policy.

Compounding the complexity are the attitudes of Whites and African Americans about themselves, about each other, and about equality. Many Whites who are in a position to make decisions may harbor irrational ill feelings toward African Americans and other minorities. Michael Link and Robert Oldendick found that "whites who were more prejudiced had less positive views of equal opportunity or multiculturalism" than those who were less prejudiced(163-64). It goes without saying that Blacks and Whites often have differing views on the issue of equality.

When developing policies pursuant to equal opportuni-

ties and discussing the associated issues, we should not only consider equality in all of its complexity but also the views of whites and minorities about themselves and each other and about equality if the principles of informed democracy are to reign. Clearly any policy that fails to consider these attitudes, especially those of decision makers, runs the risk of falling into the traps of a multitude of moral hazards.

### **Bilingual Education:**

#### **Harboring the Enemy or Ensuring Equity of Access?**

Bilingual education, “demonized” by the proponents of English Only and Official English, was and still is an instructional delivery approach that uses the child's home language (native language, first, or dominant language) to support content area achievement and the acquisition of English. Over the years Bilingual Education evolved out of its strictly compensatory mode (English as a second language) to offer second language leaning opportunities for all children through the dual language mode. Essentially the dual language (two-way bilingual) methodology acknowledges and leverages the language competencies of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) student to accelerate the development of foreign or second language acquisition by monolingual English-speakers, conserves first language proficiency for LEP students, while promoting second language acquisition for English monolingual students, a passport to success in the global marketplace, and ensures the full development of our children's cognitive structures and functions. In this latter regard substantive research in the US, Canada, and Europe points to the enhancement that second language learning has on the child's psycho-neurological development.

Rooted in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the *Lau v Nichols* U.S. Supreme Court decision, the 1968 National Bilingual Education Act or Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was an effort to build the capacities of school districts to serve growing numbers of LEP students, evolve research-based best practice models, and prepare teachers to better serve the needs of national origin language minority schoolchildren and youth and the general education popula-



tions: a sound pedagogy, not a subversive “plot” to overturn the unity of this nation. As Title VII implementation passed through various iterations over the next thirty-three years (as amended in 1978, 1984, 1988, 1994), research accompanying the various projects and programs evidenced the power of that pedagogy to support second language acquisition and assure academic achievement for the Limited English Proficient. Title VII-sponsored and independent research demonstrated the inherent potential that bilingual education held for accelerating and enhancing the acquisition of second languages for English monolingual students. The National Clearinghouse of Bilingual Education (re-named the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition in deference to the newly-minted No Child Left Behind legislation) amassed a bibliographic database of over 20,000 citations, collections, and abstracts of materials addressing language education issues; however, bilingual education’s progress as an effective pedagogical tool has been all but halted by the 2001 No Child Left Behind reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As James Crawford explains, the very term, “bilingual,” no longer exists in the federal lexicon.

...the word “bilingual” has been expunged from the law, except in a provision that strikes the name of the federal Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA). It now becomes the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited-English-Proficient Students (OELALEAALEPS), not even a pronounceable acronym (2002).

The systematic machinations that have resulted in the near-eradication of bilingual education are clearly evident. Beginning with the late Senator Hayakawa's assault on bilingual education (1981) conservative elements presenting themselves as advocates for the best interests of the children and the preservation of our union have successfully collaborated to create a monolingual/monocultural monolith. As the years passed a systematic state-by-state adoption of English Only and Official English exacted a toll at the national level. Under the twin banners of protecting the unity of the nation and the full empowerment of

all its people through a single language, the state-by-state dismantling of bilingual education pressed forward with the passage of the Unz Amendment in California, Arizona's persistence in securing English-only, the 1995 loss of Michigan's Bilingual Education state mandate, Public Act 294, 1974 the 2002 defeat of Massachusetts' exemplary Bilingual Education Act, culminating in the singular victory of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001. James Crawford describes the demise of bilingual education that was twenty-two years in the making.

Conservative Republicans dropped an attempt to mandate English only schooling as voters have done in California (1998) and Arizona (2000). Meanwhile liberal Democrats made little effort to block the transformation of the Bilingual Education Act into the English Language Acquisition Act. Not a single member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, once a stalwart ally of Title VII, voted against the legislation. Senate Democrats exacted a price for their agreement to repeal. The impact of the increase in cost is unclear, however, given that the money will be spread more thinly than before. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, federal funds will continue to support the education of English language learners (ELLs). But the money will be spent in new ways, supporting programs likely to be quite different from those funded under Title VII. One thing is certain: the rapid teaching of English will take precedence at every turn. "Accountability" provisions, such as judging schools by the percentage of ELLs reclassified as fluent in English each year are expected to discourage the use of native-language instruction. Annual English assessments will be mandated, "measurable achievement objectives" will be established, and failure to show academic progress in English will be punished (2002).

The 2001 NCLB Title III legislation thwarts both the nation's progress and the best interests of children whether Limited English Proficient or English monolingual destroying opportunities for all children to acquire necessary second language proficiency in the most effective modality of all, Bilingual Education.

Had the advocates of English-Only/Official English momentarily suspended their hysteria to read Title VII ESEA or the *National Bilingual Education Act* more thoroughly, they would have discovered that bilingual education is a pedagogical approach, not a subversive activity and tries to ensure the successful transition of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students from special compensatory services to the mainstream instructional setting. What does this mean? LEP children who demonstrate a mean score significantly below that of their English monolingual peers (the mean ranges from 36% in Texas to 40% in Michigan) on standardized measures of English language reading achievement are eligible to receive English language development services with support in academic content areas provided in the home or native language. Why? Nearly two decades of research have demonstrated that when the combined methodology is employed, children acquire English faster and transfer alingual cognitive skills (such as decoding in reading, math processing and scientific reasoning) with greater efficiency and likelihood of future school success.

The anti-bilingual/English-Only/Official English groups' well-orchestrated and highly-endowed victories will also earn them dubious credit for promoting this "Nation at Risk" to a Nation *Imperiled*. Lacking the skills to communicate, negotiate, interpret in multiple languages, our superpower status may well be limited to military might and agricultural production. Persisting on the path of monocultural/lingual isolationism may eventually force us to acquiesce to the well-publicized recommendation of the Japanese industrialist for the United States to give up on bids to regain industrial/technological leadership and concentrate instead on becoming the world's "bread-basket" and service industries' provider, that is to remove itself from the race for supremacy in the global "micro-chip economy" and settle for first-place ranking as a "potato-chip" economy. However bleak, this portent seems to be playing itself out in the economic sector. Various anti-bilingual and English Only/Official English state mandates have already cast a pall on US-Mexico trade relations, and the continuing flirtation with cultural-linguistic isolationism is certain to halt the progress of NAFTA implementation and further trade treaties with those Spanish-speaking nations of Latin

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America. It is difficult to fathom the logic, *if any*, behind *promoting* international trade and simultaneous restrictions on the use of foreign languages.

The passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a “victory” in the halls of Congress for the anti-bilingual/English Only/Official English advocates, is the culmination of a state-by-state erosion of the rights of ethnolinguistic minorities. At this writing the following twenty-five states have adopted and/or upheld policies of Official English as constitutional amendments, statutes, initiatives, or referenda with two states’ laws, Alaska and Arizona, overturned in district courts in 1998 and 1988 respectively (<http://www.englishfirst.org/efstates.htm>, English First:

**Table I. Official English States (Data Source: English First, 2002)**

State	Action/Year	Year
Alabama	Constitutional Amendment with 90% of the vote in referendum	1990 April 21, 2001 US Supreme Court ruling reversed lower court decision blocking enforcement of law
Alaska	Initiative with 69% of vote in referendum; Overturned in district court	1998; March 27, 2002
Arizona	Constitution: 51% of referendum; Overturned in district court; Supreme Court refused to reinstate law-upheld Official English	1988 March 3, 1997
Arkansas	Statute	1987
California	Constitution; 73% in referendum	1986
Colorado	Constitution; 61% in referendum	1988
Florida	Constitution; 84% in referendum	1988
Georgia	Statute	1988
Hawaii	Constitutional Amendment	1978
Illinois	Statute	1969
Iowa	Statute	2002
Indiana	Statute	1984
Kentucky	Statute	1984
Louisiana	Statute	1811
Mississippi	Statute	1987
Missouri	Statute	1998
Montana	Statute	1995
Nebraska	Constitution	1920
New Hampshire	Statute	1995
North Carolina	Statute	1987
North Dakota	Statute	1987
Tennessee	Statute	1984
Utah	67% of vote in referendum	2000 Official English Law Upheld
Virginia	Statute	1986
Wyoming	Statute	1996

Virginia. March 27, 2002)

**Coincidence Or Conspiracy? *Examining The Relationships Between Anti-Affirmative Action Activities And The Anti-Bilingual English-Only Initiatives***

Given the parallel use of both retrofitted language and historical sources by the anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual advocacy groups, we determined to examine the field of the fifty states to discover if there was a link that had manifested itself in initiatives, legislation, referenda, or constitutional amendments.

**Description of the Methodology**

We originally began our research in 1998-99, with updates to cover the period 1999-2002 using multiple data sources, including the US Bureau of the Census population demographics and updated reports( latest 1999), the 50 State Survey of the Requirements for the Education of Language Minority Children (1998), and newspaper articles covering the period 1972-2002 to track anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual/English-Only developments. We then progressed through the following, preliminary five-step process to compile, relate, and analyze the data.

- Step 1: Compiled and organized data into a comparative state-by-state matrix;
- Step 2: Calculated the mean numbers of minority populations within each state;
- Step 3: Compared the mean populations of peoples of color in states with anti-affirmative action activities and anti-bilingual initiatives;
- Step 4: Established intersections of states with anti-affirmative action activities and anti-bilingual/English-only initiatives;
- Step 5: Calculated the numbers and percentages of states with both anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual/English-only initiatives;

We also calculated the proportion of anti-affirmative action states against all anti-bilingual policy fields, mean populations of African-Americans and Hispanics for every anti-bilingual/English-Only field, and the total numbers of states associated with every anti-bilingual and English-Only field across the

mean populations of minorities. The following narrative and accompanying tables describe the preliminary findings.

Table II shows that those states that have experienced anti-affirmative action activities contain a higher mean proportion of minorities than those states that have not experienced anti-affirmative action activities. This preliminary finding comports with studies that suggest that white populations often feel uncomfortable when minority populations reach a certain threshold. The states without anti-affirmative action activities are Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming). States with anti-affirmative action activities are: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon,

**Table II: Mean State Population Percentages of Minority Groups of Color without Anti-Affirmative Action Activities and State Population Percentages of Minority Groups With Anti-Affirmative Actions Activities**

States Without Anti-Affirmative Action Activities	States With Anti- Affirmative Action Activities
19.35%	27.50%

South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington.(acenet.edu 2002, 1-8).

Table III demonstrates that the mean populations of peoples of color (African American, Hispanic, Native American and Asian American/Pacific Islanders) in states that have experienced both anti-affirmative action and anti-bilingual activities appear to be higher than in those states that have not experienced either anti-affirmative action or anti-bilingual activities. This may imply that anti-minority policies may be advanced as the numbers of

**Table III: Mean Population Percentages of Minority Groups of Color For States with Both Anti-Affirmative Action Activities and Anti-Bilingual/English Only Policies and Without Both Anti-Affirmative Action and Anti-Bilingual/English-Only Policies**

States without Anti-Affirmative Action and Anti-Bilingual Activities and/or Policies	States with Anti-Affirmative Action and Anti Bilingual Activities and/or Policies
21.39%	31.93%

minority populations begin to become more visible or pose a "threat."

Table IV shows that large majorities of states with anti-affirmative action activities have also implemented anti-

**Table IV: Number and Percentage of States with Both Anti-Affirmative Action Activities and Anti-Bilingual/English Only Policies**

	States with Anti-Affirmative Action Activities	States with Anti- Affirmative Action Activities and English Only Policies
Number	23	12
Percentage	100%	52%

bilingual/English Only policies.

Anti-Bilingual activities and resulting policies have occupied center stage in an on-going debate as to the value and relative threat to the nation for more than thirty-four years, while affirmative action has come under organized fire only recently. As time moves forward we may see an increase in anti-affirmative

**Table V: Number of States with Anti-Minority Activities Directed at People of Color**

Number of Anti-Affirmative Action States	Number of Anti-Bilingual/or English Only States
23	27

activities and, ultimately, a state-by-state capitulation of affirmative action, as suggested by Table V.

### **Implications/Recommendations/Future Directions for Further Study**

This research team plans to refine the research design to consider the impact of partisan politics and special interest groups on what appears to be a strategic offensive against programs and policies that would support the advancement and/or entry of peoples of color into the economic mainstream of America and the global market. Additionally this research team will enlarge the scope of its study to include case studies of key states representative of the fifteen regions of the United States to discover further the tools and stratagems which may lie at the base of what may be a racist-isolationist attempt to thwart the equality and the equity of access for this nation's peoples of color.

### **Recommendations**

Although data and findings are as yet in their preliminary stages, strong indicators point to the urgent need for the development of coalitions across racial-ethnic lines from the grassroots to the national levels. We believe that a strong coalition of peoples of color can re-capture and strengthen those threatened rights to equality and equity. We recognize that although our findings and analyses by no means exhaust the issues in the debates over equality, they may serve to enrich the debates and provide some insight that may be applied by those who seek a just society.

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## **CENTERING RACE AND ETHNICITY-RELATED ISSUES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES CURRICULA**

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A 2002 review of the course requirements and electives of Economics, History, Political Science, and Sociology programs in thirty randomly selected state and private, “doctoral-level” and “masters-level” institutions produced 201 courses relating to the study of race-and ethnic-related issues. Only two courses (History offerings on a single campus) were *required* for completion of a major. While some departments offered “concentrations” with mandated content, the concentrations themselves were elective. Diversity in America today is a *truly important component of social (re)organization and change and, thus, a major source of social friction*. Why is it, then, that students, those majoring in the social sciences in particular, are able, by uninformed or informed choice, to complete a degree with but cursory attention to the topic? This essay addresses the reasons for relegation of diversity-related issues to option-

al status and argues that the situation can and should be reversed.

It is difficult to understate the significance of race and ethnicity in contemporary American society. To open the newspaper each day is to wrestle with diversity-related variables, in terms of both causes and effects, as among the more powerful and enduring social forces of our time. National and state trends and policy decisions are experienced in a variety of ways at the community level and, in turn, shape those same trends and policies. Consider the following examples of persistence of race- and ethnicity-related social patterns that have been the subject of recent media attention:

- Race and ethnicity remain linked to health, education, occupation, residence, and even criminal justice choices, chances, and outcomes beyond the effects of socioeconomic status.
- Racial and ethnic integration of K-12 schools has decreased since its apex in the 1970s; presently, 70 percent of African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority-populated schools.

Consider also elements of social change reported by the media:

- U.S. Census data indicate that, in 2000, 2.4 percent of the American population identified itself as having multiple racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- It is estimated that 30 percent of second-generation Latino Americans and Asian Americans enter marriages with persons from other racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- The fastest growing population subgroup in America is Latino (1 in 20 Americans in 2000), and this fact is rapidly reshaping political party agendas.
- Were it not for immigration from Latin America and the Pacific Rim, Many states, California in particular, would not have increased their workforces between 1990 and 2000 sufficiently to have enjoyed a period of major economic expansion.

Finally, consider racially- and ethnically-related social and political stresses described by the media:

- Racial and ethnic tensions linked to education and immigration patterns in California in the 1990s spawned Propositions

209 (prohibiting “preferences” in any activities derived from state funding), 187 (aimed at curbing social benefits and services to illegal aliens), and 163 (promoting English only in schools).

- In December, 2002, insensitive remarks regarding the status of segregation in U.S. history cost Trent Lott (R – Miss) his position as Senate Majority Leader.
- In January, 2003, President Bush publicly joined the opposition toward the University of Michigan’s use of race as an important factor in admissions decisions, a matter that became the focus of a major U.S. Supreme Court case and significant media and political commentary and that was decided in favor of the University.
- In June, 2003, President Bush issued an executive order forbidding the use of racial profiling as a tool of law enforcement by federal agencies, except as it relates to anti-terrorist efforts.

The issues captured in the above examples (by no means an exhaustive inventory) are neither subtle nor trivial. They indicate clearly that, while interesting, beautiful, and part of our national heritage, diversity in America is today also a *truly important component of social (re)organization and change and, thus, a major source of social friction*. The implications of life in a diverse society are, for all practical purposes, significant and unavoidable.

### **Social Science Research and Diversity**

Understandably, social-scientific research attention to the topic of race and ethnicity in America is abundant. Social scientists are well aware of patterned differences in attitudes, behaviors, and experiences across segments of our population. Those differences often are manifested at both individual and aggregate levels along racial and ethnic lines. Some of these differences may be a function of socioeconomic status differentiation, and some may not (always a useful empirical question by which to teach students more about a given discipline). Not all social lives at all times are arranged directly around such differences and related stereotypes of them. It is debatable, for example, that they are sufficiently patterned to constitute significant cultural differentiation (as in assertions that ours is or is becoming,

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literally, a multicultural society). Yet, few social scientists would argue that their effects on persons making their way through life are inconsequential. Few would argue as well that such differentiation has not fostered, for over two centuries, serious, persistent social friction in the United States.

An extraordinary number of books addressing race- and ethnicity-related matters is published each year by social scientists. Internet searches of titles pertinent to "Race in America" offered by such publishers as University of Chicago Press, University of North Carolina Press, and University of California Press produce literally hundreds of entries. In a related vein one in four articles recently published in the major, general journal of the American Sociological Association (*American Sociological Review* [Vol. 67, 2002]) pertained to the topic of race and ethnicity in America. The corresponding fraction of coverage within the discipline of History was one in nine articles (*American Historical Review* [Vol. 107, 2002]), of Political Science, one in eleven articles (*American Political Science Review*, Vol. 96, 2002 ), and of Economics, one in twenty articles (*American Economic Review* [Vol. 92, 2002] ). Each of these disciplines also has numerous more specialized research publications that devote considerably more attention to issues of race and ethnicity.

### **Social Science Curricula and Diversity**

Against the backdrop of popular, political, and social-scientific concern with contemporary racial and ethnic diversity, one would expect to find serious university curricular focus on the same matters. To a certain degree the expectation is met. College and university campuses today more often than not address diversity-related tensions in society through curricula that are responsive to and appreciative of the social and cultural experiences of students from traditionally underrepresented populations. They generally seek to heighten student awareness of differences in the way that people(s) experience the world, to engender respect for the beauty and functionality inherent in heterogeneity, and to provide a welcome environment for students of all backgrounds. Some view this effort as worthy, others as a politically correct distraction. In either case various gen-



eral education requirements and elective courses within majors result in at least some exposure to diversity-related issues across the student's academic career. Many argue too that "cultural majors" such as Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies have been designed to provide options for the relatively small population of students with admirably greater than ordinary interest in matters of diversity.

Exactly how much exposure to diversity-related issues actually occurs among students who do not pursue a "cultural major," however, is difficult to discern since choices of elective courses within majors rarely are tracked, and general education requirements in this area usually are loosely knit, expansive, and designed in great part to spread the wealth of enrollment across campus units. In most universities, for example, dozens of courses, ranging from martial arts to Civil War history, commonly fulfill the institution's (in most cases, lone) "multicultural" course requirement. It is doubtful that many universities could describe in anything resembling learning-outcomes terms, what their students should master in the way of a systematic understanding of such a controversial matter as diversity in this society. Indeed it is a reasonable proposition that students in most universities are able by uninformed or informed choice to complete a degree with but cursory attention to the topic.

The exception to the "hit or miss" approach to curricular coverage of racial and ethnic matters, it might be assumed, would be found among the social sciences whose practitioners, as noted above, devote extensive research energy to such matters (as well as grappling routinely with the implications of affirmative action in faculty hiring and student admissions). Therefore, the reasonable empirical question: What place does racial and ethnic differentiation actually now occupy within social science major (as opposed to general education) curricula?

The answer: It is accorded elective coverage. A review of the 2002 course requirements and electives of Economics, History, Political Science, and Sociology undergraduate programs in 30 state and private doctoral and master's-level institutions, randomly selected from a comprehensive list of U.S. uni-

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versities,<sup>1</sup> produced 201 courses relating to the study of race- or ethnic-related issues. Exactly *two* (History courses on a single campus) were required for completion of a major. The remaining 197 elective possibilities were varied, topical, and excellent: race and economy, immigration and assimilation, assimilation and political power--the list was long and impressive. Still, they were optional. Some departments sought to split the difference between elective and requirement. One history program in the sample, for instance, required its majors to choose any two from a list of four courses, two dealing with U.S. and two with African American history. Some departments offered "concentrations" with mandated content (e.g., a four-course "race and ethnicity" sequence), but the concentrations themselves were elective.

Thus, while much of related substance surely is contained in numerous, more general departmental offerings (e.g., modern social problems, contemporary political issues), it clearly is possible for a student to major in most social-science disciplines without taking a single course that directly, pointedly, and primarily addresses the implications of life of in a highly heterogeneous society. Students can move from campus to real world lacking a conceptual framework (even a partial one produced by immersion in one given discipline rather than in another) to a complicated set of intense and daily pertinent social relationships and to legislative and policy agendas at the local, state, and federal levels that have direct implications for, among other elements of collective life, employment, education, and residence.

### **Potential Curricular Revision**

The curricular marginalization of diversity issues that otherwise claim professional research attention likely traces less to overt hostility to the topic of diversity than to traditional ways of defining curricular domain. Like their students, social scientists read the newspaper and confront issues such as the changing composition of the population, shifts in power and wealth, problematic delivery of social services, shrinking access to health and education resources, and persistent cultural biases. Yet, while these clearly fit our social-scientific interests, they are packaged within our curricula as contemporary "applications" expected to

emerge via examples in courses on disciplinary “basics.” Differential life chances and attendant social tension linked to ascribed social characteristics traditionally are considered “applied” rather than “basic” foci.

Easily as importantly, the situation also traces to anxiety. The curricular focus upon diversity-related issues involves difficult material delivered to people of different backgrounds, interests, and levels of experience. Hard questions are asked; offense is often taken; stereotypes come to the fore in the classroom. Most faculty members understandably are not anxious to accept such a challenge. It is stressful, and stress is relieved more easily by nesting “diversity relations” within courses focused upon multiple social issues and problems (e.g., crime, environmental threats, educational reform). Ironically, the stress that comprises the pedagogical hurdle in question makes the case rather well that diversity-related issues are among the most sensitive in this society. It is difficult to reconcile this with the view that these issues do not merit greater than elective attention within the social sciences. And we can wonder as well why the academy that defends relatively free expression of ideas and even conflict as necessary to constructive discourse has such trouble with this particular set of ideas and conflicts.

Could we bring diversity-related issues more directly into our social science major programs? Undoubtedly and without radical substantive (as opposed to ideological and pedagogical) change, since most programs now feature elective coverage of such issues. The difference between extant and revised curricula would be found in the greater and mandatory emphasis upon the implications of ascriptive statuses, cultural assimilation, and socioeconomic conflict and change, historically and contemporarily, than is now the case. A tremendous amount of what we consider of theoretical, methodological, and substantive importance in our disciplines can be addressed in courses that focus upon the various social implications of “differences” – including the very proper scientific question of degree of “cultural variation” across contemporary American subpopulations. The partial restructuring of the typical social science major curriculum such that race- and ethnic-related issues (and, potentially, those per-

taining to other ascribed statuses implicated to a high degree in contemporary social organization and change) were designated “basic” as opposed to “applied” (usually “elective”), could in an of itself represent an important device by which to transmit to students the building blocks of a discipline.

Importantly, not every discipline can address all aspects of diversity-related issues in contemporary society.<sup>2</sup> Each can, however, bring a particular, systematic approach to examining various of those aspects. Perhaps the decision about whether and how best to address this possibility should begin with departmental discussions of the significance of the “social difference” variable in those elements of the world captured by the department’s discipline. Rarely do we list and prioritize the substantive topics that we might and might not include in our major required courses. The discussion surely will lead at least one member of the department to ask: “What is more worthy of study within our discipline than this?” It is difficult to imagine diversity-related issues failing to make the list of the top five topics.

## **Conclusion**

Momentarily sorting out theoretical and ideological issues, we return to the basic premise of this discussion: it is entirely possible for students to proceed through their college educations with but scant and likely unsystematic attention to the implications of racial and ethnic diversity in this society. This occurs despite the significance of diversity-related matters (including, on some campuses, admissions policies) in the students’ everyday lives. Perhaps the relative social harmony of campus life, in which few people knowingly, purposefully, and overtly would discriminate against anyone on the basis of ascribed characteristics, blinds us to the significance of racial and ethnic conflict outside (and, truth be told, inside) the ivory tower. We have addressed our obligation (if, indeed, we view it as such) to attend to diversity-related conflict as a social fact by assigning it to the general education curriculum (usually as a matter of one-shot exposure) and by providing students with “choices” by which to increase their level of expertise in this area. The outcome of this decision is apparent when we sketch real-world issues on a transparency.

We place diversity-related conflict near the center. When we overlay this transparency with one that captures what we address in our college and university curricula, including those in the social sciences, we find diversity-related conflict nowhere near center. We have marginalized and, in many senses, downplayed the significance of a crucial element of contemporary social life. It is time to discuss priorities. Whatever its result, such a discussion at the very least will serve better to sharpen our own senses of our various disciplines such that students who choose them as major subjects can only benefit.

### Notes

1 The 30 institutions were selected through use of a table of random numbers applied to a comprehensive list of “Category I (doctoral)” and Category II (master’s) universities maintained by the AAUP. ([www.chronicle.com/stats/aaup/2002](http://www.chronicle.com/stats/aaup/2002)). “Category I” universities are “characterized by a significant level and breadth of activity in and commitment to doctoral-level education as measured by the number of doctorate recipients and the diversity in doctoral-level program offerings.” “Category IIA” universities are “characterized by diverse post-baccalaureate programs (including first professional), but not engaged in significant doctoral-level education..” Catalogs of the sampled universities were examined, online, regarding courses on race- and ethnicity-related issues offered by the departments of Economics, History, Political Science, and Sociology . Each course was identified as either “required” or “not required” of all students choosing the major.

2 Lest we focus inordinately upon the social sciences, it is important to acknowledge that these same conversations can and should be had within the arts, humanities, and sciences. How important is it that English or Art majors, for example, be exposed to the literatures and art forms of multiple segments of our population? Of no more than elective importance? What would happen were all English majors required to take a course on “contemporary African American authors”? Similarly, given myths and misconceptions held within this society, what would be the outcome of a required interdisciplinary course for science majors regarding the genetic facts about race?

## **FROM COUSIN JOE TO THE COMOROS: ORTHOGRAPHY AND THE POLITICS OF CHOICE IN AFRICA AND AFRICAN AMERICA**

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This paper explores issues of orthographic representation in two different projects, in two different locations, and draws some general conclusions about the role of an outsider linguistic anthropologist in working with individuals and their data. One project involved helping Cousin Joe, a blues singer from New Orleans, to edit his autobiography for publication. The other project involved developing a bilingual, bidirectional, Shizwani-English dictionary for the Comoro Islands. Each project required an awareness of—and sensitivity to—the cultural and political implications of orthographic decisions.

### **Cousin Joe:**

I began working with Cousin Joe when I was doing dissertation research on blues singing in New Orleans in the 1960s. He became one of my most trusted teachers on the subject, patiently explaining things and helping me to make contact with other

blues singers. His interest in my own project was paralleled by his concern for a project of his own: He wanted to publish his autobiography, and he offered me a bargain. He said something like, "I'll help you work on your book if you'll help me work on mine." I agreed and we began taping narratives for his book in the winter of 1966. We continued, intermittently, until 1986, when the manuscript went to press.

Knowing that transcripts are always "intrinsically incomplete" (West, 346), I tried to make mine as thick and detailed as I could. I included every cough, laugh, pause, and false start and I wrote as much dialect as I heard. (See especially Preston 1982 and Edwards 1992 for comments on writing dialect). If I heard "gonna," I wrote "gonna," not "going to"; if I heard "no mo," then that is what I wrote and not "no more" or "any more."

Transforming my "basic transcripts" (Ochs 1979) into manuscript form, I smoothed out the false starts, removed the references to coughs and laughs, and underlined or italicized stressed words. (See Tedlock, 1983 and Edwards 1992 on including and marking emphasized words.) [Joe's narrative style was such that many episodes were narrated more than once, sometimes as the focus of a story and sometimes as background information for another episode. Comparing multiple narrations of the same episode I combined words and phrases from different narrations until each episode seemed clear.] I kept Joe's voice in my head as I worked.

Although representing African American speech in dialect spelling was still common in those days, I had been sensitized to the issues involved when Danny Barker, a close friend of Joe's, and a member of Cab Calloway's band had shared his own manuscript--a history of jazz--with me. Complaining that publishers had asked him to write in dialect, he had refused to do so because he regarded dialect spelling as demeaning. In spite of this I was sure that Joe's reading audience would expect some dialect. The question was how much? Joe's own approach to performance was complexly multi-layered, and he often used exaggerated dialect to mock both himself and his audience. Interpreting an audience's expectations and then playing into (and playing with) the role you think it expects requires a skillful balance of reality and pretense and Joe seemed to have mastered

the art. Since Joe used dialect a lot in his taped narrations, I began using dialect spelling throughout the manuscript. As I completed each chapter I sent it to Joe for approval. In return I received encouraging phone calls. "It's great!" he'd say.

One day, however, I was transcribing a tape that Joe had sent me, and I couldn't hear some names clearly enough, so I mailed him a copy of the rough transcript and scribbled something in the margins like "Who is this?" Joe not only sent the transcript back with the names written in but with additions and corrections. I am not sure whether it was my own handwriting on the typed page or the overall rough appearance of the transcripts that triggered this response. In any case it was a welcome change. Joe smoothed out false starts and removed references to coughs and laughs. Most importantly he substituted standard spellings for some dialect spellings: where he was narrating he used standard spellings; where he was quoting he left dialect spellings.

Going back to the tapes I could hear Joe deliberately shifting styles, using one voice ("his own") for narratives and other voices (exaggerated dialects) to depict people speaking. In some cases the tone seemed to be folksy and intimate; in others the tone seemed demeaning (even self-demeaning). As Preston says, "Non-standard spellings generally have as their primary effect on the reader a demotion of opinion of the speaker represented" (Preston, 323). But this is how Joe seemed to want it. Following his lead I began switching between standard and non-standard spelling, using non-standard spelling where Joe used exaggerated dialect and marking those sections with quote marks. Joe, as narrator, now appeared in standard spelling while most of the characters he encountered appeared in non-standard spelling. The result was that the complex, multi-layered, performances I had witnessed in New Orleans began to appear on the printed page. We finally had achieved a balance that worked and was sensitive to Joe's orthographic concerns.

Using standard spelling made it easier, in fact, for readers to hear Joe's voice as they expected to hear it. Using non-standard spelling probably helped them to imagine his characters as he wanted them to be imagined. Some quotes from reviews suggest that the strategy worked. In *The [London] Sunday Times* Eric



Hobsbawm (1988) called Cousin Joe's narrative "disarming." In *Living Blues* John Brisbin (1989) described "Cousin Joe's effervescence" and "skill as a storyteller" calling the narrative "buoyant" and "colorful." In *The Black Perspective in Music* Eileen Southern (1989) commented that Joe's descriptions seemed "intensely personal."

In retrospect I find it intriguing that Joe and I never actually had a conversation about spelling. My guess is that I assumed it was my job to make initial decisions and that I expected him to make changes and comments on the manuscript, that together we would fine-tune the manuscript until it was the way he wanted it. Questions of differential power in racist New Orleans did not occur to me in this process. Somehow I had assumed that our differences in race and education were cancelled by our differences in age and gender. In addition I was his student as well as his "editor" which placed him in a position of greater authority, I thought. [He even taught me how to survive as a black person in New Orleans, a skill I found myself needing personally on occasion.] I had brought all of my linguistic anthropological skills to the collaboration, but it wasn't until we began communicating on paper about orthographic choices that we were able to achieve the results that both of us wanted.

### **The Comoros:**

In the Summer of 1967 I put my initial Cousin Joe materials into a box in my parents' basement and headed for the Comoro Islands between Madagascar and Mozambique in the western Indian Ocean. My husband, Martin Ottenheimer, was doing his dissertation research there. He had been an occasional field assistant to me in New Orleans, fishing with Cousin Joe and accompanying me to special events. I planned to return the favor by serving as a field assistant to him. I brushed up on my French; he learned Swahili, and we took off.

We found a place to live in a town on the island of Nzwani, one of the four islands in the Comoro archipelago and soon discovered that very few Wanzwani spoke French and even fewer knew any Swahili. The local language, Shinzwani, is a Bantu language and a member of the Swahili group, but with no adequate contact language, no dictionary, and no grammar, our

context for learning it was going to be largely monolingual. I began recording the language in as much detail as I could using phonetic transcriptions until I had the phonological system worked out.

Shinzwani has been written locally for hundreds of years using Arabic script. Because every child attends Koranic school, literacy in Shinzwani is at least 90% (Ahmed-Chamanga & JG 1977:46). Shinzwani has more phonemes than Arabic, however, and so certain compromises have to be made. The Arabic letter 'k' (ك) for example, is used for both [k] and [g]. The Arabic letter ج (Ǧ) is used for both [dʒ], as in English 'judge' and [ʒ], as in English 'rouge.' There are no fixed conventions, and each individual is left to himself or herself to decide how best to write (and read) Shinzwani using Arabic characters.

With the advent of French colonialism in the 1800s some planters and government officials began to use French to write personal and place names but for the most part French spelling was not widely used by Wanzwani. French did not fit Shinzwani much better than Arabic did, although it did have separate letters to represent [k] and [g] and [ʒ]. To represent [dʒ] the French used the letters 'dj.'

Taking Swahili as a model, I developed a phonemic orthography for Shinzwani which used standard Latin characters, avoiding diacritics and special ipa characters. (See Powers 1990 for comments on native reactions to diacritics.) I used the letters 'sh' to represent [ʃ], as in English 'sheesh,' for example, and paralleled it with the letters 'zh' for [ʒ], which did not exist in Swahili. I trained a few lycee students in the orthography and put them to work transcribing tape-recordings of folktales, historical narratives, and interviews.

EX: Ways of writing	[dʒ] and	[ʒ]
Arabic	Ǧ	Ǧ
French	dj	j
English/Swahili	j	zh

In the 1970s when the Comoros gained their independence from France, a few young Comorian intellectuals suggested that the Comoros needed a new Latin-based orthography. (Ahmed-

Chamanga 1976). Such a move would symbolize breaking free from French colonial influence. French spelling might be appropriate French, they argued, but the Comoros should have their own orthography, and it should resemble that used in other independent African nations. The proposed orthography looked a lot like what I had taught the Wanzwani students to use in the 1960s. The differences are interesting.

The sound [S] would now be spelled with the letters 'sh' as in Swahili, rather than with the letters 'ch' as in French. But the parallel sound [Z] would continue to be spelled with the letter 'j' as in French. And [dZ] would thus have to continue to be spelled with the letters 'dj' as in French, rather than with the letter 'j' as in Swahili and English. The fact that French rather than Swahili [or English] spellings were chosen for these two sounds reflects in part the continued influence of French-based education in the Comoros. Additionally, however, it is possible that use of the letter 'j' for [Z] also signaled an ambivalence towards being seen as "African." In any case the orthography was adopted only by those few individuals who had been educated in French-style local schools, and most others continued using Arabic script. Since nothing was settled, I continued using my own orthography for [dZ] and [Z] in my own work.

The Shinzwani-English dictionary had begun as a paper slip file in the Comoros designed primarily for analytical purposes. In the 1970s in Kansas I copied the words from the slip file into a small loose-leaf notebook, and as I continued translating field notes and narratives I added more words to the notebook. By 1982 I had six notebooks and about 6,000 dictionary entries. I also had an English-Shinzwani index. I photocopied the whole thing, wrote up a chart of noun classes and concords, and took it to the Comoros. I was stunned by the reaction. The most common comment I heard was something like, "We really do have a language (or a grammar)!" The French told us we just spoke gibberish (or we had no grammar or we didn't have a real language)." Many individuals (including some Comorian government officials) urged me to consider publishing the dictionary.

Soon after the Comorian government commissioned a linguistic study designed to develop a Latin-based orthography for Comorian and to "increase literacy" in the Comoros. The result-

ing orthography (Cheikh, 1986a and b) was similar to the ones proposed in the 1970s. It resembled Swahili, but it used French spellings for sounds not present in Swahili. For Shizwani this meant that the letter 'j' would continue to be used for [Z], and the letters 'dj' would be used for [dZ].

As I followed the gradual acceptance of Latin-based orthography in the Comoros, it became clear that the French spellings of [dZ] and [Z] were catching on in spite of whatever post-colonial implications they might carry with them. Although I had felt that using English spellings would represent Shizwani more clearly to English readers, I became more and more concerned that by continuing to use English spellings I would be imposing my own sense of "accuracy" on Shizwani orthography. As Bill Powers recently wrote, "Any attempt to [impose linguistic rigor on native languages] should be seen as another form of patronization as well as linguistic hegemony.... The politics of orthography is not a theoretical idea, it is a reality, one which must be understood and assessed by all those involved with native languages" (Powers 1990:497).

Taking a lesson from the Cousin Joe project, I decided to put the question of how to use the letter 'j' to Shizwani speakers. By now nearly all Wanzwani have completed at least eight years in local French style schools; many have completed lycee, and some have studied (or are currently studying) abroad. The discussions were interesting. Most people responded by saying that it really didn't matter since they were used to reading so many different languages and spellings. If you would just indicate somewhere what symbols were to stand for what sounds, they would adjust as necessary. Pushed to think about what they would really want to see and use and how they really would want to have the language look on the printed page, individuals felt that even if using the letter 'j' for [Z] was French, they were so used to it by now that perhaps they should continue using it that way. I also think that now, some twenty years after independence, the need to express separation from French influence is less immediate. In fact using a bit of French spelling implies that you have been educated in French style schools and can read French with all the associated status implications. I also decided to ask some English speakers such as a few of the Peace

Corps volunteers in the Comoros and some American students in Kansas. Here too, although the initial preference was for using the letter ‘j’ as in English the final preference was for using it as in French in part to avoid confusion with existing informal orthographic practice (otherwise you would always need a key to know how to read the letter ‘j’) and in part because, as one Kansas student said, “If you know you are dealing with a French-influenced country, you kind of expect to see some French spelling.” So the dictionary will use the letter ‘j’ for [Z] after all, and I am looking forward to knowing how it will be received by professionals and lay readers of both languages.

Comparing these two projects provides important insights into orthography and the politics of representation. In both cases I had thought that it was important to represent the language in question as accurately as possible in order to reach the widest audience possible. In both cases it became clear that it is even more important to respect the preferred usage of the individuals whom you are trying to represent, and that readers will make--in fact generally prefer to make--the necessary adjustments. The decisions we make, in representing individuals and their language, have far-reaching implications. Understanding these implications and discussing choices with the individuals being represented is essential. It is also important to maintain a clear distinction between basic transcription and orthographic representation. Data will always need to be transcribed with as much accuracy as the ear permits. Orthographic representation, on the other hand, must be established in response to the concerns of subject, audience, and politics. The responsible linguistic anthropologist must fully understand these variables in order to develop effective and appropriate orthographic conventions.

**Note:**

An earlier version of this article was presented at the 1997 meeting of the American Anthropological Association for the special panel on Orthography and the Politics of Representation

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## **RACE, SEX, AND REDEMPTION IN *MONSTER'S BALL***

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In this paper, we explore the way that interracial relationships between blacks and whites come to be represented as problematic for mainstream audiences. By looking specifically at the film *Monster's Ball* (2001), we examine how race is used to identify and characterize our culture's standard protagonist, the white male, and at how white male sexuality is constructed through the black female. Particularly striking in this film is how the social and institutional structures that create and reiterate problems of race are used to characterize the movie's central protagonists, yet then evaded and submerged in the discourse of romance.

When in the fifties Nabakov described the difficulty of selling *Lolita* to publishers, he explained that the topic was among "three themes which are utterly taboo as far as most American publishers are concerned. The two others are a Negro-White marriage which is a complete and glorious success resulting in lots of children and grandchildren; and the total atheist who lives a happy and useful life, and dies in his sleep at the age of 106...."

Nabakov had a point. It is still difficult to come across a



media representation of the interracial couple and impossible to think of any such romance portrayed as unproblematic. Films that center an interracial couple present narratives of the “problem” romance—the socially significant problem film, which is significantly about race.

This study is an examination of the way these interracial relationships come to be represented as problematic for mainstream audiences. By looking specifically at *Monster's Ball* (Mark Forster, 2001), we are going to explore how race is used to identify and characterize our culture's standard protagonist, the white male, and at how white male sexuality is constructed through the black female. Particularly striking in the case of *Monster's Ball* is how the social and institutional structures that create and reiterate problems of race are used to characterize the movie's central protagonists yet then evaded and submerged in the discourse of romance. While the social aspects of racism come across as “natural” or given, the problems associated with race are formulated as problems concerning certain individuals. Fortunately these problems can be rectified with individual redemption, which occurs in the course of finding romance.

*Monster's Ball* presents the unlikely relationship between Hank Grotowski (Billy Bob Thornton), a Georgia corrections officer, and Leticia Musgrove (Halle Berry), the wife of a man whose execution Hank helps to conduct. Hank's father, a classic racist, is a retired corrections officer, and Hank's son, Sonny, is learning the ropes. Hank meets Leticia while she is at her job, waitressing. In the course of the film Leticia loses her husband and her job; her twelve-year-old son, Tyrell, is hit by a car and killed, and she is evicted from her home. In the meantime Hank's son commits suicide and later, when romantic possibilities with Leticia are threatened by his father's racist remarks, Hank puts his father in a home. While the relationship between Hank and Leticia happens by chance, its foreground is a sense of shared loneliness and loss, a sense of their mutual, desperate need.

Given its setting in the South and the narrative premise of the penal institution and a black man on death row, this movie would ostensibly appear to be about the problems of social justice in a racist environment and of the impact of institutionally sanctioned executions. Not only the family of the executed man

but those whose job it is to perform the execution are the characters of this narrative—the individuals who, in the end, will bear the burden of surviving the execution. While the issues of racial injustice or the problems of institutionalizing executions leads to the film a certain credibility, the film's center is the narrative of Hank's and Leticia's relationship. As such it sideswipes these issues and becomes instead the story of a white man's transformation—his overcoming of masculinist authority, of emotional alienation and bigotry by discovering sexual love with a black woman. Indeed. Love conquers all, even racism.

The film treats the discourse of romance and how race is constructed through renderings of heterosexual sex and desire. *Monster's Ball*, read as a typical romantic film, is a male weepie with a sort of happy ending. As with most romantic films the romantic leads are presented through a linking of two narrative strands. Here the first, central strand is that of the white male protagonist, Hank. As the credits roll over a shot of Hank sleeping, we see images of tombstones, of Hank driving, of a typical truck stop. Hank wakes up, vomits, and drives to the local diner. Unmasked, the waitress brings him chocolate ice cream along with a plastic spoon. She sits down to chat as she pours him his coffee, which he takes black.

This opening sequence establishes, first, that Hank is a tormented soul. Not only is he plagued by insomnia, when he awakes from sleep he vomits. We know this is characteristic of Hank because he is evidently a regular at the diner; he has developed regular habits in order to cope. The scene also establishes that he is a likeable guy; in a friendly, non-intimate way, the waitress knows and likes him. At this point there is no reason to assume that Hank is bigot or even an insensitive jerk of a father. These characteristics are introduced later, almost as secondary or inconsequential characteristics. As such they become dispensable, attitudes that, like his uniform, are easily shed when he goes through his true romance transformation.

Leticia, on the other hand, is first introduced to us as wife of a condemned man. What the husband is guilty of is never specified and, indeed, becomes irrelevant. The husband, first seen talking to their son on the day before his execution, tells his son he is a bad man. He becomes just one more black man who

cannot get it together. As with Samuel Jackson in *Changing Lanes* (Roger Michell, 2002) or even Denzel Washington in *John Q.* (Nick Cassavetes, 2002) he becomes a stand in for the black man who, beaten down by the system, has been unable to provide for his wife and children the good life they deserve. That Leticia is shown primarily as a wife and mother is completely in keeping with the way women are typically characterized—through their relationships with men and their status as mothers. Leticia, a black woman, is no exception. Joining together the two narrative strands of Leticia and Hank is the husband, the condemned man.

The “Monster’s Ball,” the night of the condemned man’s execution, is shown through a series of cross cuts, which visually link Hank and Leticia. Hank and his son watch over the prisoner as Leticia and her son watch television. The camera frames the prisoner’s last meal, which is, like Hank’s chocolate ice cream, served with plastic utensils. As Leticia runs out to buy mini-bottles of Wild Turkey, her significantly fat son munches on chocolate bars. Like Hank, Leticia and Tyrell are characterized through their respective oral fixations, forms of gratification that indicate each character’s lack of equilibrium. This is important.

As with Hank’s vomiting the movie clearly sets up its operative signifiers on the body. Leticia slaps her child for sneaking candy bars just as she yells at him for walking in the street. Her physicality can be seen to indicate her ineffectiveness as a mother as well as her frustration. Similarly the scenes of Hank’s son and then of Hank with Vera, a white prostitute, are inserted to indicate their respective emotional or mental states. After mechanical, business-style sex from behind with Vera, Sonny asks her if she would like to go out, maybe for a drink. It is a rather dark, pathetic scene, which indicates, among other things, Sonny’s loneliness. Shortly after Sonny’s suicide in an almost identical scene we see Hank with Vera, though here Hank sends Vera off without “performing.”

While these signifiers come across as clear indicators of different characters’ mental states, they operate as open signifiers. Tyrell does not say that he eats because he misses the father. And Leticia does not say she drinks because she is lonely and frustrated, sexually or otherwise. The white prostitute is there to con-

vey masculine mental distress. Though Sonny never says he feels lonely, the scene with Vera is loaded with indicators that allow us to see, among other things, that he is. With Hank Vera asks a casual question about Sonny, and Hank changes his mind about wanting to have sex with her. Thus after a series of scenes showing an expressionless father efficiently cleaning up after his son's suicide and hurrying the funeral, we are able to see that, deep down, Hank is truly distressed. The film's unhurried pace underscores these actions. It is a pace that encourages the audience to project significance onto such physically rendered scenes.

The film's style of depicting its characters and projecting significance onto their physicality is, perhaps, best exemplified in the tremendously memorable and marketable scene in the movie—the first sex scene between Hank and Leticia. Obviously in this scene we are shown that both these characters do, indeed, alleviate mental distress through physical gratification.

The sex scene is about as raw as sex scenes in mainstream films go. Rather than the typical series of body parts shown in close up, the scene is shot in medium and long shot so that we see the characters as whole people. The sex is choreographed to show Hank's original impetus to doggy style penetration, which harkens back to the prostitute sex, but Leticia turns around, and even after Hank is satisfied, Leticia is shown getting off. Leticia's gratification is insistent because she is a physical gal. When Leticia says she needed that and when Hanks tells Leticia she has made him have feeling for the first time in a long time, we believe them. While the film has accustomed us to seeing physical action as indicating the character's inner world, the sex act now compels Hank and Leticia for the first time to express themselves to each other.

We also know that this is a significant scene because it is intercut with momentary shots of hands inside a bird cage. Obviously the hands and bird are meant to be seen metaphorically, yet, while the inclusion of these shots appears almost pretentiously significant, their significance is ambiguous. Sure—sex is release. But is Leticia being set free? From what? Or can we assume that sex with Leticia is responsible for releasing Hank from his emotional cage? Like a graphic and then metaphoric highlighter of itself, the movie's rendering of the sex act lets us

know it's a significant scene, just as the scene helps establish that this is a serious, significant movie. None of the golden, soft-glow romantic silhouettes or crescendo "ahh-ahh" music of Hollywood sex scenes here. This movie is stark. It presents the facts of life hard. This makes it "real." The sex scene lends to the film a note of legitimacy, a high-minded seriousness that identifies the film as a serious one.

But most importantly we know this is a serious film because it deals so explicitly with an interracial relationship—an interracial relationship between a white man and a black woman. This makes all the difference.

Certainly interracial relationships have occurred before on the big screen. Think about the relationships between white women and black men that have been on the big screen. Try to imagine seeing Julia Roberts and Denzel Washington expressing their mutual admiration for each other in, say, the back law offices in *Pelican Brief* (Alan J. Pakula, 1993) in any way even remotely similar to what occurs between Berry and Thornton. Certainly we would like to see it happen, but we know it would not. *Kiss the Girls* (Gary Fleder, 1997), *High Crimes* (Carl Franklin, 2002), *The Bone Collector* (Phillip Noyce, 1999), or *The Long Kiss Goodnight* (Renny Harlin, 1996) —films that feature a black man with a white woman have their relationship remain, sexually, squeaky clean. Though these films' narratives would typically allow for the romantic interlude or even the potential promise of romance, they consistently deny the interracial couple as a romantic couple. Films of this sort seem to use race to equalize the pair, to establish comradery over hierarchy. This is evident when contrasting any of these characters along side the usual white male protagonist. Typically the woman becomes the love interest or the black man operates as the buddy-sidekick. Even within a more imaginable action cop meets femme fatale scenario, a Wesley Snipes meets Sharon Stone, it is doubtful we would see a sex scene of this type. We assume that in the world according to Hollywood sexual desire between a black man and a white woman remains highly problematic.

Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* (1991), in fact, highlights just that. In *Jungle Fever* problems concerning the black male/white

female romance circle around the concern the problem of lusting after the racialized other. In general there is the problem of the lead black man standing in for generalized black masculine desire. A black man choosing a particular white woman, appears as a black man who prefers white women over black women, a guy who makes a fetish of the white body. Clearly this is not okay for a male protagonist. In *Jungle Fever* Lee has successful architect, Wesley Snipes, put aside his happy home life, the good wife and child, to dally on the white side of the tracks. Here sexual curiosity with regard to the white woman destabilizes the black home and community. With the Italian-American temptress, Annabella Sciorra, comes the problem of the white woman's desire. The overly sexualized image of the black masculine body becomes her object of curiosity.

When the white female's desire, always a bit problematic for the movies, hones in on the black male, he comes to stand in for erotic masculinity; the woman becomes owner of the gaze. Typically women who own the gaze are femme fatales, our Sharon Stones, controlling women who are not contained within the ideology of romance and true love. As with any movie calling attention to a white woman's sexual desire, the femme fatale narrative circles around the problem of the unwholesome woman whose "unnatural," deviant sexuality leads good men astray. This is made emphatically clear in *Bad Company* (Damian Harris, 1995), where we watch Laurence Fishbourne and Ellen Barkin engage in a fully clothed quickie sex scene. Here desire and lust are everything, and the sex act, void of sensuality or intimacy, is anything but romantic.

The femme fatale is the white woman, usually blonde, who is both sexual and in charge of her sexuality. While the sex scene informs us that Leticia is sexual and sexually experienced, Halle Berry is not blonde, and her Leticia is hardly a femme fatale. Leticia is, if anything, characterized by her lack of power, of control, of authority. She is someone who has bad things happen: her husband is executed after eleven years on death row; her car breaks down; she loses her job; her son is killed by a hit and run; she is evicted. Leticia's anger at her son's misbehavior is typical of her lack of authority, of her inability to control her son, of her frustrated attempts to be in control. These are not the

problems of a femme fatale.

Here you can see how Leticia's characterization as a victim is constructed using race. If Leticia were white, she would be associated with trailer parks and white trash precisely because she would be characterized by her inability to get it together. If Leticia were white, she would have had a social world associated with her waitress job, her son, and her mortgaged house; however, despite working in a people-oriented position with the colleagues and customers of food service, despite her son's social world, one that creates a world of parents, playgrounds and school, and despite the fact that she has occupied the same little house in the same small neighborhood for more than a decade, Leticia is completely alone. She is without friends or even friendly neighbors, and when her son dies, she is without family. When Hank's son dies, Hank continues to be a part of a social world, which he gradually alters by quitting his job and befriending his black neighbors. While Hank makes his world, Leticia is the lost, or evicted, lonely soul.

*Monster's Ball* reiterates some of the conventions characteristic of representations of black women with white men. As usual, in these movies, the black woman is, socially speaking, alone; the black woman enters the white man's world alone. Typically found along side the white action hero she is generally either the pleasantly sexual and eventually adoring sidekick, as with Vanessa Williams and Arnold in *Eraser* (Chuck Russell, 1996), or exotic, as with Thandie Newton and Tom Cruise in *Mission Impossible II* (John Woo, 2000). In *Executive Decision* (Stuart Baird, 1996), Berry herself is the sidekick stewardess who helps Kurt Russell and a team of marines disarm a group of onboard terrorists. Sure, she is scared, but she is tougher than her blonde co-workers, and she helps the hero land the 747 by reading directions from the flight manual. At the end of the movie she and Kurt drive off into the night for coffee. More interesting is Berry's role in *Bulworth* (Warren Beatty, 1998) where she helps to establish that Warren Beatty's Senator Bulworth is a good guy—not only is he concerned with civil rights, he is sexually attracted to her. She delivers a short lecture on problems concerning black community leadership considering the fact that black men are killed off; her character is responsible for

bringing the Senator to the hood where he receives an insightful education from the local drug dealer, and, of course, there is sexual attraction, which shows that the senator is not only human but likeable.

If a black woman is not masculinized or made the Aunt Jemima Oracle Lady, she is depicted as the dark exotic or erotic object of desire. In *Monster's Ball* the camera work as well as Berry's characterization of the isolated Leticia serves once again to establish the black woman as a sexual body. When Hank's father meets Leticia, he reminds us of just that. He too, back in his day, enjoyed "black pussy."

But, we say, Hank is not like that! Hank is not just after sex! Here we have a major indicator of how the movie's pivotal core is constructed around Hank's redemption. The fact that Leticia is first and foremost a sexualized body is evaded through the film's evidently serious rendering of inner turmoil. Both Hank and Leticia have inner turmoil. Hank's father does not. This inner turmoil, rendered through the body, lends the sex scene an aura of meaningfulness. And the graphic, raw quality of the sex indicates that this is a serious movie, which is further established through its serious interracial theme. Yet, in the end, the movie is constructed around Hank's individual epiphany, his transformation, his becoming a real man, which includes not being a racist.

Whether an audience interprets the sex scene between Leticia and Hank as a love scene might well have to do with contemporary attitudes regarding sex, romance, and love. Regardless, the series of events that follow indicate a major transformation in Hank's character. Whether we attribute them to sex with Leticia—Leticia's ability to let Hank "feel"—is open. The important thing is Hank's transformation; the audience can read the causal impetus as they choose.

Hank buys the service station showing that now Hank is going to serve people, not execute them. By white washing the house he clears away the past. By putting his father in a home he breaks with the father's authority. And Hank is particularly nice to Leticia. We know he cares about her because he names his newly procured gas station for her. He gives her his son's pick up. He gives her a place to stay at his house. And, of



course, there is the oral sex.

In the meantime, Leticia gets to be the damsel in distress, and if there is one thing you can say about Leticia, she has every reason to be distressed. Although different from the distressed damsel played by Whitney Houston in *The Bodyguard* (Mick Jackson, 1992), when Hank comes to the rescue Leticia, like Kevin Costner, he becomes a better man for it. He will protect and take care of her. Leticia does, after all, need to be taken care of. She still is not given much control over her life, but she is given a relationship, which is pretty much the best thing any woman can ask for.

Leticia can trust Hank to take care of her. He is going to take care of her instead of his father; he can give, and she can appreciate him for being such a giving guy. He has become a concerned and giving sexual partner, a real man!, worthy of being appreciated and loved. Hank's transformation confirms that, deep down, he is a nice guy.

Hank's transformation inscribes simultaneously the shedding of racism with his shedding of job and father. While on the one hand Hank's racism is superficial—irrelevant and easily dismissed—it serves, on the other, to ground the film's claim to significance. Looking back Hank's racism is made explicit only on two occasions. The first is the incident with the shotgun when his father complains about the black boys on the property, and the second comes when he calls a co-worker "nigger." After that there are various scenes that might indicate racism but by no means explicitly do so. The explicit examples of Hank's racism are inscribed into attitudes associated with this father and an almost militaristic devotion to a masculine code. The father's masculine code requires recognizing authority and following the rules. It is about recognizing power and control and about controlling one's emotions. The emotional is feminine, which is weak. After watching Sonny shoot himself, the father contemptuously remarks that the boy was weak, like his mother. The type of masculinity associated with the father is therefore readily recognized as bad, insensitive masculinity.

The second explicit demonstration of Hank's racism occurs on the job, again, a job clearly associated with the father. As with *American History X* (Tony Kaye, 1998), another popular,

significant film showing the white protagonist shedding his racism, Hank's racism is understood through the father who has been responsible for teaching his son the racist mantra. The father in *American History X* is a fireman who, once again, associates racism with civil service, with institutional traditions, old-fashioned notions of doing the right thing and following orders. Like his father, Hank is a corrections officer in charge of state executions, and Hank's anger at his son, which compels him to call a co-worker "nigger," is triggered by the son's emotional response to the execution. Here the father's abhorrence of weakness and emotion is put in the context of doing the job right, of providing a good execution. The issues of racism and class inscribed within the penal system and the psychic costs on the individuals performing sanctioned executions are, again, evaded. They are solved when Hank quits his job and buys a service station. Hank quits racism.

Racism is put aside in much the same way Hank puts his father in a home. Overcoming racism is overcoming the father, which in the case of Hank's father also indicates having the wrong attitudes about sex and women. Here being a bigot is connected or linked with outdated ideas concerning masculine sexuality. Fortunately that is all over by the end of the movie, as Hank is shown to have learned to be a considerate lover.

In the movie's final scene Hank holds out his plastic spoon of chocolate ice cream for Leticia, and she accepts it. Perhaps the plastic spoon links Hank with Leticia's husband—Hank too is guilty, and she is there to forgive. Does it matter? At the end of the day or by the end of the movie the film's treatment of the interracial relationship is all about the white male—his need to become emotionally whole, to "overcome" racism and bigotry so that he can "feel." His sensitivity training, or newly found ability to express his feelings, occurs as he overcomes his father and is properly appreciated by Leticia for being such a great guy. For Leticia, a relationship is pretty much the best she can ask for.

Clearly interracial romance is presented as problematic for mainstream audiences. The representation of romance in *Monster's Ball* is particularly problematic because it is made significant both in the acclaim that the film received and in the way that it which it normalizes the decontextualized black female

body—a body that can and is used to construct and develop the identity of the white male protagonist, thus suggesting that interracial relationships are not based on understanding and equality but rather on the benevolence of white men and the exoticism and eroticism of the black female body. In *Monster's Ball* Leticia is constructed as a victim who lacks agency so that Hank can take charge of both their lives.

Moreover, the film's approach to racism as an individual choice in which romance is the catalyst for change, denies the significance of institutionalized racism (e.g. the penal system) and the role of society at large. *Monster's Ball* illustrates how a narrative of interracial romance submerges or dismisses that which it constructs as important—racial justice, by representing racism as a problem that can be easily identified and fixed through “love.”

## Notes

1 Vladimir Nabakov. *Lolita* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1955), 317.

This applies to films across the races—from *The Joy Luck Club* (Wayne Wang, 1993) and *Double Happiness* (Mina Shum, 1994) to *Mississippi Masala* (Mira Nair, 1991). Different romantic narratives, from Sidney Poitier's successful black man in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (Stanley Kramer, 1967) to Ken Norton's “historical” slave figure in *Mandingo* (Richard Fleischer, 1975), can be seen to indicate different notions of, and shifting attitudes toward black masculinity, which goes beyond the scope of this paper.

2 Although Halle Berry won the academy award, Hanks' character opens the movie, and, as critics at the time appear to have picked up, he is the primary actor within the film's narrative of interracial romance. As with A.O. Scott, writing for the *NY Times*: Hank Grotowski (Billy Bob Thornton) is, like his father and his son, a Georgia corrections officer. Leticia Musgrove (Halle Berry) is a waitress struggling to make end meet and to raise her 12-year-old son. She is also the widow of a man whose execution Hank helped to conduct. The relationship between Hank and Leticia, a relationship born of chance, moral reflex and desperate need, is at the center of *Monster's Ball*.”

3 In fact, this character-type has become so normalized that by the time the conscientious but down trodden father of *John Q.* resorts to holding up a hospital in order to get the heart transplant that will save his son, we're rooting for him. The ludicrously happy ending—the heart arrives in the nick of time, the insurance executive is smitten with

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remorse— is justice restored. Granted, this is a Hollywood solution, but it offers the only possible happy solution to a problem that has come to appear as a natural fact of life. The conscientious father of *Changing Lanes*, beaten time and time again, will, in the end, depend on the goodness of Ben Affleck to put things right with his family. Again, the normalization of the black man's plight, which makes it almost impossible to conceptualize a (non-violent, legal) narrative alternative, turns the white man into a hero.

4 Isabel C. Santaolalla, *The Fever and the Itch: Matching Plots in Spike Lee's Jungle Fever in Terms of Endearment*, ed Peter William Evans and Celestino Deleyto (Edinburgh: Edinburgh U P, 1998).

5 This situation of a black woman entering the white (mainstream) world is not limited to films with romantic narratives. Films such as with *Corrina, Corrina* (Jessie Nelson, 1994), *Jumpin Jack Flash* (Penny Marshall, 1986), *Sister Act* (Emile Ardolino, 1992), and *Boys On The Side* (Herbert Ross, 1995) have Whoopi Goldberg enter a white world. Similarly, this situation has also been known to extend to black male stars, such as with Eddie Murphy in *Beverly Hills Cop* (Martin Brest, 1984) and its sequels.

6 Sharon Willis, 'Style', *Posture, and Idiom: Tarantino's Figures of Masculinity in Reinventing Film Studies*, ed Gledhill, Williams (London: Edward Arnold, 2000). In particular, Willis points out how, for Tarantino, a white character can use the term "nigger" as a cuss word because he has a black wife, and is therefore exempt from rules which apply to ordinary whites (p.289). This is also found in a buddy movie like *Gridlock'd* (Vondie Curtis-Hall, 1997), a white character, Tim Roth can use the word "nigger" with impunity because he's pals with a black guy/buddy, Tupac Shakur. In other words, a white character's alignment with blacks helps to exempt the white character from dispersions of racism. Similarly, in movies such as *Requiem for a Dream* (Darren Aronofsky, 2000), such alignment for the white protagonist helps to establish or identify him as a "good guy."

7 Tania Modleski, *Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a "Postfeminist" Age*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp 132-4. Also in Nicole Matthews, *Comic Politics: Gender in Hollywood comedy after the New Right* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp 90-8. Modleski points out that either the black woman is either excessively woman, or not a woman at all, which accounts for some of the masculinized roles of Whoopi Goldberg.

8 Berry won the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role in *March* 2002—acknowledging her performance as an actress, as well as highlighting the significance of her character. Leticia, as well as Berry, were recognized by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

## REVIEWS

**Gabriela F. Arredondo, Aida Hurtado, Norma Klahn, Olga Najera-Ramirez, and Patricia Zavella, eds. *Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003). xi, 391 pp., \$23.95 paper.**

*Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader* is a multidisciplinary anthology of twenty-two essays--eleven essays by scholars and creative writers, followed by eleven "respondent" essays. Edited by five professors from UC, Santa Cruz, *Chicana Feminisms* focuses on three major themes: (i) "lived realities" (ii) "creative expression" and (iii) "the politics of representation" (7). These themes are about the diversity of Chicana experience relative to socio-economic status, sexual orientation, language, and geographical region.

The authors' analyses derive from personal observations, letters, interviews, poetry, and art. To "foster dialogue" and to "generate a lively exchange," each author suggested an essay respondent. Respondents represent the younger generation, different racial/ethnic groups or nationalities, those outside academia, and male critics.

The essays constitute a rich but demanding collection that on first reading may be both overwhelming and frustrating. Each essay is a "stand alone" piece that requires careful reading because new terms and concepts at times are introduced without clarification. The editors and authors assume readers' conversance with terms such as: "situated knowledges," "contestatory nature," and "counterpublic."

The strength of the essays varies considerably. For example Maylei Blackwell's essay on Chicana print culture falters in its effort to provide a balanced historical account. Accusations are repeated without adequate documentation. For instance in her discussion of the walkout at the 1971 Houston Mujeres por la Raza meeting, Blackwell reports that "several claim" that "the women who staged the walkout" were "sent" to Houston" by a certain faction of Chicano nationalists based in Los Angeles with whom the splinter group was affiliated"(76). Who were these women and what point is the author making? Some of her conclusions are drawn from a 1988, Third Edition of Rudy Acuna's *Occupied America*. Why did Blackwell not cite from the revised fourth edition? Updating would seem to be in order.

The format, consisting of eleven essays with eleven responses, has considerable merit, but it does not consistently "foster dialogue" or "generate a lively exchange"(6). For example, respondent Ruth Behar states, "There is nothing I disagree with in Cantu's essay" and adds little critical analysis.(110) Why didn't the editors select a respondent who might offer an alternate viewpoint, a critical analysis?

Overall the editors of *Chicana Feminisms* make a lot of promises but leave the reader with a lot of unanswered questions. Who is the target audience? (The collection seems too sophisticated for the casual reader or for use in many undergraduate courses.) What can the reader conclude about "Chicana feminisms"? How do these essays reflect the three major themes of *Chicana Feminisms*? Are there boundaries to Chicana feminisms? If so, what are they?

Reviewed by: Shirlene Soto  
California State University, Northridge

**Catherine Ceniza Choy. *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), xiv, 257 pp., \$19.95 paperback.**

This book takes a look at the topic of the twentieth-century migration of Filipinos to the United States and focuses

specifically on those migrants in the nursing profession. Whether one agrees with the author or not, the basic premise of the piece is that an international Filipino professional nurse labor force has been created due to the historical demands of U.S. imperialism. This re-examination of the history of the role of nursing in U.S. colonialism shows that not all immigrants readily assimilate into American society and that the racialization of Filipinos in the United States continually takes place.

The author makes use of ethnographic and archival research in both the United States and the Philippines. Interview participants were chosen using a snowball technique in which initial participants are asked for names of other potential participants. Archival research in the U.S. was conducted at Boston University's nursing archives, the Filipino American National History Society archives in Seattle, Washington, and university libraries throughout the country to locate issues of the *Philippine Journal of Nursing*, mainstream and ethnic newspapers, American nursing journals and fact books, government documents, and federal court records. The study also was helped tremendously by the personal collections of individual American and Filipino nurses since important historical documents continue to be held by individual Philippine Nurses Association members, some of whom are unwilling to share them with researchers.

Material from the Philippines was gathered during a five-month research trip to the country where the author talked with nursing deans, faculty members, and students at several Philippine colleges and schools of nursing in Manila; directors of nursing and staff nurses at private and government hospitals in Manila; the current president and several members of the Philippine Nurses Association; government employees working in overseas-related agencies; and workers in nongovernmental organizations focusing on the welfare of migrant and women workers. The author also undertook participant-observer studies in a beginning nursing class at Trinity College (formerly St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing) in Quezon City, Metro Manila (one of the oldest nursing schools in the country), participating in their community health projects and medical missions, and attending nursing and migration conferences.

In Manila archival research was conducted in the libraries of Philippine government institutions, nongovernmental institutions, the Philippine Nurses Association, colleges of nursing, and migration and women's studies centers. One cannot doubt the primary nature of the research that was undertaken by the author in order to put this material together. It is documented with photos, copious notes for each chapter, and an extensive bibliography.

The book offers several interesting facts about Filipinos in the U.S. First, the phenomenon of Filipino nurse migration to the U.S. is a window from which to view the global dimensions of this predominantly female gendered migrant flow that emanates from this country. It is true that one of the major exports of the Philippines today is its highly skilled labor force. Secondly, these nurses' highly skilled training allows them to cross national and cultural borders, thus the world has seen a professional migration flow in which nurses from countries with comparatively higher nursing shortages (the developing world) are migrating to primarily highly developed countries such as the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. The author refers to the ensuing inequalities of health services between developed and developing countries resulting from this international migration pattern as an "empire of care," hence the title of the book.

This book differs from other immigration studies in its attempt to move Filipino nurse migrants from impersonal, faceless objects of such studies to allow a better understanding and appreciation of this group of migrants as multidimensional historical agents and therefore as professionals, women, and immigrants. Beyond exploring the conventional wisdom that Filipina nurses migrate because of the salary and professional growth that they believe they will obtain when they make this decision, this book tries to bring to light the very important and complicated roles that both the Philippine and U.S. governments, recruitment agencies, and professional nursing organizations, as well as the Filipino nurse migrants themselves, have played in facilitating this form of migration. All of these come together to bring about what the author refers to as the culture of migration. Coupled with the ways U.S. hospital recruiters have collaborated across national boundaries with Philippine travel and recruitment agen-



cies in their aggressive recruitment of Filipino nurses to work in their hospitals, the institutionalization of migration is reinforced.

Underlying all of the arguments outlined by the author is the theme that U.S. colonialism in the Philippines created an Americanized training hospital system that eventually prepared Filipino women to work as nurses in the U.S. as opposed to the Philippines. This was reinforced by the Exchange Visitor Programs in the 1950s and 1960s and paved the way for the Philippine government's institutionalization of labor export in the early 1970s. This ensuing culture of U.S. imperialism created racialized hierarchies with Americans on top and Filipinos below which persist even in more recent times and continue to inform and shape the reception and incorporation of Filipino nurses in the U.S. This same racialized hierarchy is held responsible for the ways in which Filipina women nurses have been used as scapegoats for various situations. The author uses the cases of Richard Speck who murdered nurses in Chicago and of Leonora Perez and Filipina Narciso who were accused of mass murders/poisonings in Ann Arbor, Michigan. After a jury convicted Narciso and Perez in July 1977, Filipino nurses across the U.S. suffered from public suspicion about their professional intentions so that nurses across the U.S. reported instances of patients refusing to take medication from them and of hospitals developing policies not to hire Filipino nurses. Despite charges being dropped against them, xenophobic sentiments expressed by the American public as well as nurses transformed Filipino nurses from welcomed exchange visitors and immigrants into an alleged threat to the U.S. health care system.

The book's strength lies in its ability to focus attention upon the ways in which race, nationality, gender, and class have shaped the experiences of Asian professional immigrant women. These have been virtually ignored in both ethnic and women's studies. Also by focusing on the international and transnational nature of the issue of immigration, this book changes the U.S.-centric nature of studies in the Asian American and American Studies fields.

Reviewed by: Cecilia G. Manrique  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

**Stephen F. Feraca, *Wakinyan: Lakota Religion in the Twentieth Century*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). xvii, 104 pp. cloth, \$25.00.**

**Julian Rice. *Before the Great Spirit: The Many Faces of Sioux Spirituality*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998). xiii, 175pp., cloth \$45.00, paper \$22.50.**

Each of these authors provides unique approaches and insights concerning Lakota ritual and belief. Julian Rice, a prolific writer on Lakota Literature, attempts to reconstruct the essence of Lakota religion before European contact while Feraca, who logged long periods of interaction with Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation as a government employee and field worker, provides an intricate portrait of Lakota ritual during his tenure on the Pine Ridge reservation. They reach similar basic understandings of Lakota religious practice: the importance of the acquisition of spiritual power, the primacy of kinship, the democratic and charismatic nature of individual religious practice that is balanced by communal responsibilities, and the heterogeneity of Lakota belief and practice itself.

Rice draws on a wide variety of historical, literary, and narrative texts to recover what he believes to be the essence of Lakota belief before missionary contact. His stated goal is "...to try to help the Sioux people remember who they were and what they can be" (5). In this quest he critiques academic study of Lakota religion as well as New Age adoption of Lakota practices while providing an academic analysis of belief and maintaining the need for all to learn from the Lakota. He also decries the "contamination" of Lakota religion by Christian concepts, advocating for a purism that stands at odds with Feraca's observations of the easy interaction of the two belief systems. Rice works at his reconstruction by analyzing the function of trickster figures, the transforming roles of heroes and warriors, the significance of thunder beings and water monsters, the importance of symbols,

and the role of rituals, spirits and games in generating and channeling spiritual power. He holds that Lakota religion is ultimately about the here and now, contrasting this theology with his own impressions of Christianity. Stressing the heterogeneity of Lakota belief, Rice denounces the heterodoxy that he believes has crept into the scholarly study of Lakota belief. Ultimately Lakota spirituality, according to Rice, is about independence, competition, and irreverence. The author sees the role of the warrior as protecting that belief.

While Rice uses central symbols to reconstruct the original face of Lakota religion, Feraca considers near-contemporary rituals and ritual objects in presenting his portrait of Lakota religion. This work, essentially a revised republication of the author's 1963 *Wakinya: Contemporary Teton Dakota Religion*, presents a lively and engaging portrait of Lakota ritual life during the author's field experiences from 1954-1962. While this work was contemporary twenty-six years ago, the author uses footnotes, an essential part of this work, to bring his observations up to the present. Beginning with a basic history of the Lakota, the author then carefully examines a variety of Lakota rituals: Sun Dance, Vision Quest, Sweat Lodge, Yuwipi, Peyotism, and a number of healing ceremonies. The author combines scholarly research with vivid storytelling that brings to life his descriptions. Most admirable is his chapter on herbalism which focuses on the role of women in healing, a perspective quite unique for the time when the work was written. Although this edition has fewer photographs than the original publication, its redrawn illustrations and added bibliography are helpful.

Like Rice, Feraca recognizes the independence, creativity, and charismatic nature of Lakota ritual practice and yet does not sit easily with certain innovations. Feraca states in a footnote: "True yuwipi specialists are rare in the 1990s..." (90, n.4) and confesses misgivings in his conclusion as to the proper continuance of authentic Lakota religious life (83). While Feraca stresses that Lakota religion is dynamic, that past forms of ritual and belief can be, and in fact are, reintroduced and transformed by way of the dreams and visions of individual practitioners, neither he nor Rice suggest mechanisms to separate authentic versus spurious spiritual innovation. Both works give rise to an inter-

esting hermenutical dilemma: What bearing does the recovery and interpretation of past practices or the religious configuration of a specific time period have on contemporary religious practice and who has the right to make these recoveries and evaluations both from within and outside of the group? This is an important consideration for ethnic studies, and while neither work solves the issue, both certainly engage actively in the question and the process of discerning and perhaps defining religious essences.

Reviewed by: Raymond A. Bucko  
Le Moyne College

**Hoerder, Dirk. *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). 779 pp., \$85.00 cloth.**

*Cultures in Contact* is an ambitious tome of the annotated world history of human mass migrations both within and between national boundaries. This book provides a glorious descriptive wealth of when, where, and to a lesser extent “why” mass migrations have occurred across the largest and most populous regions of the planet earth over the span of the past millennium. In this regard it may serve as a valued reference work for anyone curious about the “bigger picture” of migration flows; however, those seeking a simplistic theoretical synthesis that would account for the myriad patterns of human migrations over the past millennium will not be much gratified by Hoerder’s tome. As the author highlights in his introductory chapter, human migration flows may be either voluntary or coerced and in either case must be viewed in a socio-historically specific systems context.

Migration is here characterized as driven by a complex array of cultural, political, economic, demographic and ecological forces that converge at any one place and time in history to shape migration patterns across the globe. This fact does much to account for the great length and small font of this magnum opus. But make no mistake about it, *Cultures in Contact* is a noteworthy piece of scholarly writing summarizing as it does a millennium of intricate patterns of migratory flows. To assist the

reader in digesting these intricate migration patterns Hoerder has provided a welcome array of maps each corresponding to some specific global region at some specific century location. For example his maps encompass an array of religious expulsions (Jewish, Huguenot, Muslim, Hutterite, Bohemian, Puritan), Gypsy migrations, the trade emporia of the Indian Ocean, overseas migrations of indentured and free Asian migrants, European migrations to the Americas, African slave migrations, and many more. Throughout this encyclopedic scale work there is a wealth of astute commentary on the social dynamics pertinent to a particular migratory episode.

To the extent that the author exhibits an etiological preference in explaining the patterns of human migrations that are identified, he tends to focus on the great importance that shifting global labor market needs have played in structuring population shifts. It would be wrong, however, to infer from this that the author pays no attention to demographic, technological and ecological factors that have significant impact on world migration patterns. Nonetheless other scholars of migration history have given relatively greater weight to ecological and demographic factors in explaining why some regions of the world were notoriously prolific senders of migrants while other regions of the world produced conspicuously few migrants. These sorts of factors are dealt with more in Thomas Sowell's *Migrations and Cultures: A World View*. Of course it remains true that Sowell's insightful work focuses primarily upon the most recent past two centuries. Also, Jared Diamond's justly acclaimed *Guns, Germs and Steel* accords a relatively greater prominence to the role of demographic and ecological factors in world migration patterns. As but one example, Diamond contends that the current demographic profile of the Southern African continent can only be understood as derivative of what he describes as "a geographic accident".

Diamond observes that the Khoisan peoples indigenous to the drier parts of subequatorial Africa remained as hunter-gatherers unlike the Bantu-speaking Xhosa to their north because the plant and animal species indigenous to these regions could not sustain an agrarian lifestyle. This in turn is identified as the underlying cause of the paucity of Khoisan population in dra-

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matic contrast to the far more numerous and subsequently dominant Xhosa who gradually seized control of the traditional Khoisan homelands. Diamond informs us, though, that the Xhosa's migratory expansion stopped at the Fish River on South Africa's south coast. The reason for this being that the Bantu summer-rain crops did not grow in this region leaving the Cape's Khoisan population in control of this territory until they were later displaced by the invading Dutch settlers of the 17th Century. Overall Hoerder's work may be characterized as an eclectic blend of history, sociology and economics. Given the vast scope of his book it is understandable that he is often forced to skim over the cultural dynamics that are relevant to a fuller understanding of migratory profiles. Still the reader cannot help but to leave the work with an enlightened sense of the "inter-connectedness" of the many ethnically diverse populations of the human race.

Reviewed by: Jac D. Bulk  
University of Wisconsin, La Crosse

**Claudia Koonz. *The Nazi Conscience*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). 362 pp., \$29.95 cloth.**

As the author observed in this engaging work, the expression "Nazi conscience" is not an oxymoron. Nazi morality, profoundly ethnic in nature, sharply defined those accepted and rejected as members of the German Volk. Claudia Koonz describes with great clarity the emergence of an "ethnic fundamentalism" supported by numerous "ethnocrats" under the Third Reich who, during the "normal years" of 1933-1939, advanced decidedly racial and biological perspectives on ethnicity (141, 217). Especially significant for our understanding of Nazi racial policy is Koonz's exploration of German public opinion, much of which reflected an abhorrence of Nazi brutality. What made the policy of genocide possible was the rationalization of anti-Jewish measures through a system of legal measures creating the "mirage of law and order" (193). Thus, Nazi actions against the racial other could be legally justified and initially accepted by

broad sections of the German population before the death camps became a reality. In the end the Nazi conscience could justify the mass murder of Jews as an act of moral responsibility.

The book provides readers with a variety of historical evidence including propaganda images from the popular press and photographic collections. Koonz explores Nazi conceptions of racial morality in a variety of institutional settings including the university, public education, the SS, the Office of Racial Politics, the Propaganda Ministry, and the legal system. Coming out of the author's analysis of "ethnic populism" is an insightful revelation about a development that remains overlooked to this day in our understanding of the racial politics of the Third Reich. As Koonz points out, there existed within the ranks of Nazi ethnocrats during the mid-1930's some confusion about whether it was possible, in applying racial laws, to objectively determine "biological Jewishness" (p. 215). A shift toward the consideration of a "Jewish spirit" somehow linked to a collection of definable Jewish characteristics became a more important part of the official justification for treating Jews like pariahs. This disagreement and periodic confusion among ethnocrats over racial categories challenges the assumption that Nazi Germany was a monolithic state with reified assumptions about racial citizenship across the twelve years of its existence.

One of the great strengths of this work is Koonz's insightful examination of the Nazi conscience through the lens of ethnicity; however, the chapter on "the swastika in the heart of youth," which primarily explores Nazi perspectives on teachers, remains too thin in regard to published Nazi curriculum sources. A greater depth of analysis in this area, especially in connection with curriculum guides on the Jewish question written, among others, by Ernst Dobers, Fritz Fink and Werner Dittrich (1936-1938), would have contributed a deeper level of understanding about the dynamics of the Nazi conscience in materials written for teachers. This relatively minor concern does not detract from the excellent scholarship represented by this insightful book, a work that makes an original and long lasting contribution to the historiography of Nazi culture.

Reviewed by: Gregory Paul Wegner

**Teodros Kiros, ed. *Explorations in African Political Thought: Identity, Community, Ethics*. (New York: Routledge, 2001). X + 214 pp. Diagrams. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$22.95. Paper.**

*Explorations in African Political Thought: Identity, Community, Ethics* is a collection of ten essays written both by newcomers and by well-known African philosophers. Most of the authors are currently teaching in American universities. It is part of the growing literature that cements African philosophy as an integral part of the discipline of philosophy while charting new venues for the field. The objective of this book is to illustrate that African philosophy can serve African people as a moral activity guided by the principles of practical reason in addressing the underlying problems of African economic, political, and social institutions. Teodros Kiros, the volume's editor, chose the contributors because they were willing to describe phenomenologically entrenched practices of today's Africa, "subject them to critical assessment, and, when necessary, displace them with better visions and research." Kiros writes in the introduction that the authors address "perennial cultural, political, and ethical problems that plague the human condition in Africa."

The interdisciplinary sweep of this study is extraordinary, incorporating as it does examples from the anthropology, history, law, political science, and sociology of Africa and elsewhere. As such it has meaning for practitioners of the social sciences and the humanities. In the first chapter Gail M. Presbey argues that there are many wise sages in Africa who warrant further study by philosophers and others. She begins by referencing subjects of H. Odera Orika's "sages philosophy" project which began in 1977 and introduces candidates from Kenya she believes merit consideration as sages. Her approach should ask social scientists to broaden their notions of leadership and community improvement. Claude Summer uses his "The Proverb and Oral Society" to venture from his lifetime devotion to working on the Oromo to "delve into the *problematique* of orality." By



*problematique* Sumner means not just “the problem itself but also elements of the problem, its ‘situation,’ and the context within which it arises and grows.” G. Katsiaficas’ explorations into Ibn Khaldun’s theory of an Ethical Community are addressed to historians as much as to philosophers, Katsiaficas’ primary audience. So too is Kiros’ own chapter on the 17th century Ethiopian philosopher Zara Yacob. Readers of *Ethnic Studies Review* should find K. Anthony Appiah’s “Ethnic Identity as a Political Resource” especially appealing. Appiah, who wrote the introduction to the volume, uses the Asante of Ghana to argue that ethnicity is a materially and psychologically useful political resource and not merely a part of civil society.

This work should be stimulating to devotees of philosophy in general, not only African philosophy. Critical rationalism, communitarianism, and justice and morality are among the topics covered. Some of the authors engage the work of other contributors. Gail Presbey’s criticism of D.A. Masolo and Sumner is a prime example of the latter. Some engage the work of Eurocentric philosophers. Katsiaficas, for example, reminds us that Ibn Khaldun was indeed an Islamic philosopher as philosophers in the West European tradition portray him. Departing from the mainstream of Eurocentric philosophy, however, Katsiaficas also reminds us that Ibn Khaldun was also very much an African and an African philosopher whose relevance transcends geography and time to have meaning for modern and post-modern Africa.

Tradition and the modern state are central to the analyses of Ali Mazrui, I.A. Menkiti, Ajume Wingo, and Kwasi Wiredu. Mazrui revisits assertions that he made earlier elsewhere, that ethnic identity and other treasured African values survived the colonial experience. He maintains that colonialism resulted in uniting societies who traditionally had lived separately, thereby generating or furthering discords and conflicts. He contends that in the interest of peace and stability peoples with shared values and perspectives should be allowed to live together, a transparent suggestion that borders inherited from European colonial states should be reconsidered. The inviolability of borders created by European colonists is a sacred tenet of postcolonial Africa. Wingo, like Mazrui, holds that precolonial Africa had

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ways of promoting positive values, and in turn those values led to compromise, peace, and stability. He concludes that modern leaders and their states need to inculcate youths with those positive values. Wiredu is insistent that consensus was a trait of traditional Africa. As such he also builds on a thesis featured in other of his works. He asserts that consensus was a democratic trait, especially in non-centralized states. He reasons that leaders of postcolonial Africa should recognize that it is in their self-interest, as well good policy, to promote it. Menkiti also delves into the issues of political stability and instability. From his perspective instability resulted from the failure to incorporate African values into Western style systems.

*Explorations in African Political Thought: Identity, Community, Ethics* makes a significant contribution to African philosophy. Although some undergraduates may be challenged by a number of the examples used by authors, the book makes for stimulating and useful reading on the graduate and professional levels. Policymakers and executors of public policy will find the work enlightening and thoroughly absorbing.

Reviewed by: Ashton Wesley Welch  
Creighton University

**Matibag, Eugenio. *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint*. (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2003) 269 pp. \$55.00 Cloth.**

Those unfamiliar with the Dominican Republic and Haiti would probably think that the two countries with their different languages and cultures are distinct and separate historically as they are culturally. The French and African heritage of Haiti is often contrasted with the Spanish heritage of the Dominican Republic. Matibag demonstrates that the two cultures and nations are intertwined at a level that would surprise even the informed scholar.

The book is scholarly and interesting. It covers the history of the Dominican Republic and Haiti in a coherent and wide-ranging fashion. The text not only offers insights into the conflict

between the two nations but also offers an explanation for the various policies, conflicts, and even cooperation between the two nations. It provides the reader with an understanding of how the two countries became so different and yet intertwined in their histories and current situations. Matibag explains how two countries that occupy the same island can be so separate and so unequal. Using theory, concepts, and historical facts, he attempts to explain how the long histories of the two countries have been so intertwined and yet so separate. Anyone not familiar with this history will find the chapter on this of great value in understanding current events in both countries and in their relations with the U.S. Students, educators, and scholars of all sorts will benefit from his tracing the different histories based on European conquest and domination until the Haitian revolution.

The centuries of domination by colonial powers clearly provide the basis for the separatism and yet also for the ties that bind the two cultures. Matibag's analysis follows the development of Haiti after the revolution. Though the French left, their influence did not leave. Haiti became the second Republic in the Americas but did not get support from the U.S. or other democracies as one might have expected. Matibag looks at the relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic between 1802 and 1844. These years were filled both with good relations and violence between the two countries. The two countries were united under Haitian rule for twenty-two years which ends with the Dominican revolt that led to the formation of the Dominican Republic. The country begins with an anti-Haitian basis. Those not familiar with this history might struggle to understand current conflicts between the countries. Matibag also examines the attempts at nation building and the processes of nationalism that emerge after the 1844 founding of the Dominican Republic. Though probably better known, Matibag examines the increasing intervention of the U.S. on the weak island nations and the U.S. support of dictatorships in both countries. The domination of both countries from 1930-1985 by strong leaders and their exploitation of their own people and those of the other island nation is also examined. Massacres, murders, "death squads" abound. Getting personal money for providing corporations with workers, taking part of those workers pay, getting profits from

nearly every industry and more are discussed as the exploitation rapes both nations. Trujillo and the Duvaliers destroyed their own countries for power and money.

Perhaps more unique is Matibag's analysis of the cultures in an intriguing chapter that uses literature to show the pain and suffering of the people of both nations. Matibag develops a history of Haitian/Dominican relations through a presentation of literature. Using the words of Dominican writers, he presents a vivid picture of the heart of the peoples. He concludes by offering a scholarly interpretation of past events and future collaborations between the peoples of both nations. The border, though short, is a great divide between the two nations.

This is an excellent text that deserves to be read. It is interesting, information and very readable. I highly recommend it.

Gerry R. Cox  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

**Jun Xing and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, eds. *Reversing the Lens: Ethnicity, Race, Gender, and Sexuality Through Film*. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003). xv, 270 pp., \$19.95 paper.**

The fourteen essays collected in Xing and Hirabayashi's new volume make a strong argument for serious intellectual work involved not only in the college-level study of moving images for their messages about minority groups but also in pedagogical approaches that take film and video as their primary texts. Written by a collection of scholars who work in ethnic and racial studies and various allied fields, the essays share a concern with pedagogy and with showing "how visual media can be used to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and communications, particularly with respect to the thorny topics of ethnicity and race" (3). Indeed, despite the book's title, film/video's treatments of minority races and ethnicities are the collection's main focus; gender and sexuality are broached in their intersection with ethnic and racial categories (Elisa Facio's chapter on "The Queering of Chicana Studies" and Marilyn C. Alquizola and Lane Ryo

Hirabayashi's piece on teaching stereotypes of Asian American women, for example), and global/international identities are discussed when they can illuminate a United States context. An eclectic range of Hollywood, avant-garde, independent, and documentary film and video is examined in essays of a likewise broad range of rhetorical styles and methodologies--some firmly grounded in academic theory, others more accessible to the laypeople addressed in the introduction as potential readers.

The volume's unique focus on pedagogy is attributable to its origins in a regional academic conference that drew participants from post-secondary institutions in Colorado "that focused on the use of video and film in studying multiple dimensions of ethnicity and race" (xiii). While a few essays quickly gloss over pedagogy, most devote significant attention to this theme. Readers/instructors are repeatedly impressed with the need for extreme care in choosing a video/film and its place on the syllabus, then maximizing its effectiveness as a teaching tool: "Film should not be used merely as a supplement, but it should be an integral part of the thematic and pedagogical focus of a course" (12). Brett Stockdill, Lisa Sun-Hee Park, and David N. Pellow provide detailed, bulleted guidelines on how to achieve these ends in their essay "Beyond the Hollywood Hype: Unmasking State Oppression Against People of Color," which also includes excerpts from student responses to the documentary, *The Panama Deception*. Similarly other essays describe syllabi or lesson plans, analyzing their success in real--sometimes diverse, sometimes not--classroom settings, such as Malcolm Collier and Hirabayashi's piece on teaching the documentary *Monterey's Boat People*, Brenda J. Allen's work on using the documentary *Skin Deep* to teach race and critical thinking,, and Jeffrey B. Ho's unusual chapter on using *The Matrix* to teach concepts of eastern mysticism. Ward Churchill and Lee Bernstein offer surveys of ethnocentricity and racism in, respectively, the history of Hollywood's representations of Native Americans and the historical racialization of popular crime films. In this context Adeleke Adeeko's essay on the film *Mississippi Masala* is somewhat unusual in being less descriptive of classroom practices or film history, than speculative regarding what should be taught in a multicultural curriculum. Adeeko interprets *Masala* as a means

of theorizing the current stakes in multicultural pedagogy and related curricular reforms.

The editors are quick to point out that the instructional use of film and video outside of film/video studies does present difficulties (7). Despite this recognition in the volume's very careful introduction, "film/video aesthetics," "visual literacy," and "critical visual thinking" are concepts that are unevenly defined and/or employed across the volume's subsequent chapters. The copious film/video stills and publicity posters peppering the book serve as mere illustrations rather than subjects for visual analysis. Also visual media's ideologically and otherwise meaningful formal qualities are examined closely only in chapters analyzing avant-garde films. The dangers of this tendency to interpret visual rhetoric only when it is unavoidable (because cognitively unusual) are compounded by the volume's at times sloppy discussions of film's "realism" (particularly documentary films) and its consequent ability to elicit emotional affect in (student) spectators. For example, Brenda J. Allen claims, "The documentary format appeals to students because the people in the video are 'real'" (149), and "to provide [students with others' experiences], scholars frequently recommend using media based on narrative because of its potential for a strong, enduring impact. . . ." (147). Xing and Hirabayashi also ascribe the pedagogical power of moving pictures to "the seeming immediacy of film and its seeming evidentiary power" (4). Scare quotes and "seemingnesses" aside, one wishes for a more sustained analysis of the rhetorical and manipulative powers of visual media--documentary included. (Indeed Churchill and Bernstein immediately flag Hollywood films' narratives as manipulative and ideologically sinister in their "realism," but they, too, fail to explore the films' visual strategies.) The complications of using such "real," affective media to teach about really-real minority groups and their experiences should be examined.

Along with a comprehensive index to its essays, *Reversing the Lens* includes a selected filmography and film distributors index. For those well versed in film history and theory, who already take film seriously as a pedagogical tool or subject, this volume provides provocative film/video titles and close readings. For its primary audience--instructors of ethnic and racial studies

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interested in meaningfully incorporating film texts into their courses--it also offers valuable classroom case studies, sample lesson plans and assignments, as well as an introduction to the complex and increasingly more crucial task of teaching "visual literacy" in an ethnic and racial studies context. As Hirabayashi and Alquizola write, "This anthology is only the spark for what will necessarily be a long, collective dialogue. . ." (246).

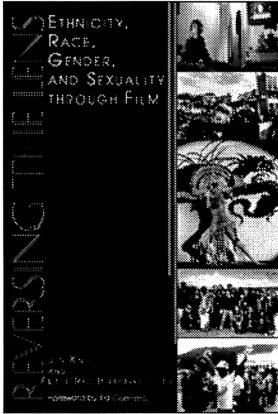
Susan Crutchfield  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse



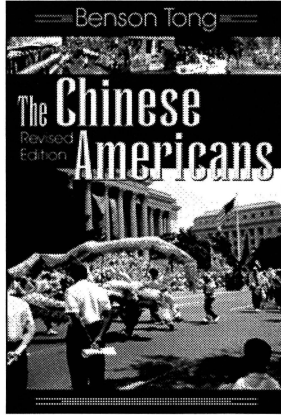




University Press of Colorado



**REVERSING THE LENS**  
Ethnicity, Race, Gender,  
and Sexuality Through  
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*Edited by Jun Xing and  
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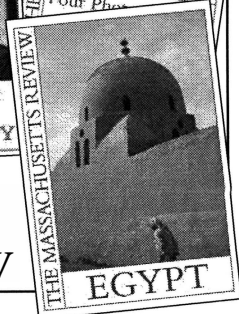
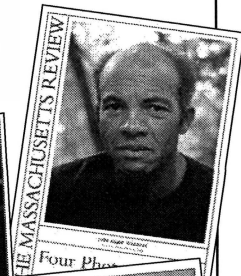
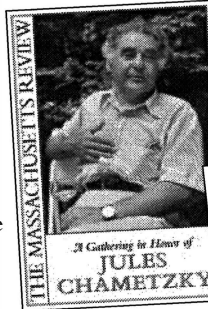
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