

class is a definite weakness of the article.

Third, that the history of education in this country demonstrates how the prevailing thrust has been in favor of a pedagogical philosophy which is not about the business of preserving culture is inaccurate. American education has traditionally focused on the preservation of culture—European and Euroamerican.

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Notes

¹Charles L. Sanders, ed. *Mental Health Programs for Racial Minorities*. Institute for Urban Affairs and Research. (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1977) 2.

²James A. Banks. *Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1979) 7.

Critique

The main subject of Jesse Vazquez's article is clearly the ethnic matrix, although several related issues are also covered. While any of the latter could be discussed here, my comments will focus on the matrix itself.

The ethnic matrix deals with a problem of obvious importance, the need to better conceptualize the nature of ethnicity given what we have learned about this phenomenon over the past two decades. The ethnic matrix is an insightful approach to this problem which has the potential for becoming a significant perspective. It provides a fresh point of view which is good because fresh views often encourage or directly contribute to the work of other researchers and they serve as reminders of the inadequacies of earlier conceptions of ethnicity such as the assimilation paradigm. Beyond this, I especially like how the matrix builds upon the common but useful notion of behavior choices and that it emphasizes the adaptability of racial minorities and other groups, the fluidity and complexity of ethnicity, and the influence of the larger societal context.

Vazquez, however, presents only the barest outlines of the ethnic matrix. The matrix must be conceptually developed beyond this initial

stage in order to have any major influence on researchers and human services practitioners. This situation should be seen as more of an opportunity for future work than an existing shortcoming. Fortunately, there are a number of avenues along which future development might proceed. Vazquez undoubtedly has some thoughts on this matter—as will readers of this article. I will offer three modest suggestions.

First, the idea of an ethnic continuum defined by only two opposite poles is probably too simple. A certain number of continuum mid-points could be formulated and examined. One possibility is to consider very general types of what Vazquez refers to as modified or mixed mode behaviors. These could even include traditional modes of behavior which have new Anglo-American social meanings and consequences or vice-versa.

Second, the role of ethnic culture as a cause as well as a result of behavior choices (or broad collective behavior patterns) could be given more attention. Ethnic culture could itself be seen as a complicated mix of elements retained unchanged or in modified form from a group's traditional cultural background, elements selectively taken unchanged or in modified form from Anglo-American culture, and completely new elements which evolve out of a group's experiences in American society. Over time, changes in this mix, including the possible reintroduction of previously discarded elements, will produce different ethnic cultural forms. My third suggestion is that the links between behavior choices, general orientations, and perhaps longer term life patterns could be further explored.

One final observation. The specific implications of the ethnic matrix for human services practitioners could be investigated more extensively in future work. One example would be a detailed look at the types of high-impact behavior choices which might require the assistance of counselors or therapists. Such investigations could make use of pertinent findings from the recent literature on cross-cultural counseling.

In sum, the ethnic matrix is a promising approach to the important problem of better conceptualizing ethnicity. However, its basic outlines need additional development. I hope that Vazquez as well as others will soon pursue this task.

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