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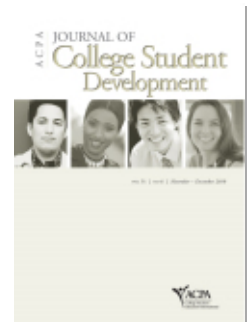
*Ethnicity in College: Advancing Theory and Improving
Diversity Practices on Campus* (review)

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Ethnicity in College: Advancing Theory and Improving Diversity Practices on Campus

Anna M. Ortiz and Silvia J. Santos

Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2009, 401 pages,
\$35.00 (softcover)

Reviewed by Florence M. Guido,
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A long misunderstood concept often used interchangeably with racial identity, ethnic identity is thoughtfully outlined, researched, and applied to college students in a clear, thorough, and scholarly way in *Ethnicity in College: Advancing Theory and Improving Diversity Practices on Campus*. In this carefully crafted book, Ortiz and Santos describe a multicampus, multimethod study they conducted examining college students and their ethnic quest. In contrast to the underlying assumptions of many ethnic and racial identity models, their study assumed that the college student participants grew up in multicultural environments, not predominately monocultural White environments as in much previous identity inquiry.

Ortiz and Santos wanted to know “how students develop ethnic identities in multicultural contexts” (p. ix). In fact, both institutions studied are multicultural campuses where students of color outnumber White students, many who, in a turnabout, felt inferior at these culturally rich institutions. The book is arranged in three key sections: (a) a review of the literature on ethnic and racial identity development (chapter 2), much of which lays the psychological groundwork for creating ethnic identity; (b) an overview and explanation of the ethnic identity of Asian American, African American, Latinas/os, and

Whites (chapters 3-6) and each group’s most important cultural impact on students; and (c) illustrations of the forces connected to diverse communities of learning for students’ ethnic development and their relationships with each other (chapters 7-8).

In a relatively detached voice, the book details a qualitative study conducted at two institutions of higher education in Southern California, both with White student populations under 50%. The broad diversity within each cultural group netted interviews with 120 student participants who were classified as African American (23%), Asian American (23%), Latinas/os (25%) and Whites (29%) with an average age of 21.3 years and enrolled in their junior or senior year. In addition, 64% were women, 77% worked full or part-time, 42% lived with family, 44% were first-generation students, 75% identified their social class status as working, lower middle, or middle class, and 94% were enrolled in college full time. Finally, most student participants from each ethnic group above identified a smaller cultural group to which they belonged (for example, an Asian American might identify as Japanese or Vietnamese instead of as a member of the larger group; while Latinas/os have many identifiers from Haitian American to Mexican American and Chicano to name a few on a long list).

The review of literature in chapter 2 provides a discussion encompassing several popular racial and ethnic models which influenced the concept of ethnic identity development for the four ethnic groups in the study, although it falls short of the breadth and depth of available literature. Although this study contributes to the literature on ethnic

identity, it ignores the contributions of others who have empirically studied undergraduate students' ethnic identity and extended our knowledge of how this manifests itself in a college environment (for example, Torres, 2003; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2004). The absence of this research is disappointing as it is in the forefront of the student development literature (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010) and *informs* our understanding of college students' ethnic identity, although it does not state a multicultural context as a given.

The next section of the book discusses the details of the interview data related to the college experiences of Asian American (chapter 3), African American (chapter 4), Latino (chapter 5), and White (chapter 6) college students at these multicultural institutions in Southern California. (The absence of Native American student voices undermines the study's stated objective to be inclusive). Three paramount themes surfaced for the Asian American students, such as: (a) the family's impact on ethnic identity, (b) how language effects ethnic pride, and (c) the transformation of the Asian culture by these students becoming American. African American students indicated miseducation of their cultural history which required its reconstruction while simultaneously suffering discrimination. Religion, spirituality, dialect, and an inclusive family structure all help maintain African American students' ethnic pride and cultural transmission and generation. Elements of Latino ethnic identity center on self-assignment of ethnic labels, "expressions of ethnicity, the collectivist nature of family, ethnic identity processes, emerging political awareness and consciousness, and acculturation in becoming *Americanized*" (pp. 130-131). These students sought a bicultural world in which they could live in the dominate culture while maintain their Latino cultural heritage.

Finally, White students discuss many aspects of the meaning and practice of white identity but reveal angst related to racial identity without contrasting its development to cultural/racial others, some reconstructing Whiteness as a nonracist identity.

The final two chapters of the book highlight the effective practices of multicultural campuses which support the ethnic identity of students. Chapter 7 discussed positive elements of multicultural campuses in descending order of importance including sense of belonging, multicultural competence, evolving ethnic identity, interethnic connectedness, ethnic political consciousness, and course/campus organizations, while the negative elements were identified as ethnic inadequacy, perceived discrimination, interethnic tension, and ethnic segregation. The researchers' called to higher education administrators to create environments on campus to address these issues. Finally, chapter 8 summarizes the ethnic identity issues of each group discussed and creates a holistic way to examine the differences of each ethnic group to enrich the lives of all students on a multicultural campus.

The authors see their book as appropriate for upper-division and graduate courses on pluralism, as a resource for psychology and higher education practitioners and scholars, and as a guide for higher education and student affairs leaders to develop policy highlighting individual major ethnic group strengths for creation of a pluralist campus culture. The book claims new research findings in each of the four major groups discussed but some findings appear similar in scope to other published research on each major ethnic group. As an example, Ortiz and Santos refer to Latino students as living in a "hybrid culture" which seems similar to "biculturalism" as discussed in Torres' (1999) validation of a bicultural orientation model for Hispanic students. Finally, the authors

suggest they set in motion a more holistic way to examine ethnic identity rather than isolating it as one social identity among many to develop while becoming an adult. Some examples for improving diversity practices on campus are offered. However, the strength of this book is its weaving of selected literature through a broad range of student voices to highlight similarities and differences among each group so developmental interventions can be successful for college students seeking to develop their ethnic identity.

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The Future of Service-Learning: New Solutions for Sustaining and Improving Practice

Jean R. Strait and Marybeth Lima (Editors)
Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2009, 256 pages, \$29.95 (softcover)

Reviewed by Lydia F. Bell,
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The Future of Service-Learning: New Solutions for Sustaining and Improving Practice, edited by Jean R. Strait and Marybeth Lima, is a timely volume asking the reader to consider what is next for service-learning. Primarily geared toward service-learning practitioners and those interested in service-learning research within higher education, this edited volume raises numerous questions to push service-learning further and to address the current climate of higher education. Discussions regarding changing student demographics, an increase in web-based courses, and the current financial climate facing institutions of higher education are addressed in this volume, which includes case studies, anecdotal best practices, and reviews of current research on various aspects of service-learning in higher education.

The book is divided into three sections. Part I explores issues of service-learning administration, part II examines service-learning's ability to lead to research, and part III discusses future directions for service-learning design. Although the chapters nestle within their section, each can be read on its own, allowing the reader to jump to the chapters of most significant interest.

In part I, chapter 1 begins with an overview of the volume by Jean Strait, addressing the rationale which led the book to be produced, presenting the logic behind each section's organization, and providing a brief overview for each chapter. In chapter 2, Strong, Green, Meyer and Post discuss where service-learning is housed on various campuses, and