DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

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DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education

Edited by

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With a Foreword by

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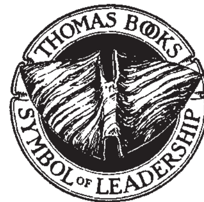

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This book is dedicated to my wife, soul mate, and best friend, Shelley Banks Milner; to my wonderfully supportive and loving parents, Henry and Barbara Milner; to my splendidly talented sister who is a public school teacher of diverse learners, Tanya Milner McCall; and to all the teachers and educators who dare to do what is right for learners, all learners, each day.

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FOREWORD

The contributing authors to this volume exemplify many of the major concepts and principles of Multicultural Education, individually and collectively. This is accomplished by the specific content presented, as well as how the authors craft their chapters. In developing their own narratives of particular issues of concern they demonstrate that Multicultural Education has ideological, structural, substantive, and process dimensions. At its best all of these aspects are woven into every story told and proposal made for improving learning opportunities and outcomes for all students through the inclusion of ethnic, racial, cultural, and social diversity into educational policies, programs, and practices. This pervasive inclusion is a theoretical ideal and often difficult, if not impossible, for an individual advocate to accomplish in actual practice. Here is where this volume is particularly noteworthy. The various chapters address a wide range of perspectives that have high "individual and "stand-alone" significance. An even greater strength, however, is how the chapters complement each other, and together constitute a comprehensive profile of Multicultural Education, conceptually and pragmatically. Together they accomplish much more than a single author would be able to do alone.

Another prominent feature of these discussions is *multiple perspectives and multiple means.* "Diversity" is examined from a wide range of vantage points. These include race, ethnicity, gender, social class, disciplines, language, and levels of schooling, as well as curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning climate and context, and relationships between teachers and learners. These analyses give functional meaning to Jerome Bruner's (1986) notions that "We know the world in different ways, from different stances, and each of the ways in which we know it produces different structures or representations, or, indeed, realities"(p. 109). Furthermore, people give different status or claims of significance to the experiences they have from their different encounters with the world, all of which are filtered through complex sets of sociocultural lens.

The most effective pedagogical way to respond to this variance in culturally pluralistic classrooms is to use multiple ways of teaching and learning to

accomplish the highest outcomes for all students. Since students come to learning encounters with different cultural orientations, frames of reference, lived experiences, and personal styles treating them all the same instructionally is morally indefensible. Instead, educational beliefs, programs, and practices for diverse students should be governed by the *normative standard of plurality (or diversity) informed by cultural knowledge and responsiveness to different ethnic, racial, social, and language groups.* In promoting these ideas and demonstrating how they function in different learning contexts, the authors of *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* operationalize Banks' (1994) and Boykin's (2002) recommendations to view educational institutions as complex social systems that require comprehensive approaches to implementing education for and about cultural diversity. Banks cautions us that merely "reforming any one variable, such as curriculum materials and the formal curriculum, is necessary but not sufficient" (p. 116). Boykin (2002, p. 81) agrees in his statement that, "Comprehensive transformations, which impact the full range of school activities, outlooks, structures, and outcomes are needed." Banks' caution can be extended to attributing the challenges, benefits, and understandings of diversity to a single variable such as race, gender, age, or social class. The chapters in this volume avoid these pitfalls by analyzing the intersections of multiple versions of diversity, both separately and collectively. Although most focus primarily on a particular type of diversity (such as language) its interaction with other kinds (i.e., race, social class, and gender) is examined as well.

The contributing authors also broaden the dialogue on Multicultural Education by addressing some issues of analysis that often are not included in the same discussions. For example, Multicultural Education scholars who focus on Pre-K-12 schools and those who concentrate on collegiate education typically do not publish in the same journals, or participate in the same professional communities. As a result, the research and scholarship they produce sometimes use a language and style of discourse that are discordant, and at times even contradictory. *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* bridges these gaps by including pre-collegiate and higher education viewpoints. These are enriched further by combining general, across-subject analyses of ethnic, language, and cultural diversity with subject-specific discussions; weaving scholarly and personal voices together into compelling synergies of ideological persuasion and pedagogical power; using insider and outsider perspectives to complement each other; including analyses of current realities along with transformative possibilities; and applying all of these to areas of study often overlooked, or treated separately. Therefore, readers learn about implementing cultural diversity in early elementary education, higher education, post-secondary athletic programs, preservice teacher education, understanding African American masculinity, action research, leadership development for women, English language learning, African American females in contemporary popular culture, urban schools, and global interdependence.

While most readers may not consider all of these issues with the same amount of interest and ownership, the volume has the potential of bringing a broad cross-section of individuals together in richer, deeper, and more comprehensive dialogue about the attributes, necessities, and benefits of Multicultural Education. Undoubtedly, such conversations will crystallize visions of its future possibilities as well, and give further clarity to the notion that the best Multicultural Education practices are systemic, pervasive, comprehensive, and persistent (Banks & Banks, 2007). They also will illustrate that although the principles of good Multicultural Education are transcendent across context and content, their operational features must be responsive to particular locations, audiences, purposes, and subjects. Thus, *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* exemplifies *unity and diversity*, simultaneously, in its content and techniques.

A third common theme across the chapters of this book is that being an effective advocate of diversity in education requires personal and professional competence and commitment. Again, this message is conveyed by *how* as well as *what* the authors write about. Personal stories are woven together with theoretical scholarship, research findings, and practical experiences in compelling arguments about the nature and beneficial effects of cultural diversity in education for students in different levels of learning, from early childhood, to secondary schools, to college programs of study, to the professional preparation of individuals planning to become teachers. These ways of conveying the essence of Multicultural Education are consistent with the claims made by many other scholars and leaders in the field. For example, Sleeter (1992) noted that teachers will do little to revise their pedagogical practices related to ethnic, racial, and social diversity unless they make concurrent changes in the contexts in which they live personally and function professionally. In other words, they need to become multicultural on multiple levels. Nieto (1992) restated this idea in *Affirming Diversity* when she declared, "*becoming a multicultural teacher . . . first means becoming a multicultural person* (p. 277; emphasis in original). She explained further that, "Without this transformation of ourselves, any attempts at developing a multicultural perspective will be shallow and superficial. But becoming a multicultural person in a society that still emphasizes the model of an educated person in a monocultural framework is not easy. It means reeducating ourselves in several ways" (p. 277). This reeducation agenda must include confronting racial, ethnic, cultural, social and linguistic biases; learning to see social and educational realities from the perspectives of diverse ethnic groups and varied positions within groups; acquiring more knowledge about ethnic and cultural diversity; and teachers developing the skills and habits of critical reflection on their instructional beliefs about and behaviors toward culturally diverse students (Nieto, 1992). Gay (2003, p. 4) follows these lines of thinking in not-

ing that "who we are as people determines the personality of our teaching." Thus, if individuals are multiculturally conscious and critically reflective in their personal lives, they are more likely to be so as well in their professional activities.

Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education offers diverse opportunities, invitations, and challenges for educators to engage in all these levels of learning and transformative ways of being as they cultivate their professional and personal multicultural competencies. The contributing authors give functional meaning to Banks' (1994) suggestion that the best way to prepare teachers to involve students in knowing, caring, and acting constructively toward ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity is for them to gain more knowledge about ethnic and cultural diversity themselves; to consider knowledge as a social construction from different ethnic and cultural perspectives; and take action to make their own lives, communities, and professional behaviors more culturally diverse. These authors help the process by providing knowledge about different manifestations of diversity that directly affect teaching and learning, suggestions for how this knowledge should transform pedagogical practices, case studies of these suggestions actualized, and the transformative effects of multicultural education on various kinds of achievement.

While the mixture of theory, research, and practice woven throughout *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* (both within and across the chapters) is noteworthy, an even more salient attribute is the use of personal stories, or narratives. This fourth common theme constitutes a powerful linkage between the conceptualization and actualization of ideas related to educating students who are not members of the mainstream U. S. society. These stories make the authors and their proposals more personable, and improve the overall meaningfulness of the text for different learners or consumers of the content. They fit Goldblatt's (2007) description of narrative or story as a scaffold between writers and readers, speakers and listeners. In the construction and telling of stories intimate connections are made among individuals through language, thought, and action, and as they encounter "echoes or resonances to their own experiences" (p. 40). Furthermore, "Narratives provide the continuing chain that can expand perceptions . . . hold the potential to acknowledge truths inherent in the Human Condition . . . [and allow] perhaps even new ways to confront and think about societal issues" (Goldblatt 2007, p. 41).

The chapters in this volume also demonstrate how and why story and narrative can be a research methodology, a body of content knowledge, and an instructional tool for learning about and promoting cultural diversity in education (Fowler, 2006). As Witherell (1991) explains,

> Whether inventing, reading, or listening to stories, reading or writing journals and autobiographies, conducting oral history interviews, or engaging in therapeutic dialogue, the teller or receiver of stories can discover connections between self and other, penetrate barriers to understanding, and come to know more deeply the meaning of his or her own historical and cultural narrative. Story and metaphor provide a form of educational encounter that renders us human and frees the moral imagination. (p. 94)

For example, the stories some of the authors in this volume tell about themselves and children being victimized by racism and other forms of oppression move these issues from the realm of intellectualized abstraction to the level of *emotionally felt lived experiences*, thereby making the message about the damages done more poignant, and the need to counteract them even more urgent and imperative. Thus, story reveals and impacts in ways and to an extent that factual information alone can never reach. It is a powerful technique for implementing high quality multicultural education. In this sense, story heightens and highlights the other central features of the content in this book.

Stated somewhat differently, the personal stories included allow the various readers of *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* to "see themselves" vicariously in the issues, experiences, and reform ideas presented by the authors. In so doing these narratives do for envisioning ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity in the educational enterprise what Witherell and Noddings (1991) see as the power of story in general.

According to them,

> Stories and narratives, whether personal or fictional, provide meaning and belonging in our lives. They attach us to others and to our own histories by providing a tapestry rich with threads of time, place, character, and even advice on what we might do with our lives. The story fabric offers us images, myths, and metaphors that are morally resonant and contribute both to our knowing and our being known. (p. 1)

Speaking specifically about personal stories in teaching, Witherell and Noddings add that "Understanding the narrative and contextual dimensions of human actors can lead to new insights, compassionate judgment, and the creation of shared knowledge and meaning that can inform professional practice" (p. 8). However, the power of story as a teaching tool extends far beyond merely revealing personal insights. It resides, instead, in the union of thought and feelings, of logic and morality, of individual selves with communal selves, of the familiar and the strange, of reality and possibility (Witherell & Noddings, 1991). This is because, according to Fowler (2006, pp. 8–9),

"Stories seduce; they build desire to know *what* happened, to watch *who*, to visualize where and when, to make meaning about how, and to more deeply understand why. . . . Stories educate because they lead us to see, know, become, want, construct something else as the heart matures or withers, as the mind connects or disconnects."

The sense of connection and camaraderie, and feelings of personal ownership elicited by the stories in this volume are essential to moving commitments to cultural diversity in education from vague beliefs to specific actions. They also are strong motivators for novices who are just beginning their journeys into Multicultural Education, and may be plagued by skepticism about their abilities to be effective promoters of diversity. These individuals are likely to be encouraged by the wide-ranging strategies for dealing with diversity at different levels and locations of teaching included in *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education*. By sharing personal stories that illuminate this variance, virtually all readers should be able to "find a place for themselves" in promoting this educational transformation, and know that they can make worthy contributions to the cause without having to replicate any particular person, program, or practice. These authors tell us, in very authentic ways, that there are many viable approaches for implementing ethnic, racial, social, cultural, and linguistic diversity in education. In fact, a strong message they convey through the use of personal stories about challenges they have encountered with cultural diversity, and how they are overcoming them (personally and professionally) is that *implementing diversity in education demands diverse knowledge and methodologies*. What better way to convey this idea than by telling one's own story of effort, engagement, and effect as a transformative multicultural educator.

Recently and over time a great deal of attention has been given to underachieving students of color and closing the achievement gap in academic scholarship, research, school policy, instructional practice, and even the popular press. More often than not, a pathological orientation permeates most of this discourse in which the emphases tend to be on the problems and deficits of the victimized students. Negative statistics are quoted about performance on standardized tests, disciplinary referrals and actions, grade retention, and failure to complete various levels of schooling as expected (i.e., not performing at grade level, dropping out of school before graduation; not completing college degrees in a timely manner or at all). The authors in *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* evoke some of these statistics as well, but, fortunately, they do not stop there. These scenarios are presented more as background information, contextual cues, and graphic reminders of the magnitude of the need for change, rather than as the central or dominant issues of analysis. There is an uplifting, positive tone to their discussions, and a sense of hopefulness that an educational transformation is

possible for underachieving students of color. This is the fifth common theme across the chapters. These authors shift their primary focus for change from individual students to educational systems. They see educational institutions as victimizing students from ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds that differ from the mainstream, and argue that they should accept the primary responsibility for lifting the burdens of oppression by making some fundamental changes in how they deliver educational services to marginalized students. They readily recognize that this may not be an easy task, or that educational institutions can accomplish all of the changes needed to bring about equity and social justice. But, there is much they can do, and must, if the pervasive inequities that currently (and historically) characterize educational environments, opportunities, programs, and practices are to be eliminated.

From the perspective of students, this volume in its entirety endorses, illustrates, and promotes what Kim, Roehler, and Pearson (Chapter 7 this volume) call *strength-based instruction.* This idea is expressed in different ways by the authors of the various chapters and by other advocates of Multicultural Education. For example, Boykin (2000, 2002) has created a Talent Development Model for classroom teachers to cultivate the *talent potential* or *cultural assets* of African American students, and *place them at promise* for academic success instead of at risk for failure. He defines *talent* as high-level competence or performance that is age-appropriate, and includes academic, affective, interpersonal, cultural, community involvement, political action, and personal efficacy skill development. Much of this talent potential is embedded in and filtered through cultural foundations and socialization. As Noel (2000, p. 26) explains, "Our cultural background helps shape our identities, our perspectives on life are shaped by our experiences within our particular society and communities. . . . Each cultural way of life has developed within a culturally influenced set of histories, traditions, and patterns that help shape the identities of people today."

Consequently, unleashing the talent potential and teaching to the natal strengths of ethnically, racially, socially, and linguistically diverse students, requires using their cultural heritages as instructional resources. Moll and Gonzalez (2004) develop this idea further in suggesting teachers recognize and use the academic potential of the *funds of knowledge* that Latino American students acquire from everyday living in their homes and communities. Lipka (1998) worked with community elders and indigenous teachers to connect the cultural knowledge and styles of the Yup'iks with the academic knowledge and ways of teaching in schools to improve student achievement. Culturally responsive teaching techniques also were applied in the Kamameha Early Elementary Program that built on the cultural strengths of Native Hawaiian students to teach them academic literacy skills (Tharp &

Gallimore, 1992; Au & Kawakami, 1994). In explaining how this work was accomplished and its far-reaching positive effects for the Yup'iks, Lipka (1998) noted that

> These [Yup'ik] teachers, in collaboration with university consultants and elders, created a group that, through study and research, revealed that Yup'ik ways of teaching supported a more conversational classroom interactional routine that differed substantially from the typical classroom discourse routine of elicitation, response, and evaluation. By working in a collaborative, community-based model for more than 15 years, the group began to connect ancient Yup'ik wisdom to the teaching of core academic content. Through these processes and by increasing community involvement, this group began to change the culture of schooling. (p. x)

Regardless of the particular language and labels used, three underlying messages permeate all of these *culturally responsive* approaches to teaching and learning for ethnically diverse students. The first one is every individual entrusted to the care of teachers comes into the classroom with *inherent* value (Kozol, 2007) and assets that offer much pedagogical potential, regardless of the level of schooling. Second, these authors give culturally contextualized meaning to the general education principle that effective teachers build upon the prior knowledge and experiences of students to teach them new knowledge and skills (i.e., scaffolding). The third deep message is marginalized students (and groups) of color are not devoid of any positive attributes, or redeeming features. Instead, they have valuable cultural heritages and experiences that can be useful resources for teaching and learning in classrooms, In making this point hooks (1990, pp. 149–150) contends that marginality is "much more than a site of deprivation . . . it is also a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance . . . from which to see and create, to imagine alternative new worlds." In other words, there is power, strength, resilience, positive productivity, and cultural assets within the margins. And, the individuals who inhabit them have competencies that should be woven into their formal educational experiences in schools. Kozol (2007) speaks passionately about these ideas as they relate to what some analysts call "reluctant learners," "hostile individuals," and "underachieving, unappreciative students" in poor, urban schools (the population of utmost concern to the authors of *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* and other proponents of Multicultural Education). He says,

> None of us should make the error of assuming that a [student] who is hostile to us at the start, or who retreats into a sullenness and silence or sarcastic disregard for everything that's going on around him [or her]in the room, does not

> have the will to learn and plenty of interesting stuff to teach us too, if we are willing to invest the time and the inventiveness to penetrate his [or her] seemingly implacable belief that grown-ups [or 'authorities'] do not mean him [or her] well and that, if he [or she] trusts us, we will probably betray or disappoint him [or her]. (p. 13)

To the extent that their prior knowledge and backgrounds are evoked in teaching ethnically, racially, culturally, and linguistically, diverse students will find schooling more relevant to their lived experiences, and high academic achievement more desirable and easier to accomplish. In proposing that educators empower diverse students, first by recognizing and respecting the cultural competencies they have acquired outside of school, and then building upon them within educational institutions, the authors in this volume support a position taken by Comer, Haynes, Joyner, and Den-Avie (1996). They believe educators can, if they so desire, identify and embellish the strengths of students when they work collaboratively with parents, administrators, students, and each other. They also can understand that "schooling cannot replace family and cultural conditions and expectations, but [it] can promote the positive health and social ingredients that are present in potential and active forms in each family, cultural, and social setting" (Comer, et al., p. xv). A well-constructed strength-based educational agenda goes beyond teaching only academics. It empowers students in multiple ways simultaneously, including intellectual, cultural, social, civic, personal, ethical, and political knowledge acquisition and skill development. The contributing authors to this book convey these messages repeatedly and cogently, both separately and collectively.

Because of these features, reading *Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education* is an effective learning experience for several reasons. First, it provides information about some issues that will be unfamiliar to some readers. Therefore, they will acquire new knowledge. Second, it will reinforce many of the things others already know, thereby validating some of their own values, beliefs, and knowledge. Third, it will cause some readers to question, to ponder, and to wonder about some of the points made in the text, as well as raise others that go beyond it. Fourth, the ideas of the contributing authors prompt non-intellectual reactions as well. Sometimes it is joyous and encouraging to hear their passion, commitment, and compassion about transforming education for the benefit of students of color. Sometimes the reasons they give for the positions taken and proposals made for reforming education provoke discomfort, pain, personal identity with, and empathy for the inequities imposed upon these students. At other times there are graphic and disconcerting reminders that so much remains to be done before educational inequities, and the horrors of injustice are eliminated–that chil-

dren and youth of some ethnic backgrounds have to suffer from the negative racial attitudes, actions, and events perpetuated by schools and society, not because of any specific behaviors they exhibit but simply because of who they are.

There were times reading the various texts in this book when I argued with the authors and wondered why they did not emphasize what I would have, or propose a new educational order identical to my own. But, I also was excited to know that the mandate for more cultural diversity in education is expanding and reaching into terrains of the educational enterprise that have not been addressed much in previous discourses. I was stimulated to think, to feel, to imagine, to hope about what I was actually reading, and to envision some other dimensions that were not included by the authors. Often, I wanted to know more, not because they do not express themselves clearly, or develop their analyses sufficiently, but because at the end of the chapters I simply wanted more! All of these reactions are indicative of what good teaching should do for students–validate, entice, trouble, stimulate, invite, inform, extend, and thirst for more! Since books are instructional resources they should always teach something new to students, even those thought to be very advanced in the area, and readers should always be perceived as students.

Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education meets these mandates. In so doing, it teaches poignant lessons about incorporating ethnic, racial, cultural, social, and linguistic diversity into the content, contexts, and processes of different levels of the U. S. educational enterprise. The lessons taught include:

- teach to accomplish multiple objectives in multiple ways.
- use a wide variety of instructional resources that are culturally authentic for different ethnic, racial, and social groups.
- perceive cultural diversity as a strength and asset for improving the performance of students, especially the marginalized and underachieving, at all levels of learning.
- recognize the power of personal story as content, research methodology, and instructional technique.
- understand powerful pedagogy for diverse students as being responsive to their cultural heritages on a systematic, persistent, and routine basis.
- identify the consensual concerns and points of agreement embedded in the different language, stories, and constituencies used by various researchers, scholars, and practitioners of cultural diversity.
- conceptually understand and demonstrate in practice how various perspectives on cultural diversity and Multicultural Education can be complementary and enriching rather than conflictual or contradictory.

- know that culturally responsive education for ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse students have positive effects on many different kinds of achievement.

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ON THE CONFLUENCE OF DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION: AN INTRODUCTION

Drawing from their research, theoretical understandings and orientations, experiences, and cultural frames of reference, the contributing authors of this book, Diversity and Education: Teachers, Teaching, and Teacher Education, provide important perspectives for readers. Scholars from various disciplines discuss, critique, and explicate what I am calling the confluence of diversity and education. By confluence, I mean the coming together and the convergence of diversity and education. Diversity and education converge and operate in confluence on at least two important levels:

- deliberately or purposefully; and
- subconsciously or unintentionally.

Diversity and education seem to be in confluence productively or counterproductively, but they are usually in confluence. In some educational contexts, diversity is *deliberately* and *purposefully* embraced, and people work to promote it in their daily experiences, instructional practices, curricular decision-making, and policy development and implementation. For instance, some teachers teach with diversity at the fore of their thinking, and they work to create learning opportunities to meet the needs of all their students in the classroom. They place diversity (and social justice) front and center (Nieto, 2000).

However, diversity and education can also converge *subconsciously* or *unintentionally.* There are some in education who are not conscious of the salience of diversity, committed to promoting diversity, or who still do not believe that diversity is relevant to their experiences in society, in education, or in classroom settings. For instance, some teachers in the classroom adopt colorblind (Lewis, 2001; Johnson, 2002) and culture-blind (Ford, Moore, & Milner, 2005) ideologies and perspectives in their work. They avoid matters of diversity and consequently students typically suffer. In either situation, whether diversity and education converge and are in confluence deliberately or unintentionally, they converge and are in confluence nonetheless.

Inevitably, educators across disciplines and learning contexts will need to be prepared for the union of diversity and education; the realities of education have diversity steeply ingrained in ideology, philosophy, reform, policy, curriculum, and instruction. Thus, the authors of the chapters in this book critique and analyze reality. They push theory, build on and from research, and provide concrete implications for practice rather than just reporting or discussing diversity and education. The chapters are written with implications for various groups, constituents, and stakeholders in education: practicing teachers, counselors, coaches, administrators, teacher educators, graduate students, undergraduate students, and educational researchers. People interested in addressing and meeting the needs of all students in education and also interested in understanding the complexities inherent in diversity and education may find the book useful. A recurrent question throughout this book is: ***Where diversity and education are concerned, what questions, issues, and problems are necessary to answer and to address in order to improve and change the learning opportunities of all students?***

The contributing authors are diverse themselves; they possess an incredible range of human diversity, including diversity in terms of their racial and ethnic identity, their geographic locations, their epistemological and philosophical orientations, their institutional affiliations, and their social, political, and economic backgrounds. I deliberately invited authors who represent a wide range of diversity themselves. The authors have conflicting views on issues in some cases; in other situations, their perspectives are more consistent. The authors' varied and diverse perspectives, ways of knowing, and frames of reference are important and are assets to the overall essence of the book.

While the authors have chosen to ground their writing in theory, research, and practice, there is also a powerful *narrative* and *counter-narrative* (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) theme and thread throughout the 15 chapters. At the core of the narrative is lived experience, and these experiences can help shed light on real-life situations in order for the narrator–the authors and readers to more fully understand the convergence and complexity of the human condition. Elbaz-Luwisch (2001) wrote:

> Storytelling can be a way of admitting the other into one's world and thus of neutralizing the otherness and strangeness. . . . Telling our stories is indeed a matter of survival: only by telling and listening, storying and restorying can we begin the process of constructing a common world. (p. 134–145)

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explained how important it is for a person to name "one's own reality" or "voice" (p. 57). Through the counter-narrative, people–and in particular people of color are able to name and voice a reali-

ty that is often inconsistent with dominant narratives. Counter-narratives need to be told but are often dismissed, trivialized, or misrepresented in texts. A counter-narrative provides space for researchers to *disrupt* or to *interrupt* (cf. Milner, 2007) pervasive discourses that may paint communities and people, particularly communities and people of color, people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and people from urban environments in grim, dismal ways. The authors use the narrative and counter-narrative in powerful ways throughout this text to help elucidate the important matters they engage regarding the confluence of diversity, urban education, teaching, teachers, and teacher education.

The first three chapters focus on the confluence of race and gender, particularly African American male students in P-12 schools with implications for practicing teachers. The race and gender issues covered in these chapters span pre-Kindergarten through post-secondary education, so teachers working with large numbers (or smaller numbers) of African American male students may find the chapters insightful. In addition, the authors consider a range of teaching contexts, including urban P-12 schools, suburban P-12 schools, rural P-12 schools, and higher education. In chapter 1, I argue that, while there is a plethora of unfortunate situations and experiences that African American male students face, there is no excuse for teachers' lack of effort and commitment to meeting the needs of these students, particularly in urban schools. At the same time, there are situations in which teachers find themselves that are far beyond their control. For instance, a teacher may not be able to control whether particular students receive help from their parents on homework each night. Similarly, teachers cannot necessarily control whether students will grow up in a nuclear family with two parents in the home or whether students will grow up living in poverty. Building from my research, I outline some promising perspectives and practices on teaching that can empower Black males in urban school contexts: (1) Teachers and students *envision life beyond their present situations*; (2) Teachers and students *come to know themselves in relation to others*; (3) Teachers and students speak *possibility and not destruction*; (4) Teachers and students *care and demonstrate that care*; and (5) Teachers and students *change their thinking in order to change their actions.*

In chapter 2, Kathy-ann Hernandez and James Davis consider the multiple levels and challenges associated with teaching Black males. A permeating theme of their chapter is that of identity and the complex interplay of sociocultural, school, and classroom contexts. The authors consider who Black males are in schools and what teachers should know to improve their practices with these students. Black masculinity and its relationship with contextual factors is explored, questioned, and used as an analytic tool to examine the needs and realities of Black males in public schools. The authors

focus on empirically-based practices that can mitigate and address negative contextual factors for Black males. In chapter 3, John Singer discusses some of the realities of African American male student athletes in education. Drawing from his personal experiences, narratives, and research, Singer provides implications and insights for what he calls educational stakeholders, those who have a concern for, involvement with, and interest in the educational experiences of student athletes. For instance, the author draws from his research with student athletes in higher education to shed light on and to provide practical insight into the educational and athletic needs of high school-level students. The author goes into depth in discussing and addressing African American student athletes and the ever-evolving needs of these students for the benefit of teachers, coaches, counselors, and related mentors.

While the first three chapters of this volume focus on African American male students, chapters 4 and 5, focus on African American females. The authors consider African American females in P-12 schools and also African American female principals. The chapters collectively consider implications for parents, teachers, and principals. In chapter 4, Kimberly King-Jupiter draws from her own experiences as a parent of two African American females, as a faculty member, and as a researcher to consider the complex needs of African American children, both in the home and at school. While much of the chapter provides knowledge about African American students in schools with implications for teachers and others in schools working with these students, the author does not stop there. By focusing on the media, hip hop culture, health disparities and realities, and other conditions of African American female students, King-Jupiter provides perspectives and implications for parents interested in working with schools to increase the success and learning opportunities of African American females in schools. April Peters, in chapter 5, provides an important historical context of African American women in educational leadership, namely the principalship. The author critiques traditional hierarchical and analytic models available in the literature regarding educational administration. She explains that many of these models were developed by and are focused on White males and fall short of addressing the dynamic and systemic needs of African American female leaders. Indeed, Peters suggests that analyses need to focus on both gender and race, and she cautions that readers (and others) should not allow gender to trump race and vice versa. It is the *confluence* of race and gender that deserve continued attention according to Peters. The author concludes with implications for schools and district offices, focusing specifically on supporting (new) school leaders through mentoring programs.

While chapters 1-5 focus mostly on African American male and female students, Chapters 6 and 7 focus on Latino/a-American and Korean-American students, respectively. The authors consider the confluence of

race, language, and learning in these chapters. Vicki Nilles and Francisco Rios invoke the (counter)-narrative in their chapter drawing from the insight of Nilles' former bilingual student, Anthony, who succeeded in school. They identify several promising principles to help educators think about their role and influence in developing learning environments that honor and propel their students, all students. The chapter has a direct focus on English language learners, particularly Latino/a students. The principles that Nilles and Rios outline for educators in their chapter include: *building caring communities, recognizing students' identities, affirming students' assets, developing linguistic responsive pedagogy,* and *adopting holistic views.* Youb Kim, Laura Roehler, and P. David Pearson discuss what they call "strength-based" instruction for bilingual and English language learners. They provide support for teachers serious about teaching students whose first language is not English. In essence, the authors suggest that teachers build upon the strengths that these students bring into the learning context. One of the authors, Kim, discusses her experiences with her own son in elementary school and the struggles she faced in working with one of his teachers to meet his needs as a non-native speaker of English. The authors share important instructional practices that successful teachers might use in their classrooms with English language learners including: (1) gradual release of responsibility, and (2) student ownership.

The volume then shifts to a focus on the confluence of diversity, teacher education, and higher education in chapters 8–12. Kamau Siwatu, in chapter 8, identifies components of what he calls self-efficacy building interventions that teacher educators can incorporate in the preparation of teachers. The major thrust of the argument of the chapter is that teacher educators need to prepare prospective and practicing teachers with the *knowledge, skills,* and *confidence* to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students and become culturally responsive pedagogues. He draws from a psychological theoretical framework, self-efficacy, developed by Albert Bandura to frame the interventions that teacher educators can develop and utilize for teachers to help prepare them to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Siwatu explains that it is critical that teachers not only have the *knowledge* to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students but also the *confidence* to teach them. Thus, teacher self-efficacy can be defined as teachers' confidence or their beliefs in their ability to complete specific tasks, such as teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. In short, coming to know how to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students is important; yet, to have the confidence to teach these students is also critical. In a sense, Siwatu argues that one cannot really have the knowledge to teach these students without having a keen sense of confidence to do so. In chapter 9, JoAnn Phillion addresses international field experiences in teacher education that can make a difference in terms of students' cultural, ethnic, and

linguistic awareness. She reports on the structure of a study abroad program and also shares some preliminary findings from a study abroad program in Honduras. Phillion makes it clear that there is a need to broaden discussions in teacher education beyond traditional notions of multicultural education. How do teacher education programs develop and structure international experiences for students to provide learning opportunities that meet the needs of diverse learners in public schools? The author does not only outline the promises of study abroad programs but also considers some of the pitfalls and struggles embedded in them. Students who participate in the study abroad program experience different educational systems from what they experience in the United States, observe orphanages with homeless children, and observe poverty in the developing country. The students also get a real sense of how "others" view and perceive people from the United States. Thus, the students come to understand themselves in relation to others, are challenged to breakdown and counter stereotypes about themselves and others, and experience firsthand what it is like to actually "be the other." One pervasive challenge that emerges from Phillion's work is how students are quick to understand and view inequity individually but struggle to see how inequity is perpetuated systemically.

In chapter 10, Robin Vann Lynch shares data from students early in their collegiate career who were enrolled in a foundations course that endeavored to provide students with early experiences with diversity and urban education. The author explains how important education foundations courses can be in providing theoretical and practical experiences for students in their development of racial, cultural, and social understandings and awareness. The Philadelphia Mural Arts tour and urban classroom observations were used as sites to facilitate reflection and inquiry into the complexities of living and learning in urban Philadelphia. Lynch made it clear that these experiences, made available in the course, were important as a place to *begin* such reflection, not as the end result; in reality, she maintained that it was important for teacher education programs to be structured in a way to build on foundational experiences around diversity and equity that were started in the course but recognize that "touring" the murals was not enough. In chapter 11, Kathy Wood addresses the role of higher education (and teacher education in particular) in thinking about and conceptualizing what they hope to accomplish in their programs (in terms of the curriculum and instruction) and what they are actually accomplishing. In other words, Woods suggests that it is not enough for teacher education programs to claim to have social justice and equity foci; rather, she explains that research and studies are needed to actually determine the effectiveness of such programs. She begins to study a teacher education program by drawing from the voices of students enrolled in the teacher education program. Similarly, while not focused

specifically on teacher education, Richard Reddick, in chapter 12, focuses on the role of higher education in preparing students for the diversity they will face in society. Reddick begins his discussion with a story of Diego, an English language learner and Jennifer, a dedicated second year teacher in Diego's school. While Jennifer wants to teach Diego well, she does not feel equipped to do so. Reddick's chapter provides important (current) statistics of diverse learners across the United States. Building from his research with colleagues from Harvard University, he discusses what *can be* done to promote diversity and to foster cultural pluralism in higher education. Central to the discussion and framing of matters of diversity in higher education were several forms of capital that were well conceptualized and captured by Reddick: educational capital, institutional capital, and human capital.

The final three chapters of the volume (chapters 13–15) address pressing issues around diversity and education: the confluence of race, class, and culture in education with implications for practitioner research, gifted education, teaching, and learning. In chapter 13, Ming Fang He and William Ayers introduce the diversity landscape with specific statistics regarding language, global migration, and immigration. Solid historical perspectives on research and action research are provided in the chapter. Questions regarding what knowledge is and how it is developed and constructed are considered in the chapter. Teachers and other practitioners interested in studying their own practice and in working to change their practice may find the chapter useful. In addition, the chapter gives space and voice to three practitioners in order to showcase their important and insightful work. The practioners showcase their experiences, perseverance, challenges, and hopes in their educational experiences, and researchers He and Ayers demonstrate the promise of helping practitioners think deeply about and construct stories of their past work in order to understand and improve current educational situations. Embedded in these African American female practitioners' stories are issues of equity, race, ethnicity, culture, class, and diversity. These participants use what the authors call *personal, passionate,* and *participatory lenses* to frame their inquiry and narratives. In chapter 14, Donna Ford, Gilman Whiting, and James Moore focus on African American students in gifted education. Teachers, counselors, and administrators are challenged to recognize the expertise (really genius) of these students by rejecting deficit thinking and also by expanding definitions and conceptions of what it means to be considered "gifted." The authors also stress the problematic nature of referral tests for gifted education and the need for teacher education programs to focus more attention on preparing teachers to identify, recruit, and retain gifted African American students. Finally, Sherick Hughes, in chapter 15, discusses distinctions between class and socioeconomic-status. He also stresses how class and socioeconomic status connect to student outcomes. Indeed,

the final chapter of the volume is about how inequity manifests itself in education and society concurrently. Drawing from his rich experiences studying matters of diversity, Hughes paints important pictures related to class and socioeconomic status from which readers can really learn.

Taken together, the chapters are written by some of the leading scholars in education and beyond. In educational research, surface level issues of diversity and equity are often investigated rather than deep-rooted, structural, systemic and institutional dimensions. The goal of this book is to move beyond the surface to more deeply explore the intersections and confluence of diversity and education. And perhaps more importantly, the book is designed to provide explicit insight and examples for practitioners (teachers, counselors, coaches, principals) who dare to teach all students and to teach them well! Finally, when thinking of a scholar to write the forword for this volume, I could not think of a person more appropriate than Geneva Gay. Gay is a nationally- and internationally-renowned scholar and leader in the field of multicultural education who truly understands the confluence of diversity and education.

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DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

Section 1

RACE AND GENDER: AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN P-12 SCHOOLS

Chapter 1

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN SCHOOLS: NO EXCUSES–TEACH AND EMPOWER[1]

H. Richard Milner

I am an African American male (I use the terms African American and Black interchangeably throughout this chapter), and I was educated in public schools. I was not raised with a great deal of money although my family's needs were met. We were not rich, but I did not know what it meant to not have clothes to wear or food to eat. Both of my parents worked–and I mean they worked very hard to provide for our family. I did not take trips out of the country or visit museums during holidays. My parents did not read me bedtime stories every night before I went to sleep; instead, my parents (especially my mother) made sure that I had said my prayers before falling asleep and that all my homework was completed and done correctly. My parents taught me to work hard, take responsibility for my choices (both good and bad), and to put forth my best effort in all that I set out to do.

In a similar light, my teachers were not " board certified." In elementary school, almost all of my classmates were Black. At that time, there were perhaps one or two White students in my classes, but most of the students were Black. My teachers were both Black and White. They came to school and taught us in spite of their personal situations and issues and regardless of their students' situations. I was empowered to learn and to achieve in school.

As a faculty member in a teaching and learning department and as an educational researcher, I often find myself amazed and a bit disappointed by the enormous list of excuses available for why Black male students are not succeeding in school. Black male students can and are succeeding in all types of schools–urban included–and the time has come for those of us in education to stop making excuses and to teach and empower Black males to reach their full capacity in urban schools across the nation.

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My point in sharing a bit about myself in the previous paragraphs is not to suggest that my experiences are completely synonymous with all other Black males in schools. However, my point in sharing just a small piece of my upbringing and my identity is to offer a snapshot of the counter-narratives (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Morris, 2004; Parker, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Tate, 1997) available and needed to (re)direct the discourse on Black males in education.

In this article, I attempt to outline some promising perspectives on teaching that can empower Black males in urban school contexts. I argue that Black males have a wide range of potential and that teachers can *and must* teach and empower these students and stop making excuses. Reports about African American males are inundated with challenges and struggles of Black males in urban schools. I argue that, while there is a plethora of unfortunate situations and experiences that these students face, there is no excuse for teachers' lack of effort and commitment to meeting the needs of Black males in urban schools. At the same time, there are situations in which teachers find themselves that are far beyond their control. For instance, a teacher may not be able to control whether particular students receive help from their parents on homework each night. Similarly, teachers cannot necessarily control whether students will grow up in a nuclear family with two parents in the home or whether students will grow up and live in poverty.

Clearly, the aforementioned experiences and situations are beyond teachers' control. However, there are research-based strategies and suggestions that can help teachers meet the needs of Black male students in urban contexts, regardless of the students' circumstances and situations. What can teachers do that *is in their control* to teach and empower these students to reach their possibility? Much of what I share in this article emerges from my own life experiences and from my own research that I have conducted in an urban middle school. Throughout this article, I invoke personal narratives, mostly counter-narratives, to help elucidate the issues discussed. I admit that this topic is of grave importance to me, and I am willing to share features of myself and my life to help explain the intricacies and complexities of educating and empowering Black male students in urban schools. While I draw from some of my research in an urban middle school, I believe many of the promising principles that I share transfer into elementary and high school environments. The pervasive theme of this article is that teachers can move their practices to the next level, a new and more promising level of education for Black students, when effort and commitment are present. In addition, it is important to note that this article is not written as a fairytale—one that is simply a vision or a dream of what can be. Rather, this article is written from a *what could and should be* perspective, as I have observed some of the best teaching practices available to Black students in urban schools. The

discussion shifts now to one that highlights some current trends about Black males in urban classrooms, communities, and schools.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN CLASSROOMS

African American males in urban schools are often perceived as troubled students whose futures are in limbo. A report from the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2004) stressed:

> In many school districts, up to 70 percent of Black boys who enter 9th grade do not graduate four years later with their peers. In most districts, Black boys are disproportionately assigned to special education and nearly absent from advanced placement classes. (p. 2)

Black male students are grossly underrepresented in gifted education and overrepresented in special education. Ford (2006) wrote: "Sadly, I have seen little progress relative to demographic changes–Black and Hispanic students continue to be as underrepresented in gifted programs today as they were 20 years ago" (p. 2). Holzman (2004), from The Schott Foundation for Public Education, places the urgent nature of teaching Black students at the top of the foundation's agenda in *Public Education and Black Male Students: A State Report Card* (2004). In short, the report card revealed that "in 2001/2002 59 percent of African American males did not receive diplomas with their cohort" (p. 4). Moreover, where education is concerned, the report revealed that "New York City and Chicago, for example, enrolling nearly 10 percent of the nation's Black male students between them, fail to graduate 70 percent of those [Black males] with their peers" (p. 4). Central and salient questions about why Black students are not receiving the education they deserve need attention.

Skiba, Michael, Nardo, and Peterson (2002) analyzed disciplinary records of 11,001 students in 19 middle schools in a large, urban Midwestern public school district during the 1994–1995 school year. Skiba et al. reported a "differential pattern of treatment, originating at the classroom level, wherein African American students are referred to the office for infractions that are more subjective in interpretation" (p. 317). The Skiba et al. (2002) study pointed out that students of color, and particularly African American male students, overwhelmingly received harsher punishments for misbehavior than did their White counterparts. As an example, the authors described a fistfight at a high school football game in Decatur, Illinois that resulted in the superintendent's recommendation that all seven of the African American stu-