Book Series

Contemporary Perspectives in Race and Ethnic Relations

Series Editors
M. Christopher Brown, Kentucky State University; T. Elon Dancy, The University of Pittsburgh

The Contemporary Perspectives in Race and Ethnic Relations series includes book-length volumes derived from the best scholarship on the varied dynamics of race and ethnicity in America. Books in this series bridge the gaps between traditional race and ethnic research, practical approaches to creating equitable contexts, and the fluid nature of cultural realities. Additionally, the race and ethnic relations series endeavors to provide major discourses and meaningful guidance on continuing challenges of race and ethnic diversity in America. The aim is to generate a corpus of scholarship that critically examines the interplay among issues of race and ethnicity, state, global community, social justice, and ideology.

The series centers on volumes that treat race and ethnicity in conjunction or parallel with social sciences, human studies, public policy, and/or education and that disseminate ideas and strategies useful for various communities against a backdrop of race and/or ethnicity in America. Books in this series foreground novel thinking about race and ethnicity, important policy/praxis issues, developing trends and responses across society, and the concerns of public and/or institutional constituencies. To the extent possible, books in the series explore the interconnection of multiple perspectives, while concurrently articulating implications resultant from the intersections of race/ethnicity (i.e. gender, class, sexual orientation, creed, ability). Each volume investigates one or more critical topics missing from the extant literature, and engages one or more theoretical perspectives.

Books in this series:

- The Pursuit of Excellence
- Models of Success
- Is That Your Mom?
- STEM Models of Success
- The Brother Code
- African American Males and Education
- Filling in The Blanks

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The Pursuit of Excellence: Kentucky State University, 1886-2020 is a compelling examination of the most diverse public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Starting with Kentucky State University’s establishment in 1886 to train black school teachers, the book explored how the University met and successfully overcame challenges. Although created in an era of racial segregation, Kentucky State University developed an inclusive faculty, staff and student body sustained by a tradition of academic excellence. By 2020, Kentucky State University offered bachelors, master’s and doctoral degree programs as well as 1890 land grant research and service programs. The book provides background on selected notable alumni and their contributions to the Commonwealth and the world.


Models of Success: How Historically Black Colleges and Universities Survive the Economic Recession

This edited book contains chapters related to the excellent management and leadership practices currently taking place at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the context an economic recession. Each chapter highlights successful operations at HBCUs from management, leadership, and administrative standpoints in a manner that is not comparative of or overly reliant upon dominant literature, standards, or theories. Amongst the deficit-laden literature regarding the fiscal, accreditation, and governance status of HBCUs are few studies highlighting those institutions successfully operating in a difficult economy. This book fills that gap of information by offering chapters on excellent management and leadership practices occurring at a variety of HBCUs today.

While White parents raising Black children has become increasingly salient in the last 20-30 years, the experience of those who grow up in these cross-racial families is much more complicated. Indeed, much of the adoption studies literature has privileged White parent voices, further silencing crossracially raised Black-identified children. “Is That Your Mom?” challenges the dominant narrative that love trumps race (and racism) in family dynamics, and reasserts the need for critical voices of those most impacted by being cross-racially raised: the very people who face extreme racism that is both similar to, and uniquely different from, that faced by people of color more broadly.

“Is That Your Mom?” centers the voices of Cross Racially Raised individuals of the African Diaspora to illustrate that racial socialization is a process in which individuals have agency in their racial development. In this book, Cross Racially Raised adults, both those who were adopted and those who were raised in cross-racial birth families, share their stories regarding experiences with racism in the following three ways: (1) encounters with racism within and beyond educational settings, (2) perceptions of parents or guardians’ efforts toward racial socialization, and (3) strategies used to navigate racially hostile environments (which sometimes are the families themselves). The voices of the individuals in this book illuminate a deeper conceptual understanding of how racial socialization practices are linked with one’s ability to cope with racism and ways of addressing racism, particularly among those families that contradict monoracial assumptions of racial socialization processes. The book concludes with a discussion of how schools, educators, and parents can help Cross Racially Raised children and youth develop skills necessary to cope and remain resilient in the face of racism, particularly if the immediate family is not offering those supports.


As the U.S. focuses on positioning itself to retain and advance its status as a world leader in technology and scientific innovation, a recognition that community colleges are a critical site for intervention has become apparent. Community colleges serve the lion’s share of the nation’s postsecondary students. In fact, 40% of all undergraduate students are enrolled in community colleges, these students account for nearly 30% of all STEM undergraduate majors in postsecondary institutions. These students serve as a core element of the STEM pipeline into four-year colleges and universities via the community college transfer function. Moreover, community colleges are the primary postsecondary access point for non-traditional students, including students of color, first-generation, low-income, and adult students. This is a particularly salient point given that these populations are sordidly underrepresented among STEM graduates and in the STEM workforce.

Increasing success among these populations can contribute significantly to advancing the nation’s interests in STEM. As such, the community college is situated as an important site for innovative practices that have strong implications for bolstering the nation’s production and sustenance of a STEM labor force. In recognition of this role, the National Science Foundation and private funding agencies have invested millions of dollars into research and programs designed to bolster the STEM pipeline. From this funding and other independently sponsored inquiry, promising programs, initiatives, and
research recommendations have been identified. These efforts hold great promise for change, with the potential to transform the education and outcome of STEM students at all levels. This important book discusses many of these promising programs, initiatives, and research-based recommendations that can impact the success of STEM students in the community college. This compilation is timely, on the national landscape, as the federal government has placed increasing importance on improving STEM degree production as a strategy for America’s future stability in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. Informed by research and theory, each chapter in this volume blazes new territory in articulating how community colleges can advance outcomes for students in STEM, particularly those from historically underrepresented and underserved communities.


The Brother Code: Manhood and Masculinity among African American Men in College

T. Elon Dancy II, University of Oklahoma


The Brother Code: What is the role of manhood and masculinity in the lives of African American males in college? How do manhood norms influence decisions within and beyond college? How might mothers and fathers differentially affect manhood and masculinity in their sons? What are African American’s men unique ways of knowing themselves and their surroundings? The Brother Code: Manhood and Masculinity among African American Men in College situates itself at the intersection of higher education and cultural studies to address these questions and more. Primarily, this book offers colleges and universities a penetrative gaze into a complex web of identities—the manhood of African American males in college. Yet the book also seizes a rare opportunity in higher education research to review six historical eras of African American manhood as well as the troublesome relationship between African American males and education in general.

This knowledge is important for understanding all aspects of African American male participation in college, including enrollment, retention, curricular, and co-curricular involvement. Based on an empirical study, the data in this book emerged from one-on-one interviews in which 24 African American males enrolled in 12 colleges discussed how manhood matters in their social and college lives. The aim is to help unearth the marginalized topics of manhood, gender, and masculinity in males generally but, more specifically among African American males, a marginalized student group in education. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the book draws upon literature in history, African American studies, gender studies, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, and anthropology.

African American Males in Education: Researching the Convergence of Race and Identity
T. Elon Dancy II, University of Oklahoma; M. Christopher Brown, Kentucky State University

African American Males in Education: Researching the Convergence of Race and Identity addresses a number of research gaps. This book emerges at a time when new social dynamics of race and other identities are shaping, but also shaped by, education. Educational settings consistently perpetuate racial and other forms of privilege among students, personnel, and other participants in education. For instance, differential access to social networks still visibly cluster by race, continuing the work of systemic privilege by promoting outcome inequalities in education and society.

The issues defining the relationship between African American males and education remain complex. Although there has been substantial discussion about the plight of African American male participants and personnel in education, only modest attempts have been made to center analysis of identity and identity intersections in the discourse. Additionally, more attention to African American male teachers and faculty is needed in light of their unique cultural experiences in educational settings and expectations to mentor and/or socialize other African Americans, particularly males.


Filling in The Blanks
Standardized Testing and the Black-White Achievement Gap
Keena Arbuthnot, Louisiana State University

Filling in the Blanks is a book dedicated to helping policymakers, researchers, academics and teachers, better understand standardized testing and the Black-White achievement gap. This book provides a wealth of background information, as well as the most recent findings, about testing and measurement concepts essential to understanding standardized tests. The book then reviews theories and research that has been conducted which explain the differences in performance between Black and White test takers on many standardized tests. Most notably, Filling in the Blanks presents several new theories that address why Black students do not perform as well as their White counterparts. These theories present very novel and innovative perspectives to understanding these test performance differences. The book ends with a host of recommendations that are intended to address the concerns and questions of several stakeholder groups.

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