



HARVARD JOURNAL
OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN
PUBLIC POLICY



John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

TEARING DOWN WALLS, BUILDING BRIDGES
Exploring the African American-Latino Dialogue

FEATURES

Burdening the Right to Vote: Assessing the Impact of Mandatory Photo Identification Requirements on Minority Voting Strength
Kristen Clarke

Increasing Organ Donations: An Urgent Need in African American and Latino Communities
Wayne R. Moore

Immigrant and African American Relations: Parallel Struggles That Should Unite
Maria Blanco and Diana C. Tate

Latino Anti-Black Violence in Los Angeles: Not "Made in the USA"
Tanya Kateri Hernández

Continued Abandonment in Dixie: No More Policy as Usual
Veronica L. Womack

INTERVIEWS

Political Coalitions Across the United States: An Interview With Kenneth J. Cooper
Interviewed by Zach Neumann

African American-Latino Relations in Los Angeles: An Interview With Earl Ofari Hutchinson
Interviewed by Anthony Woods

African American-Latino Relations in Houston: An Interview With Tatcho Mindiola, Jr.
Interviewed by Cynthia M. Martinez

BOOK REVIEWS

Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos
Edited by Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler
Reviewed by Sapna D. Shah

Winning the Race: Beyond the Crisis in Black America
By John McWhorter
Reviewed by T. Marie Cropper

SPECIAL CONTENT

A Letter From the Staff of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*

Best of African American Policy Conferences
Compiled by the Staff of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy

Volume XIII • Summer 2007

HARVARD JOURNAL OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Summer 2007
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy (ISSN# 1081-0463) is a student-run journal published annually at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. An annual subscription is \$10 for students, \$20 for individuals, and \$40 for libraries and institutions. Subscriptions will be automatically renewed unless otherwise notified. Additional copies of volumes I–XII may be available for \$10 each from the Subscriptions Department, Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy, 79 JFK Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Donations provided in support of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy are tax deductible as a nonprofit gift under the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University's IRS 501(c) (3) status. Please specify intent.

Send address changes to Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy, 79 JFK Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, or by e-mail to hjaap@ksg.harvard.edu.

COPYRIGHT © 2007 BY THE PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy does not accept responsibility for the views expressed by individual authors. No part of the publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without the expressed written consent of the editors of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* accepts unsolicited articles year-round and is currently accepting submissions for Volume XIV to be published summer 2008.

The *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* is a student-run, non-partisan scholarly review published annually by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Our mission is to educate and provide leadership that improves the quality of public policies affecting the African American community. In so doing, we hope to further the economic, social, and political empowerment of African Americans.

We are interested in manuscripts that emphasize the relationship between policy making and the political, social, and economic environments affecting African Americans in the United States.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

To be eligible for the editorial review:

- Articles must be original and unpublished.
- Articles should be 5–30 double-spaced pages.
- Articles should be formatted in any version of Microsoft Word.
- References and endnotes should be formatted according to the guidelines and author-date system of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Footnotes are not accepted. All figures, tables, and charts should be submitted as entirely separate files.

In addition, we request that all authors submit the following:

- A cover page with the submission title, author's name, mailing address, e-mail address, daytime telephone number, and a brief biography
- Five hard copies of the article
- An electronic copy of the article on a formatted CD
- A 100-word abstract

Authors are required to cooperate with editing and fact-checking. The deadline is **30 November 2007**.

MAIL ENTRIES TO:

Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
79 John F. Kennedy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

PLEASE CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS AT:

Tel: 617-496-0517
Fax: 617-384-9555
Email: hjaap@ksg.harvard.edu
Website: www.ksg.harvard.edu/HJAAP

**HARVARD JOURNAL
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
PUBLIC POLICY**

**JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

Summer 2007
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The editorial board of the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* would like to thank the following individuals for their generous support and contributions to the publication of this issue:

John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University

Dean Joseph McCarthy

Helaine Daniels

Kennedy School Student Government

Richard Parker

Christine Connare

HARVARD JOURNAL OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY

2006-2007 EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITORIAL BOARD

CYNTHIA M. MARTINEZ

Editor-in-Chief

COLLEEN DIXON

Managing Editor

MICHAEL S. MCCLENDON

Senior Editor for Articles

NATALIE O. COLBERT

Senior Editor for Commentaries

ZACH NEUMANN

Senior Editor for Interviews

JARROD F. LOADHOLT

Senior Editor for Book Reviews

TUKNEKAH NOBLE

Associate Publisher of Finance

KEVIN CURRY

Associate Publisher of Web Development

CHRISTINE CONNARE

Publisher

RICHARD PARKER

Faculty Advisor

EDITORS

T. MARIE CROPPER

JESSICA LIN

SAPNA D. SHAH

ANTHONY WOODS

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

LERONE BENNETT, JR.

Ebony Magazine

FRANCES BRISBANE

State University of New York

HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.

Harvard University

DOROTHY GILLIAM

The Washington Post

ROBERT HOLLAND

WorkPlace Integrators

JAMES LLORENS

Southern University

DAVID THOMAS

Harvard University

CORNEL WEST

Princeton University

WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON

Harvard University

HARVARD JOURNAL OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE7

FEATURES

Burdening the Right to Vote: Assessing the Impact of Mandatory Photo
Identification Requirements on Minority Voting Strength
Kristen Clarke9

Increasing Organ Donations: An Urgent Need in African American
and Latino Communities
Wayne R. Moore17

Immigrant and African American Relations:
Parallel Struggles That Should Unite
Maria Blanco and Diana C. Tate33

Latino Anti-Black Violence in Los Angeles: Not "Made in the USA"
Tanya Katerí Hernández37

Continued Abandonment in Dixie: No More Policy as Usual
Veronica L. Womack41

INTERVIEWS

Political Coalitions Across the United States:
An Interview With Kenneth J. Cooper
Interviewed by Zach Neumann55

African American-Latino Relations in Los Angeles:
An Interview With Earl Ofari Hutchinson
Interviewed by Anthony Woods63

African American-Latino Relations in Houston:
An Interview With Tatcho Mindiola, Jr.
Interviewed by Cynthia M. Martinez71

BOOK REVIEWS

Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos
Edited by Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler
Reviewed by Sapna D. Shah79

Winning the Race: Beyond the Crisis in Black America
By John McWhorter
Reviewed by T. Marie Cropper83

SPECIAL CONTENT

A Letter From the Staff of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*87

Best of African American Policy Conferences
Compiled by the Staff of the Harvard Journal
of African American Public Policy89



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

The End of Government . . . As We Know It:

Making Public Policy Work

ELAINE C. KAMARCK

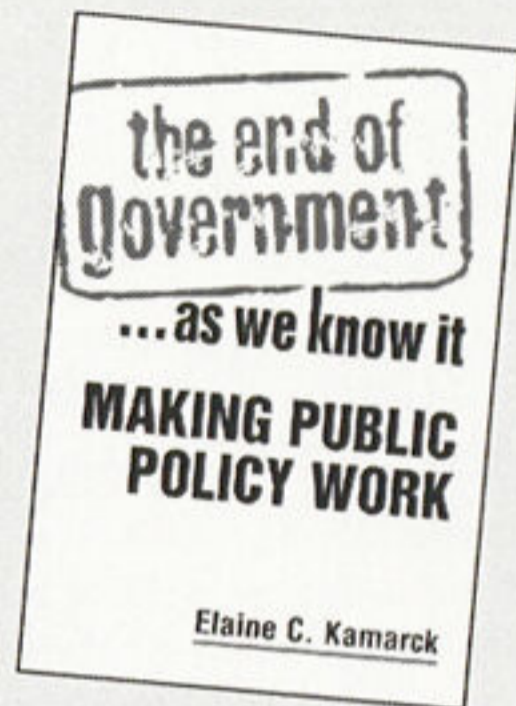
“**T**his important book examines how bureaucracy can be updated to deal with the quickly evolving demands of the twenty-first century and also uses real-world examples to help us understand how new alternatives can best be applied.”

—Richard W. Waterman, University of Kentucky

“**K**amarck properly emphasizes the crucial importance of implementation for achieving results and makes clear that there are alternatives to creating yet another bureaucracy. Any member of Congress who takes congressional oversight seriously—and shouldn't they all?—would certainly benefit from reading this book.”

—James Davis, Washington University in St. Louis

hc \$49.95 • pb \$19.95



Creating Gender: The Sexual Politics of Welfare Policy

CATHY MARIE JOHNSON, GEORGIA DUERST-LAHTI,
AND NOELLE H. NORTON

Explores the ways that the government uses policy to legitimize and support some gender-based behaviors, while undermining others. • hc \$55

CELEBRATING 23 YEARS OF INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING
1800 30TH STREET • BOULDER, CO 80301 • TEL: 303-444-6684 • FAX: 303-444-0824 • www.rienner.com

Editor's Remarks

"Our separate struggles are really one. A struggle for freedom, for dignity, and for humanity." —Martin Luther King, Jr., in a telegram to Cesar Chavez

The 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s were pivotal decades in the histories of the African American and Latino communities in the United States. Throughout that thirty-year period, these two groups found themselves united in a battle for the guarantee of basic civil rights. The collaboration of African Americans and Latinos in landmark cases *Mendez v. Westminster* and *Brown v. Board of Education* dismantled segregation across the country. Efforts between the Young Lords and the Black Panthers were pivotal to advancing the Nuyorican Movement and improving poverty-stricken neighborhoods in New York and Chicago. In the Southwest, labor activist Cesar Chavez proudly marched alongside Martin Luther King, Jr., in a struggle for equality. Yet these successes were wracked by tension and acts of violence that kept both communities from forging a permanent relationship and utilizing the political power that a coalition would afford.

Today the situation is much the same. As African Americans and Latinos seek to redefine their struggles after the tumult of the twentieth century, the continued relationship between these communities has been accompanied by a growing tension. In areas of New England, African Americans and Latinos work together to improve their local communities and fight injustice, while in Southern California, racial tension manifests itself on a daily basis through violent outbreaks in schools and on the streets. In New Orleans, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has seen the Latino population bloom from approximately 6 percent to more than 20 percent. The declaration that Latinos are now the largest minority group in the country, combined with the uprising of a largely Latino-based immigrant rights movement, has left many African Americans feeling ignored. The presumption that Latinos are destined to replace African Americans in low-wage jobs has only increased the perception that these populations are competing for valuable and limited resources.

This volume aims to explore the nature of the relationship between African Americans and Latinos in the current social context. Our content makes it clear that the forces shaping this relationship are not just political, but historical. And while the media and political analysts depict these two communities in constant war with each other, our contributors clearly demonstrate that such pessimism is unwarranted. Addressed correctly, the relationship between African Americans and Latinos presents numerous opportunities for collaboration and the continued revitalization of American politics today.

This year, the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* is proud to feature several articles and commentaries that probe the nature of this relationship as it pertains to various aspects of public policy. Commentary by Kristen Clarke explores the impact that new photo identification requirements will have on the voting strength of the African American and Latino communities. Wayne R.

Moore offers an analysis of the importance of organ donations for both communities, and Maria Blanco and Diana C. Tate examine the impact the immigrant rights movement has had on coalition building. Tanya Katerí Hernández contributes with an analysis of the role that racial constructions in Latin America have played in this relationship, while research by Veronica L. Womack focuses on the Black Belt and the need for a national policy intervention that addresses the needs of African Americans in the area.

Additionally, we present several interviews with respected professionals whose work focuses on African American-Latino coalition building. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and editor Kenneth J. Cooper discusses the different ways that African American-Latino coalition building has surfaced in the political arena. In two specific case studies, Earl Ofari Hutchinson and Tatcho Mindiola, Jr., analyze race relations in Los Angeles, CA, and Houston, TX. The insights they offer clearly display that the opportunities for collaboration are many—they need only be explored.

We have also included reviews of two influential pieces of literature: *HJAAP* staff member Sapna D. Shah considers *Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos*, as edited by Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler, and T. Marie Cropper offers a look at John McWhorter's *Winning the Race: Beyond the Crisis in Black America*.

With the publication of the 2007 volume of the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*, I would like to give special thanks to the numerous individuals that have provided support and wisdom throughout its development. First and foremost, the hard work and dedication of this year's staff has been a source of inspiration throughout this academic year. Without their strength and commitment to the issues addressed here, this publication would not have been possible. More importantly, however, I must extend my gratitude to the readers of this publication whose work continues to advance the interests of the African American community. It is because of *your* commitment that injustices continue to be righted.

In today's political climate, coalition building between African Americans and Latinos is a necessary topic in the continued struggles over access to health care, the funding of public education, military recruitment policies, economic development, access to higher education, and many others. I hope that this volume acts as a catalyst to spur intellectual discourse regarding the relationship between the African American and Latino communities in the United States—and the revelation that there is more that unites us than divides us.

Cynthia M. Martinez
Editor-in-Chief
Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy
Cambridge, Massachusetts
May 2007

Burdening the Right to Vote: Assessing the Impact of Mandatory Photo Identification Requirements on Minority Voting Strength

by Kristen Clarke

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no issue threatens the fragile status of the voting rights of African American and Latino voters more than recent efforts to adopt mandatory nationalized voter identification requirements. Linking the right to vote to the presentation of specific photo identification significantly burdens that right and denies minority voters equal and unfettered access to the political process. However, prevailing public discourse around mandatory voter identification requirements have failed to sufficiently link the respective burdens faced by African American and Latino voters. While discussion regarding the impact of these laws on African American voters has focused on the issue of poverty, the discourse around the impact on Latino voters has focused more on questions of citizenship. Despite the unique impact of these laws on both communities, the burden placed on each group's ability to access the political process is best viewed in the context of ongoing voting discrimination. Indeed, Congress' recent reauthorization of the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 makes clear that both African American and Latino voters continue to experience significant levels of discrimination that impair their ability to meaningfully exercise their right to vote and equally access the ballot box on Election Day. I argue that African American and Latino voters are comparably burdened by voter identification requirements and current discourse around these laws should be revised to account for the ongoing voting discrimination that both groups face.

Kristen Clarke is assistant counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF). Prior to joining LDF, Ms. Clarke worked for several years in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Ms. Clarke received her A.B. from Harvard University and a J.D. from Columbia Law School, where she served as editor-in-chief of the National Black Law Journal. She has published a number of essays and articles on voting rights and election law issues, including "Voting Rights and City-County Consolidations," which appeared in volume 43 of the Houston Law Review. Her edited volume examining the racial implications of Hurricane Katrina is scheduled to be released this spring.

THE STATUS OF FEDERAL EFFORTS TO ADOPT A MANDATORY IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Both state and federal efforts to adopt voter identification requirements have been encouraged, in part, by the findings and recommendations issued by the Carter-Baker Commission on Federal Election Reform (2005). The commission, chaired by former president Jimmy Carter and former secretary of state James Baker, issued a series of recommendations and an election reform proposal that, according to an article by Dan Balz in the 19 September 2005 *Washington Post*, purport to build confidence in and enhance the quality of our electoral system. Perhaps the most contested of these recommendations concerns the adoption of a national standardized voter identification system based on REAL ID-identification that confirms citizenship and provides social security number verification (Weiser et al. 2005). The commission also suggested that concerns surrounding homeland security following the September 11 World Trade Center attacks may eventually lead to the adoption of a national identity card that would serve as an appropriate substitute for the REAL ID. Unfortunately, the commission's findings leading up to its recommendation are devoid of substantive analysis of the impact that voter identification requirements would have on minority voter access. Indeed, the commission's final report does not reference African Americans, Latinos, or minority voters in any part of its analysis or discussion concerning voter identification.

The Carter-Baker Commission's recommendations eventually gave rise to efforts to adopt voter identification requirements on both state and federal levels (National Conference of State Legislators). Most notably, in September 2006 the House passed H.R. 4844-the Federal Election Integrity Act of 2006-a bill that would require all voters to present costly government-issued photo identification in all federal elections, commencing in November 2008. Although a seemingly sensible requirement on its face, the bill also requires that by 2010, all voters present identification that could only have been obtained if proof of citizenship were provided. In most instances, a state-issued driver's license would not suffice under this heightened standard. Such a law, if passed, would dramatically revamp the way that we vote in the United States by requiring that every voter prove his/her citizenship as a prerequisite to participation in the political process. However, these mandatory voter ID requirements are unwise, vulnerable on a number of constitutional grounds, and negatively impact the voting rights of African American and Latino voters. Specifically, both state and federal voter identification laws likely violate the equal protection guarantee and poll tax prohibition of the Constitution and thus impermissibly burden the fundamental right to vote. In consideration of any constitutional challenge, a court is likely to utilize a greater degree of scrutiny if it can be shown that there is not only a significant threat to the fundamental right to vote but also that the threat is one that is racial in nature. Here, highlighting the impact on racial minorities, particularly African Americans and Latinos, can help bolster any efforts to contest the constitutionality and viability of these statutes.

The prevailing arguments in support of voter identification statutes suggest that there is a need to take corrective measures to prevent vote fraud and to bar noncitizens from participating in the electoral process. Indeed, the records underlying the

adoption of both federal and state laws of this kind, such as the controversial 2004 Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act of Arizona, are replete with suggestions that noncitizens pose a threat to the integrity of the electoral process because, without identification, there is no way to ensure that noncitizens would not cast ballots on election day (Reyes 2005). It is clear that many proponents of voter identification laws are fueled by ongoing debates regarding immigration and the need for stronger border security. Other proponents advance arguments that embrace the growing xenophobic sentiment stemming from the September 11 attacks. Despite the prevailing tone of these debates, little empirical evidence exists demonstrating that noncitizens perpetrate vote fraud on any significant level (Overton 2006). Rather, the evidence suggests that noncitizens seek to avoid interaction with local, state, and federal officials for fear of inviting undesirable levels of governmental attention and scrutiny. Moreover, any recorded occurrences of duplicative voting, impersonators seeking to cast ballots on behalf of dead voters, and noncitizens casting electoral ballots are too few and far between to justify the burden that these laws impose on minority voters. In other words, the costs associated with voter identification laws far exceed any benefits that proponents could hope to derive.

Moreover, in those rare instances in which vote fraud occurs, there are several existing federal and state laws that make such conduct prosecutable. For example, 18 U.S.C. 911 makes it criminal for noncitizens to falsely assert citizenship and 42 U.S.C. 1973i(c) makes it illegal to solicit undocumented immigrants to register or vote. Thus, a noncitizen who declares American citizenship on a voter registration form or groups who knowingly organize and register noncitizens are all subject to fairly stiff federal criminal penalties. In addition, most voter registration forms in the United States contain a statement warning applicants that false statements on the form are subject to penalties of perjury. The deterrent effect of these criminal laws should not be underestimated and serve to discourage the type of fraud that voter identification statutes would presumably reach.

Proponents of voter identification laws suggest that voters will have more confidence in our political process if they know that noncitizens will not be permitted to vote and distort electoral outcomes. However, there are several flaws with this argument. First, a recent study that provides a comprehensive look at county and state voter turnout rates during the 2004 presidential election found a correlation, albeit limited, between burdensome and costly voter ID requirements and depressed voter turnout rates (Vercollitti and Andersen 2006); thus, the empirical evidence supports the contention that the costs would outweigh any benefits that identification proponents might hope to derive. Second, proponents have failed to establish the relationship between voter identification and reduced vote fraud. To the extent that there is any viable evidence suggesting that fraud is a significant problem in our electoral process, it is unclear that the presentation of voter identification at the polls is the appropriate corrective measure that would result in reduced levels of fraud. In addition, to the extent that fraud threatens the integrity of our electoral process and reduces the confidence of some in electoral outcomes, one should be concerned about the burdens posed by identification requirements that would most certainly lock out significant numbers of racial minorities. The potential for racial exclusion poses a far greater threat to the integrity of an electoral process that claims to be

built on principles of equality and fairness. Finally, the goals of the Voting Rights Act and other federal laws that have helped ensure greater levels of access to the political process for African American and Latino voters are significantly undermined by identification requirements that erect unnecessary barriers to participation (Shaw 2005). This threat should be of grave concern to those concerned with enhancing turnout and participation rates among racial minorities.

As a general matter, proponents of voter identification laws pay scant attention to the impact that the law would have on the ability of African American and Latino voters to participate in the political process. Proponents also attribute little weight to the extensive record that Congress has amassed showing that minority voters continue to experience significant levels of voting discrimination. For example, the record underlying the 2006 reauthorization of the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act was replete with evidence of systemic discrimination against minority voters in a number of jurisdictions throughout the country. Jurisdictions sought to reduce minority voting strength through a range of tactics that included the reduction of minority population percentages in districts that provided minority voters an opportunity to elect candidates of their choice, selective annexations in which the requests of White voters were elevated above those of minority voters, and the elimination of elected bodies and replacement with appointive bodies. Photo identification proposals must be viewed against this backdrop. Current debates regarding the need for federal voter identification requirements falsely convey a sense that citizenship problems provide a sound basis for the law. These debates seize upon rhetoric concerning border security and immigration problems to suggest that there are significant numbers of noncitizens seeking to undermine the integrity of our electoral process by casting ballots in elections for which they are ineligible. However, sufficiently highlighting the burdens placed on African American and Latino voters in the context of significant and ongoing voting discrimination would help make clear the precise burden placed on minority voters' ability to participate in the political process and help the public conduct a cost-benefit analysis in order to gauge the value of these laws.

SUPREME COURT RECOGNITION OF ONGOING VOTING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LATINO VOTERS

The Supreme Court's recent ruling in *LULAC v. Perry* is fairly recent recognition of the fact that voting discrimination against Latino voters persists. Moreover, the ruling helps highlight the barriers that stand in the way of minority voters' ability to access the political process and provides a way to understand the harms associated with restrictive voter identification requirements. In *LULAC*, the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of a redistricting plan that emerged during a racially heated and partisan-driven legislative session in the state of Texas. Although the Court rejected claims with respect to partisan gerrymandering, the Court did find that a particular majority Latino district, covering the southwest section of the state, had to be redrawn because it impermissibly diluted minority voting rights in violation of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

The logic underlying the Court's reasoning is explicit recognition of the fact that discrimination persists. The Court highlighted significant levels of "particularly severe" racially polarized voting in state elections and found that this polarization stood as stark evidence of ongoing voting discrimination. In particular, the Court found that "Anglo citizen voting-age majority will often, if not always, prevent Latinos from electing the candidate of their choice in the district." The Court credited the findings of experts who carefully conducted statistical analysis of voting patterns and determined that Anglos were generally unlikely to extend their support to Latino candidates. Moreover, the Court found that aspects of the Texas redistricting plan bear "the mark of intentional discrimination that could give rise to an equal protection violation." Thus, the Court identified discrimination, to varying degrees, on both effect and intent grounds. Although the *LULAC* ruling deals specifically with facts arising in the state of Texas, the political reality described by the Court is one that extends to many jurisdictions throughout the country with significant numbers of racial minorities and contested electoral seats. To the extent that mandatory identification requirements impose additional burdens on voters who already experience significant levels of discrimination in the voting context, it is clear that mandatory identification requirements compound the effects of that discrimination while creating barriers that will make it increasingly difficult for minority voters to cast their ballots on election day.

EVIDENCE OF VOTING DISCRIMINATION PRESENTED DURING THE 2006 REAUTHORIZATION OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Moreover, there has been significant evidence memorializing the extent to which ongoing voting discrimination continues to inhibit the ability of both African American and Latino voters seeking to participate in the political process. For example, the record underlying Congress's recent reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act is replete with examples of discrimination faced by minority voters in many jurisdictions throughout the country. Such discrimination ranged from the adoption of discriminatory redistricting plans that negatively impacted the ability of African American voters to elect candidates of their choice to intimidation at the polls on election day. More egregious examples of voting discrimination include the decision by the town of Kilmichael, MS, to cancel a 2001 election after census data confirmed that African Americans had become a numerical majority and were on the verge of exercising their newfound political clout and Louisiana State Legislature's 2001 decision to eliminate a majority Black district in New Orleans as part of its decennial redistricting plan.

Fortunately, the Section 5 preclearance provision, which requires certain jurisdictions to seek permission before implementing new voting changes, helped ensure that these discriminatory voting changes were never put into effect; however, this political reality underscores the need for measures that guarantee unfettered access to the ballot box. Indeed, federal protections, such as those afforded by the Act's Section 5 preclearance provision, remain necessary in order to preserve the right to vote. Against this backdrop, it is difficult to justify the burden imposed by voter

identification requirements in light of voting discrimination that remains both severe and racial in nature.

LOOKING BEYOND CIVIL RIGHTS CONCERNS

I argue that public debate around voter identification statutes should be revised to account more meaningfully for the impact that these restrictions would place on African American and Latino voters. However, it is important to note that the implications of voter identification statutes extend beyond racial minorities alone. In particular, these laws do little to account for the impact that would be felt by the elderly, particularly those who are home-bound, those with physical disabilities, persons born outside of hospitals in rural and isolated communities who are disproportionately poor and lack access to government agencies, persons born at home to midwives who are often without birth certificates, American Indians on reservations who are unaccustomed to dealing with state bureaucracies, and women who are more likely to encounter problems securing documents that may vary between marital and maiden names. In this sense, these laws would impose barriers that would paralyze many groups seeking to participate freely in the political process by compounding the level of discrimination experienced or exacerbating those barriers already encountered in seeking to exercise the right to vote. While common sense might dictate that legislators take steps to encourage greater levels of political participation, voter identification laws would erect barriers that can be understood beyond the parameters of traditional civil rights discourse.

THE LEGAL VULNERABILITY OF VOTER IDENTIFICATION STATUTES

Voter identification requirements are in tension with at least two constitutional amendments. These laws not only violate the Voting Rights Act's Section 2 vote denial prohibition, but also its Section 5 retrogression provision, which bars certain jurisdictions from adopting voting changes that worsen the position of minority voters (Shaw 2005). Reflecting the tenuous grounds upon which these laws stand, a number of courts have struck these laws on various federal and state constitutional grounds. Most recently, in *Lakes v. Perdue*, a state court found that Georgia's voter ID law violated its constitution in that it impermissibly created new voter eligibility criteria. In *Common Cause v. Billops*, a federal district court found that that same voter ID law constituted a poll tax and violated the Equal Protection Clause. In none of these cases were the state defendants able to offer any substantial proof that vote fraud was a problem that justified the substantial burden imposed on the right to vote.

The purpose of the 24th Amendment was to ensure that neither Congress nor any state passed a law conditioning the right to vote in federal elections on payment of any tax or fee. Courts have used an adaptable standard to determine what constitutes an impermissible poll tax. For example, in *Harman v. Forssenius*, the Court struck down a Virginia law that required voters to pay a poll tax or, alternatively, file a certificate of residence (a sworn statement of continued residency). The Court reasoned that the certificate of residence, although not a poll tax per se, imposed a burden on

those who had not yet paid back taxes but still desired to vote in federal elections. In this regard, the Court found that the law amounted to an “onerous procedural requirement which effectively handicap[ped] exercise of the franchise” (380 U.S. 528, 541).

Given this precedent, a court today would likely find that Congress’s voter ID bill represents a more “sophisticated” form of a poll tax in that it requires voters to pay significant fees to secure the requisite documents needed to establish citizenship. For example, the Department of State issues passports at a standard rate of ninety-seven dollars and for those rushing to meet election dates or deadlines, an additional sixty-dollar fee is imposed. Birth certificates, on average, cost approximately fifteen dollars to process and an additional fifteen dollars to mail-in addition to those costs associated with travel to the relevant issuing agency. Although the federal bill waives the cost of the state-issued identification required at the polls for those deemed “indigent,” the bill is silent with respect to these inescapable associated costs. Moreover, forcing voters to declare their indigence is a stigmatizing and burdensome precondition upon which to tie the right to vote. A court is likely to also construe the statement of indigence to be akin to the certificate of residency—a “cumbersome procedure” with no clear rules or standards defining who would be eligible. This kind of evidence will likely be at the heart of any 24th Amendment challenge that may be mounted against the law.

The Court’s seminal poll tax ruling is *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, which found that Virginia’s poll tax violated the Equal Protection Clause. The *Harper* Court found that one’s status of wealth or ability to pay a fee was not a valid qualification for voting. Several post-*Harper* rulings rely on the strict scrutiny standard to determine if a particular regulation is narrowly tailored to advance some compelling state interest. However, recent cases have adopted a more flexible standard aimed at giving states more flexibility in constructing voting regulations. This standard weighs the magnitude of the alleged injury and the rights at stake against the state’s justification for the burden imposed on those rights (see *Burdick v. Takushi*). Regardless of the standard adopted by the Roberts Court, the result should be the same. Indeed, there is scant evidence that fraud is a massive problem, little proof demonstrating the ability of voter identification laws to address alleged fraud, a clear burden imposed on the fundamental right to vote, and traceable impact on the voting rights of racial minorities.

PROTECTING THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO VOTE

When eligible individuals register to vote in the United States, they complete a registration form that generally contains a warning that false statements on the form could lead to prosecution. Potential voters also attest that they are of age, a citizen, and a resident of the respective jurisdiction. These attestations along with a myriad of state and federal criminal laws that reach electoral fraud have long sufficed as effective safeguards to shield the integrity of our political process. Nevertheless, recent efforts on both the state and federal levels suggest that fraud is a systemic problem and that voter identification requirements are the cure. Proponents often use a xenophobic rationale to further justify the need for these restrictive laws.

However, by focusing on the comparable effects faced by African American and Latino voters, the tenuous justifications proffered for these laws become evident. It is clear that voter identification requirements violate the federally protected voting rights of minority voters by creating unnecessary burdens that inhibit access to the ballot box. Moreover, in the context of significant and ongoing voting discrimination against minority groups, voter identification requirements would make it exceedingly difficult for minority voters to freely cast their ballots. For those concerned with both the practical and theoretical conceptions of political participation, the challenge is not only to identify the subtle and overt laws that restrict voter access but also to construct laws that make participation easier and more racially inclusive.

REFERENCES

- Commission on Federal Election Reform. 2005. *Building Confidence in U.S. Elections*. Center for Democracy and Election Management, American University.
http://www.american.edu/ia/cfer/report/full_report.pdf.
- National Conference of State Legislators. Requirements for Photo Identification (Updated August 1, 2006). <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/elect/taskfc/voteridreq.htm>.
- Overton, Spencer. 2006. Voter Identification. *Michigan Law Review* 105:631-682.
- Reyes, Steven (staff attorney, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund). 2005. Letter to Joseph Rich, Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 13 January.
- Shaw, Theodore (director-counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.). 2005. Letter to John Tanner, Chief, Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 3 August.
- Vercollitti, Timothy, and Anderson, David. 2006. Protecting the Franchise, or Restricting It? The Effects of Voter Identification Requirements on Turnout. Paper presented at the 2006 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 31 August-3 September, at Philadelphia, PA.
- Weiser, Wendy R., Justin Levitt, Catherine Weiss, and Spencer Overton. 2005. Response to the Report of the 2005 Commission on Election Reform. Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, New York, NY.

Increasing Organ Donations: An Urgent Need in African American and Latino Communities

Wayne R. Moore

Advancements made in biomedicine and surgical techniques since the 1960s have greatly improved the success of organ and tissue transplantation. Survival rates have risen dramatically due to improvements in surgery and the development of immunosuppressive agents. Nevertheless, within the African American and Latino communities, many individuals have not benefited from these life-saving medical treatments because the need for donated organs outpaces the available supply. This article examines factors impeding African Americans and Latinos from receiving transplantation as a treatment option, the urgent need for both communities to be active in supporting organ and tissue donation, and strategies to address ambivalence towards organ donation.

End-stage renal disease is an important public health and medical problem in the United States that affects racial and ethnic minority groups disproportionately. Approximately 35.6 percent of the 39,924 persons on kidney transplant lists are African Americans; of those African Americans awaiting transplantation, only 21.9 percent receive a donor kidney. African Americans experience a longer waiting period for organ donation: a median of thirty-nine months compared to twenty months for Euro-Americans. African Americans are seven times more likely than European Americans to develop hypertension, a condition that can lead to end-stage renal

Wayne R. Moore is currently an associate professor of social policy in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, NC. Prior to teaching, he worked in various health care, medical, and psychiatric settings. Moore has worked with renal transplant candidates and families with pre- and postoperative issues. He was one of the original founders of the geriatric assessment program at University Hospitals of Cleveland and served as a faculty member with the Department of Family Medicine, University Hospitals at Cleveland. He has been involved in numerous community efforts to address disparities that minorities and other populations at risk encounter in access to quality health care and issues on end-of-life decisions. He has presented numerous papers and workshops at international, national, state, and regional conferences on various issues dealing with Alzheimer's disease and dementia, caregiver issues, and bereavement work with adults and youths. His primary teaching areas are clinical social work practice in health and mental health settings, gerontology, and social policy. Moore received his master of social work from the Ohio State University and his doctorate from the University of South Carolina.

disease and eventual kidney failure. They are four times more likely than Euro-Americans to be on dialysis, which is best treated by kidney transplantation. While African Americans compose 12 percent of the general population, they number nearly one-third of those with renal disease (Rozon-Solomon and Burrows 1999; Young and Gaston 2002).

Although few epidemiological studies have focused on Latino organ donation or transplantation issues, available research shows the population has a higher incidence of end-stage renal disease, hypertension, and diabetes. These conditions contribute to the substantial need for organ transplants among a group underrepresented as organ donors. Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure and is estimated to be four to six times more common in Latinos. Latinos make up 10 percent of those waiting kidney transplants. Within the Hispanic population, about fifteen thousand Latinos await organ transplant, with about 77 percent waiting for a kidney transplant (Alvaro et al. 2005; Chapa 1991; Chiapella and Feldman 1995). The shortage of available donor organs contributes to longer waits for transplants and greater risk of death for both African Americans and Latinos.

Transplantation is the treatment of choice for those with end-stage renal diseases. However, according to Callender, Miles, Hall, and Gordon (2002) of the National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program, minorities are the most likely members of society to die while awaiting transplant or to not even be offered this treatment choice. It is urgent that African Americans and Latinos understand transplantation and donor issues, how the current shortage of donor organs affects their communities disproportionately, and what actions have been taken to increase donation consent.

IMPEDIMENTS TO ORGAN DONATION

Research illustrates that when families do consent to donate their deceased relatives' organs or become designated organ donors themselves, it is because of their desire to see good come out of tragedy, their sense of a duty to help others, and their acknowledgement of the altruism and life-saving capacity that donation allows. However, members of the African American and Latino communities have been reluctant to donate organs for transplantation, designate oneself as an organ donor by signing a donor card, or to register as a bone marrow donor. According to research on organ donor issues, such as that covered on the National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program (MOTTEP) Web site, the African American community and Latino population share many of the same fears and concerns towards organ donation (Chapa 1991). These concerns include lack of awareness of the need for organ donation with their respective communities, religious myths and misconceptions, mistrust of the medical system, concerns about allocation issues, money and insurance barriers, and attitudes of medical practitioners.

LACK OF AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO DONATE

African American and Latino patients also lag behind with respect to time spent waiting for a transplant. In a report by the Office of the Inspector General, Black

transplant candidates waited almost twice as long as White candidates for kidney transplants. Data from the United Network for Organ Sharing shows that Caucasians are removed from the national kidney transplant waiting list by living related donors at a rate more than three times greater than that for Blacks (Callender et al. 2002; DHHS).

Awareness of the need for organ donation within the Latino community is changing slowly. In survey research of Latino households and attitudes towards organ donation, respondents reported they had never really thought about organ donation or signing organ donor cards. Research examining attitudes towards donation in American cities with the largest adult Latino populations found they were uninformed about donation and that the community does not like to discuss death or plan for it. Also, many expressed confusion about the donor process and most were unaware that the Catholic Church supports organ donation. The lack of available donations from Latinos and African Americans exacerbates the waiting period for those needing a transplant and can affect the outcomes (Callender et. al. 2002; Alvaro et al. 2005; Chapa 1991). Both African American and Latino communities must become aware of the significance that a donation within their respective communities can have for those awaiting a life-saving transplant.

RELIGIOUS MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

As noted above, research demonstrates that African American and Latino communities are reluctant to donate organs. This is due to the belief that the body must be intact for resurrection and for an afterlife (Chapa 1991). This point of view has centered on the theology that the body must be kept whole to be properly resurrected upon "Judgment Day." In 1963 the Catholic Church repealed its prohibition on cremation. The deceased person was thus given permission to receive full burial rites regardless of bodily form and the way was opened for organs to be removed from deceased persons. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod was the first Protestant denomination to endorse organ donation in 1981. Because of the many different Protestant denominations, no unified statement has been written about organ and tissue or marrow donation. However, nearly all faith communities have issued statements in recognition of the life-giving benefits of organ and tissue donation (National Council of Churches 1997). Some of these encourage donation respecting an individual's conscience; others state no prohibition toward donation.

The African American faith community, adhering to traditional Judeo-Christian values, supported sharing organs and tissues with those in need. The Congress of National Black Churches, comprising eight denominations and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, has urged its congregations to become organ, tissue, and blood donors (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997). The faith community plays a crucial role in dispelling the fears, misconceptions, and myths that have subverted efforts to increase donation in the African American and Latino communities.

MISTRUST OF MEDICAL SYSTEM

The myths and distrust that erode the urgency of African Americans and Latinos to become organ and tissue donors stem from their experiences with the medical system. Both groups have good reasons for their mistrust. Among these were the use of African Americans in unethical medical experimentation such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Trials, unwarranted sterilizations of Hispanic and African American women, and abuse in medical and mental health treatment. Such experiences have resulted in many individuals refusing to seek medical care with the belief that physicians, hospitals, and health care institutions will not treat their medical problem seriously. For African Americans, research continues to confirm a continuing lack of trust for doctors, the medical system, and the procedures through which people are selected for advanced medical treatment (Baldwin et al. 2005; Peterson et al. 1997; Richards and Lowe 2003).

Misinformation in the African American and Latino communities regarding organ donation is rampant. African Americans and Latinos are inclined to believe that fewer efforts are made to save someone's life if it is known that the person has a signed donor card. Furthermore, African Americans believe that Whites are given priority for transplants or that Black organ donations do not necessarily benefit other Blacks. Worse, some believe that African American organ donors are not needed. Past conspiracy theories have been constructed about organ acquisitions too. In 1994, Louis Farrakhan attempted linking Black-on-Black crime to the efforts of organ procurement programs to increase the supply of organs for the benefit of people other than African Americans (Warren 1994).

In surveys and interviews, both the African and Latino communities exhibit a sense of confusion about the whole donor process (Alvaro et al. 2005; Frates and Bohrer 2002; Weiss 2003; McNamara et al. 1999). The most misunderstood point is that the transplant surgeons are not members of the medical team either in the emergency room or within the acute care hospital. The organ procurement organization working with a hospital's organ donor team is called only after all efforts to save the life of the patient have been exhausted.

ALLOCATION OF ORGAN DONATIONS

Congress created the Office of Organ Procurement and Transplantation administered by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to coordinate the use of donated organs and to create a national system for matching donors and recipients. In 1986 the Department of Health and Human Services solicited proposals for the establishment of a national organ procurement system to set standards, develop policies, govern membership, and establish a 24-hour computer telephone network to identify donors and recipients. The United Network for Organ Sharing was awarded the contract in 1988 to develop and administer the current system for matching organs to potential recipients nationwide and to control the allocation of donated organs by establishing ten regional geographic areas (Hader 2006). Under current organ allocation policies, patients are given priority for organs based on their geographic location ahead of their medical need. Called the "local first" rule, this has

had the effect of a less medically urgent patient receiving transplantation while another more critical patient dies.

In 1998 the Secretary of Health and Human Services issued a directive calling for the revision of the allocation policies. This was intended to reduce the current geographic disparities for those on waiting lists. In addition, this directive called for the development of uniform criteria for determining a patient's medical status and eligibility for placement on organ waiting lists. Currently, each individual transplant center establishes its own medical criteria. This can cause the patients listed at one center to be regarded as less critical than if they were listed at another center with more stringent medical criteria. The development of medically objective, uniform criteria used by all transplant centers would work to ensure a level playing field in selecting the patients with the greatest medical need to receive donor organs (DHHS).

MONEY AND INSURANCE BARRIERS

Access, quality, and utilization of health care services in America are directly related to insurance and money. Dr. Clive Callender, chairman of surgery and director of transplant services at Howard University, speaking before a congressional hearing, first described monetary or insurance barriers to transplantation as the "green screen" (Congress 1998). This screen has been eased with passage of the End-Stage Renal Disease Program in 1972. This provided for dialysis for treatment of end-stage renal disease and additional Medicare amendments to cover the medical costs of transplantation, preliminary tests, and postoperative expenses for most organ transplants. Medicare and state Medicaid programs began providing immunosuppressant medications in 1999, thus removing a hurdle to transplant rejection.

Monetary barriers to transplantation persist today. Prospective transplant recipients who want to improve their chances for transplants often undergo evaluation at several transplant centers. Each center has its own protocols and evaluation criteria for whom they will accept and where they will be placed on their transplant waitlist (DHHS). The organ procurement organization maintains there are no advantages to being on multiple waitlists in areas served by the same organization. Nevertheless, many patients awaiting a transplant conduct extensive research to place their name on another list in hopes of increasing their chances at receiving an organ. Even though Medicare and most insurance policies cover an initial evaluation assessment, multiple evaluations are often not covered. To receive multiple evaluations, a patient must have his or her own means to pay. Additional expenses include travel and living expenses for patients and their accompanying caregivers during the lengthy medical evaluation. Patients registered with multiple centers must be able to travel immediately when notified an organ is available. However, even after a cross-country plane trip, they may find that the match is not possible. Those without discretionary money or extensive private insurance may never obtain transplantation.

ATTITUDES OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS AND ACCESS TO TRANSPLANT CARE

Compared to other ethnic groups, African Americans have many reasons to mistrust the medical system. Among these reasons are the use of African Americans in unethical medical experimentation, the unwarranted sterilization of African American women, and the failure to include African Americans in clinical and biomedical research. Many do not seek routine medical care because they believe that physicians, hospitals, and health care institutions will not treat their medical problems as seriously as those of other ethnic groups (Baldwin et al. 2005; Gamble 1997; Richards and Lowe 2003; Trivedi and Ayanian 2006). They do not trust physicians or health care institutions to promote a patient's best interest in end-of-life care and related decisions.

It is important to determine whether African Americans and Latinos are being offered transplantation. If transplantation is a viable medical treatment, all patients must be informed of its benefits, associated procedures, processes, and risks. Unfortunately, studies have shown that African Americans frequently are not referred, evaluated, or placed on transplant waiting lists. (Alexander and Sehgal 1998; Young and Gaston 2002). Ayanian, Cleary, Weissman, and Epstein (1997, 1667) found that even among patients who were well informed of transplantation's benefits and desired the procedure, "Black patients were less likely than White patients to have been evaluated and placed on a waiting list or given a transplant." Among Latinos, lack of access to health care providers, health insurance, and routine medical care has resulted in an increased incidence of end-stage renal disease and dialysis dependency. (Chapa 1991; Trivedi and Ayanian 2006).

Frates, Bohrer, and Thomas (2006) assessed the impact of a media advertising campaign to promote organ donation among Latinos within major television and radio markets in southern California. They found many had genuine fear and misconceptions about organ donation. Among their reasons was fear that medical personnel might withhold care from identified organ donors. They were also uncomfortable discussing questions or concerns they had about organ donation or transplantation with health care professionals. They also reported other interrelated issues including disrespect by physicians directed toward Latinos, lack of choice in medical providers, and problems communicating with physicians.

Medical care providers must inform, recommend, and educate patients for whom the treatment option of transplantation may be clinically appropriate. Patients must be encouraged to undergo evaluation. The evaluation process may seem overwhelming to frightened patients and families. Effective communication between Latino and African American patients and the medical community is necessary to assure that those evaluated as suitable transplant candidates follow through on each stage of the transplant process. These four stages are (1) declaration of medical suitability for transplantation, (2) expression of interest in receiving a transplant, (3) referral to a transplant surgeon for evaluation, and (4) placement on a waiting list for a new kidney. In their research focusing on patients already on transplantation waiting lists for kidney transplant, Alexander and Sehgal (1998) of the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine found that race, income, and gender influ-

ence every stage of the transplant process—from declaration of medical suitability to placement on organ waiting lists. Their findings found African Americans and minorities were less likely than European Americans to complete the last three steps of the transplant process. After controlling for age, years on dialysis, and cause of renal failure, African Americans, women, and the poor are significantly less likely to be transplanted.

ACTION REQUIRED OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO COMMUNITIES

The federal government has attempted to increase referral to organ procurement organizations by enacting “required request laws.” When hospitals admit patients, they must ask whether they are or would consider becoming an organ donor. In addition, hospitals are required to identify and notify organ procurement agencies of potential donor candidates. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization (2006), which reviews and accredits the nation’s hospitals and evaluates a hospital’s protocols and data, directed all hospitals to strengthen their protocols by asking patients or relatives of their desires regarding organ donation. To further reinforce required request efforts, in May 2006, all organ procurement organizations became required to submit performance data to maintain federal reimbursement for costs associated with working with local hospitals in organ retrieval (CMS 2006). In spite of such efforts, the overall organ supply has not increased. Failure to obtain consent from the next of kin remains the single largest reason why the shortage of organs for transplantation continues. Unrealized donor potential in hospitals suggest either the eligible donors are not being identified or that their families are not being approached to donate (Hader 2006; Shanteau, Harris, and VandenBos 1992).

COMMUNITY EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Research continues to support the importance of public information and education to address the ongoing shortage. Among ethnic groups in the United States, Latinos and African Americans are the most likely to die waiting for an organ because they are not referred for transplant in a timely manner (Callender et al. 2002; Chapa 1991). Efforts to heighten the public’s awareness of advances in transplantation must be undertaken. Several current initiatives provide the model to address this alarming need. Among them, MOTTEP and the Georgia Leadership Commission on Organ, Tissue, Blood, and Marrow Donation Among African Americans both provide holistic educational approaches, are replicable, and use basic grassroots strategies to educate African Americans. The two initiatives have also been used as models to educate other minorities, including Latinos, of the urgent crisis in organ, tissue, and bone marrow donation and transplantation.

In 1982, Clive Callender initiated the first research to explore why Blacks are less likely than Whites to become living organ donors or sign donor cards and to institute strategies to improve minority donations. Through his efforts, there has been improvement in minority donation since 1982. In 1980, minority donations

were reported at 15 percent with increases by 2001 attaining 28 percent (Callender et al. 2002; Congress 1998). The obvious conclusion was that face-to-face dialogue, testimonials from transplant candidates and recipients, as well as education programs would be necessary to convince African Americans of the need to become actively involved as organ donors.

MOTTEP was developed and implemented in 1991 to reduce the number of ethnic minorities needing organ and tissue transplants. Its target populations are African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives. This program provides minority communities with the facts about organ and tissue transplants, encourages individuals to sign donor cards, and encourages families to discuss their attitudes, feelings, and beliefs about organ donation to become donors. Initially funded by the National Institutes of Health in June 1993, with additional funding in 1995, MOTTEP has expanded coverage from its original three cities to fifteen cities across the nation. Its educational efforts include the following strategies:

Community Involvement: Persons who live within the community are invited to become participants rather than remain part of a passive audience. Their awareness about donor and transplantation issues increases when their own ideas are acknowledged and their opinions are reinforced.

Face-to Face-Dialogue: Personal testimonials from transplant recipients, transplant candidates, and donor families encourage listeners to “Share the Gift of Life” by becoming donors. Ethnically similar messengers are effective in encouraging African Americans and Latinos to sign donor cards or to indicate willingness to donate when renewing driver’s licenses. The most critical point, however, is the necessity for discussing one’s decision with family members so they know and can abide by a person’s wishes upon death. Providing information that is culturally sensitive, accurate, and easy to comprehend is critical to resolving the transplant crisis. Face-to-face presentations, community exhibits, video presentations, work-site presentations, literature using photographs of real people to whom an audience can relate, donation literature in physician offices, and inquiries whether a patient has considered being an organ donor during patient history—all of these are important educational strategies. Research from the Latino and African Americans communities continues to show that, when the designated donor communicates a wish to be an organ donor to the next-of-kin, it is the strongest predictor of a family’s consent to organ donation (Frates and Bohrer 2002; Yuen et al. 1998; Morgan, Miller, and Arasaratnam 2002).

Media Promotion: Television, radio, and print media are also effective tools in publicizing the need for donors. Newspaper and television stories of transplant recipients and donor families, especially African Americans and Latinos, have a direct impact on donor response. It is especially important for the media to alert minorities of the organ shortage and to inform the wider community about the benefits of organ and tissue donation by recognizing National Minority Donor Awareness Day on the first day of August. Celebrities with status in the African American and Latino communities have considerable impact. For example, Rod Carew’s appeal for bone marrow for his eighteen-year-old daughter who later died of leukemia and the National Football League star Walter Peyton’s appeal for a new

liver underscored the continued urgency for the African American community to become organ donors and participate in the national bone marrow registry. Comedian Rich Ramirez, speaking about his experiences obtaining a liver transplant in his show *You Want A Piece of Me?*, illustrates the need for donation and positive outcome of organ transplantation for the Latino community. Again, a central overarching message that must be encompassed within any outreach campaign is the encouragement of families to sit and discuss their beliefs and desires in becoming designated organ donors. According to Morgan (2004), the strongest predictor of families providing consent to donate is family discussion about organ donation. Family discussion doubles the rates of family consent (Alvaro et al. 2005).

Collaboration: It is imperative that community organizations work together to educate and support the mission to increase organ and transplant awareness. Collaborative efforts between organ procurement agencies and other community service agencies such as the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, National Kidney Foundation, national heart, liver, and lung associations, and agencies serving African American and Latino communities must reinforce that advances in transplantation have led to life-continuing therapies.

The formation of the Georgia Leadership Commission on Organ, Tissue, Blood and Marrow Donation Among Africans Americans in 1996 is another example of effective education on this issue. This commission is a collaborative effort between Emory Hospital's Center for Transplantation and the Institute for Minority Health Research, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University (Preston 1998). Its mission is to increase awareness of African American donor participation in Georgia. As members of this commission travel through the state, they provide opportunities whereby local citizens, elected officials, clergy, health professionals, donor families, transplant recipients, and people on the waiting list for lifesaving transplants can speak about the urgency for black citizens to become organ donors. Southern California's Coalition on Donation's Hispanic campaign and other community-based initiatives around the United States, such as MOTTEP, are designed to empower minority communities to become involved in community educational avenues (Callender et al. 1997). Furthermore, any community initiative must connect emotionally, intellectually, and rationally to provide clear answers and understanding of the growing number of Latinos awaiting organ transplants and to clarify misconceptions and misinformation held by individuals, families, and communities.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

All colleges and universities should revise their curricula and community service programs such that students understand the urgent need for organ/tissue donors and discuss this issue with their relatives. Medical, nursing, dental, public health, and social work schools should be encouraged to provide materials that sensitize students to issues in organ donation specific to the African American and Latino communities. Student honor and service organizations should be encouraged to sponsor or organize campus or community public education campaigns to highlight donor awareness. Black History and Multicultural Awareness Months on the nation's

campuses could be utilized to call attention to the plight of those awaiting a new life through organ transplantation.

It is imperative for historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to understand this crisis, to inform students of the challenge before the African American community, and to encourage students to sign organ donor cards and enroll in the national bone marrow registry. The most critical point is for students and faculty to discuss with their families their decision to be a donor. Such efforts undertaken by student leaders and students at Howard University, Prairie View A&M, Southern University, and North Carolina A&T have shown results. The percentage of students who had family discussions about donor shortages increased from 22 percent to 52 percent (Callender et al. 1997). This heightening of donor crisis consciousness should not be limited to just HBCUs. All colleges, universities, and community colleges should encourage minority student organizations, fraternities, sororities, professional clubs, faculty forums, and community programs to inform their constituents of the crisis and do their part to alleviate suffering.

CLERGY AND FAITH COMMUNITIES

The African American and Latino communities are particularly reticent to contemplate their own deaths; thus, there is often confusion when confronted with the donation of organs and tissues of dying relatives. Because of its role of leadership in the Latino and African American communities, the clergy may have a role to play in ameliorating this problem. It could do so by encouraging congregations, individuals, and families to discuss becoming organ donors and to sign donor cards. Furthermore, when clergy are called to the emergency room or intensive care unit, they sustain families in their decision to donate their relative's organs by providing empathy and compassion (Chapa 1991; National Council of Churches 1997).

The Congress of National Black Churches, the National Council of Churches, the Black Church Liaison Committee, and the Roman Catholic Church have encouraged their congregations to reaffirm and embrace the life-saving benefits and potential of transplantation and donation. Among Catholics, the Hispanic Campaign Workshop of the Coalition to Donate continues to clarify and stress that the Catholic Church wholeheartedly supports organ donation. The late Pope John Paul II and his successor, Pope Benedict XVI, have encouraged Catholics to donate, and to emphasize the church support of organ and tissue donation, each signed donor cards.

Organ donors and recipients should be encouraged to participate in services or programs in their congregations in which they can provide personal accounts of their transplant experiences and thus overcome the obstacles of apathy, fear, and prejudice about donation. Also, faith communities must be supportive, sensitive, and sympathetic to the emotional needs of these individuals and families whose relatives are on waiting lists for transplantation. In this endeavor, many faith communities have created special sermons and educational programs for a special service during the annual National Donor Sabbath in November.

PUBLIC POLICY

Two major policy developments have shaped our current system of organ donation, procurement, and transplantation at the national level. Rather than developing a federal law or system for donation to all states, in 1968 Congress took the indirect route and passed the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (UAGA) to help clarify the role of the donor and the altruistic atmosphere of organ giving. By 1973, all states had enacted some version of the UAGA formalizing the methods by which individuals or families could make a gift of organs and tissues. The primary thrust was the donor card, a written statement by which the public declared being a donor. The second policy development was passage of Public Law 92-603 or the End-Stage Renal Disease Program (ESRD) under the Social Security Act of 1972. Through this law and subsequent amendments, persons under the age of 65 could be eligible for Social Security cash benefits, full coverage for home-based and hospital-based dialysis, and coverage for transplantation as a treatment modality.

Since the number of those awaiting organ and tissue transplantation far exceeds the supply efforts by the federal government, the national health care accreditation body, and state legislatures have not been able to close the gap (Delmonico et al. 2002; Hader 2006; CMS 2006). The Department of Health and Human Services has awarded over \$21 million in new grants since 1999 to expand demonstration projects and programs intended to increase organ and tissue donation and to identify best approaches to increasing future donation. Other efforts have included the *Workplace Partnership for Life* program to involve collaboration between corporations and companies of all sizes and their employees to become potential organ donors, and to encourage employees to discuss with their families their attitudes, values, and understanding about organ and tissue donation.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2006) have attempted to improve communication and work relationships between designated organ procurement organizations and acute care hospitals. In April 2003, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initiated a national effort for hospitals to share their best practice methods and experiences in increasing family consent rates. It also encouraged hospitals to offer the option of organ and tissue donation to donor eligible families. President George W. Bush signed the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act of 2004 to further expand the development of best practices and strengthen efforts to increase the rate of organ donation. In 2006 the United States Senate Appropriations Committee recommended a two million dollar increase for donation and transplantation activities to expand available funds, demonstration grants, community education initiatives, and the training of health professionals in new practice models to seek organ and tissue donation requests consent from families.

The original National Organ Transplant Act of 1984 declared that organs were a national resource and not subject to compensation. The ethical reasoning was that payment for human organs turns the human body and human life into a commodity. However, television and Internet appeals to locate an organ from a live donor in the United States or from a foreign country have recently increased. The well-informed transplant candidates, who have monetary means, offer "indirect payments" to

prospective donors who may be a match. They have offer payment toward home mortgages, contributions to college, or retirement or various vacation options. Even though no direct payment for the potential donated organ is made, a financial transaction occurs. Fear and desperation have propelled some patients to seek a living donor overseas to bypass waiting lists; this option is available only to those with money. Reported payments to obtain a kidney from a foreign donor range from as low as one thousand dollars to over two hundred thousand dollars and even higher depending on factors of age, gender, nationality, broker's fees, and location of the surgery overseas or paying the donor's expenses to travel to the United States (Delmonico et al. 2002; Morais 2007). Underprivileged, inner-city, minority recipients do not have this option to attract or barter for a living organ donor. The poor, or those with limited finances, are unable to compete in attracting a personal donor.

It is time to reexamine and reevaluate the current organ donor process. Even though most countries have outlawed the commercial trade in organs, every effort should be made to make the organ donation, transplant evaluation, surgery, and postoperative management as fair and equitable as possible. It is time to revisit the discussion and debate about the use of direct and indirect financial and tax incentives to encourage more individuals and families to sign organ donor cards and consent to organ donation requests.

HEALTH PREVENTION

Prevention-based health education is crucial to any message intended to address the need for transplantation. African Americans and Latinos are affected by a shorter life span due to higher incidences of untreated diabetes as well as kidney and cardiac disease (Callender 1991; Pugh et al. 1998). These treatable conditions may be mitigated through prevention. Current public health campaigns addressing smoking, drinking, breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, as well as car seat and toddler restraint belts, demonstrate the capacity for people to assume responsibility for change. Such capacity must be harnessed for the purpose of health prevention. African Americans and Latinos are placed at risk for transplantation due to four factors: diabetes, hypertension, substance abuse, and poor nutrition and obesity. Information regarding prevention and management strategies of diabetes, hypertension, and obesity is imperative. Those are three factors that may lead to organ failure and a need for transplantation. Along with encouraging individuals and families to support organ donation, it is imperative to encourage individuals and families to adopt healthy behaviors. These include eating a healthy diet, increasing exercise and mobility, and avoiding drugs and alcohol.

CONCLUSION

The donor shortage is the number one problem in transplantation today. The number of donors has not increased to match the medical demand for organs, tissue, and marrow. Rapid advances in surgical techniques and new antirejection medications have made transplantation for many diseases a viable treatment choice. However, availability is limited due to the shortage.

The failure to consider becoming an organ donor and refusal by relatives to donate a deceased person's organs and tissue remain the two principal causes for the current shortage and long waiting lists. Communication between the person who signed the donor card and their family is the strongest predictor of ultimate consent to donate. This is due, in part, because many in the African American and Latino community are unaware of the need for well-matched organs, tissues, and marrow and how they will be involved in the donor process (Chapa 1991; Daniels et al. 1998).

African Americans and Latino reticence toward organ donation and transplantation must be viewed in the broader context of how the communities have been served and treated within America's health care system. Although donor awareness campaigns show that Latinos and African Americans are willing to give when asked, they are still at a clear disadvantage. Despite the benefit of transplantation as a treatment for many end-stage diseases, Black and Latino patients are not being informed about transplantation when it may be a treatment choice. They are also not referred for transplant evaluation. If they are indeed referred and make it through the stringent process to be accepted, they risk death waiting for a viable organ, tissue, or marrow match.

Stakeholders must be proactive in the process. Physicians must suggest and explore with their patients whether transplantation may be a treatment option. Along with appropriate referral to a transplant center, the primary physicians need to be the case managers and assure that their patients are fully informed of the benefits, risks, procedures and processes necessary for transplantation and postoperative care and maintenance. Black and Latino patients and their families must also become advocates for their own health care. They must not be intimidated when they wish to discuss whether transplantation might be advisable as a treatment choice.

Transplant centers, organ recovery organizations, health professionals, academic communities, representatives of faith communities, civic and social organizations, corporations, and state and city governments must all make concerted efforts to educate the African American and Latino communities about the impact of the organ, tissue, and marrow donor shortage. Such efforts must build upon a philosophy of collaboration and partnership, and not the traditional approach of telling and directing what the African American or Latino community should do. Each community has its own strengths and resources, and its own experts that can ensure success. In this new millennium, as individuals, family members, clergy, community leaders, educators, and health care professionals, we have the potential to influence and increase the size of the donor pool. The challenge is before us.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, Caleb, and Ashwini Sehgal. 1998. Barriers to Cadaveric Renal Transplantation Among Blacks, Women, and the Poor. *Journal of American Medical Association* 148:1148-1152.
- Alvaro, Eusdebio, Sarah Jones, Antonio Robles, and Jason Siegel. 2005. Predictors of Organ Donation Among Hispanic Americans. *Progress in Transplantation* 15:149-156.

- Ayanian, John, Paul Cleary, Joel Weissman, and Arnold Epstein. 1997. The Effects of Patients' Preferences on Racial Differences in Access to Renal Transplantation. *New England Journal of Medicine* 22:1661-1669.
- Baldwin, Laura-Mae, Sharon Dobie, Kevin Billingsley, Yong Cai, George Wright, Jason Dornitz, William Barlow, Joan Warren, and Stephen Taplin. 2005. Explaining Black-White Differences in Receipt of Recommended Colon Cancer Treatment. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 97:1211-1220.
- Callender, Clive, Patrice Miles, Margruetta Hall, and Sherilyn Gordon. 2002. Blacks and Whites and Didney Transplantation: A Disparity! But Why and Why Won't It Go Away. *Transplantation Reviews* 16:163-176.
- Callender, Clive, Betty Burston, Curtis Yeager and Patrice Miles. 1997. A National Minority Transplant Program for Increasing Donation Rates. *Transplantation Proceedings* 29: 1482-1483.
- Callender, Clive. 1991. Organ/Tissue Donation in African Americans: A National Stratagem. Proceedings of the Surgeon General's Workshop on Increasing Organ Donation, 8-10 June, at Washington, DC. Background papers, http://Profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/Z/H/_/nnbczh.pdf (accessed 30 January 2007).
- Callender, Clive, James Bayton, Curtis Yeager and James Clark. 1982. Attitudes Among Blacks Towards Donating Kidneys for Transplantation: A Pilot Project. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 74:6-8.
- Chapa, Jorge. 1991. Hispanics and Organ Donation: Prospects, Obstacles and Recommendations. Proceedings of the Surgeon General's Workshop on Increasing Organ Donation, 8-10 June, at Washington, DC. Background papers, <http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/Y/Z/segments.html>.
- Chiapella, Anne, and Harold Feldman. 1995. Renal Failure Among Male Hispanics in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health* 85:1001-1004.
- Daniels, Dennis, Karen Smith, Teresa Parks-Tomas, Debbie Gibbs, and Jade Robinson. 1998. Organ and Tissue Donation: Are Minorities Willing to Donate? *Annals of Transplant* 3:22-24.
- Delmonico, Franic, Robert Arnold, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Laura Siminoff, Jeffery Kahn, and Stuart Younger. 2002. Ethical Incentives-Not Payment-for Organ Donation. *New England Journal of Medicine* 346:2002-2005.
- Frates, Janice, and Garcia Bohrer. 2002. Hispanic Perception of Organ Donation. *Transplant Proceedings* 12:169-175.
- Frates, Janice, Gloria Bohrer, and David Thomas. 2006. Promoting Organ Donation to Hispanics: The Role of the Media and Medicine. *Journal of Health Communication* 11:683-698.
- Gamble, Vanessa. 1997. Under the Shadow of Tuskegee: African Americans and Health Care. *American Journal of Public Health* 87:1773-1778.
- Hader, Richard. 2006. Desperately Seeking Donors. *Nursing Management* 37:28-34.
- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization. 2006 Standards Related to Organ Donation. <http://www.iowadonornetwork.com/Library/Joint%20Commission%20Standards.pdf> (accessed 2 September 2006)
- McNamara, Patrick, Edward Guadagnoli, Michael Evanisko, Carol Beasley, Eduardo Santaggio-Delphione, Clive Callender, and Elaine Christiansen. 1999. Correlates of Support for Organ Donation Among Three Ethnic Groups. *Clinical Transplantation* 32:45-50.
- Morais, Robert. 2007. Desperate Arrangement. *Forbes*, 29 January. http://www.forbes.com/free_forbes/2007/0129/072.html.

- Morgan, Susan. 2004. The Power of Talk: African Americans' Communication With Family About Organ Donation and Its Impact on the Willingness to Donate Organs. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 21:112-124.
- Morgan, Susan, Jenny Miller, and Lily Arasaratnam. 2002. Singing Cards, Saving Lives: An Evaluation of the Worksite Organ Donation Promotion Project. *Communications Monographs* 69:253-273.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. 1997. Ethical and Religious Directions for Catholic Health Care Service. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- National Council of Churches. 1997. Resolution on Tissue Transplantation. Passed at the annual General Assembly, 12 November, at Washington, DC.
- Peterson, Eric, Linda Shaw, Elizabeth DeLong, David Pryor, Robert Califf, and Daniel Mark. 1997. Racial Variation in the Use of Coronary-Revascularization Procedures: Are the Differences Real? Do They Matter? *New England Journal of Medicine* 336:480-486.
- Preston, Lorri. 1998. More Black Donors Needed for Transplant Patients. *Emory Report* 51 (2). http://www.emory.edu/EMORY_REPORT/erarchive/1998/August/eraugust.31/8_31_98Transplants.html.
- Pugh, Jacqueline, Steven Haffer, Michael Stern, Cheryl Eilfer, and Manuel Zappata. 1998. Excess Incidence of End-Stage Renal Disease in Mexican Americans. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 127:135-144.
- Rayburn, Ann. 2005. A Multipronged Approach to Addressing the Organ Shortage. *Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing* 20:S14-S21
- Richards, Christopher, and Robert Lowe. 2003. Researching Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Emergency Medicine. *Academy of Emergency Medicine* 10:1169-1175.
- Rozon-Solomon, Maritz, and Lewis Burrows. 1999. Tis Better to Receive Than to Give: The Relative Failure of the African American Community to Provide Organs for Transplantation. *Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine* 4:273-276.
- Shanteau, James, Richard Harris, and Gary VandenBos. 1992. Psychological and Behavioral Factors in Organ Donation. *Hospital and Community Psychiatry* 43:211-219.
- Smith, Sandi, Jenifer Kopfman, Lisa Lindsay, Jina Yoo, and Kelly Morrison. 2004. Encouraging Family Discussion of the Decision to Donate Organs: The Role of the Willingness to Communicate Scale. *Health Communications* 16:333-346.
- Trivedi, Amal, and John Z. Ayanian. 2006. Perceived Discrimination and Use of Preventive Health Services. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 6:553-558.
- U.S. Congress. House Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health and Environment, and Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. 1998. *Putting Patients First: Resolving Allocation of Transplant Organs*. Testimony of Clive Callender. 105th Congress, 2nd session. 18 June. http://www.med.howard.edu/ethics/handouts/joint_hearing_of.htm.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). 2005 Annual Report of the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network and the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients: Transplant Data 1995-2004. Rockville, MD: Health Resources and Services Administration, Healthcare Systems Bureau, Division of Transplantation. <http://www.optn.org/AR2005/default.htm> (accessed 11 January 2007).
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). 2006. CMS Establishes New Quality Measures for Organ Procurement Organizations. <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/press/release.asp> (accessed 5 August 2006).

Warren, Jim. 1994. Transplant Community Outraged: Farrakhan Says Whites Condone Black-on-Black Killings Because It's a Source of Transplantable Organs. *Transplant News*, May 13.

Weiss, Rhoda. 2003. Boosting Organ Donation Among Hispanics. *Health Progress* 84:13-14.

Young, Carlton, and Robert Gaston. 2002. African Americans and Renal Transplantation: Disproportionate Need, Limited Access, and Impaired Outcomes. *American Journal of Medical Science* 323:94-99.

Yuen, Christine, William Burton, Peter Chiraseveenuprapund, Elizabeth Elmore, Susan Wong, Philip Ozuah, and Michael Mulvihill. 1998. Attitudes and Beliefs About Organ Donation Among Racial Groups. *Journal of the National Medical Association* 1:13-18.

Immigrant and African American Relations: Parallel Struggles That Should Unite

By Maria Blanco and Diana C. Tate

The nationwide marches for immigrants' rights in the spring of 2006 brought to the surface tensions between immigrant and African American communities. In the media buzz about divisions between the two groups, a common theme was a sense on the part of some African Americans that immigrants are responsible for their economic displacement and for the lowering of wages, particularly in blue collar and service jobs. There was also a sense of a different kind of displacement when headlines, sound bites, and some immigrant rights spokespersons referred to the "new civil rights movement." Predictably, anti-immigration forces pounced on these much-publicized divisions and attempted unsuccessfully to gain African American support for the harsh and punitive anti-immigrant legislation being debated in Congress. For example, according to Hemmy So's 3 May 2006 article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps made focused efforts to recruit African Americans to their self-styled vigilante border patrol, and Fox News did a primetime feature that asked the race-baiting question "Is Illegal Immigration as Dangerous for African Americans as Slavery Was" (Hayes 2006).

In response to the highly touted and probably overblown conflict, many leaders from both communities stepped forward with expressions of unity, fully aware that both groups face similar discrimination, second-class status, and scapegoating. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, Julian Bond, and other veterans of the civil rights movement "hailed the marches for immigrant rights as a natural progression of the mobilizations in the 1960s," writes Rachel L. Swarns in the 4 May 2006 *New York Times*. Meanwhile, María Elena Durazo, executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor/AFL-CIO and longtime leader in the Latino

Maria Blanco is the executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. As both a litigator and an advocate, she has been a longtime leader for immigrant rights, women's rights, and racial justice. Prior to joining the Lawyers' Committee, she was an attorney with Equal Rights Advocates, a professor of law at Golden Gate University's School of Law, and national senior counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Diana C. Tate is the staff attorney for the African American agenda at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. Her practice includes litigating cases on the Lawyers' Committee's race docket, which includes a wide range of legal issues, and providing legal counsel to community groups and organizations advocating for racial equality and social justice.

community, called for Latinos and African Americans to join together in demanding economic justice for all workers in Jazmin Ortega's 9 April 2006 article in the Spanish language daily *La Opinión*. The efforts to unite these communities were welcomed and needed. But sometimes the rush to close ranks cut short a conversation that is necessary in order to build genuine unity between the two communities. In order to move forward together, both communities must be willing to engage with each other in open discussions of history and identity and to critically examine the current political and economic structures that have contributed to tensions between the two groups.

Using the immigrants' rights mobilizations of 2006 as a starting point for the conversation, it is important to recognize that, in some cases, the organizers of these mobilizations employed language and arguments that may have had unintended divisive effects. For example, many of us winced when we heard the rallying cry "We do the jobs that nobody else will do" because, despite its goal of demanding much-deserved respect, many African Americans are acutely sensitive to the existence of a highly exploited, second-tier workforce. Immigrant rights leaders should also have distanced themselves from the media's characterizations of the marches as the "new civil rights movement," which to African American communities was a harsh reminder of the unfinished business of the "old" civil rights movement. It is more accurate to say that the civil rights movement has grown and crossed borders, both literally and culturally. In many respects, the civil rights movement has been expanding since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., broadened its reach with the Poor People's March on Washington, a movement that brought together the often-entwined issues of race and poverty.

We need to understand the connections between issues of race and class, along with the shared histories and struggles of immigrants and African Americans, in order to confront the larger issue at hand—the economic and political structures that have made low-wage work an accepted norm for both groups. This country's massive layoffs in the manufacturing sector, the demise of unions, and the growing income gap between rich and poor are not the result of immigrants crossing the border to steal American jobs, but of the increasing availability of an international low-wage workforce in today's global economy. The fact is that immigrants in the United States predominantly occupy jobs that cannot be outsourced by U.S. businesses seeking to compete in the global economy. As much as they may want to, companies cannot outsource jobs in the hotel, agriculture, construction, restaurant, or meatpacking industries the way they have other jobs that used to be the mainstay of the U.S. worker: auto, steel, shoes, garment, textile, electronics, and so on. The exporting of these blue-collar jobs has had a disproportionate effect on African American communities. For example, in 2000, two million African Americans were working in factory jobs. Just three years later, approximately ten thousand African American factory workers had been laid off and some of their jobs reopened overseas (Leondar-Wright 2004).

Instead of viewing immigrants who take low-paying jobs to help their families survive as the cause of low wages, civil rights leaders and policy makers need to address the political and economic policies that have lowered wages, created jobs with no health insurance or safety regulations, and eliminated the safety net.

According to a recent study by the Commonwealth Fund, 41 percent of adults with incomes between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a year did not have health insurance for at least part of 2005, up from 28 percent without coverage in 2001 (Collins et al. 2006). Blame for the existence of jobs without health insurance cannot be laid at the feet of immigrants; it is our privatized, profit-driven health care system that should be held accountable. Nor are immigrants responsible for the demise of unions and massive layoffs due to companies who go overseas. Communities that face unemployment and structural displacement should take aim at the policies that have created an unprecedented number of billionaires and millionaires and an unparalleled economic divide between the haves and the have-nots.

We are not suggesting that we attempt to stop the forces of globalization that have brought us here; this approach is neither realistic nor desirable. Instead, we should focus on ensuring that the same technologies and innovations that have helped multinational corporations to grow exponentially in recent years be used to advance the basic rights of people in the United States, in Latin America, and around the world. The processes of globalization are complex, but the basic principle is simple. Soaring unemployment in Mexico, mass migration to the United States, job outsourcing, and the erosion of social welfare programs can all be traced to policies rooted in the same free-market ideology, an ideology that simply does not include a vision to protect the rights of those marginalized along the way. The only way to temper the negative social effects of global capitalism is with organized and sustained efforts to make human rights an international priority. To do this, it is increasingly important that we understand our distinct struggles for justice and equality as part of a shared fight for the human rights of all individuals, regardless of class, color, or country of birth.

Of course, achieving this kind of cross-issue coordination is easier said than done. Though the world is becoming increasingly interconnected, the human tendency to associate with the known and familiar remains. In some cases, the rapid globalization that our world is undergoing only further pushes organizations and individuals to turn to the familiar, to hold tightly to an established identity as if it might be lost completely in the transformation.

At the same time, promising examples are beginning to emerge of groups that recognize that the struggles of disenfranchised populations are increasingly difficult to separate. It is encouraging that recent efforts at uniting various communities are taking place in Los Angeles, a city that often sees conflict between its large Latino and African American populations. For example, Alana Semuels wrote in the 5 October 2006 *Los Angeles Times* that the Los Angeles branch of the hotel workers' union Unite Here, which for the last decade has mainly employed and been led by Latinos, recently announced a new initiative that encourages the hiring of more African Americans in the hotel industry to counter what advocates say is preferential hiring of immigrants. According to the Smithfield Justice Web site, over five hundred African American and Latino workers at the Smithfield hog processing plant in Tarheel, NC, joined together in a massive walk-out to protest the plant's refusal to observe Martin Luther King, Jr., Day 2007. In terms of organizational philosophy, groups such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) have long taken a comprehensive approach to addressing issues

such as health care, unemployment and community safety-basic human rights issues that affect all low-income individuals.

The importance of initiatives like these cannot be overstated. Too often, political discussions on the connections between various issues and struggles affecting marginalized communities spiral out of control until we want to throw up our hands in frustration at the magnitude of the challenge. Efforts towards cross-issue, multiracial collaboration like the examples mentioned above defy assumptions that the issues before us are too large and complex to tackle. It is not the responsibility of any one group to conquer the inequalities of the day; it is our shared responsibility to recognize the linkages between the challenges we face and incorporate that knowledge into our work. Only together can we move the powers that be to address the injustices that affect us all.

REFERENCES

Collins, S. R., K. Davis, M. M. Doty, J. L. Kriss, and A. L. Holmgren. 2006. *Gaps in Health Insurance: An All-American Problem*. The Commonwealth Fund, April.
http://www.cmwf.org/publications/publications_show.htm?doc_id=367876.

Hayes, Ted. 2006. Interview by Sean Hannity and Alan Colmes, *Hannity & Colmes*, Fox News, 17 April. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,193429,00.html>.

Leondar-Wright, Betsy. 2004. Black Job Loss Déjà Vu. *Dollars and Sense*, May/June.
<http://dollarsandsense.org/archives/2004/0504leondar.html>.

Latino Anti-Black Violence in Los Angeles: Not “Made in the USA”

By Tanya Kateri Hernández

A version of this piece was originally featured as an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times on 7 January 2007 as “Roots of Latino/Black Anger; Longtime Prejudices, Not Economic Rivalry, Fuel Tensions.”

The acrimonious relationship between Latinos and African Americans in Los Angeles is growing hard to ignore. Unfortunately, as reported by Joe Mozingo in the *Los Angeles Times* on 1 January 2007, the Black versus Latino race riot at Chino State Prison in December 2006 is not an aberration. Even so, the 27 December 2006 coverage by Sam Quinones, also in the *Los Angeles Times*, of the 15 December 2006 murder in the Harbor Gateway neighborhood of Cheryl Green, a fourteen-year-old African American, allegedly by members of a Latino gang, was shocking.

Yet there was nothing really new about it. Rather, the murder was a manifestation of an increasingly common trend: instances of Latino aggression toward African Americans in multiracial neighborhoods. Just last August, federal prosecutors convicted four Latino gang members of engaging in a six-year conspiracy to assault and murder African Americans in Highland Park area of Los Angeles (DOJ 2006). During the trial, prosecutors demonstrated that African American residents (with no gang ties at all) were being terrorized in an effort to force them out of a neighborhood now perceived as Latino, in a manner suggestive of ethnic cleansing. For example, one African American resident was murdered by Latino gang members as he looked for a parking space near his Highland Park home (Murr 2006). In another case, a woman was knocked off her bicycle and her husband was threatened with a box cutter by one of the defendants, who said, “You niggers have been here long enough.”

At first blush, it may be mystifying why such animosity exists between two ethnic groups that share so many of the same socioeconomic deprivations. Over the years, the hostility has been explained as a natural reaction to competition for blue-collar jobs in a tight labor market, or as the result of turf battles and cultural disputes

*Tanya Kateri Hernández is presently a professor of law and the Frederick Justice Hall scholar at Rutgers University Law School-Newark. As of August 2007 she will be a professor of law at George Washington University Law School. She is the coauthor of the forthcoming book *The Long Lingering Shadow: Law, Liberalism and Cultures of Racial Hierarchy and Identity in the Americas* (UNC Press). Her most recent article, “Latino Inter-Ethnic Employment Discrimination and the Diversity Defense,” was published in the *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*.*

in changing neighborhoods. Others have suggested that perhaps Latinos have simply been adept at learning the U.S. lesson of anti-Black racism, or that perhaps Black Americans are resentful at having the benefits of the civil rights movement extended to Latinos. Although there may be a degree of truth to some or all of these explanations, they are insufficient to explain the extremity of the ethnic violence.

Over the years, there's also been a tendency on the part of observers to blame the conflict more on African Americans (who are often portrayed as the aggressors) than on Latinos. But although it's certainly true that there's plenty of blame to go around, it's important not to ignore the effect of Latino culture and history in fueling the rift.

The fact is that racism-and anti-Black racism in particular-is a pervasive and historically entrenched reality of life in Latin America and the Caribbean. More than 90 percent of the approximately ten million enslaved Africans brought to the Americas were taken to Latin America and the Caribbean (by the French, Spanish, and British, primarily), whereas only 4.6 percent were brought to the United States (Román 1996). By 1793, colonial Mexico had a population of 370,000 Africans and descendants of Africans-the largest concentration in all of Spanish America (Vinson 2000).

The legacy of the slave period in Latin America and the Caribbean is similar to that in the United States: Having lighter skin and European features increases the chances of socioeconomic opportunity, while having darker skin and African features severely limits social mobility (Hernández 2002).

White supremacy is deeply ingrained in Latin America and continues into the present. In Mexico, for instance, citizens of African descent, estimated to make up 1 percent of the population (Gleaton 2004), report that they regularly experience racial harassment at the hands of local and state police, according to recent studies by Antonieta Gimeno, then of Mount Holyoke College, and Sagrario Cruz-Carretero of the University of Veracruz. (Mount Holyoke College 2000; Cruz-Carretero 2003).

Anti-Black sentiment also manifests itself in Mexican politics. During the 2001 elections, for instance, Lazaro Cardenas, a candidate for governor of the state of Michoacan, is believed to have lost substantial support among voters for having an Afro Cuban wife, according to Yvette Cabrera in the 1 March 2002 *Orange County Register*. Even though Cardenas had great name recognition (as the grandson of Mexico's most popular president), he only won by 5 percentage points-largely because of the anti-Black platform of his opponent, Alfredo Anaya, who was quoted by Unification Press International's Steve Sailer on 8 May 2002 saying, "There is a great feeling that we want to be governed by our own race, by our own people."

Given this, it should not be surprising that migrants from Mexico and other areas of Latin America and the Caribbean arrive in the United States carrying the baggage of racism. Nor that this facet of Latino culture is in turn transmitted, to some degree, to younger generations along with all other manifestations of the culture.

The sociological concept of "social distance" measures the unease one ethnic or racial group has for interacting with another (Yancey 2003). Social science studies of Latino racial attitudes often indicate a preference for maintaining social distance from African Americans. (Mindiola, Flores Niemann, and Rodriguez 2002). And although the social distance level is largest for recent immigrants, more established

communities of Latinos in the United States also show a marked social distance from African Americans.

For instance, in University of Houston sociologist Tatcho Mindiola's 2002 survey of six hundred Latinos in Houston (two-thirds of whom were Mexican, the remainder Salvadoran and Colombian) and six hundred African Americans, the African Americans had substantially more positive views of Latinos than Latinos had of African Americans. Although a slim majority of the U.S.-born Latinos used positive identifiers when describing African Americans, only a minority of the foreign-born Latinos did so. One typical foreign-born Latino respondent stated, "I just don't trust them . . . The men, especially, all use drugs, and they all carry guns." This same study found that 46 percent of Latino immigrants who lived in residential neighborhoods with African Americans reported almost no interaction with them (Mindiola, Flores Niemann, and Rodriguez 2002, 44-45).

The social distance of Latinos from African Americans is consistently reflected in Latino responses to survey questions. In a 2000 study of residential segregation, Camille Zubrinsky Charles, a sociology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, found that Latinos were more likely to reject African Americans as neighbors than they were to reject members of other racial groups. In addition, in the 1999-2000 Lilly Survey of American Attitudes and Friendships, Latinos identified African Americans as their least desirable marriage partners, whereas African Americans proved to be more accepting of intermarriage with Latinos (Yancey 2003). Ironically, African Americans, who are often depicted as being averse to coalition building with Latinos, have repeatedly demonstrated in their survey responses that they feel less hostility toward Latinos than Latinos feel toward them.

Although some commentators have attributed the Latino hostility of African Americans to the stress of competition in the job market, a 1996 sociological study of racial group competition suggests otherwise. In a study of 477 Latinos from the 1992 Los Angeles County Social Survey, professors Lawrence Bobo, then of Harvard University, and Vincent Hutchings of the University of Michigan found that underlying prejudices and existing animosities contribute to the perception that African Americans pose an economic threat-not the other way around.

It is certainly true that the acrimony between African Americans and Latinos cannot be resolved until *both* sides address their own unconscious biases about one another. But it would be a mistake to ignore the Latino side of the equation as some observers have done-particularly now, when the recent violence in Los Angeles has involved Latinos targeting peaceful African American citizens.

This conflict cannot be sloughed off as simply another generation of ethnic group competition in the United States (like the familiar rivalries between Irish, Italians, and Jews in the early part of the last century). Rather, as the violence grows, the "diasporic" origins of the anti-Black sentiment-the entrenched anti-Black prejudice among Latinos that exists not just in the United States but across the Americas-will need to be directly confronted. When that is done, Latino and African American communities will be better positioned to diminish the violence and build coalitions. Past experience has shown that these two groups can work together. Some notable examples include the 1983 Chicago mayoral election campaign of Harold Washington (Guinier and Torres 2002) and the Young Lords alliance with the Black

Panthers in the 1960s (Fox 1996). Honestly confronting all the sources of interethnic conflict will only enhance the potential for more frequent, extensive, and lasting collaborations.

REFERENCES

- Bobo, Lawrence, and Vincent L. Hutchings. 1996. Perceptions of Racial Group Competition: Extending Blumer's Theory of Group Position to a Multiracial Social Context. *American Sociological Review* 61:951-972.
- Cruz-Carretero, Sagrario. 2003. Black Presence in Mexico: Historical and Contemporary Perspective. Paper presented at the International Scholars Conference, 26 March, at the Institute of African American Research, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Fox, Geoffrey. 1996. *Hispanic Nation*. Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group.
- Gleaton, Tony. 2004. The African Presence in Mexican National Identity. In "Africa: One Continent. Many Worlds" of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA. <http://www.nhm.org/africa/gleaton/index.htm> (accessed 29 September 2004).
- Guinier, Lani, and Gerald Torres. 2002. *The Miner's Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hernández, Tanya Kateri. 2002. Multiracial Matrix: The Role of Race Ideology in the Enforcement of Antidiscrimination Laws, a United States-Latin America Comparison. *Cornell Law Review* 87:1093-1176.
- Minidola, Jr., Tatcho, Yolanda Flores Niemann, and Nestor Rodriguez. 2002. *Black-Brown Relations and Stereotypes*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Mount Holyoke College. 2000. FP Antonieta Gimeno Attends Conference on Black Mexicans. 2000. *College Street Journal* 13(28). <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/comm/csj/042800/gimeno.html> (accessed 20 September 2004).
- Murr, Andrew. 2006. A Gang War With a Twist: Gangbangers in L.A. on Trial for Deadly Hate Crimes. *Newsweek*, 17 July.
- Román, Miriam Jimenez. 1996. Un Hombre (Negro) del Pueblo: José Celso Barbosa and the Puerto Rican "Race" Toward Whiteness. *Centro* 8:8-29.
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Central District of California. 2006. Gang Members Convicted of Federal Hate Crimes for Murders, Assaults of African Americans. Press Release, 1 August. www.usdoj.gov/usao/cac/pr2006/102.html.
- Vinson, Ben, III. 2000. The Racial Profile of a Rural Mexican Province in the "Costa Chica": Iqualapa in 1791. *The Americas* 57 (October): 269-282.
- Yancey, George. 2003. *Who Is White? Latinos, Asians, and the New Black/Nonblack Divide*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Zubrin, Charles, Camille. 2000. Neighborhood Racial-Composition Preferences: Evidence From a Multiethnic Metropolis. *Social Problems* 47 (3): 379-407.

Continued Abandonment in Dixie: No More Policy as Usual

by Veronica L. Womack

Poverty and hopelessness have been common occurrences for African Americans in the Southern region since their arrival at the ports of the South. With the devastation imposed by Hurricane Katrina, the economic plight of many African Americans in the urban South was highlighted. Yet the hurricane also destroyed rural coastal areas of the Black Belt that have received very little media attention and that will more than likely never recover from the tragedy. This region, already extremely impoverished, must not be overlooked when discussing the rebuilding of the coastal region and must be at the center of any national policy discussions regarding the economic conditions of African Americans in this country.

Rural America has been mostly hidden for the last three decades in general national assessments of the economy, and African American rural residents have been invisible. However, the importance of regions and regional differences when analyzing economic conditions of African American people is very important, particularly when assessing the plight of African Americans living in the Black Belt. The lack of a national political focus on America's rural economies has resulted in areas plagued by high poverty rates, unemployment, drug infestation, and an exodus of educated and middle class residents, and unfortunately, these problems are exasperated in the Black Belt.

THE BLACK BELT AND THE REGION'S PEOPLE

What exactly is the Black Belt and who are its residents? In Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* (1901), he attributes the Black Belt's definition to the color of the soil and the large numbers of Black people that reside there. In this eminent work, the incomparable connection between Black people and the land, which was the primary source of economic security in the Black Belt, was discussed. This relationship between Black people, the land, and the wealth of the Black Belt became the cause for a racial and economic dilemma that continues to this day.

The Black Belt comprises 623 counties in eleven Old South states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina,

Veronica L. Womack is an assistant professor and political scientist in the Department of Government and Sociology at Georgia College & State University. She received her M.P.A. and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. She specializes in interdisciplinary approaches to economic development policy, rural development issues, and Black Belt regional studies. Her research focuses on intergovernmental relations, public policy, and the Black Belt.

Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia (Wimberley and Morris 1997). Although African Americans compose almost 13 percent of the American population, this population can reach as high as 70 or 80 percent in some Black Belt counties. By most definitions, the Black Belt is America's third world. When factors such as unemployment, income levels, infant mortality rates, housing quality, accessibility of health care, educational attainment and opportunities, and physical and technological infrastructure are considered, the reference to the region as the third world is realized. A recent report by the Carl Vinson Institute found that "over half of the persistently poor counties in the U.S. are in the 11 southern states known as the Black Belt" (Dunning, Ledbetter, and Whorton 2002).

The relationship between this region and poverty is unmistakable, with 280 of 444 persistent poverty counties being located there. These counties are defined as counties with consistently high poverty rates over several decades. Comparatively, there are no non-metro persistent poverty counties in the Northeast (Joliffe 2004). Of 210 counties identified as Black, high-poverty, non-metro counties, all 210 are located in the Black Belt. In addition, nine out of ten low-education counties (where at least one of four adults between the ages of twenty-five and sixty-four have not completed high school) are located in the South, particularly those counties with large populations of African Americans (Gibbs 2005). Therefore, African American quality of life is affected by residing in the Black Belt. Thirty five percent of the nation's poor, 43 percent of the rural poor, and 90 percent of poor rural African Americans live in the Black Belt (Harris and Worthen 2003).

This region also has a unique sociopolitical culture that historically has affected its development and continues to influence opportunities for its residents. This political culture encompasses

- the inability of African American political participation until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
- segregated schools and neighborhoods;
- strict class power structure in local government;
- the increasing change from mayor-council form of government to council-manager form of government (thus weakening elected mayors);
- the increasing reliance on non-elected, unrepresentative special district bodies in local economic development.

In addition, most of the land in the region is owned in large acreage by people or companies that reside outside of the counties. This economic arrangement results in low property taxes for large land owners but underfunded public education and a lack of accumulation of wealth for African American residents. Because of historically low educational attainment, most jobs available in these counties have very low wages and few benefits. The lack of opportunity for high wage jobs, coupled with the lack of accumulation of generational wealth, has resulted in each generation of Black Belt African Americans having few or no assets. Therefore, the majority of Black Belt residents often find themselves falling victim to predatory lending, lacking assets and capital, and having little possibility of financial security. These factors have created a bleak sociopolitical and economic reality within the Black

Belt that can be linked to its unusual history, the traditional political culture, and the rigid racial and class structures.

LACK OF GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT

Historically, Southern states and localities proved that their role in the lives of their citizens extended only to Whites. Yet due to Southern African American political activism, the national government was forced to uphold some of the constitutional guarantees for African Americans that were afforded other citizens of these states. Thus, Southern African Americans initially developed a strong reliance on the national government for civil rights policy. Yet both levels of government (national and state) left the issue of the economic equality of Southern African Americans primarily up to their own design. This governmental arrangement allowed for all levels of government to neglect obvious discriminatory practices that impeded the economic success of African Americans in the Black Belt. This strategy to disregard was hardly a successful one for the South and the nation, and has resulted in a subsection of the American South existing in an economic and educational dilemma. This situation will require a nationally directed comprehensive effort to overcome a history of regional neglect. The Black Belt has been hindered by conflicts of race, class, ineffective intergovernmental organization and cooperation, and insufficient private financial investment. Historically, the South and its economy have lagged behind the nation, and the Black Belt South has lagged even further behind. By assessing Southern economic development strategies over time, it is revealed that, in many instances, these strategies were not very helpful and in some cases, harmful to African Americans because they were not reflective of the unique characteristics of the South. These destructive economic development strategies include the encouragement of racially split labor markets, single industry recruitment and reliance on single-sector employers, reliance on tax incentives to attract industry, reliance on an abundance of unskilled labor, low-wage job growth, the active and sometimes violent discouragement of unionization by the state as well as by employers, and very low levels (by standards of advanced industrial societies) of protective legislation for workers and controls over business activity (Cobb 1982, 1993; Devey-Tomaskovic and Roscigno 1996; Scranton 2001; Van Sickle 1951).

These strategies are contradictory to the goals of successful economic development strategies, which, according to Blakely and Bradshaw (2002), are to provide basic quality jobs for the current population, achieve local economic stability, and build a diverse economic and employment base. Yet the unique history and political culture of the Black Belt made it difficult or impossible to develop the region. A local, dominant, elite class of businessmen and politicians, hostile to the economic gains of African Americans, resulted in the suppression of economic opportunities for Black Belt residents and retarded the region as a whole. Because the elite class was dependent on low-skilled labor and private industry, it combated local governmental efforts that would educate or provide skills to the populace in order to keep a surplus of unskilled labor. In addition, Black Belt local government officials had less experience in applying for and receiving grants, thus limiting the resources of the region. Finally, some state and local development officials used the

metropolitan areas of Black Belt counties as “growth centers” and neglected the rural areas (Calhoun, Reeder, and Bagi 2000). These factors show a lack of effort to strategically develop rural Black Belt areas in order to maintain the status quo and institutional barriers that negatively affect economic development in this region.

A HISTORY OF NEGLECT

Since the Civil War, the region has evolved into an interesting and controversial case study of governmental neglect based primarily on race. The region reveals fascinating differences when comparatively studied against the development of other American regions. These differences are a direct result of the large African American population living in the region and society’s unwillingness to address issues of race as they relate to poverty. National policies created in an effort to provide opportunities for improvement within the region have met many Black Belt institutional and racial barriers. These barriers hindered the implementation of many of these policies and the region’s economic progress, particularly the economic progress of African Americans. Historically, national policies formulated to aid economic conditions in this country were never implemented equitably in the Black Belt to African Americans. Most of the New Deal policies were administered on the state and local levels, which provided opportunities for discrimination and unequal implementation. Many New Deal policies aimed to aid economic progress actually hindered African American progress in the South. As wages increased, previously unattractive jobs to White Southerners became more attractive at the cost of African American employment. In addition, the implementation of national policies such as the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 in the Black Belt resulted in White landlords failing to distribute funds to Black tenants, or partially distributing the payments, and even evicting Black tenants (Mertz 1978). There were no venues of grievance for African Americans in the Black Belt, and they were forced to suffer discrimination without remedy.

Since the days of the New Deal policies, the South has had a remarkable transformation, and many African Americans have benefited like many other southerners from the region’s success. However, those African Americans residing in the Black Belt have not been as successful as African Americans in many other regions. Recently, academics, grassroots activists, politicians, the media, and Black Belt citizens have focused on the conditions of the area and have begun to promote the idea of a regional commission or authority to address the economic problems that persist in the Black Belt (Jeter 2003; Calhoun, Reeder, and Bagi 2000).

This concept of creating a regional commission to combat specific problems of a particular region is not a new one. Other federal regional commissions and development authorities have been created to address similar issues throughout the country. These include the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Delta Regional Authority, and the Denali Commission. The details of these commissions are shown in Table 1.

The need for national policy makers to address the persistent poverty in the Black Belt and the effect of globalization on the region is imperative. It is also essential that the new focus on economic development of the region involves developing the

people of the region as well, which would be a new exploration of development policy in this country and particularly in the South. Historically, the economy of the Black Belt needed large numbers of unskilled workers to work the agricultural economy, and when this economy was replaced by textile mills and manufacturing plants, the unskilled workers could still be relied on for unskilled labor. Yet the new 21st century economy relies on skilled personnel with technological training. Many Black Belt residents find it difficult to make the transition. They will need unique approaches to development strategies to be able to participate in the new economy. Therefore, many traditional approaches to economic development policy are clearly incompatible with the region.

PLACE-BASED VERSUS PEOPLE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Traditionally, there have been two types of policy strategies designed for rural development. These strategies have been defined by Mark Drabenstott and Katherine Sheaff (2002) as place-based development policy and people-based development policy. Place-based development policy is focused specifically on building up the physical infrastructure of a geographic area. The logic behind this kind of economic development policy is the opportunity to build up the physical environment of the area and open it up to trade and commerce more effectively. The ability to connect the rural area to urban areas and aid in business success through industrial recruitment, the deliverance of goods, and the ability of citizens to travel to urban centers for employment and pleasure are all critical to the development and vitality of rural areas. People-based development policy is based on investment in the people of the region and promoting the human capital of the citizens of the rural community. This policy initiates programs dedicated to improving the skills, education level, and quality of life of the residents.

Historically, this country has focused most of its economic development efforts in rural America under the place-based development policy category. Most rural development policy has been an effort to physically change rural America by focusing on physical infrastructure such as the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, which created the Rural Electrification Agency and provided electricity to rural areas, and the Area Redevelopment Act of 1961, which focused on rural areas with chronic unemployment by promoting rural development loans, physical infrastructure loans, and debt forgiveness. Another rural development effort occurred with the passage of the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, which established the ARC. Finally, the Rural Development Act of 1972 authorized \$500 million per year for rural development loans focused on physical infrastructure and public works projects. There has not been a comprehensive policy on rural development since this act, yet there have been many changes in rural America. Since the 1970s, fewer people rely on agriculture for jobs and many of the manufacturing opportunities rural residents depended on for work are no longer available. The lack of rural development policy, coupled with an antiquated general, broad-sweeping, nationalistic approach to economic policy has resulted in policy makers failing to develop rural economies, particularly the Black Belt economy.

The reliance solely on place-based development policy will not aid the Black Belt in the new global economy, nor will old strategies such as the reliance on a surplus of cheap unskilled labor, tax incentives, and a low cost of living. Today, industry wants to locate in communities with large educated workforces, good public school systems, and high quality of life standards. These are the keys to successful economic development strategies and therefore it is necessary that national policy assist in developing these things for the Black Belt.

POSSIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION

As in the 107th and 108th Congresses, the 109th Congress has again failed to pass sponsored economic development policy to address the ills of the Black Belt. Black Belt legislative efforts in the 109th Congress included S1865 (entitled the SouthEast Crescent Authority, introduced by Sen. Elizabeth Dole of North Carolina) and HR20 (entitled the SouthEast Crescent Authority, introduced by Rep. Mike McIntyre of North Carolina). These twin bills HR20 and S1865 proposed to create a regional authority to address key issues of economic development within the Black Belt. Unfortunately, like previously proposed legislation for the region, these bills lacked innovation and consideration of the unique characteristics of the region which are imperative to developing a successful authority for the Black Belt. They are reflective of a "one size fits all" approach to economic development and are based on the ARC model, which according to many social scientists has not been successful in addressing the needs of the people of Appalachia. In fact, the proposed legislation is an example of policy as usual as discussed by Harris and Worthen (2003, 41) in their study of rural development, which states "decades of experience have shown that policy as usual is not an adequate approach for addressing the peculiar case of Southern rural underdevelopment." The twin proposals are shown in Table 2.

The concept of structuring any commission/authority after the ARC is problematic at best, yet for the Black Belt it is implausible. The most implausible element of the ARC decision-making structure for the Black Belt is its dependence upon local development districts in conjunction with local governments and planning commissions. These bodies within the Black Belt tend to be occupied by political appointees, are usually members of the established power elite, and may not include representatives from the neediest areas of the community or people who have worked directly in these areas. Knowledge of the uniqueness of the region and its political and socioeconomic structures are critical to successfully creating a useful development strategy. This decision-making structure is problematic because it negates the ability of Black Belt citizens or their proven allies to participate in any meaningful way in addressing the development of their communities or act in a decision-making role. Broad language of the proposed legislation also allows for the successful funding of potential programs that may not benefit the neediest residents. Although the bills state that participating counties must have high poverty rates, low per capita income, or high unemployment rates, there is no guarantee that those within the most distressed areas of the county will actually benefit or if more prominent areas will utilize the resources. Without adequate representation at the

decision-making level, exclusion of opportunity of these poor areas is likely to continue to occur.

This governing structure has already proven to be inadequate in the Appalachian region where the issue of race has not been a historical problem. After several decades of funding, there are mixed opinions on how successful the ARC has been. Early in its existence, there was criticism that a significant portion of the money was being spent on physical infrastructure in more affluent areas and very little money was invested in equipping the people with needed skills and resources. Recently, there has been a push to ensure that the neediest counties receive needed resources under the ARC model. This was partly due to efforts exposing the fact that wealthier counties were getting more than their share of the resources at the expense of the neediest counties, as reported by Mark Ferencik, Rita Price, and Jill Riepenhoff in the *Columbus Dispatch* in the fall of 1999. Today, according to the ARC, several of the counties in the ARC's original coverage area are statistically out of poverty (Bradshaw 1985). Several adjustments had to be made over decades to insure that impoverished counties received needed ARC money, and the fight continues. The Black Belt must learn from the mistakes of the ARC experience and make changes to proposed legislation ahead of time. The Black Belt can not afford decades of untargeted resources; the needs of the region are too great. So what should a regional entity look like that would benefit this unique region? How would it be structured?

TUSKEGEE MODEL

Groups within the Black Belt have already voiced their opinions of what type of regional commission/authority they would like. In 2002, Tuskegee University conducted focus groups in six Southern states with community-based organizations and community leaders to discuss the feasibility of a national commission in the Black Belt. These groups voiced their eagerness for a Black Belt regional commission, but also voiced their concerns about the ARC's governing structure and subsequently proposed a governing structure with more community-based and direct resident participation (Hill 2002). This was realized in a bill sponsored by Representative Artur Davis of Alabama during the 108th Congress, which recommended the Delta Black Belt Regional Authority (DBBRA) be created. This authority would continue and expand the preexisting Delta Regional Authority's duties by including the Delta Regional Authority's original states of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee, and adding Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. This authority shown in Table 3 is unique in that the governing structure included greater participation from residents and community-based organizations than other existing or proposed entities for the region.

The DBBRA would have created a constituency representation board consisting of representatives from community-based, faith-based organizations or institutions of higher learning within the Black Belt and those who reside in distressed areas of the district. Representatives would also be required to have experience as community and economic development practitioners and have direct contact with the

impoverished populations to be eligible. The constituency representation board was an innovative, democratic component of the DBBRA that would have addressed some of the barriers within the Black Belt and the difficulty of implementation of policy there. The board addressed the factors of race and social exclusion within the region, which are key in developing a successful economic development strategy. Representatives of the board would have an understanding of the issues affecting Black Belt residents and would have a history of working in the region. The stipulation that the work experience must have been in direct contact with the impoverished population ensures dedication to the issues affecting the region's citizens. This is a very important factor of this piece of legislation because it allows for nongovernmental organizations that have worked in the Black Belt community to have a voice in funding projects.

This differs from traditional approaches of implementation of national policy in the Black Belt, which would have utilized existing governmental structures at the local level, such as local development districts that may not have been supportive of Black Belt programs geared toward the neediest Black Belt residents or toward programs that directly work with residents. Additionally, funding for transportation and infrastructure would have been capped at 25 percent, which would address problematic disproportionate funding to physical infrastructure at the expense of investing in social and educational programs that would focus directly on Black Belt residents. Unfortunately, the DBBRA bill was not reintroduced in the 109th Congress, and the community-based planning component it created was not adopted by the proposed bills in the 109th Congress.

Community input in community-based planning has been a part of the existing Denali Commission established for the state of Alaska, as shown in Table 1. This commission allows for groups such as residents, organized labor, higher education, business, and local government to all play a role in governance. The Denali model goes beyond the policy as usual approach of the ARC model by allowing citizens the opportunity to assist in creating community-based plans for their communities. This allows for a more direct, democratic decision-making process about programs and projects that will be funded, as well as a greater opportunity for prioritization of resources. The ARC structure only allows local participation through unelected, appointed development districts and planning commissions, which may promote the exclusion from decision making of the very residents whom the ARC was created to address. Since 1965, the ARC has spent significant resources mostly on public infrastructure, yet the quality of life for many residents of the region is still not comparable to the rest of the nation. This is a strong indicator of the need to try new, additional, and innovative approaches to economic development.

The needs of the Black Belt require a comprehensive national policy initiative, yet it is important that this initiative address these needs through unique regional approaches with broad definitions of economic development. The Black Belt, with its troubled racial and political history, requires careful consideration when creating any initiatives to address its problems. Because of the history of exclusion, an elitist political environment, and the social class structure of the South, it would be necessary to create proposals that are sensitive to these issues. Any initiative must not utilize conventional decision-making structures nor rely solely upon existing

local development districts or local governments and planning commissions. Reliance on these entities continues the policy as usual strategies of the past. The Black Belt needs a new definition of economic development that includes developing the people of the region and engaging them in real dialogues about the development of their community. It is imperative that the creation of a regional commission or authority targeting the Black Belt address the unique characteristics of this region. There must not be politics as usual.

REFERENCES

- Blakely, Edward, and Ted Bradshaw. 2002. *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Bradshaw, Michael. 1985. Public Policy in Appalachia: The Application of a Neglected Geographical Factor? *Institute of British Geographers New Series* 10:385–400.
- Calhoun, Samuel, Richard Reeder, and Faqir Bagi. 2000. Federal Funds in the Black Belt. *Rural America* 15:20–27.
- Cobb, James. 1982. *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936–1980*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press.
- Cobb, James. 1993. *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936–1990*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Delia, Albert A., S. Richard Brochett, and Malcolm Simpson. 2002. Southeastern Crescent Authority: A Proposal for Economic Growth in the Southeastern United States. Regional Development Institute, East Carolina University.
- Devey-Tomaskovic, Donald, and Vincent J. Roscigno. 1996. Racial Economic Subordination and White Gain in the U.S. South. *American Sociological Review* 61:565–589.
- Drabenstott, Mark, and Katherine Sheaff. 2002. The New Power of Regions: A Policy Focus for Rural America—A Conference Summary. Introduction to proceedings of third annual Rural Policy Conference, 9–10 May, Kansas City, MO. <http://www.kc.frb.org/publicat/econrev/PDF/2q02drab.pdf>.
- Dunning Art, James G. Ledbetter, and Joseph Whorton. 2002. Dismantling Persistent Poverty in the Southeastern United States It's a Matter of Wealth. University of Georgia. www.poverty.uga.edu/report-costsofpoverty.pdf.
- Gibbs, Robert. 2005. Most Low-Education Counties Are in the Nonmetro South. *Amber Waves*, June 2005. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/June05/Findings/LowEducationCounties.htm>.
- Harris, Rosalind, and Dreamal Worthen. 2003. African Americans in Rural America. In *Challenges for Rural American in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by David Brown and Louis Swanson. University Park: The Pennsylvania State Press.
- Hill, Walter. 2002. *Persistent Poverty in the South: A Community-Based Perspective*. Tuskegee, AL: Tuskegee University.
- Jeter, Lynne Wilbanks. 2003. Southern Black Belt Alliance: Will It Go Forward? Lack of Consensus May Sink Proposed Commission. *Mississippi Business Journal*, November 5–11.
- Jolliffe, Dean. 2004. Persistent Poverty Is More Pervasive in Nonmetro Counties. *Amber Waves*, September 2004. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Amberwaves/September04/Findings/persistentpoverty.htm>.

Mertz, Paul. 1978. *New Deal Policy and Southern Rural Poverty*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Scranton, Phillip. 2001. *The Second Wave Southern Industrialization from the 1940s to the 1970s*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Van Sickle, John. 1951. The Southeast: A Case Study in Delayed Industrialization. *The American Economic Review* 41:384–393. Paper and Proceedings of the Sixty-third Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association, *From Hearings before Special Subcommittee on Cotton of the Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives, 80th Congress 1st session* (GPO, 1947) p. 506

Washington, Booker T. 1901. *Up From Slavery. An Autobiography*. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday & Co.

Wimberley, Ronald, and Libby Morris. 1997. *The Southern Black Belt: A National Perspective*. Lexington, KY: TVA Rural Studies.

Table 1 Examples of Commissions/Authority

Model	Governance	Priorities/Core Goals	Decision making
<p>Appalachian Regional Commission</p> <p>Established: 1965 Total population: 23 million Coverage area: 13 states</p>	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of Congress</p> <p><i>Governors</i> of the participating states</p> <p><i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor</p> <p><i>State co-chair</i></p>	<p>Infrastructure for development</p> <p>Development of industry</p> <p>Entrepreneurial communities</p> <p>Diversified regional economy</p> <p>Making the region's industrial and commercial resources more competitive in national and world markets</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Local development districts or planning commission</p> <p>Local municipalities</p>
<p>Delta Regional Authority</p> <p>Established: 2000</p> <p>Total population: 9.25 million Coverage area: 8 states</p>	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president</p> <p><i>Governors</i> of the participating states</p> <p><i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor</p> <p><i>State co-chair</i></p>	<p>Basic public infrastructure</p> <p>Transportation infrastructure</p> <p>Business development/ entrepreneurship</p> <p>Job training and education</p> <p><i>*Transportation and infrastructure projects receive at least 50 percent of the appropriate funds.</i></p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Local development district</p> <p>Municipalities, counties, and parishes</p>
<p>Denali Commission</p> <p>Established: 1998</p> <p>Total population: 625,000</p> <p>Coverage area: Alaska only</p>	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president</p> <p><i>State co-chair/governor</i> of Alaska</p> <p><i>Panel of five commissioners</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Natives/residents 2. Organized labor 3. University system/education 4. Construction contractors/business 5. Municipal managers/local government 	<p>Energy</p> <p>Healthcare facilities</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Intergovernmental coordination</p> <p>Other infrastructure</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Citizen input through community-based comprehensive plans</p>

Source: Hill 2002; Delia, Brochett, and Simpson 2002

Table 2 Regional Commission Models

Entity	Appalachian Regional Commission Created: 1965 13 states	Proposed Southeast Crescent Authority <i>House version</i> 7 states	Proposed Southeast Crescent Authority <i>Senate version</i> 7 states
Federal Governing Structure	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of Congress</p> <p><i>Governors</i> of the participating states</p> <p><i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor</p> <p><i>State co-chair</i></p>	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of Congress</p> <p><i>Governors</i> of the participating states</p> <p><i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor</p> <p><i>State co-chair</i></p>	<p><i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of Congress</p> <p><i>Governors</i> of the participating states</p> <p><i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor</p> <p><i>State co-chair</i></p>
Policy Topics	<p>Infrastructure for development</p> <p>Development of industry</p> <p>Entrepreneurial communities</p> <p>Diversified regional economy</p> <p>Making the region's industrial and commercial resources more competitive in national and world markets</p>	<p>Infrastructure for economic development</p> <p>Assistance for job training, employment-related education, and business development</p> <p>Assistance to distressed and underdeveloped areas</p>	<p>Infrastructure for economic development</p> <p>Assistance for job training, employment-related education, and business development</p> <p>Assistance to distressed and underdeveloped areas</p>
Local Governing Structure	<p>Board</p> <p>Local development districts</p> <p>Local municipalities</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Local development districts</p> <p>Local municipalities</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Local development districts</p> <p>Local municipalities</p>

Table 3 ARC and DBBRA Comparison

	Appalachian Regional Commission Established: 1965 13 states	Proposed Characteristics of DBBRA Proposed: 2002 14 states
Governance	<i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of Congress <i>Governors</i> of the participating states <i>Resident</i> of the state appointed by the governor <i>State co-chair</i>	<i>Federal co-chair</i> appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate <i>Governors</i> of the participating states <i>Constituency representative</i>
Priorities/Core Areas	Infrastructure for development Development of industry Entrepreneurial communities Diversified regional economy Making the region's industrial and commercial resources more competitive in national and world markets	Develop comprehensive plans, establish priorities, and approve grant proposals Facilitate and coordinate inter-state relations Review the needs and assets of the region and support state government and local development districts with economic development strategies Assist private investment in the region
Structure/Decision Making	Board Local development districts Local municipalities	Board Constituency representation board Comprehensive strategic plan developed by local communities to prioritize community needs

Source: Hill 2002



Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy

RESERVE YOUR COPY OF VOLUME XIII TODAY

The 2007 issue of the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*, "Tearing Down Walls, Building Bridges: Exploring the African American-Latino Dialogue," is currently available. The journal is a must-read for scholars, students, social scientists, and practitioners with an interest in coalition building and the issues that unite communities of color. "Tearing Down Walls, Building Bridges" explores the issues of organ donation, political participation, racial stereotypes, and immigration. Featured in Volume XIII are interviews with:

- Kenneth J. Cooper
- Earl Ofari Hutchinson
- Tatcho Mindiola, Jr.

COMPLETE THIS FORM TO ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!

YES, please sign me up as an annual subscriber to the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*.

\$10 students

\$20 individuals

\$40 libraries & institutions

Payment enclosed

Bill my VISA MC

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Card # _____ Exp. date: _____ / _____

Signature _____

Mail this form to:

Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy
John F. Kennedy School of Government ♦ Harvard University
79 John F. Kennedy Street ♦ Cambridge, MA 02138
<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/hjaap/> ♦ E-mail: hjaap@ksg.harvard.edu
Phone: (617) 496-0517 ♦ Fax: (617) 384-9555

Political Coalitions Across the United States: An Interview With Kenneth J. Cooper

Interviewed by Zach Neumann

Kenneth J. Cooper is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who has been a newspaper reporter and editor for nearly thirty years. He has specialized in government, politics, and social policy at the Washington Post, Boston Globe, Knight Ridder, St. Louis American and St. Louis Post-Dispatch. In 1984, Cooper shared a Pulitzer Prize in special local reporting for his role in producing "The Race Factor," a Boston Globe series that examined institutional racism in Boston. Cooper covered the nation's capital for a dozen years, reporting on the presidential campaign of Michael Dukakis, welfare reform, and health policy for Knight Ridder. For the Washington Post, he covered education policy and Congress, including the "Republican revolution" that took control of Congress in 1994. He also wrote a monthly column on Washington, "Capital Scene," for Emerge magazine. From 1996 to 1999, Cooper was the Post's correspondent for South Asia, reporting on India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives from his base in New Delhi. In his second stint at the Boston Globe, he was its national editor from 2001 to 2005.

Zach Neumann of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy interviewed Kenneth J. Cooper on 9 February 2007.

HJAAP

How would you characterize the political relationship between African Americans and Latinos in the United States today?

COOPER

It is uneven and mixed. It depends on whether you are talking about national politics in Washington, at a local level, or whether you are talking about one state or another. The relationship in California is different from the relationship in other parts of the country. Even among the very successful coalitions we have found tensions and different dynamics that emerge. It really is uneven.

Originally from Missouri City, TX, Zach Neumann is currently pursuing a master in public policy degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is a 2006 graduate of the University of Texas at Austin.

HJAAP

Are there any particular areas in the country where it is particularly troubling or challenging?

COOPER

I would say that south Florida is probably at the top of the list.

HJAAP

What factors have contributed to making this relationship problematic in south Florida, for example?

COOPER

There are a few things that distinguish south Florida. One is that you have a Latino population that historically has been dominated by Cubans and there is a tension that has been created between White Cubans and Afro-Cubans. This is unusual because these tensions can be traced back to their homeland of Cuba and yet are materializing in the United States.

HJAAP

In areas where the relationship has been more productive, what has led African Americans and Latinos to be effective in forming a partnership?

COOPER

There are two keys to any successful Black-Latino coalition. One is community leadership, and the other is elected officials like former Denver mayor Frederico Peña or former New York City mayor David Dinkins. Most of these individuals are candidates that are African American more often than they are Latino.

HJAAP

Whenever there is talk about African Americans and Latinos forming political coalitions, it is always within the structure of the Democratic Party. Does the possibility exist that this type of relationship can be formed under the Republican Party?

COOPER

The Republican Party has not quite figured this out, but it is conceivable, given the current politics of the Republican Party, that you can try to galvanize Latinos and African Americans around specific issues that might seem somewhat surprising. Given today's politics, there are issues where these two communities tend to be more conservative, such as abortion and other touchstone issues that are central to the core Republican philosophy.

One of the challenges for the Republicans is to overcome their hesitancy to do exactly what they accuse the Democrats of doing: of engaging, of playing into minority interest groups and pandering to them. It is this classic American interest group politics and nothing new about racial or ethnic politics in this country or the very core of urban politics. Here in Boston, throughout the twentieth century, Irish Americans wielded a large amount of political power. Later in the century, African Americans who had Irish surnames got lots of votes in places like South Boston because some of the eligible voters just voted for whoever had an Irish surname. If you look at African Americans that have been elected in this area to positions such as the school committee, many of them have Irish surnames.

HJAAP

Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is often credited with building a coalition between African Americans and Latinos to solidify his election in 2005. He made the same efforts at coalition building in 2001 and failed. What strategies accounted for the difference? Why was he successful in coalition building in 2005 and unsuccessful in 2001?

COOPER

Good question. My impression from afar is that one of the things that helped him very much in 2005 is that on the city council before that time, he had cultivated a relationship with Bernard Parks, who was a former African American police commissioner and mayoral candidate when Villaraigosa was a candidate in the Democratic primary. Following the Democratic primary, Bernard Parks supported Villaraigosa, which definitely helped Villaraigosa among African American voters. Furthermore, one of those direct benefits that Antonio Villaraigosa was able to take advantage of was that there was a widespread sense of Black dissatisfaction with the incumbent mayor and a sense that he had broken some of his promises and betrayed the community. So there was a vote against the incumbent. Antonio Villaraigosa did a better job of reaching out and of running an inclusive campaign that sent the signal, "Yes, I am Latino. But I want everybody's votes, no matter your race or ethnicity. If I get elected mayor, I will be mayor of all of Los Angeles."

HJAAP

How was Villaraigosa able to overcome animosity among low-income African Americans and low-income Latinos that manifested itself in violence in public schools? Did he do anything specific to overcome those issues or were they not pertinent to his campaign?

COOPER

Right after he got elected there was a Black-Latino gang disturbance in a high school, and he appeared there and made the right kinds of healing statements that did not take one side or the other, but spoke in the interest of peace.

I am not one that interprets the gang violence between Blacks and Latinos as necessarily an expression of tensions between the two communities as it is an expression of tensions between gangs who, by their very nature, want to establish and preserve their turf. In Los Angeles, the gangs have racial ethnic identities. I would not interpret that as representing all Latinos or all African Americans. If the conflict was so profound in terms of violence, how could you have this Black-Latino coalition electing the first Latino mayor of this city? Some people interpret the violence as representative of the entire communities, they shouldn't. This violence is more of a criminal issue than an issue of racial ethnocentricity.

HJAAP

Fernando Ferrer attempted to form similar coalitions during his campaign in New York. Why was he unable to achieve the same success that Villaraigosa achieved?

COOPER

A lot of Democratic leaders think Fernando Ferrer's problem wasn't that he was not a talented candidate or campaigner like Antonio Villaraigosa. Fernando Ferrer lost a lot of Black support because of one set of statements on one occasion where he appeared to take the side of police in a controversial shooting in that city.

Now a talented politician who has made that faux pas once would have been able to overcome that, particularly since Fernando Ferrer actually had been on protest lines taking the side of African American protestors. But that spring, eight months later, he still had not overcome that backlash. That is a failing of the campaign and a candidate crisis.

I would add that, if you look at Black-Latino relations in major cities and look at Latino subgroups, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans—Fernando Ferrer is Puerto Rican—tend to have better relations with African Americans than Cuban Americans and Mexican Americans. Both of those groups, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans, have an identity that includes an acknowledgement of ancestry that is European, indigenous, and African. There is an affinity present that is not present with Mexican Americans or the dominant White Cubans in south Florida.

HJAAP

In the process of rebuilding New Orleans, Mayor Ray Nagin made remarks alluding to the need to protect the city from an influx of Mexican workers. Like New Orleans, Houston, TX, has also seen a swift change in demographics among African Americans and Latinos post-Katrina. How do you see these changes affecting the political scene in each city?

COOPER

In the case of New Orleans, Mayor Nagin's statements reflected sloppy thinking and did not distinguish between Latinos and undocumented workers. He could have said

what he really wanted to say without referencing it. But his concern was that you have displaced African Americans who had lived in New Orleans and they deserved opportunities to work in reconstruction.

In regards to Texas cities and the movement of displaced African Americans from New Orleans into those communities, African Americans have to accept that at various points and in various places around this country, Latino political power is going to eclipse African American political power. That is a tough thing to swallow for any group.

But the transition will be made for them if African Americans, while they still dominate that coalition, build open lines of communication and alliances with Latinos as Latinos emerge as the larger group. If African Americans govern inclusively when they are a majority in that coalition, there is a better chance that when Latinos emerge as the dominant group they will do the same thing.

HJAAP

In the 2008 presidential race there are two Democratic candidates that are capturing media attention because of their ethnicity, Barack Obama and Bill Richardson. What do you think the presence of these two men signals for American politics? In terms of building relationships between African Americans and Latinos, what does the presence of these candidates signify for the continued role of these two groups in the Democratic Party?

COOPER

The candidacies of Barack Obama and Bill Richardson can only serve to stimulate African American and Latino participation. It is definitely a positive thing that both candidates are coming off strongly in this election. Their campaigns may be fraught with some difficulties because ours is a competitive winner-take-all system. It is imaginable that that there could emerge some tension.

Bill Richardson is a competitive politician, but he has had senior aides in various government jobs who are African American and work extensively with the African American community. As far as the nation's politics, the assertion of both Obama's and Richardson's candidacies will help break down polarized voting in this country where Blacks and Latinos often vote for White candidates, but the reverse is not true nearly as often. Eventually you are going to start painting attitudes and creating conceptual space in the minds of White voters that once said, "I'm not going vote for a Black candidate." The same thing is likely to happen within the Latino community.

Richardson, with his Anglo name, his White American father and his Mexican mother, his lack of a noticeable Latino accent, his bilingualism, and his professionalism, has been able to come across in a distinct way that emphasizes his abilities and not as a candidate defined by Spanish being his native language or by his Spanish surname. Some people think the same thing about Obama—that his ancestry being half White and half Black, his father being African as opposed to African

American, the childhood he had in places like Hawaii and Asia, became less threatening. But Obama will challenge White voters to grapple with him on his own terms as an individual.

HJAAP

In regards to Barack Obama, his vote in favor of constructing a wall along the United States-Mexico border has done significant damage to his relationship with Latinos in Illinois. What effect would his candidacy have on the larger African American-Latino relationship if he continues to pursue these types of policies?

COOPER

Latinos are a significant political presence in Chicago in Cook County and Cook County is a major political factor for any Democrat seeking statewide office in Illinois. Perhaps Barack Obama is not thinking about seeking reelection. But if he is, I would expect that he is taking other actions to support Latinos in Illinois in other ways. Experienced and successful politicians have a record for a mixed presence like that.

HJAAP

In discussing the relationship between the African American and Latino communities, it is often assumed that these two groups are competing for a limited set of political resources, limited access, and limited economic opportunities. In terms of politics, are these two groups competing against each other and what effect does this have on the nature of this relationship?

COOPER

The first mistake is to think about it as being limited. In most cases—if you look at Congress, for example—it is not that often that a Black candidate and a Latino candidate are competing for election to the same House district. It comes up more frequently in city council and state legislative races around the country.

People have to be clear. Politics is a competitive process. Each group wants their candidate to win. In the end, one only does win. And the way for any group to protect its interests is to build relations with whoever the winner is and to hold that elected official accountable to serving all of his or her constituents, regardless of matters of racial ethnicity. It is not just about symbolic representation, i.e., “one of us got elected,” but it is also a pragmatic question about elected officials serving a group’s interests as well. The thing that both groups need to do is reach out and try to get more elected officials that are not from their specific group to support their interests.

HJAAP

Some people say that positive relations are impossible between these two groups and will never materialize. Others say that these coalitions are forming now and that it is going to change the face of American politics. Over the next forty to fifty years in the United States, what is going to be the status of these two groups and what impact will this have on the political process?

COOPER

That is a good question, but it is a difficult one to answer. There are so many unknowns. We do not know what the continued rate of Latino immigration will be and we do not know what the rate of naturalization will be. It is hard to gauge what will happen with the Latino community in the future, how that will affect their political power, and how it will relate to African Americans.

As far as what it does for the entire country, it will make the political process more inclusive because not just Black or Latino candidates and elected officials, but all candidates and elected officials will have to tend to the interests of those two groups to get elected. We have seen that in the city of Boston with Mayor Thomas Menino, but he cultivates everybody because he knows what a mosaic this city is.

Ours is a pluralistic political system where interest groups compete for power and resources. That is its nature because you have to have a majority. The more the society looks like a collection of minorities as opposed to a White majority and some minorities, the more we will require more coalition building to get things done.

The problem with people who say that the relationship between African Americans and Latinos are terrible or that they are wonderful is that there are legitimate examples to support either direction. Since the 1960s the legislature of New York has had what started as the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and has grown to become the Black, Puerto Rican, and Hispanic Caucus. In baseline California you have a Hispanic Caucus and a Black Caucus in the legislature that are not always working in concert. In Congress, you have a Black Caucus and a Hispanic Caucus. When you look at the voting records of the members of those two groups, there is a high degree of convergence. Approximately 80 percent of the time, members of the Black Caucus are supporting the legislative priorities of the Hispanic Caucus and vice versa. Part of that is that they are, by and large, Democrats. But given that number, look at White Democrats. I do not think they are supporting the Black Caucus 80 percent of the time in the House of Representatives.

There are examples in either direction, even in Los Angeles. Every coalition, to some extent, involves tensions and disagreements. It is possible to maintain a coalition where both sides acknowledge that, on occasion, the two groups are not going to be with each other but still respect the other's position. And whoever has the most political strength will win because, at the end of the day, that is the way that we resolve our conflicts.



HARVARD JOURNAL of HISPANIC POLICY

Order your copy of Volume 19

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* is an annual, nonpartisan, student-run scholarly review dedicated to publishing interdisciplinary work on policy making and politics affecting the Latino community in the United States.

Topics covered in this year's volume include:

- **Candid interviews with Univision News Anchor Jorge Ramos and California State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez**
- **Editorial content focusing on mentoring programs for young Latinas and the affirmative action referendum in Michigan's 2006 mid-term elections**

To order your copy of Volume 19, complete the form below and mail to:

Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy
 John F. Kennedy School of Government
 Harvard University
 79 John F. Kennedy Street
 Cambridge, MA 02138

YES, please sign me up as a risk-free subscriber to the
Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy.

\$25 individuals

\$55 institutions

Renew my subscription

I'm a new subscriber

Payment enclosed

Bill my VISA MC

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Card # _____ Exp. date: _____

Signature _____

Visit our Web site at www.ksg.harvard.edu/kssgorg/hjhp.

To order by e-mail, write to hjhp@ksg.harvard.edu; by phone, call (617) 496-8655; or fax to (617) 384-9555.

African American-Latino Relations in Los Angeles: An Interview With Earl Ofari Hutchinson

Interviewed by Anthony Woods

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is a nationally acclaimed writer and political analyst. He has authored ten books, and his articles are published in newspapers and magazines across the United States. As a social and political analyst, he often appears on such networks as CNN, MSNBC, NPR, American Urban Radio Network, and local Los Angeles television and radio stations. He is an associate editor at New America Media and a regular contributor to BlackNews.com, Alternet.org, BlackAmericaWeb.com and the Huffington Post. He also does a weekly commentary on KJLH Radio in Los Angeles.

Anthony Woods of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy interviewed Earl Ofari Hutchinson on 2 February 2007.

HJAAP

How would you characterize the relationship between the African American and Latino communities in Southern California?

HUTCHINSON

When you look at Black/Latino relations, it is really a mixed bag. On the surface, many people have focused on the violence, the conflicts, the strife, and the tension between African Americans and Latinos—whether we are talking about the prisons, jails, gang violence, conflict, or in the schools.

There is a sense among African Americans living in neighborhoods that have been predominantly or exclusively Black and are now transitioning and becoming largely Latino that African Americans are being pushed out, that their needs are not being addressed by the new Latinos that are moving in. So in that sense, it has created some tensions and divisions.

But when I say “mixed bag,” on the other hand, when you really dig down and look at day-to-day living conditions, generally you will find that people are people.

Anthony Woods is pursuing a master in public policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is a 2003 graduate of West Point Military Academy and currently serves as an officer in the United States Army.

People just get along with each other. Even in these neighborhoods, people who live there, Blacks and Latinos, live side by side with each other. And at the basic level of human relations between people, you do not really see the major problems that are projected—particularly by the media and public policy makers—as being the *defining* characteristic of Black and Latino relations.

So what is one to think of this? On the one hand, you have fairly good relations among neighbors. And on the other hand, you do have the conflict among some. So it is almost a skewed picture that is being presented. And I think it is fair when you really look at Black and Latino relations, particularly in the present context, that you look at all sides of it.

It is not a black-and-white situation. There are a lot of nuances to the relationships that are evolving. And it is an evolutionary process because much of this is still new. So that is why I always caution, when we look at this, do not just look at the surface. Do not just look at the headline news. Go a little bit deeper.

HJAAP

How would you categorize the depiction of this relationship in the media?

HUTCHINSON

Given the nature and the shape of the media as we know it, the emphasis is always on the sensational. For example, recently in Los Angeles, we had another tragedy. A young African American girl, fourteen-year-old Cheryl Green, was gunned down. Two other young blacks were wounded, and Cheryl Green was killed. They arrested two Latino gang members. That dominated the news for days in Los Angeles and became a national story. So someone would take away from that, saying, “Well you see? This is really emblematic of relations between African Americans and Latinos.” And now, it is kicked up to the violence level, where you have young Blacks that are being gunned down and specifically targeted by Latino gang members.

Those Latino gang members are not only being charged with murder, but also a hate crime because Green and the other Blacks were targeted solely because of their race. One might take away that this is reflective of very tense and hostile relations between Blacks and Latinos.

But the bottom line is, when you go to that neighborhood where she was killed—the Harbor Gateway area in the south part of Los Angeles—what you find is a mixed ethnic area; not just Blacks and Latinos, but every ethnic group.

And you find that people get along. When you go to the park, you see people of all groups playing together. When you go to the schools down there, the kids of all ethnic groups are relating to each other. When you see what is happening on the streets, you see kids playing with each other. You see working class people going about their business, going to work every day. But that is not captured in the media because it is not sensational.

HJAAP

Would you say that public officials or community leaders are doing enough to address any of the tensions that do exist?

HUTCHINSON

One of the major criticisms that I have had of public officials—Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, the Los Angeles City Council—has been that they have been missing in action when it comes to really getting a handle on solid public policy issues that address the conflict, to the extent that it is there. They have been clueless about how to get a handle on this. Unfortunately, it has taken a tragedy like a shooting or gang violence before you even hear or see a statement being made.

After the Cheryl Green shooting, you had a number of community activists, both Black and Latino, that were in that area. They had some walks. They had marches against hate violence. They had forums and dialogue sessions on Black/Latino relations. Until that shooting drew media attention, you didn't see the politicians there. Then they all said, "We're going to do this. And we're going to have these programs. And we're going to do this in the schools." But more realistically, what they really said is, "We're going to bring in more cops and crack down."

And I thought it was a cheap and easy way out when you are dealing with these things. But it is no answer to anything. It is no solution. And to me, it is just cheap sensationalism and really just political pandering on the part of clueless elected officials.

The challenge has always been twofold to elected officials. You really have to get ahead of issues. You cannot just tail in public opinion or the media. When you do that, the same problems become magnified and become even more endemic in these communities. I think public officials do have a responsibility to be good leaders. They have programs that can be put in place and expanded and certainly even become more effective and productive to reach out to people that are in the greatest need. But when they abrogate that responsibility, they are simply worthless as elected officials.

HJAAP

In regards to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, his 2005 mayoral victory is often credited as being a result of a political alliance between African Americans and Latinos in Los Angeles. Why didn't this relationship spread positive change in addressing some of the tension?

HUTCHINSON

First of all, he is the mayor. And, in all fairness, he is only one person, albeit a very powerful person. It is not totally unrealistic that he can do much more than he is

doing. By that I mean providing the funding and the resources, expanding programs that are already in place, and so forth. These are the kinds of things that are much needed and the kinds of things that a mayor and other public officials can put in motion. Has he really wielded power to the extent that he can? Based on performance, the answer is no.

Villaraigosa is an influential Latino leader. It is his duty to speak out and challenge other Latino leaders—elected officials, religious leaders, business leaders, and community activists.

The mayor can use his position as a bully pulpit to say, “Look. We’ve got a problem here. We’ve got divisions. We’ve got some strife and violence in our city. It’s up to us, as responsible people, and those that are influential and have the ear of many in the communities. It’s up to us to take the lead. It’s our city, now. We have the numbers. African Americans are a distinct minority in Los Angeles, only about 10 percent of the population of the city and dwindling. We have a duty and an obligation to take the lead on this issue because now we are closer than ever to having the reins of political and economic power in the city of Los Angeles.”

HJAAP

You mentioned that the increasing Latino population, specifically in Southern California, has strained resources and that can be a source of tension. As we see an increase in Latino populations across the country, do you see the tensions associated with this relationship growing elsewhere in the country?

HUTCHINSON

There is the potential for increased tensions. Over time, particularly the last decade, we have seen the population demographics radically change in the United States. The urban areas that did not have much of a Latino population—Atlanta, New Orleans, Birmingham—urban areas that historically were exclusively African American are noticing an influx of Latinos.

Could the L.A. model in terms of how neighborhoods have transitioned between Blacks and Latinos with some of the problems that we talked about happen in Atlanta? Could it happen in Birmingham? Could it happen in Baltimore? Could it happen in Cleveland? Detroit? The possibility is certainly there, if two things happen.

Number one, all roads lead back to the political leadership in that city. If they learn the lessons from places like Los Angeles and get ahead of it with good initiatives and good outreach, then no. The second thing that has to happen is that there has to be firm community grassroots outreach between Blacks and Latinos. To an extent that that has happened in Los Angeles, in places like Watts and other parts of south Los Angeles, they have seen very few problems. There is a working model that is in place, a positive working model that could be used in other parts of the country to avoid many of the damaging problems that we have seen in Los Angeles.

HJAAP

Many African Americans are expressing a resentment that the immigrant rights movement is being referred to as the “new civil rights movement,” implying that the African American civil rights movement is older or less important. Is this an accurate interpretation?

HUTCHINSON

I did a series of articles on the immigration back in April, May, and June of 2006. It was a multipart series looking at Blacks in the immigration movement. Now, the pieces that I did presented a balanced view on the topic, both past and present, and projected it into the future while also putting a historical context to it. But my depiction was interpreted, or misinterpreted, because people read what they want to read based on where they are coming from. Some people saw it as a pro-Latino and pro-immigrant. That sent up a big warning that this thing has gotten emotional. It has really touched a big emotional nerve with so many Blacks. It was almost like the way racist Whites in the South back in that era talked about Blacks—you could not tell the difference.

The leadership of the civil rights organizations took the politically correct position: “We support immigration reform. It is a legitimate civil rights struggle. And we’re going to be there to support it, just like we always have.” But that’s them. Underneath, you saw a monstrous disconnect between the official political position from the civil rights establishment and just the regular guy and woman on the street.

HJAAP

How would you characterize the relationship between middle-class Latinos and African Americans? What is the relationship in the higher levels of this class of society?

HUTCHINSON

It is really a two-tier process. On the one hand, where you *do* see the conflict, it does tend to be among lower-income Latinos and African Americans. But I would expect it to be that because they are rubbing shoulders with each other, particularly in the public schools. We are talking about poor, underserved, inner-city schools. They are scratching and clawing for resources, and attention, and the particular needs of each group.

When we are talking about jails and prisons, Blacks and Latinos are bumping shoulders there. When you layer it over with turf battles and drug battles and all these other things that gangs engage in, then you can see the potential for the problems.

Public services, too—particularly the hospitals—there was some resentment about who gets what and who gets hired. Are more Latinos being hired? More Blacks being hired and promoted? At the lower end, there are resentments on the part of

Blacks that say, "We can't get the jobs because all the employers want to do is just hire cheap-wage Latinos from another country."

When we move up the scale to other professions, whether we are talking about in private industry or public employment, generally speaking, you do not find the same degree of tension. I have seen more willingness to work together, particularly when we look in the education sphere and public policy sphere.

HJAAP

Can similarities or common interests be used to build harmony among these two communities?

HUTCHINSON

Well, take the big three by the way of education and public schools. Obviously, the overwhelming majority of African American students are not in private schools; they are in public schools. The overwhelming majority of Latino students are in public schools. So right away there is a huge battle to make these schools better, to better serve the educational needs of all students in the schools. It would strike me that parents, students, administrators, and teachers have a vested interest in focusing on several things: the battle for more resources, more funding, more classroom space, smaller classroom sizes, better equipment, better texts, and all the things that make for a good public education facility. That knows no color. Those are the kinds of things that parents, teachers, administrators, and students should battle for no matter what the color is or ethnicity because it impacts directly the future of their children. Right away the battle for resources, school improvements, and education is a common-ground issue.

Also, there are millions of Blacks and Latinos that have absolutely no access to any kind of quality health care. The struggle to provide for the health needs of so many poor, underserved Blacks and Latinos is certainly a common issue battle that public policy makers at all levels can focus on.

Another crucial area is jobs. We have an astronomically high rate of unemployment among young African American males. But we also have a high rate of unemployment among young Latino males. There should be a major push on the part of Black and Latino organizations, groups, and community activists and community leaders to provide more funding, more programs in the area, jobs, skills, education training, and also job expansion.

And then, of course, the violence issue; obviously, it impacts all of these communities. We have seen a number of Black and Latino groups and community activists come together and have walks against violence, peace marches, peace walks, and dialogue sessions. These are the kinds of things that could be done in four critical public policy areas to bring Blacks and Latinos together on common ground and a common-ground fight.

HJAAP

Until Blacks and Latinos are seeing eye to eye on the issues they do share, what impact is this going to have on furthering the larger needs of people of color?

HUTCHINSON

A unity agenda on all the crucial public policy issues that impact the life and well-being of our communities is imperative to try to build those bridges. We are building bridges into the twenty-first century as America becomes a multiracial country. It is not a White man's country anymore. As California and a couple states already are minority-majority states, America could be a minority-majority country.

Given that, we are going to have crucial battles for resources, for public policy program initiatives that address all of the issues we talked about, from education to health care, violence, jobs, and political empowerment. These are the kinds of things that I think that unity is needed on.

When we talk about the new civil rights movement, I do see the new civil rights movement as being all-inclusive and encompassing of policy initiatives in all the areas that we talked about. And political empowerment is crucially important because what is going to happen is a major impact on the Republican and the Democratic Parties. It is going to intensify with national elections coming up in 2008.

But nonetheless, political empowerment is key. The major parties are beginning to respond to that, and they are understanding that we are not going to be able to win and hold power unless we have substantial support within the hearts and minds of Black and Latino voters. That is going to have a major impact on public policy change in this country.

HJAAP

You mentioned the national elections coming up in 2008. How are candidates such as Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Bill Richardson, and John Edwards going to appeal to both African American communities and Latino communities?

HUTCHINSON

When you look at, at least as far as the 2008 presidential race is shaping up, it is very interesting that, for the first time in American political history, we have a major mainstream Black candidate, we have a major mainstream female candidate, and we have a major mainstream Hispanic candidate. When you throw John Edwards in, we have a major mainstream White candidate who is not afraid to talk about the issues of race and poverty. He is the only one who has talked about a new war on poverty and he has never run away from the issue of race and racism.

Look how the landscape has changed on the Democratic side. That is a challenge to the political process to find that you have these individuals who obviously represent

different genders and ethnicities and are also willing to talk about issues that have disappeared from the political landscape—race, poverty, economic injustice. That is going to have an enormous impact in the political process.

It is a wake-up call that it is okay again to talk about the issues of social justice. It is okay to talk about labor. It is okay to talk about the environment. It is okay to talk about poverty. And it is certainly okay to talk about race. I think that is going to change the paradigm of the political tapestry in America in 2008 where you will see candidates addressing these issues and wanting to talk about substantive public policy issues that impact race and class in America.

HJAAP

What do the next five to ten years look like as far as this relationship between Black and Latino communities?

HUTCHINSON

Well, let me get the crystal ball out and rub it off. The best way to answer is just to come full circle back to what we started with. I said in the beginning that I see a mixed bag in terms of relations. If we projected into the future, my guess is we would see the same mixed bag. We will see degrees of progress, outreach, and cooperation between many Blacks and Latinos. We will also see conflicts we have already seen between Blacks and Latinos in many of the areas that we have already talked about—streets, schools, jobs, education, health services. But again, you will see a balance between the conflict and the cooperation.

The leadership at all levels, Blacks and Latinos, have to be the ones to push the envelope to ensure that cooperation is the watch word between Blacks and Latinos over the next five to ten years. If they are willing to do that, then the future could be very positive because the realization is going to sink in that with so many problems of race and poverty in this country, we better figure out a way to work together if in fact we are going to make real progress and be change agents in these communities.

African American-Latino Relations in Houston: An Interview With Tatcho Mindiola, Jr.

Interviewed by Cynthia M. Martinez

*Tatcho Mindiola, Jr., is the director of the Center for Mexican American Studies and an associate professor of sociology at the University of Houston. Mindiola has a bachelor degree in business administration and a master degree in sociology from the University of Houston. He earned his Ph.D. in sociology from Brown University. Mindiola's current research focuses on the relationship between Mexican and African Americans, the educational experiences of Mexican Americans in the public school system, and the portrayal of Mexican Americans in films. He is the author, along with Yolanda Flores Niemann and Nestor Rodriguez, of *Black-Brown Relations and Stereotypes*, published by the University of Texas Press in the fall of 2002.*

Cynthia M. Martinez of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy interviewed Dr. Tatcho Mindiola, Jr., on 12 February 2007.

HJAAP

One of the arguments that you make within *Black-Brown Relations and Stereotypes* is that in Houston, there are a lot of negative stereotypes that African American and Latino communities have of each other. What would you say are the most damaging perceptions that these two groups have?

MINDIOLA

Within our research, most of our respondents began by using one-word descriptors that were positive. When they began using negative terms, Latinos often described African Americans as noisy, loud, lazy, and hostile. African Americans described Latinos as opportunistic and having poor English. Generally what we found is that African Americans tend to have more positive stereotypes about Latinos than Latinos had about African Americans. African Americans tend to use more positive words to describe Latinos than vice versa. Within the Latino community, we found that immigrants tend to have more negative views of African Americans than

Cynthia M. Martinez is currently the editor-in-chief of the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy. She will receive her master of public policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in June 2007.

U.S.-born Latinos. We concluded that the negative stereotypes that immigrants had of African Americans was a function of having much less contact with African Americans than U.S.-born Latinos. In fact, there was a fairly significant number of the sample that said they had no contact with African Americans at all.

Well, that raised a question. If they have no contact with African Americans, where are the negative stereotypes among immigrants coming from? We speculated that the media, as a worldwide phenomenon with much of film and television coming from the United States of America, was where they were picking up the stereotypes. Once immigrants are here, then those stereotypes tend to be reinforced by what they see in the United States.

HJAAP

In the media coverage of the relationship between these two communities, it is often assumed that they are competing for the same scarce resources, that African Americans generally think more negatively of Latinos, and that Latinos are more willing to collaborate with African Americans than vice versa. How do you reconcile the differences between this media depiction and what your research found?

MINDIOLA

The media depiction is incorrect. U.S.-born Latinos in particular are much more knowledgeable about African Americans and have much more positive views of African Americans. It has been U.S.-born Latinos who have formed coalitions with African American organizations throughout the country. LULAC and Operation Push, the National Council of La Raza, MALDEF, and other groups have sat down with African American leaders, both nationally and locally, and attempted to form coalitions.

The research on immigration is very controversial and has been controversial for a number of years. Immigrants, to the extent that they affect the labor market here in the United States in a negative way, tend to affect that segment of the labor market which are high school dropouts. There is a perception among many African Americans that immigrants take jobs away from African Americans. However, in regards to these issues, the media is concentrating only on the provocative elements that sell newspapers.

HJAAP

One of the historical points that you make in your book is that, within the history of Houston, it was common for Latinos to implement segregationist tactics such as Jim Crow laws against African Americans, just as Whites would. How has this history affected race relations within the city?

MINDIOLA

There were some Mexican Americans and U.S.-born Latinos who went along with Jim Crow issues. We have a history of regarding ourselves as White that goes back to the late 1930s.

Here in Texas, the Texas Constitution allowed for the legal segregation of the Black and White races. What happened was not a system for Blacks and a system for Whites, but a tri-ethnic system—one for Blacks, one for Whites, and one for Latinos. The Latino community, via LULAC, began questioning the segregation of Latinos, arguing that it was unconstitutional because the Texas Constitution only allowed for the legal segregation of Blacks and Whites. Since we had Caucasian influence via Spain, we were White and should not be segregated from the majority population. Groups would file lawsuits against particular school districts here in the state and the courts would agree with them. But the school districts would say that Mexican Americans were being segregated due to their special linguistic needs, which was just a smokescreen, and the courts would say that was okay. But it was just a subterfuge to continue their segregation.

If you look at the Census Bureau, beginning in 1950, they used to publish a special volume that dealt only with our demographics in the southwest states of Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. The title of the publication was *White Persons of Spanish Surnames*. So throughout the 1950s and 1960s we were officially classified as a special category of White people.

When the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation in the United States was unconstitutional and mandated busing as the integrative mechanism, school districts in Houston and other parts of the Southwest were submitting the required paperwork saying, “We have transferred so many Black students into White schools and so many Whites into African American schools,” when, in reality, what they were doing was busing Blacks into Mexican schools and Mexicans into Black schools. But since we were officially White, they were using that as another smokescreen. They were leaving the White districts alone and just integrating Black and Mexican schools, so there was a boycott here in Houston around that issue.

This had some negative implications for ethnic relations in that it conveyed the message that Latinos did not want to go to school with African Americans. The Latino community responded to that criticism by saying, “Well, if we go to school with African Americans, we are not going to any schools that are any better than ours.” But clearly, it indicated that maybe we did not want to be integrated with African Americans.

Eventually we went back to court in 1969 and argued that we were not White, that we were an identifiable ethnic group with distinctive physical characteristics, a distinctive culture, and that we erred in calling ourselves White. And the court agreed with us so we went back to being who we are.

But there has been this history of Mexican Americans creating an impression, sometimes real, sometimes more perception, that we did not want to form coalitions with African Americans. But that did not define the character of the relationship between the two groups because you also had Mexican Americans who wanted to form coalitions with African Americans. I believe that we have more coalition building efforts now than ever before.

HJAAP

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Houston's large Latino population has been joined by a surge in its African American population due to an influx of people from New Orleans. How does this change in demographics affect race relations in the city?

MINDIOLA

There were between 150,000 and 200,000 people from New Orleans who came to Houston, the majority of them being African Americans and of low socioeconomic circumstances. Many of them went into the historical African American neighborhoods.

To my knowledge, it did not create a strain between the two populations. However, as time has gone on, there has been some indication that the spike in crime rates here in Houston was, in part, a result of that immigration and that there was a disproportionate number of African American males that were involved in criminal activity. But I have no firsthand knowledge of it straining the relationship between Latinos and African Americans, nor do I recall reading anything about a strain on that relationship because of the influx of people from Katrina.

HJAAP

Houston mayor Bill White has stated that the rise in crime can be attributed to the African Americans that came to Houston in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Immediately after his remarks there was a public outcry that those comments were inappropriate and damaging to the relationship that could be built between different races in Houston. How damaging was his argument?

MINDIOLA

I don't know if his remarks had a negative impact. Anytime there is a spike in crime and it is minority related, whether it be Black, Latino, Asian, or some other people of color, the negative perception of that particular group is just reinforced. Ultimately, while his remarks may have fed that perception, the mayor was correct. There were several instances where African Americans who were involved in drug trafficking in New Orleans brought their activities into Houston.

HJAAP

Just as Houston saw this change in demographics, New Orleans has also witnessed a similar shift. At one point Mayor Ray Nagin came out and said that he was worried about protecting the city from an influx of Mexican workers. Being that the situation is reversed in this case in that there is a strong African American community being joined by an influx of Latinos, how will race relations develop in New Orleans?

MINDIOLA

There were several reports in the newspapers about the growing number of Latinos that were pulled into New Orleans to help with the cleanup and rebuild the city. There was a lot of questioning as to why the African Americans who were forced out of the city were not initially brought back to help rebuild it. Many people are expecting that New Orleans will have a much more significant Latino influence as years go on. There was an unusual number of male Latino immigrants in New Orleans that were there to work, which is what you expect. Now there is evidence that New Orleans is seeing more Latino babies being born than ever before. So New Orleans is going to experience a transition from being seen as predominantly an African American enclave to one that is African American and Latino. There will be stresses and strains as both groups make the adjustment.

HJAAP

In major cities where African Americans and Latinos have been living together for several decades, reputations have developed. For example, Los Angeles has a reputation where these communities are in competition with each other. New York, on the other hand, has a history of cooperation between these two groups. How would you characterize the relationship between African Americans and Latinos in Houston?

MINDIOLA

Houston is more like New York. Right now Los Angeles has more conflict between Latinos and African Americans than other major cities. But Miami has had its conflict between African Americans and Cubans and Central Americans. Dallas has also been characterized by conflict between Latinos and African Americans around the school system, who is going to serve on the school board, and whether or not African Americans are looking after the interests of Latinos and vice versa.

In the Old South, in Georgia in particular, there has been conflict between Latino immigrants and African Americans because, like New Orleans, racial dynamics have been determined in terms of Black and White. Now you have the enclave of Latinos which many Blacks think are taking their jobs and which many Whites do not know how to deal with. In the state legislature, for example, there was an attempt to exclude Latinos from affirmative action programs. Eventually, the African

American community dropped their position. That instance represents an example of where Latino leaders went to African American leaders, talked to them, and African Americans changed their minds. So you have these different scenarios in different cities, but I do not know of any city that has the violence that Los Angeles has.

What is happening across all of the inner cities in the United States where Latinos and African Americans are living in large numbers is that we are increasingly thrown together in the same schools. There has been some racial tension that surfaces around holidays, like Cinco de Mayo or Diez y Seis de Septiembre, where African Americans think that the school districts are giving Latinos more attention than they should get.

Here in Houston, there has been some concern expressed by the alumni of the predominantly African American schools that were segregated. Many of these schools are 45 percent Latino, and it has changed the dynamic. Similarly some of the high schools here that were predominantly White are now predominantly Latino. And at their alumni meetings, their White, elderly alumni are baffled as to what has happened to their alma maters. Likewise, because we are increasingly thrown together in the schools, we are going to see an increase in intermarriage between African Americans and Latinos.

But all relationships have two components. There is a side that promotes harmony, consensus, and intimacy because you share things in common. Likewise, a relationship also has stresses and strains; you have disagreements. That is the way it is in relationships with groups. You are going to have some things that pull us together. In the case of Latinos and African Americans, a common history of discrimination, of being a different color, of being pushed, of discrimination, of being stereotyped, our common socioeconomic circumstances, our common goal to increase our voting rates. That is everything that pulls us together.

On the other hand, we have these things that tend to pull us apart—the perception among many Latinos that we are White, the perception that the racial hierarchy in the United States has African Americans on the bottom, the fact that Latinos are more easily accepted among Anglos, the perception that Latinos were Johnny-come-latelies to the civil rights movement, that when the civil rights movement started, Latinos only climbed on when we saw that gains could be made.

So you have both sides to it. At any given point in time the question is, what is the nature of the relationship today? Is it more conflictual or is it more of a coalition? Right now in Los Angeles things are very conflictual. Here in Houston, things are relatively smooth and easygoing.

HJAAP

What role do women play in coalition-building between African Americans and Latinos?

MINDIOLA

What our research has found is that immigrant women and African American women tend to have more negative views of each other. That is important because historically females have played a greater role in socializing our children than men have. So there are implications about women socializing our children in a negative fashion.

Likewise, since they are key to the nurturing and socialization process of children, especially in the Latino and African American communities, women are in a very important role to play a positive aspect in relations between the two groups. It could go either way.

HJAAP

Can these negative stereotypes be overcome?

MINDIOLA

That is a very interesting question because the social science literature would indicate what we call the "social contact hypothesis." If you put two groups together and let them interact over a sustained period of time, the negative stereotypes tend to dissipate and those groups gain a better understanding of each other and begin to realize their commonalities. Everyone wants to have a good life, a nice house, food on the table, decent clothing, decent health insurance, and a way to provide for their children. That is universal.

But in the back of my mind, I always think of men and women. I can think of no more intimate relationship than between men and women, and I am not sure if their constant contact has led to a dissipation of negative stereotypes on both parts. Men have negative stereotypes of women and women have negative stereotypes of men. We do not have to put them together; they are always together. In fact, they are always seeking each other out. Now, has that led to a dissipation of the stereotypes? I don't know—maybe so, maybe not.

HJAAP

Can Afro-Latinos play a role in building the relationship between African Americans and Latinos?

MINDIOLA

That is an unexplored area, at least to my knowledge of the literature and Black-Brown relations. The role that Afro-Latinos play in fostering understanding is unexplored. It is something that we need to explore, but I do not think all of the answers are in that.

The other thing that is happening in Black-Brown relations is that there are more scholars who are interested in this area and are beginning to research the history of

African American contact in Mexico, the Caribbean, and in South America. For example, we know that the Spanish brought in slaves to Veracruz in Mexico. There is a population there that is very dark in color, are all Spanish speakers, and can trace their heritage back to that time. We also know that runaway slaves from the Old South used to run away to Mexico because Mexico had antislavery laws. The assumption is that they married into the population and biologically phased themselves out. We know that one of the earliest presidents of Mexico, Vicente Guerrero, had strong African heritage. We are also beginning to realize that segments of the Latino population have significant African biological influences in their physiological makeup. But we are also learning that another segment has strong Caucasian influence. These are all things that are being brought to the forefront in terms of Black-Brown relations.

Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos

edited by Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler

Reviewed by Sapna D. Shah

“While the stigma of blackness is similar throughout the hemisphere, the experience of blackness is heterogeneous depending on historical and cultural characteristics as well as the demographic of each country” (16). The essays included in Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler’s *Neither Enemies nor Friends* explore the idea that “blackness” means different things to different populations. By exploring these distinctions within Latin America and the United States, the essays deepen the discourse on racial dynamics abroad and describe the implications for African American-Latino relations at home.

A powerful read, the book is a sharp addition to the understanding of African American-Latino relations. Not only does it discuss the challenges facing collaboration, but it questions how they came to be. The contradictory frameworks underlying race relations in Latin America and the United States are systematically questioned and deemed problematic. Each dynamic is exposed for being responsible for many dilemmas facing African American-Latino cooperation today. Wide in its scope and successful in its argument, the collection’s only limitation is not addressing the process by which a Latin American immigrant transitions from his native understanding of racial identity to that which confronts him in the United States.

Divided into three main sections, each piece of the book approaches this topic from a different angle. While the first section contains the editors’ analysis of the dialogue that is about to appear, the second section explores the politics and process by which race is constructed across Latin America, and the third delves into political and economic coalition building between African Americans and Latinos in the United States.

The essays of the second section begin with the unquestioned premise among Latin Americans that, unlike their northern counterparts, they are free of racist prejudices. Proud that they have never had race-based discrimination embedded in the rule of law, Latin Americans emphasize national unity. The overarching assumption is that, in stark contrast to the race obsession in the United States, Latin Americans are color blind, and class and gender are the main social organizing principles on the continent.

Sapna D. Shah is currently a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Sapna has worked with Fortune 1000 companies to help them integrate social responsibility practices into their operations, decision-making processes, and values. She has also worked as a marketing consultant and as an English and drama teacher in Mumbai, India.

Yet these essays flip this widely held belief on its head. Systematically, they show that it is the lack of race-based societal discourse that allows color-coded hierarchies to perpetuate. As editors Suzanne Oboler and Anani Dzidzienyo argue in their opening essay, the value placed on the idealized conception of *mestizaje*, or that the populations are of mixed race, "has led to the neglect of racial difference as a significant aspect of social experience" (8). When Afro-Latinos seek to illuminate these patterns of discrimination, they are met with accusations of trying to subvert national interest. In his essay, "Afro-Ecuadorian Responses to Racism: Between Citizenship and Corporatism," Carlos de la Torre observes that Afro-Ecuadorian responses to racism and efforts to overcome inequality are often based on paternalism and individual relationships. The results are "individual accommodation over the collective struggle for citizenship" (62), with minimal reduction of structural inequalities. He notes, though, that the Ecuadorian government has recognized the need to create a unitary Black movement. In contrast, in "The Foreignness of Racism: Pride and Prejudice Among Peru's Limeños in the 1990s," Suzanne Oboler remarks that tying a Black movement to the political power dynamic in Peru has been difficult. When they are generated, suggestions to improve the status of Blacks in society are suggested in individual terms, not structural ones.

One of the highlights of this section is Mark Anderson's "Bad Boys and Peaceful Garifuna: Transnational Encounters Between Racial Stereotypes of Honduras and the United States." This essay is an exploration of the Garifuna of Honduras, which, like Ecuador and Peru, lacks overtly constructed identities based on race. By understanding the struggles and strategies of African Americans in the United States, the Garifuna wrestle with creating this definition for themselves. In Anderson's words, "Black America serves as a site through which Garifuna imagine and improvise meanings of race and identity in Honduras" (110). And yet the association based on race ends there, as does the struggle against oppressive stereotypes; Garifuna often support and reiterate the damaging stereotypes African Americans face in the United States. Translating Black identity to the United States then becomes a conundrum. Whereas being "Black" in Honduras supports the Garifuna identity, in the United States the "Black" identity conflicts with the ethnic.

The Garifuna's consciousness of any connection to Blacks in other countries is unlike the image of Black Mexicans as represented by Bobby Vaughn's "Afro-Mexico: Blacks, *Indigenas*, Politics, and the Greater Diaspora." Here he notes, "All but the most educated people . . . have had little consciousness of Africa and even less of their being part of any African diasporas" (125). In fact, Blacks are understood as being devoid of any type of distinct ethnic or cultural identity; this uniqueness is reserved for indigenous populations. Blacks generally concur with the prejudicial stereotypes facing the indigenous population. However, they express envy of the fact that indigenous populations have employed their singular position to make strides in community development initiatives while Blacks remain absent from political strata. Upon arrival in the United States, the Black consciousness remains absent in daily life until Black Mexicans are mistaken for African American.

Taken together, the essays exploring the racialization of Blacks in Latin America are insightful, unassuming, and thought provoking. Chosen because they explore the

ideas that unify the process of racial construction across Latin America, the selection of essays showcases differences between Latin American nations in such a way as to leave the reader with an understanding of the similarities.

The essays of the third section switch gears to explore the politics of racialization in the United States. As a key force in social organizing, racial categorization and construction in the North is the antithesis of that in the Latin American context. The book argues that the hegemonic classification system imposed upon new immigrants quickly demands they come to terms with labels such as "Hispanic" or "Black" and their corresponding roles as framed in the U.S. context.

Jorge Duany's essay, "Neither White nor Black: The Representation of Racial Identity Among Puerto Ricans on the Island and in the U.S. Mainland," expounds upon the fundamental misalignment between Latin American and U.S. racial identification categories from a demographic perspective by specifically looking at the United States and Puerto Rico. He notes that "on the island the vast majority of Puerto Ricans regard themselves as White. In the mainland most consider themselves to be neither White nor Black but members of some other race. To many Americans, Puerto Ricans occupy an ambiguous position between Whites of color" (175).

Shifting the conversation to the political realm, the setting for many racial interplays in the United States, Kevin Johnson's essay, "African American and Latina/o Cooperation in Challenging Racial Profiling," examines the implications of the racism entrenched in the criminal justice system and suggests this as an avenue for coalition building between African Americans and Latinos. Mark Sawyer's "Racial Politics in Multiethnic America: Black and Latino/a Identities and Coalitions" begins with an anecdote that succinctly captures the idea that African American-Latino relations are hindered by the unresolved racial prejudice that Latin Americans carry with them when they immigrate. Simultaneously, he argues, African Americans fail to fully appreciate the depth of the struggles of other groups of color. Both groups' perceptions of each other are shaded by the values and structures created by White attitudes towards the two populations. Meanwhile, John Betancur's essay, "Framing the Discussion of African American-Latino Relations: A Review and Analysis," details the study of the history of African American-Latino relations and pinpoints that part of the problem is that the system of racial order in the United States was created by Whites. This leads African Americans and Latinos to view themselves as competing for the same set of small and fixed resources.

The book also steers the reader's attention to the way that race, ethnicity, culture, and class are sometimes conflated in the United States and presented as mutually exclusive identities. Readers will finish the book understanding how African American-Latino relationships are shaped both by racialization in Latin America as well as by the sudden recoding that occurs upon immigration. The anthology points out that all systems of racial classification are reductionist and too simplistic for the actuality of racial dynamics.

Despite the book's success in delivering these messages, the reader is left wanting more. The section tackling Latin American racial identity is far more cohesive than the section on racial dynamics in the United States, in part because each essay is able to delve into a specific Latin American community while addressing a simi-

lar set of questions. This frames the question in terms of community-level identity, precisely because the larger discussions about political or economic identity are largely absent from Latin American debates. It answers questions pertaining to the construction of race and the implications of those constructions. The third section, however, seems to make a farther than warranted jump from this discussion and dives deep into exploring collaboration between African Americans and Latinos. Its heavy focus on political and economic race relations in the United States relies upon the Black/White ordering to force-fit African American-Latino relations in those terms even after portraying the tensions inherent in doing so.

The gap, however, lies not with the essays themselves, all of which are individually revealing and engaging. Instead, it is the juxtaposition of the two main sections without a transition that is puzzling. An essay specifically addressing the personal process by which Latin American immigrants, of African descent and not, change their personal racial identities to construct new political and economic identities in the United States would have been useful. While this topic is noted in essays such as the Sawyer piece or Silvio Torres-Saillant's "Racism in the Americas and the Latino Scholar," it is not directly addressed.

Including this aspect would be a welcomed enhancement in this otherwise thorough, thoughtful, and uniquely perceptive anthology. The essays sparkle with clarity and readability, and the introduction by the editors confirms the salience of the collection by laying the groundwork for the issues addressed by the book. It is a worthwhile read, providing such rich layers of ideas that both students and experts will encounter much food for thought in these pages. If this reader found a conceptual gap in the reading, it is precisely because the collection was otherwise so illuminating that the reader is left wanting and questioning more.

Winning the Race: Beyond the Crisis in Black America

by John McWhorter

Reviewed by T. Marie Cropper

In *Winning the Race*, John McWhorter argues that modern Black ills are not due to racism but a more damaging cultural shift that occurred from 1960 to 1970. According to McWhorter, race matters, but culture matters just as much, if not more. A cultural shift occurred in the form of a meme which he describes as therapeutic alienation—an alienation that is embraced not because of a real-life stimulus such as racism, but to reinforce one's legitimacy against an oppressor. Unfortunately, it is not clear which race is more important to McWhorter—the race to clear the “evil, Wonder-Bread, supremacist White America” (92) of any charges of racism or the race to uplift Black Americans. This ambiguity exists predominantly because a great portion of *Winning the Race* is dedicated to defending White America.

McWhorter attempts to debunk the academic-driven belief that Black communities integrated because factory jobs and middle class Blacks moved away by tracing a realistic account of the birth of today's crime-ridden inner city. He describes earlier accounts of segregated Black ghetto life to show that the Black lower class is not a new phenomenon. Drug addiction and sales, absent fathers with multiple children by multiple partners, and multigenerational Black families on the dole were not part of the earlier norm. He convincingly describes how, in the earlier part of the twentieth century, Blacks worked and took jobs that were available even when menial. McWhorter then traces how these communities took a more “desperate, violent, hopeless, and narcoticized” (25) turn after the Great Society welfare programs of the late 1960s.

Showing little sympathy, McWhorter argues that most of the racial violence in the late 1960s was easily excused as being a response to racism because there were no similar reactions from Blacks who endured centuries of abuse and discrimination under slavery, the Ku Klux Klan, and Jim Crow laws. He ridicules Blacks who are not willing to travel to the suburbs, even if it requires taking multiple buses, and

T. Marie Cropper is currently a Ph.D. candidate in public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, with a research interest in criminal justice policy, especially juvenile crime and the death penalty. In her current research, she is applying theories of social choice to construct a jury decision-making model that predicts a jury's sentencing decision in a capital case. She studied electrical engineering at Boston University and then worked for Digital/Compaq Corporation for eleven years. Later, she returned to school and received a degree in crime and justice studies at the University of Texas at Dallas before entering the Kennedy School.

notes that Blacks traveled farther than a suburban bus ride away when millions migrated north in search of better jobs.

While McWhorter has abandoned the “why can’t you pull yourself up by your bootstrap as I have?” argument in *Winning the Race*, he does believe that there is a level playing field today and only effort can stop an individual from succeeding. For instance, it seems to escape McWhorter’s consciousness that suburban jobs are not guaranteed. He also glamorizes the great migration from the South as solely being the result of the desire of Blacks seeking work, forgetting the harsh life that Blacks were also escaping. An unconditional embrace of McWhorter’s argument is a return to the subservient Negro who was grateful to receive any type of work in an extremely restrictive employment field. Thus, the dilemma one faces when accepting some of McWhorter’s arguments is what type of Black America will emerge if Blacks compete and win the race that he describes.

The most powerful message that McWhorter stresses in *Winning the Race* is that African Americans cannot delay their achievement until they cleanse White people’s souls of all traces of bias. Blacks, especially students, should be taught how to achieve despite bias. Furthermore, he states that loving Black people and wanting to see them succeed should be more important than “hating Whitey” (294). This is a strong message that could have been made stronger if McWhorter had gone beyond the crisis in Black America and written about what is needed to win the race, as his title book implies. Instead, McWhorter’s concern for Black success is overshadowed by his stronger concern for defending “Whitey” and an even stronger sense of duty to prove that most Blacks very seldom encounter overt racism. Anecdotal evidence is given to show that cries of racism are unfounded, including McWhorter’s own encounters with White racism, which include being tailed in a bookstore (justified by the unexpected presence of two Black teens in a store on the edge of a sketchy Black neighborhood), being called a nigger by a drunken laborer (a desperate mumbled belch from a bested opponent in an argument), and being called Blacky by fellow day campers (said in clumsy jest). McWhorter does acknowledge that there may be some Black people who occasionally experience bouts of racism, but he argues that the degree and proportion is negligible compared to their ancestors.

Winning the Race is a good read for those who question the popular belief that today’s Black pathologies are the legacy of slavery and segregation. Some of McWhorter’s harshest criticism is hurled at academics, who he claims are not concerned with whether research results improve the lives of Black Americans but only whether they feel good about exposing the evil system of White America. McWhorter does a great job in summarizing research findings from social scientists that show that social pathologies spread in the worst neighborhoods, bad neighborhoods are bad for people growing up, and Whites tend to leave poor neighborhoods when there are high levels of crime.

Other targets of McWhorter’s criticisms are “concerned White people.” McWhorter believes that the 1960s welfare system was the beginning of the creation of the “deathscapes” of poor Black communities. He shows the subtle racism from so-called defenders of poor Blacks who imply that Blacks are incapable of behaving if they are congregated together, are devoid of any human agency to resist drugs, and are a drain on society. Purported Black leaders do not escape McWhorter’s crit-

icism either. According to McWhorter, today's self-proclaimed Black leaders are performers rather than activists. McWhorter also finds that attacking Whites as racists and deeming Whites sinister encourages the belief among Whites that Blacks cannot be dealt with constructively. Such a social distance can only hinder advancement. Again, it is not clear which race McWhorter is trying to win. Is he an activist hoping to have an impact upon the lives of the people he purports to be concerned about, or is he a performer?

McWhorter does offer suggestions to achieve a brighter future and win the race for Black Americans. He proclaims, "Today, we face another daunting challenge, and it is not making sure all Whites love all Blacks . . . The work that remains to be done is dedicating ourselves to letting the 'Whitey has to pay' routine go, and filtering all of our race politics through a constant awareness of that, with a deeply felt moral urgency" (358). He also states that new Black leaders are needed who celebrate Blacks victories, are interested in cultural hybridity, identify racism and discrimination after careful consideration, think Blacks are capable of succeeding in the system as is, and consider the equation between alienation and Black identity to be a problem. Unfortunately, even his solutions are more focused on defending White America than uplifting the Black community.

Yet McWhorter's message does come across quite powerfully throughout the book. In the beginning of the book, McWhorter describes a detour from a scenic route on the way to his mother's job as a professor at Temple University to a longer route through the "North Philly ghetto" to sense how "other Black people lived" (17). Based on the images that he saw peering from the window of the car, McWhorter rejected the notion that poor Blacks' lives were in disarray because of societal racism; he deemed at an early age that the culture he saw mattered. McWhorter argues that social scientists analyze Black Americans through a lens that leaves them unable to admit the truth. Perhaps McWhorter also has an ideological filter about his perceptions of the "other Black people" whom he viewed from his car window. Maybe his message that Black Americans cannot delay their achievement until they cleanse White people's souls of all glimmers of bias would be better received today if during one of those car rides he would have gotten out of the car in that "North Philly ghetto."

A Letter From the Staff of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* is proud to support our sister publication, the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*, in its efforts to enhance public debate and discussion on the issue of coalition building between African Americans and Latinos. Through the work of their respective staff members, contributors and supporters, both journals hope to bring attention to important topics of racial equality, political representation, and reconciliation among two groups that have found themselves at odds with each other despite having similar obstacles to be overcome.

As the United States continues to experience a large influx of immigration, coalition building between African American and Latino communities will gain an even more important role within our many mixed-race communities. It is an unfortunate reality that much of the literature on these communities has focused on interethnic conflict, discrimination, and disenfranchisement. Although a history of denial and exclusion plays an important role in shaping the experiences of many communities, there is much that can be accomplished through greater dialogue and cooperation. Within this context, this year's edition of the *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* can make a unique contribution.

It is the hope of both journals that our respective contributions to the African American and Latino communities can play increasingly important roles in furthering public discussion on these important issues. Although ideas must be put into practice in order to bring about lasting change, the discussions found in the pages of this publication represent a thoughtful look at an issue that has received far less attention within the arena of public debate than it deserves.

We are proud to be a part of this dialogue.

The Staff of the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy

Best of . . .

African American Policy Conferences

*Compiled by the Staff of the
Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*

John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University Black Policy Conference

<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/bpc/>

Harvard Business School Africa Business Conference

<http://www.hbsafricaconference.org/>

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Leadership 500 Summit

<http://www.naacp.org/events/leadership/>

National Urban League Legislative Policy Conference

<http://www.nul.org/legislativepolicyconference.html>

Southern Conference on African American Studies

<http://www.scaasi.org/>

Kellogg School of Management Black Management Association Conference

<http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/bmaconference/>

National Black MBA Association Annual Conference

<http://www.nbmbaa.org/>

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

<http://www.cbcfinc.org/>

National African American Student Leadership Conference

<http://www.naaslc.org/>

Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Memorial Conference

<http://wmy.wharton.upenn.edu/>

HARVARD JOURNAL OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY

THE FOLLOWING BACK ISSUES ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE
FOR PURCHASE

VOLUME XII – SUMMER 2006

A Nation Exposed: Rebuilding African American Communities

Southern Women's Voices From the Gulf Coast States on Hurricane Katrina—*Ophera A. Davis and Marie Land*

From Despair to Hope: Rebuilding the Health Care Infrastructure of New Orleans After the Storm—*Donna M. Christensen, Britt Weinstock, and Natasha Williams*

Reimagining and Recreating Health Care Systems Along the Gulf Coast—*Henrie M. Treadwell*

VOLUME XI – SUMMER 2005

Invisible: HIV/AIDS in the African American Community

HIV/AIDS: Leadership Challenges in Africa and the African Diaspora—*Deborah Prothrow-Stith*

HIV/AIDS in the African American Community: The Legacy of Urban Abandonment—*Robert E. Fullilove and Mindy Thompson Fullilove*

The Politics of HIV Prevention and Black Women—*Lorriane Cole*

VOLUME X – SUMMER 2004

Politics and Progress: A Presidential Platform for 2004

The New Southern Political Landscape, the Black Vote, and Election Reform—*Melanie Campbell*

Remembering Roosevelt: Reflections on Race and the Republican Party—*DeWayne Wickham*

Redefining Devolution—*Marc H. Morial*

VOLUME IX – SUMMER 2003

Black Middle Class Poverty Consciousness—*Christopher Tyson*

Economic Salvation: Homeownership and the Black Church—*Wayne Thornhill*

The Ouémé Child Survival Program—*Kendra Blackett and Carmen Coles*

VOLUME VIII – SUMMER 2002

Fighting Corruption in Africa: Lessons From Malawi—*Bruce Bolnick*

Reparation to Black America: A Legal Analysis—*Tiffany McKinney*

Black Men Fenced in and a Plausible Black Masculinity—*Gregory Hampton*

VOLUME VII – SUMMER 2001

Race as a Plus Factor in Undergraduate Admissions—*Carol M. Swain*

The Prison Moratorium Project—*Kate Rhee and Rashid Shabazz*

Color-Blindness Is Not the Same Thing as Racial Justice—*Glenn C. Loury*

VOLUME VI – SUMMER 2000

A Tribute to the Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.

The Bridge Over the Racial Divide—*William Julius Wilson*

VOLUME V – 1999

Health and the Black Community

AIDS and the Black Community—*Nora I. Osemene and James Essien*

Violence and the African American Community—*Lisa D. Benton*

Black Women and Depression—*Hazel Trice Edney*

VOLUME IV – 1998

Welfare Reform and the Black Community

Strategies for Addressing Welfare Reform—*Shelia Coates and Dale Alston*

Adapting to Segregation—*Percy C. Hintzen*

Commentary—*Lewis Diuguid*

VOLUME I – 1992

Measuring Job Discrimination—*Franklin J. James and Steven W. DelCastillo*

Disparate Bank Lending Patterns—*Sadie R. Gregory*

Blacks and Coalition Politics in the 1990s—*William Julius Wilson*

Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
79 John F. Kennedy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138