

White mainstream culture are more likely to exhibit negative peer pressure on each other in school.

In chapter 11, the role of Black parents in their children's education is explored by examining their knowledge of the educational process, both at school and home. A common theme among these interviews is the accepted struggle to secure residence in Shaker Heights to ensure a quality education for their children.

Chapter 12 provides a summary of the major findings reported in previous chapters. Lastly, chapter 13 provides policy implications for improving the conditions of academic achievement for Black students. The four main approaches recommended for consideration are: (a) choice; (b) performance contracts; (c) cooperative learning; and (d) culturally responsive pedagogy.

Although *Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb* is an excellent study overall, there are a few weaknesses that must be noted when examining its scholarly contribution and application to practice. First, while this work generalizes on occasion, the findings must be localized to Shaker Heights. These findings may bear relevance to other affluent suburbs, but are not representative of the typical school district. Second, the research protocol was broadly explained, thus masking to some degree the nature of the interviews and their exact number. An example of this occurrence is:

Although we did not conduct formal interviews with counselors and teachers on leveling, we had at least one group session with each of them. (p. 91)

Third, many of the knowledge claims are made on what seems to be limited data. Several places in the text the author goes beyond what these data permit. Fourth,

stylistically the book contains redundant statements of the problem and proposed solutions, as early as chapter 1. Anyone using this study for additional research and specifically for application to practice must consider these limitations in order to appropriately situate this study in existing scholarship.

Despite these limitations, this book is an important contribution to the literature on the Black-White achievement gap. Whereas the book has direct application to the K-12 sector of education, it has increasing importance to higher education as both sectors of academia begin to work together to address educational disparities by race. More specific to student affairs administration, the collaborative nature of the field promotes the use of research from other areas to improve practice. As such, this work will be useful in the evaluation and modification of early intervention programs, educational resources provided to parents, and information on transition to college provided to school counselors and teachers.



### *Condition of Access: Higher Education for Lower Income Students*

Donald E. Heller (Editor)

West Port, CT: Praeger, 2002, 200 pages,  
\$34.95 (hardcover)

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The cost of postsecondary education and students' perceived ability to pay intervene throughout the college choice process of lower-income students (Cabrera & LaNasa, 2001). These financial factors not only affect which colleges students attend, but more importantly, *whether* they attend (Cabrera & LaNasa) or persist to graduation (St. John,

Paulson, & Starkey, 1996). Historically, financial aid in its various forms promised to be the great equalizer for qualified, lower-income students (Hern, 1999). Whether contemporary financial aid programs live up to this promise is the empirical question addressed in *Conditions of Access: Higher Education for Lower Income Students*, edited by Donald E. Heller.

Heller's book is written as a companion to and continuation of *Access Denied: Restoring the Nation's Commitment to Equal Educational Opportunity* (2001) commissioned by President Bush's Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, although one need not be familiar with *Access Denied* to benefit from Heller's work. These two works serve a similar purpose: to elevate the discussion of higher education access for lower-income students to a national level.

Heller assembled an impressive group of 14 nationally recognized experts to contribute to his volume, representing academic faculty and administrators, financial aid researchers, and higher education policy makers. Each author, including Heller, contributes to the two overall goals of the book: (a) examining how the "shifts in educational policy at the federal, state, and institutional levels have affected access to [baccalaureate] higher education for student of different backgrounds" and, (b) projecting "the impact of current policies on the large cohort of college-age students" expected to enter postsecondary education in the next two decades (p. x). Each goal is met, highlighting a disturbing gap between the college participation levels between higher-income and lower-income students as a result of pricing and financial aid policies.

The book is organized into four thematic sections: postsecondary participation pat-

terns of lower-income students; the status of federal, state, and institutional financial aid patterns; student support programs designed to supplement financial programs (e.g., TRIO and GEAR-UP); and, the projections of the effects of current financial aid policies on future students. In each section the authors attend to the differential impact of the changing financial aid policies and practices on postsecondary access for lower-income students. The book provides a strong historical perspective of financial aid programs in the United States, contextualizing the discussion of current realities within the original aspirations of financial aid legislation. It further provides empirical evidence for the success and failure of these programs, as well as the perils that lie ahead if current deficiencies are not corrected.

The final section of the book puts the previous chapters in the context of, and places the emphasis on, the future of financial aid in higher education. The book concludes with a powerfully written chapter addressing the policy priority changes necessary to meet the needs of an increasing number of lower-income students. A. Clayton Spencer contextualizes these priorities in contemporary economic and political realities, including President Bush's Leave No Child Behind and tax initiatives; the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and resulting military actions; and the accountability movement in K-12 education. Spencer calls for a refocus on increased access for lower-income students as the underlying goal of all financial aid programs and, supported by the data presented throughout the book, presents a realistic strategy to this end.

The book is written for a national policy audience. Although some understanding of how financial aid and postsecondary pricing/

costing works is assumed by the authors, the text is readily comprehensible. The book is filled with easy-to-understand figures and graphs that complement the text and reinforce the data. Because of the intended audience, student affairs generalists reading this book in search of specific practices to improve access on their campuses will be left wanting; this is not to say, however, that Heller's book cannot make a valuable contribution to student affairs.

Student affairs professionals who are not directly involved in financial aid programs will benefit from reading this book in numerous ways. Those of us who assume that "financial aid doesn't work" are provided with a broad, empirically grounded examination that leads to a more sophisticated understanding. The book introduces the reader to the complexity of financial aid policies and implications. Heller and his associates highlight those financial aid policies and practices that do work, those that are not fulfilling their historical promise, and suggestions for improvement.

Student affairs professionals who do work directly with financial aid also will benefit from reading this book. Those professionals in the position to make institutional policy decisions are provided with empirically grounded evidence of the effects of policy trends on student access to higher education, including the increased reliance on loans and on tuition discounting. Of particular note are the numerous unanticipated and deleterious effects of institutional financial aid policies, including the stratification of higher education by socioeconomic status (p. 81). Armed with the information from this book, financial aid professionals will be better able to make informed financial aid policy decisions that result in the desired impact on student access.

Finally, all higher education professionals concerned with equity will benefit from the information contained in *Condition of Access*. The reader is provided a framework through which to understand current policy debates and decisions, especially in this time of economic difficulty. After reading Heller's book, we will be better informed professionals who can recognize institutional and national policies and practices that, while ostensibly meant to assist lower-income students, create obstacles to access.

The section related to nonfinancial programs that support student access may be of particular interest to student affairs professionals. The inclusion of the two chapters in this section moves the discussion beyond financial aid, and perhaps beyond access, to student support and ultimately student success. The discussion of precollege outreach, early intervention programs, and on-campus student support strategies should resonate with student affairs professionals who often are responsible for such programs on campus. These chapters highlight the opportunity and responsibility we have to increase student access and equity.

The economic and social benefits of higher education are intergenerational—passed from generation to generation (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Financial aid policies that allow for or hinder access for lower-income students have impact beyond the individual student. In the context of the increasing diversity of the U.S. population and the economic difficulties higher education currently is experiencing, the discussion begun by Heller and his associates is essential. If higher education is the key to economic prosperity in the United States, then postsecondary access for lower-income students must be a priority for all higher

education professionals and public policy makers.

Do current financial aid programs live up to their intended promise? The simple answer is still, "No." After reading Heller's book, however, one cannot help but gain a more complex understanding of financial aid policy and its (intended and unintended) effects on lower-income students' access to higher education. The reader will no longer need to settle for the simple answer.

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### *Becoming Asian American: Second-Generation Chinese and Korean American Identities*

Nazli Kibria

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 217 pages,  
\$19.95 (hardcover)

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In *Becoming Asian American*, Kibria's study explores the racial and ethnic identity development of 64 middle-class, college-educated Chinese and Korean Americans.

Although limited in its coverage of other Asian American ethnicities and a broad spectrum of others outside the middle class, the book is important in its qualitative investigation of ethnic and racial identity development among a group that is constantly marked as an American "other," a foreigner, or alien. I consider the book important as the next generation of Asian American studies texts examining successive generations of Asian ethnic groups other than Japanese Americans.

Building on seminal works that have also explored the racial, ethnic, and cultural hybridity of Asians in America, such as Lowe's (1996) *Immigrant Acts* and Okimoto's (1994) *Margins and Mainstreams*, the author weaves a complex multidisciplinary (e.g., sociological and historical) approach examining life-span experiences within this heterogeneous community. Underlying the various narratives throughout the book is a theme that, regardless of acculturation and generations in the U.S., and unlike White ethnics (Jacobson, 1998), Asian Americans cannot escape their ascribed racial identity as "not quite American." Consequently, the tenuous struggle for Asian Americans is negotiating ascribed identities and marginalization and finding spaces to express and develop their personally constructed selves.

In chapter 1, Kibria establishes the theoretical and historical context for her study by showing how migration before and after 1965 impacted the economic, cultural, and educational trajectories of Chinese and Korean Americans. Therein she critiques the model minority image as sociohistorical rather than cultural or ethnically innate. Additionally, Kibria engages the reader to consider where Asian Americans fit into the White-Black racial paradigm of the U.S. She also discusses how Asian Americans contend