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Review: Learning Partnerships: Theory and Models of Practice to Educate for Self-Authorship

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(p. 9). In other words, good arguing produces good citizens.

These messages should resonate for student affairs administrators. And although *Clueless in Academe* is targeted primarily for a faculty audience, Graff's philosophy for improving student learning creates space for student affairs to join in the conversation too. For example, his suggestion of tapping students' hidden intellectualism in order to facilitate learning opens the academic world of analysis and discourse to the possibility of including experiences and conflicts that exist in the student affairs world as well. This could have implications both inside and outside the classroom. Faculty could encourage students to focus specifically upon a conflict relevant to student affairs and/or students' out-of-classroom lives within course assignments designed to develop skills in academic discourse. In turn, student affairs administrators could challenge students to approach conflicts and differences in their out-of-classroom lives using the same skills and rigor of analysis and discourse that they practice in their academic lives. Such experiences could help to blur the distinctions between students' in-class and out-of-class worlds, creating a more seamless learning environment.

Clueless in Academe certainly is not a panacea for the challenges surrounding student learning, but the ideas presented in this book are provocative. At a time when we are searching for ways to bring coherence to the academic experience, organizing student learning around a central theme, such as academic discourse, may offer one powerful starting point for integrating learning contexts, efforts and outcomes.

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Learning Partnerships: Theory and Models of Practice to Educate for Self-Authorship

Marcia B. Baxter Magolda and Patricia M. King (Eds.)

Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2004, 342 pages, $24.95 (softcover)

Reviewed by Maureen E. Wilson, Bowling Green State University

Society expects college students and graduates to "assume positions of responsibility," "manage complexity and engage multiple perspectives," "gather and judge relevant evidence . . . to make decisions," and "act in ways that benefit themselves and others equitably and contribute to the common good" (p. *xviii*). Based on Baxter Magolda's longitudinal study of intellectual development, the Learning Partnerships Model (LPM) introduces learners to those expectations. It is a framework for promoting self-authorship, "the internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and relations with others" (p. 8). The LPM "portray[s] learning as a complex process in which learners bring their own perspectives to bear on deciding what to believe and simultaneously share responsibility with others to construct knowledge (p. xviii). *Learning Partnerships: Theory and Models of Practice to Educate for Self-Authorship* presents the LPM and practical examples from the college course, program, and institutional levels of how to prepare young adults for the professional, civic, and personal challenges of their lives.

Learning Partnerships is divided into four parts. In Part I: A Theoretical Framework to Educate for Self-Authorship, Baxter Magolda describes self-authorship as the common goal of 21st century education (chapter 1) and the LPM (chapter 2). Based on several reports, she argues that contemporary college learning outcomes should include cognitive maturity, an integrated identity, and mature relation-

ships. Maturity in these three areas enables effective citizenship. She asserts that "educational practice has yet to be substantively reformed to facilitate these outcomes," in part because of the lack of attention paid to the "developmental foundations on which complex learning outcomes stand" (p. 7). Those learning outcomes require self-authorship. The foundations of those learning outcomes involve three dimensions of development—epistemological (how people use assumptions about the nature, limits, and certainty of knowledge to make knowledge claims), intrapersonal (how people view themselves and construct their identities) and interpersonal (how people view themselves in relation to others and how they construct relationships) (pp. 8-9).

In the next chapter, she explains the LPM, a combination of the three key assumptions and three key principles about learning characterizing environments that promote self-authorship. The LPM assumes that knowledge is complex and socially constructed, one's identity plays a central role in crafting knowledge claims, and knowledge is mutually constructed via the sharing of expertise and authority. Self-authorship is supported by three key principles: validating learners' capacity as knowledge constructors, situating learning in learners' experiences, and defining learning as mutually constructing meaning. The LPM is a grounded theory offering a flexible approach to promoting the learning goals of cognitive maturity, an integrated identity, mature relationships, and effective citizenship.

Part II: Models of Educational Practice to Promote Self-Authorship contains 6 chapters. In chapter 3, Carolyn Haynes describes the challenges of working with seniors writing theses in Miami University's School of Interdisciplinary Studies. Haynes developed a four-year writing curriculum "that helps student move toward self-authored, interdisciplinary inquiry, and scholarship" (p. 65), a plan founded on the core principles of the LPM.

In chapter 4, Anne Hornak and Anna Ortiz explain the Multicultural Education Framework, how it exemplifies the assumptions and principles of the LPM, and its implementation in a community college course on workplace diversity. The course and outcomes assessments are described in some detail.

An urban leadership internship program in which Miami University students participate in a 10-week, full-time, paid, summer internship is described and evaluated by Katie Egart and Melissa Healy in chapter 5. The educational assumptions of the LPM are inherent in the internship settings. The students' processes of making sense of their experiences "closely resembled steps on a journey to self-authorship" (p. 129).

In chapter 6, Kevin Yonkers Talz describes a program in which students, many from Jesuit colleges and universities, go to El Salvador to work with the poor and engage in academic study and reflection. He explains how the assumptions of the LPM are deeply embedded within the program and how it promotes participants' development of self-authorship.

The Community Standards Model (CSM) implemented in the residence halls at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is the focus of chapter 7. Terry Piper and Jennifer Buckley describe this approach, that has the LPM as its foundation, to allow students to create and manage their living environments. It "provided many students with the guidance and empowerment they needed to take steps along the bridge between adolescent dependence and adult responsibility" (p. 212).

In chapter 8, Judy Rogers, Peter Magolda,

Marcia Baxter Magolda, and Kathleen Knight Abowitz discuss their enactment of the LPM in the college student personnel graduate program at Miami University. The four tell their stories of personal transformation as teachers as they used the LPM to promote students' self-authorship and build a community of scholars.

Part III: Implications of Implementing the LPM contains 2 chapters. In chapter 9, Terry Wildman describes how the introduction of a new frame of reference—the LPM—worked in the academic community at Virginia Tech. That process helped faculty better understand students' intellectual development and how faculty could better inform their educational practices. It also helped them analyze the university core curriculum.

In chapter 10, Rebecca Mills and Karen Strong discuss the reorganization of the student affairs division at UNLV from one that was highly independent and departmentally focused to "an emerging, interdependent, student-focused learning organization" (p. 269). Through this process, they learned that to promote self-authorship among students, organizations must first be created to promote it among staff.

The book ends with Part IV: Designing Learning Partnerships. In the final chapter, King and Baxter Magolda suggest how the LPM might be applied to practice, offer a framework for deciding whether and how to use to LPM, and how an approach can be adapted for different contexts.

The editors hope that the effectiveness of learning partnerships described in the book will inspire readers to "remold assumptions about teaching and learning to enable self-authorship during the college experience" (p. xxvi). *Learning Partnerships* certainly has the potential to do that. It provides ideas, support, and encouragement to tackle complex ideas to promote self-authorship and learning and presents personal stories that speak directly to the reader. Authors write about their own experiences and often the frustrations or failures that led them to seek alternative practices to promote student success. Their practice has been shaped by the model and the model has in turn been shaped by their practice. They have significant investments in the LPM and to Baxter Magolda. They are her learning partners—her colleagues, friends, and former students.

Significant details are provided that help readers understand the context in which the LPM was used and the effectiveness of using it. The assumptions and principles that form the LPM are referenced frequently by chapter authors. The programs highlighted are from both academic and student affairs settings and some are examples that bridge that gap or have the potential to do so. It is perhaps especially encouraging to see work so firmly rooted in students and student development be applied by faculty to enhance teaching and learning in a variety of ways.

Those interested in strengthening the ties between theory and practice and between faculty and student affairs can find inspiration here. Those committed to developing the co-curriculum to promote self-authorship will have a better sense of how to do that from this book. *Learning Partnerships* could serve as a text for courses on epistemological development or teaching and learning. It could provide a foundation for professional development for faculty or student affairs practitioners (and examples for doing so are included).

Even those with prior knowledge of self-authorship and the LPM are likely to find this text useful in further clarifying those concepts. With its focus on practice and experiential education and its personal tone, readers are invited into the worlds of the authors to see

the assumptions and principles of the LPM in practice. With this volume, Baxter Magolda and King continue to make significant contributions to higher education and student affairs and encourage learning partnerships to promote students' development.

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Mixed Race Students in College: The Ecology of Race, Identity, and Community on Campus

Kristen A. Renn

Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004, 296 pages, $22.95 (softcover)

Reviewed by Raechele L. Pope, Danielle Johnson, and Jason Jakubowski, University at Buffalo

Let's face it, there's more than one reason why in-depth scholarly books rarely make it to a best sellers list. Too often these books are overly dry, pedantic, and tend not to address the immediate needs of most practitioners. However, this book, *Mixed Race Students in College: The Ecology of Race, Identity, and Community on Campus*, deftly straddles the lines between being intellectually challenging and accessible; between observation and engagement; between theory and practice. In essence, the book is both challenging and satisfying. It offers a clear conceptual framework, thorough literature review, captivating stories, and meaningful applications to higher education practice and policy. Kristen A. Renn, in her detailed and rich qualitative study, has taken the complex and dynamic understanding that has begun to shape our evolving multicultural practice in higher education and added greatly to the ongoing discussion of the influence of psychosocial development and racial identity on the experiences of college students. In *Mixed Race Students in College,* Renn reports that the underlying motivation for this study came

from her interactions as a higher education administrator with student peer educators during a retreat: "From the ensuing conversation grew my interest in learning more about the experiences of students, who like the woman who broke the silence, lived as mixed race individuals on campuses where monoraciality is the norm and race is highly salient" (p. xii).

Over the past two decades, research on multiculturalism in higher education has gained significant momentum throughout the education community. The change in population demographics has challenged the academic structures and has tested the flexibility of our institutions to adapt to these evolutionary forces. The diverse cultural variables that affect our ability to address the needs of all students have become more complex and dynamic. Understanding the influence of racial identity and its effect on college students and our campus interventions is an excellent illustration of that evolving complexity. Renn breaks new ground in her detailed analysis of the racial dynamics on campus, our understanding and application of student development theories, and the impact these realities have on college students who come from families where each parent is from a different racial group.

The primary question that Renn attempts to answer in her book appears rather simple. Do mixed race students have different experiences, needs, and expectations than both monoracial white students and students of color? While the number of books in both academic and popular presses focusing on the unique realities of mixed race individuals in the United States has increased in recent years, still very little is known about who these students are and what impact our attitudes, services, curriculum, and policies have on them.