DIVERSITY AND TRIUMPHS OF NAVIGATING THE TERRAIN OF ACADEME

DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Series Editor: Henry T. Frierson

Recent Volumes:

Volume 12: *Black Female Undergraduates on Campus: Successes and Challenges* – Edited by Crystal Renée Chambers and Rhonda Vonshay Sharpe

Volume 13: *Latino College Presidents: In Their Own Words* – Edited by Rubén O. Martinez and David J. León

Volume 14: *Seeding Success in Indigenous Australian Higher Education* – Edited by Rhonda G. Craven and Janet Mooney

Volume 15: *Maori and Pasifika Higher Education Horizons* – Edited by Fiona Cram, Hazel Phillips, Pale Sauni, and Clark Tuagalu

Volume 16: *Black Males and Intercollegiate Athletics: An Exploration of Problems and Solutions* – Edited by Robert A. Bennett III, Samuel R. Hodge, David L. Graham, and James L. Moore III

Volume 17: *Infusing Undergraduate Research into Historically Black Colleges and Universities Curricula* – Edited by Jeton McClinton, Mark A. Melton, Caesar R. Jackson, and Kimarie Engerman

Volume 18: *The Coercive Community College: Bullying and Its Costly Impact on the Mission to Serve Underrepresented Populations* – Edited by Leah P. Hollis

Volume 19: *The Crisis of Race in Higher Education: A Day of Discovery and Dialogue* – Edited by William F. Tate IV, Nancy Staudt, and Ashley Macrander

Volume 20: *Campus Diversity Triumphs: Valleys of Hope* – Edited by Sherwood Thompson

Volume 21: *Underserved Populations at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: The Pathway to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* – Edited by Cheron H. Davis, Adriel A. Hilton, and Donavan L. Outten

Volume 22: *Broadening Participation in STEM: Effective Education Methods, Practices, and Programs for Women and Minorities* – Edited by Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, Goldie S Byrd, Eugene Kennedy, and Henry T Frierson

DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION VOLUME 23

DIVERSITY AND TRIUMPHS OF NAVIGATING THE TERRAIN OF ACADEME: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

EDITED BY

RAPHAEL HEAGGANS
Niagara University, USA

HENRY T. FRIERSON
University of Florida, USA

United Kingdom – North America – Japan
India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2019

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-78973-608-3 (Print)
ISBN: 978-1-78973-607-6 (Online)
ISBN: 978-1-78973-609-0 (Epub)

ISSN: 1479-3644

ISOQAR certified Management System, awarded to Emerald for adherence to Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

This page intentionally left blank

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr Zuhra E. Abawi is Sessional Lecturer at Ryerson University's School of Early Childhood Studies in Toronto, Canada. She completed her Doctorate in Education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) University of Toronto. Prior to becoming a faculty member, she worked as an Elementary Teacher and Early Childhood Educator at the Peel District School Board, a Toronto area board and the second largest board of education in Canada.

Dr Andrew M.A. Allen is Associate Professor and a former University Teaching Leadership Chair in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. He teaches Introduction to Issues in Education and Mathematics Methodology in the preservice program, Research Methodology and Sociological Aspects of Education in the graduate program and the Joint PhD program. He is a co-principal investigator with the weSpeak project in Windsor-Essex looking at masculinity, vulnerability, and resilience of heterosexual Black men. He is currently both the coordinator of the Urban Education Partnership teacher education program and the Aeronautics Leadership program in the department of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies. His international development work includes rebuilding and supporting an orphanage and school in the Singida Region of Tanzania in East Africa. He is a former elementary classroom teacher in the Toronto District School Board. He is also a graduate in Mechanical Engineering at Ryerson University. He received his Bachelor of Education and Master of Education degrees from York University and his PhD in education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto.

Dr Lucy Effeh Attom is a Lecturer at the Department of Social Studies Education Faculty of Social Science Education at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.

Dr Martin Brown is a Lecturer at the School of Policy and Practice and Senior Researcher at the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection, Dublin City University Institute of Education. He is a specialist in educational evaluation and assessment and has planned and led evaluations in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Europe, and the Middle East, working for, among others, the Department of Education and Skills, the National Learning Network, and the United Arab Emirates government. Research interests include Assessment, Comparative Education, School Inspection, School Self-Evaluation, Programme Evaluation, Policy Influences in Evaluation, and Inclusion in Education. He

also has a research interest in teaching and learning in digital environments having designed and developed online Teacher professional development programs for the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), and PDST Technology in Education on priority government initiatives such as School Self-Evaluation, ePortfolios for Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Research Methods for the Leaving Certificate Politics and Society Syllabus that has recently been introduced. Current funded projects include co-principal Investigator on the Erasmus + Projects, Polycentric inspection of Networked Schools (PINS), Aiding Culturally Responsive Assessment in Schools (ACRAS), and Evaluation of tertiary tutors' use of ICT on the Island of Ireland (SCOTENS). Other funded projects include the development of online and site-based professional development modules on Evaluation for teachers in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Dr Denise Burns is a Researcher in the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection, the Institute of Education in Dublin City University. She is currently researching culturally responsive assessment in a project with other European partners. She is lecturing in a semester module of the BSc in Education and Training entitled "Policy and Structure in Irish Education." She completed her PhD in Trinity College with a thesis focused on the intellectual skill in the Irish Leaving Certificate. She was principal of Sancta Maria College, a secondary college in Ballyroan, Dublin 16. Previous to that role, she was researcher and report writer in the Commission on School Accommodation, producing reports for the Minister for Education on a range of infrastructural topics. She worked as principal of St. Monica's College, a secondary college in Cairns, North Queensland, Australia, and also as a central office administrator in Brisbane Catholic Education. Her research interests include, inter alia, curriculum design, assessment, culturally responsive assessment, quality of learning, document analysis, school improvement.

Dr Neysa L. Figueroa is Assistant Department Chair and Assistant Professor of Spanish at Kennesaw State University. She uses her expertise in linguistics to explore the role of language attitudes in shaping foreign-language curricula in the United States. As part of her mission of developing an appreciation of the Spanish-speaking world, she has led study abroad programs to Peru and Spain since 2012.

Dr Raphael Heaggans is Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Teacher Education at Niagara University who earned his doctorate in education from West Virginia University. He is a former preschool, seventh-, and eighth-grade language-arts teacher. He serves as Vice Chair of the Seven Hills Charter School board. He facilitates diversity-themed workshops across the United States and parts of Canada for school districts, businesses, and nonprofit organizations on topics such as gang prevention strategies in the schools, media, historical, and economic literacy, anti-poverty education, culturally proficient leadership, attracting diversity to the workforce, among others. Further, he is an education consultant with the National Alliance of Faith and Justice

(Washington, DC). He is a former Consultant with the Appalachian Educational Laboratory (which was part of the US Department of Education) where he engaged teachers in developing and implementing culturally relevant teaching into curriculum and lesson planning. He is the author of over 20 works related to multicultural education and teacher education. He is an editorial board member of the Journal of Educational Leadership.

Dr Ann E. Lopez is a Faculty Member in the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She is also the Director of the Center for Leadership and Diversity and Advisor to the Provost on Access Programs. She has wide experience in public education in Canada as a Secondary School Administrator and Teacher in one of the Canada's largest school boards. Born and raised in Jamaica, Dr Lopez's teaching and research focuses on issues of equity, diversity, decolonial education, culturally responsive and social justice leadership, school leadership across contexts, and student engagement. Her most recent publications include books *Culturally Responsive and Socially Lust Leadership in Diverse Contexts: From Theory to Action*; *Transformative Pedagogies in Teacher Education*, and journal articles in *Multicultural Perspectives*, *Multicultural Education Review*, *Mentoring and Tutoring*, *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, and *Journal of Cases in Educational Administration*. Dr Lopez is the current President of the National Association for Multicultural Education. She is an Editorial Board Member of the *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* and the *International Journal of Educational Policy & Leadership*.

Dr Gerry McNamara is Professor of Education at the Institute of Education in Dublin City University. From 1997 to 2007 he was the Head of the School. He is course director of the Doctorate in Education, a taught doctoral program in the field of educational leadership and evaluation. He is a specialist in educational evaluation and has planned and led many major evaluations at home and abroad, working for, among others, the Department of Education and Science, the National Centre for Guidance in Education, the Equality Authority of Ireland, the European Commission, and the United Nations Development Programme. He was a member of the Teaching Council of Ireland (2001/2002, 2004–2006), a co-founder of the Irish Evaluation Network, (2000) and was a member of the Council of the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society, (BELMAS) from 2008 to 2012.

Dr Zachary Njagi Ndwiga is a Professor at the University of Embu (UoEM), School of Education and Social Sciences. Dr Ndwiga teaches pedagogical methods, curriculum, and instruction. Dr Ndwiga has a rich background of teaching in public secondary schools, teacher training at diploma college level, and at the university. He is also experienced in curriculum development and has participated in many activities at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). These include curriculum design, book evaluation and evaluation of curriculum support materials, development of digital content and development

of educational television, and radio programmes, among others. Currently he is engaged in the Ministry of Education, Department of Basic Education as a National Trainer for the Greatness United(G-United) programme.

The programme objective is to enhance national cohesion and improve literacy among Grades 2 and 3 learners through the support of Volunteer Graduates Assistants (VGAs). In higher education, Dr Ndwiga has seven years teaching experience in a private university and two years in a public university.

Joe O'Hara is Professor of Education in the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. He is the Director of The Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection and a member of the Centre for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. He has presented at national and international conferences and has links with researchers in education, both European and American. He is a former President of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland and a former member of the Teaching Council of Ireland. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Association for Personal Services Overseas (APSO) from 2002 to 2004 and represented Ireland on the Council of the European Educational Research Association from 2008 to 2013. He was Head of the School of Education Studies, DCU from 2010 to 2016. He is a Director and Founding Member of the Irish Evaluation Network and is a member of the Board of the Centre for Talented Youth, Ireland. He is the current President of the European Educational Research Association.

Dr Seneca Vaught is a jointly appointed Associate Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies at Kennesaw State University in the Departments of History and Interdisciplinary Studies. He uses his expertise in the intersections of race and policy to address contemporary issues. He has been awarded the William Wells Brown Award for his innovative and project-oriented approach to framing community problems in policy terms for scholars, activists, and community leaders seeking to creatively apply historical knowledge.

Dr Njoki Nathani Wane is Professor and Chair of the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) University of Toronto. She is a distinguished scholar and professor whose work focuses on Indigenous education, gender and antiracism education. She is the recent recipient of the 2018 African Scholars Award. She grew up in rural Kenya and moved to Canada in 1996 to pursue graduate studies.

Dr Eveldora Wheeler joined the faculty at West Liberty University in 2017 as Assistant Professor on tenure track. As a member of the faculty, she serves as advisor for Phi Alpha Honor Society, and develops online courses for the program. She is a trainer for Child Welfare Professionals in West Virginia, a Title IV-E-funded project, and is a recipient of Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grant a comprehensive early intervention health promotion for substance disorders. Her professional work experience includes academe, corporate, and nonprofit sectors. Besides teaching across the

curriculum in graduate and undergraduate programs, she has extensive non-profit management and direct practice experience in child welfare programs with an emphasis in foster care, residential, mobile, medical, and bereavement therapy. Her management experience includes Director of Residential Services, Director of Education and Vocational Services, Supervisor of Specialized Foster Care program, Instructional Designer, and Training Coordinator.

This page intentionally left blank

INTRODUCTION

THE GREAT GULF BETWEEN OUR PROGRESS YESTERDAY AND OUR SURVIVAL TOMORROW: SWIMMING IN THE ACADEME OCEAN

Raphael Heaggans

How many times do we look at a problem, attempt to diagnose it, and realize that the problem still exists since we have not examined the root of the problem? This was an issue that Lee Iacocca, Ford executive in 1968, learned firsthand when the Pinto made its debut in Ontario, Canada, and parts of California. People bought the Pinto in droves even though it was known that the car had a very thin rear bumper that housed parts of the gas tank and a door that was subject to jamming during the slightest accident. The Pinto earned huge profits for the manufacturer even though the car was known to be easily incinerated when rear-end accidents occurred. Despite the deathtrap capabilities, the Pinto became "the car nobody ever loved, but everybody bought" (Retrieved from www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z11819/Ford_Pinto. Accessed on July 15, 2018). Large lawsuits followed since Ford conveyed to some consumers that profits are held in greater regard than human life. Instead of paying $11 per vehicle to implement a new design that would decrease the likelihood of the Pinto exploding, Ford opted to pay the lawsuits (Leggett, 1999):

> Ford's rationale used the accepted risk/benefit analysis to determine if the monetary costs of making the change were greater than the societal benefit. Based on the numbers Ford used, the cost would have been $137 million versus the $49.5 million price tag put on the deaths,

Diversity and Triumphs of Navigating the Terrain of Academe: International Perspectives
Diversity in Higher Education, Volume 23, 1–5

ISSN: 1479-3644/doi:10.1108/S1479-364420190000023002

> injuries, and car damages, and thus Ford felt justified not implementing the design change. (Leggett, 1999, p. 1)

On first appearance, Ford provided the kind of product that responded to what the company thought was valuable for consumers in the long run. Despite numerous injuries, deaths, and lawsuits, Ford refused to address the root of the problem. This phenomenon mirrors what is happening within Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). There is a dearth of ethnic-minority faculty and administrators on these campuses. Some PWIs appear have a stronger handle on attracting students of color on their basketball and/or football teams than attracting faculty and administrators of color. Some administrators at PWIs often overlook this disparity perhaps by alleging that they are doing everything they can to encourage people of color to apply for positions because it is easier than focusing on what the real skeletal problems are. Some of these include lower salaries among ethnic-minority-faculty hires, holding ethnic-minority faculty at a higher accountability, changing policies and/or procedures that results in deleterious effects on ethnic-minority faculty, and challenging their educational background, among others. But what is the narrative of faculty of color at PWIs on how they navigate through these murky waters, and what drives their determination to triumph over them?

Diversity and Triumphs of Navigating the Terrain of the Academe: International Perspectives captures the narratives of faculty's experiences within universities. This work is not about casting aspersions upon PWIs; rather, it is about exposing some of the common themes among faculty in various parts of the world. PWIs' intentions may include fostering greater campus diversity, but they have to abandon some of their historical underpinnings to make diversification of an endemic part of all parts of the campus such as curriculum, hiring practices, and mentoring. It starts with the leaders of the institution. Houston and Sokolow (2006) charge:

> Most leaders do not have a strong enough appreciation of the power of intention as a force for shaping reality. People do or want to do so many things that it's not always clear what their intentions are. So it's very important for leaders to have clear in their own mind what their intentions are—not only what they would like to see happen in a particular set of circumstances or in a particular dynamic, but also what motivation lies one step beneath the goal itself […]. For example, you could have a goal to lose weight, but the intention is to be healthy. The intention is more fundamental than the goal. The intention can even create a set of goals. The goals themselves are not the intention; the intention is underneath the goal and explains why. (p. 3)

Colleges and universities internationally are using the power of protest to fight for equal rights. The students at the University of Missouri expressed their discontent in the 2014−2015 school year with the racialized incidents on campus which included a swastika drawn in a stairway, Black students being called the n-word, lack of ethnically diverse faculty and staff, lack of a diverse curriculum, absence of funding for mental health personnel, and an administration who acted oblivious to the events taking place on campus (Izadi, 2015). The impact of this protest is still felt by the University at this time of this writing. Reportedly, enrollment has declined more than 35% and:

> the university administration acknowledges that the main reason is a backlash from the events of 2015, as the campus has been shunned by students and families put off by, depending on their viewpoint, a culture of racism or one where protesters run amok. (Hartocollis, 2017, p. 1)

People of color are still underrepresented among faculty and administration at predominantly White institutions. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (2018) reports that "nationwide, just over 5% of all full-time faculty members at colleges and universities in the United States are" ethnic minority. Colleges and universities are making strides in vocalizing their commitment to diversifying their campuses. But how far does diversifying their campus extend? They advertise various job announcements and include a diversity-commitment statement, but according to Flaherty (2017), assistant professors are more likely to be Hispanic, Black, or Asian, while full professors are overwhelmingly White. This information infers that at the time of this writing, the average racial-and-gender makeup of the university jobs within predominantly White institutions across the North America is as follows (Table 1):

Table 1. The Face of PWIs.

Job	Race and Gender
President/Chancellor	White male
Vice President	White male
Provost	White male
Dean	White male; White female
Chair	White male; White female
Full Professor	White male; White female
Associate Professor	White male; White female
Assistant Professor	White, Black, Hispanic, Asian males/females
Adjunct Professor	White, Black, Hispanic, Asian males/females

The *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (2018) adds the "results largely depend on whether the faculties that control hiring at particular universities have a strong commitment to developing a racially diverse teaching corps. Much depends, too, on who has the power to hire faculty […]. University presidents and dean have little or no say in the hiring process." Diversity celebrates differences as well as sameness (Gay, 2018). Hence, it is not a surprise to see or hear of a group of White faculty or administrators at PWIs having lunch, establishing business ventures, and/or hanging out at a local bar together. The job performance of Whites at the assistant or associate professor levels is evaluated by the very Chairs, Deans, and Provosts with whom they have weekly outings. To the ethnic minority, this organizational structure suggests they can only see themselves at the lower ranks.

MICROAGGRESSIONS: MICROASSAULTS, MICROINSULTS, AND MICROINVALIDATION

Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily, verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007). The authors add that microassaults are deliberate nonverbal or verbal attacks; microinsults are subtle insults related to one's race or ethnicity, while microinvalidation is a refutation of the existence of an ethnic-minority population. The chapters that follow elaborate on the authors' experiences.

> Gary Howard's *We can't teach what we don't know* contends that Racism for Whites has been like a crazy uncle who has been locked away for generations in the hidden attic of our collective social reality. This old relative has been part of the family for a long time. Everyone knows he's living with us, because we bring him food and water occasionally, but nobody wants to take him out in public. He is an embarrassment and a pain to deal with, yet our little family secret is that he is rich and the rest of us are living, either consciously or unconsciously, off the wealth and power accumulated in his heyday. (p. 56)

This crazy uncle whose incubus hovers over PWIs gives the appearance that his racist ways have curbed considerably over the years especially since more ethnic minority and White female faculty are being hired to join the professoriate. I felt like a contestant on *Family Feud* when I was hired at a PWI since I was the first African-American male hired within the department. Though the "crazy uncle" has nothing to do with the hiring process, he made it clear that the hue of my skin warrants differential treatment than those who are much lighter hued. This treatment included overhearing a conversation between two White faculty members on whether I am an affirmative action hire; being accosted by campus police on the legitimacy of my faculty appointment as I was using my office key to enter my office; having the department chair change low grades of White students who were frequently absent from my class and did not submit assignments; the department chair hiring a former graduate student in an adjunct position – though she knew that in my multicultural education class, he initiated a class skirmish because he got upset during our discussion of the intertextuality of race, class, and gender (only for me to meet with the class in the presence of the department chair and hear how the students where coerced by him to join the bandwagon though the issue was him); being the face of diversity every time a diversity issue arose on campus; being falsely accused of stealing; appealing for tenure due to one missing class evaluation (though conclusively my teaching evaluations were overwhelming positive, my publications were in more peer-reviewed journals and were more in number than most of my White colleagues, had gone up for tenure before me); among others.

I did not wither while undergoing these experiences like a follically inept Samson; rather, I shared my experiences with other ethnic-minority colleagues at other PWIs. They encouraged me to continue to navigate through these experiences since being in the professoriate is not about me. It is about teaching those Whites a multicultural truth while encouraging ethnic minorities who seek

to enter the professioriate to pay it forward because someone lived, worked, fought, prayed, and died for the equality in the education that we are still striving to achieve. We are taught to celebrate every victory in this professional walk, for one day will come where the fruits of our labor will cause those that come after us to triumph in the academe.

REFERENCES

Flaherty, C. (2017, August 22). The missing black professors. *Inside higher education*. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/08/22/study-top-public-universities-finds-limited-faculty-diversity-and-yet-signs-progress

Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Hartocollis, A. (2017, July 9). Long after the protests, students shun the University of Missouri. *The New York Times*, pp. 1–9. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/11/09/the-incidents-that-led-to-the-university-of-missouri-presidents-resignation/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ad04cab1fd3c.

Houston, P., & Sokolow, S. (2006). *The spiritual dimension of leadership: 8 key principles to leading more effectively*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Izadi, E. (2015, November 9). The incidents that led to the University of Missouri president's resignation. *The Washington Post*, pp. 1–5. Retrieved from http://www.easybib.com/reference/guide/apa/newspaper.

Leggett, C. (1999). *The Ford Pinto case: The valuation of life as it applies to the negligence-efficiency argument*. Law & Valuation.

Sue, D., Capodilupo, C. Torino, G., Bucceri, J. Holder, A. Nadal, K., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, *64*, 271–286.

The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education. (2018). *Black faculty in higher education: Still only a drop in the bucket*. Retrieved from http://www.jbhe.com/features/55_blackfaculty.html

This page intentionally left blank

TALK IS CHEAP: THE PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS WITH CAMPUS CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

Neysa L. Figueroa and Seneca Vaught

ABSTRACT

In attempts to defuse racial tensions on campus, higher education administrators have often commissioned special units and campus-wide initiatives. Historically, these commissions often address racial challenges in higher education that impact both faculty and students. If designed and deployed carefully, these commissions can be very useful mechanisms to address sensitive racial, religious, and linguistic concerns on campus. Despite the prevalence of studies that discuss racial experiences on campus, far less scholarship has focused on the effectiveness of these commissions and the dialogic strategies that faculty of color have employed in their service.

This study draws on three major findings. First, the chapter explores why the presidential commission structure is a powerful mechanism for improving dialogue about racial and ethnic issues on campus. Former commissioners discuss its potential for addressing the complex and interlocking concerns of faculty, staff, and students of color. Second, although the commission's structure is promising, we present numerous problems that require further attention. We discuss how the emphasis on dialogue and less dedication to targeted actions and policies may actually undermine the goals of commissions like these and further frustrate aggrieved faculty, staff, and students. Third, the chapter highlights successful and unsuccessful strategies for sustaining fruitful dialogue that lead to an increased understanding and acceptance of diverse viewpoints and perspectives. These findings have specific relevance for international faculty and faculty of color interested in ways to

Diversity and Triumphs of Navigating the Terrain of Academe: International Perspectives
Diversity in Higher Education, Volume 23, 7–23

ISSN: 1479-3644/doi:10.1108/S1479-364420190000023003

be more proactive in shaping existing programs, policies, and approaches to meet the diverse needs of university life.

Keywords: Critical dialogue; micro-aggressions; Cora Harris; advocacy; race; indifference

INTRODUCTION

In 2008, Kennesaw State University (KSU) received a donation of land from Jody Leon Hill. The donation was a 56-acre homestead just north of Cartersville (KSU News, 2008) in Rydal, Georgia, named "In the Valley" from its previous owner, the regionally renowned writer Corra Harris. Despite the intentions of Mr Hill, a historical preservationist and local historian, the land grant became steeped in controversy when faculty, staff, and students discovered Corra Harris had published a series of articles justifying and advocating lynching – including that of Sam Hose, one the most infamous lynching victims in the history of the United States. In a series of widely circulated articles, Harris justified mob rule via the lynching of black men to save white women (Badura, 2003). When these writings became known, many of the faculty became uncomfortable with the university accepting the gift and raised concerns. Students also became involved in protesting the decision.

Numerous racial incidents throughout the recent history of Bartow County, on which Harris' lot was located, also presented a context of persistent racial hostility that complicated the optics of the donation and the politics of the situation (Swift, 2011). Up until that point, the diversity efforts on the campus had been based on multicultural conversations and the need to recruit more faculty and students of color. The donation of the land prompted discussions on the quest to address a particularly important question: How to transform diverse perspectives and dialogues into targeted plans of action and policy initiatives on campus? The university was decisive in addressing the problem in a town hall and later resolved to engage in dialogue with the aggrieved parties by institutionalizing anti-racist programming. One of the outcomes was the creation of a commission dedicated to the dialogue of racial and ethnic issues on campus.

The presidential response at KSU mirrored earlier presidential responses in American politics. Perhaps the one in the most recent memory was Barack Obama's lectures to the nation on race in his 2008 Philadelphia speech, but perhaps for a more instructive example, we must return to the 1990s. In April of 1993, Bill Clinton nominated Lani Guinier to head up the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. In contrast to the case against Cora Harris, Guinier's opposition argued that she was unacceptable as a candidate because of her radical writings *against* racism (The New York Times, 1993). The issue at hand, other than politics, was the suggestion that the Justice Department needed to address ongoing systemic failures to ensure equity. Even as blacks elected representatives, they could be easily marginalized by entrenched special interests and antiquated practices. She was demonized as a "quota queen" by her critics, too