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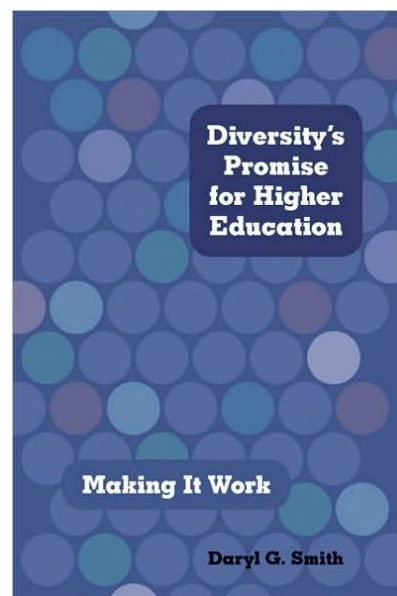
Pp.352

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*Diversity's Promise for Higher Education: Making It Work*, by Daryl G. Smith, is a comprehensive framework for institutions to approach diversity in a more practical and meaningful way. She recommends a set of tools for administrators and researchers to develop and sustain effective diversity initiatives. Daryl G. Smith is a professor of education and psychology and has served in her current faculty position with Claremont Graduate University (CGU) since 1987. Prior to her long-time tenure with CGU, she served for 21 years as a college administrator working in the areas of planning and evaluation, institutional research, and student affairs. Smith is the author or co-author of more than 12 hardcopy and digital books and dozens of journal articles, chapters, research briefs, reviews, monographs, and reports.

In the Preface, Smith asserts that everyone may not have been prepared or ready for this phenomenon called diversity.



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It is almost as if, one day, this nation laid down for a good night's sleep and woke up to one of the most diverse and multicultural nations in the world. For those among us who were not or are not ready – get ready! “Diversity is not happening, she argues, “diversity is” (p. ix). Smith compares the introduction and integration of technology of higher education to diversity. With this analogy she successfully explains that, like technology, diversity has to be embraced and woven into the fabric of higher education institutions, if they plan to produce citizens who are successful in a pluralistic society.

In Chapter One, *The National and Global Context for Diversity in Higher Education*, the theme is aligned with the context by which diversity exists in America and why it is still such a sensitive and challenging issue. Smith explains why there are very few successful examples of diverse societies by which higher education institutions can model. She blames this lack of success on racism, sexism, religious conflicts, and other inequities and inequalities. Due to the influx of immigrants into the United States, Smith further explains how diverse diversity can be. She uses a perfect example of the Hispanic population which has become the largest ethnic population in the United States. Just within the Hispanic population of the U.S., there are more than 24 nationalities, from nearly 2 dozen regions around the world, each unique from another. This underscores the challenges that higher education institutions face in dealing with diversity. The crux of One highlights the fact that there are still racial and gender inequities that we battle in areas such as education, housing, employment, health care, banking, and the criminal justice system. Historically, we cannot forget how these inequities and injustices came about in the first place and how they are continually being perpetuated. She stated, “It is hard to imagine that merely forgetting and moving on is going to be effective for those whose history has been shaped by these injustices, particularly when their current reality reflects continuing inequality,” (p. 12). Perhaps, this was one of her most powerful statements in the book because it called to question how people can allow history to repeat itself, when we had the control and responsibility to change life for the better.

The central theme of Chapter Two, *The Role of Identity in Diversity*, focuses on how complex identity can be. The way people describe themselves as opposed to the way other people describe and characterize them may often be completely different. People may be compelled to fit one person into several different categories, all of which can shape and form his or her identity. Let's use the President of the United States as an example. He can be identified or grouped, per se, according to the following characteristics: bi-racial, African-American, minority, male, middle class, educated, heterosexual, married, father, politician, liberal, democrat, or Christian. Smith even talked about the word 'minority,' and its many connotations and meanings. She feels that calling anyone who is non-white a minority is just too broad. Is she right? The theme of this chapter is important because it shows the reader how difficult it may be for a higher education institution to address diversity, because of the ways in which people identify themselves. No one race, religion, or gender is homogenous in nature, nor will they have the same needs. The question then becomes, how does an institution successfully make diversity work for them and their students? Smith goes on to explain how this can be done in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Three, *A Diversity Framework for Higher Education*, Smith revisits the technology analogy to illustrate that in the same way technology was integrated into every aspect of higher education, so must diversity. In the beginning, she argues that institutions saw the need and relevance of technology as contributing to the success of the school and students, but there were still challenges. The leaders of the schools didn't know exactly what to do, but they knew they had to do something. Smith states, "Technology has been understood to be an imperative – a necessity that, despite all challenges of change, must be implemented without excuses," (p. 47). So basically, these institutions figured it out, and technology was integrated into the schools' mission, vision, hiring practices, training, and curriculum. Smith argues that higher education institutions must do the same with diversity. "Institutions that are more diverse and that

have developed new ways will be able to respond to change and will be more viable, as well as potentially more attractive to diverse groups of people,” (p. 50), \she says. As in the past, the efforts of most higher education institutions are still focused on outreach, access, and success, which focus heavily on affirmative action as a tool for increasing diversity. We know that affirmative action is definitely not enough, especially since it has been unfairly targeted and is scarcely available for students pursuing postsecondary education today.

However, Smith also explains how some institutions are already taking steps to incorporate diversity into their institutions in various ways. For example, there has been an increase in the number of faculty involved in curriculum transformation and development, in addition to an increase in the diversity of the faculty, staff, and administration. In addition, a growing number of institutions are appointing a chief diversity officer (CDO) whose job is to advise leadership and develop, train and facilitate diversity efforts. The most informative section of chapter three is figure 3.1, which is a diagram of the framework for diversity by which all institutions can utilize. The center of this model is the mission of the institution. Smith states that, “Aligning diversity strongly with the institution’s mission is a cornerstone of much of the research being done,” (p. 65).

The four sections surrounding the mission include the following: Climate and Intergroup Relations, Education and Scholarship, Access and Success, and Institutional Viability and Vitality. Smith goes on to explain each section and how institutions can strategically incorporate diversity into each one of these sectors. Each group in the framework is interconnected and provides an inclusive approach to diversity.

Chapter Four, *The Past Forty Years*, takes a look at the diversification in higher education over the last forty years and has excellent charts and graphs that highlight the facts. In this chapter, Smith looks back at where institutions have come, and discusses some very important policies and laws that have ignited the demographic shift in higher education.

She explains, how years ago, the faculty of these institutions consisted of mostly White men, women were paid less than their male counterparts and sororities and fraternities were segregated. Unfortunately, little has changed and progress is slow, in spite of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which forced higher education institutions to reevaluate all of their policies ranging from hiring to admissions. Financial aid was introduced to assist low-income students afford college. Title IX encouraged women to participate in athletics and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium was founded to coordinate the relationship between the government and tribal colleges.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was enacted to help persons with disabilities. Smith also shared some staggering statistics. For example, since 2005, undergraduate women consistently outnumbered undergraduate men, roughly 6 to 4 in number. Black undergraduate student enrollment increased from 10% to 13% of total enrollment with the number of Black women growing by 145% as compared to the 62% increase in Black male enrollment. Smith highlights the gender gap among African Americans because the presence of African American men in college has been stagnant over the last thirty years. A recent study from the Justice Policy Institute (<http://www.justicepolicy.org>), a Washington, DC-based think-tank that advocates for alternatives to prison, found that after two decades of harsh criminal justice policies, there are more black men in jail or prison than in college. By contrast, the study further found that in 1980, black men in college outnumbered black men behind bars by a ratio of more than 3 to 1. From 1965 to 2005, two-year colleges grew 153 percent. As of 2005, out of the minority groups, Asian Americans represented the largest number of people earning doctorate degrees with a growth of 395 percent. Men still outnumber women on the faculty with 59% and 41%, but the percentage of women faculty is growing. Between 1993 and 2005, the percentage of women faculty grew by 50 percent. Another important part of chapter four highlights the achievement gap between men and women and various racial groups. As in P-12 education, the achievement gap in higher education is just as disproportionate when measured by graduation rates. The

six-year graduation rate for students attending four-year universities is 45% for Latinos, 52% for African Americans, 65% for Asian Americans, and 68% for Whites. Smith concludes the chapter with two emerging themes over the last forty years: the expansion and deepening of the domain of diversity” (p. 132) and an overwhelming amount of unfinished business,” (p. 132).

Chapter Five entitled, *Identifying Talent*, takes a look at the importance of diversifying the faculty in higher education institutions. In this chapter, Smith discusses some very compelling reasons why diversity in faculty is relevant to the success of the school and more importantly the students. In the past, the main reasons institutions sought to diversity faculty was because of the potential increase in the diversity of the student body. Smith cleverly highlights that the problem has not been whether to diversity the faculty, but how to match or exceed the diversity of the students. In many college departments, there are no women or people of color, Smith highlights. This problem can definitely be seen in the engineering, science and technical departments at universities around the nation. Smith gave a perfect example of why this may pose a problem for some students. Smith states, “If students never see an African American physicist, how likely is it that significant numbers of African American students will imagine themselves as physicists,” (138)? Smith explains the reason for lack of faculty diversity is because “faculty are hired primarily on the basis of field, department, or institutional priorities, not on the background characteristics of the students,” (p. 139). This is the same finding of earlier African American scholars (Blackwell, 1983; Gregory, 2001; and Wilson, 1995). Smith goes on to list seven important reasons to diversity a faculty, all of which have been cited in previous studies by a diverse cadre of scholars. Smith’s seven reasons include: 1) diversity in the faculty shows that institutions are serious about equity in its hiring and retention; 2) diversity is important in the university’s ability to develop diverse points of view and knowledge; 3) a diverse faculty helps in forming relationships with a diverse community outside of the campus; 4) having a diverse faculty helps leaders make informed decisions at all levels; 5) having a diverse faculty

makes the university more attractive to students from all backgrounds; 6) a diversified faculty helps lead to a diversified leadership at higher education institutions; and 7) having a diverse faculty provides role models for everyone.

Chapter Six, *Working with and across Differences – Intergroup Relations and Identity*, Smith reemphasizes the idea of identity in diversity and all of its complexities. Looking back at the example of the President of the United States, there are many different ways in which a person may identify him or herself. This chapter looks at the best ways in which people from diverse backgrounds, in all areas of the institution can learn, work, and socialize together. Smith states, “One of the most compelling arguments for the importance of diversity has framed it as an educational opportunity for groups from different backgrounds to learn from and with one another,” (p. 178). Smith explains this concept in terms of intergroup (recognition that individuals bring multiple and intersection identities) and intra-group (racial, ethnic, religious, class, and sexuality issues that may be present with each gender) interaction. This chapter cites important research by Gordon Allport (1954) that suggests four conditions by which intergroup efforts will work best: 1) equal status, 2) shared goals, 3) cooperation, and 4) institutional support. A good example of this can be seen when students are rooting for the university’s football team to win a National Championship. Smith also describes many of the various ways in which institutions have unsuccessfully attempted to deal with identity and diversity through de-categorization, re-categorization, and mutual differentiation. She argued that often, the best approach to take is a sociological study. Basically, this approach asks a person to think of all the multiple groups with which he or she identifies and participate in, which in turn, allows the person to develop relationships with people who share common characteristics or interests, but may be different from oneself. Smith states, “The societal or institutional strategy is to encourage multiple identities and then to build meaningful participation in each of them in order to increase the likelihood that, rather than having a single in-group and out-group, one will find oneself connecting with individuals from many groups over time,” (p. 184).

Chapter Seven, *Student Learning and Success*, focuses on the best conditions by which institutions can foster student success. The chapter is broken down into three primary sections: 1) special purpose institutions (i.e. women's colleges and HBCUs), 2) institutional qualities that foster student success, and 3) the impact of diversity on student success and learning. Smith starts by sharing some statistics about the success of special purpose institutions. For example, Xavier, an HBCU, produces two-thirds of African Americans that graduate from medical school, followed by Morehouse School of Medicine. Many of the women in Congress, of any race, graduated from a women college. We immediately thought of Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. It makes one wonder what these institutions are doing to foster success. Smith shares a few of her thoughts as to the possible reasons for these successes: 1) Special purpose institutions set high expectations for their students; 2) the faculty and administration believe that all students can be successful despite their backgrounds; 3) they offer students full support; 4) they communicate a message to students that their education is to be used for a higher purpose; 5) students have professors that 'get' them and with whom they can identify; and 6) role models are everywhere with whom they aspire to emulate. So, how can other institutions incorporate some of these strategies of special purpose institutions to improve their success rate. Smith admits, "It is not easy," (p. 203). Smith cites a study called 'Project Deep' (documenting effective educational practice) that studied twenty-seven institutions known for successful student engagement and retention to see what strategies these schools use. She found that these institutions use strategies very consistent with those of special purpose institutions. In Table 7.1, *Guiding Questions for Diversity and Student Success* she lists eight questions that administrators of all higher education institutions should seek to answer and incorporate into both academic and student affairs. These will serve as a great resource to encourage success for all students.

Chapter Eight, *Monitoring Progress on Diversity* takes a look at the assessment and evaluation process by which institutions

can see if progress is being made in terms of diversity. Most accreditation processes that institutions go through to evaluate effectiveness, do not include a diversity component. In this chapter, Smith describes a method of evaluation that shifts diversity to the center of the institution and ties it to the mission. She states, "If an institution has declared that its mission is to educate all students to thrive in a diverse society and a global context, the link between diversity and effectiveness should be apparent," (p. 233). Smith declares that campuses should ask the following questions: 1) Who is succeeding? 2) Are all groups of students engaged on campus? 3) Where are they engaged? And; 4) Do all groups of students perceive and institutional commitment to their success? Smith contends that disaggregating the data received from these answers can provide the information needed to make the necessary changes to ensure success for all students. Smith favors organizational learning as a strategy for helping institutions monitor their progress. In a nutshell, organizational leadership encourages administrators, faculty, and staff to honestly evaluate themselves reflect on their successes and failures, take ownership over the results, and make the necessary changes for improvement and effectiveness. Organizational learning is a self-imposed evaluation and assumes that change will come from the people within institution, as opposed to mandates from people from the outside. Smith suggests a 'three-pronged process' for monitoring institutional progress: "1) establish the context and background for diversity on campus; 2) develop an approach for monitoring progress with a relevant framework and indicators; and 3) develop a method to report and share information and make necessary changes" (p. 241).

Chapter Nine, *Making Diversity Work*, is primarily a summary of the book. Smith goes back over the highlights of each chapter with a few new tidbits of information sprinkled throughout. There was one quote that Smith used from a letter Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from the Birmingham jail in 1963. King states, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," (p. 259). This statement is enough to want to make diversity work on college campuses and societies everywhere. Smith concludes by looking at the

historical context by which diversity happened and is continuing to happen in the United States, from research and lessons from the field, to the impact of diversity in higher education, and its implications for the future.

In conclusion, Daryl G. Smith's contribution in *Diversity's Promise for Higher Education: Making it Work* is a wonderful historical compilation of the challenges institutions are facing in addressing diversity in a meaningful and comprehensive manner. However, the book fails to keep its promise of explaining, how to "Make it Work," which is the subtitle of the book. While Smith offers numerous suggestions, much of them confirmed by previous studies, she does not provide a clear or concise strategy for 'making it work.' But as she states, it is not easy. And that is a fact, 'Making it work' is going to be an ongoing journey that will take all of us who are committed to true diversity, to work together in a multitude of venues, to move us forward in a meaningful way. Smith challenges us to push ourselves beyond our comfort zones and keep our eyes on the prize—full inclusion and equitable access to the one thing no one can ever take away from you, a quality education.

### About the Reviewers

Alecia Watkins is a doctoral student at Clark Atlanta University, in the department of educational leadership. She is currently employed at Georgia Perimeter College as an academic advisor. In 2007, he received the *Dr. Ernest E. Just Educator of the Year Award for Excellence* in Education and Service to Community. She is currently serving as the Vice President of the Educational Leadership Student Association at Clark Atlanta University.

Sheila T. Gregory, PhD, is a professor of educational leadership and higher education at Clark Atlanta University and a faculty mentor at Fielding Graduate University. She received a Ph.D in Higher Education Administration from the University of Pennsylvania. In 2005, Sheila Gregory's sixth co-authored book, *Daring to Educate: The Legacy of the Early Spelman College Presidents*, was nominated for an NAACP Image Award. Also in 2005, she received the

prestigious national award of *Teacher and Scholar of the Year*. Dr. Gregory is the author of six scholarly books and nearly three dozen articles and book chapters. Dr. Gregory's major research interests are in the areas of faculty and student recruitment and retention, professional leadership and development, and student academic achievement with a special emphasis on race, ethnicity, class, gender, and distance learning.

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