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Valverde, Leonard A. (Ed.) (2008). *Latino Change Agents in Higher Education: Shaping a System That Works for All*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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The United States is in a constant state of evolution. Politically, economically, and socially, the United States of today is radically different from the United States of 50 years ago – even 15 years ago. At the vanguard of this change is the change in demographics that is emanating from the American Southwest and sweeping across the rest of the nation. This change in demographics calls for a change in all aspects of American life, our school system, and especially in our system of higher education. Without change, our system of higher education will be an agent of the status quo and will doom the nation to that of a second-rate power.

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Born from a “platica” in Austin, Texas, in February of 2005 “Latino Change Agents in Higher Education: Shaping a System that Works for All” is a call to arms. This call to arms is not just for Latino educators and politicians, but for all educators and politicians because it will take a collective effort to transform the higher education system to that of opportunity and equity for all. Not until action is taken will the face of higher education reflect that of the rest of our society.

From the “platica” a “grito” emerged. Responding to the “grito” were Valverde and ten other Latino change agents. These agents of change have created twelve essays that address the demographics, problems, needs, strategy, and insight to change the system of higher education. The book is divided into four parts: “The Past Cannot Be the Future”; “Systemic Change, Sí; Special Add-On Programs, No”; “A Bright Future Necesita Un Grito Fuerte” and “Beginning the Work of Reshaping Higher Education.” Each of the parts has 2-4 essays while part one includes two essays with multiple authors.

Part One consists of three essays. The first essay, “Why the United States Can No Longer Wait to Educate Its Latino Population” was coauthored by Valverde, Arispe y Acevedo, and Perez. In this essay, the authors tackle the larger question of “why it is important that Latinos must be targeted for higher education?” To this the authors compile a list of six contributing factors: complete the social justice agenda, embrace changing demographics, strengthen the national economy, advance higher education institutional viability, reshape local communities, and lead the way to forming a global society.

In the second essay, “Pathways to a Better Future: Reconfiguring the Educational Context for Change,” husband and wife coauthors Henry and Yolanda Ingle address the direction of Latino higher education. The Ingles stress that the current model of higher education must be modernized and that this change must overhaul the entire system. This modernization will target stronger cross-cultural and global perspectives. By implementing this

change, the higher education system, in fact the entire education system must confront three important aspects of the curriculum. These aspects are what, why, and how content is taught. By addressing these aspects, the curriculum ought to be changed to fit the needs of the students. In addition to changes in curriculum, the authors address the need for universities to address graduation rates of their Latino students and to look to the Latino community for philanthropy.

“Making an All-in-One K-16 System Work,” authored by Gloria Ann Lopez is the final essay of part one. In the essay Lopez, addresses the reason for the lack of Latino professors in universities as well as the low numbers of Latinos who hold doctorate, master’s, and bachelor’s degrees. Two issues that stand out in relation to the lack of education in the Latino community are tuition rate and immigration issues. In another section of the essay, Lopez takes an insightful look at the K-16 system of Catholic education in San Antonio, Texas and uses it as an example for others to emulate. The role of politics takes a central role in the lack of educational opportunities in South Texas and in the funding of higher education throughout the state.

Part one provides the reader with an insight to the plight of Latino education in the United States. It provides demographic information that is eye opening and helps illustrate why change is crucial. Part one also gives the reader an insight of what can and should be done to improve the situation.

Part two consists of four essays. The first essay, “From Minority to Majority: New Education Strategies” was authored by Ed Apodaca. In this essay, the author shows what can be done when government works to plan for higher education when demographics show that the need will be there. The author uses the California Master Plan for Higher Education for this end. The problem he cites is that the plan was made in the 1960s and nothing similar has been created to help educate the large number of Latinos in that state. Apodaca also cites a similar population explosion in Texas. Apodaca goes on to illustrate how a glass ceiling

exists for Latino educators in higher education from professors to presidents of universities and how universities skirt accountability when it comes to minority graduation rates.

Silas H. Abrego authored the second essay of part two, “Recent Strategies to Increase Access and Retention.” Abrego argues that it is of vital importance that there be an understanding of educational background of Latino students and there must also be strong academic and financial services available to Latino students. In order for students to continue their education and aspire to achieve higher degrees, there must be a learning environment that encourages active learning and there must be role models to whom these students can turn. Abrego notes the steps that have been taken by organizations such as Upward Bound, GEAR UP, ENLACE and others. Abrego’s essay is key in understanding the need for local and national attention to the importance of higher education for Latinos.

“Latino Professional Associations: Advocacy for Liberation” was authored by Leonard A. Valverde and is the third essay of part two. This essay establishes how and why professional organizations were formed and what actions these organization can take. Latino professional associations, the author stresses, must play a chief role in being an agent of change. This can be accomplished by: focusing on ideas, using relational power rather than making unilateral decisions, positioning themselves with politicians and exerting pressure, by being proactive and planning for the long term, and by cooperating with other associations. Latino professional associations cannot be on an island and they cannot operate as rogue agents. By bringing together different organizations and tapping unused talent, these organizations can become the agents of change Latinos need.

“Establishing Intuitions of Higher Education That Serve Latinos” by Monte E. Perez is the final essay of part two. Perez addresses the need to have institutions that serve the increasing number of Latinos in the United States. Perez cites the importance and deficiencies of Title V and

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). Perez describes the changes in demographics in the American South and how the delivery of instruction, curriculum, support services, technology, and revenue are critical. The use of foreign and alternative intuitions is of particular interest in this essay.

Part three consists of three essays. In the first essay, “The Stakes Keep Going Up: Sustaining Latino Communities,” author Baltazar Arispe y Acevedo Jr. uses the Hispanic Development Helix for a Sustainable Community Model to demonstrate how the Latino community can be fashioned to create a brighter future for its students. The model consists of six crucial elements that must work together in order to achieve and sustain success. These six elements are: continuous leadership development, strategic visioning and planning, educational development, economic participation, community citizenship, and technology literacy.

“Old Promises, Contemporary Goals, and Future Dreams: Time for a Bold Plan,” by Manuel N. Gomez is the middle essay of part three. Gomez establishes eight principles for a plan of future success. Goals must be proactive and deliberate rather than reactive while maintaining a balance between external and internal realities. These two principles go hand-in-hand with the third principle of planning locally and remaining globally aware. Gomez’s simultaneous concern for the large and small picture is challenging but crucial to the success and sustainability of the plan. Three other goals that go hand-in-hand are: recognize and build on gains, do not get discouraged by failures and start at the roots. By starting at the roots, failures will be small and success can be built upon. The final two goals stress the need to collaborate and share. Keeping in mind the need to be globally aware, collaboration along the P-20+ pipeline is essential to the plan.

The final essay, “Where Latinos Go to College Matters” by Roberto Haro addresses the lack of information Latino parents possess when it comes to institutions of higher education. Haro addresses where Latino students go to school and the differences between two-year community colleges, private four-year liberal arts colleges and

universities, regional four-year universities, and doctoral-granting research universities. With each of these intuitions students are at different levels when it comes to tuition, opportunities, and networking.

Part four is the smallest part of the book but provides a ray of light to lead the way to improving higher education for Latinos. David Ballesteros authored the first essay titled, “Leadership Always Makes a Difference.” Ballesteros addresses six qualities that must be present for a good leader. A leader must be a person that can put students first and can bring together all stakeholders. This includes students, educators, and members of the community as they all have a vested interest in the success and achievement of the students. Leaders must be ethical, accountable and must also take care of themselves and their families. Finally, a good leader must stay for a while. Ballesteros contends that a good leader will need five years to make a difference. Good leaders that leave too soon do not make the change that is necessary, but leaders who stay a while and are vigilant are the true difference makers.

Leonard A. Valverde wrote the final essay of the book. As the principal author, Valverde provides solid bookends to the topic. In “Changing Paradigms: As Society Transforms So Must Higher Education” Valverde describes the transformations that have taken place in society and how higher education must transform from a place of exclusion to inclusion and from simply focusing on recruiting to also looking at retention. The curriculum, Valverde asserts, must also be changed to meet the needs of society and that minority studies courses should be required for all students, thereby creating a culturally diverse student body. Finally, universities must make partnerships with the community, the K-12 system, and with two-year colleges to facilitate a pipeline of education. Only by making these changes, Valverde asserts, will higher education stay true to its democratic purpose of educating all students.

Latino Change Agents in Higher Education is a timely addition to the discourse of minorities in higher education. It highlights the deficiencies of Latinos in higher education and creates

avenues for action. By bringing authors from all over the country, Valverde has created a book that contributes to the literature and is useful to educators and politicians from all over the nation. Chief amongst this book's accomplishments is its ability to personalize and energize the reader. For only with a "grito" as a call to action will support be rallied and change be effected.

About the Reviewer

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