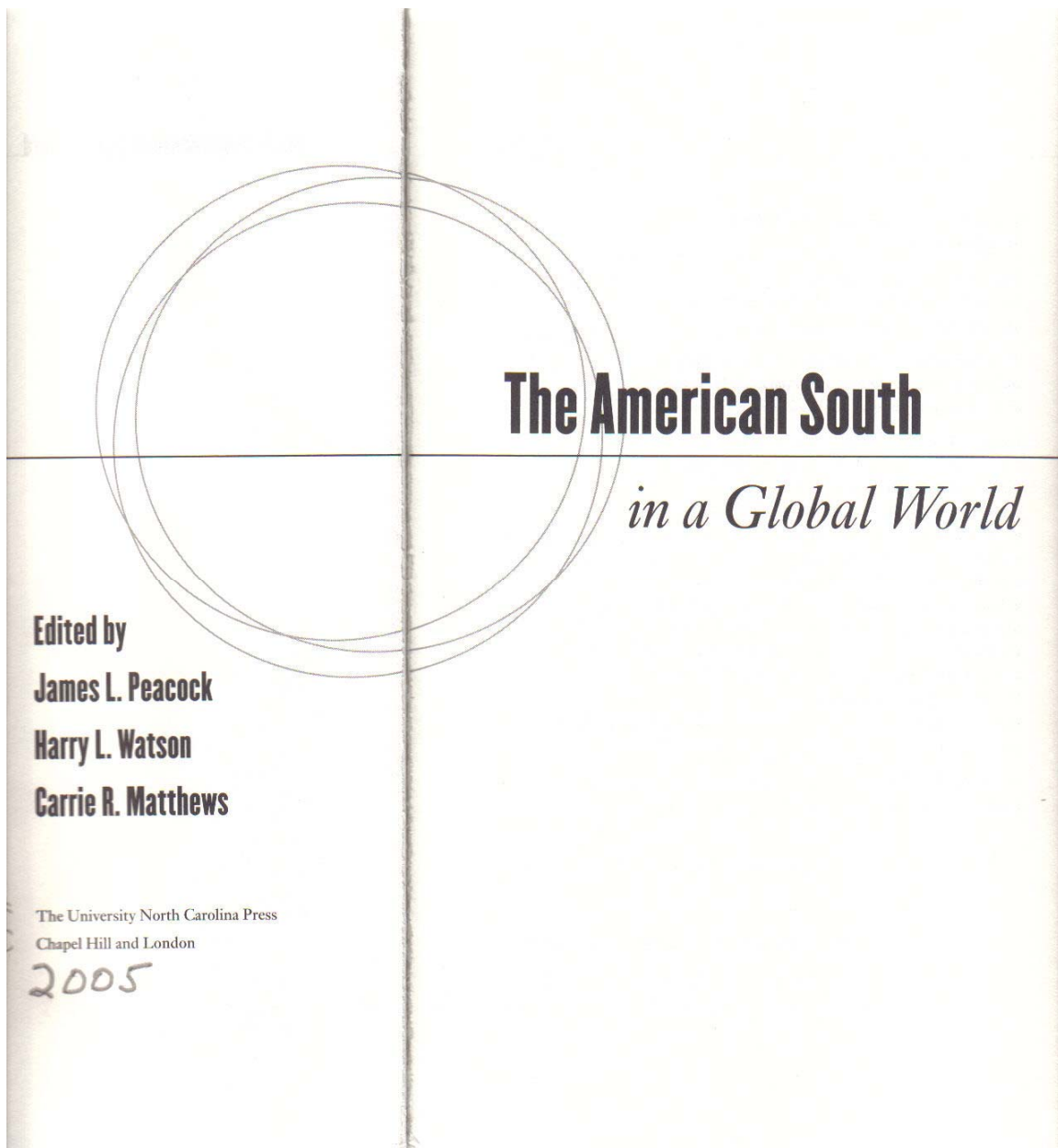




Gregory Stephens

Monolingualism and Racialism as Curable Diseases

Nuestra America in the Transnational South

As a southwesterner, when I first relocated to North Carolina, I was impressed by the fact that my colleagues thought of the border as being the Mason-Dixon line—that would be the North as the Other of southern oppositional identity. This was a long way, further in cultural and psychological terms than in geo graphic distance, from the border I grew up

facing, which was with Mexico. It is impossible for most people in the Southwest to think of the United States and Mexico as completely separate cultures. For most residents of that region, Mexico is not an Other against which they are opposed.

My worldview has been indelibly shaped by having worked in border cities such as Laredo, Texas, and San Diego, and having been an undergraduate in Tucson, in southern Arizona. In the Southwest it is normative to think of the border as a region that extends in both directions, rather than a line. (I am thinking of Carlos Fuentes's novel *Old Gringo*, for instance.) Where is the border drawn between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking peoples? This is something we are being forced to reexamine. From my perspective, the orientation of many southerners toward an often racialized North-South border of memory has left them ill prepared to deal with a new demographic coming from the South.

Demographic changes in the transnational South challenge us to develop new paradigms of intercultural and international relations. A working assumption of mine has been that a bilingual or multilingual workforce must be one component of a transnational South that is prepared for the economic, political, and cultural exchanges of a global market. Furthermore, moving toward a bilingual, transnational South will also involve a reorientation of what it means to be a southerner, as well as what it means to be an American. In particular putting into practice more inclusive and more productive forms of politics, education, and socioeconomic exchange will require southerners to develop alternatives to two forms of myopia that are endemic to the region: monolingualism and racialism.

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My research took three forms. I did ethnographic research among Spanish-speaking immigrants in Oklahoma and North Carolina in which I sought their perspective about their transition between two nations, cultures, and languages. I did a comparative study of dual language programs in those two states, with classroom observation at Shidler Elementary in Oklahoma City. And I interviewed many educators and opinion leaders about the place of bilingualism in the globalized South and about the difficulties that the black-white worldview presented for individuals trying to come to terms with new demographics such as Latinos.

The Bilingual Crisis in Living Color

By early 2002, the number of foreign-born U.S. residents and children of immigrants had reached the highest level in history, 56 million. Mexico alone accounted for more than a quarter of all foreign-born residents. Only 34 percent of residents older than twenty-five years and born in Mexico had completed high school, while 95 percent of those born in Africa had. The median household income for those born in Latin America was \$29,338, but \$52,353 for those from Asia. Such economic and educational disparities are reflected in a persistent "achievement gap."

The number of North Carolina Latinos increased by 394 percent between 1990 and 2000. The increase in the number of Mexicans in North Carolina was almost 600 percent. During the last decade of the twentieth century, North Carolina had the highest proportion of low-English-proficiency immigrants in the nation. The proportion of increase in the number of monolingual Spanish immigrants is higher in North Carolina than in any other state.

The North Carolina Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps spent more than a year studying why 80 percent of the state's Anglo and Asian students score at grade level, compared with 60 percent of Latino and American Indian children and only 52 percent of African Americans. In February 2002 administrators were mandated to come up with a time line within a month for implementing a state plan to close the achievement gap in North Carolina schools. In a ruling on April 4, 2002, North Carolina Superior Court Judge Howard Manning of Wake County wrote, "The state must step in with an iron hand and get the mess straight." Schools are under pressure because they face loss of federal dollars if they do not close this gap quickly, under the "No Child Left Behind" law passed in January 2002.

A dramatic variant of the challenge faced by districts in southern states can be glimpsed in Oklahoma City where massive Latino began several

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years earlier than in North Carolina. The percentage of Latinos in Oklahoma City Public Schools has doubled in less than four years, to 27 percent as of January 2002. This proportion is expected to pass 50 percent within this decade. As of the fall of 2003, there were no Latino administrators in Oklahoma certified in secondary education (Font 2002).⁴ When I was hired in August 2002 at Shields Heights Elementary, a school that is 47 percent Mexican, I was the only certified teacher that spoke Spanish. This was also the case when I began work in September 2003 at Capitol Hill Elementary, which was 60 percent Latino.

The Shortage of Bilingual Professionals

In early 2002 federal civil rights enforcers told North Carolina's Department of Health and Human Services that the state's shortage of interpreters violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Health care and social service agencies in North Carolina were told that they must employ more interpreters or risk losing federal money (North Carolina funnels \$4.5 billion annually from the federal government to these agencies). Agencies also may face discrimination law suits if they do not comply, as the lack of interpreters impedes delivery of constitutionally guaranteed services.

The scope of this crisis can only be sketched in broad form here. It is not possible to offer one-size-fits-all solutions that educators and policy makers could apply. My focus is on a change in orientation—a different worldview, really—that will be necessary in order to begin recognizing that the people of the demographic discussed here are not just a "problem" but bring valuable resources. The questions we should be asking, I believe, would require us to reexamine our most fundamental preconceptions. How do we begin

seeing this new demographic as they are, and as they describe themselves, rather than how we think they are, or wish they would be?

Greater Mexico and Nuestra America in the Transnational South

I use the terms “nuestra America” and “greater Mexico” as framing devices to help visualize or conceptualize our interconnectedness within the region in which Spanish- and English-speaking communities are intersecting. José Limón coined the term “greater Mexico” to describe a region with a long history of interpenetration between peoples of the United States and Mexico (Limón 1998). He sketches several parallels in histories and cultures of the

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American South and northern Mexico, which suggest that our differences are not nearly so great as language might make it seem. For instance, plantations and haciendas play somewhat parallel roles in southern and Mexican history and memory I might add that African Americans and indigenous peoples play a similar role in both regions: they are both a despised Other for some and yet also an idealized embodiment of our democratic aspirations. Without their inclusion in the political process, the humanistic potential of the South or the promises of the Mexican Revolution will remain deferred dreams.

This greater Mexico is now among us. It is here to stay. What will be our relationship with its people? How can we teach them our language and our culture? Just as important, to what degree are we willing to reeducate ourselves about theirs? How do we come to terms with these other Americans, now an exploding presence in our America? How do we conceptualize and communicate with them?

A transnational view requires us to realize that North Americans cannot continue to consider ourselves as co-extensive with “America.” America is a continent and, indeed, a hemisphere, not just a nation, the United States. Within what José Martí called *nuestra America*, or “our America,” a majority are *Latin Americans*, speaking Spanish or Portuguese. Spanish is the dominant language within the hemisphere. In 2000, the population of Latin America was double that of the United States.

It is now, of course, impossible to draw a clear distinction between these Americas, since so much of “our America” resides within the borders of the United States. So we are now being called upon to undergo a paradigm shift in which we learn to listen to our other America, what North Americans used to refer to as our backyard. We do not have a very good track record at this. Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz referred to the United States as an “Imperial Democracy.” “North Americans are outstanding in the art of monologue,” he wrote, “but conversation is not their forte; they do not know how to listen or to reply.” Yet self and Other always have a relationship: “El otro define nuestro yo”, as the Mexican novelist and essayist Carlos Fuentes writes. The other defines our I, both with and against. In simplest terms, we must start recognizing that we have a relationship, a developing intersubjectivity, with our America. And what does this other America say to us?

Monolingualism Is a Curable Disease

Carlos Fuentes once told a North American audience that “monolingualism is curable disease” (Saffa 1989). Fuentes made this tongue-in-cheek corn-

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ment by way of explaining why he was going to read from his works in Spanish, even though he is fluent in English. The United States has traditionally perceived “foreign languages” and, indeed, often bilingualism as a problem. When people come to the United States, we have traditionally expected “English Only.” When North Americans travel abroad, too often they expect that people will speak to them in English. Fuentes is suggesting that monolingualism is really the problem, in a hemispheric and global context.

In an effort to describe in living color (rather than black and white) what *nuestra America* means for the transnational South, by default I must sketch in very broad strokes here. What I have in mind is a sort of “Latin America joi” for southerners who have been caught unaware while still gazing northward toward the Mason-Dixon line. The key term I have adapted to describe that America, from south of the other border, is “multicentric.” Guillermo Gómez Peñla, a Mexican—born “border artist,” argues that we need to adopt a “multi centric perspective” in order to understand the interpenetrations of two or more cultures. He suggests that living in more than one culture or nation or being a by-product of more than one “race,” is actually normative in “our America,” despite binary racial mythologies. Speaking from the borderlands, Gómez Peñla insists that “the dominant culture is no longer dominant,” and that if there is a dominant culture, it is border culture—people with their feet in more than one culture or nation (1993, 46).

In a similar way, Fuentes (2000, 25) writes that after the Cold War, we entered an era in which “se encuentra con muchos centros, no solo dos; muchas culturas, no solo una.” We have many centers and many cultures now, not just one or two. “Solo las culturas que se comuncan viven y florecen?” Only cultures that communicate with different cultures can survive and flourish in our era.

One finds a multicentric perspective voiced most eloquently, perhaps, by Latin Americans such as Fuentes or Martí who have spent a great deal of time in the United States. From within the “belly of the beast,” as Martí once said, spokespersons from *nuestra America* have been able to see more clearly how different is the embrace of a multicentric mixture of cultures that they grew up with from the us-versus-them worldview that has often been dominant in the United States. The opposite of multicentrism is monocentrism or a uni centric worldview. Carole Boyce Davies (1999,96) uses these terms to critique a variety of one-sided worldviews, and the resulting “isms and schisms” they engender, such as Eurocentrism, Afrocentrism, and unilateralism. One can make a case for a unicentric worldview such as Afrocentrism or Zionism as a historically necessary corrective, or a form of psychosocial self-healing, occasioned by previous oppression and exclusion. Yet such isms, defined so much

by opposition to their Other, inevitably generate an action-reaction cycle. As Clarence Walker (zoos, 133) writes, “I do not think anything calling itself ‘centrism’ is critical?” Gayatri Spivak (1990) points out that merely opposing Euro centrism, for instance, reifies that center. Such critiques presume that forms of unicentrism, be they Eurocentrism, monolingualism, or unilateralism, are myopic and in need of a corrective, a multicentered perspective.

As a variant of monocentrism, monolingualism becomes a form of “linguicism” when it has institutional backing—that is, the domination of one language at the expense of another; along with a devaluation of the linguistic resources and cultural capital of the excluded language (Skutnabbs-Kangas and Cummins 1988, 53). Monolingualism in the South is currently having negative consequences of several sorts: limited economic development, a failure to provide constitutionally guaranteed public services, and a flawed public education system that tends to reinforce class and ethnic divisions.

The Philosophy and Practice of

Dual Language Programs

I will now focus on the educational side of the bilingual crisis and look toward a working solution. The number of language-minority students is increasing more quickly than that of any other “special group?” The proportion is expected to double from 20 percent of the school-age population (as of 1997) to 40 per cent by as soon as 2020. This increase is causing a nationwide drop in school district test scores. It threatens national productivity as underprepared language-minority students replace baby boomers in the workforce (Thomas and Collier 2000). Everyone agrees with the goal of teaching these students to be fluent in English. The degree to which English Language Learners (ELL) will be transitioned to fluency in English by using content instruction in their native language is what makes this a political issue.

Dual Language Program (mu’) advocates argue (backed by cognitive psychologists and linguists) that children learn a second language more easily and more fluently when they retain fluency in their native language (Hoch zoo2)10. Skills such as decoding and sound blending, which are taught more effectively in a child’s first language, are “clearly transferable among languages that use phonetic orthographies, such as Spanish, French, and English” (Slavin and Cheung 2003; August 2002). Furthermore, “research has shown that postponing or interrupting academic development while students learn a second language is likely to promote long-term academic failure,” Wayne Thomas and Virginia Collier (1977) emphasize

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Research about native language instruction has been politicized. Rossell and Baker (1996) argued that research does not support bilingual education. However, a “meta—analysis” by Greene (5997) concluded that the “methodologically adequate” studies surveyed by Rossell and Baker did favor bilingual over English-only approaches. There

is a growing consensus about the value of native language instruction in teaching transferable literacy skills. In 2003 the US Department of Education and two other federal agencies funded a comprehensive review on this subject by the National Literacy Panel on the Development of Literacy Among Language Minority Children and Youth. Robert Slavin, a member of this panel, published his findings in a rigorous study released in December 2003 (Slavin and Cheung 2003). "None of the studies that met the inclusion standards found bilingual education to be . . . worse than (English) immersion," concluded Slavin and Cheung, while most studies show that students are testing higher with dual language than with any other approach currently available for ELL students.

As of 2001 there were 260 DLP5 in twenty-three states. Many more are in development. DLP's are becoming popular with middle-class parents because research shows that children raised bilingually have a higher level of cognitive development than their monolingual peers and, more importantly, because bilingual students entering the job market have more choices and greater earning power. But there are institutional and ideological forces aligned against adopting innovative educational strategies such as DLP5. The political backlash against bilingualism is so charged in many parts of the South, in particular, that Raul Font (2002) told me that the very words "bilingual" or "multicultural" "make people sweat" in Oklahoma, where he was in charge of ESL programs for Oklahoma City Public Schools. Similarly, Ryuko Kubota, who trains ESL teachers at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, alludes to "the B-word?"

Such tensions reflect wider cultural misconceptions, as when Newt Gingrich (1995, 162) wrote, "Bilingualism keeps people actively tied to their old language and habits and maximizes the cost of the transition to becoming American?" In the 2004 election cycle, opposition to bilingualism has reached hysterical and, indeed, racist proportions, as Carlos Fuentes and others have pointed out. In a Foreign Policy essay, Samuel Huntington (2004, 45) decries the "dual loyalties" of bilingual Americans and concludes, "There is no American dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English?" Former Colorado governor Richard Lamm (2002) is even more explicit: "It is a curse for a society to be bilingual?"

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I wonder what a polyglot like Thomas Jefferson, who had side careers as a diplomat in France and was a practitioner of miscegenation, would have thought of the notion that Anglo-Protestant culture and monolingualism are synonymous. One might also rhetorically ask how many languages the writers and subjects of the New Testament spoke. The notion that citizens in a multinational nation-state of nearly 300 million people should not have dual allegiances or speak more than one language is clearly a racialized form of nativism. The idea that bilingualism is a curse is, of course, contradicted by abundant evidence of the economic benefits of bilingualism.

Especially in the South, one is forced to return to the racialized foundations of the insistence on monolingualism as an American virtue. At the University of North Carolina, Kubota emphasized that creative solutions to language learning and, more broadly, to a multiethnic curriculum reform were hampered by a black-and-white worldview. ESL programs in North Carolina were very Anglocentric, she said. By “Anglocentric” she meant not only Euro-centric, but that most people in higher education that she worked with thought of cultural diversity almost exclusively in terms of African Americans. Kubota pointed out that of more than fifty full-time professors in the School of Education, there were no Latinos and only two Asians.

In terms of institutional resistance, most schools are heavily invested in ESL programs, even though research shows that this is the least effective strategy for ELL. Another major impediment is that students are not being tested on language learning because of a narrowly defined reemphasis on “fundamentals.” Until statewide testing policy is changed, teachers and administrators will have little incentive to emphasize language learning, since they are under pressure to raise test scores, especially to close the so-called achievement gap.’ In fact, DLP can be an important component of closing that gap, and not only for Latinos. African American children at the Jones Elementary program in Greensboro, North Carolina, and at Shidler Elementary in Oklahoma City; the school I have been studying in depth, are among those scoring higher than their monolingual peers.

DLPs can help to ameliorate some negative aspects of class and racial divisions. Well-implemented DLPs or enrichment programs help level the playing field for students of low socioeconomic status (they score much closer to their more privileged peers). More specifically, DLPs problematize racial language and the way that schools have traditionally followed racial categorization.’ rtu’ students are divided into two groups: native English speakers and nonnative English speakers. In a Spanish/English program, the English speakers can include Mexican American students as well as African Americans, Anglos,

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and Asians, since many Mexican American families in fact use English as a first language. Conversely, Spanish speakers can also be of any ethnicity. As our own census forms tell us, Hispanics can be of any race, which points to the decentering of race in our America. For instance, most people of African descent in the Americas speak Spanish or Portuguese, not English. Students in DLP classes often socialize according to language more than ethnicity or race; at the same time, the structure of the program facilitates a great deal of interchange between language groups.

Thinking in Black and White: A Myopic Schema

There is one more term in my title that needs to be defined: racialism. Racialism is “the insidious confusion of race with culture which haunts our society;” as Ralph Ellison (1962) said, the belief that phenotype or outward appearance is a meaningful way to determine someone’s culture, intelligence, or aptitudes. The social science consensus now; to the contrary; is that “race has no biological justification.” No matter whom we

blame for the origins of racial mythologies, racialism is a problem perpetuated by people of all colors, as Frederick Douglass had the courage to say long ago. Douglass called racialism a “diseased imagination.” It is also a curable disease. If we cannot completely cure the disease, we can at least contain it by articulating a more attractive alternative. To even conceive of an alternative, however, we first have to agree that racialism is a concept with insidious consequences.

We are still having a hard time putting into practice a more attractive alternative to racialism, in part, because racialism is a mostly unconscious way of thinking, an “imaginative pattern,” as Mary Midgley says in *The Myths Live By* (2003). It is what Freud called a “schema” and what Jung termed a “category of the imagination” (Jung 1958, 518). In other words, it is a blue print or a script. When people follow a schema or a script, they are usually unconscious of its origin. They think that this is “their” thought, while typically they are following a script whose structure and broad outlines were crafted by forces and generations unseen. Racialism, in the form of a “one drop” ideology that our institutions still largely enforce, was articulated by white supremacists, a link that many who advocate racial solidarity today seem unaware of or untroubled by.

Freud once wrote, “We are often able to see the schema triumphing over the experiences of the individual” (qtd. in Adams 1996, 45). We project unconscious thought patterns, such as racialism, onto the world and then we reject or tune out experiences that do not fit this pattern. North Americans still

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tend to project a racialized black—and-white schema onto a full—color, multi-centered social world. Nowhere is this tendency more ingrained than in the South.

As Latinos became the largest minority in the United States, many African Americans expressed resentment or the perception that Latinos were “trying to be white.” This seems to be a case of a schema being projected onto a demographic that does not fit into this racial binary and does not see the world in that way. Yet this point of view also clearly expresses a psychological reality. However understandable this may be in psychological or historical terms, racialized perceptions of competition can lead to support for monolingualism, which is what happened when African Americans led opposition to bilingual education in Houston.’

Monolingualism often reinforces racialism. Anglos who speak Spanish are going to be less likely to perceive Latino immigrants as “wetbacks” who need to “swim back.” They will probably feel some sort of kinship with Spanish-speaking peoples. African Americans who know Spanish will be less likely to try to project a black/white binary and its racist assumptions onto Latinos. They, too, are likely to develop a sense of kinship, to understand that millions of people from *nuestra América* are, in fact, of African descent, although a concept of blackness and an opposition to whiteness may not be central to their identity and sense of community

“The presence of large proportions of Asians, Hispanics and black immigrants are changing Americans’ notions of race,” notes Nancy Foner (2000). I would argue that this can only be a healthy thing for all of us. Latinos are going to play the key role in this process for the foreseeable future. We should not condescend and imagine that they need to learn our truth about race. Our racial definitions continually reproduce a cultural and political myopia toward people that do not fit into North America’s binary black-white racial divide. Racialism also contributes to a concept of patriotism that conflates the United States with America and does not allow for the increasingly normative experience of people who retain allegiances to more than one nation, culture, and language.

Reorienting Ourselves toward

Nuestra America

A multicentered model of intergroup relations in the South would undertake what I see as a fundamental challenge of inclusive democracy: building institutions and social spaces in which commonality and difference can coexist. If

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commonality and difference are to coexist, we cannot avoid debate about racism and racialism, yet we must decenter the privileged place of race in our imagination. And we must come to understand that we are situated within a region in which English must be decentered to some degree. We will have to question some of the universalist assumptions of English monolingualism.

In the final analysis, practicing a multicentered and multilingual model of intergroup relations in which commonality and difference can coexist means that we have to develop some sense of kinship with people that do not look like us or speak our language.

Jim Peacock suggests that the model the South is following is in transition from its former stance of opposition within the nation (opposing the North, its Other) to integration within the world. But even that oppositional mentality can have some benefits, he believes, structuring how the South integrates globally. Because of its history of opposition to military intervention and northern materialism, the South may be more inclined to oppose North America’s role as transnational bully, Peacock believes. It is more apt to be sympathetic to other nations that have also suffered occupation and defeat. (See Peacock 2002.) The notion that the South will offer a critique of the worst aspects of Americanism, such as materialism and military adventurism, is hard to square with the conservatism and deep-seated patriotism of the region. However, I do believe that the South could develop such a critical consciousness if it undertakes a more successful internal integration. One route would be to discover our kinship with *nuestra America* and to recover the political implications of that concept.

José Martí has iconic status throughout Latin America and, interestingly, is embraced both by those in Cuba who remain committed to communism and by right-wing Cubans in Miami who want to overthrow Castro. I want to make three observations about the context in which Martí developed his notion of *nuestra America*. First, he did most of his writing during a two-decade “exile” in New York, from where he was in a unique

position both to celebrate North America's strengths and to criticize its myopia and adventurism. Second, antiracism is a foundational element of Martí's thought—not only antiracism but antiracialism, I should say, an embrace of a mestizo identity. Third, the very concept of *nuestra America* was an explicit critique of North American imperialism and ethnocentrism. By distinguishing *nuestra America* from imperial America, Martí wanted to give voice to previously excluded/silenced peoples, the true majority in the Americas, people of African and native descent and, more broadly, all people whose language and culture give them a critical perspective on North American monocentrism. By integrating *nuestra America*

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into the transnational South, along with all its cultural, ideological, ethnic, and linguistic diversity we can incorporate both Martí's critique and his celebration of the best of North America's cultural and political traditions.

Civil rights leaders are among those helping to develop a multicentered notion of kinship across the lines of difference. During a conference on coalition building between African Americans and Latinos in Musgrove, on Sam Simon's Island in Georgia (sponsored by the Southern Regional Council), Latino immigrants began explaining to their African American peers some of the specifics of immigration policy, such as the way it sometimes tied them without choice to one employer. "My God, that's slavery," the African Americans responded. "You don't need to approach us on the basis of our self-interest. This is a question of justice?" Understanding the ways in which Latino immigrants had been denied justice evoked a feeling of kinship among African Americans who heard this humanizing story.

That awakening sense of kinship across the lines of ethnicity or language, however, is still all too rare. Teodoro Maus, former Mexican counsel in Atlanta, speaks about the African American perception that Latinos, as immigrants, "lack a root in America?" Lacking that root, they will therefore not fight for its betterment, some think.'

One must insist again on asking, Which America? Immigrants from Latin America have roots in more than one America and are struggling for betterment on more than one side of it. They are remitting huge amounts of money back to their home communities outside the United States, but they are also becoming involved in the education of their children and other activities that demonstrate their increasingly strong roots in North America.

In the spring of 2002 I interviewed Barbara Smith and Marcela Mendoza of the "Race and Nation in the Global South" project in Memphis.' The heart of their project centered on tensions between Latino immigrants and African Americans. As a sociologist and a North American, Smith was inclined to argue that racial formations justified African American resentment and would prevent Latinos from inhabiting a third space between racial binaries. As an anthropologist from Argentina, Mendoza resisted racial binaries. She was impatient with what she saw as a paternalistic attitude among some African American leaders who took the attitude that Latinos were "not ready" for coalition building until they can be educated about the endurance of American racism. In a sense, the attitudes of Smith and Mendoza represent the different world-views of North

America and “our America?” They had to agree to disagree on some issues, but they were still working together on shared interests.

The capacity of Latin Americans to maintain allegiance to more than more

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one nation, language, culture, and race is a fundamental challenge to many of our prior assumptions about identity and community. Meeting this challenge requires us to evolve beyond a binary worldview and to embrace multitenuredness as a more attractive alternative to racialism and monolingualism. As Marcela Mendoza said to me over lunch, after we concluded our formal interview, “Bienvenida la mezcla.”

Conclusion: Reimagined Communities

The biggest obstacle to integration of *nuestra America* in the transnational South is cultural myopia, which renders “our America” invisible. But this myopia is curable if we recognize that integration is an intersubjective process. We southerners are also being integrated into *nuestra America*. I think of a story told by my officemate David Camp about his first trip to Texas. He was sitting in a mall in San Antonio, and he was stunned by the sea of colors he saw moving through that mall. He tells how it was a treat to his eyes, and he just feasted on that range of colors. It was so very different from what he was accustomed to seeing, he recounted, and perhaps more to the point, from what he had been acculturated to see in the South, which is black and white. To understand both our similarities to and differences from our neighbors from our other America, we have to see them with new eyes, in living color, rather than in black and white.

Notes

- i. Because of a dual-state residence necessitated by having two children in Oklahoma City, I was “pushed into taking one site as [primary perspective]” (Burawoy et al. 2000, vii), i.e., Oklahoma City, where my daughter was a student in a Spanish/English double immersion program.
2. Interview with Nob Martinez, North Carolina governor’s liaison for Hispanic and Latino affairs. See also Stephens 2002.
3. See “North Carolina Faces Lawsuits” 2002; “Achievement Gap” 2002; and “Ruling Should Light Fire” 2002. See also the Chapel Hill/Carrboro School District’s Minority Student Achievement Plan at <http://www.chccs.kra.nc.us/minoritystudentachievement.htm>.
4. Interview with Raul Font, then-director of external funding, Oklahoma City Public Schools.
5. Regarding parallels in representations of African Americans in North America and native people in Mexico as the true embodiment of their respective nations’ democratic aspirations, see Gregory Stephens, “Frederick Douglass’ Biracial Abolitionism: ‘Antagonistic Cooperation’ and ‘Redeemable Ideals’ in the July Speech,” Corn-

munication Studies (Fall 1997), and writings by Subcomandante Marcos, collected in *Our Word Is Our Weapon* (Seven Stories Press, 2001).

6. For writings about Martí's concept of *nuestra America*, see Belknap and Fernan dez 1998; Abel and Torrents 1986; and Saldivar 1991, chap. i. See also Stephens 2004.

7. "Imperial Democracy": I have adapted this from Paz 1985, 375. Quote from p.

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8. See Fuentes 2000,25. What is a Mexican, after all? A mestizo, a mixture of Eu ropean and native peoples, traditions, and languages. The discourse on mestizaje, in much of Latin America, is about a three-way mixture: African, European, and native (Esteva- Fabregat 5995). There is also a large body of scholarship that is critical of ro manticized notions of mestizaje, of Brazil's myth of itself as a mixed-race utopia, etc See Rudin 1996, 112—29. For an example of a growing chorus critiquing Brazilian racialism, see Twine 1997.

. Thanks to my student Sekou Clancy at the University of Oklahoma for pointing me to this piece. "Isms and schisms" is a reference to a line from Bob Marley's song "Ride Natty Ride" from *Survival* (Island/Tuff Gong, 1979). The notion of "One Blood" or "One Love" as a diversity-in-unity consciousness that is an antidote to schizmatic monocentrism is a central tenet of Rastafarian thought.

10. Interview with Fran Hoch, section chief for second languages, ESL, informa tion and computer skills, arts education, and healthful living, North Carolina Depart ment of Public Instruction. For a brief overview of Dual Language Education, see <http://www.un> Proposition 227 was a response to public perception that bilingual education is often "equated with remedial educa tion." Ruth Saddle Alderson notes. Dual language education manages to escape this perception because it is popular with middle-class English-speaking parents.

i Interviews with Ryuko Kubota of the education department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Raul Font.

I 2. Interviews with Kathy Hodges, director of Alliance for Language Learning, North Carolina, and Fran Hoch.

13. Interview with Patrick Marc'-Charles, codirector of Oklahoma Title 7 Dual Lan guage Grant, Hennessey Elementary. A good overview of political debates about bilin gualism is Galindo 5997.

14. Frederick Douglass wrote of a "diseased imagination" in "The Races," *Douglass Monthly* (August 1859),, quoted in Blight 5994.

55. On accusations of "trying to be white:" see Darrity 2002; interviews in Shipler 1997,492,461; and Stephens 2003.

,6. See Paul Levengood's essay in this volume.

57. The John Sayles film *Lone Star* is an excellent dramatic illustration of the co-existence of conflict and the development of a sense of kinship in a border culture setting where Mexican Americans, Anglos, African Americans, and Native Americans co-exist. See also José Limón's commentary on this film (Limón 1998, 549—60).

18. Teodoro Mans is interviewed in *Dialogue for Inclusive Democracy* 2002.

19. Interview with Barbara Smith and Marcela Mendoza, "Race and Nation in the Global South," University of Memphis. The Southern Regional Council's Inter-

Group Project "attempts to shift the existing paradigm in Atlanta from a black-white paradigm to one that involves leadership from growing populations of Latinos and Asian Americans in the metropolitan area" (Southern Regional Council website at <http://www.src.wI.com/partner/jnde> Many working-class African Americans perceive that Latinos are taking their jobs, although studies have shown little basis for this sort of direct economic competition. See Morris and Rubin 2000; Hanier mesh and Bean 1998; Cornelius 1998, 11—155; Hing 2000.

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