

LIFE HISTORIES AND LEADERSHIP OF TWO LATINO (PUERTO RICAN) EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Vonzell Agosto
Associate Professor
University of South Florida

Angel Hernandez
Doctoral Student
University of South Florida

Heather McConnell
Doctoral Student
University of South Florida

Abstract

The contributions of Latinos/as in school and district - level leadership positions are a potential source of knowledge. This study focuses on two Latino (Puerto Rican) administrators (current and former) who have advanced education and/or educational leadership through role modeling, mentoring, and coaching. Their life histories illustrate how their social and cultural identities were relevant in their advancement through the educational administration pipeline and their leadership to support others to study and work in educational contexts.

Keywords: administrators, mentoring, Latinos, culture, identity, life history

The article introduces Elliott and Mario, two men of Latin American (Puerto Rican) descent who have held roles as teachers and administrators in schools and district offices for several decades. We

were interested in understanding how these two men expressed their social and cultural identities through leadership roles to support persistence in education and/or educational leadership for themselves and others. Their combined life stories help to illustrate how Latino cultural identity varies and be variously expressed through educational leadership roles. Elliott's life history focuses more on social and cultural identity to support students, families through curriculum; whereas Mario's social and cultural identity is understated in comparison yet apparent in his perspectives on supporting administrators through leadership development. Both life histories add to the collection of legacies of Latino/a educators who serve as role models and mentors who persist, and support the persistence of others, in education and educational leadership. As such, these life histories add to the scholarship on Latino/a identity among those in educational leadership roles (e.g., Hernández, 2006; Iglesias, 2009).

There is a limited presence of Latino/a educators (Irizarry & Donaldson, 2012). As long as this remains the case the number of Latino/a educators preparing to move from teaching to administrative positions will likely be insufficient to ensure that the growing numbers of Latino/a students will encounter such role models and mentors. According to Méndez-Morse (2004), "[m]entors play an important role in promoting others to leadership positions and are defined as people who support another or others toward career success while role models are those with characteristics and/or traits whom another or others wants to emulate" (p. 563). To address the limited presence of Latino/a administrators, same-race administrator mentoring support programs have been constructed (Magdaleno, 2006). Such programs can learn from stories that span long careers involving mentoring and role modeling, especially life stories that interweave social, cultural, and professional identities of the storytellers. "The role-modeling function of leadership is . . . performed not only by the leaders exhibiting certain behaviors in front of followers, but also . . . by the traits and behaviors reflected in the stories leaders tell about themselves" (Shamir, Dayan-Horesh, & Adler, 2005, p. 15). We excavated "life stories" of those who have held both school and district-level administrative roles (e.g., Dimmock & O'Donoghue,

2005). We then crafted life histories by situating their life stories in broader socio-cultural contexts.

Life history offers a way of exploring the relationship between culture, social structure, and individual lives (Dollard, 1949). Some of the earliest life histories were autobiographies of Native American chiefs (Goodson, 2009), such as Sun Chief (Talayesva, 1942). Detailed studies of the lives of individuals can reveal new perspectives on the culture as a whole “which are not accessible when one remains on the formal cross sectional plane of observation” (Dollard, 1949, p. 4). Additionally, life histories represent a selective commentary, interpreted and constructed through the researchers engaged in a meaning making process, using contextual data that point to the changing patterns of time and space to help readers understand life histories as social constructions (Goodson, 2009). For instance, in studying educational leadership, life history (as a particular form of biographical writing) has been used to study gender in the lives of women administrators (e.g., Bloom & Munro, 1995; Dillard, 1995). And though the two participants we feature herein identified as Latino (of Puerto Rican descent), each described their identities differently with regard to sexual orientation, geographical context (Illinois, Florida), and leadership role.

We recruited participants from our social circles who had served in educational leadership roles for at least 10 years. By inviting participants already acquainted with at least one researcher we were attempting to diminish any reticence they might have felt had we been strangers asking them to share their personal and professional lives. Also, we expected that a career of at least 10 years would have yielded them many opportunities to teach and mentor children and adults. We generated data by conducting telephone and face-to-face interviews (two each), making notations when transcribing, and collecting participants' written responses to follow up questions. We coded using an electronic format to help structure the narratives, as well as the comments and notations we made about the data. Analysis continued with the writing process through our decisions about which, if any, frameworks to consider in advance in response to the analysis. Themes arose while writing and are identified in the headings and subheadings.

Multiple ways of engaging with data and one another helped us understand how participants' social/cultural identities intersect with and informed the development of leadership (their own; others') over time. We present each participant's life history separately in order to "learn from the uniqueness each experience and situation brings to understanding leadership" among educators (Fennell, 2008, p. 111).

Mario Menendez: "Just do it!"

In 2015 Mario Menendez was supporting 25 schools as area director, which he noted is a position few other Latinos/as have held in his district. He began his career in education in Puerto Rico as a physical education teacher at a time when it was common for (White) men to leave coaching to enter administration. Mario relocated to Florida in 1999. He referred to this event as a "career change" even though he was only trading one teaching position for another – not changing his career field. He was also leaving one country and its dominant language (Spanish) for another country with a different dominant language (English). He was hired as a Spanish teacher while beginning his master's degree in educational leadership. His transition can be understood as an expression of what Yosso (2005) refers to as community cultural wealth. More specifically, his linguistic capital was evident through his effort to capitalize on his bilingual ability. Yosso's framework resists deficit notions about culture among people of color and challenges Bourdieu's cultural capital theory (e.g., Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). For example, rather than thinking attributing instances of low achievement in education to the culture of communities of color, community cultural wealth emphasizes the accumulation of individuals' assets and the translation of those assets into different yet intersecting forms of capital (navigational, linguistic, resistance, familial, social, aspirational) that can be invested in self and others.

Role Model to Mentor: Supporting Leadership Development

During Mario's next position as both a teacher and coach, the principal of the school encouraged him to take on more leadership responsibilities. That kind of encouragement continued when Mario transferred to a school where another principal gave him opportunities to work on administrative tasks that would prepare him to become an assistant principal. Mario stated, "I made him proud, I got the job done, I learned. So he pushed me more and then he helped me get my first administrative job, because he knew I could do the job anywhere else". His principal went from being his role model (someone Mario admired) to a mentor (someone who inspired Mario to advance through the leadership pipeline).

As a newly hired assistant principal of curriculum at the secondary level, Mario and others assistant principals were convened each summer to make fall term "master schedules" for their respective schools. This structure allowed assistant principals to capitalize on the collective skills of master schedule planners and receive specialized personnel resources. The grouping of entry-level and more experienced administrators helped to shape the school district's formal peer network and supported Mario's growth by providing access to high quality training and mentoring.

You have to have your relationships with your colleagues, because you have to learn from your colleagues...so the communication has to be a lot stronger and that makes it more influential because you rely on each other. I might rely on you this year, but next year you might rely on me. (Mario's quote)

He discussed support as reciprocal (rely on one another), active rather than passive (rely on you/me), and accessible when needed (this year, next year).

According to Yosso (2005), social capital is demonstrated through one's ability to draw on networks of people and community resources to accomplish some desired outcome without being or feeling isolated. The network of support Mario accessed included

informal mentoring and role modeling and structural opportunities provided by the district (i.e., collaborative assignments with apprenticeship). At that stage of his administrative career Mario was learning that relationships are building blocks to success and survival as a school administrator.

Barrier to Leadership Development: Cultural Mimicry

A threat to leadership development is the seductive power of the idealized image of leadership, which can lead to mimicry rather than some more authentic expressions. Mimicry derives from mimesis and in cultural anthropology refers to the imitation of a representation – often in the form of a group of people imitating another group. According to Pink (2008), an “effective leader is one who is able to channel this mimetic desire into shared goals, values and outcomes that can be perceived as having a wide benefit” (p. 13). Instead of aspiring to become what he admired (i.e., imitating his role models), Mario focused on serving others rather than self (self-image). He esteemed service-oriented collaboration over competition and gauged his leadership development according to what it provided to others.

If I try to be someone else, I'm just going to be the same. If my job's to be better than the person that was before me here, I wouldn't be better than him, because I need to help more people. My job's to help schools, help the principals, help teachers, help the students. (Mario's quote)

Furthermore, his aspirational capital was grounded in a service narrative, that centered his need to do good deeds (to help), rather than a needs-based narrative of others' deficits. Rather than aspire to be better than another, he aspired to do better for others; thereby, conveying his use of “aspirational capital” (Yosso, 2005).

Mario also linked development to personal background. He said, “You can't forget how you came up or where you came from and the things that some people did” (Mario's quote). We understand him

to mean that one's background is a source from which development proceeds. Rather than attempt to imitate other men or women he admired, he adapted and created his way of leading.

You have to adapt everything, not being him or her, just being yourself. But all the knowledge that you grab from everybody in making your own style, making your own leadership way [so] that people understand your way of being a leader.
(Mario's quote)

His advice to prospective administrators is to be oneself creatively and innovatively, making one's style/way.

Mentoring as "Pushing"

The cultural wealth of a community is only as vast as the assets invested. Mario's role model and mentor demonstrated cross-cultural mentoring: his mentoring principal was a White male who gave him opportunities to explore his curiosity about leadership. When asked about the role of ethnicity and gender in deciding who to mentor Mario responded, "It all depends on the person. You can be anything and if you don't have the mindset of helping, supporting, setting expectations then being a leader doesn't matter. That's my point of view." Rather than advance an essentialist perspective on ethnic and gender identity he acknowledged group heterogeneity and the importance of ideology or "mindset" as a force shaping how people behave. In closing Mario emphasized, "That's my point of view." We conclude that from his point of view helping, supporting, and setting expectations were key capacities that indicate one is "being a leader."

When the conversation focused on the recruitment of Hispanic (Latino/a) teachers into the leadership pipeline, Mario responded:

Of course, you want more, because right now we're the largest demographics in the county. You know, 34% of the students in this district are Hispanic and when they don't have role models,

they don't have people that they can relate with, it's a little bit more difficult. Even though that [not having role models] shouldn't be an excuse, but it [having role models] can also be an advantage.

Mario communicated that a person's character and capacity, rather than culture alone, guided his decision-making about whom he would mentor, though he was aware that Hispanic/Latino-a role models were underrepresented in school-based leadership positions.

When it came to discussing his work with Latino/a students and parents, Mario described how he "pushed" them to work with schools on advancing achievement by using a questioning technique to expose and rebuke excuses for failure. He would ask, "What's the excuse? You can't do it, because what? So with coming where I came from and how I grew up, yes [no excuses]." Mario's comments indicated his use of resistant capital in his leadership capacity. Yosso (2005) asserts that resistant capital involves opposing inequity, injustice, and social oppression through the use of skills and resources (assets). For instance, Latino parents who provide cultural/historical knowledge to expand a curriculum dominated by White -Western European cultural/historical knowledge and explain this as a structural issue is upending narratives of individual success and failure as the problem and solution.

Mario's description of "pushing" educators toward leadership provided additional insight into his comments on how he "pushed" Latino students and parents earlier in his career. He stated, "They need to be pushed for the right reasons, and [with] the understanding of why they need to be in a different position. They need to look in moving up in their career." It seems as though the emphasis on needs in the mentoring relationship is tied to an effort to bring awareness and come to agreement about opportunities, positions, and professional mobility. By working with Latino parents, students, or educators to help them understand the network of opportunities and challenges facing them when aspiring to obtain higher levels of education or higher-ranking positions, Mario can incite the critical consciousness necessary to use resistance as a transformative form of capital.

Zhou (1997) has written about Latino immigrant students growing up in America rely on social capital linked to ethnicity using different strategies that resulted in different outcomes. He states,

Some may rely on social capital available in their own ethnic community to actively fight for acceptance by the larger society; others may consciously reject the ideology and norms of the larger society by reconstructing an ethnicity in resistance to the oppressing structure; still others may give up their struggle and remain trapped in the bottom of the society. (p. 79)

Perhaps the combination of reliance and rejection, or opposition fluctuates for youth and adults within a broader range of strategies than those listed by Zhou (e.g., Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). When the conversation reverted to mentoring toward leadership, Mario provided examples of how he invested his assets and drew on forms of cultural capital in his efforts as “pushing”. We found that “pushing” was a part of his approach to leadership development: *offering mentoring*.

Mentoring as an Offering

In the following quote, Mario described how and why he invests his energy in others – those he perceived as having leadership potential and qualities he thought would benefit students.

You see potential, you want to get the best out of that potential and make it reality. And you want what's best out there to lead the schools, because it's going to benefit the students. . . . I pushed some people. I'm waiting for them to actually flourish. So you just look for quality, you look for potential. You maximize it!

Mario's narrative of offering mentoring involves seeking someone to mentor (“you just look for quality”), pushing to develop or improve

one's efforts and outcomes ("I pushed some people."), waiting ("I'm waiting for them to flourish."), and maximizing their potential ("You maximize it!"). Coupled with his efforts was his motto, Just Do it! As he explained, "I live by a philosophy of no excuses, and you can just do it. People that start looking for excuses why I cannot do something. That's when they fail. I just do it!" Given the context provided above, we understand that with the support of other role models who take the lead in offering mentoring one can be enabled to "Just do it!" In contrast to Mario's emphasis on his current role as an administrator supporting leadership in several schools, Elliott reflected on his social, cultural, and leadership identity having retired from educational leadership and taken on a new role as a life coach.

Elliott Rodriguez: "Stand Up for What you Believe – Do not Hide Your Identity!"

Elliott expressed pride in being Latino. "I am very Latino at the core of me and I love my culture and my music, food and all that represents being a Latino." He spoke of how he has encouraged others through his mantra, "Stand up for what you believe in - do not hide your identity!" While he may not have lived his quote during his educational journey as a teacher and administrator, over time he came to recognize the importance of feeling free to express what one thinks and who one is despite potential repercussions.

Elliott Rodriguez grew up in an abusive household where his father left him and his siblings at a young age. Then, at the age of fifteen, he cut ties with his mother. After moving from the Northeast area of the US to the Midwest, he experienced racism and hate related to sexual orientation. He described himself "first and foremost as Elliott, then a dad, grandfather, and feminist". He wants to be thought of as a person first, however, he described himself as a gay man in the interview.

As I've gotten older I don't like labels, so this whole thing of

you're gay, I'm not. You're straight. You must be bisexual because you were married, because I was married at one time. Then of course that question always came up with men that I dated was, "Are you bisexual?" because I was married before. (Elliott's quote)

By age nineteen he had married a woman, which lasted ten years (1973-1983), and had two daughters with his wife. When he was married to a woman, many people assumed he was bisexual while others questioned his "gayness." At the time of the interview his relationship with a male had recently ended. His detest of labels appeared to us as stemming from others' constant questioning of his sexual orientation.

His career in education began in 1977 as an elementary school teacher in Illinois, where he taught first through eighth grade for 16 years. He entered the field of education and learned to mentor through working with students from racial minority groups and low-income neighborhoods.

All of the schools I was in were primarily Hispanic or a combination of Latino and Black. They were schools in not so great areas of the city. Teaching changed my life for the better and when I look back at it I can see how much it has helped me to help others, even some parents with their kids. (Elliott's quote)

Elliott was promoted to assistant principal in 1993, where he continued to serve at the elementary school level prior to moving to an educational administrative position at the school district office for nine years. His career in leadership has included working directly with students to working with adults as an administrator and coach. Elliott's sexual orientation, coupled with identifying as Latino, presented a challenge. Elliott stated, "Being Latino and teaching in primarily Latino areas for most of my career was a challenge as a gay person. I literally hid it most of the time and wore a wedding ring even after I got divorced." While an administrator, Elliott continued wearing his

wedding ring so people would assume he was married to a woman as a "straight" male.

Leading Toward the Freedom to Love and Be Loved

During Elliott's teaching and administrative career as an assistant principal, he faced several barriers in his attempt to implement programs he believed would address topics such as racism, homophobia or bullying. He recalled one specific incident where he relieved a teacher for a break. While the teacher was on break, Elliott and the students in the classroom engaged in a conversation surrounding race and racism. While he did not permit students to discuss particular teachers, he did engage in discussions that acknowledged racism did exist in the school and what students felt could be done to overcome it. His attempt to engage the students in meaningful conversation surrounding topics very real to the population of students, primarily Hispanic and Black, did not fare well with some of the teachers or his principal.

It got back to the principal and he was furious. I mean he wanted to eat me for breakfast. He had a special meeting for me with the teacher and other teachers who, in my opinion, were exactly what the kids were talking about. (Elliott's quote)

Attempts to address race and racism were not the only barriers Elliott confronted while an administrator.

[It] really was challenging for me to set a tone and get programs in the school that would address the bullying, and address and decrease the incidence of violence. It wasn't encouraged at the district level, at the top. I think teachers avoided it because they didn't know how to address it. (Elliott's quote)

He also felt that certain policies and practices impeded his ability to

address other issues in an effort to prompt change. Elliott stated, "For me some of the policies [and practice] frustrated me . . . like lining up girls only and boys only, [and] the fact that we don't address LGBT kids even when it's obvious that there is a need."

The silencing exerted over him by the power of the "norm" of heterosexuality was also evident in his discussion of young students. He spoke about the difficulty in introducing programs into the elementary school addressing LGBT issues.

I don't think I'd be able to even really know the answer because I didn't try to do it. My perception, working for [the district], [was] like pulling teeth, like serious dental work where kicking and screaming may be the way that they would finally decide to address the LGBT kids. In high school, the students have taken over. They've been the ones to say, "We're gay. We want to be seen. Hello, we're here," and they start their clubs. Whereas in elementary school they don't dare do that, they're too young. They may not know how to – they're not as organized in that way. They're not as confident . . . so they sit quietly and some are harassed. (Elliott's quote)

Not all students identify or are comfortable with the accepted dichotomous gender roles that are ingrained in society.

Butler (1990) argues that gender is socially and culturally constructed. Separating boys and girls into different lines perpetuates a dichotomous view of gender and gender roles and reifies society's socially constructed concepts of the "neat" categories males and females based solely on physiological differences that are taken as truths about how they should act and behave. Policies and practices based on these notions of gender, coupled with expressions of love or intimacy prohibited Elliott's work as an administrator to promote a more socially just and inclusive environment.

In the 1990s, the policies "Don't ask don't tell" and the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) were implemented under the Clinton administration. In 1994, "Don't ask don't tell" was enacted, and though it stated "closeted" homosexuals serving in the military

would be free from harassment, it also made clear that individuals who were openly homosexual could not serve in the military. In 1996, DOMA became a federal law which allowed individual states the right to refuse recognizing same-sex marriages even if the marriages were granted by law under other states. Thus, states were allowed to continue legal discriminatory practices against gay couples seeking to marry. These types of policies discouraged Elliott from attempting to implement programs at his school or even “come out” and live his vision of a more authentic life.

When discussing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) topics, Elliott’s own fear of “coming out” was evident.

I kept it completely private. I felt like in the inner city (in the kind of rough areas that I was in) it wasn’t a good idea for me to come out . . . I’m not going to endanger my profession, my livelihood, so that I can come out. I believed that if I were out, it would be problematic . . . It was the silence around it that told me everything, that spoke volumes and that dictated to me, ‘Elliott, don’t tell people you’re gay. They’re not going to dig it and they’re going to try to impede you from going forward.’
(Elliott’s quote)

Ramirez (1999) found that in Puerto Rico “masculine ideology” also includes heteronormative practices, where the male who does not fit into this role may be seen as the “non-man or maricón (fairy).” Similarly, in the Dominican Republic, De Moya (2004) found that in its dominant gender order, heteronormativity denoted masculinity. Although Elliott was working in the US, the hierarchies associated with gender, race, and sexual orientation travel through relations between countries and cultures; personal and professional. Additionally, Mayberry, Chenneville, and Currie (2011) argue that educational institutions reify a heteronormative culture, positioning those who fit into the “norm” with power, while oppressing the “others.” Fear of losing his job or having his career destroyed by “coming out” kept Elliott in the closet, rendering him silent to even suggesting policies or practices as an administrator that would create a

more inclusive environment.

Spiritual Mentor/Life Coach

After 29 years in education, Elliott found himself in a transformational period of his life. He decided to take an early retirement and found spiritual mentoring as his calling. He went back to school and received a Master's Degree in Spiritual Psychology, which he described as a very rigorous but extremely self-reflective in nature, which helped facilitate his transformational journey.

I realized that my calling was to help others and that I had a gift of being able to get people to get to a solution for their life problem or their life issue – whatever that challenge was. I think it came out of being a teacher for so long and then being an assistant principal; being a problem solver. (Elliott's quote)

He believed his new career as a spiritual life coach was chosen for him and was playing a major role in his identity.

I identify a lot more in my life as a mentor, a spiritual mentor. I want to mention that, because that seems to be what God has decided for me. Like I don't think I made that decision, I think it was made for me. (Elliott's quote)

Through embarking on this new career path, seemingly inspired by divine intervention, Elliott was able to reflect, adapt, and reuse lessons learned in 29 years educating in public schools to help kids succeed and applying them to adult lives striving to meet the same end - goal of achievement and personal satisfaction. Others have found a similar intersection of spirituality, ethnicity, and advocacy for LGBT students (e.g., Reed & Johnson, 2010).

Conclusion

According to Anderson and Page, literature targeting educational leadership in the 1980s –1990s, the decades that Elliott and Mario entered educational leadership in the US, has seldom acknowledged those in educational leadership roles “as human beings with life histories, genders, social class affiliations, and ideological commitments” (as cited in Fennell, 2008, p. 110). Even when gender became an identity of interest in the 1990s, other aspects of identity remained sidelined such as ethnicity, language, spirituality, and sexual orientation. In addition to the relevance of their sense of cultural identity to their leadership practice and development, was their sense of agency.

“Just do it!” (No Excuses) was a motto in Mario’s leadership philosophy. His message for those without role models was to confront the barriers and accept support from those offering mentoring. Mario saw barriers as part of reality, which could be overcome through adequate support, resources, and the recognition that one’s development is needed (to help others). He lived out this motto in his practice with students, parents, and adults. Elliott’s mantra was twofold, “Stand up and do not hide your identity!” It illustrates how agency and identity were linked to his sense of purpose, which he enacted in the practice of purpose-driven leadership. A spiritual dimension guided his purpose and thus he viewed his profession in education as a calling to serve others. In common, Mario and Elliott have had long careers through which they have demonstrated an inner strength to resist hegemonic structures, forms of oppression, and systemic inequities (Dantley, 2003). Like them, those in educational leadership who draw on multiple forms of capital to support others through such challenges are central actors in the aim to promote the advancement of Latinos/as in education and/or educational leadership.

References

- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture*. London, England: Sage.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- De Moya, A. (2004). Power games and totalitarian masculinity in the Dominican Republic. In R. E. Reddock (Ed.), *Interrogating Caribbean masculinities: Theoretical and empirical analyses* (pp. 68 - 102). Kingston, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press.
- Dimmock, C. A., & O'Donoghue, T. A. (2005). *Innovative school principals and restructuring: Life history portraits of successful managers of change*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bloom, L. R., & Munro, P. (1995). Conflicts of selves: Non-unitary subjectivity in women administrators' life history narratives. In J. A. Hatch & R. Wisniewski (Eds.), *Life history and narrative* (pp. 99-112). Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.
- Dantley, M. E. (2003). Purpose-driven leadership: The spiritual imperative to guiding schools beyond high-stakes testing and minimum proficiency. *Education and Urban Society*, 35(3), 273-291.
- Dillard, C. B. (1995). Leading with her life: An African American feminist (re)interpretation of leadership for an urban high school principal. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 31(4), 539-563.
- Dollard, J. (1949). *Criteria for the life history*. Magnolia, MA: Peter Smith.
- Fennell, H. A. (2008). Walking a fine balance: The life history of a woman principal. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*, 6(2), 93-113.
- Goodson, I. (2009). The story of life history: Origins of the life history method in sociology. *Identity*, 1(2), 129-142.

- Hernández, F. (2006, April). *The racial identity development of selected Latina/o school principals and its relation to their leadership practices*. Paper presented at the American Education Research Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Iglesias, N. (2009). *Latino superintendents' identities: A critical study of cultural, personal, and professional worlds* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/6026v2cx>
- Irizarry, J., & Donaldson, M. L. (2012). Teach for America: The Latinization of U.S. schools and the critical shortage of Latina/o teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 49(1), 155-194.
- Magdaleno, K. R. (2006). Mentoring Latino school leaders. *Leadership*, 36(1), 12-14.
- Mayberry, M., Chenneville, T., & Currie, S. (2011). Challenging the sounds of silence: A qualitative study of gay-straight alliances and school reform efforts. *Education and Urban Society*, 43(6), 1-33.
- Méndez-Morse, S. (2004). Constructing mentors: Latina educational leaders' role models and mentors. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 561-590.
- Pink, C. (2008). Leadership through the lens of Mimetic Desire. *International Journal of Leadership in Public Services*, 4(2), 10-14.
- Ramirez, R. L. (1999). *What it means to be a man: Reflections on Puerto Rican masculinity* (R. E. Casper, Trans.). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Reed, L., & Johnson, L. T. (2010). Serving LGBT students: Examining the spiritual, religious, and social justice implications for an African American school administrator. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 79(3), 390-404.
- Solórzano, D., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2001). Critical race theory, transformational resistance and social justice: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, 36(3), 308-342.

- Shamir, B., Dayan-Horesh, H., & Adler, D. (2005). Leading by biography: Towards a life-story approach to the study of leadership. *Leadership, 1*(1), 13–29.
doi: 10.1177/1742715005049348
- Talayesva, D. C. (1942). Sun chief: The autobiography of a Hopi Indian (L. W. Simmons, Ed.). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education, 8*(1), 69-91.
- Zhou, M. (1997, August). Growing up American: The challenge confronting immigrant children and children of immigrants. *Annual Review of Sociology, 23*, 63-95.

Authors

Vonzell Agosto, Associate Professor of Curriculum Studies in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, focuses her research on curriculum leadership policy, practice, and preparation related to anti-oppressive education.

Angel Hernandez, Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, focuses his research on leadership practices of school administrators and instructional leadership with attention to culture and technology.

Heather McConnell, Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, focuses her research on school leadership and culture informed by policies and practices related to disability, discipline, and sexual identity.