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Longman's "Diversity matters: Race, ethnicity, & the future of Christian higher education" (book review)

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Book Review



Longman, K., (Ed.) (2017). *Diversity matters: Race, ethnicity, & the future of Christian higher education*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press. 384 pp. ISBN 9781891124542

This book is a compilation of carefully curated diversity research written by educational professionals working in post-secondary institutions within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). This five-part book begins with an inspirational forward and introduction. This book was written to raise awareness of the theological importance of diversity work in Christian higher education.

This book is well structured and easy to read. Following the initial preface and introduction, the book is divided into five sections, all starting with an introduction explaining the purpose of each chapter within the section. At the end of each chapter, discussion questions help readers interested in implementing diversity work further explore possible institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in creating a sustainable, successful program. The first section comprises four campus case studies showcasing the positive impacts of having a diverse campus and diversity programming.

In the first four chapters, Nyack College, North Park University, Warner Pacific University, and Greenville College, each chapter's author reflects upon the history of their institution and their institution's location, roles, and intentionality in furthering diversity work and programming.

Section two is authored by five Christian diversity professionals who have over twenty years of experience in diversity work at their respective institutions. This section shares authentic reflections from the authors, specifically discussing the importance of resiliency and transformational leadership efforts and sharing the lessons they have learned over time leading diversity efforts.

The third section investigates the roles of white allies engaged in racial justice advocacy. The authors of the introduction to section three state that they hope to “help readers to recognize the brokenness of individuals and of systems that perpetuate the problem of partiality and racism in society broadly, and Christian higher education specifically” (p. 163). The authors of each chapter in this section are scholar-practitioners who have witnessed and experienced the healing work of racial reconciliation.

The fourth section discusses specific curricular and co-curricular institutional initiatives in implementing successful diversity programming and activities.

The fifth and final section shares the lived experiences of courageous faculty and administrators of color employed within primarily white Christian colleges and universities and how they have thrived despite experiencing macro- and microaggressions, stereotyping, and gender bias.

This book is strongly recommended. Additionally, this book expands upon the existing literature and the readers' understanding of intersectionality within God's diverse kingdom.

Reviewer

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