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Book Review Introduction: Growing Up Transnational: Colombian and Dominican Children of Immigrants in New York City

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Cover Page Footnote

Patricia Velasco, EdD, (patricia.m.velasco@gmail.com) started her career as a speech therapist in Mexico City. She worked for the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project supporting bilingual and ENL teachers across NYC. Ruth Swinney and Patricia co-authored *Connecting Content and Academic Language for English Learners and Struggling Students* (2011). Together with Elizabeth Ijalba and Catherine Crowley, Patricia has recently edited a book published by Cambridge University Press titled *Language, Culture and Education: Challenges of Diversity in the United States*. From 2010-2013, she was the director of the NYSED Bilingual Common Core Initiative. Patricia is currently coordinating a NYSED project that describes the importance of oral language, metalinguistic awareness and flexible groupings as key practices for implementing the Next Generation English Language Arts Standards in bilingual classrooms.

Book Review Introduction

Growing Up Transnational: Colombian and Dominican Children of Immigrants in New York City

Patricia Velasco

Queens College, City University of New York

In this present issue of *JMER*, Marcela Ossa Parra is reviewing a book by Upegui-Hernández titled *Growing Up Transnational: Colombian and Dominican Children of Immigrants in New York City*. Ossa Parra is currently an Assistant Professor in the Bilingual Education Program at Queens College, CUNY. Marcela Ossa Parra is Colombian and she therefore understands the cultural context where many of the participants in Upegui-Hernández' work have lived.

This book was published in 2014. We decided to review it because of the holistic picture that Upegui-Hernández paints of the multiple identities that Colombian and Dominican children of immigrants living in New York City have to negotiate in their daily life. As teachers working in multilingual environments, we are aware of the role that language has in transmitting and reinforcing the cultural background and identity that our students bring. Reading Upegui-Hernández's book can give us a more nuanced understanding of how multiple selves are formed and differentiated in Colombian and Dominican immigrants. Family and social context seem to be at the center of transnational identity.

An interesting finding in Upegui-Hernández book was that for all the participants in this study, family is at the center of maintaining transnational ties with members in their parents' home countries. Furthermore, both groups developed similar identity negotiation strategies that go beyond fixed ethnic, racial, and national labels. In negotiating these transnational identities however, the social context of skin color, perceived social class, and personal immigration histories played a determinant role in forming a transnational identity.

Anyone interested in social justice should read this book. It has made an important contribution to understanding the many obstacles and challenges that immigrants face in the United States.