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Immigrant Students in High Schools

Patricia Velasco

Queens College, City University of New York

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Book Reviews' Theme: Immigrant Students in High Schools

Patricia Velasco

Queens College, City University of New York

Socially relevant issues always find their way into the classroom, one way or another. This is particularly the case with the theme that concerns the two books that are reviewed in this issue of JMER: Immigrant Students in High Schools. The books *The New Kids. Big Dreams and Brave Journeys at a High School for Immigrant Teens* by Brooke Hauser (2011) and Tatyana Kleyn's (2011) *Immigration: The Ultimate Teen Guide. It Happened to Me* highlight the talents, hopes and resilience of recently arrived immigrant students in classrooms across the United States.

The books by Hauser and Kleyn are not scholarly books aimed at creating "airtight" arguments. These are books that can enable students and teachers to "breathe, create spaces and find voices" (Pinar, 2008, p. 493). Kleyn and Hauser present vignettes that bring to life the stories, circumstances and educational challenges that undocumented immigrant students face. These books convey the enormous optimism and courage that these students deploy as they learn and adapt to a new society. Both books can be used by prospective and practicing teachers to question present immigration policies, the uncertain future of these policies as well as our relation to them. In so doing, students and teachers create a collective understanding of what it means to analyze a socially relevant issue. These discussions are indispensable not only for creating advocates for improving educational opportunities for all students; they form the basis for becoming a truly educated individual.

Reference

- Pinar, W. F. (2008). Curriculum theory since 1950: Crisis, reconceptualization, internationalization. In F. M. Connelly, M. F. He, and J. Phillion (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of curriculum and instruction* (pp. 491-513). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.