From Schooling, blackness, and national identity: This article presents qualitative observations among Ecuador’s largest Afro-Ecuadorian population, located in the province of Esmeraldas. The author explores how the “presentation of blackness” often has negative connotation even within the predominately Afro-Ecuadorian community. She explores the origins of these negative connotations in school curriculum and interaction; and further in representations and references to local and national “blackness.” She states: “My objective is to show the relationship between local context, educational practices and how students make sense of racial identity and discrimination” (pg. 50).

1. First, consult Ecuador in Focus, The CIA world fact book, and this article in order to understand what portion of Ecuadorians are Afro-Ecuadorian? After reading this article, why might such statistical discrepancies exist?

2. Describe the creation and utilization of the “Mestizaje” and Blanqueamiento” social categories (pg. 48). After reading this article consider and comment on the implications of such a social construction of race.

3. The first Ecuadorian census occurred in 1950. When did racial/ethnic classification appear on the census?

4. Why was Esmeraldas chosen as the setting of this research?

5. Identity and describe what you find interesting regarding the authors findings assessing her three main research question:

   a) What ways is the dominant discourse of national identity and citizenship, mestizaje and blanqueamiento revealed in formal schooling practices?

   b) In what ways is the dominant discourse revealed in teacher and student perceptions of and negotiations to racial inequality and discrimination?

   c) How do students of African descent perceive and negotiate the dominant discourse of national identity?