

identify a “trainee teacher.” The fact that a group of college lecturers with different backgrounds and interests could be persuaded to work towards a common product of this sort is a demonstration of collegiality that many could learn from.

What could a student teacher from elsewhere in the world gain from reading this book about the British context? There are certainly subject-specific ideas that would apply anywhere, and most of the suggestions for further activity would also be useful. Most of the suggested readings and references come from Britain, and would be a valuable new perspective for North American students. Finally, all student teachers, and many practicing teachers would benefit from knowing how children perceive them, and this, of course, is at the heart of the book. There is great perceptiveness and a sophistication demonstrated in the quotations from children. Do all student teachers already know that children do not object to hard work as long as the teacher “makes it clear and exciting?” that Year 2 children recognize – and appreciate – a teacher who “helps us do things. She doesn’t make us,” and that an 11 year-old child can recognize that: “He couldn’t control us. He never kept his word on punishments. He was only nice to us when we were nice to him.” Given these – and many other – observations by the children, student teachers should be especially proud of “the tenacious loyalty to the trainee” observed by the writers of one chapter.

This was an ambitious venture. It may be that the book occasionally falls short of its goals, but it comes close enough that it would certainly be a worthwhile addition to a professional library for student teachers, practicing teachers and teacher educators. If we agree with one of the authors that “being an effective and efficient teacher is more about what the pupils think of the teacher than the other way around,” this book has taken the first step in asking the pupils what they think, and the second step in helping us to listen to them. It is left to the readers to respond appropriately.

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RAM MAHALIGAM & CAMERON McCARTHY (Eds.). *Multicultural Curriculum: New directions for social theory, practice, and policy*. New York: Routledge (2000). 310 pp. US\$34.99. (PB ISBN 0415920140). Library Edition US\$80 (HB ISBN: 0415920132).

Since the 1970s multiculturalism has made significant headway in politics, society, and culture, particularly in ‘western’ democracies such as Europe, north America, Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand. While its impact can be witnessed in a range of activities throughout these societies (e.g. government policy, the media, advertising, sport), it is in schools and, more

broadly, education, that multiculturalism has arguably had its most significant effects. This can be witnessed by not only a growing and theoretically diverse literature on the relationship of multiculturalism to education, but an array of governmental sponsored multicultural policy initiatives that have profoundly shaped the character of schooling. For example, it is not unusual for university and college teacher education programs to include a significant component that focuses on multiculturalism. Canada, for example, has a ministry of multicultural affairs and a minister responsible for promoting issues and policies on multiculturalism.

The emergence and growing importance of multiculturalism in both everyday life and schooling has also become the focus of much scholarly debate and analysis to which the present volume, *Multicultural Curriculum: New directions for social theory, practice, and policy* makes a timely contribution. *Multicultural Curriculum* brings together papers from a range of scholars who critically review and analyze the different manifestations of multiculturalism as it has emerged within education. As the title of the book suggests, these are organized within three sections under theory, practice, and policy. While the six chapters that constitute the first section each have a different focus, they all nevertheless attempt to develop an analysis of their subject that defines a theoretical perspective that is multicultural.

As becomes apparent, this theoretical perspective is quite eclectic, borrowing insights from feminism, neo-marxism, postmodernism, post-colonial theory and, more broadly, cultural studies. For example, James Ladwig's chapter makes extensive use of postmodern and postcolonial theory to understand how schooling has shaped globalization. His argument is that globalization theorists have tended to assume that schooling has been subject to processes of globalization, rather than understand schools as 'world-cultural institutions' that have historically constituted a force of globalization. Ladwig's response is to argue for a 'world theory' of schooling that would allow the transfer of 'just pedagogies' aimed at subverting the historical connections between curriculum and the reproduction of social inequality.

Similarly, Michael Apple's chapter on the effects of current educational reforms associated with marketisation elaborates a neo-marxist critique of New Right educational politics. Apple's analysis of 'the reconstruction of common sense' that the New Right has achieved in education, and more broadly culture and society, is particularly illuminating on neo-liberalism and the impact of markets on the politics of race and ethnicity.

McLaren, Leonardo and Lee Allen's chapter has similar concerns. Their account of the social context of 'whiteness' and the re-colonization of 'its lost historical horizons' argues for a 'revolutionary multiculturalism' and 'praxis' that acts as both critique of contemporary institutional forms of

multicultural education and a focus for research. The aim of this 'radical multiculturalism' should be the construction of a 'methodological apprenticeship' aimed at denaturalizing 'white governmentality.' As they point out, this should begin with teacher education programs that almost invariably have white teachers as their clientele. Along with the other chapters in this section, the work of these authors makes a significant contribution to understanding how and in what ways the concept and practice of multicultural education can be used to explore new possibilities for reconceptualizing social theory.

The second and third sections of the book move from theory to questions of practice and policy. These two sections are more concerned with the problems and issues that educators confront in the everyday world as practitioners of multiculturalism within schools as, for example, teachers of mathematics or as university professors. These later sections nevertheless build upon the theoretical insights developed in the first section on theory.

The chapter by Chun, Christopher and Gumpert 'Multiculturalism and the academic organization of knowledge,' explores the tensions and contradictions that educators face in developing multicultural programs in higher education that are increasingly governed by forms of technical rationality. As they point out, the impact of neo-liberalism on universities has been to systematically promote closer relations with commercial interests that are viewed positively for creating 'opportunities,' 'synergy,' and 'progress.' The effect of this process has been to open up the internal social organization of higher education to economic influences that now saturate research, teaching, administration and academic career paths in the pursuit of capital accumulation. Consequently, they argue, the organization and production of much academic knowledge has increasingly been infiltrated by a discourse that masks its technical-rational character. As a counterweight to this process, Chun, Christopher and Gumpert explore the knowledge politics of ethnic and gender studies as exemplars of multiculturalism. Their observation is that multiculturalism, rather than expressing the neutral, apolitical 'truths' of technical-rational discourse, allows for and celebrates multiple perspectives that simultaneously subvert and open up possibilities for the construction of critical epistemologies. Thus, they conclude that 'if scholars who share a critical epistemological standpoint could be located together, regardless of their subject matter interests, teaching and research may find some unexpected synergies' (p. 236).

Lesko and Bloom's chapter also focuses on questions of knowledge production within the academy and the contradictions it presents multiculturalists. Through their account of teaching multiculturalism to student teachers they highlight what they refer to as the 'haunting of multicultural epistemology and pedagogy.' As they convincingly argue, contemporary forms of multicultural epistemology and pedagogy are embedded within a 'modernist

fantasy' that relies upon notions of positive knowledge and rational persuasion to be deployed by teachers within classroom interactions with students. That is, lack of awareness of students towards multicultural issues is assumed to be the outcome of their ignorance or lack of knowledge rather than an affect of knowledge itself. Lesko and Bloom show how such a positivist epistemology generates teaching practices that engender a view of poverty and race in their (predominantly white) students that explains such poverty as the outcome of either individual personal failings or of the belief that 'black families are deviant.' The authors suggest the construction of an alternative, multicultural pedagogy that is dialogical, focuses on the production of student interpretations, and involves a degree of risk on the part of teacher-educators. As they succinctly put it:

. . . we maintain that the focus of multicultural teacher education must shift from presentations of experiences of "others" [. . .] to examinations of the construction of identities, subjectivities, and experiences. This understanding shifts the curriculum focus from imparting "realistic truths" about historically oppressed groups to interrogating how systems of meaning work – systems that result in people seeing and believing that the world is made up of "blacks" and "whites," "women" and "men," and "gays" and "straights." (p. 252)

These and other chapters in *Multicultural Curriculum* make an important contribution to the development of a critical multiculturalism in education. In this respect the text deserves a wide readership, particularly among teacher educators and other practitioners involved in the preparation of student teachers, pre-service and in-service teacher education. There are many theoretical insights, observations on practice and policy in the book that should provoke critical self-reflection and discussion among these groups engaged with both mainstream and 'radical' forms of multicultural education. Having said this, two weaknesses can be identified in *Multicultural Curriculum*. First, there is a tendency by some of the authors to adopt a rather dense and at times opaque discourse that is unnecessarily theoretical, particularly given its intended audience(s). Second, while the text does suggest 'new directions' for reconceptualizing multicultural education as theory, practice and policy, these remain relatively discrete areas of inquiry. Despite these reservations, *Multicultural Curriculum* makes an important and timely contribution to re-thinking both multicultural education and what it means to be a multicultural educator.

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