



Race, R. (2015). *Multiculturalism and education*. London: Bloomsbury.

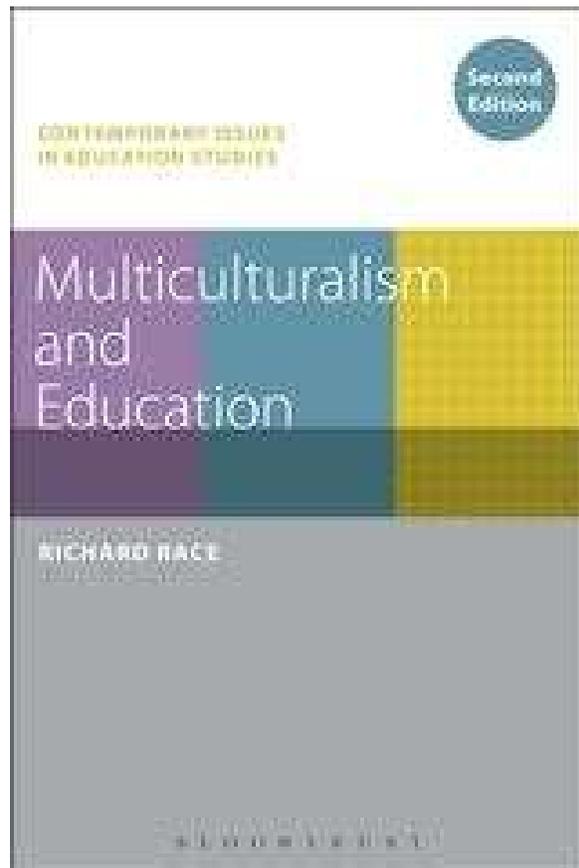
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Reviewed by Eric Ambroso
Arizona State University
United States

Richard Race's book *Multiculturalism and Education* (2015) effectively supports his formerly publicized position that schools should "provide culturally diverse opportunities for subjects like racism, terrorism and anti-discrimination to be taught" (Race, 2008a; 2008b, as cited in Race, 2015, p. 11). As part of the series *Contemporary Issues in Education Studies*, this volume is one of five studies published by Bloomsbury that explores key issues in education today. In the concise second edition of the book, Race, who also serves as the series' co-editor, examines the trajectory of multicultural education from a global perspective, with a particular focus on policies in Britain. The seven chapters, including the introduction, are a quick, informative read for students, teachers, and faculty members interested in multiculturalism in modern education.

Readers interested in a framework that values the cultural practices of marginalized communities may find, as I did, that Race's analysis of the concept of multiculturalism sheds light on salient issues surrounding access and equality in the US. (Yosso, 2005).



It is timely in regard to critiques of the “color-blind” social and educational paradigms that continue to advance racial inequalities in post-civil rights U.S. (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011; Embrick, 2015), as well as current politics regarding nationalism, religion, and immigration (e.g., Mark & Diamond, 2015). The concept of multiculturalism is therefore relevant to debates about education and social policy in the U.S. surrounding oft-discussed religious, cultural, and racial tensions throughout the country.

Race begins the book by describing the evolution of multiculturalism as a concept, from its adoption as an official policy in Canada in 1971 to its current implementation in Britain. Race posits the Canadian definition as one that has historically satisfied both the majority and minority populations, encouraging a two-way social process in which all citizens maintain claims to their unique cultural identities. To situate the Canadian model comparatively, he outlines a critique of the U.S. salad bowl metaphor, but the discussion falls short of sufficiently explaining the issues of privilege and power within that model. Race’s conceptual framework is informed by the work of two significant authors in the field of multicultural education: James A. Banks and Bhikhu Parekh. He supports Banks and Banks’ (2007) position that multiculturalism cannot be thought of as a social concept that operates independently, and Parekh’s (2000) contention that the concept is both plural and fluid because the state of cultural diversity is constantly changing in the modern world (as cited in Race, 2015). Race examines both of these conceptual constructs within the context of education and social reforms over the past half-century.

Race also offers insight into how educational, social, political, and conceptual factors informing the construct of multiculturalism have affected its development, and he provides examples of rhetoric and policy documents that epitomize shifting paradigms throughout its history. For

example, he describes how educational policies aimed to improve inter-faith relations in the have been influenced by immigration trends and contextual events, such as the riots in the northwest of Britain or the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001. He draws on data collected from interviews with teachers and teacher-trainers to illustrate how they made sense of these policies when developing curricula. In describing how educational policy has continuously adapted to contemporary social pressures, Race makes a strong case for the relevance of multiculturalism in education systems that are in desperate need of teachers who can bridge cultural divides.

Pointing out the differences between assimilation, integration, multiculturalism and anti-racism, Race provides context for each concept by applying them to relevant government reports and analyzing the consequences of each on British multiculturalism. In particular, he credits the interpretation of multiculturalism in the Swann Report (DES, 1985) with shifting supposed responsibility for the “problem” of diversity from immigrants to the education system in Britain. According to Race, the Swann Report challenged the status quo of the integrationist framework by calling for an education system that recognized the diversity of its students and offered them all equal opportunities.

The greatest weakness of the book is Race’s organization of rhetorical and policy examples to bolster his arguments. In the section about integration, Race describes how the 1950s Civil Rights movement in the US contributed to educational policy before examining the influence of Margaret Thatcher on the British educational system in the 1970s (p. 22). In examining the concept of multiculturalism, Race focuses on the Swann Report (DES, 1985, in Race, 2015), but ends the section with a short paragraph about multicultural education in the U.S. Although these analyses are presented chronologically, the connection between the two different

contexts is not clearly defined. Race's attempt to analyze the concept of multiculturalism on a global scale is admirable, but it is often difficult to follow the contextual path of his examples.

Perhaps the most relevant section in the book describes the responses to a terrorist attack in London on July 7, 2005 ("7/7") and the political gesturing that followed. Race analyzes a speech made by former Chairperson of the British Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, in which he addressed cultural issues and social segregation in Britain. He points out several contradictions in Phillips' speech, which included a plea to the public that Muslims not be made the targets of retribution, while simultaneously calling on Muslims to come forward with information on terrorist activity. Race also references his own work (2008b; 2008c) to demonstrate the relationship between education and terrorism, suggesting that Phillips's speech both highlighted and contributed to the British government's agenda dominated by an integrationist policy framework. Finally, Race examines empirical data collected from interviews to make claims about how professionals interpreted Phillips' arguments. One interesting phenomenon he discusses was the emergence of the 'discourse of strangers' metaphor, which represented how the interviewees viewed the spatial and social segregation occurring in Britain at the time (p. 52). Race interprets this data as further evidence that modern British communities are becoming more socially segregated due, in part, to globalization and technology.

Race effectively uses empirical data to analyze the effects of multiculturalist policy in small-scale, local contexts and to consider the possibility of advancing the concept post 7/7. The anecdote about Iranian immigrants asking a city council in Vancouver to segregate a public swimming pool is particularly memorable because it epitomizes the tension between cultural respect and an inclusive Canadian ethos (p. 80). In another interview, a

former British science teacher criticizes the practice of educators celebrating cultural differences in schools without fully understanding how to encourage cultural awareness in the classroom (p. 84). These examples help the reader understand issues concerning the implementation of multicultural practices in local communities and draw attention to how teachers and students understand them in schools.

The concept of citizenship is central in the conclusion of *Multiculturalism and Education*, in which Race takes a careful look at the current citizenship education curriculum in the UK. He connects contemporary literature on the subject with policy documents to describe how more responsibility was placed on school systems in these countries to emphasize the importance of citizenship after the 7/7 attacks. Race expands upon this topic by highlighting a recent ideological shift from multicultural to integrationist citizenship education practices in Britain. Once again, he leans on the work of Parekh (2008) and Banks (2014) in his theoretical framework (as cited in Race, 2015).

Race's volume is an excellent account of the development of multiculturalism in various countries, particularly Britain. The scope of his research into the existing literature and policy documents is impressive, including the connections he makes to his own empirical findings. As an educator with a background in second language acquisition, I am interested in further examination of the English-language hegemony within the concept of multiculturalism in the UK and US. I also believe that extensions of this work could explore the issues of police brutality against minorities and the formation of extremist groups to protest monocultural or multicultural policies. Overall, however, *Multiculturalism and Education* is an excellent read for students and faculty members interested in multiculturalism, or for administrators, educators, and curriculum developers working to overcome cultural issues in diverse classrooms across the world.

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About the Reviewer

Eric Ambroso

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
eric.ambroso@asu.edu

Eric Ambroso is a doctoral student in the Educational Policy and Evaluation program in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. His research interests include educational policy, English language teaching and learning, language education policy, and multicultural education.



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