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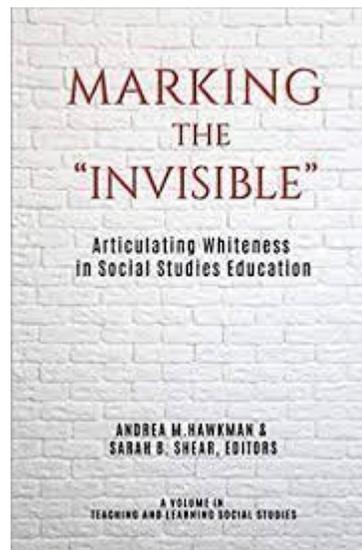
Hawkman, A. M., & Shear, S. B. (Eds.) (2020). *Marking the “invisible”: Articulating whiteness in social studies education*. Information Age Publishing.

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It is no surprise that the social studies curriculum in the United States has suffered substantive maladies, from gaslighting to whitewashing to making invisible Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), in the retelling – and often the storytelling – of American history. In this edited volume, Hawkman and Shear bring together an array of social studies scholars, practitioners, and other educational stakeholders to underscore the pervasiveness of white social studies (WSS) and its lingering effects in curricular areas that run the P-20 spectrum.



The editors begin by establishing the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the volume. They follow with a section that delves immediately into mapping how whiteness has been imbued, supported, and cultivated in official social studies curricula and standards. Next, contributing authors critique and outline ways to provide critical counternarratives to learning spaces and digital media often used in social studies instruction. In the penultimate section, authors call out, name, and talk back to (hooks, 1989) invisible, hegemonic discourses of whiteness in educational trajectories. The editors culminate the volume with conversations and dialogues that underscore the messy and self-reflective work of confronting and challenging whiteness and white supremacy in teaching practices.

The main underpinnings of this volume are rooted in the interface of whiteness, WSS, and critical race theory (CRT) and the subsequent insights this generates for the social studies curriculum. The work relies on Matias' (2016) definition of whiteness as “a pre-existing psychological condition which makes those who subscribe to it feel humanistically empty” (p. 223) and is often understood to be characterized by “denial, defensiveness, and dismal” (p. 64). An offshoot of this in the social studies curricular and instructional realms is the prevalence of white social studies, akin to the concept of whiteness in that it “seeks to maintain the status quo of the white dominant hegemonic narrative across K-12 history, economics, civics, geography, and other social sciences” (p. 272). In identifying characteristics of WSS, most contributors elucidate on one or more of its 10 tenets, noted initially by Chandler and Branscombe (2015). Similarly, most authors ground their analyses in CRT tenets with a bent and emphasis toward counternarrative storytelling as a heuristic to reveal the lasting tacit yet damming legacy of invisible whiteness in the social studies curriculum.

The works in this volume draw from various research designs and data collection methods, such as content analysis, youth participatory action research, and historiography, among others, which is one of its strong points. This variation provides readers evidence of the prevalence of WSS across approaches and methodologies. While this characteristic makes the volume attractive and diverse, the quality and methodological soundness of the chapters vary significantly. To illustrate, in one contribution where the authors reported the findings of critical content analysis using picture books recommended by the National Council for the Social Studies, they used only five to seven books of the 59 picture books they examined to underscore their findings. The authors noted four main themes – evasiveness of whiteness, tokenistic use of ethnic minorities, white saviorism, and the historical isolation of ethnic minorities – to underscore how whiteness is manifested in picture books. While they did identify these “look fors” (e.g., tokenism), they neither noted emergent or dominant themes nor provided alternative instructional options for practitioners. The findings from this chapter feel forced and left this reader questioning the validity of this research endeavor.

Conversely, Buchanan and Ward, in their contribution, use two films about the famous court case *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) to analyze the oft-ignored anti-miscegenation laws that were also contended along with other injustices during the Civil Rights Movement. The contributors engage the films from a critical, liberatory positionality and provide a detailed guide for practitioners on using the films to address the subject. They present an extensive analysis of both films; note segmented clips to use; list themes throughout the clips; provide academic vocabulary for students; and supply guided questions to use as instructional heuristics to teach silenced and ignored aspects of the Civil Rights Movement.

In addition to comprehensive chapters such as that written by Buchanan and Ward, the volume also includes several chapters that detail innovative approaches to examining whiteness and WSS. For example, in a chapter on race, white supremacist artworks, and historiography, the author explains a process of amending artwork rather than erasing it so that white supremacy can be exposed in the social studies curriculum. Additionally, in a chapter focused on decentering whiteness in social studies field trips, Burgard suggests a framework for practitioners to use with students so they can critically engage and interrogate the knowledge from the past that is presented to them in public spheres. These, and other pieces in the volume, depart from the common thread that whiteness is prevalent and that BIPOC are fetishized, tokenized, or ignored in formal and informal social studies curricula, and offers some boots-on-the-ground recommendations for practitioners to be an active agent of resistance, change, and disruption to the status quo.

I engaged with this text from my positionality as a former practitioner in an international, bilingual K-12 setting and current professor and teacher educator. As a high school social studies teacher, I was often troubled with the whitewashed curriculum that my international schools adopted from the United States and often found myself counter-storytelling and inserting counternarratives into the content. As an African American female in those settings, I also had a keen awareness of WSS and hegemonic discourses perpetually reborn each time a lesson from those curricula was unquestionably taught. Thus, I appreciate the conversation, reflection, and explicitly calling out of white invisibility and WSS in this volume. At the same time, many of the chapters became repetitive, and I wondered how they could be reorganized in such a way to capitalize on the richness of each. I considered my colleagues at international schools concentrated on their craft, my colleagues in the teacher education program concerned with teaching white students about being white, and community liaisons and partners who see the results of WSS and hegemonic practices evidenced in policies and procedures in the day-to-day lives of community members. I questioned whether various volumes dedicated to specific segments would be more accessible and impactful. In critical times when important scholarship would benefit from broader dissemination, such a question warrants consideration.

This volume is fashioned to be a stem-to-stern review of the invisibility of whiteness in the social studies curriculum. The editors achieve this by first naming and providing the lens to critically engage the issue. The contributors subsequently chronicle their evidence of invisible whiteness and WSS and detail their emancipatory efforts and frameworks to counter them. However, the extensiveness of the collection (P-20, including teacher education plus conceptual and theoretical frameworks) bogged down this reader in the same narratives meant to be emancipatory and liberatory. Volume editors Hawkman and Shear gathered collaborators who bring to the fore critical questions about curriculum, content knowledge, race consciousness, teacher education, practitioner identity, among other topics. Nevertheless, the

prevalence of WSS becomes repetitive, and, unfortunately, the reader may get lost in capturing a renewed awareness, keen insight, or transformative idea. Nonetheless, the gems of innovative research approaches and dialogue within this volume are counternarratives to whiteness and WSS worth reading, taking note of, and acting upon.

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About the Reviewer

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