

***Multicultural education policies in Canada and the United States.*** Reva Joshee and Lauri Johnson (Eds.) (2007). Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press. 257 pp. ISBN: 10-0774813261.

What do we know about the history of multicultural policies, racism, immigration and citizenship education in Canada and in the United States? What are the similarities, differences and interconnections between multicultural education policies in these two countries? To what extent are diversity policies and citizenship education in these societies creating space for social justice, or are they only reproducing current dominant discourses and the relations of power? Through comparative multicultural education policy analyses, Joshee and Johnson offer in this insightful book, a reflexive and provocative opportunity for us to engage critically in the discussion of the above questions. After reading this book, we have a better understanding of how multicultural education policies and racist practices in educational institutions and society in Canada and the US have historically become a strong and invisible barrier to minority groups in these countries. They create groups of second class citizens based on marginalizing stereotypes of race, ethnicity and culture, where natives, immigrants from the south and blacks are strangers and their identity, a symbol of incapacity. The book illustrates how the influence of neoliberal policies has increased the gap between the first and second class citizens and with a worsening social injustice situation in both countries.

This book presents the outcomes of an expanded dialogue that started more than seven years ago about issues of diversity policies and racism in the two editors' countries, Canada and the US. Joshee and Johnson developed the text having in mind the power of dialogue as a dynamic and creative method for a larger comprehensive understanding of comparative policy studies. They argue that this process helps us become more conscious about the complexity of "policy webs" in Canada and the US that engage parties from both inside and outside of each country. Questions of power and discourse receive particular attention in most of the chapters in this book, allowing us to think profoundly and critically about the differences and similarities between historical contexts and the development of multicultural policies in both countries. In the introduction, the editors invite us to rethink and reinvent present approaches regarding the issues discussed in the seventeen chapters and emphasize that in order to shift the policy process forward, we must also engage with policy developers.

The text is organized in a very innovative and provocative way. The first five sections provide us with an astute dialogue about multicultural issues in Canada and the US. Each section contains one article about the Canadian context and another on the US. The last part of each section creates a dialogue between the two contexts and points to alternatives in the issues at hand. The sixth and last section extends this dialogue to the UK and has a different structure with a panel response to David Gillborn' chapter.

In the first section, Joshee and Winton discuss the US sway on the development and implementation of Canadian education policy, mainly from 1940 to 1950, when policies in multicultural education, citizenship education and multiculturalism were emerging nationally and internationally. We are encouraged to think how policy concepts evolve over time and in particular environments. Johnson calls attention to the role of the historical, social and political context in order to understand diversity policies in the US. She also emphasizes the role of leadership and networks in creating schools that represent democratic, inclusive and equitable values and practices. Pak closes this section by highlighting that policy and leadership are extremely significant because our societies up until now have not succeeded in dealing with the complex web of historical multicultural

relations. She believes that traditional citizenship education approaches, instead of helping surmount the situation of exclusion and ignorance, aggravate it since they deny that millions of citizens have access to full participatory citizenship.

In the second section, the authors do remarkable work in helping us think critically about the history of racism in both countries and question the hierarchal relations of power involved in the policy agenda for minority groups. They illustrate how Native Americans and Aboriginal Canadians have received a kind of education that perpetuates and intensifies inequity present in both societies. The third section shows that despite some differences in context and policies, both Canada and the US have adopted immigration legislation that privileged groups most similar to the dominant group while excluding others that are more racially and linguistically distant. The language policies and citizenship education programs for immigrants are criticised since they marginalize their mother culture, knowledge, history and language. This has led many of them to resist the school curriculum and thus fail. The three chapters in this section stress the need to improve the quality of education offered to immigrants in Canada and the US and also the significance of promoting a consciousness about the injustices based on language use and background in both social and educational contexts.

In the fourth part, we are presented with the history of race-based policies in Canada and the US and how slavery and segregated schooling was experienced in both societies. It allows us to become aware of how policy in both countries has been used as a powerful instrument to reach particular radicalized goals of discrimination, exclusion and privilege. It also considers how the traditional discourse of racism or even the emergent discourse of antiracism shapes the schooling of Africans, Asians, Arabs and Latinos. The fifth section exemplifies the strong connections between Employment Policy in Canada and Affirmative Action in the US. The three chapters question the way these policies have been developed. There is a need for a change in perspective and action by employers, unions, organizations and designated groups, such as women, immigrants, natives and Afro-descendants. Goldberg highlights in his closing chapter that it is paramount to consider the power relations functioning in this process and the political dimension intrinsic in every policy-making step.

The sixth section is extremely provocative and invites us to reflect about the similarities of racism, multicultural education policies and citizenship education curriculum and practices in the UK, Canada and the US. David Gillborn explicates how citizenship education in England promotes compliance and manipulation. Its antiracist dimension continues unfulfilled and it also champions a non-critical vision of society. In the last chapter, the authors respond critically to Gillborn's article and also recommend that it is fundamental to maintain and extend dialogue and engagement with multicultural education policies in Canada and the US. They conclude that in order to create a democratic and equitable space in schools and society, educators everywhere must always question how educational policies for working-class and marginalized groups are developed and implemented in schools. They need to ask themselves what they are teaching, why they are teaching it, how they go about it, and who is benefiting from it. Furthermore, I would add that educators need also to reflect daily if they are prepared and qualified to teach the students whose language, culture, accent, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and race is different from the majority. To what extent are they empowering their students to overcome a history of racism, poverty and social injustice? Is their chosen approach of citizenship education inclusive and emancipatory, or exclusive and oppressive?

I recommend this book not only to Canadian and American educators, but to every person concerned about racism and social justice everywhere. Sections three and

four, about immigrant education and race-based policies, are especially fascinating and their recommendations have to be considered. In these times of neoliberal globalization, it is crucial to have the option of more informative, critical and inspiring books such as Joshee and Johnson's.

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