

*Multicultural Education and the American Indian*. Contemporary American Issues Series, No. 2. (Los Angeles: American Indian Studies Center, University of California, 1979) 172 pp., \$10.00.

*Multicultural Education and the American Indian* provides an excellent treatment of selected issues related to the education of American Indians. This volume, by scholars in Indian studies, is divided into six sections and includes an overview and background information, discusses American Indian policy at the national and local level, examines cross-cultural education and the performance of Indian students, and suggests ways to provide more effective teacher training and curriculum development. These concerns are important for both the American Indian and non-Indian communities to understand and address.

A common element is a plea to educators to help all children grow and achieve success by becoming responsible participants in society. In order to meet this goal, educators need to become aware of Indian philosophy and meaning of life, the history of past government practices which imposed isolation and cultural destruction, and the traditional values and respect for the environment held by American Indians. Yet one is cautioned not to assume that all Indians hold identical views on these important aspects of life.

Within recent years there have been concerted efforts to work with educators through pre-service and staff development to reduce prejudice by eliminating preconceived notions and stereotypes about Indians. This task has been fostered through the establishment of American Indian Studies Programs at several universities, development of new curricula for elementary and secondary students, insistence that greater care be taken in selecting educational materials, and in some instances, initiation of bilingual and bicultural educational programs. Yet examples of lack of understanding and insensitivity to Indian culture, values and institutions abound in classrooms.

This volume is one attempt to alert educators teaching Indian students to the cultural environment from which the Indian student comes. While all the papers are interesting and present different insights regarding the learning experiences of Indian youth, Brown's paper, "The Cross-Over Effect: A Legitimate Issue in Indian Education?" discusses the phenomena of "crossover effect"<sup>1</sup> and "peak over"<sup>2</sup> as they apply to Indian students' school performance. Although research data are not all in agreement (there are problems of methodology in studies cited) there does seem to be evidence that these children do excell academically during their early years and later demonstrate less achievement as they continue school. While various causes have been proffered as contributing to the low

achievement of Indian students, the basic implication is that schools have been unwilling or unable to accommodate to Indian culture.

Each essay has been selected from papers presented at the second American Indian Issues Conference, sponsored by the American Indian Studies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles. Other volumes in the series focus on equally important topics, e.g., new directions for federal Indian policies, Indians in higher education, American Indian scholarship in the 1980s, and Indian art.

This collection deserves the attention of educators, parents and community members. It offers information and guidelines which, if used, should not only reduce bias in teaching Indian children but also enable other students become more knowledgeable about Indian culture.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>J. Bryde. *The Sioux Indian Student: A Study of Scholastic Failure and Personality Conflict*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Denver, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>Donald R. Milam. *Analysis of the Academic Achievement of Selected Indian Tribes with High Achievement*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University, 1972.

Mothobi Mutloatse, ed. *Africa South: Contemporary Writings*. (Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 1981) 208 pp., \$6.00.

The twenty-five selections, mostly short stories, reprinted here make painful reading for anyone sympathetic to the black African who must live under the daily indignities of apartheid. Considering the number of writers in exile, one may at first find those still living in South Africa suspect but, although the murderous violence familiar to newspaper readers is absent, there is still pain enough. For those unfamiliar with past or current events, fiction here is history as well as art.