May’s edited and well structured collection focuses on education literature surrounding multicultural and antiracist education. The book offers ten chapters on the subject, which are all interesting and thought provoking. The research comes mostly from the English speaking world and the author encourages future studies which encompass a truly global perspective of the topic. The book is dedicated to Barry Troyna, who wrote extensively and passionately about multicultural and antiracist education. In the introduction, the author argues that there is a need for global dialogue on multiculturalism. Multicultural education policies promised much but delivered little. The book aims to consider and articulate how we might move forward. Multicultural education has been criticised for a simplistic and naïve view of wider social and cultural power relations in a postmodern world.

May begins the book with a critique of multiculturalism. Ultimately for May, multiculturalism should allow minority and majority students to recognise and explore the complex interconnections and gaps that occur between their own and other cultural and social identities. McLaren and Torres argue that Globalisation has unleashed new practices of social control and class domination. The authors want to see racisms examined, with the renewed interest in class analysis and a need to move beyond Eurocentric discourse and Western cultural imperialism. Rattansi uses a postmodern framework to examine racism, ethnicity and identity. For the author, intellectual engagements are needed for the complex intertwining between ‘expert’ systems and education systems. Sleeter and Montecinos examine multiculturalism in the Americas. The authors highlight the need for teachers to be more flexible in the classroom to accommodate all children and thus providing a more socially just curriculum and ultimately a partnership between student and teacher. Moodley examines the comparative context in
relation to antiracist education in Canada. A cosmopolitan multicultural political literacy is needed, historically understood and both comparative and international in perspective. Carrim and Soudien suggest that South Africa provides an opportunity to investigate ways in which racism is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed. A critical antiracism is needed to examine intra-black desegregation and a ‘de-essentialized’ sense of people’s identities is needed to acknowledge and incorporate the notion of ‘difference’ within and among people. Short and Carrington also highlight that critical multicultural pedagogy should combine antiracist education and a reconstructed multiculturalism. Nieto, in an American and multicultural context, asks how do students understand and interpret their social experiences? Hodson’s aim is to build on antiracism via curriculum proposals. The author’s interest is in science and technical education and he is specifically interested in how science is perceived by scientists and students. Ultimately, a critical multicultural science education provides a key means by which these processes can be identified, contested and changed. Kalantzis and Cope conclude with four proposals from the New London Group concerning good teaching learning: situated practice; overt instruction; critical framing and transformed practice. All four angles need to be part of the learning process, though not necessarily in any fixed sequence or as neatly separate bits.

May’s edited book offers a global, sociological and cultural examination of multiculturalism and antiracism. It is historical and theoretically rich, highlighting e.g. the postmodern approach which allows space for different voices and identities to be heard. Nieto gives the personal perspectives of Ron Morris and Paul Chavez whose antiracist education experiences show the advantages and disadvantages of the education system within the bigger social picture. The book portrays a realism amongst the authors about the difficulty of the task involving the movement from multicultural to antiracist curricular. The research highlights that in time the journey is necessary and possible. Some authors go as far as suggesting that multiculturalism is simply not enough and antiracism is ultimately needed. The book’s real strength is twofold. Firstly, Critical
Multiculturalism highlights the plurality of racisms, identities and ethnicites
(Grosvenor, 1997; Jenkins, 1997). Secondly, in all the chapters, the reader is
couraged to reflect on multicultural and antiracist practice in the classroom
(Ryan, 1999).

References:

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