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The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 33
Issue 4 December

Article 19

2006

Multiracial America: A Resource Guide on the History and Literature of Interracial Issues. Karen Downing, Darlene Nichols, and Kelly Webster.

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Recommended Citation

Barreto, Rose M. (2006) "*Multiracial America: A Resource Guide on the History and Literature of Interracial Issues.* Karen Downing, Darlene Nichols, and Kelly Webster.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 33 : Iss. 4 , Article 19.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol33/iss4/19>

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Book Notes

Karen Downing, Darlene Nichols and Kelly Webster, *Multiracial America: A Resource Guide on the History and Literature of Interracial Issues*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005. \$35.00.

The ability to check “all that apply” when presented with a list of race and ethnicity options was a milestone for the recognition of people with a multiracial or multiethnic heritage. Since the 1997 revisions to the Federal policy on race and ethnic definitions, all government forms must provide this opportunity. The 2000 Census was the first to do so, and as a result we learned that approximately 3% of the U.S. population identifies as multiracial and that 6% of married couple households are interracial. Interest in this area of study is growing, yet it remains difficult to locate materials on interracial issues.

This book is an invaluable reference that addresses this problem by providing an annotated bibliography and critical discussion of major themes that arise in both scholarly and popular literature, film and on the internet. The guide is written for a wide audience of potential researchers, students, multiracial individuals and the general public. The authors begin with strategies for accessing the literature and highlighting the barriers that occur in this field, including inconsistent vocabulary for search terms, changes over time in acceptable language for describing multiracial individuals, and the overwhelming negative bias found especially in the early, pre-civil rights literature. Other practical features are lists of search terms by specific indices, a glossary of terms used in interracial literature and a chapter devoted to teaching a higher education course about race in which a teacher shares his experiences with the development and structure of a course.

The value of this book derives from the annotated materials, which are organized into thematic chapters: “hot button issues” (such as perception of physical appearance), historical literature, politics, dating and marriage, families, transracial adoption, books for children and youth, identity development,

Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, December 2006, Volume XXXIII, Number 4

sexuality and cinema. The authors, and additional contributors, describe the main ideas of each item and for some works, background information about the author or context for when the item was written or produced is also provided. A further strength of this resource guide is the breadth of material that is included and reviewed, with items spanning the last one hundred years and presenting a diversity of viewpoints. By reading through the bibliographic annotations, the reader can emerge with an introductory understanding of the evolution of the field of interracial studies.

The authors acknowledge that the items included in the bibliography are not all-inclusive, and therefore it is important to understand their selection criteria. The materials were included based upon quality of the argument, quality of the content, supportable evidence, substantive content, and balance of perspectives and media types. It is clear that these criteria were successfully maintained, though there is some uncertainty regarding the exclusion of seemingly valuable materials from the annotated bibliography that had been referenced within the introductory essay to a chapter. In addition, there are inconsistencies in style, format and depth of review between the chapters, likely due to the varying authorship of each chapter. There is some overlap in the entries, with each review of a given item differing according to theme. However, as a whole, the annotations are engaging and represent significantly improved access to information on interracial issues.

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Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005. \$ 25.00 papercover.

A great deal has now been written about the impact of globalization on economic and social conditions. For example, the literature on globalization has dealt in depth with the way currency speculation and the flow of finance capital has created economic difficulties for a governments around the world. A good deal has also been written about the effects of globalization on employment and incomes. Although some scholars