Multicultural Education and the Internet: Intersections and Integration. Paul C. Gorski. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2001. 161 pp.

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Paul Gorski's *Multicultural Education and the Internet: Intersections and Integration* is a book written primarily for K-12 teachers interested in integrating multicultural educational philosophies and Internet technologies. Multicultural education is defined in teacher-friendly prose with reference to the frameworks of James Banks and other notables in the field. The definition promotes the "ideals of social justice and educational equity" (pg. 9) through pedagogies that transform the self, schools and schooling, and society. Such ideals are realized through instructional practices and curricula that are based on notions of active, interactive, inclusive, and collaborative learning and teaching. Gorski explains these notions and offers practical suggestions for how educators at all grade levels, and in various subject areas, can use the Internet to actualize them in their approaches. He provides extensive lists of Internet resources including web sites with subject-specific multicultural content, multicultural lesson plans, online journals, and virtual field trips. Teachers are encouraged to use these resources to end the "massive injustices [of] traditional, Eurocentric and male-centric curricula" (p. 39) by exposing students to diverse voices and perspectives. Teachers are invited to create lines of communication with people across cultural borders by logging onto or creating internet bulletin boards, chat rooms, e-mail exchanges, and other venues.

Gorski claims that his book is more than a resource guide for teachers. It supposedly "transcends" the resource-guide formulation by combining technology and teaching practices into transformative pedagogies. But little solid evidence is presented in support of this contention. Little more than prevailing multicultural rhetoric, the author's own personal experiences, and flimsy examples support most of the book's assertions. One of these assertions, at the beginning of Chapter 4, posits that the Internet provides virtually boundless opportunities for teachers to make connections among culturally-diverse colleagues. In the example that follows, parents, teachers, and activists participating in an on-line bulletin board discuss how "average" students lose educational time when their "gifted" classmates are pulled out for special instruction. While the participants in this dialogue represented diverse roles, they were hardly representative of cultural diversity. Nor was their exchange focused on a topic of pressing concern for multicultural educators.

In fact, there are no good examples of truly transformative dialogues and activities taking place among teachers or students or activists or parents occupying different ethnic, racial, gender, class, or other social locations. Gorski does mention the wide disparities in

Internet use between white families, who have access to computers, and low-income families and people of color who do not. But he offers neither solutions for closing the gap nor illustrative cases of educators who managed to cross the digital divide between historically divided groups.

Other issues addressed in the book are the challenges of web-site accuracy and the credibility and qualifications of web authors. Chapters 6 and 7 suggest ways for teachers to evaluate Internet content and "dig through the dirt" to find good on-line multicultural resources. By zeroing in on the content of individual web sites, the discussion overlooks the larger terrain of the Internet as a culturally privileged space. The cultural expanse of the Internet is dominated by literate, English-speaking people residing in economically-developed countries who have the time, money, and status to take advantage of computer technologies. Virtual-Internet cultures are far removed from the everyday lived cultures of impoverished inner-city students in the United States; teachers in remote African, South American, or other villages; and schools in countries that cannot afford textbooks, much less computers.

Like all cultures, cultures of the Internet have their own particular meaning systems. They are characterized by linguistic and normative codes produced, enacted, and transmitted by people who have access to high technology. The greater challenge for ensuring the exchange of credible online knowledge is how to involve more diverse, marginalized, and isolated people in the actual production of Internet cultures. This means moving well beyond academically prescriptive judgments of web sites towards the forging of more culturally responsive Internet connections that authenticate and bridge cultural differences.

The real strength of this book is that is an extremely well-written, practical guide for teachers looking for innovative ways to use the Internet to augment their practices and expand standard curriculum. Suggestions for integrating the Internet into instruction are easy to follow and make good pedagogical sense. I spent a very enjoyable afternoon visiting many of the listed web sites including Gorski's *Multicultural Pavilion,* which has wonderful links to Internet resources and dialogues. I found this site and many others to be educationally worthwhile, if not personally interesting.

I recommend this book as an excellent resource guide for K-12 teachers and for preservice teachers in undergraduate methods courses. I would not, however, recommend it as an effective source for transformative multicultural pedagogy. There is much hard inter-cultural Internet work that needs to be done before such pedagogies are developed and, hopefully, put into practice.