



Deaf Plus: A Multicultural Perspective. Kathee Christensen, ed. San Diego: DawnSignPress, 2000. 278 pp.

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In *Deaf Plus: A Multicultural Perspective*, the authors assume that the reader has a fundamental understanding of "Deaf people as a cultural/bicultural entity" (p. vii) and they probe the multiple cultures and identities that exist within deaf culture. One of the key themes, introduced by Welch (ch. 1) and recurring in several of the chapters is the need to "deconstruct the popular fundamental definition of Deaf Culture and expose ALL Deaf students to the variety of ethnic and racial cultures that have been excluded from that definition" (p. 15). Welch's well-researched literature review provides a solid framework within which to apply the general literature in multicultural education to the education of deaf children.

The following chapters are mainly think pieces, synthesizing the mainstream literature dealing with varying issues and trends within multicultural education and projecting applications to deaf peoples. Some authors include historical frameworks that provide context for understanding deaf children who are from various cultures. Cheng (ch. 4) provides background information about Asian and Pacific cultures and their attitudes toward and treatment of disabled and deaf individuals. Within this framework, Chengh also discusses Asian and Pacific immigrants and refugees. Akamatsu and Cole (ch. 5) complement Cheng's chapter with a discussion of deaf immigrants and refugees.

Ramsey (ch. 6) and Garner de Garcia (ch. 7) offer strong companion pieces. Ramsey's ethnographic study of transnational parents of deaf children and their teachers deftly illustrates the complexity of varying cultural contexts. She drives home the point that schools need "to adapt and alter schooling practice in order to find meaningful ways to engage both children and their parents" (p. 145), rather than expect them to accept the Anglo, middle-class values of the school. Garner de Garcia follows with a review of a wide range of historical, programmatic, and legal considerations for meeting the needs of Hispanic and Latino students. Fletcher-Carter and Paez (ch. 9) tie in many of the preceding pieces by challenging the reader to explore the "personal cultures" of their students. They provide a framework and several case studies to illustrate how to include information about deaf children's personal cultures in the curriculum.

Deaf Plus attempts to cover a wide range of territory, and many of the pieces provide very basic information. Readers wanting more depth will need to pursue references provided by the authors. Some of the chapters are densely packed with a wide range



of information; others are short and unsatisfying. A chapter on literacy does not seem to address multicultural issues; it explores literacy in terms of deaf bilingualism. Some cultures are not well represented within these pages-American Indians and African Americans, for example. Some information provided is inaccurate or at least debatable. Christensen (ch. 3), for example, attributes a young deaf child's misinterpretation of a hearing teacher's request to an unawareness of nuances of American Sign Language (ASL). She suggests the teacher scaffold the child's understanding by providing the child more detailed information. The example used, however, suggests the teacher lacks finesse in the use of American Sign Language, detracting from Christensen's point. As another example, Akamatsu and Cole incorrectly cite "contact sign" as a language. It is disappointing to find such misinformation; it suggests that the authors do not possess some of the basic knowledge of the language and culture they assume of the readers.

Christensen concludes her book with a call for research replicating findings in research in bilingual education of hearing children, an incongruity given the stated goal of "expand(ing) the bilingual and multicultural dimensions of the Deaf community" (p. vii). Although it is true such research is direly needed, Christensen does not address the unique research needs of those who are Deaf**PLUS**. As a result, the many projections about the needs of these children from diverse backgrounds promoted within the text are left dangling. Nevertheless, the book makes clear the urgent need for further research that sheds light on the educational needs of deaf children from various cultures.

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