

VALERIE OOKA PANG

# MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

*A Caring-Centered,  
Reflective Approach*

SECOND EDITION

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# Multicultural Education

A Caring-Centered, Reflective Approach

VALERIE OOKA PANG  
San Diego State University



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## Higher Education

### MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: A CARING-CENTERED, REFLECTIVE APPROACH

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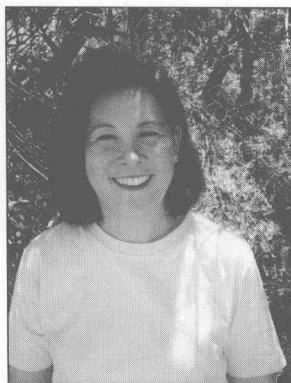
### Dedication

This work is dedicated to Jenn, Matt, Gerry, Debbie,  
Kathy, Cheryl, Karen, Trish, Naomi, Kyle, Andy,  
Ariana, Cameron, Mirei, Connor, Nicole, and Sophie.

### Special Dedication

To Carl Masami Ooka and Marie Horiuchi Ooka

## About the Author



VALERIE OOKA PANG is a professor in the School of Teacher Education at San Diego State University. She was a first- and second-grade teacher in rural and urban schools.

This is a revision of her book on Multicultural Education. In addition, Dr. Pang was senior editor of a text called *Struggling to Be Heard: The Unmet Needs of Asian Pacific American Children*, published by State University of New York Press. It is the only multidisciplinary text on Asian Pacific American children and was awarded honorable mention by the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights at Boston University.

Due to her work in Multicultural Education, social studies education, and teacher education, Dr. Pang has been a consultant for corporations such as Sesame Street, Fox Children's Network, Family Communications (producer of *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*), McGraw-Hill, and Scott Foresman.

Dr. Pang has published in a variety of journals, including *Harvard Educational Review*, *The Kappan*, *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Action in Teacher Education*, *Educational Forum*, *Theory and Research in Social Education*, *Social Education*, *Equity and Excellence*, and *Multicultural Education*.

She was a senior fellow at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. She was honored with the 1997 Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) Standing Committee on the Role and Status of Minorities in Education. Dr. Pang has also received the Outstanding Teaching Award in the Liberal Studies Program at San Diego State University. In addition, she founded the Multicultural Education Infusion Center at San Diego State University, which provided professional development for university professors in teacher education.

Her own children are pursuing careers in immunology, engineering, and law.

 Preface

Schools can be places of great hope, mediocrity, or severe oppression. I wrote this book with the hope of providing insights for current and future educators about the importance of creating caring and equitable educational environments.

Students that I know thrive in classrooms where teachers care and believe in them. They also learn more effectively when teachers build upon their cultural and experiential knowledge. This book is founded upon three foundational theories that emphasize democracy, diversity, culture, and community: care theory (ethic of care), education for democracy (progressive education), and the sociocultural theory of learning.

## The Goals and Foundations of This Book

In this book, I encourage readers to explore and think about how they can make changes in their current and future classrooms—changes that are based on strong philosophical orientations, a clear understanding of schools as social systems, and the importance of compassion and social justice in that endeavor. The book is also written to encourage current and future teachers to build communities of care with other educators, students, parents, and community members.

People utilize a variety of “lenses” when looking at issues. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s, orientation was heavily based upon civil rights and his religious beliefs. A primary lens utilized within this book is *ethic of care*—a moral commitment to care for and teach all students. In my work with children, I have found that most seek and respond to caring human connection. Older students also value trusting relationships with teachers who believe in them. The relationships that teachers and students create are critical in the learning process because these relationships form the context and motivation for growth.

Additional lenses that form my belief system include *culture*, *community*, and *social justice*. Culture is critical because each student develops within a complex

cultural context. In addition, learning occurs within a social environment in which there are continuous interactions with others. These interactions can serve to extend or clarify a person's thinking. When students and teachers form a community based on social justice and compassion, they develop a unity devoted to building an equitable society (Gibson 1999).

Finally, I am committed to creating a society built on social justice. We are members of a democracy, and, as such, all of us—teachers and students—need to develop higher-order thinking skills that will allow us to address complex social and personal issues. Today more than ever, we must challenge oppression with compassion, collaboration, and courage—whether in schools or the community in general.

## Text Approach and Organization

I wrote this book *in a personal style* that encourages current and future educators to *reflect* on their educational practices and philosophy. Because of its personal, reader-friendly style and caring-centered framework, this book is unique within the Multicultural Education field. The text also utilizes *an applied, real-life approach*. It conveys many course-related concepts through the use of personal stories, case studies, comic strips, photographs, and teacher voices. Modeling is one of the most powerful tools that teachers have, and the book tries to present many real examples of what occurs in effective, culturally meaningful classrooms.

In terms of text organization, the book is divided into five sections:

Part One: A Culturally Relevant and Caring Teacher.

Part Two: Confronting Prejudice in Ourselves and Our Schools: The Challenge of Change.

Part Three: Multicultural Education: Framework and Principles.

Part Four: Creating a Caring and Culturally Meaningful Classroom.

Part Five: Personal Professional Development.

Each of the five sections contains one or more chapters that use questions as their titles. Questions are used to focus reader attention on key concerns. For example, the title of Chapter 2 is "Why Is Culture Important?" This question encourages the reader to reflect on a vital issue (culture) that affects curriculum and instruction.

## Text Content New to the Second Edition

I would like to highlight some specific examples of important new and unique text content that can be found within the second edition:

### Part One

Chapters 1 and 2 in Part One lay the foundation for the rest of the text. **Chapter 1** is entitled "Why Multicultural Education?" This chapter explains the circumstances that

prompted me to seek out principles of Multicultural Education in my own teaching. In addition, I explain the theoretical framework that guides Caring-Centered Multicultural Education. This framework is not only dedicated to good teaching, but it is also committed to an educational philosophy that utilizes *care theory*, also known as the *ethic of care*, as its foundation. The framework calls for change on an individual, school, and societal level. This chapter is designed to motivate the reader to think about the purposes of schools and how to provide the best education for students. It extends the discussion of Caring-Centered Multicultural Education that was initially presented in the first edition of the book. This chapter includes the important work of Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker, who studied the Caswell County Training School, a segregated school founded on beliefs in caring, social justice, and culture.

**Chapter 2** of the book (also found within Part One) discusses the impact of culture. Culture is all around us, but people do not often recognize it. In order for teachers to reach every student, they must consider the influence of culture in teaching and learning. The description of culture is presented early in the book to initiate reflection from the reader about its complex nature. People's worldviews evolve from the values, behaviors, beliefs, history, and many other aspects of their culture(s). Often, culture and its components are invisible to one who lives within its daily workings. As educator and author Jack Nelson shared with me, "Cultures define us and we define culture. We come to know and absorb our own culture's values and behaviors, and we recognize differences from others through education. It is the 'multi' part of multicultural that makes multicultural education so important" (Nelson 2000). These first two chapters describe the power of culture and how it is created, transmitted, and sustained.

One of the highlights of Chapter 2 is a new section written by a teacher about working with Somali refugee students in Ohio. Educator Merry Merryfield presents critical examples of how conflicts and cultural issues arose when many new students from Somalia began to attend school in the United States. The cultural expectations of Somali students and their teachers in school often clashed.

## Part Two

Part Two of the book presents four chapters (**Chapters 3–6**) that describe individual and social oppression such as racism, gender bias, classism, and homophobia. One of the most difficult challenges that many of us face is confronting our own racism, biases, and participation in institutional oppression. It is usually easier to identify one's own biased remarks toward others than to identify accepted school practices that harm students. It may be difficult to see how some educational practices are damaging to students because these practices have been seen as legitimate and rational for many years. For example, Gibson (1998) provides data that demonstrate how standards are "veiled literacy tests" because from standards come tests. The tests that measure student knowledge of standards then become even more powerful than the standards because the understanding of students will be seen as measured by these tests. Secondly, students who have middle-class and ethnic backgrounds similar to the individuals who wrote the standards are more likely to do well on the standardized examinations. The

standards and their tests are extremely influential, although, like the *National History Standards* (National Center for History in Schools 1994), they represent a “common legacy” and are nationalistic and elitist in their orientation (Gibson 1998).

Part Two of the book also covers how people and children develop prejudice and bias toward others. Research is presented to describe how prejudice and social oppression can impact the development of one’s racial identity and sense of affiliations. How did the concept of race arise? Is race an accurate biological concept or a sociopolitical one? These are questions addressed in **Chapter 3**. In addition, there are many social issues that people may not have had the opportunity to think about. For example, classism is an issue that is difficult for some to understand. In Chapter 3, the author describes many who fall into a group referred to as the working poor. The people in this situation work full time, but are paid only minimum wage and cannot financially sustain themselves because their incomes are too low.

Often, individuals do not see their own prejudices because the prejudices are viewpoints held by many others in the community. A good example of this is White privilege. This dynamic is thoroughly discussed in **Chapter 4**. Moving to identity development, **Chapter 5** discusses how children learn prejudice and develop racial identity. Current and future teachers will benefit from using the antibias strategies explained in this chapter. **Chapter 6** provides examples of prejudice and discrimination in schools. The chapter explains the concept of the culture of power—a hegemonic culture that attempts to choke off the divergent ethnic cultures of students, or convey negative messages about various social differences due to gender, racial differences, class, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. Several real case studies from schools are included in this chapter. One of the issues covered is Native American mascots. The extensive description of Native American mascots gives several viewpoints within the framework of a culturally and caring community. Because one of the major goals of this book is teacher reflection within a democracy, the reader is asked to “Take a Stand” on the issue. (See the section “New Pedagogical Features” for a detailed description of the new text feature entitled “Take a Stand.”)

### Part Three

Part Three of the book presents an in-depth and expanded discussion of Caring-Centered Multicultural Education. I present examples of four types of teachers that I see in schools: the assimilationist, the human relations, the social action, and the caring-centered. These teachers have different goals, although some of their actions may be similar. The comparison of the four types of teachers is described in **Chapter 7**. Because an issues-centered approach to education is a component of the text’s framework, **Chapter 8** includes discussion of several hot topics. These topics present controversial issues such as the national uses of racial categories in U.S. data collection processes. It is critical that all teachers consider these social issues and think about how the issues may affect their classrooms. One such teacher who has spent a lifetime examining issues of oppression and compassion is Linda Christiansen. As a caring-centered English teacher in Oregon, Christiansen is an excellent role model who provides important insights into how to actually create a classroom in which culture is affirmed and students thrive and are successful.

## Part Four

Part Four (**Chapters 9–11**) is devoted to discussing culturally relevant teaching. How can teachers create a curriculum that reflects and resonates with their students who may come from a multitude of cultural communities? How can relevance and meaning become the core of the teacher's pedagogy? A number of research projects carefully describe how ethnic, family, and neighborhood contexts can be integrated into the teaching strategies utilized and curriculum content presented in schools. The work of Luis Moll and his colleagues' project Funds of Knowledge is an example of how the lives of bilingual students can form the basis for a meaningful and successful academic curriculum.

As Moll's research has demonstrated, one of the vital areas of culture is language. Teachers need to understand how a second language like English is learned. A brand new **Chapter 9** centers on English language learners and how they acquire language. The chapter includes two case studies written by teachers who work with bilingual students. The first case study by Kathee Christiansen presents the needs of a young deaf child who was faced with the huge task of learning Spanish, English, and American Sign Language in order to communicate in his family and school settings. In the other case study, Evangelina Bustamente Jones discusses strategies she used in teaching writing to Spanish-speaking college students. She provides both attitudinal and concrete suggestions.

In **Chapters 10 and 11**, there are many curriculum strategies that are recommended and can be used in K–12 classrooms. I suggest the natural integration of the following: personal experiences of students, role models of students, culturally grounded stories and songs, cultural expressions, multiple perspectives, include cultural knowledge in subject area content, and community issues. Several issues-centered units are also included within these chapters. All students can benefit from a culturally meaningful classroom.

## Part Five and End-of-Text Epilogue

Finally, Part Five is devoted to personal and professional development. In order for all educators to continue to grow, they must continue to reflect upon their practices and examine practices in light of their belief systems. If they have chosen social justice and caring as core values, do their instructional practices mirror these beliefs? Teachers must also work to increase their knowledge base of content area disciplines and examine their assessment tools. In **Chapter 12**, the author provides a rubric that teachers can use to examine the effectiveness and meaningfulness of their teaching. An important addition is a discussion of crucial educational principles developed by Dr. James Banks and his colleagues. In addition, this chapter presents six components of a caring-centered school that integrate the importance of caring, culture, and community throughout the entire school structure.

The **Epilogue** is designed for additional personal reflection. Reflection refers to the importance of teachers continually reevaluating their teaching. These efforts toward change can produce new levels of understanding of teaching and learning and overall reform in school policies and structures.

## New Pedagogical Features


Many colleagues reviewed the first edition of this text and provided excellent suggestions for improvement. Based on their recommendations, *I have tried to make this second edition a more effective learning tool for students taking the Multicultural Education course.* The text now contains a useful and comprehensive pedagogical structure. In each chapter, students will find the following new text features that encourage mastery of course content and personal reflection:

- **Chapter Main Ideas outlines** can be found at the beginning of each chapter, and serve as an outline of the key topics that will be covered within the chapter.
- **Chapter Overview** paragraphs, located at the beginning of each chapter, provide a quick narrative summary of the chapter's main themes.
- Helpful **Marginal Notes** found throughout each chapter reinforce key points within the chapter narrative.
- **Case Studies** spotlight a real educational figure, institution, or situation. These case studies illustrate key themes within the chapter using real-life experiences related to multicultural education.
- **New Photos and Cartoons** enliven the text and help students apply course concepts in a fun and visual way.
- **OLC Connection boxes**—Within the text, Online Learning Center Connection boxes describe useful Web resources related to chapter content, such as Web links or Web-based readings. Students and instructors can go directly to the text's OLC and connect to these Web-based resources from there. Please visit the text Online Learning Center to check out all the great resources included for each chapter.
- **Take a Stand boxes** present a hot or controversial educational issue and encourage readers to comprehensively examine their own biases and consider multiple perspectives before making a decision. These boxes are also great tools for starting class discussion.
- **Chapter Summaries** reiterate the key themes and findings within each chapter and allow students to check their understanding of key chapter concepts.
- **Reflection Activities**, located at the end of each chapter, make excellent class assignments, homework assignments, journaling activities, or portfolio activities. More Reflection Activities and an electronic template for their submission to the instructor can be found on the text's Online Learning Center ([www.mhhe.com/pang2e](http://www.mhhe.com/pang2e)).
- **Key Terms lists** can be found at the end of each chapter with their accompanying page numbers from the text.
- An **OLC Chapter Review** at the end of each chapter reminds students to visit the text's Online Learning Center ([www.mhhe.com/pang2e](http://www.mhhe.com/pang2e)) to utilize its numerous study tools and resources. Each chapter includes quizzing features, Web-based

resources that accompany each chapter, interactive reflection activities, student study tools, and much more.

## Supplements Package

The second edition of *Multicultural Education* is accompanied by expanded ancillary materials:

- The second edition of *Multicultural Education and the Internet* by Paul Gorski accompanies each copy of the text. This brief text provides practical guidance for using the Internet as a tool for teaching in a multicultural manner.
-  **Student and Instructor Online Learning Centers at [www.mhhe.com/pang2e](http://www.mhhe.com/pang2e)** contain a wealth of resources for taking and teaching the course. This website includes many special features that extend the content and goals of the text.
- An **Instructor's Resource CD-ROM with Instructor's Manual, Test Bank, and Computerized Test Bank** is available to adopters of the text.
- **FolioLive** is an online portfolio tool that you can use to create an electronic portfolio in three easy steps. (1) Use a template to create a homepage; (2) choose to create a custom framework or framework to structure your portfolio, and (3) add the artifacts to build your portfolio by uploading existing files (from Word to PowerPoint to Video), linking to artifacts posted elsewhere on the Web, or creating an artifact through *FolioLive* embedded forms. Go to [www.foliolive.com](http://www.foliolive.com) to learn more about this product or to purchase a one-year account.

## Conclusion

The value of this text is what the reader does after thinking about the issues raised in the book. I hope that all teachers continue to seek more effective ways to reach all their students. This book is one of hope—the hope that teachers, along with their students and parents, will work together to form bonds of trust that lead to the creation of exceptional schools. Bonds of humanity and caring propelled the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Today, these same bonds can propel us toward definitive actions that will address the damaging social practices of inequities due to race, class, ethnicity, gender, and other differences in schools and society.

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