

5 years after the children had participated in the programme, and it aimed to assess the long-term changes in the participants' lives. The young people reported that their participation had transformed their lives. Chapter 9 also presents a case study whereby the transformation was at the societal level. In this case the children used radio to question adults on issues that the children would not have ordinarily questioned adults about. Over time the children observed a change in adults' attitudes towards them i.e. adults began to seek the views of children whereas previously this was not done.

The book is very thought-provoking and it encourages readers to decolonise the participation of children and young people. Children have been colonised to listen quietly without an utterance. In decolonising children and young people's participation the authors urge adults to 'be quiet, to step back and listen' (p.52). They termed this 'the reflexivity of learning', i.e. unlearning speaking and learning to be quiet. I was struck to note the activities of street children, child soldiers, children's membership of peer groups and gangs could be seen as forms of participation. While the authors do not argue that the activities of child soldiers or gangs are good, they make the point that adults dream up what is considered necessary or appropriate for children. They argue that 'extreme' examples such as child soldiers or gang membership are not being given attention as compared to activities of children in schools, community projects, youth clubs etc. I couldn't agree more with the authors; children and young people's participation in such 'extreme' activities are often studied from the perspectives of criminal justice. In decolonising children and young people's participation, the authors call for attention to such activities.

In as much as the book presents examples of transformative participation, the authors are mindful that such transformative shifts may not endure throughout time and changing context. They note that the number one challenge facing children and young people's participation is how to make it meaningful, effective and sustainable; a responsibility that rests on adults – since adults play a critical role of either assisting or blocking children and young people's participation. It is a good read for academics and practitioners interested in involving children and young people's participation. The book discusses both the successes and challenges encountered in implementing the case studies.

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Harris Beider (2015), *White Working Class Voices – Multi-Culturalism, Community Building and Change*, Bristol: Policy Press, £24.99, pp. 208, pbk.

doi:[10.1017/S0047279416000854](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279416000854)

This is a very timely addition in the contemporary debate relating to the intersectionality of social class, ethnicity, nation, society and citizenship. Harris Beider looks and listens to the white working class in the United Kingdom from a particular and welcome perspective, an academic but also a very experienced community development worker. Both of those perspectives run clearly throughout the book, a close academic critique of how class and ethnicity intersect within local communities; but Beider also widens the critique out of a global perspective of class and 'whiteness'.

Over the last thirty years the white working class in the UK and in the US appear to have become a research focus in their own right, represented as mysterious, frightening, and even valiant, all through the lens of the academic researcher. I have read hundreds of these studies and

written some of them, and my criticism has always been that these communities are sometimes represented as 'alien' to the researcher in a similar way that the anthropologists of the 1950s represented the people of Africa, and South America: exotic, spellbinding, and sometimes savage.

When I was asked to review a book called 'White Working Class Voices' I admit I was sceptical – and apprehensive, if I'm being truthful. However, my scepticism was unfounded, and my apprehension turned into curiosity, as I read the first page: the acknowledgments. I always read the acknowledgements. I like to get a feel for the author, and try and find their perspective; acknowledgments, I feel, are a good way to do this. The first line set up the whole book and drew me into Beider's analysis:

'There was a time I used to hate white people'

I was hooked: this level of honesty rarely manifests itself in academic writing, and from thereon I knew this was well worth the couple of days needed to read it.

Harris Beider writes in an unusual way, that is both engaging and very serious, constantly reminding us that 'concepts' around race, class and gender have been constructed; his analysis cleverly returns to this theme at the end of each chapter. Beider's 'lens' is interesting and refreshing: he understands the communities he is researching, and recognizes the similarities of his own working class Pakistani heritage background, at the same time being directly connected to white working class people through personal and institutionalized racism. This complexity of 'lens' comes through strongly in the analysis of structure; hence this is not a book that looks at the 'other'. Beider has held many positions within community development, and this grass roots lens really stands out as you read through the first few chapters that contextualize the historical, political, and policy implications that have occurred through globalization, neo-liberalism and especially multi-culturalism.

The central aspect to the book is that of multi-culturalism. Beider examines how, in his opinion, white working class people have been pitted against the concept of multi-culturalism. The first two chapters clearly sets up this argument and Beider saves special and damning criticisms of the New Labour project's approach of using their notion of multi-culturalism to replace class discussion. Although the book never shies away from the very difficult questions that arise from the argument, Beider asks that difficult question 'Are the white working class racist?' The question is not fully resolved – quite rightly; this is a debate and a discussion very few people want to fully engage with. Beider puts forward a strong argument that the white working class as we know them, and as they are 'represented', are the product of a reified version of policy outcomes stretching back to the 1970s and built upon by every Government since.

Even though the book is rich in historical and political argument and critique, there are two chapters that outline and detail research projects that the author has undertaken. The research strays somewhat away from the book's key arguments of the political positioning of the white working class and moves us towards the role that community organizations play within working class communities. This is understandable: the author comes from the tradition of community development and organization; and Beider uses the research as a base to discuss neighbourhood cohesion and possible solutions that various communities are working on to create more cohesive neighbourhoods. Finally, the author briefly looks at multi-culturalism in Europe and concludes that the white working class, within the UK at least, has been straitjacketed by policy into positions of 'backward looking' and argues that a coalition of women, young people, minority voters and middle class liberals could build a core of support throughout the cities of the UK in order to 'free' the white working class from this straitjacket.

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