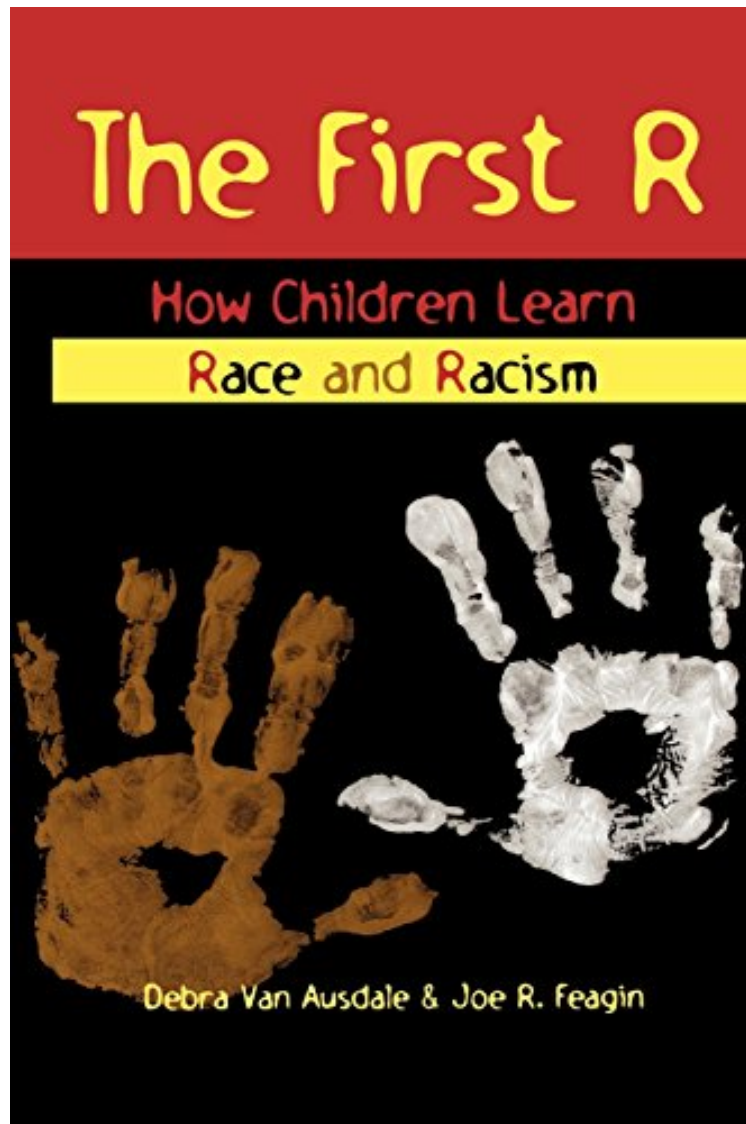


(Download) The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism

The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism

*Debra Van Ausdale, Joe R. Feagin Texas AM University
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Debra Van Ausdale, Joe R. Feagin Texas AM University : The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Bought for a College ClassBy AyrnI needed The First R: Race and Racism for a Rethinking Multi Education class. When I started reading the first chapter I thought the book would be dry and boring, but After getting out the needed facts about previous studies dealing with children and the laying the

groundwork for the rest of the book, the reading turned out to be quite interesting. I even think I feel comfortable suggesting it to non students who want to learn more about early childhood and young people's developing the ability to recognize and react to race and how the 'do' race and racism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must have for Educators! By Jen Watson This is a wonderful read for anyone working with children and families! Offering new perspective on how to look at race and culture! I would recommend this book to anyone working with children and families to take a different approach to working with these families! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Awesome Book By Kari O'Rourke This book is well written and very insightful. The discussion on the intuitive process that children develop at a very early age regarding comparative identity is well done.

This study looks into how children learn about the 'first R'—race—and challenges the current assumptions with case-study examples from three child-care centers. Parents and teachers will find this remarkable study reveals that the answer to how children learn about race might be more startling than could be imagined.

From Publishers Weekly Decades of "adultcentric" research have led social scientists to deny the existence of racial awareness in young children. Yet children—even very young ones—are clearly able to understand sameness and difference, say sociologists Van Ausdale and Feagin after studying 58 children, three to six years old, in an urban nursery school. According to their findings, children learn to identify racial or ethnic markers (skin or hair color, eye shape, accent) and use them to gain social control, even in a nursery school with an antibias, pro-tolerance curriculum. Van Ausdale, the fieldworker of the two, spent 11 months listening to the children chat and observing their play, effacing her presence as much as possible. While the authors' validation of the child's perspective is compelling, and their societal approach to the race problem sensible, their study itself is underwhelming. First, the school's racial mix is curiously skewed: of 58 children, 24 are white and 19 Asian, and there is only one nonwhite teacher. The authors continually assert that Van Ausdale functioned as an invisible observer, although this concept is questionable. The most problematic aspect of this report is the anecdotal presentation of the findings. Readers are left wondering about the actual frequency of various types of racist behavior, data that would have given the study more credibility and depth. While the jacket is appealing, no one browsing this book would mistake it for a lively read. Still, early education professionals and interested parents will find it an important addition to their collections. (Jan.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The premise of this challenging study by Van Ausdale (sociology, Syracuse Univ.) and Feagin (sociology, Univ. of Florida, Gainesville) is that children are complex individuals from very early on. They are not "too little" to understand race or ethnic identity, and they can and will use those concepts to discriminate and segregate. Van Ausdale arrived at these conclusions after spending 11 months in a day-care center as a nonsanctioning adult observer. She describes many comments of the children, who were aged three to five, and the use of ethnic identity in their play. Often, when she reported what she had observed, teachers and parents responded with disbelief, arguing that the children must have picked up that attitude elsewhere. As a parent of children raised in diverse neighborhoods, this reviewer has some quarrels with the underlying meaning the authors attribute to what Van Ausdale observed. Certainly, many of the authors' opinions on race relations are well taken, but readers may have real reservations about some unsubstantiated claims made concerning the children's motivations. As the authors state, much more in-depth research needs to be done in this field. An extensive bibliography is included. Recommended for academic libraries. Margaret Cardwell, DeKalb Technical Coll., Clarkston, GA Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Van Ausdale and Feagin challenge conventional theories of child development that are "adultcentric" and removed, based mostly on attitude testing and behavioral checklists. The authors spent a year at a racially diverse day care center, observing children from three to six years old. They found—and report—children deliberately and intentionally using hurtful words and attitudes. Despite denial, particularly among white adults, that children are unaware of racism, the authors found that the children "themselves perpetuated racial and ethnic patterns, away from the prying eyes and controlling activities of adults." The authors suggest that racially hostile and discriminatory behavior among children needs far more study and attention than it has had to date. They also advocate research methods that examine children's racial attitudes in their own interactive context. Vanessa Bush Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved