



Between Race and Reason: Violence, Intellectual Responsibility, and the University to Come

Susan Searls Giroux

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Inquiring into the future of the university, Susan Giroux finds a paradox at the heart of higher education in the post-civil rights era. Although we think of "post-civil rights" as representing a colorblind or race transcendent triumphalism in national political discourse, Giroux argues that our present is shaped by persistent "raceless" racism at home and permanent civilizational war abroad. She sees the university as a primary battleground in this ongoing struggle. As the heir to Enlightenment ideals of civic education, the university should be the institution for the production of an informed and reflective democratic citizenry responsible to and for the civic health of the polity, a privileged site committed to free and equal exchange in the interests of peaceful and democratic coexistence. And yet, says Giroux, historically and currently the university has failed and continues to fail in this role. Between Race and Reason engages the work of diverse intellectuals—Friedrich Nietzsche, W. E. B. Du Bois, Michel Foucault, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jacques Derrida and others—who challenge the university's past and present collusion with racism and violence. The book complements recent work done on the politics of higher education that has examined the consequences of university corporatization, militarization, and bureaucratic rationalization by focusing on the ways in which these elements of a broader neoliberal project are also racially prompted and promoted. At the same time, it undertakes to imagine how the university can be reconceived as a uniquely privileged site for critique in the interests of today's urgent imperatives for peace and justice.



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