



1,415

Views

30

CrossRef citations to date

4

Altmetric

Article

'Waiting for Superman' to save black people: racial representation and the official antiracism of neoliberal school reform

Michael J. Dumas

Pages 531-547 | Published online: 05 Aug 2013

Cite this article

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2013.822621>



Full Article

Figures & data

References

Citations

Metrics

Reprints & Permissions

Read this article

Share

Abstract

The author argues that the documentary, *Waiting for Superman*, effectively employs bodies and texts in ways that reproduce hegemonic constructions of race, and more specifically, offers an image and imagination of black engagement in education that reinforces neoliberal-multicultural narratives about black disinterest in, and responsibility for their own lack of educational attainment. Black subjects are understood as sympathetic primarily because, and only to the extent that they accept individual 'responsibility' and move toward neoliberal school 'choices' as a corrective for their own past cultural and educational shortcomings. The author also uses his analysis to encourage a (re-)commitment to critical cultural analysis of racial signification in educational policy discourse.

Keywords:

Related Research Data

[The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education](#)

Source: Brock Education: a Journal of Educational Research and Practice

[Situating Asian Americans in the Political Discourse on Affirmative Action](#)

Source: Representations

[Black Sexual Politics](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

[Colorblind Racism and Institutional Actors' Explanations of Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurship](#)

Source: Critical Sociology

[Imagining the Urban: The Politics of Race, Class, and Schooling](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

Linking provided by 

Related research

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by
30

Information for

[Authors](#)

[R&D professionals](#)

[Editors](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Societies](#)

Opportunities

[Reprints and e-prints](#)

[Advertising solutions](#)

[Accelerated publication](#)

[Corporate access solutions](#)

Open access

[Overview](#)

[Open journals](#)

[Open Select](#)

[Dove Medical Press](#)

[F1000Research](#)

Help and information

[Help and contact](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[All journals](#)

[Books](#)

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email



[Sign me up](#)



[Copyright © 2025](#) [Informa UK Limited](#) [Privacy policy](#) [Cookies](#) [Terms & conditions](#)

[Accessibility](#)



Taylor & Francis Group
an **informa** business

Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954
5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG