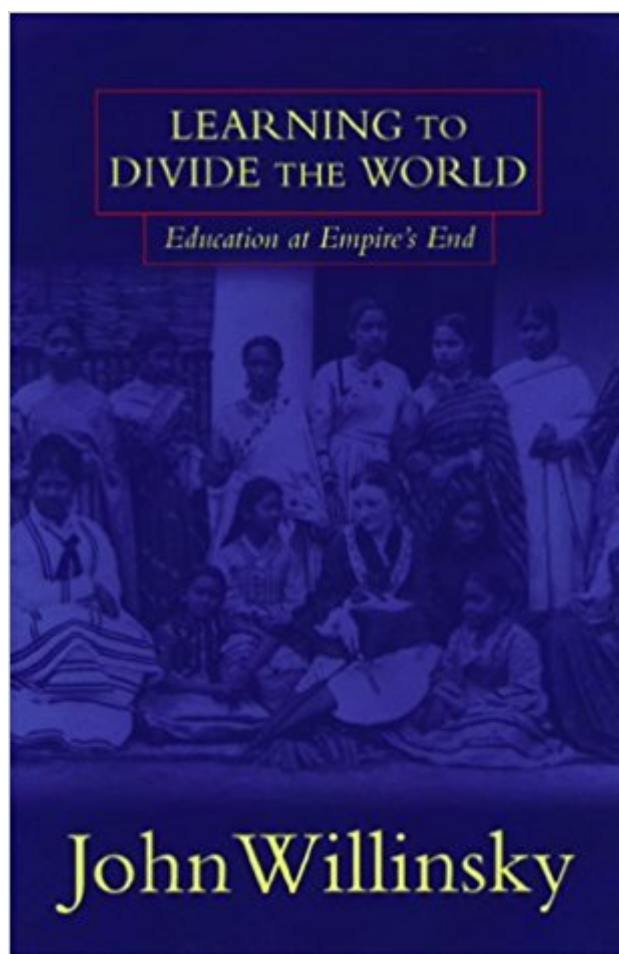




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# Learning To Divide The World: Education At Empire's End



## Synopsis

"The barbarian rules by force; the cultivated conqueror teaches." This maxim from the age of empire hints at the usually hidden connections between education and conquest. In *Learning to Divide the World*, John Willinsky brings these correlations to light, offering a balanced, humane, and beautifully written account of the ways that imperialism's educational legacy continues to separate us into black and white, east and west, primitive and civilized.

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## Customer Reviews

Willinsky (education, Univ. of British Columbia; *Empire of Words*, LJ 12/94) describes how colonialism and imperialism shaped the Western way of thinking and how Westerners were educated. He discusses "how five centuries of studying, classifying, and ordering humanity within an imperial context gave rise to peculiar and powerful ideas of race, culture, and nation," and he explores what happens when our comprehension of the world is tied to our conquest of it. How has education today been influenced by "the global forces of imperialism" in the past? How have centuries of European expansion influenced how we see the world? And how have migrations of peoples around the globe in recent decades changed our assumptions of it? These are some of the ideas that intrigue Willinsky. This scholarly work is well researched, with numerous footnotes, and may be more suitable for academic libraries than for leisure reading.   
Terry Christner, Hutchinson P.L., Kan.  
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The transfer, in July 1997, of Hong Kong from British to Chinese rule marked the conclusion of a turbulent era of European imperialism. However, as Willinsky (Education/ Univ. of British Columbia) eloquently argues, the colonial legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of those educated, all over the world, in geographic, racial, and cultural categories crafted by European colonialists. As a result of the discoveries of Columbus and other explorers, Europeans' medieval worldview collapsed and a new one rose in its place. This modern perspective is with us still, Willinsky asserts. Reviewing the vigorous, often violent centuries of European imperialism, the author focuses on the European emphasis on examining, classifying, and categorizing the diverse peoples, geography, and plant and animal life of the conquered continents. "It is not hard to argue," the author observes, "that the whole venture had about it something of a great public education project intent on bringing the world together under the roof of European learning." Willinsky goes on to make this argument, showing that imperialist attitudes pervasively influenced the teaching of history and gave rise to such disciplines as geography (National Geographic and geography textbooks tended to treat the non-Western world as a barbaric place gradually coming under civilization's sway, the author argues) and anthropology (which often produced scientifically credible apologia for racism and eugenics). In his survey of racist bias in language and literature, the author identifies the evident links between the emergence of English as a world language and British and American imperialism: Less evident, the author points out, are potential racist, sexist, and chauvinist perspectives embedded in English that may dominate world culture, and the often smug assumption that English's universality is evidence of its intrinsic superiority to other languages rather than, as the author contends, an artifact of British imperialism. A thoughtful examination of the changing mission of education in a multicultural world. (11 photos, not seen) -- Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I just finished the second chapter and my mind is blown. This should be required reading for all high school students. It's important for them to understand all that they have been denied and WHY it is they think the way they do. Willinsky masterfully explains the history of "education" and imperialism, while allowing the reader to reflect on various historical interpretations that NEED to be addressed. The troll on the negative review here simply doesn't get it, they are a product of imperialism; blinded by greed. Get it!

Really good book needed for class. Awesome reading material.

Great buy

This book is the winner of Outstanding Book Awards from the History of Education Society (1998-1999) and American Education Research Association (1999).

No, no, no. This book is an egregious indoctrination to our young people. Anyone with property rights, owns a business or has any wish to become successful is viewed as dangerous. In fact, Socialism, Communism and Marxism is detrimental to society. If you see anything in high school history books with this author, or our young people reading this please de-brainwash them and show them how success is good for everyone and does not require government intervention. There is plenty of information that refutes this dangerous indoctrination. Also, get involved in your children's education. Green energy regulation is another indoctrination that is causing unnecessary fear in our future leaders. They must be given the truth.

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