

## **Review by Raymond R. White**

**Kleinrock, Liz. 2021. Start Here Start Now.**

[Book provided to every teacher, principal, & library tech in the MVWSD,  
Not available from the district for public viewing.

The Santa Clara county library (Los Altos) has a copy & Mtn View Library has one ordered.

This book was approved for purchase by the MVWSD by “the Cabinet”. The Cabinet consists of Dr. Rudolph, the chiefs (Baur, Vikjord, & Westover), and the Directors (Henderson, Aker, Pongo, Ellard, Chang, Jinbo, and Dagar). MVWSD purchased the [Kleinrock] books “as a resource for teachers and to further contextualize the conversations around Equity for the 2021-22 school year.” (Henderson, Equity Director). The two presentations given to teachers provide some debatable background material and explain how to use this book to convert current curricula to present content through an anti-racist, antibias (ABAR) lens. Mostly this sticks to advice as to how to change curricula without getting into trouble with parents or administration.

The anti-racist, antibias (ABAR) lens provides a left-wing political agenda. The details of the agenda are mostly omitted from the book, but some evidence can be found in the definition of ABAR work by Liz Kleinrock: “For example, diversity has been the key term for such a long time, but simply having a group of people who look different from different experiences doesn't necessarily mean that anyone is working to create an environment that is free from white supremacy, free from patriarchy, or free from any of the social constructs that end up harming marginalized people.” [underlining by RRW].

The three frames in the T1 presentation about the book for teachers to notice are these:

#9: Setting Yourself Up for Success

- Effective work not an add-on, nor a separate block of time
- A lens through which you can teach any and all subjects
- Standards-aligned instruction can be interpreted in numerous ways
- Standards-aligned instruction also allows you to backward-plan and also helps identify areas to supplement

Mountain View Whisman School District

[What this does is ask instructors to creatively describe modifications to the curriculum (all of the curriculum: “all subjects”, all the time) as aligning with standards. It would seem to empower teachers to place their political preferences into all of the curriculum all of the time.]

## #10 Building Your ABAR Lens

Building on your knowledge base, use your skills to build a 'disruptive' lesson that:

- Operates within an inclusive environment
- Is conducive for student discussions that allow for multiple viewpoints
- Incorporates student voice and cultural backgrounds (into curriculum and instruction)
- Maintains high academic expectations for all

Mountain View Whisman School District

[A viewpoint (lens) that is **disruptive** cannot be **inclusive** of those of us who understand the value of the important principles of Western Civilization: Individualism, Universalism, Rule of Law, distinction between church and state, ... . To start with the goal of being disruptive is to have a conclusion already set, and any criticism is of existing structures. Criticism is not critical thinking without the options of alternatives. Without critical thinking we do not have high academic expectations. Disruption of current institutions is mentioned four times in the text (pages xxii, xxiii (twice) and 77).]

## #11 Teaching required standards/lessons/books with a disruptive lens:

- Focus on the themes and explore possible paired texts and/or consider your ABAR lens when you are preparing for discussions

Mountain View Whisman School District

[Pairing texts refers to the practice of picking material to counter curriculum opposing the ABAR viewpoints. This could result in critical thought, but might easily become simply criticism instead. Again, the intent to be **disruptive** implies **prior** conclusions.]

**Start Here Start Now** goes lightly on its intended agenda, but mentions the importance of language in conveying key understanding. This is mostly about changing the meanings of terms such as “white supremacy” and “racism”, expanding their definitions and introducing prejudicial terms such as “marginalized”.

systemic racism, anti-racist page xxiii

“Systemic racism” usually refers to something invisible that is alleged to disadvantage PoCs.

If human attitudes lie on a continuum from racist to anti-racist, almost everyone falls in the racist zone while a few brave allies attempt to become anti-racist as the goalposts continue to be moved.

marginalized and privileged groups page xxvii

“Marginalized” groups tend to be kept down by policies such as open borders, ineffective public schools, and inadequate policing; all policies favored by those who claim to be most concerned about Equity. Since “privileged” groups include many arriving as ESL with no capital and yet rise rapidly, the term can often be exchanged for “accomplished”.

white supremacy page xxvii

“White supremacy” is stretched to cover acts and policies that benefit those who value education and work, which are racially blind values of Western Civilization.

**Start Here Start Now** contains some historical and factual inaccuracies.

Howard Zinn is recommended as a source for historical material (p20, 26). Mr. Zinn is reliable as a purveyor of partisan political propaganda, but not as a historian. His “work” is sloppy and often based on leftist talking points devoid of historical bases.

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is recommended as “its own language” (p25), which it is not. The vocabulary and grammatical constructions of AAVE were found in the borderlands where Scotland met England (lawless for hundreds of years) and then in the southern US, populated by people from this and similar regions of the UK (Fischer, **Albion’s Seed, 1989**). These now non-standard forms have been educated out of the UK and nearly all of the southern US. To promote AAVE as authentically African American, implying African roots, is fraudulent and demeaning to African Americans.

Discussing slavery (Figure3-2, p45), Kleinrock allows the smear that white people were morally deficient in their participation in slavery. At that time there was no organized moral opposition to slavery anywhere in the world. Most slavery has always been by “owners” of close genetic and cultural groups to those of the slaves. When American and British (white, Christian) Quakers began to think of slavery as morally wrong they gradually changed the minds of people in the West. No organized group in the rest of the world joined in (Thomas Sowell: **Black Rednecks and White Liberals, 2005**). Kleinrock commits the error of “presentism”, judging the past by standards of today. She also evades all known patterns of historical slavery over some 6,000 years farther back.

I can imagine this as providing a “teachable moment” with critical thinking, but that is clearly not Kleinrock’s intent.

Kleinrock presents a graphic (Figure 7-2, p117) that reverses Fairness and Equality (Equity?). As demonstrated by Frans deWaal, we and our primate relatives have innate concepts of morality, including that fairness is both subjects getting the same rewards. A current concept of Equity is that each subject gets what he or she needs to come out even with each other.

A frank error occurs where Kleinrock credits Barbara McClintock’s student, Harriet Creighton, with McClintock’s seminal discovery of jumping genes and with McClintock’s Nobel Prize as well (Figure 8-2, p137).

**Start Here Start Now** is most insistent in its program for confusing very young children as to the relative importance of learned gender concepts versus biological reality. Examples of individuals being introduced with their own pronouns occur ten times (on pages 30, 31, 36, 62, 67, 77, 80, 122 125 and 131). The Anglo-derived term Latinx is found on page 132, for identifying Hispanic persons of unknown sex/gender. Figure 6-8 on p105 calls for introducing yourself with pronouns, especially if you are cisgender. Suppressing gender stereotypes is suggested on pages 35, 60 and 105. Introducing LGBTQ special privileges to very young children is promoted on p114-115.

Discomfort between a person’s biological sex (determined at conception) and his or her (cultural) gender identity occurred in perhaps 1/10,000 people 15 years ago. Out of a birth cohort of about four million per year, that would be about 400 individuals. Not every one of these people would opt for surgical treatments. In 2020 there were 16,353 transgender surgeries in the US to make one sex more like the other sex. If you check your health care provider’s website, you will see that Obamacare rules have forced and enabled the providers to offer “affirmative” “care” in the forms of counseling, puberty blockers, (cross-sex) hormone treatments, and surgeries. Fifteen years ago there was a single transgender surgery clinic in the United States. Now there are hundreds.

The rapid increases in surgeries make it clear that this is not an evolutionary event, but is rather a social contagion. A cursory familiarity with evolutionary theory (a well-founded scientific fact) and natural selection should inform anyone that being truly transgender is so likely to reduce one’s ability to

successfully reproduce that any genes for this mismatch can be expected to be kept to extremely low proportions. The phenomenon is expected to be rare.

Unfortunately, this is California, one of about 20 states in which laws require “affirmative” “care”. All we can do here is to insist that **any sexually related material, including gender confusing pronouns**, be put off to the latest grades possible. Introduction of this material in the early grades is effective at grooming children into risky choices. If the grooming is not effective, why have the numbers been rising so rapidly?

Chris Widmaier is quoted on p142 using the horrible Tuskegee “experiments” as an example of science/medicine acting in a racially discriminatory way, which it certainly was. It seems unlikely that anyone following Kleinrock would realize that the moral failing in the “experiments” was of **informed consent**. Affirmative care erases the moral principle of **informed consent** in the case of gender dysphoria *etc.*

There is significant risk that my inclusion of factual information on this topic might elicit hateful speech and even attempts to smear me. I stand with the facts, the science, and the parents.