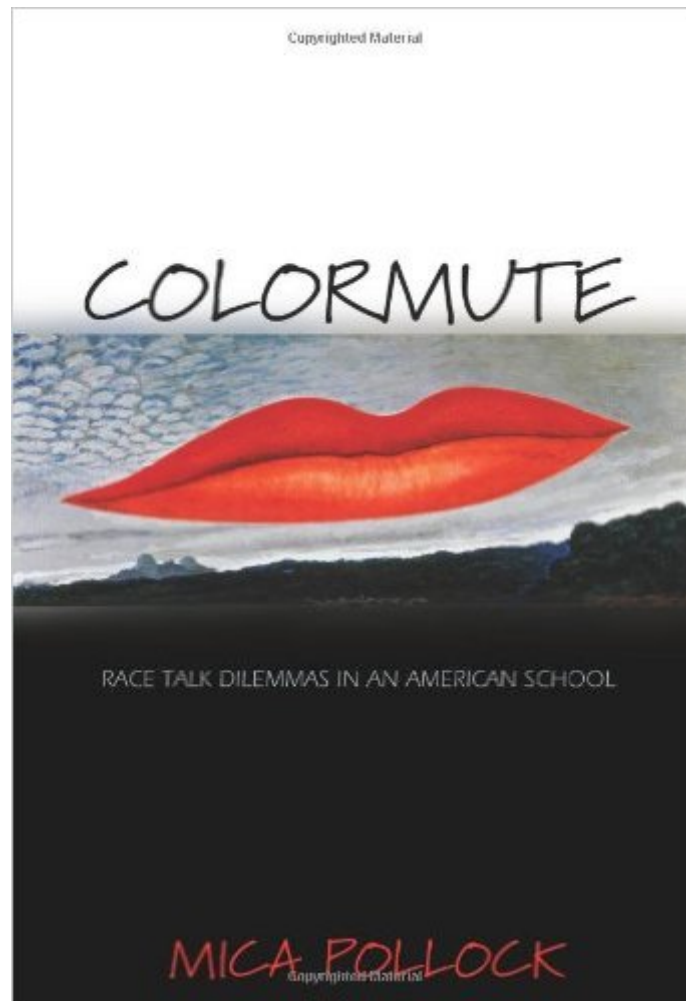


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# Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas In An American School



## Synopsis

This book considers in unprecedented detail one of the most confounding questions in American racial practice: when to speak about people in racial terms. Viewing "race talk" through the lens of a California high school and district, Colormute draws on three years of ethnographic research on everyday race labeling in education. Based on the author's experiences as a teacher as well as an anthropologist, it discusses the role race plays in everyday and policy talk about such familiar topics as discipline, achievement, curriculum reform, and educational inequality. Pollock illustrates the wide variations in the way speakers use race labels. Sometimes people use them without thinking twice; at other moments they avoid them at all costs or use them only in the description of particular situations. While a major concern of everyday race talk in schools is that racial descriptions will be inaccurate or inappropriate, Pollock demonstrates that anxiously suppressing race words (being what she terms "colormute") can also cause educators to reproduce the very racial inequities they abhor. The book assists readers in cultivating a greater understanding of the pitfalls and possibilities of everyday race talk and clarifies previously murky discussions of "colorblindness." By bridging the gap between theory and practice, Colormute will be enormously helpful in fostering ongoing conversations about dismantling racial inequality in America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have been teaching for thirty three years in an East Coast urban district in schools that all have great variety of people and circumstances. I read Colormute last spring. I was intrigued by the title

and the introduction and opening chapter. Though the setting of Colormute is California, I still recognized so much of the race/ethnicity talk. I could easily call up parallel experiences as a life-long teacher and student of race talk. I loved the dichotomous chapter headings each of which lays out a dilemma that usually has two opposing "solutions". She chronicles shifting definitions of personal identity among school people and shifting allegiances and shifting values about the meaning of one's race. I love that Ms. Pollack is a white woman listening hard to student and teacher talk about race and that she is not easily satisfied. She keeps digging deeper with those she is talking to and she does not propose pat or easy conclusions. This book is real, thoughtful, honest, and useful. I really liked it.

From what I've read so far, the author explicitly describes the inter-intra dialogue, personal belief systems (developed and emerging), thought processes, and frustration of adults and young people when talking about, or not talking about race and the use of labels to describe one another. The dialogue is authentic, as it reflects similar personal interactions or those I've observed among people of Western European descent and different ethnic groups. Within the context of the educational environment I plan to reference her discussion and incorporate her reflections during future lessons, teaching moments, and interactions outside of the classroom.

Everytime I purchase something some , I am always happy with the prices, my selections of items are always sent in a timely manner. I rather shop online than go out to the department stores.

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