

INTRODUCTION

This issue of *Explorations in Ethnic Studies* brings into focus the vision NAIES has had from the onset, i.e., the pursuit of “explorations and solutions” to problems within the context of oppression as they relate to the coloured ethnic minority experience in the U.S. and other places. In two separate essays, Jack Forbes and Vine Deloria present issues which ethnic studies proponents must address if such study is to be viable. These writers recognize ethnic studies as being about the business of empowering individuals to be creatively involved in their futures. Forbes and Deloria present varying perspectives, recognizing the history and implications of fascism and institutional racism on a global scale as well as the more immediate policies such as affirmative action and ethnic minority preference.

In his essay, Forbes traces the history of fascism from its roots to its current manifestations in the Americas. He points out the oppression of Indians in the Americas and, by extension, the oppression of indigenous peoples everywhere. Forbes makes clear, however, that oppression is by no means limited to indigenous populations; particularly by looking at historical and contemporary politics in the United States, he shows how fascism has been allowed to flourish, albeit in disguised forms, in this country.

Deloria continues where Forbes leaves off by discussing some specific examples of institutional racism in this country. He too points out how accustomed we have all become to the policies which foster and indeed encourage racism and sexism. We are all guilty—corporations, the government, those who do the hiring, and even the ethnic minorities who aspire to positions within the corporate structure. The recognition of the tangled webs we weave between and among the parties who perpetuate racist policies is what is important and what can lead us to liberation of ourselves and freedom from the power of the corporate state.

The accompanying critiques of the essays are designed to strengthen and focus the issues by presenting a number of specific ideas which give credence to the more general topics of fascism and institutional racism. In particular, Shirley Vining Brown's response to Forbes's essay serves as a bridge for linking the topics. She focuses on contemporary political issues as they affect ethnic minorities today and forces us to visualize what the future will be without active intercessions on the part of knowledgeable persons.

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