

diane ravitch the death and life

Diane Ravitch The Death and Life: Exploring Educational Reform through a Critical Lens

diane ravitch the death and life is a phrase that resonates deeply within conversations about American education reform. Diane Ravitch, a renowned historian of education and policy analyst, has profoundly influenced how educators, policymakers, and the public perceive the trajectory of public schooling in the United States. Her book, **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**, serves as a compelling critique of decades of reform efforts, challenging popular narratives and advocating for a more equitable and thoughtful approach to education.

In this article, we'll delve into the core themes of Diane Ravitch's work, unpack her perspectives on the successes and failures of educational reform, and explore why her insights remain essential for anyone invested in the future of public education.

Who Is Diane Ravitch?

Before diving into **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**, it's important to understand who Diane Ravitch is and why her voice carries such weight in education circles. Ravitch is a former Assistant Secretary of Education under President George H.W. Bush, an esteemed scholar, and a prolific author. Over her career, she has shifted from supporting standardized testing and market-based reforms to becoming one of the most vocal critics of these approaches.

Her evolution reflects a deep engagement with real classroom dynamics, research evidence, and the lived experiences of teachers and students. This background gives her critique both credibility and nuance, distinguishing her from more ideologically driven commentators.

The Death and Life of the Great American School System: Key Themes

At the heart of Diane Ravitch's book lies a meticulously constructed argument against the dominant reform strategies of the early 21st century, including high-stakes standardized testing, charter schools, and privatization efforts. Here are some of the central themes she explores:

1. The Myth of Decline

Ravitch challenges the widespread belief that American public schools are failing catastrophically and that teachers are primarily to blame. She points to historical data showing that in many respects, American schools have improved significantly over time. This counters the "death" narrative often used to justify radical reforms.

2. The Problem with Standardized Testing

One of the most influential arguments in **The Death and Life** critiques the overreliance on standardized testing. Ravitch argues that excessive testing narrows the curriculum, stifles creativity, and places undue stress on both students and teachers. Instead of serving as a helpful diagnostic tool, testing often becomes punitive, leading to "teaching to the test" rather than fostering genuine learning.

3. The Role of Teachers and Unions

Contrary to some reformers' portrayals of teachers as obstacles to change, Ravitch highlights their professionalism and dedication. She advocates for supporting teachers through better training, respect, and collaboration rather than scapegoating them for systemic problems. This perspective also extends to teachers' unions, which she sees as essential advocates for quality public education.

4. Equity and Access

A major focus in Ravitch's critique is the persistent inequities in education, particularly along racial and socioeconomic lines. She emphasizes that reforms must address these disparities directly rather than glossing over them with simplistic market solutions or competition models.

Why Diane Ravitch's Critique Matters Today

Over a decade since the publication of **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**, Diane Ravitch's insights continue to influence debates on education policy. Here's why her voice remains crucial:

Educational Policy and Public Awareness

Ravitch has helped shift public discourse away from blaming teachers and schools toward understanding the complexities of education reform. Her work encourages policymakers to consider evidence-based approaches and to engage with educators as partners rather than adversaries.

Resistance to Privatization and Market-Based Reforms

As charter schools and voucher programs expand, Ravitch's arguments provide a counterbalance that questions whether these alternatives truly serve all students. Her advocacy for strong, well-funded public schools reminds stakeholders of the vital role public education plays in a democratic society.

Focus on Holistic Education

Ravitch's critique pushes the conversation beyond test scores and accountability metrics to include broader educational goals, such as critical thinking, civic engagement, and cultural literacy. This holistic vision challenges narrow definitions of success, urging educators and policymakers to consider what it means to educate the whole child.

Lessons from Diane Ravitch *The Death and Life for Educators and Parents*

Whether you are a teacher, administrator, parent, or simply someone interested in education, the lessons embedded in Diane Ravitch's work offer valuable guidance:

- **Question Simplistic Solutions:** Educational improvement is complex. Beware quick fixes that rely heavily on testing or privatization without addressing deeper structural issues.
- **Value Teachers' Expertise:** Teachers know their students and communities best. Their insights should guide reform efforts rather than be dismissed.
- **Advocate for Equity:** Focus on closing opportunity gaps by investing in schools serving marginalized communities and addressing broader social inequalities.
- **Promote Comprehensive Curriculum:** Resist narrowing education to test preparation. Encourage arts, sciences, physical education, and critical thinking.

Critiques and Controversies Surrounding Diane Ravitch's Views

No influential thinker is without critics, and Diane Ravitch's shift from a reform advocate to a reform skeptic has sparked debate. Some argue that her stance underestimates the potential benefits of innovation, choice, and accountability in education. Others feel that her critiques do not sufficiently address persistent achievement gaps or the need for systemic change.

However, even detractors often acknowledge the importance of her call for respectful dialogue and the necessity of grounding reform in solid evidence rather than ideology.

The Broader Impact of Diane Ravitch's Work on

Education Reform

Diane Ravitch's **The Death and Life of the Great American School System** has inspired educators, activists, and researchers to rethink how we approach schooling in America. Her emphasis on history, context, and equity has influenced policy discussions at local, state, and national levels.

Moreover, her accessible writing style and public presence have helped democratize education debates, encouraging wider participation beyond academic or political elites. This has contributed to a growing movement that champions strong public schools as pillars of community and democracy.

Diane Ravitch the death and life of educational reform is more than just a critique; it's an invitation to reconsider what success means in our schools and to forge a path that honors both tradition and innovation. Her work reminds us that education, at its best, is a living, breathing institution that requires care, respect, and a commitment to justice. For those passionate about the future of American education, engaging with Ravitch's insights is both enlightening and essential.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Diane Ravitch, the author of 'The Death and Life' series?

Diane Ravitch is an education historian, policy analyst, and advocate known for her critical views on education reform in the United States. She has written extensively on public education and is the author of 'The Death and Life of the Great American School System.'

What is the main focus of Diane Ravitch's book 'The Death and Life of the Great American School System'?

The book critiques contemporary education reform efforts, particularly standardized testing and charter schools, and argues for strengthening public schools through equitable funding and support for teachers.

Why is Diane Ravitch critical of standardized testing in education?

Ravitch argues that standardized testing narrows the curriculum, encourages teaching to the test, and often punishes schools serving disadvantaged communities, thereby undermining educational equity and quality.

What alternative solutions does Diane Ravitch propose in 'The Death and Life' for improving public schools?

She advocates for increased public investment in education, respect and support for teachers,

reducing reliance on high-stakes testing, and community involvement in schools to foster genuine improvement.

How has Diane Ravitch's perspective on education reform evolved over time?

Initially a supporter of some reform measures like charter schools and accountability, Ravitch later became a vocal critic, emphasizing the importance of public education and cautioning against market-driven reforms.

What impact has 'The Death and Life of the Great American School System' had on education policy debates?

The book has influenced educators, policymakers, and the public by challenging prevailing reform narratives and promoting a more balanced, equity-focused approach to improving schools.

Are there any recent updates or sequels to Diane Ravitch's 'The Death and Life' book?

Diane Ravitch continues to write and speak on education issues, often updating her views through articles and social media, but as of now, there is no official sequel to 'The Death and Life of the Great American School System.'

Additional Resources

Diane Ravitch *The Death and Life: An In-Depth Examination of Education Reform*

diane ravitch the death and life is a phrase that resonates powerfully within the ongoing discourse on American education reform. Diane Ravitch, a prominent historian of education and policy analyst, has been a vocal and often controversial figure regarding the trajectory of public schooling in the United States. Her seminal book, **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**, not only critiques prevailing reform movements but also proposes a renewed vision for equitable, effective education. This article delves into the core themes of Ravitch's work, its significance in the education landscape, and the broader implications for policy and practice.

Understanding Diane Ravitch's Perspective on Education Reform

Diane Ravitch's journey from a supporter of standardized testing and charter schools to one of their most ardent critics is central to understanding the nuances of her arguments in **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**. Initially, Ravitch endorsed reforms such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the expansion of charter schools, believing these measures would drive accountability and improve outcomes. However, by the late 2000s, she publicly retracted this stance, highlighting unintended consequences and advocating for a reassessment of reform strategies.

Her critique centers on the overemphasis on high-stakes testing, market-based reforms, and privatization efforts that, according to her research and analysis, have often undermined public education rather than strengthened it. The phrase “diane ravitch the death and life” encapsulates this duality: the “death” referring to the decline of traditional public education under misguided policies, and the “life” representing the potential renaissance through renewed commitment to equity, community engagement, and comprehensive support for students and teachers.

The Death: What Went Wrong in American Education?

Ravitch’s diagnosis in **The Death and Life** is rooted in empirical data and historical context. From the 1990s onward, education reform shifted dramatically towards a corporate, results-driven model. Key issues she identifies include:

- **Excessive Reliance on Standardized Testing:** The proliferation of tests to measure student achievement narrowed curricula and pressured teachers to “teach to the test,” often at the expense of critical thinking and creativity.
- **Privatization and Charter Schools:** While originally intended to provide alternatives and foster innovation, many charter schools have shown mixed results in terms of equity and academic outcomes, sometimes exacerbating segregation.
- **Accountability Measures:** Policies tying funding and evaluations to test scores have created punitive environments, undermining teacher morale and destabilizing communities.

These factors, Ravitch argues, contributed to what she perceives as the “death” of a strong, inclusive public school system—one that traditionally served as a cornerstone for democratic participation and social mobility.

The Life: Revitalizing Public Education

Contrasting the bleak outlook, Ravitch offers a hopeful vision for the “life” of American schools. Her recommendations emphasize:

1. **Reducing the Role of Standardized Testing:** She advocates for balanced assessment systems that support learning rather than solely enforce accountability.
2. **Strengthening Public Schools:** Instead of diverting resources to private entities, investment should focus on improving public schools through adequate funding, smaller class sizes, and enhanced support services.
3. **Empowering Educators:** Recognizing teachers as professionals and partners in reform, with input into curriculum and evaluation, is critical.
4. **Addressing Inequality:** Tackling socioeconomic disparities and systemic racism within

education is a prerequisite to genuine improvement.

Ravitch's advocacy for these principles aligns closely with calls from educators and community leaders who seek sustainable and just reforms.

The Impact and Reception of Diane Ravitch's Work

Since the publication of **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**, Diane Ravitch has become a polarizing figure. Her critiques have sparked intense debate among policymakers, educators, and reform advocates. Supporters praise her willingness to challenge the status quo and bring attention to the human costs of market-driven policies. Critics, particularly from the charter school and testing proponents, argue that her perspective underestimates the need for accountability and innovation.

Comparative Outcomes: Public Schools vs. Charter Schools

One of the most contentious areas in Ravitch's analysis is the performance of charter schools relative to traditional public schools. Data from various states reveal a complex picture:

- Some charter schools outperform local public schools, especially those with specialized curricula or innovative teaching methods.
- However, many charters show no significant advantage or perform worse, particularly when factoring in student demographics and funding disparities.
- Concerns about cherry-picking students and lack of transparency have fueled skepticism about the universal efficacy of charter models.

Ravitch's insistence on rigorous evaluation and accountability for all schools, public or private, reflects a nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

Policy Shifts Influenced by Ravitch's Critique

While education reform remains a complex and evolving field, Ravitch's work has contributed to several shifts in policy conversations:

- Growing skepticism toward high-stakes testing as the primary measure of school success.
- Renewed emphasis on addressing social determinants of educational outcomes, such as poverty and community resources.

- Increased dialogue about the role of unions and teacher professionalism in shaping educational quality.
- Greater scrutiny of charter school accountability and equitable funding models.

These developments suggest that her critiques resonate beyond academic circles, influencing grassroots movements and legislative debates.

Exploring the Broader Educational Landscape Through Ravitch's Lens

Diane Ravitch's analysis invites reflection on the broader socio-political forces shaping education. The tension between market-driven reforms and public good is emblematic of larger ideological divides in American society. Her work underscores the importance of historical context, reminding readers that education systems are not merely transactional but deeply embedded in cultural and civic life.

By framing education reform as a matter of "death and life," Ravitch challenges stakeholders to reconsider priorities: Is the goal short-term test score gains, or long-term societal well-being? How can equity and excellence coexist in a system historically marred by inequality?

Lessons for Future Education Policy

To build on Ravitch's insights, policymakers and educators might consider:

1. **Holistic Approaches:** Integrating academic, social, and emotional learning to support diverse student needs.
2. **Community Engagement:** Involving families, local organizations, and students in decision-making to ensure relevance and responsiveness.
3. **Evidence-Based Practices:** Embracing data while contextualizing it within qualitative insights from educators and learners.
4. **Long-Term Investment:** Prioritizing stable funding and infrastructure that enable sustained improvement.

These strategies align with the revitalization themes found in **The Death and Life of the Great American School System**.

Diane Ravitch's contribution to education discourse extends beyond critique; it provides a framework for thoughtful, inclusive reform. Her call to reimagine public education challenges entrenched assumptions and encourages a collective commitment to nurturing the "life" of the school system,

ensuring it remains a vibrant institution central to democratic society.

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diane ravitch the death and life: *Radical Dreamers* Joseph P. Viteritti, Thomas Hunter Professor of Public Policy Joseph P Viteritti, 2025-09-26 In *Radical Dreamers*, Joseph P. Viteritti presents a wide-ranging history of the most controversial educational reform movement in America: school choice. Using it as a lens for observing the broader history of American educational failure, Viteritti traces how the school choice movement emerged to correct disparities in education and help economically disadvantaged students of color but evolved into a mechanism to provide public funding for students, irrespective of income, to attend private and religious schools. Viteritti's story is brought to life by featuring the contributions of six major figures whose careers helped shape this history and the ongoing debate.

diane ravitch the death and life: *The Origins of the Common Core* D. Owens, 2015-01-22 Owens provides a historical analysis of the ideological movements and reform efforts leading to the Common Core State Standards, beginning with conservative criticism of public schools in the 1930s and culminating in a convergence of the political right and left in efforts to systemically reform education based on free market principles.

diane ravitch the death and life: The Tragedy of American School Reform Ronald W. Evans, 2011-05-09 Two persistent dilemmas haunt school reform: curriculum politics and classroom constancy. Both undermined the 1960s' new social studies, a dynamic reform movement centered on inquiry, issues, and social activism. Dramatic academic freedom controversies ended reform and led to a conservative restoration. On one side were teachers and curriculum developers; on the other, conservative activists determined to undo the revolutions of the 1960s. The episode brought a return to traditional history, a turn away from questioning, and the re-imposition of authority. Engagingly written and thoroughly researched, *The Tragedy of American School Reform* offers a provocative perspective on current trends.

diane ravitch the death and life: The Choice We Face Jon Hale, 2021-08-10 A comprehensive history of school choice in the US, from its birth in the 1950s as the most effective weapon to oppose integration to its lasting impact in reshaping the public education system today. Most Americans today see school choice as their inalienable right. In *The Choice We Face*, scholar Jon Hale reveals what most fail to see: school choice is grounded in a complex history of race, exclusion, and inequality. Through evaluating historic and contemporary education policies, Hale demonstrates how reframing the way we see school choice represents an opportunity to evolve from complicity to action. The idea of school choice, which emerged in the 1950s during the civil rights movement, was disguised by American rhetoric as a symbol of freedom and individualism. Shaped by the ideas of conservative economist Milton Friedman, the school choice movement was a weapon used to oppose integration and maintain racist and classist inequalities. Still supported by Democrats and Republicans alike, this policy continues to shape American education in nuanced ways, Hale shows—from the expansion of for-profit charter schools and civil rights-based reform efforts to the appointment of Betsy DeVos. Exposing the origins of a movement that continues to privilege middle- to upper-class whites while depleting the resources for students left behind, *The*

Choice We Face is a bold, definitive new history that promises to challenge long-held assumptions on education and redefines our moment as an opportunity to save it—a choice we will not have for much longer.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Leaders in the Historical Study of American Education* Wayne J. Urban, 2012-01-01 This volume consists of twenty six autobiographical essays by leading historians of American education which document the enormous variety of paths taken to get into this field. A companion to earlier volumes on philosophy of education and curriculum studies, the historians in this volume reflect a wide variety of interests that underlay accomplishment in this scholarly field. They come from diverse backgrounds that have animated their scholarly careers in compelling ways. Readers in any variety of educational or historical study should learn from this volume how unplanned careers can still result in highly successful sets of accomplishments. That realization is a tribute both to the individual contributors and to the great attractiveness of educational history to committed scholars of various backgrounds and orientations.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Teachers Under Attack* Mike Spina, 2011-02-17 Never in the history of the United States have teachers and public schools undergone so much criticism. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has been its poster boy for his scathing attacks on public school teachers and their union. Christie's personal vendetta against the NJEA and his proposed reforms will radically change public education and not for the better. In *Teachers Under Attack!* retired teacher Mike Spina torpedoes Christie's proposals by demonstrating education experts have proved them ineffective. Spina compiles all the arguments teachers can use to refute the Governor's misstatements and shows the public they are being duped so Christie can achieve his political agenda of privatizing public schools.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Childhood Under Siege* Joel Bakan, 2011-08-09 Corporations have found a new resource to be mined for profit: our children. In this shocking and indelible behind-the-scenes journey, Joel Bakan, acclaimed author and award-winning maker of the renowned film and international bestselling book *The Corporation*, uncovers the astonishing degree to which companies exploit the special vulnerabilities of children, manipulate parents' fears, and operate with callous disregard for children's health and well-being. The number of children taking dangerous psychotropic drugs has skyrocketed as pharmaceutical companies employ insidious, often illegal tactics to inflate diagnoses of disorders and convince parents their children require medication. A highly sophisticated marketing industry deploys increasingly subtle and powerful tactics to play on children's intense emotions and desires and to lure them into obsessive consumerism. Computer game designers craft techniques to titillate children with sex and violence, while social media developers infiltrate and shape children's social and emotional worlds to compel them to spend more and more monetizable time online. America's schools are being transformed into profit centers while children are subjected to increasingly regimented teaching that thwarts curiosity and creativity, numbing the joy of learning. And children's chronic health problems, from asthma to cancer, autism, and birth defects, steadily escalate as thousands of new industrial chemicals are dumped into their environments. Nelson Mandela once sagely remarked that "there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children." The problem today, as Joel Bakan reveals, is that business interests have made protecting children extremely difficult. Corporations pump billions into rendering parents and governments powerless to shield children from an unrelenting commercial assault, with the result that after a century of progress, during which protective laws and regulations were widely promulgated, children are once again exposed to substantial harms at the hands of economic actors. *Childhood Under Siege* leaves no room for doubt that this assault on childhood is a major crisis of our time. A powerful manifesto for urgent change, it empowers us to shield our own children while offering concrete and realistic proposals for legal reforms that would protect all children from these predatory practices.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Transforming Educational Leadership* Anindya Kundu, 2026-01-20 As educational settings in the United States become more diverse and uncertain, students need support in new and formative non-academic ways. To combat the deep inequalities

that persist across the educational system, we need transformative leadership. Yet given rigid institutional rules, a legacy of structural barriers, and political attacks meant to discredit and defund schools, how can educational leaders effectively promote equity and champion the rights of all students? *Transforming Educational Leadership* sets out to answer this question by examining the lived experiences of leaders from a range of vantages--students, parents, educators, organizational leaders, and scholars. Drawing key lessons from their narratives and considering them alongside theory from sociological and leadership studies, Anindya Kundu presents tools for emerging and seasoned leaders, equipping them to build better systems to address stakeholders' basic needs, apply research to make sense of complex problems, maintain conviction in the face of staunch opposition, promote the agency of everyone served, and uphold dignity through educational leadership. Ultimately, *Transforming Educational Leadership* calls us to action: to broaden our conceptions around what educational leadership is and should be, to become the leaders we can be, and to reclaim education as our collective responsibility, so we can together learn to root out and heal the inequalities that plague the US education system and its learners.

diane ravitch the death and life: The Principal's Office Kate Rousmaniere, 2013-09-17 The Principal's Office is the first historical examination of one of the most important figures in American education. Originating as a head teacher in the nineteenth century and evolving into the role of contemporary educational leader, the school principal has played a central part in the development of American public education. A local leader who not only manages the daily needs of the school but also represents district and state officials, the school principal is the connecting hinge between classroom practice and educational policy. Kate Rousmaniere explores the cultural, economic, and political pressures that have impacted school leadership over time and considers professionalization, the experiences of women and people of color, and progressive community initiatives. She discusses the intersections between the role of the school principal with larger movements for civil rights, parental and community activism, and education reform. The school principal emerges as a dynamic character in the center of the educational enterprise, ever maneuvering between multiple constituencies, responding to technical and bureaucratic demands, and enacting different leadership strategies. By focusing on the historic development of school leadership, this book provides insights into the possibilities of school improvement for contemporary school leaders and reformers.

diane ravitch the death and life: Urban Issues, 6th Edition , 2012-09-15 Is extreme poverty growing? Is business-style competition a good model for improving schools? Are downtowns making a sustainable comeback? These are just some of the provocative questions your students will find in the new edition of *Urban Issues*. For current coverage of urban politics, your students will appreciate the balanced and unbiased reporting of CQ Researcher. *Urban Issues* gives them a window into how policy is made and implemented and is sure to spark classroom debate. Each chapter examines the key players, stakes, and lessons for the future, while covering the range of fact, analysis, and opinion surrounding each issue. Advancing critical thinking, each report includes the following useful features: a pron box that examines two competing sides of a single question; a detailed chronology; an annotated bibliography and web resources; and photos, charts, graphs, and maps. Customize your own book! Choose from an extensive collection of CQ Researcher articles and create the *Urban Issues* that is perfect for your class. Find out more at custom.cqpress.com.

diane ravitch the death and life: Follow the Money Sarah Reckhow, 2013-01-17 Some of the nation's wealthiest philanthropies, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Broad Foundation have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in education reform. With vast wealth and a political agenda, these foundations have helped to reshape the reform landscape in urban education. In *Follow the Money*, Sarah Reckhow shows where and how foundation investment in education is occurring and presents in-depth analysis of the effects of these investments within the two largest urban districts in the United States: New York City and Los Angeles. In New York City, centralized political control and the use of private resources have enabled rapid implementation of reform proposals. Yet this potent combination of top-down authority and outside funding also poses serious questions about transparency, responsiveness, and

democratic accountability in New York. Furthermore, the sustainability of reform policies is closely linked to the political fortunes of the current mayor and his chosen school leader. While the media has highlighted the efforts of drastic reformers and dominating leaders such as Joel Klein in New York City and Michelle Rhee in Washington, D.C., a slower, but possibly more transformative, set of reforms have been taking place in Los Angeles. These reforms were also funded and shaped by major foundations, but they work from the bottom up, through charter school operators managing networks of schools. This strategy has built grassroots political momentum and demand for reform in Los Angeles that is unmatched in New York City and other districts with mayoral control. Reckhow's study of Los Angeles's education system shows how democratically responsive urban school reform could occur-pairing foundation investment with broad grassroots involvement. Bringing a sharp analytical eye and a wealth of evidence to one of the most politicized issues of our day, *Follow the Money* will reshape our thinking about educational reform in America.

diane ravitch the death and life: God, Schools, and Government Funding Laurence H. Winer, Nina J. Crimm, 2016-04-15 In recent years, a conservative majority of the U.S. Supreme Court, over vigorous dissents, has developed circumventions to the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment that allow state legislatures unabashedly to use public tax dollars increasingly to aid private elementary and secondary education. This expansive and innovative legislation provides considerable governmental funds to support parochial schools and other religiously-affiliated education providers. That political response to the perceived declining quality of traditional public schools and the vigorous school choice movement for alternative educational opportunities provokes passionate constitutional controversy. Yet, the Court's recent decision in *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn* inappropriately denies taxpayers recourse to challenge these proliferating tax funding schemes in federal courts. Professors Winer and Crimm clearly elucidate the complex and controversial policy, legal, and constitutional issues involved in using tax expenditures - mechanisms such as exclusions, deductions, and credits that economically function as government subsidies - to finance private, religious schooling. The authors argue that legislatures must take great care in structuring such programs and set forth various proposals to ameliorate the highly troubling dissension and divisiveness generated by state aid for religious education.

diane ravitch the death and life: Dismantled Leanne Kang, 2020 *Dismantled* is an accessible, critical look at the devolution of local power in the Detroit public school system. The author examines the rise of charter schools and other private enterprises, the eclipse of control from local actors to new players and influences, and the invaluable lessons the experience holds for urban school systems nationwide. Kang provides a compelling narrative of this shift in power beginning in the 1980s and leading to the breakup of Detroit Public Schools in 2016, and concludes with a discussion on the implications and dilemmas of regime change. The text looks at such questions as: What happens when local actors no longer have a voice in what happens to their schools? What are the consequences when teachers and administrators cede control to private interests and cease to participate in decisionmaking? What are some ways to redirect public schooling towards democracy in the aftermath of dismantling the Progressive Era system? **Book Features:** Examines how a series of policies dismantled the Detroit Public Schools, resulting in new educational characteristics such as the marketization and privatization of schooling. Offers an historical perspective on market-based reform, including why and how race and politics serve as barriers to reform. Explains the role and influence of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos in the Detroit events. Provides a framework from which to envision the next steps for public education in the 21st century.

diane ravitch the death and life: Folk Phenomenology Samuel D. Rocha, 2015-09-28 *Folk* is an analog foundation in a digital world. Phenomenology is a big word about a small, impossible task: trying to imagine the real. This book describes this task in relation to its foundation. Most of all, *Folk Phenomenology* is a defense of the integrity and sufficiency of art--thinking, feeling, living, dying. In short, being in love. .embed-container { position: relative; padding-bottom: 56.25%; height: 0; overflow: hidden; max-width: 100%; } .embed-container iframe, .embed-container object, .embed-container embed { position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; width: 100%; height: 100%; }

diane ravitch the death and life: Political Agendas for Education Joel Spring, 2014-03-26

The Fifth Edition of Joel Spring's ongoing documentation and analysis of political agendas for education reflects the major political issues in education since 2008. This edition focuses on the education sections of the 2012 Republican, Democratic, Green, and Libertarian Party platforms. Taking a fresh look at the social and political forces, educational research, and ideologies shaping the educational agendas of these political parties and a comparative approach, the book stimulates reflection and discussion. New coverage in the Fifth Edition includes: • The political coup called Race to the Top • Common Core State Standards and national testing based on the Standards • Explosion of online instruction • Debates about teacher evaluations and merit pay • Growing for-profit education industry • New agenda for American Education: Constitutional amendment; long life and happiness; environmental education Political Agendas for Education is essential reading for courses dealing with the politics of education, foundations of education, educational leadership, and curriculum studies, and for educational scholars, professionals, policymakers, and all those concerned with the politics of education in the U.S. and its consequences for schools and society.

diane ravitch the death and life: *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*

Diane Ravitch, 2016-06-28 An urgent case for protecting public education, from one of America's best-known education experts In this landmark book, Diane Ravitch - former assistant secretary of education and a leader in the drive to create a national curriculum - examines her career in education reform and repudiates positions that she once staunchly advocated. Drawing on over forty years of research and experience, Ravitch critiques today's most popular ideas for restructuring schools, including privatization, the Common Core, standardized testing, the replacement of teachers by technology, charter schools, and vouchers. She shows conclusively why the business model is not an appropriate way to improve schools. Using examples from major cities like New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver, and San Diego, Ravitch makes the case that public education today is in peril and includes clear prescriptions for improving America's schools. *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* is more than just an analysis of the state of play of the American education system. It is a must-read for any stakeholder in the future of American schooling.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Affirmative Action for All Our Children* Alain F. Corcos,

2016 American public schools are in deep trouble. They are still characterized by ethnic and class segregation, grossly unequal teaching and learning facilities, and governed by mammoth bureaucracies with a plethora of contradictory policies and goals. For many low and medium income students, college is still not an option due to high tuition rates and poor primary school education. Is there any hope? *Affirmative Action for All Our Children: And Why College Education Should Be Free* tackles the hard truth and comes up with a compelling answer to solve all of these problems: the Federal Government should completely take over the education system. According to author Alain Corcos, such a takeover needs to include the federal government financing the entire education system from preschool to college, training teachers and paying their salaries, building and maintaining school facilities, developing the best curriculum to prepare all children to face today's world, and providing tuition-free college for students willing to give back by serving their nation in some capacity for two years between the ages of eighteen and twenty. *Affirmative Action for All Our Children: And Why College Education Should Be Free* lays out a detailed plan that paves the way for US public schools to become the best in the world. However, time is of the essence because any change will take at least two generations to affect the nation.

diane ravitch the death and life: *Humanizing the Education Machine* Rex Miller, Bill Latham,

Brian Cahill, 2016-11-07 A clear roadmap for the new territory of education Education in the U.S. has been under fire for quite some time, and for good reason. The numbers alone tell a very disconcerting story: according to various polls, 70% of teachers are disengaged. Add to that the fact that the United States ranks last among industrialized nations for college graduation levels, and it's evident there's a huge problem that needs to be addressed. Yet the current education system and its school buildings—with teachers standing in front of classrooms and lecturing to students—have gone

largely unchanged since the 19th century. Humanizing the Education Machine tackles this tough issue head-on. It describes how the education system has become ineffective by not adapting to fit students' needs, learning styles, perspectives, and lives at home. This book explains how schools can evolve to engage students and involve parents. It serves to spread hope for reform and equip parents, educators, administrators, and communities to: Analyze the pitfalls of the current U.S. education system Intelligently argue the need to reform the current landscape of education Work to make a difference in the public education system Be an informed advocate for your child or local school system If you're a concerned parent or professional looking for a trusted resource on the need for education reform, look no further than Humanizing the Education Machine. This illuminating resource provides the information you need to become a full partner in the new human-centered learning revolution.

diane ravitch the death and life: Better Off Without 'Em Chuck Thompson, 2013-07-16 The author of Smile When You're Lying describes his controversial road trip investigation into the cultural divide of the United States during which he met with possum-hunting conservatives, trailer park lifers and prayer warriors before concluding that both sides might benefit if former Confederacy states seceded.

diane ravitch the death and life: Censored 2012 Mickey Huff, Project Censored, 2011-10-04 Every year since 1976, Project Censored, our nation's oldest news-monitoring group—a university-wide project at Sonoma State University founded by Carl Jensen, directed for many years by Peter Phillips, and now under the leadership of Mickey Huff—has produced a Top-25 list of underreported news stories and a book, Censored, dedicated to the stories that ought to be top features on the nightly news, but that are missing because of media bias and self-censorship. Seven Stories Press has been publishing this yearbook since 1994, featuring the top stories listed democratically in order of importance according to students, faculty, and a national panel of judges. Each of the top stories is presented at length, alongside updates from the investigative reporters who broke the stories. Beyond the Top-25 stories, additional chapters delve further into timely media topics: The Censored News and Media Analysis section provides annual updates on Junk Food News and News Abuse, Censored Déjà Vu, signs of hope in the alternative and news media, and the state of media bias and alternative coverage around the world. In the Truth Emergency section, scholars and journalists take a critical look at the US/NATO military-industrial-media empire. And in the Project Censored International section, the meaning of media democracy worldwide is explored in close association with Project Censored affiliates in universities and at media organizations all over the world. A perennial favorite of booksellers, teachers, and readers everywhere, Censored is one of the strongest life signs of our current collective desire to get the news we citizens need—despite what Big Media tells us.

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