



Radical Education and the Common School: A Democratic Alternative (Foundations and Futures of Education)

Michael Fielding, Peter Moss

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What is education, what is it for and what are its fundamental values? How do we understand knowledge and learning? What is our image of the child and the school? How does the ever more pressing need to develop a more just, creative and sustainable democratic society affect our responses to these questions?

Addressing these fundamental issues, Fielding and Moss contest the current mainstream dominated by markets and competition, instrumentality and standardisation, managerialism and technical practice. They argue instead for a radical education with democracy as a fundamental value, care as a central ethic, a person-centred education that is education in the broadest sense, and an image of a child rich in potential. Radical education, they say, should be practiced in the 'common school', a school for all children in its local catchment area, age-integrated, human scale, focused on depth of learning and based on team working. A school understood as a public space for all citizens, a collective workshop of many purposes and possibilities, and a person-centred learning community, working closely with other schools and with local authorities. The book concludes by examining how we might bring such transformation about.

Written by two of the leading experts in the fields of early childhood and secondary education, the book covers a wide vista of education for children and young people. Vivid examples from different stages of education are used to explore the full meaning of radical democratic education and the common school and how they can work in practice. It connects rich thinking and experiences from the past and present to offer direction and hope for the future. It will be of interest and inspiration to all who care about education - teachers and students, academics and policy makers, parents and politicians.

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