

john taylor gatto dumbing us down

John Taylor Gatto Dumbing Us Down: Unpacking the Critique of Modern Education

john taylor gatto dumbing us down is more than just a phrase—it's a powerful critique of the contemporary education system that has sparked conversations among educators, parents, and policy makers alike. John Taylor Gatto, a former New York State Teacher of the Year, was a vocal critic of compulsory schooling and the way traditional education often stifles creativity, critical thinking, and true learning. His book, **Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling**, has become a seminal work for those questioning the purpose and methods of modern education.

In this article, we'll explore the core ideas behind John Taylor Gatto's critique, why he believed the education system is "dumbing us down," and what alternatives or solutions he proposed. If you've ever wondered why school sometimes feels more like a factory than a place of inspiration, Gatto's insights may offer a fresh perspective.

The Origins of John Taylor Gatto's Critique

John Taylor Gatto spent nearly three decades as a classroom teacher before becoming disillusioned with the system he was part of. His experience in public schools gave him firsthand insight into how the education system operates—not just in terms of curriculum but in the social dynamics it enforces.

What Does "Dumbing Us Down" Mean?

When Gatto talks about "dumbing us down," he's referring to the process by which schools unintentionally promote conformity and discourage independent thought. According to him, the system prioritizes obedience, rote memorization, and standardized testing over curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking skills.

He argues that rather than fostering intelligence and wisdom, schools often train students to become passive consumers of information, ready to accept authority without question. This "hidden curriculum" teaches students to be dependent on external validation and to avoid risk-taking or original thought.

The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling

In **Dumbing Us Down**, Gatto outlines several "lessons" that schools teach beyond the official curriculum:

- **Confusion:** Constantly shifting schedules and subjects prevent deep focus.
- **Boredom:** Lack of engagement with material reduces motivation.

- **A Class Position:** Students are ranked and labeled, which can limit potential.
- **Indifference:** Encouragement to avoid caring too much about any one thing.
- **Emotional Dependency:** Reliance on teachers and authority figures to tell you what to do.
- **Intellectual Dependency:** Discouragement of independent thought and problem-solving.

These hidden lessons, Gatto believed, undermine true learning and personal growth.

Why John Taylor Gatto Believed the System Was Failing

Gatto's frustration wasn't just about curriculum content but the very structure and purpose of schooling. He saw compulsory education as a system designed not to educate, but to produce compliant workers and consumers.

The Industrial Model of Education

One of Gatto's key points was that the modern school system is modeled after the industrial revolution's factory approach. Schools operate on strict schedules, bell systems, and standardized curricula much like assembly lines. The goal is efficiency and uniformity rather than nurturing individual talents.

This approach neglects the diverse ways students learn and often suppresses creativity. It also disconnects education from real-world experiences, making school feel irrelevant and boring for many students.

The Impact on Creativity and Critical Thinking

Because the system prioritizes standardized testing and measurable outcomes, teachers often feel pressured to "teach to the test." This leaves little room for exploration, discussion, or critical thinking. Gatto argued that this environment stunts students' intellectual development and discourages them from questioning authority or thinking innovatively.

Alternatives to Traditional Schooling Inspired by Gatto's Ideas

John Taylor Gatto didn't just critique the system; he also championed alternatives that promote independent learning and personal growth. Many of

these ideas align with homeschooling, unschooling, and other forms of education that break away from compulsory schooling's constraints.

Self-Directed Learning

A key principle Gatto advocated is self-directed learning—allowing students to pursue subjects they are passionate about at their own pace. This method encourages curiosity and intrinsic motivation rather than external rewards or punishments.

Community-Based Education

Gatto believed learning should be deeply connected to the community and real-life experiences. Instead of isolated classroom lessons, students could engage with mentors, local experts, and hands-on projects that prepare them for practical challenges.

Unschooling and Homeschooling

Many parents inspired by Gatto's work choose homeschooling or unschooling, where children learn through everyday experiences, interests, and exploration. This approach respects individual learning styles and fosters a love of learning that is often missing in traditional schools.

How John Taylor Gatto's Ideas Resonate Today

Even decades after **Dumbing Us Down** was published, Gatto's critique remains relevant. The rise of standardized testing, debates over curriculum content, and concerns about student disengagement echo the issues he raised.

The Modern Debate on Education Reform

Educational reformers often cite Gatto's work when advocating for more personalized, student-centered learning approaches. His insights have contributed to movements seeking to reduce standardized testing, incorporate project-based learning, and integrate technology in ways that empower learners.

Digital Learning and Gatto's Vision

The growth of online education and digital resources offers opportunities to move away from the "factory model" of schooling. Students can now access diverse materials, connect with experts worldwide, and learn at their own pace—concepts that align well with Gatto's philosophy.

However, challenges remain, such as ensuring equitable access and maintaining

motivation without traditional structures.

Applying John Taylor Gatto's Lessons in Everyday Life

Even if you're not an educator or a homeschooling parent, Gatto's ideas can influence how you think about learning and personal development.

- **Encourage curiosity:** Always ask questions and seek deeper understanding beyond surface-level facts.
- **Value diverse learning experiences:** Explore learning outside formal settings—through travel, hobbies, and mentorship.
- **Promote critical thinking:** Challenge assumptions and analyze information critically rather than accepting it blindly.
- **Support independent projects:** Whether for children or adults, working on passion projects can develop self-motivation and creativity.

John Taylor Gatto's **Dumbing Us Down** reminds us that education should empower, not confine, and that true learning happens when individuals are free to explore, question, and create. By reflecting on his critique, we can rethink how we approach education and lifelong learning in ways that foster genuine growth.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is John Taylor Gatto and what is he known for?

John Taylor Gatto was an American educator and author known for his criticism of the traditional public education system. He advocated for homeschooling and alternative education methods and is famous for his book "Dumbing Us Down."

What is the main argument of John Taylor Gatto's book 'Dumbing Us Down'?

In 'Dumbing Us Down,' John Taylor Gatto argues that the public school system in the United States is designed to limit critical thinking, creativity, and individuality, effectively 'dumbing down' students to conform to societal norms rather than empowering them to be independent thinkers.

Why does John Taylor Gatto believe the education system is 'dumbing us down'?

Gatto believes the education system enforces conformity, obedience, and passivity, suppressing curiosity and independent thought. He claims it prioritizes standardized testing and bureaucratic control over genuine

learning and personal growth.

What impact has John Taylor Gatto's critique had on education discussions?

John Taylor Gatto's critique has sparked widespread debate about the effectiveness and purpose of public education. His work has inspired educators, parents, and reform advocates to explore alternative education models such as homeschooling, unschooling, and democratic schools.

What are some key teachings or lessons from 'Dumbing Us Down'?

'Dumbing Us Down' emphasizes the importance of self-directed learning, critical thinking, and questioning authority. Gatto encourages recognizing the hidden curriculum of schools that condition students to be compliant and to challenge educational norms to foster true learning.

How does John Taylor Gatto suggest we improve education?

Gatto suggests moving away from standardized schooling towards more personalized, community-based, and experiential forms of education. He advocates for empowering students to take control of their own learning and for parents and teachers to nurture curiosity and critical thinking.

Is John Taylor Gatto's perspective widely accepted in the education community?

While John Taylor Gatto's critiques have gained a significant following among alternative education advocates, many traditional educators and policymakers argue that public schools are essential for providing equal access to education. His views are considered controversial and serve as a catalyst for ongoing discussions about education reform.

Additional Resources

John Taylor Gatto *Dumbing Us Down: An Investigative Review of His Critique on Modern Education*

john taylor gatto dumbing us down is a phrase that resonates deeply within educational reform circles and among critics of the public school system. Gatto, a former New York State Teacher of the Year and a veteran educator, rose to prominence with his provocative critique of mainstream education, most notably through his book "Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling." His work challenges the foundational assumptions of public schooling, arguing that the system is designed not to enlighten or empower students, but rather to create conformity and compliance. This article explores Gatto's core arguments, analyzes his critique within the broader context of educational theory, and examines the lasting influence of his ideas on educational discourse.

Understanding John Taylor Gatto's Critique of Public Education

John Taylor Gatto's perspective on schooling diverges markedly from traditional educational philosophies. His contention is that compulsory schooling, as practiced in much of the United States and other Western countries, serves more to suppress creativity and critical thinking than to foster intellectual growth. Gatto's "Dumbing Us Down" is a scathing indictment of the public school system, which he believes functions as a tool for social control rather than genuine education.

At the heart of Gatto's argument is the concept of the "hidden curriculum"—the implicit lessons taught by the structure and routine of schooling rather than through explicit subject matter. According to Gatto, this hidden curriculum teaches students to be passive, obedient, and dependent, rather than independent thinkers or innovators. He asserts that schools inadvertently promote a culture of mediocrity and conformity, which serves industrial and governmental interests by producing a compliant workforce.

The Hidden Curriculum and Its Implications

Gatto identified several characteristics of the hidden curriculum, including:

- **Confusion:** The fragmentation of knowledge into isolated subjects discourages holistic understanding.
- **Class Positioning:** Schools reinforce social stratification by tracking students into different educational paths.
- **Indifference:** Routine and rigid schedules dull students' natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.
- **Emotional Dependency:** Students learn to seek approval from authority figures instead of developing self-motivation.
- **Intellectual Dependency:** The system encourages rote memorization over critical thinking.
- **Provisional Self-Esteem:** Self-worth becomes tied to grades and external validation.

These points outline how Gatto believed the schooling system subtly conditions students to accept limitations on their intellectual and personal freedoms. This analysis is consistent with critical pedagogy scholars who emphasize the role of education in reproducing societal inequalities.

John Taylor Gatto Dumbing Us Down: Educational

Outcomes and Societal Impact

Exploring the impact of Gatto's critique requires understanding how his views contrast with prevailing educational outcomes. Traditional schooling often measures success through standardized testing and grade performance, metrics that Gatto argued are inadequate indicators of true learning. Instead, he suggested that these measures contribute to the "dumbing down" phenomenon by prioritizing memorization and uniformity over creativity and critical engagement.

Studies in educational psychology and sociology support some of Gatto's concerns. For example, research indicates that standardized testing can lead to a narrowing of the curriculum and increased student stress, while failing to account for diverse learning styles and intelligences. Additionally, sociological data reveal that schools often perpetuate existing social inequalities, aligning with Gatto's critique of class positioning within education.

However, it is important to note that not all educators or policymakers agree with Gatto's assessment. Many argue that public education provides essential opportunities for social mobility and civic preparedness. They point to reforms aimed at increasing inclusivity, critical thinking, and personalized learning as evidence that the education system can evolve beyond the limitations Gatto described.

Comparing Gatto's Views with Contemporary Educational Practices

In recent years, several educational trends have emerged that address some of the issues raised by Gatto:

- **Project-Based Learning (PBL):** Encourages students to engage in real-world problems, fostering creativity and collaboration.
- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** Focuses on developing self-awareness and emotional intelligence, counteracting emotional dependency.
- **Personalized Learning:** Tailors education to individual student needs, challenging the one-size-fits-all model Gatto criticized.
- **Critical Pedagogy:** Encourages students to question societal structures and their own role within them.

While these innovations reflect a shift toward more holistic education, Gatto's warnings remain relevant as many public schools continue to struggle with standardized testing pressures, overcrowded classrooms, and limited resources.

The Legacy and Influence of John Taylor Gatto's

"Dumbing Us Down"

John Taylor Gatto's work has inspired educators, parents, and activists seeking alternatives to traditional schooling. His call for self-directed learning and educational freedom resonates with homeschooling movements and democratic schools that emphasize student agency. Moreover, Gatto's critique has been cited in numerous educational reform debates, highlighting ongoing tensions between institutionalized education and individualized learning.

Despite criticism from some quarters labeling his views as overly pessimistic or conspiratorial, Gatto's writing invites reflection on the purpose and methods of education. His emphasis on cultivating independent thought challenges educators to rethink not just what is taught but how and why.

Pros and Cons of Gatto's Educational Philosophy

- **Pros:**

- Encourages critical examination of educational systems.
- Advocates for fostering creativity and independent thinking.
- Supports personalized approaches that respect student individuality.
- Highlights the societal role of education beyond mere academics.

- **Cons:**

- May underestimate the complexities of delivering universal education.
- Could be perceived as dismissive of the benefits of structured learning.
- Some ideas lack practical application within large public systems.
- Occasionally criticized for a negative portrayal of teachers and schools.

These points illustrate the nuanced reception of Gatto's ideas and the ongoing dialogue they provoke regarding educational reform.

John Taylor Gatto's "Dumbing Us Down" remains a powerful critique that challenges educators and society to reconsider the objectives and methods of schooling. Whether one agrees fully with his conclusions or not, his work underscores the importance of fostering education that truly empowers students rather than conditioning them to conformity. In an era marked by rapid technological change and evolving workforce demands, revisiting Gatto's insights can contribute meaningfully to conversations about building a more

adaptive and thoughtful education system.

John Taylor Gatto Dumbing Us Down

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john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Dumbing Us Down John Taylor Gatto, 2002-02-01 With over 70,000 copies of the first edition in print, this radical treatise on public education has been a New Society Publishers' bestseller for 10 years! Thirty years in New York City's public schools led John Gatto to the sad conclusion that compulsory schooling does little but teach young people to follow orders like cogs in an industrial machine. This second edition describes the wide-spread impact of the book and Gatto's guerrilla teaching. John Gatto has been a teacher for 30 years and is a recipient of the New York State Teacher of the Year award. His other titles include *A Different Kind of Teacher* (Berkeley Hills Books, 2001) and *The Underground History of American Education* (Oxford Village Press, 2000).

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Summary of John Taylor Gatto's Dumbing Us Down Milkyway Media, 2024-01-22 Get the Summary of John Taylor Gatto's Dumbing Us Down in 20 minutes. Please note: This is a summary & not the original book. Dumbing Us Down by John Taylor Gatto is a critical examination of the American education system. Gatto, an experienced teacher, identifies a hidden curriculum within schools that teaches seven detrimental lessons: confusion, class position, indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, conditional self-esteem, and the impossibility of hiding. These lessons promote conformity, obedience, and reliance on authority, stifling independent thought and action...

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Dumbing Us Down - 25th Anniversary Edition John Taylor Gatto, 2017-05-19 Transform your child's education from institutional compliance to intellectual freedom. Former New York State Teacher of the Year John Taylor Gatto reveals how compulsory schooling creates dependent workers instead of independent thinkers, replacing natural curiosity with rule-following conformity. Over 30 years of classroom experience led to his revolutionary discovery: genius is as common as dirt, but conventional education systematically destroys it. Why This Educational Awakening Matters Now: After 100+ years of mandatory schooling, literacy rates have dropped, families are fragmented, and children are increasingly disaffected. This isn't failure - it's the system working exactly as designed to produce compliant workers rather than creative thinkers. What You'll Discover: The hidden curriculum that trains children for industrial compliance instead of critical thinking Step-by-step strategies for transitioning from school-based to self-directed learning How to identify and nurture your child's natural learning style and interests Practical methods for creating engaging educational experiences without formal curriculum Real-world approaches to developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and life skills Community resources and support networks for families choosing educational alternatives 25 Years of Proven Impact: This bestseller has guided over 100,000 families toward educational freedom, with children achieving remarkable academic and personal success through self-directed learning. Zachary Slayback, Ivy League dropout and tech entrepreneur, provides a powerful new foreword demonstrating how Gatto's principles create innovators and leaders. Your child's natural love of learning can't wait for education reform. Start implementing these time-tested strategies immediately to unlock their intellectual potential and creativity. Join thousands of families

discovering that education works best when it honors children's innate curiosity.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Summary of John Taylor Gatto's Dumbing Us Down Everest Media,, 2022-03-27T22:59:00Z Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample Book Insights: #1 I used to teach English language and literature, but I don't anymore. I teach school, and I win awards doing it. The seven lessons that make up a national curriculum are taught from Harlem to Hollywood Hills. #2 The first lesson I teach is confusion. I teach my students that everything I teach is out of context. I teach them disconnections, and I teach them too much. They learn about things in depth, but they learn about them like children learn the catechism or the Thirty-nine Articles of Anglicanism. #3 I teach my students that they must stay in the class where they belong. I don't know who decides where my kids belong, but that's not my business. I make sure they understand their place in the pyramid. #4 The third lesson I teach is indifference. I teach students not to care too much about anything, even though they want to make it appear that they do. They must become totally involved in my lessons, but when the bell rings, they must turn on and off like a light switch.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: *Dumbing Us Down* John Taylor Gatto, 2002-02-01 This radical treatise on public education has been a New Society Publishers' bestseller for 10 years! Thirty years of award-winning teaching in New York City's public schools led John Gatto to the sad conclusion that compulsory governmental schooling does little but teach young people to follow orders as cogs in the industrial machine. In celebration of the ten-year anniversary of *Dumbing Us Down* and to keep this classic current, we are renewing the cover art, adding new material about John and the impact of the book, and a new Foreword.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: *Dumbing Us Down - 25th Anniversary Edition* John Taylor Gatto, 2017-05-19 Transform your child's education from institutional compliance to intellectual freedom. Former New York State Teacher of the Year John Taylor Gatto reveals how compulsory schooling creates dependent workers instead of independent thinkers, replacing natural curiosity with rule-following conformity. Over 30 years of classroom experience led to his revolutionary discovery: genius is as common as dirt, but conventional education systematically destroys it. Why This Educational Awakening Matters Now: After 100+ years of mandatory schooling, literacy rates have dropped, families are fragmented, and children are increasingly disaffected. This isn't failure - it's the system working exactly as designed to produce compliant workers rather than creative thinkers. What You'll Discover: The hidden curriculum that trains children for industrial compliance instead of critical thinking Step-by-step strategies for transitioning from school-based to self-directed learning How to identify and nurture your child's natural learning style and interests Practical methods for creating engaging educational experiences without formal curriculum Real-world approaches to developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and life skills Community resources and support networks for families choosing educational alternatives 25 Years of Proven Impact: This bestseller has guided over 100,000 families toward educational freedom, with children achieving remarkable academic and personal success through self-directed learning. Zachary Slayback, Ivy League dropout and tech entrepreneur, provides a powerful new foreword demonstrating how Gatto's principles create innovators and leaders. Your child's natural love of learning can't wait for education reform. Start implementing these time-tested strategies immediately to unlock their intellectual potential and creativity. Join thousands of families discovering that education works best when it honors children's innate curiosity.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: *Weapons of Mass Instruction* John Taylor Gatto, 2010-04-01 The transformation of schooling from a twelve-year jail sentence to freedom to learn. John Taylor Gatto's *Weapons of Mass Instruction*, now available in paperback, focuses on mechanisms of traditional education which cripple imagination, discourage critical thinking, and create a false view of learning as a byproduct of rote-memorization drills. Gatto's earlier book, *Dumbing Us Down*, introduced the now-famous expression of the title into the common vernacular. *Weapons of Mass Instruction* adds another chilling metaphor to the brief against conventional schooling. Gatto demonstrates that the harm school inflicts is rational and deliberate. The real

function of pedagogy, he argues, is to render the common population manageable. To that end, young people must be conditioned to rely upon experts, to remain divided from natural alliances and to accept disconnections from their own lived experiences. They must at all costs be discouraged from developing self-reliance and independence. Escaping this trap requires a strategy Gatto calls open source learning which imposes no artificial divisions between learning and life. Through this alternative approach our children can avoid being indoctrinated-only then can they achieve self-knowledge, good judgment, and courage.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: A Different Kind of Teacher John Taylor Gatto, 2000 Gatto analyzes the roots of the modern American education system, outlining prescriptions for revitalizing the system, advocating greater emphasis on critical analysis, creativity, practicality, and real-world exposure in the curriculum. He calls on educators and administrators to acknowledge student's need for a spiritual and ethical framework upon which to build a good life.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: The Underground History of American Education John Taylor Gatto, 2001 The underground history of the American education will take you on a journey into the background, philosophy, psychology, politics, and purposes of compulsion schooling.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: The State of the American Mind: Stupor and Pathetic Docility Amechi Okolo PhD, 2010-06-10 This book, *The State of the American Mind: Stupor and Pathetic Docility* Volume One begins to unravel some of the most obvious, perplexing, embarrassing and enduring problems and contradictions of American history and sociology, viz., how could the American revolution that started with the most ringing and most inspiring Declarations of human equality in world history end up establishing the most vicious, exploitative society the world ever knew Black chattel slavery and only ten percent white enfranchisement, etc. Further, how could men of such great wisdom and intellect like George Washington, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and others who were Enlightenment scholars and clearly knew that slavery was despicable and evil, because they had variously experienced white servitude and slavery themselves, collude to establish and institutionalize the horrible system of Negro chattel slavery in America; and also disenfranchised over 90 percent of people of their own race actions that racism could not explain. The structural/institutional slavery system they established, and the resultant consequent racism hobbles America today as it did in the past, and forced Eric Holder, the Attorney General to declare that, America is a nation of cowards, when it comes to race discussions. Thus, this book starts with serious critical discussions of race in America and reveals what no textbook has ever done, viz., that most early American whites and Blacks were slaves an uncomfortable fact that would shock most Americans because it contradicts the orthodoxy or the dominant narrative that only Blacks were brought here in chains. Further, the book also shows the year Black slavery started something almost, all textbooks got wrong. It also shows who, was the first Black slave in America something no textbook ever mentions. It also shows when and how racism started in America and many other very sensitive and embarrassing but necessary issues that America avoids but must be frankly discussed for America to move forward. This book therefore shatters the two dominant themes of Americas history and sociology that Blacks were brought into America in chains as slaves while whites came to America in search of freedom, as Obama famously told us in his race speech. Thus, the crowning lesson of this book, in addition to discussing some critical policy issues like education, health care, etc., is that it discovers the centripetal force of the American society that eluded contemporary Americans because American bosses have laboriously concealed the facts from the public the scary but clearly healthy uniting fact that most Americans are united by their common ancestry, their universal history and experience of servitude, bond-indentures and slavery. Nothing is more universal, more common and more shared in American history and sociology than the fact that most of our ancestors, black and white, were servants, bond-indentures and slaves who were dominated and super-exploited by few overlords. Colonial America was the preferred dumping ground for British, outcasts, rejects, criminals, masterless class, vagabonds, bond-indentures, slaves, etc., until 1776 when Australia replaced America as the British dump for its rejects and surplus citizens. Thus, that America was a nation founded by British rejects and losers is inherently more

rational than the prevailing orthodoxy or the Obama theory of Americas founders that they were great honorable men who journeyed across the ocean for freedom because of the obvious reason that good, powerful achieving citizens do not normally emigrate to new uncharted lands.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Homeschool Rising Christy-Faith, 2024-03-12 Take a good look at the reasons why homeschooling can help today's kids thrive Homeschool Rising is a guide for anyone interested in homeschooling their children, regardless of background. It busts through the myths surrounding homeschooling, reveals the failures of our current school system, and demonstrates how home education and loving, motivated parents can provide a solution for students and families everywhere. There are many assumptions made about homeschooling—that the child will be socially awkward due to lack of social interaction, that parents are not equipped to educate their children, that homeschooling is only for White, Christian, middle-class parents, and more. In Homeschool Rising, educator Christy-Faith offers insights from more than 20 years in the field and her experience working with thousands of students to debunk these myths and misconceptions. The truth is, homeschooling sets today's students up for success in a way that traditional schooling no longer can. This authoritative yet casual and accessible guide provides parents the tools, courage, and knowledge to opt out of the school system and take charge of their children's education. Clear up the confusion and misconception surrounding homeschooling See why homeschooling is a great option for kids of any race, religion, and background Gain the knowledge you need to start your kids off on the right foot with homeschooling Make sure your homeschooled kids are getting the support they need academically and socially New and experienced homeschoolers looking for support, as well as educators, psychologists, and others who work with homeschooled children, will love the clear, evidence-backed, and conversational information in Homeschool Rising.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Unschooling Gina Riley, 2020-07-20 This book explores the history of the unschooling movement and the forces shaping the trajectory of the movement in current times. As an increasing number of families choose to unschool, it becomes important to further study this philosophical and educational movement. It is also essential to ascribe theory to the movement, to gain greater understanding of its workings as well as to increase the legitimacy of unschooling itself. In this book, Riley provides a useful overview of the unschooling movement, grounding her study in the choices and challenges facing families as they consider different paths towards educating their children outside of traditional school systems.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: College Without High School Blake Boles, 2009-09-01 Because the real world is the best education. High school can be boring. High school curriculum can be frustrating and out of touch. So what is the answer for young people whose creativity, bright ideas, and boundless energy are being stifled in that over-scheduled and grade-driven environment? What would you do if you could go to college without going to high school? Would you travel abroad, spend late nights writing a novel, volunteer in an emergency room, or build your own company? What dreams would you be pursuing right now? College Without High School shows how independent teens can self-design their high school education by becoming unschooled. Students begin by defining their goals and dreams and then pursue them through a combination of meaningful and engaging adventures. It is possible to pursue your dreams, and gain admission to any college of your choice. Boles shows how to fulfill college admission requirements by proving five preparatory results: intellectual passion, leadership, logical reasoning, background knowledge, and the capacity for structured learning. He then offers several suggestions for life-changing, confidence-building adventures that will demonstrate those results. This intriguing approach to following your dreams and doing college prep on your own terms will be welcomed by students (and their parents).

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: The Empty Campus Sergio Caldarella, 2016-11-26 The Empty Campus, starting from a documented series of cultural premises, depicts an image of society rooted in the ideas of education, real learning, knowledge, and understanding that could serve as an antidote to many of the wrongdoings of our species. The main goal of this essay is to address some

of the worst facets of the current situation of learning and the overall cultural situation of our time, pointing to its human and political implications. The Empty Campus grows from a profound concern for the deepest roots of what makes us civilized beings and the passion for learning and understanding that defines civilization in its opposition to barbarism.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Unschool Kerry McDonald, Peter Gray, 2019-05-07 Education has become synonymous with schooling, but it doesn't have to be. As schooling becomes increasingly standardized and test driven, occupying more of childhood than ever before, parents and educators are questioning the role of schooling in society. Many are now exploring and creating alternatives. In a compelling narrative that introduces historical and contemporary research on self-directed education, Unschool also spotlights how a diverse group of individuals and organizations are evolving an old schooling model of education. These innovators challenge the myth that children need to be taught in order to learn. They are parents who saw firsthand how schooling can dull children's natural curiosity and exuberance and others who decided early on to enable their children to learn without school. Educators who left public school classrooms discuss launching self-directed learning centers to allow young people's innate learning instincts to flourish, and entrepreneurs explore their disillusionment with the teach-and-test approach of traditional schooling.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: The Ethics of Homelessness: Philosophical Perspectives, 2020-01-20 This new and expanded edition of G. John M. Abbarno's anthology The Ethics of Homelessness underscores what is ignored in plain sight: people without a home or dwelling are also without privacy and dignity. It is argued that they lack moral standing. The chapters uncover the harsh realities of poverty where economic value overrides competing human values. Naomi Zack argues that homelessness is symbolic of society's materialistic values. It has a tendency to resist sufficient charity and perpetuates conditions of injustice. Uma Narayan questions whether the homeless have protection under the U.S. Constitution. Other authors present an enlarged sphere of homeless to include runaway children, refugees, adoptees and the disabled. The book demonstrates the value of applied philosophy.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: School Choice David Harmer, 1994 What school choice will mean and how we get it.

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Take Back the Land Rick Boyer, 2011-10-01 This is a book for young people. It was written because I believe young people are important and that they have a huge part in God's plan for the future of America and the Church. In fact, you are the future, and a big part of the present, too. - Rick Boyer, The Learning Parent God is calling you to greatness. No excuses. Be ready to answer the call. As a young person, you have the chance to impact the future in a positive, godly way. The question is: Are you ready for the challenge? If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, your calling is to change the world. All you need to get started is the desire to influence your country and church in a positive way. Home schooling and the strength of the Christian family is helping to produce the future leaders of our culture, those with the potential to lead decades of revival and national reformation. If you ignore the challenge, there is little hope for America. A lot depends on you. So, here is the challenge: Grow up. Now. Get busy. Take responsibility to change this world for God, because that's exactly what He expects you to do. Your life matters, and God wants to make your life great. It won't be easy, and reading this book, you may feel it's being a little tough on you. There are high expectations and little allowance for excuses. Life isn't easy, but strive to make it a worthy one. Pioneer missionary William Carey once said, Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from God. Take Back the Land is an important, landmark book for the homeschool movement. Written by homeschooling pioneer Rick Boyer, its message is aimed at the Joshua Generation whose special mission is nothing less than taking America back to its Christian roots. The author explains the meaning of this great mission and why he believes the Joshua Generation has been chosen by the Lord to carry it out. - Samuel Blumenfeld, columnist The New America Take Back the Land is a call to young adults to get busy for the kingdom, to take the Word of God seriously and apply it in every area of life. Great exhortation to pray, seek wise counsel

and act! Filled with ways that young adults can make an impact on the world that God created. Well done Mr. Boyer! Well done!" - Corey Cheney, Christian Home Educators of Colorado and Homeschool Update Magazine

john taylor gatto dumbing us down: Learning Unleashed Evonne E. Rogers, 2016-08-30
Children enter the world curiously hard-wired for creativity and imagination. After a few short years of school, something drastically changes for them. Why? There is an unmistakable and deliberate attempt to control the learning of young people who find themselves sitting in our schools. The industrial model of schooling has taken its toll and victims without remorse. It programs curious young minds to become helpless, dependent, and compliant. It is manipulation and malpractice, but few seem to notice or care. After years of observing and participating in some of these questionable practices herself, Evonne decided it was time to tell the truth about schools. With a credible and strong voice, Evonne tackles the "sacred school rituals" that are rarely questioned and widely accepted as normal. She transparently leads the reader through firmly-held and often faulty assumptions about schooling practices. She offers common sense solutions that challenge us to re-imagine how we do school in this country. With strong conviction, passion, and a call to action, she encourages us to hear and listen to the voices of our children who are crying out for the freedom to learn.

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'Educational Horizons' explores the nature of the relationship between education and the reality problem from a variety of perspectives. In the process of doing so, a variety of topics that shape, orient, and influence the manner in which education is understood and applied are engaged through critical reflection. Some of the topics explored during this process of critical reflection are: The life and ideas of John Holt; cognitive development; human nature; the construction of social reality; reason; several landmark court cases involving the evolution v. creationism debate; Noam Chomsky; Sam Harris; propaganda, sovereignty; qualities of a teacher; epistemology; hermeneutical field theory, as well as some rather revolutionary ideas concerning education and the Constitution..

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