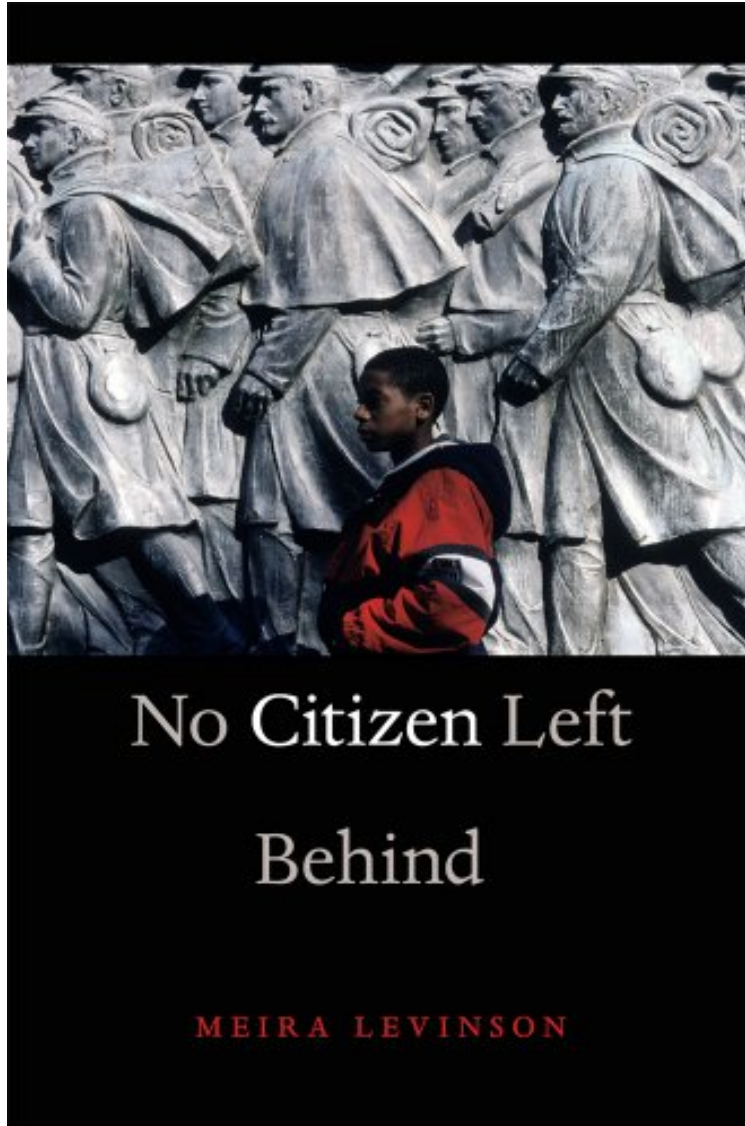


(Read now) No Citizen Left Behind

No Citizen Left Behind

Meira Levinson

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Meira Levinson : No Citizen Left Behind before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised No Citizen Left Behind:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. How Schools Can Address Some of the Problems of Our DemocracyBy Daniel MillensonMeira Levinson's "No Citizen Left Behind" - perhaps uniquely - combines the tight reasoning of political philosopher with the pathos and deep experience of a public school classroom teacher working in some of Atlanta and Boston's poorest schools. The result is a thoughtful and thought-provoking book that challenges popular notions of how schools do and ought to teach students about democracy and civic action.The disjuncture

between the semi-triumphalist narrative of U.S. history and civics taught in today's schools ("Yes, we made mistakes like slavery, but now things are better."), and the reality of civic institutions that low-income and minority young people often cannot trust (e.g., police forces, their own failing schools) often prompts those same students to dismiss civic engagement entirely. As a result, they fail to learn how to use the very tools that would improve both those institutions and their own lives. Levinson argues that that disjuncture, combined with a school system more segregated now than at any time since *Brown v. Board*, mean that schools must approach teaching citizenship (a term Levinson uses beyond the narrow legal sense) in a new way; they must explicitly teach students how to use collective action to rectify racial and class injustices. And precisely because students' attitudes towards democracy are often shaped by their experience of school climate, Levinson argues that schools must fundamentally reform their own quite undemocratic cultures. Practices now increasingly popular (fueled by a testing culture run amok), such as students who must walk tin-solider-like, silently in single-file lines, between classes can be inimical to cultivating critical, active citizens. In effect, Levinson points out, such schools deny their students the opportunity to learn by denying them the opportunity to make decisions and, inevitably, some mistakes. Unfortunately, whereas Levinson's book is always acute in its observations of inequity and quite often a stirring call to action, it can at times be frustratingly elusive as a program of action for practitioners. That said, "No Citizen Left Behind" is an important book on an under-appreciated problem, a corrective for many of the myths on modern education, and a must-read for anyone concerned with the health and equity of American democracy.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Not the usual nonsense about the problems with our education system

By CARL STEWART I bought this book after hearing the author speak at the annual conference of Massachusetts school boards and superintendents. She was an inspiring speaker and the book amplifies her insightfulness on what is happening with education in this country. While Meira Levinson does not supply any magic bullets for solving the faults in the way we educate our children, she does have many points that every educator could benefit from. This is particularly true for those who are in "failing" schools. It may be a bitter pill to swallow but we are missing the boat if we blame our children for being difficult to educate. The system needs fixing, not the kids.

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Required reading

By Natalie Schmigle Required reading. I only skimmed it. Wasn't my cup of tea.

While teaching at an all-Black middle school in Atlanta, Meira Levinson realized that students' individual self-improvement would not necessarily enable them to overcome their profound marginalization within American society. This is because of a civic empowerment gap that is as shameful and antidemocratic as the academic achievement gap targeted by *No Child Left Behind*. "No Citizen Left Behind" argues that students must be taught how to upend and reshape power relationships directly, through political and civic action. Drawing on political theory, empirical research, and her own on-the-ground experience, Levinson shows how "de facto" segregated urban schools can and must be at the center of this struggle. Recovering the civic purposes of public schools will take more than tweaking the curriculum. Levinson calls on schools to remake civic education. Schools should teach collective action, openly discuss the racialized dimensions of citizenship, and provoke students by engaging their passions against contemporary injustices. Students must also have frequent opportunities to take civic and political action, including within the school itself. To build a truly egalitarian society, we must reject myths of civic sameness and empower all young people to raise their diverse voices. Levinson's account challenges not just educators but all who care about justice, diversity, or democracy.