

America's Education Deficit and the War on Youth: Reform Beyond Electoral Politics

Henry A. Giroux



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America's Education Deficit and the War on Youth: Reform Beyond Electoral Politics Henry A. Giroux America's latest war, according to renowned social critic Henry Giroux, is a war on youth. While this may seem counterintuitive in our youth-obsessed culture, Giroux lays bare the grim reality of how our educational, social, and economic institutions continually fail young people. Their systemic failure is the result of what Giroux identifies as "four fundamentalisms": market deregulation, patriotic and religious fervor, the instrumentalization of education, and the militarization of society. We see the consequences most plainly in the decaying education system: schools are increasingly designed to churn out drone-like future employees, imbued with authoritarian values, inured to violence, and destined to serve the market. And those are the lucky ones. Young people who don't conform to cultural and economic discipline are left to navigate the neoliberal landscape on their own; if they are black or brown, they are likely to become ensnared by a harsh penal system.

Giroux sets his sights on the war on youth and takes it apart, examining how a lack of access to quality education, unemployment, the repression of dissent, a culture of violence, and the discipline of the market work together to shape the dismal experiences of so many young people. He urges critical educators to unite with students and workers in rebellion to form a new pedagogy, and to build a new, democratic society from the ground up. Here is a book you won't soon forget, and a call that grows more urgent by the day.

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