



Closing The Book On Homework: Enhancing Public Education (Teaching/Learning Social Just)

John Buell

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zed by all the demands on family time, and the time has come to examine those demands * I resent homework intensification not because I am lazy or want to spare children all challenges and difficulties but because I want to instill the character and self-discipline I admire. I want children to have gradually expanding opportunities both to manage and be responsible for free time. * Scholarly studies of homework's ability to deliver in even such short-term and narrow areas as test scores and grades yield at best uneven results. * Many studies of homework show no correlation-or even indicate an inverse relationship-between homework and a student's performance * Young children reach a saturation point [for absorbing new information] far more quickly than adults aEURO|fatigue and an inability to sustain concentration is likely to be a substantial factor in learning. * All claims that homework critiques involve a war against the poor systematically disregard important evidence. * Some students who are doing their homework conscientiously will nevertheless test poorly simply because test-taking is not their forte. * It is hard to recognize from homework where a child is having difficulty; it is even harder to find just why. * The claim that homework evokes long-term discipline [is] largely unsupported by extensive empirical work, but there is reason to believe that many other extracurricular factors in the life of a child and young adult contribute substantially to this virtue. Author note: John Buell is a columnist for the Bangor Daily News, and co-author (with Etta Kralovec) of *The End of Homework: How Homework Disrupts Families, Overburdens Children, and Limits Learning*.

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