
Ultimately, as DiIulio himself says, law-abiding blacks hold the key to solving the black crime problem. Kennedy sees a hopeful sign: a movement, "across the political spectrum and within black communities," toward giving more sympathy to the victims of crimes than to those who commit them.

School Choice for Some

"Somebody's Children" by Diane Ravitch, in *The Brookings Review* (Fall 1994), 1775 Mass. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Since the early 1980s there has been wave after wave of education reform, yet the worst schools, the inner city schools so wretched and dangerous that they should not even be called schools, remain largely unchanged. Although she considers herself a supporter of public education, Ravitch, a Senior Research Fellow at New York University and a noted historian of education, says she has come around to the view that parents faced with such dreadful schools should be given a choice.

"The best solution I see," she writes, "is for states, cities, or the federal government to provide means-tested scholarships to needy families, who may use them to send their children to the school of their choice, be it public, independent, or religious." The size of the scholarship would vary according to family income, with needier children getting larger grants. "For the neediest, the grant should be at least equal to the state average per pupil expenditure. . . . Since funds will necessarily be limited, highest priority for such scholarships should go to children who are now enrolled in schools identified by public authorities as the worst in the district."

She proposes, in other words, a "liberal" version of the school-choice idea championed by some conservative reformers. Putting tuition money in the hands of the parents of "at risk" urban children would encourage creation of the sort of schools such youngsters need, Ravitch maintains.

"Whether public or private, the most successful urban schools share certain characteristics. . . . All have in common a sense of purpose, a mission, an identity of their own. And all function *in loco parentis*, with the knowledge and assent of parents who welcome a partnership with the school."

Fears that a "choice" program of the sort she advocates would destroy public education are groundless, Ravitch asserts, citing a survey showing that only 19 percent of all public school parents would like to send their children to a private school. "In a means-tested system, many of these families, of course, would not qualify for scholarships," she notes. The public schools would retain 80 percent or more of all students (instead of today's 90 percent). "Far from being destroyed," she concludes, "the public school system would be strengthened because it would be able to shut down bad schools."

Proto PC

"Political Correctness and American Academe" by Peter F. Drucker, in *Society* (Nov. 1994), Rutgers—The State University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

The current attempt to impose an orthodoxy of "political correctness" on the American university is not unprecedented. The Stalinists did much the same thing during the late 1930s and early '40s, recalls Drucker, a professor of social science and management at Claremont Graduate School. The tactics then and now, he says, were quite similar: "intimidation, character assassination, hounding of 'resisters' and 'reactionaries,' denial of discourse and of freedom of thought and of speech." But academia then was a very different place—and, as a result, so were the radicals' strategic goals.

Today, Drucker says, the proponents of political correctness seek to gain control of colleges and universities. These institutions "have become power centers through control over the granting of degrees which, in turn, controls access to jobs and careers;