

Autobiography based on racial affiliations and social



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Autobiography

Jonathan Kozol, the writer of 'Savage Inequalities' was born in September 1936 in Boston, Massachusetts. He is an activist; non-fiction writer and an educator, whose literary works on public education have earned him popularity in the United States. Kozol, a graduate of Harvard University with a degree in English Literature, is a scholar and winner whom the administration fired during his career as a teacher in the Boston public schools for his poetry teaching. He then continued with activism until he secured a teaching post in Boston Public Schools. He has also worked as a social psychologist, a job that has been greatly significant in his career as a writer. Besides Savage Inequalities, Kozol has written many other books. These include, Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America, Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools, and Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation

Description

In the United States, the mainstream idea is that everyone has equal access to education, regardless of his or her racial backgrounds. Kozol's findings however are contrary to this assumption.

Kozol, through his book, 'Savage Inequalities' exposes a highly biased education system in the United States, whereby resources are not equally shared among the public schools. The education agents discriminate schools dominated by black children, resulting in a poor state of conditions that make normal learning a nightmare. To raise the anger of the reader, Kozol exposes the challenges the schools face such as insufficient textbooks,

absence of classrooms and teachers. The end effect of these insufficiencies comes out clear, much to the annoyance of the reader when Kozol says that three out of four children who do not make through in their education are blacks. Kozol also shows the wide gap which exists between school in the rural areas as well as in the urban areas. The gap is shocking since even if the poor decide to pay tax at higher rates in order to develop their schools, the revenue accrued can neither decrease nor surpass the poor-rich gap. Instead, the poor become poorer and as a result increase the gap further. The writer further engages the reader's feelings when he brings up the idea of racism.

He juxtaposes two rural public schools and their modern equivalents, compares them, and analyses them based on racial affiliations and social class in dissemination of education. He then suggests that the system's idea is such that funds it is better they spend more on urban schools where the multitude believes that there is greater likelihood of development. This wrongly classifies poor children as poor investments. To end this practice, Kozol comes up with an idea and suggests that the level of funding to schoolchildren should be a function of their needs. He also comes up with a non-profit organization to help fight the out flux of teachers from rural schools in order to solve teacher crisis.

Positive Aspects

One can identify many positive aspects in this book. The writer drafts the book in such a way that everybody can read, comprehend and spot a hitherto difficult to see idea. He brings to the limelight things happening in the education system by using vivid descriptions.

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How Kozol has brought out the idea showing how authorities have not structured revenue from tax is commendable. He brings out the unfairness by describing the poor as receiving inferior education as compared to the rich. I do also acknowledge his idea that the few people in society lucky enough to see the inequalities end up not doing anything to change the situation. This is not ethically right and it is important that after one makes these serious situations known, people should endeavour to suggest and implement positive changes. The writer of *Savage Inequalities* has also come to the rescue of parents in an issue they have no control over.

Many at times, everyone has blamed parents for the failure or any misgivings in their lives, be it related to health or academics. To these people Kozol manages to prove that the wider society has a hand in sufferings that children undergo and they need to do something to change this. He describes a rape case whereby a brother to the rape and murder victim cannot tell whether it happened in the past week or year. Those entrusted with their care have neglected their dental health resulting in the case of a boy suffering from toothache. This masterpiece offers readers with imperative insights on American education. It is paramount to view an issue from diverse perspectives because at times it is impossible to see beyond one's situation

Criticism

Though he has succeeded well in conveying his message to the reader, it is also important to criticize part of his literary work. Kozol fails to address the importance of reversing the notion that poor children, especially those with

Africa- American origin do not have a good learning ability.

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As such, he has failed to talk against racism, which is common in the modern society. Kozol also emphasizes too much on matters of little significance. One instance is when he focuses too much on absence of football uniforms and lockers, and gives a description of lack of computer facilities in schools. The important thing is that children learn sports and computers, but not owning computers. This book has been a good source of information since it has changed my earlier belief that there is equality in education dispensation in United States. In addition, it has created the urge in me to act to ensure positive change in the education system.

It can be a good recommendation to high school students.

Conclusion

Through his book, 'Savage Inequalities', Kozol has been successful in sensitizing readers about the current inequalities in education based on racism. Even though he does not address all problems like racism, this book is a good inspiration.

Works Cited

Kozol, Jonathan.

Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools. New York: Crown Publishers, 1991. Print.