

# Question of education in savage inequalities

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



The United States of America has always been regarded as the land of opportunity. Other countries look to us and see how successful and prosperous we are, realize that this is the place where dreams come true. The place where a fantasy can become reality. Yet this is not the case. How can place so rich, be so poor? How can such a multicultural place be so segregated? Why is it that you can hand the world to one child, yet cheat another? Where did we go wrong? Does the future of our children lay solely on the amount of funds available? Is it that a child is only as successful as they want to be based on their motivation? Or does motivation matter at all, does the child ultimately become a product of their environment?

In Jonathan Kozol's book *Savage Inequalities*, he speaks of children who are deprived of the right to a decent education. But how can this be the case. Is one school given more money than another? Funds for public schools come from property taxes. In wealthy communities where property values are generally higher more money is allocated, than in a poor communities with lower property values.

The poorer communities tend to tax themselves higher than wealthy communities, yet they are still not able to reach the same quality of education. Most of these poor communities spend their limited tax money on other costs those wealthy communities do not, at least not on the same scale. Such expenditures include the police and fire department and public health. Federal and state governments dispense funds to the poor communities in order to try and balance this financial gap. The funds aren't enough to make the necessary changes. Because of this children are subjected to attend inadequate learning facilities. While on one hand wealthy

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children are given the luxury of smaller classrooms consisting of about 15 or 20 children and an abundance in text books. Children in less affluent communities are subjected to classrooms consisting of up to 45 children and a scarcity of textbooks. Members within the communities also have the opportunity to contribute money into their schools via fundraisers. This allows the schools to give their children the technology and materials needed. This in turn allows the school to use funds for other things such as renovations and simple luxuries like air conditioning and an advance curriculum. Yet some poor communities can not even afford to provide a playground or a lunch area for their students. The majority of these under privileged schools are attended by Black and Latino students, although underprivileged white schools do exist they are rare. And Predominately whites attend the majority of the privileged schools students. When people look at this they sometimes look at it as unfair and racist to a certain point.

These schools are for the most part based in urban communities where there is a high crime rate and a large number of uneducated civilians. These neighborhoods are home to many menial workers and unemployment, as well as welfare recipients. The lack of education and opportunities provided by the schools contribute to this cycle. Kozol describes these neighborhoods as slums,

M. Medina where violence and hopelessness is an everyday issue. C. Wright Mills speaks of the "social imagination" as "how unique historical circumstances of a particular society affect people and, at the same time how people affect history" (Henslin, pg. 19). How can someone live under

these conditions and yet look to a brighter future? This who they are and what they know. How can they be expected to overcome barriers that have been in existence for years?

Children who are exposed to these conditions hesitate to want more than they already have.

In attending underprivileged establishments, with teachers who have no regards for there future, how can they be expected to want more for themselves? Kozol describes schools in which children attend unsupervised classrooms and where some classes are held in the school gymnasium. When children observe their environment and what opportunities are available to them and see no future they are easily disillusioned. When these underprivileged children compare their environment to others, and see the discrepancies, they are aware that they are at a disadvantage. How will they be able to compete at the same level when they receive inadequate materials? Teachers at these establishments are unwilling to do more than they have to, they aren't willing to encourage the pupils. Students are expected to attend classrooms with no air conditioning or heating, as well as unsafe buildings. When children then are left with the choice of staying home or going to school. The majority choose to stay home why should they bother to make an effort when no one seems to make any regards for them? These children ultimately end up becoming part of the cycle. They ultimately drop out of school. And those that continue are not dedicate and only seem to fall behind. These children then become parts of the cycle; they become a product of their environment. They have become uneducated, menial

workers. If not that they become dependent of the government that failed them.

The fact that these children are underprivileged and seem to go unaccounted for leads to leads to a decline in their motivation. How can they want more than what they know? They see the streets in which they live in infested with drugs, violence, death and decay. It's as if they are living in a battle zone in their own community. Yet despite these factors and other barriers, there are those that wish for more and strive to achieve all they can. These are the students whom want to know what's outside of their neighborhoods and want more than what they have. These are the children whom dedicated themselves to changing the cycle and destroy the barriers. Amidst all the conflicts and the odds against them, they seek to find the resources they need to overcome these obstacles. And for these students there are teachers whom are dedicated and put in extra effort to help them achieve the most. There are very few of these teachers who will put in twice the work for half the pay. But theses are the teachers who see the potential in these students.

Who you are and what you become is not an effect of the history you know. You make your own history. It's all based on motivation. You've got to strive for all you can and set your own path. Al though there are obstacles may prevent students from accomplishing anything. All that is need is motivation. You've got to want more than you have to succeed. Some children are feed on a silver platter and others are not. These students have got to want more for themselves and for those to follow in order to change the cycle. Kozol

spoke of children who opposed giving something they felt was rightfully theirs in order to equalize the discrepancies.

Although it seemed unfair they were reluctant to try and give up something of theirs in order to make it equal. Money matters to a degree, but its not all that is need. You can have everything you need, but the lack of motivation will set you behind. Children that grow up in an environment, which gives them all they need with out a struggle, assume that in the end things will be this way. But again a lack of motivation will keep them at a disadvantage. Although children in the underprivileged schools are at a disadvantage there are teachers that are willing to make the extra effort to help those students motivated enough to make a difference. People are never a product of their environment or the history they know. They have the power to overcome obstacles and make their own history. Those who say that can not achieve more than what they already have or know use this as an excuse for their lack of motivation and effort.