

How Teachers Enact the Geography Curriculum in Late Capitalism

This article explores how teachers enact the geography curriculum in late capitalism, arguing that the curriculum is shaped by the dominant ideologies and power structures of society. The article draws on critical geography theory and qualitative research to examine how teachers' practices and experiences are influenced by the commodification of education, the rise of standardized testing, and the increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness.

The geography curriculum is a contested space, shaped by the dominant ideologies and power structures of society. In late capitalism, the curriculum has become increasingly commodified, standardized, and marketized, reflecting the broader shift towards a neoliberal economic and political order. This article explores how teachers enact the geography curriculum in this context, drawing on critical geography theory and qualitative research to examine how their practices and experiences are influenced by these broader societal trends.

Critical geography theory provides a framework for understanding the ways in which the geography curriculum is shaped by power relations and social inequalities. Critical geographers argue that the curriculum is not neutral, but rather reflects the interests of the dominant social groups and serves to reproduce existing social structures. In late capitalism, the curriculum has become increasingly commodified, as education has been transformed into a market-based system in which students are seen as consumers and schools are seen as businesses. This commodification of education has led

to a narrowing of the curriculum, as schools focus on teaching only those skills and knowledge that are seen to be directly relevant to the job market.



Hyper-Socialised: How Teachers Enact the Geography Curriculum in Late Capitalism by David Mitchell

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Standardized testing has also played a significant role in shaping the geography curriculum in late capitalism. Standardized tests are used to measure students' achievement and to hold schools accountable for their performance. However, critics argue that standardized tests are biased against certain groups of students, such as students from low-income families and students of color. This bias has led to a narrowing of the curriculum, as teachers focus on teaching only those skills and knowledge that are tested.

The increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness has also influenced the geography curriculum in late capitalism. In a globalized economy, countries are competing for jobs and investment, and this competition has led to a focus on education as a means of economic development. As a result, the geography curriculum has become increasingly focused on teaching students about the global economy and how to compete in it.

This article draws on qualitative research to examine how teachers enact the geography curriculum in late capitalism. The research was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, I interviewed 20 geography teachers from a variety of schools in the United States. The interviews explored teachers' experiences with the geography curriculum, their perceptions of the changes that have taken place in the curriculum over time, and their views on the role of geography education in late capitalism. In the second phase, I conducted participant observation in three geography classrooms. The observations focused on teachers' teaching practices and interactions with students.

The findings of the research reveal that teachers' enactment of the geography curriculum is shaped by a number of factors, including the commodification of education, the rise of standardized testing, and the increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness.

The Commodification of Education

The commodification of education has led to a narrowing of the geography curriculum, as schools focus on teaching only those skills and knowledge that are seen to be directly relevant to the job market. This has resulted in a decline in the teaching of critical geography, which seeks to challenge the dominant narratives about the world and to empower students to make informed decisions about their lives.

The Rise of Standardized Testing

Standardized testing has also had a significant impact on the geography curriculum. Teachers are under pressure to teach only those skills and knowledge that are tested, which has led to a narrowing of the curriculum

and a focus on rote learning. This has made it difficult for teachers to teach critical geography, which requires students to think critically about the world around them.

The Increasing Emphasis on Economic Competitiveness

The increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness has led to a focus on teaching students about the global economy and how to compete in it. This has resulted in a shift away from teaching about the environment and social justice, which are seen as less important to economic development.

The findings of this research suggest that the geography curriculum is shaped by the dominant ideologies and power structures of late capitalism. The commodification of education, the rise of standardized testing, and the increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness have all led to a narrowing of the curriculum and a focus on rote learning. This has made it difficult for teachers to teach critical geography, which is essential for empowering students to make informed decisions about their lives.

This article has explored how teachers enact the geography curriculum in late capitalism. The findings of the research suggest that the curriculum is shaped by the dominant ideologies and power structures of society. The commodification of education, the rise of standardized testing, and the increasing emphasis on economic competitiveness have all led to a narrowing of the curriculum and a focus on rote learning. This has made it difficult for teachers to teach critical geography, which is essential for empowering students to make informed decisions about their lives.

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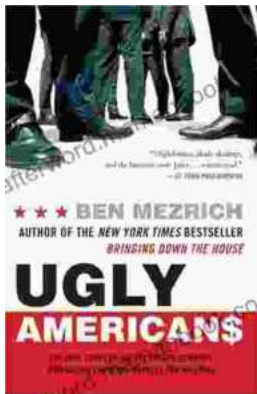
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