

## “You Be the Judge” Book Review Form

**Date:** 02/17/2009

**Your Name:** *Michael Rush*

**Collegiate Classification:**

FR

SO

JR

SR

GR

**Contact Information:**

**Reference:**

Finn, P. (1999). Literacy with an attitude: Educating working-class children in their own self-interest. Albany: State University of New York Press.

**Star Rating**

★★★★★

★★★★★

★★★★

★★★

★

**“WOW!”**  
(Wonder of Words)

**“Pretty Useful”**

**“Fair Use”**

**“What’s the Use?”**

**“Not Useful”**

I would absolutely recommend this book. It is an excellent resource filled with extensive useful information.

I would recommend this book. It has a great deal of useful information.

I may recommend this book. It has useful information, but is deficient in some areas.

I most likely would not recommend this book. There was little useful information.

I would not recommend this book. The information is not clearly presented or useful.

**Review:**

**Word Count:** 336

Literacy with an Attitude:

Educating Working-Class Children in Their Own Self-Interest

Before I started reading Patrick Finn’s book concerning literacy with an attitude, I had no idea where Finn would take me in his quest to demonstrate the inequality in the education of the have and the have-nots. Finn effectively illustrates examples of how middle-class and lower income students are not receiving the same education as the upper-class students. He discredits the notion that the poor are not as smart as the privileged by demonstrating how lower-income students receive an inferior education.

He also gives explanations for these disparities that are not obvious or consciously executed.

As a teacher, I was intrigued with many of the concepts explored by Finn. I found myself evaluating the teaching styles of the teachers from my own educational background. I must admit Finn accurately pegged my early childhood education from a working-class school district. Teachers basically taught from the textbooks with very little interaction. The teacher was the ultimate authoritarian and demanded obedience. There was very little teaching “outside-of-the-box.” Finn calls this type of teaching domesticating education or functional literacy.

This book was published a decade ago, and I believe many teachers have adopted more progressive methods of teaching, however, not to the extent Finn would consider to be empowering. Finn wants there to be drastic changes and even though these ideas are compelling; change doesn't come easy. His arguments supporting equality in empowering education over domesticating education are thought-provoking. Every teacher should be introduced to the concepts addressed by Finn. Only after understanding can change happen. However, teachers and parents alike must be on board to bring about change. Sadly to say, many teachers and parents alike are resistance to change and are perfectly satisfied with the status quo. Understanding what is at stake for our students should be enough to bring about change. Everybody would agree that they want justice and equality in education; however, when it comes down to implementation of the ideas and concepts described by Finn, I believe it would take more than a village to achieve.