



Film Review: “Whose Children Are They?” Exposes Public Schools But Ultimately Falls Short on Solutions

Over the past two years, millions of parents willingly sent their children to public schools, where their kids endured forced masking, social distancing, and remote learning; practices that would become as commonplace as once were tetherball, pop quizzes, and story time. But were these same parents also aware of the other truly shocking and at times horrifically graphic teachings taking place in the schools?

The new documentary [Whose Children Are They? Exposing the Hidden Agenda in America's Schools](#) lays bare these horrors, and the war, or “clash of worldviews,” raging in schools and beyond between cultural Marxism and Western beliefs based on Judeo/Christian values on which America was founded.



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Yet while excelling in bringing to light the issues dividing not only students in the classroom but citizens throughout the country, *Whose Children Are They?* ultimately disappoints for its failure to address the need for parents to rescue their kids from the state institutions and find an alternative form of education, such as homeschooling.

Since its release on April 15, the film has been highly praised for its vivid depiction of the abusive and corrupt environment of public education, illustrated through a chilling exposé of interviews with more than 80 educators, parents, and students.

Married filmmakers Deborah (president and founder, [Parents United America](#)) and Jonathan Flora (*Lt. Dan Band: for the Common Good*), teaming with co-writer and co-producer Rebecca Friedrichs (*Standing Up to Goliath*; founder, [For Kids and Country](#)), expose everything from the harms of the Covid lockdowns to the widespread implementation of Critical Race Theory and vile sex education into mainstream curriculum to gut-wrenching testimonies by loved ones of victims of tragic school shootings.

The two-hour-plus production further encourages teachers to mobilize a mass union exit, to disrupt and dissolve corrupt teachers' unions, while urging parents to take up arms alongside teachers and fight for school choice and educational freedom by getting involved in school-board elections and local politics.

Missing the Case for Homeschooling

In a film that so clearly portrays the risks involved in entrusting the care of one's child to the whims of the government, the glaring decision not to explore homeschooling in depth is bewildering. Notably, the number of American families homeschooling has surged in the past year, with many parents continuing to educate at home despite schools reopening.



Written by [Annalisa Pesek](#) on May 20, 2022

According to a recent report by [Fortune](#) magazine, “in 18 states that shared data through the current school year, the number of homeschooling students increased by 63% in the 2020-2021 school year, then fell by only 17% in the 2021-2022 school year.”

But the case for homeschooling as a compelling solution for coping with the current education crisis is noticeably ignored in the film; an omission especially surprising given that many of the cast members are publicly known as fierce advocates for homeschooling.

Yes, the film wonderfully illustrates how power, money, and politics drive state-funded schooling, and that parents and teachers must come together to effect change. But only after parents pull their kids out of the schools, should they decide to enter the battlefield!

Ultimately, the goal of awakening parents to the nightmare that is the public-school system is achieved, but the filmmakers miss a golden opportunity to reach more parents grappling with the decision of what to do to keep their children safe. Keeping the kids in these harmful environments while fighting back will be unthinkable to many viewers, though this seems to be the solution the film is promoting.

But setting critiques aside, let’s focus on the many other aspects of the film that do have merit and serve a tremendous good.

The Ugly Truth About Teachers’ Unions

Early on, viewers learn of the fascinating, if underreported, history of the creation of the teachers’ unions, beginning with a major character in the development of U.S. public education: a communist sympathizer named John Dewey (1859-1952).

As explained in the film by *The New American* magazine’s Alex Newman, executive director of the nonprofit [Public School Exit](#), “[Dewey] worked diligently toward achieving ‘democracy in education’ and instilling a ‘collectivist mentality’ into children. [He cared] about utilizing education for a political purpose ... training teachers and training future leaders of the public-school system. He also worked on creating the materials that would be used in public schools all across America. Obviously, the unions were a huge part of that, especially the NEA [National Education Association], for which he was made the honorary life president.”

Another educator from St. Paul describes the unions “as American as apple pie and baseball.” His interview is followed by stories of how these groups have long intimidated teachers and used mob-like tactics to wield power over educators so effectively that they have obediently transformed the classroom from a place of wonder to a space of indoctrination.

Writer and producer Friedrichs, a former public-school teacher who notably sued the teachers’ unions in an effort to fight against forced unionization with her trailblazing lawsuit heard by the Supreme Court in 2016, [Friedrichs, et. al v. California Teachers Association, et. al](#), states that “teachers’ voices have been silenced for decades by unions that claim to represent us. They do not.”

Friedrichs’ solutions for reform, which include families “adopting a teacher” to help inform them of the ways of the nefarious unions, may indeed rattle the system, but arguably the foundations of public education are too deeply rooted in corruption and lies so that no matter how many teachers exit the unions or how many parents admonish the school boards or run to replace the “progressives” in charge, the system cannot change enough to protect children from the evils of leftist ideology.

Parents Assert Their Authority

Among the film’s highlights are the moving personal stories of the mothers and fathers who fled



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communist countries such as Cuba, China, and Romania for the freedom of America.

Marilyn Salabarría, a Colorado mother and Cuban exile, tells viewers that the Cuban government “always tried to replace the parent because one of their core tenets is that we need to be in charge of educating and preparing the younger generation. It’s been 63 years, and we’re still fighting against it.”

Xi Van Fleet, a Virginia mother and survivor of Mao’s cultural revolution, says she was taught in China that “children are the successors of communism,” and that her “real parents” were the party and Mao. “One song everyone is taught and everyone knows says, ‘Mao is our real parent,’” she said.

These poignant interviews document the nearly century-long struggle of who is responsible for the children — the parents or the state. In America, the struggle has been ongoing literally since Karl Marx (1818-83), the father of communism, famously said, “the education of all children, from the moment that they can get along without a mother’s care, shall be in state institutions.”

This Is a Battle for America’s Soul!

Indeed, “whose children are they” is not a debatable point. Yet, despite all the exposure of the corruption, indoctrination, and lies flowing through the public-school system, all of it needing to come to light, many families still *choose* to send their children into these depraved spaces where so-called educators believe the impossible — that the children in their care belong to them and *not* to the parents.

If, as Deborah Flora suggests, a parent uprising “reaches a tipping point, where real change happens,” as parents would be well informed of the goings-on in the schools, it seems a natural next step would be a mass exodus to send the message to educators, the teachers’ unions, and school boards and administrators that their actions will not be tolerated. And had the film sent this message emphatically, it would have had a greater impact.

Whose Children Are They? was released on April 15 through [SalemNow](#) and is available for viewing at the film’s [website](#).



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