



Using Standards and High-Stakes Testing for Students: Exploiting Power with Critical Pedagogy (Counterpoints)

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This book has received the AESA (American Educational Studies Association) Critics Choice Award 2012.

This book overturns the typical conception of standards, empowering educators by providing concrete examples of how top-down models of assessment can be embraced and used in ways that are consistent with critical pedagogies. Although standards, as broad frameworks for setting learning targets, are not necessarily problematic, when they are operationalized as high-stakes assessments, test-based pedagogies emerge and frequently dominate the curriculum, leaving little room for critical pedagogies. In addition, critics maintain that high-stakes assessments perpetuate current class structures by maintaining skill gaps and controlling ideology, particularly beliefs in individualism, meritocracy, and what counts as knowledge. This book offers readers a deepened awareness of how educators can alleviate the effects of standardization, especially for students in poor and working-class communities. As teachers negotiate their roles in this time of increasing regulation and standardization, it is essential to maintain and model a critical stance toward curriculum and instruction. Educators know why this approach is vital: This book illustrates how to make it happen.

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