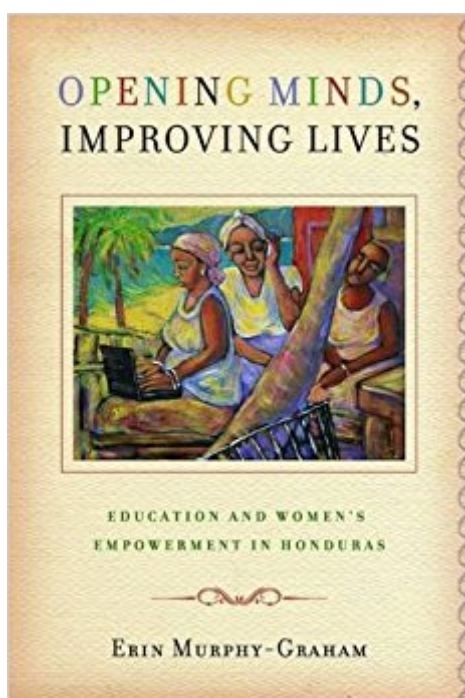


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Opening Minds, Improving Lives: Education And Women's Empowerment In Honduras



Synopsis

Juanita was seventeen years old and pregnant with her first child when she began an activity that would "open" her mind. Living in a remote Garifuna village in Honduras, Juanita had dropped out of school after the sixth grade. In 1996, a new educational program, Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial (Tutorial Learning System or SAT), was started in her community. The program helped her see the world differently and open a small business. Empowering women through education has become a top priority of international development efforts. Erin Murphy-Graham draws on more than a decade of qualitative research to examine the experiences of Juanita and eighteen other women who participated in the SAT program. Their narratives suggest the simple yet subtle ways education can spark the empowerment process, as well as the role of men and boys in promoting gender equality. Drawing on in-depth interviews and classroom observation in Honduras and Uganda, Murphy-Graham shows the potential of the SAT program to empower women through expanded access and improved quality of secondary education in Latin America and Africa. An appendix provides samples of the classroom lessons.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Winner of the Comparative and International Education Society's Jackie Kirk Outstanding Book Award"Based on her years of intensive interviews, Murphy-Graham teaches us that the right kind of education promotes much more than economic opportunities. We learn about the remarkable ways that women changed: recognizing their own human worth, developing public voices, creating their

own businesses, pursuing higher education, and negotiating more egalitarian marriages. This book should be read by everyone interested in the transformational power of education and in gender equality, and by all who seek hope for a better world." --Francine Deutsch, Mt. Holyoke College "A major contribution in helping us turn discussion of empowerment and education away from jargon and cynicism, enhancing our concern with women's struggles for recognition, capabilities, and wider social change." --Elaine Unterhalter, University of London "Erin Murphy-Graham shows how the complex process of empowerment unfolds, and answers the question of how it can take place within an educational program that also prepares students for traditional educational assessments. A valuable contribution to understanding gendered processes of empowerment at school and home." --Karen Monkman, DePaul University

A fresh conception of women's empowerment through education as a process of recognition, capacity development, and action in a community setting

I read this book as required reading for a class on education in Latin America. One might wonder whether a research project on secondary/adult education using the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial (SAT), in indigenous Central American communities could be reported interestingly. In my opinion, this one was. The author describes the current situation of education in marginal villages in Honduras, the curriculum whose results she examined, and the results themselves. The results reveal generally positive change in those who participated in the program and saddening results in those who did not, strongly suggesting the SAT's value. The author does not hide the basis of the program on the values of her Bahai religion. As a civil libertarian, I was wary of infusing religion into an education program designed to benefit severely disadvantaged populations. However, it became clear that not the religion itself but rather purely its nearly universal values were. The appendices include samples of three lessons in the English-language counterpart to the SAT for you to judge for yourself, and the final results include notations of people continuing to practice their current religion. The works cited include many helpful sources for further study. If gender equality or education issues in Central America interest you, this book is helpful.

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