



# **Lessons from the Heartland: A Turbulent Half-Century of Public Education in an Iconic American City**

*Barbara Miner*

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In a magisterial work of narrative nonfiction that weaves together the racially fraught history of public education in Milwaukee and the broader story of hypersegregation in the rust belt, *Lessons from the Heartland* tells of an iconic city's fall from grace—and of its chance for redemption in the twenty-first century.

A symbol of middle American working-class values and pride, Wisconsin—and in particular urban Milwaukee—has been at the forefront of a half-century of public education experiments, from desegregation and “school choice,” to vouchers and charter schools. Picking up where J. Anthony Lukas's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Common Ground* left off, *Lessons from the Heartland* offers a sweeping narrative portrait of an All-American city at the epicenter of American public education reform, and an exploration of larger issues of race and class in our democracy. Miner (whose daughters went through the Milwaukee public school system and who is a former *Milwaukee Journal* reporter) brings a journalist's eye and a parent's heart to exploring the intricate ways that jobs, housing, and schools intersect, underscoring the intrinsic link between the future of public schools and the dreams and hopes of democracy in a multicultural society.

This book will change the way we think about the possibility and promise of American public education.

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