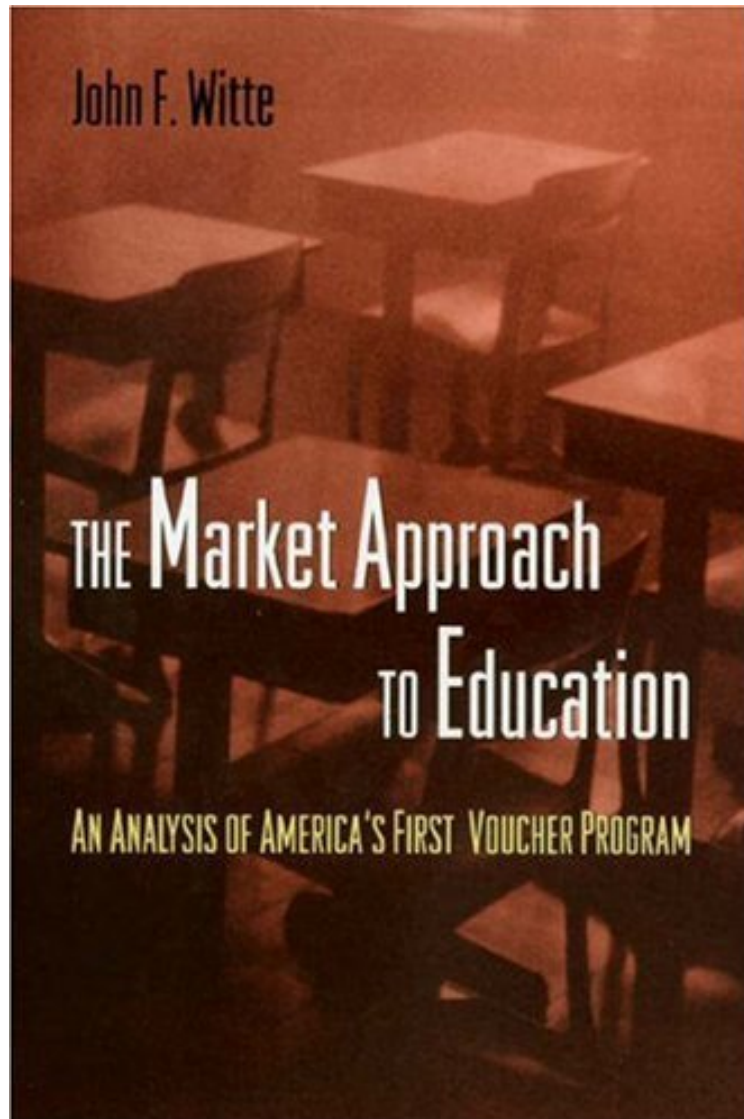


[Mobile book] The Market Approach to Education: An Analysis of America's First Voucher Program

The Market Approach to Education: An Analysis of America's First Voucher Program

Von John F. Witte

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Market Approach

to Education: An Analysis of America's First Voucher Program:

It's impossible to pry the school voucher debate from the political and romantic barbed wires that weigh it down, but this comprehensive look at the nation's first experiment with vouchers comes as close as it gets. Author John F. Witte, the independent evaluator of Milwaukee's first five years with vouchers, gives the issue context by addressing the politics, the media, and the starry-eyed notions of transforming public education. But the bulk of his book is composed of statistics, scientific observations, and the unglamorized tales of some private schools that first participated in the experiment. Witte, a political science and public affairs professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, shuns the simplistic view that vouchers will either reinvigorate or destroy public schools. Instead, he lays out the pros and cons in a detailed, scholarly manner, complete with charts and thick footnotes. His primary message: vouchers can be a lifeline for poor families struggling with inferior inner-city schools by giving them a choice where none existed before. Witte's final stance has surprised the antichoice movement, which used his earlier research results to argue against vouchers. Still, his endorsement is far from ringing—he found no proof that vouchers improve students' test scores or offer them a better education in the private sector. He also recommends that vouchers be issued to low-income students only, thus opening up another cause for debate. His writing is cautious and a bit defeated, reflecting a frustration with the attacks leveled at him from both sides of this raging dispute. He shouldn't despair: this book is a valuable resource that, if heard above the shouting, could elevate the debate and lead to a more rational conclusion.

-- Jodi Mailander Farrell
Particular interest . . . is Witte's description of the historical context of the program, the competing agendas of advocates on both sides, and the political process involved in creating, operating and attempting to evaluate a voucher program in light of these diverse constituencies.

-- James G. Mulligan
"Economics of Education "Witte was Wisconsin's 'official evaluator' of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the nation's first educational voucher program. . . .Witte describes in detail Milwaukee's experience, concluding that the program was successful, given its intent, but warning against using that success to justify other programs designed to satisfy different goals
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Amid the welter of claims and counterclaims, it is heartening to hear the careful study of the voucher movement by John Witte.--Howard Gardner "New York of Books "Anyone interested in school choice should read this book. Though it is grounded in a detailed case study, the book's message resonates far beyond. . . . [It] transcends the predictable polemics that can overwhelm the choice debate.--Scott Davies "Contemporary Sociology "Of [particular] interest . . . is Witte's description of the historical context of the program, the competing agendas of advocates on both sides, and the political process involved in creating, operating and attempting to evaluate a voucher program in light of these diverse constituencies.--James G. Mulligan "Economics of Education "Amid the welter of claims and counterclaims, it is heartening to hear the careful study of the voucher movement by John Witte.--Howard Gardner "New York of Books "Of [particular] interest . . . is Witte's description of the historical context of the program, the competing agendas of advocates on both sides, and the political process involved in creating, operating and attempting to evaluate a voucher program in light of these diverse constituencies.--James G. Mulligan "Economics of Education "Anyone interested in school choice should read this book. Though it is grounded in a detailed case study, the book's message resonates far beyond. . . . [It] transcends the predictable polemics that can overwhelm the choice debate.--Scott Davies "Contemporary Sociology ""[Witte] was Wisconsin's 'official evaluator' of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the nation's first educational voucher program. . . .Witte describes in detail Milwaukee's experience, concluding that the program was successful, given its intent, but warning against using that success to justify other programs designed to satisfy different goals"--Booklist
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