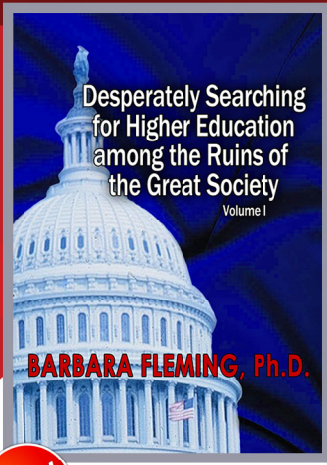


America is operating two national school systems - one for the rich and one for the poor.

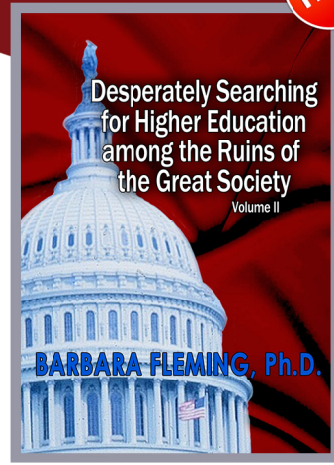
new



Volume I of *Desperately Searching for Higher Education among the Ruins of the Great Society* compares the academic deficits of African American and other low-income white and other minority children on both the 2017 and 2019 National Assessment Ed Educational Progress (NAEP). The analysis of scores on the both the NAEP and two international middle-class suburbanite families and the other for poor urban and rural families; and this split is pulling the entire elementary and secondary education enterprise of the country down.

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Volume II of *Desperately Searching for Higher Education among the Ruins of the Great Society* compares postsecondary outcomes of U.S. college and universities by race while investigating the following question: Why do foreign students who major in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields at U.S. colleges and universities get the best education money can buy while the U.S.'s own African-American students get the worst at all levels of the American education pipeline?

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According to 2019 NAEP results from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education, this split academic achievement among U.S. elementary and high school students is also evident from the reading scores of low-income students inasmuch as the scores of poor children have literally gone down over the past 10 years while the reading scores of more affluent children have gone up over the same time period.

In October, 2019, both the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Center for Education Statistics that administers the NAEP decried the average reading scores of U.S. 4th and 8th graders on the 2019 NAEP. The Secretary stated that: "Two out of three of our nation's children aren't proficient readers". The Associate Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) which administers the NAEP similarly stated in an NCES press release in October of 2019 that: "... In fact, over the long term in reading, the lowest-performing students (those readers who struggle the most) have made no progress from the first NAEP administration almost 30 years ago" until the 2019 administration.

On the face of it this is not an easy question to answer; but it is certainly a question that deserves an answer, an answer that looks across the landscape of issues confronting African-American families as they aspire and attempt to educate their children but often fail to do so through no fault of their own. Based on the data analyzed in this document with respect to postsecondary graduation rates, it is clear that African American outcomes at the postsecondary level of schooling are clearly far worse than the outcomes of White and other minority upper middle-class suburbanite college students, especially in the STEM fields. The question posed earlier also deserves an answer when considering the astounding amount of debt incurred by these same African American students, many of whom drop out of school before they receive their certificates or degrees, especially if they are enrolled in for-profit postsecondary institutions. However, whether African American students drop out or graduate, they end up owing significantly more student loan debt than White and other minority postsecondary students.

African American postsecondary college students, past and present, are inundated with both private and federal student loan debt from U.S. postsecondary institutions where they often do not graduate but remain responsible for the debt. These students are in essence in a condition of debt peonage, saddled with huge debts they cannot re-pay because of their low incomes, a situation attributable to their families' continued poverty in the U.S. Because of their poverty, African American college students pay a premium for higher education in terms of higher amounts of federally-subsidized and privately-financed student loans; higher interest rates on privately-financed student loans; lower enrollment rates in and higher dropout rates from U.S. postsecondary institutions; and lower completion or graduation rates from these same institutions. They pay dearly to achieve the American dream which still eludes most of them, especially African American students who attend for-profit postsecondary institutions.



MEET THE AUTHOR • Barbara Fleming

In addition to her career as a writer of mystery fiction, Barbara is first and foremost a trained social scientist with a B.A., M.S., and Ph.D. in Psychology with a concentration in the intellectual development of children. She earned both the master's and Ph.D. degrees in Developmental Psychology. Barbara has expertise in mental health and higher education and has written extensively in both fields. She published a report for the Ohio State Department of Mental Health entitled *Minorities' Utilization of Public Mental Health Services in the State of Ohio* and she also produced a 5-year comprehensive strategic plan for her local state university when she served as the Director of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research for that institution.

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