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Expelling Hope: The Assault on Youth and the Militarization of Schooling (SUNY series, INTERRUPTIONS: Border Testimony(ies) and Critical Discourse/s)

Christopher G. Robbins

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Demonstrates the many devastating and interrelated threats that punitive policies like "zero tolerance" pose to youth, schooling, and democracy.

Expelling Hope raises critical questions about the effects of punitive policies, particularly "zero tolerance," and repressive social relationships on youth (of color) and public schooling. It argues convincingly that zero tolerance is a catchword, or linchpin, for an array of discourses and social practices that support the criminalization of youth, the militarization of public schooling and culture, and the marketization of public life. Politically impassioned and intellectually rigorous, the book provides the framework for an alternative vision of youth and schooling, one rooted in hope that calls for youth to be treated as agents of a democratic future.

"…a strong addition to the critical discussion about public education and what it would truly mean to leave no child behind." — CHOICE

"When 'zero tolerance' replaced 'teaching tolerance' as the dominant paradigm for children's lives and public education, society unleashed nothing less than a low-grade, persistent war on youth—and on our common future. Children in schools find themselves locked out and locked in, searched and surveilled, excluded and banished, objects of a militarized social order. Christopher Robbins has written a brilliant and incisive account of the ravaging of hope through the criminalization of youth, punishing kids by depriving them of an education. A must read to see how we got here, who is served, and how to resist." — Bernardine Dohrn, coeditor of Zero Tolerance: Resisting the Drive for Punishment in Our Schools: A Handbook for Parents, Students, Educators, and Citizens

"The author makes important new links between the phenomenon of zero tolerance and the scholarship on militarism, neoliberalism, and democratic politics." — Kenneth J. Saltman, coeditor of Education as Enforcement: The Militarization and Corporatization of Schools

Christopher G. Robbins is Assistant Professor of Social Foundations at Eastern Michigan University and the editor of The Giroux Reader.

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