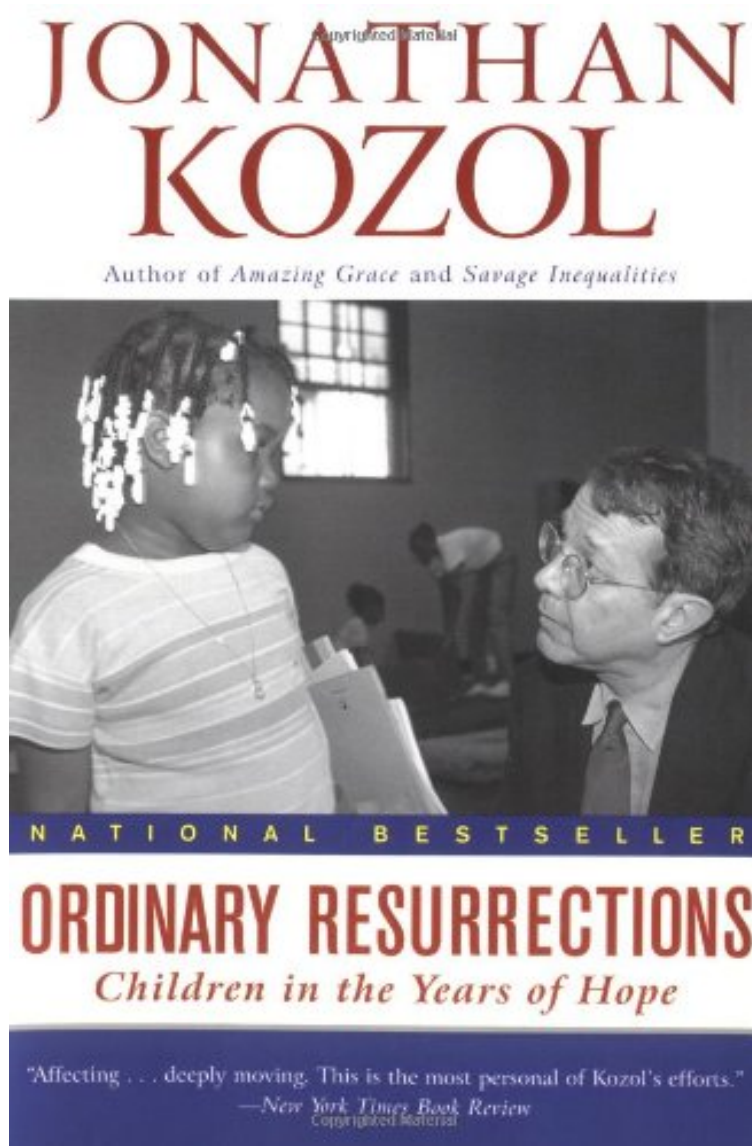


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Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope

Jonathan Kozol

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Jonathan Kozol : Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It still reads the same over a year later....By Terry MathewsI just re-read ORDINARY RESURRECTIONS and wanted to update my review....the book is just wonderful....and full of such hope!Like other reviewers, I heard Mr. Kozol's interview on National Public Radio during my commute home and was completely enchanted by his stories of Pineapple and her friends in Mott Haven.I ordered the book from

amazon.com and devoured it in two sittings. I cannot remember when a book moved me as much as this one. I'm not sure what gifts God gave Jonathan Kozol, but one of them is true compassion and insight without judgment or pretense. I was continually amazed, as was Kozol, at these children's tenderness, kindness, their incredible gift of insight and their wide-eyed innocence. At the back of the book, there is an address for St. Ann's Church. I will be sending them a check...for St. Ann's Scholars...for Pineapple and Elio and Mother Martha and all the children and caretakers who perform miracles day in and day out. This should be required reading for not only present/future teachers, it should be required reading for the human race. I hope Kozol and his kids win the Pulitzer/Nobel/and any other available award! Read this book...you will be richer for it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By BaBNice book 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ordinary...Not so ordinary By Vanessa Garcia Great book! I highly recommend it! Kozol manages to capture the complexity and simplicity that is a child without pretension.

Jonathan Kozol's books have become touchstones of the American conscience. In his most personal and optimistic book to date, Jonathan returns to the South Bronx to spend another four years with the children who have come to be his friends at P.S. 30 and St. Ann's. A fascinating narrative of daily urban life seen through the eyes of children, *Ordinary Resurrections* gives the human face to Northern segregation and provides a stirring testimony to the courage and resilience of the young. Yet another classic of unblinking social observation from one of the finest writers ever to work in the genre, *Ordinary Resurrections* is a piercing discernment of right and wrong, of hope and despair -- from our nation's corridors of power to its poorest city streets.

Stepping back from his 30-year attack on the inequalities of education, Jonathan Kozol allows the children to speak for themselves in *Ordinary Resurrections*. These are the schoolchildren of South Bronx's most dismal neighborhood, Mott Haven, where social struggles with poverty and imprisoned fathers rate just under AIDS and asthma as the greatest threats to young lives. Yet, Kozol marvels, despair and bitterness don't come to mind when you meet 10-year-olds like Ariel, who "skips through life" and displays a healing tenderness to others at the church afterschool program that has become a living laboratory of sorts for Kozol since he wrote *Savage Inequalities* in 1996. This is "not the land of bad statistics but the land of licorice sticks and long division, candy bars and pencil sets," he writes. In recording conversations between these kids and each other, their teachers, caretakers, parents, and even himself, Kozol manages to move the adults to the periphery in order to let the children teach. There is no government data, no research conclusions, only a sense of hope and wonder at the resiliency of the young. Kozol readily admits that he's due for a reflective moment. In his 60s, living alone, his parents seriously ill, he seeks safety in surrounding himself with children. He confesses that he's not a religious man, yet he finds himself overcoming his awkwardness with prayer, even bowing his head with the children at times. His writing in this moving account is among his most eloquent, as when he describes the gentle way in which a teacher tugs for the attention of a dreamy first-grader as if carefully unwrapping a small package that may be breakable. He captures the rhythm of the exchanges between teacher and student in a way that practically whispers to the reader. Ultimately, this is a book about healing that reveals more about the lives of children in poor neighborhoods--and Kozol--than any of his prizewinning books to date. --Jodi Mailander Farrell From Publishers Weekly A persistent voice of conscience, Kozol poses the question: do we want our schools to remain segregated and unequal? The National Book Award-winning education activist revisits Mott Haven, a poverty-stricken section of the South Bronx that was the setting for his two previous books, *Amazing Grace* and *Savage Inequalities*. The tone here is more optimistic, partly because his extended conversations and interactions with children take place not only at public elementary schools, but also at a supportive after-school center run by St. Ann's Church, a neighborhood Episcopalian congregation that reaches out to the hungry and homeless. Ranging in age from six to 12, all of the children in Kozol's empathetic, leisurely portraits are black or Hispanic; some know hunger; many have lost at least one relative to AIDS; a large number of them see their fathers only when they visit them in prison. Many have asthma or other severe respiratory problems, which Kozol blames on the high density of garbage facilities in the area and on a waste incinerator that was not shut down until 1998 after protests by community activists, environmentalists and doctors. His sensitive profiles highlight these kids' resilience, quiet tenacity, eagerness to learn and high spirits, as well as the teachers' remarkable dedication despite sharp cutbacks in personnel and services; overcrowded, decaying buildings; and crime-riddled streets. Yet as Kozol makes piercingly clear, the students' "ordinary resurrections" can only go so far amid what he calls "apartheid education," a racially and economically segregated school system that in effect assigns disadvantaged children to constricted destinies. Major ad/promo; 11-city author tour. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From School Library Journal YA--With warmth and compassion, Kozol tells of his continued visits with the children who attend the after-school program at St. Ann's Episcopal Church in the racially segregated, impoverished South Bronx. Surrounded by drugs and violence, these youngsters hold on to their optimism and innocence. Elio, described as "somewhat timid, almost happy, and attempting to be brave" tells him that "I can hear God crying-when I do something bad." The children listen to the author as well, sensing when he is troubled and reassuring him. The program is run by Mother

Martha, an Episcopal priest educated at Radcliffe and a former trial lawyer, who doggedly works the system for her children, and by the grandmothers of the neighborhood. Kozol is well aware of what the future holds for most of these kids and rails against the injustices. However, he mostly relishes his relationship with them. Teens will be enriched and inspired by their stories, which fracture the stereotypes of the nightly news. Jane S. Drabkin, Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, VA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.