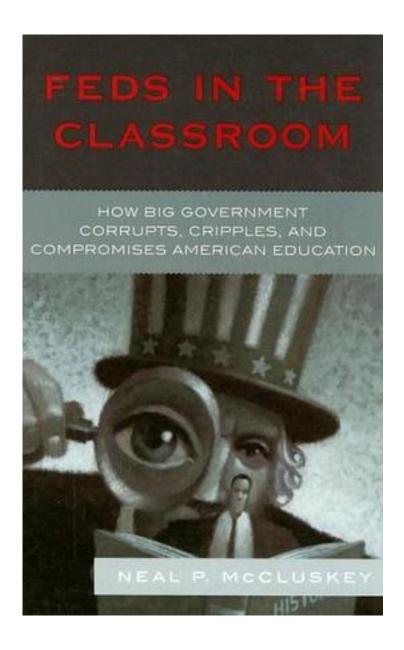
Feds in the Classroom



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Thomas Jefferson warned that "the natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." American elementary and secondary education shows how right he was. Two centuries ago the founders rejected federal participation in education and even rejected George Washington's plans on establishing a national university. It should be of little surprise, then, that the term "education" appears nowhere in the Constitution. Few early Americans would have considered providing education a proper function of local or state governments, much less some distant federal government. Federal control of the nation's schools would have simply been unthinkable. This view was the prevailing one well into the 20th century. In the 1980s, Ronald Reagan campaigned, in part, on a proposal to close the federal department of education. How things have changed in a few short decades. Today, every state requires children to attend school, and most dictate precisely what the children will learn. Parents, in contrast, are able to make very few choices about their children's education. And what role does the federal government have now? It has drilled deep into almost every public classroom in America. Washington can now tell public schools whether their teachers are qualified, their reading instruction acceptable, and what they must do when their students do not achieve on par with federal demands. At the outset of his presidential administration, for example, George W. Bush pushed for the largest federal encroachment in education in American history. Through his No Child Left Behind Act, the federal government can dictate what will be taught, when, and by whom, to most of the 15,000 public school districts and 47 million public school children. Why the change? Is it a change? What's the cost to the taxpayers? What are the benefits to public school students? To public schools? Today, with the almost-complete consolidation of education authority in the hands of policy makers in Washington, the last of our edu

作者介绍		
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