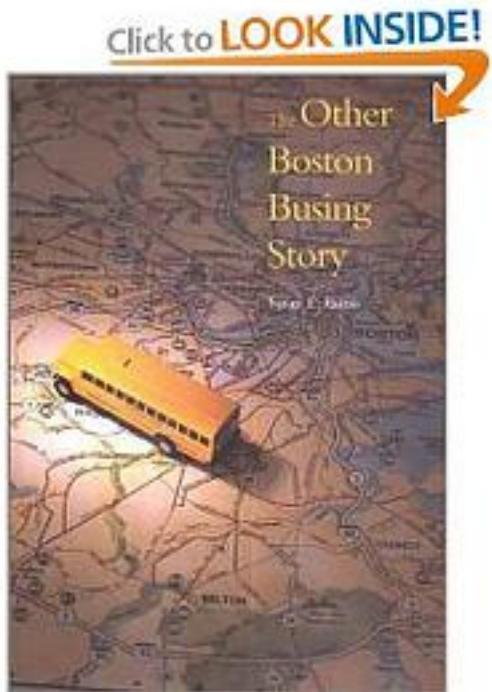


The Other Boston Busing Story



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METCO, America's longest-running voluntary school desegregation programme, has for 34 years transported black children from Boston's city neighbourhoods to predominantly white suburban schools. In contrast to the infamous violence and rage of forced school transportation within the city in the 1970s, METCO has quietly and calmly promoted school integration. How has this programme affected the lives of its graduates? Would they choose to participate if they had to do it again? Would they place their own children on the bus to the suburbs? Sixty-five METCO graduates vividly recall their own stories in this revealing book. Susan Eaton interviewed programme participants who are now adults, asking them to assess the benefits and hardships of

crossing racial and class lines on their way to school. Their answers poignantly show that this type of racial integration is not easy - they struggled to negotiate both black and white worlds, often feeling fully accepted in neither. Even so, nearly all the participants believe the long-term gains outweighed the costs and would choose a similar programme for their own children - though not without conditions and apprehensions. Even as courts and policymakers today are forcing the abandonment of desegregation, educators warn that students are better prepared in schools that reflect our national diversity. This book offers an accessible and moving account of a rare programme that, despite serious challenges, provides a practical remedy for the persistent inequalities in American education.

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