

Death In the Classroom

For, if we ever get to a place of complete certainty and assuredness about our practice, we will stop growing. If we stop growing, we will die, and, more importantly, our students will wither and die in our presence. Both teachers and students can be vulnerable to a sort of classroom death. Death in the classroom refers to teachers who stop trying to reach each and every student or teachers who succumb to rules and regulations that are dehumanizing and result in de-skilling (Apple,1993). Instead of teaching, such people become mere functionaries of a system that has no intent on preparing students- particularly urban students of color--for meaningful work and dynamic participation in a democracy, The academic death of students is made evident in the disengagement, academic failure, dropout, suspension, and expulsion that have become an all too familiar part of schooling in urban schools. Academic death leaves more young people unemployed, underemployed and unemployable in our cities and neighborhoods, and vulnerable to the criminal justice system. Furthermore, this vicious cycle often continues with the children they will parent. If we hope to disrupt this cycle, our pedagogies must evolve to address the complexities of social inequalities.

Ladson-Billings, G.(2021).Culturally relevant pedagogy: Asking a different question. Teachers College Press.