

THE Adventures OF

Ms. URBAN



THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

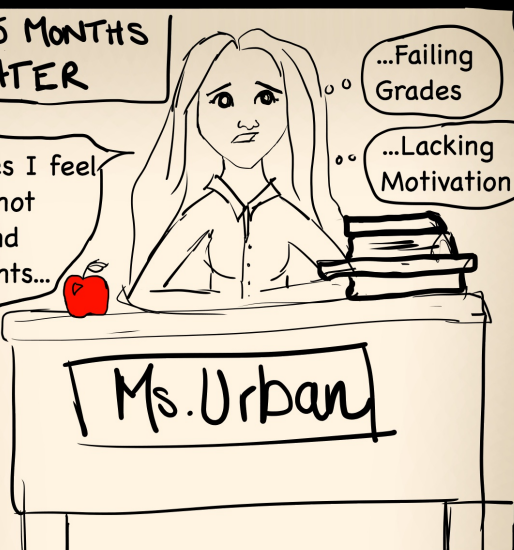


... 5 MONTHS
LATER

Sometimes I feel
like I do not
understand
my students...

...Failing
Grades

...Lacking
Motivation



LET'S DO
SOME
RESEARCH!

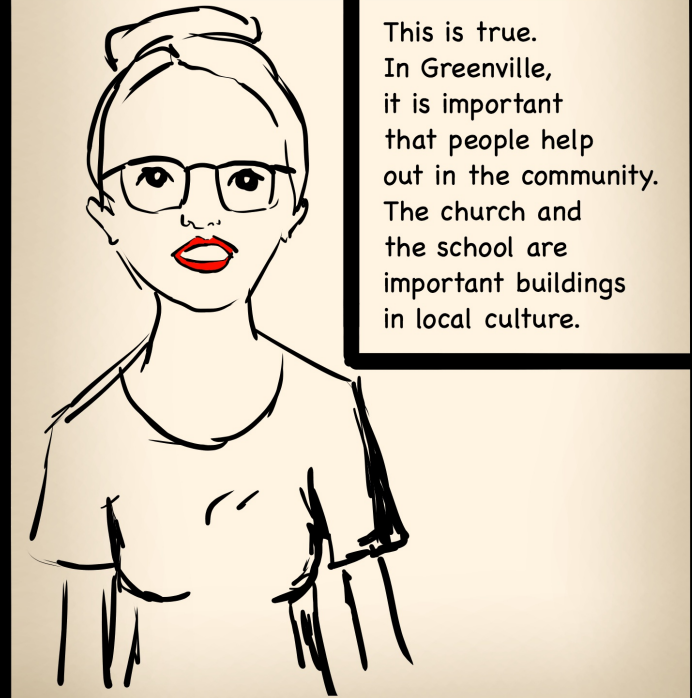


The Left Behind: Decline and Rage in Rural America
by Robert Wuthnow

"The places they
[rural people]
live are 'moral
communities that
carry meanings about
the quality of life
that they feel is
right.'" (pg 16, The
Left Behind)



This is true.
In Greenville,
it is important
that people help
out in the community.
The church and
the school are
important buildings
in local culture.



Each rural community has its own unique problems but some of the common ones are:

- Population decline
- An aging population
- Teenage Pregnancy and High School Drop-out rates
- Access to Healthcare
- Brain Drain (for more information on this topic see Hollowing out the Middle)
- Drugs
- Demoralization
- Few Jobs
- Cultural Threats



Wuthnow complicates the idea that rural populations are declining, but he does not complicate the other problems that impact rural communities.

Every community is different and has different problems.

FINALLY,
SOME SOLUTIONS ...

According to Wuthnow rural communities need both local charities and government help. These communities also need to create and sustain local businesses.



Oh! Hi Mrs. Garcia!
Hi Julia! See you in
class tomorrow

Hi Ms. Urban!
Have a good
night!

Cookies!

This might help address the economic problems that these communities face.



People in rural communities have lost faith in the federal government.

Wuthnow then paints a grim picture of Rural America:

According to him, rural communities are racist, homophobic, islamophobic, anti-immigrant, and misogynist.

This is too much of a generalization. Not everyone in rural communities believes these things. Even if they are the majority, people's opinions and beliefs are more complicated than he leads the reader to believe.



Greenville Teacher Book Club

Why didn't he include the voices and opinions of people who identify with racial and ethnic minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, or people who are not Christian.

I liked how he focused on how rural communities are supposed to be benevolent, loving places.

Join the Conversation

I think most U.S. citizens feel like the government ignores them, regardless of where they fall on the political spectrum.



It is important to understand the community that a teacher is a part of, but that does not mean that we have to excuse and justify xenophobia.

Please read *The Left Behind: Decline and Rage in Rural America*, and make up your own mind.

by Ariana Garcia-Cassani (2019)

BOOK DISCUSSED!

Wuthnow, R. (2018). *The Left Behind: Decline and Rage in Rural America*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press.

FURTHER READINGS

Another Book on this topic!

Hochschild, A. R. (2016). *Strangers in their own land: anger and mourning on the American right*. New York: The New Press.

This book is best summarized with the following narrative developed by Hochschild.

If we imagine that everyone spends their life, waiting in line for their chance at the “American Dream” - slowly working towards attaining it - and then they see that some people are given the chance to cut in line. This is how some white Americans feel about social programs that were developed to help mitigate the structural oppression experienced by minority groups in the United States.

Articles

Belluz, J. (2016). We visited one of America's sickest counties. We're afraid it's about to get worse. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2016/12/7/13673802/louisiana-healthcare-concordia-sickest-counties-in-america>.

Illing, S. (2018). A Princeton sociologist spent 8 years asking rural American why they're so pissed off: Hint: it's not about the economy. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2018/3/13/17053886/trump-rural-america-populism-racial-resentment>

Jones, S. (2018). Whitewashing Trump Country: How the media erases people of color from rural communities. Retrieved from <https://newrepublic.com/article/147136/whitewashing-trump-country>