



Restoring Power to Parents and Places

Richard S. Kordesh

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What made “the good old days” so good? We often answer this question by pointing out problems of our modern society in contrast: schools that leave children behind, Internet groups that have replaced neighborhoods, and rampant consumerism. In this compelling, well-thought-out treatise, professor and community development professional Richard S. Kordesh suggests a solution to these problems that, in many ways, seems like a return to the past.

Kordesh argues that good communities – meaning places that enable children to thrive – are comprised of “productive” families. Productive families, headed by a married mother and father, create value – whether material goods, services, or simply well-raised children – rather than just consuming it.

Within this very traditional family structure, parents play roles that are “thick” rather than “thin.” Instead of outsourcing their children’s education to teachers and their food supply to grocery stores, productive parents “co-educate” their children through home-schooling, while also involving them in a home-based business, cultivating a backyard or community garden, and preparing and eating meals together. Not only do children in productive families benefit from learning valuable skills, Kordesh says, communities made up of such families are safer, more vital, and economically stronger.

It’s an appealing vision, but one that may exclude or overwhelm non-traditional parents and those who don’t have the fortitude or resources to make the radical life changes Kordesh says are necessary to become “thick”. In laying the foundation for a global movement, however, this book succeeds beautifully, and Kordesh provides concrete advice for all the players needed to make it happen – parents, community organizers, and policy makers.

Also available in harcover and ebook.