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Sommario/riassunto

Being a child in American society can be problematic. Twenty percent of American children live in poverty, parents are divorcing at high rates, and educational institutions are not always fulfilling their goals. Against this backdrop, children are often patronized or idealized by adults. Rarely do we look for the strengths within children that can serve as the foundation for growth and development. In *Rethinking Childhood*, twenty contributors, coming from the disciplines of anthropology, government, law, psychology, education, religion, philosophy, and sociology, provide a multidisciplinary view of childhood by listening and understanding the ways children shape their own futures. Topics include education, poverty, family life, divorce, neighborhood life, sports, the internet, and legal status. In all these areas, children have both voice and agency. They construct their own social networks and social reality, sort out their own values, and assess and cope with the perplexing world around them. The contributors present ideas that lead not only to new analyses but also to innovative policy applications. Taken together, these essays develop a new paradigm for understanding childhood as children experience these years. This paradigm challenges readers to develop fresh ways of listening to children's voices that enable both children and adults to cross the barriers of age, experience, and stereotyping that make communication difficult. A volume in the Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies, edited by Myra Bluebond-Langner.
