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Renowned Educator Returns to South Bronx & Exposes the Harsh Realities of Drugs, Crime, Violence, & Appalling Schools Faced by Latino Young People Today

Are low income urban schools really that bad? How disadvantaged are children growing up in low income neighborhoods? Why is it that people living on the same block 40 years apart have such unequal chances in life?

In a new book to be published in June, Arthur Levine and Laura Scheiber look at the real obstacles and opportunities for young people in tough neighborhoods. The authors revisit the South Bronx, where Levine grew up in the 1960s among many first- and second-generation families, and compare his experiences with those of a group of Latino teenagers coming of age in the same neighborhood nearly 40 years later.

Shaken by the violent death of Leonel Disla, one of the young men in his group, Levine and Scheiber explore what happened to Leo and how society failed him. In this compelling account, we meet Leo's family and friends and learn about his hopes and fears. The book exposes the devastating effects of poverty and racism: low-wage, dead-end jobs; inadequate housing; high crime rates; appalling schools; violence; drugs; a broken legal system; prison; and underage funerals.

For interviews with the authors or the Latino young people whose lives are depicted in the book, contact Chloe Louvouezo at 866-955-9450 x 314

Unequal Fortunes explores how our communities shape the destiny of young people and what needs to be done to ensure that more young people from low-income, high-crime communities can succeed in school, college, and life. The authors not only tell Arthur's and Leo's stories, but struggle to explain why their lives were so starkly different. They focus on the new social realities that have shaped Levine's old neighborhood, and they conclude with the lessons that must be learned if we are to help today's disenfranchised children and restore to them the American Dream of a "better, richer, and happier life."

See accompanying documents for a 7,500-word excerpt, key themes, and what can be done to reclaim the American dream.

"Levine and Scheiber tell two tales about poor kids growing up in the Bronx—one inspires, the other rips your heart out. They also compel us to recognize that educational failure has both individual and societal costs that can be fatal. We can and must do better."—**Joel Klein**, Chancellor, New York City Department of Education.

Arthur Levine is president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and president emeritus of Teachers College, Columbia University. **Laura Scheiber** is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative and International Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.