



No Contest: The Case Against Competition

By Alfie Kohn

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No Contest stands as the definitive critique of competition. Contrary to accepted wisdom, competition is not basic to human nature; it poisons our relationships and holds us back from doing our best. In this new edition, Alfie Kohn argues that the race to win turns all of us into losers.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Contending that competition in all areas—school, family, sports and business—is destructive, and that success so achieved is at the expense of another's failure, Kohn, a correspondent for USA Today, advocates a restructuring of our institutions to replace competition with cooperation. He persuasively demonstrates how the ingrained American myth that competition is the only normal and desirable way of life—from Little Leagues to the presidency—is counterproductive, personally and for the national economy, and how psychologically it poisons relationships, fosters anxiety and takes the fun out of work and play. He charges that competition is a learned phenomenon and denies that it builds character and self-esteem. Kohn's measures to encourage cooperation in lieu of competition include promoting noncompetitive games, eliminating scholastic grades and substitution of mutual security for national security.

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From Library Journal

Kohn, a journalist whose work has appeared in such publications as *The Nation* and *Psychology Today*, has written a timely summary of research and commentary by others on the psychology of competitiveness. He seeks to debunk "the rationalizations for competition" that it is inevitable, more productive, more enjoyable, and likely to build character. In closely reasoned argument he shows that, while competition is deeply ingrained, it is also inherently destructive, especially where self-esteem is contingent on winning at the expense of others. The book, which lacks depth only in its discussion of organizational behavior and the incentive for creativity, will provoke considerable discussion. Recommended for general collections and subject collections on social interaction. William Abrams, Portland State Univ. Lib., Ore.

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(Library Journal)

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