

Katie Stringer  
Fall 2010  
FOED 6020  
A Town Torn Apart Response

The film *A Town Torn Apart* was another great example of teachers and educators making a difference in their students' lives. This film, however, focuses on a principal, "Doc," rather than a single educator as in *Conrack*. Again, the educator opts for more progressive teaching and learning techniques. As shown in this film, some people (namely the parents) are not receptive to such methods.

*A Town Torn Apart*, based on the experiences of Dennis Littky, tells the story of a small town, not particularly backwards, but definitely slower to progress than Littky's home of New York. When the town's outsider becomes the principal at the derelict high school, the students begin to learn and become more prideful in their school and work. However, the parents of some of the students do not agree with Littky's progressive methods and try to overthrow his power.

As with *Conrack*, the basic story is of becoming one's own person and holding true to your own theories and beliefs while not creating so much commotion that it becomes distracting and potentially causes one to lose his or her job. The case within the movie of one teacher who took creative license too far is a great example of taking too much liberty with assignments. Once Littky discussed his problems regarding the assignment with the English teacher, that educator was able to find better ways of expressing himself and his ideas to the students without being over-the-top.

Once again, *A Town Torn Apart* shows the impact that educators can have on the lives of their students. From delinquents to graduates, the students' lives were obviously impacted by the guidance and leadership of Doc Littky.