From literacy educator Deborah Hicks comes a gripping account of one woman’s journey of hope and discovery with her students – girls growing up in America’s most invisible poverty.

PRAISE FOR
THE ROAD OUT

“The Road Out is vital and enriching. I think it’s an important book that should be required reading for every American who’s concerned with education of the poorest and most forgotten in our society.”
—Stephen King, author of On Writing

“Can one teacher truly make a difference in her students’ lives when everything is working against them? Can a love for books and learning help the most vulnerable of youth create roads out of poverty? Deborah Hicks set out to give one group of girls something she never had: a class for the gifted – a chance to read literature, to write, and to dream. The Road Out leads us deep into the worlds of seven girls coming of age in a Cincinnati neighborhood that once offered jobs and hope for migrants from Appalachia but today is a deteriorating cityscape – a ghetto.

This is a moving story about girls who have lost their childhoods, but who face the street’s torments with courage and resiliency. “I want out,” says 10-year-old Blair, a tiny but tough girl who is severely poor and yet deeply imaginative and precocious. Hicks conveys to her students a sense of the power of literature and of a sisterhood that will help them through the toughest years of early adolescence. The author’s own life story—from a poorly educated girl in a small mountain town to a writer, teacher, and now social entrepreneur—infuses this chronicle with a message of hope.

www.theroadout.net

“Read this book, it is a cure for what I sometimes think is the only unforgivable sin—despair.”
—Dorothy Allison, author of Bastard Out of Carolina

“This stunning book will open your eyes and break your heart. Reminiscent of Robert Coles’ magisterial Children of Crisis, The Road Out is the best book I’ve read on the inner lives of working-class girls.”
—Mike Rose, author of Back to School