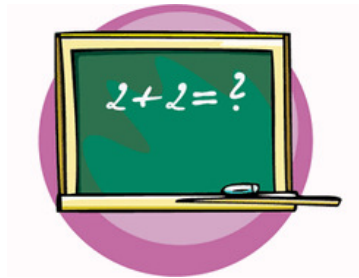


# The Success of State Education

11/14/2010 Dubbs Galt



*The information contained in this article was adapted from a lecture I attended this summer by historian Steve Davies. I wish I could find a transcript or video of this lecture because it is excellent. For now, my interpretation will have to suffice. This article is supported by detailed lecture notes but any inaccuracies are my own.*

State education is not a failure, but rather, a great success. I must start by making sure we are clear on terms. By “State education” I am talking about compulsory education mandated and administered by the government (e.g. the public school system in the US). By “success”, I refer to the success that State education has achieved in relation to the purpose and function of the system itself – which ironically is not education.

State education is relatively new to human history. The Prussians were the original advocates of State education, and the founders were very clear on what they thought the purpose of State education should be. After their embarrassing defeat to Napoleon in 1806, the Prussian elite decided to setup a “model national education system”. They wanted a system that produced “loyal, public spirited citizens” and groomed “obedient, disciplined soldiers”.

With these objectives in mind, the Prussian elite develop the first State education system (similar to the model of our public school system today) with the thought that the system should be compulsory, uniform, organized by age groups, and defined by structured time periods, structured desks, set text books and an authorized curriculum. The founders of the modern system of education were very explicit in their stated intentions. They wanted to teach students to follow the rules of institutions and comply with structure. This all sounds an awful lot like what we are used to today, but these were very new ideas at the time and vastly different from how education was previously provided.

The ruling Prussian elites wanted to groom obedient soldiers. This was not a secret. It was the openly communicated goal of the educational reform they were implementing. No longer was education used as a means for drawing out the knowledge and potential of individual students. Instead, children were formally manipulated; they were schooled collectively. The structured environment helped achieve this objective. Students were taught to submit, obey, not question authority, and take orders. This was the first time children started wearing uniforms to school. This was the first time students started reciting a national pledge of allegiance in school. This was the first time students were required to attend a school organized by age – so that they would be in the class room with their future brothers in combat.

It should also be noted that the elites thought of this system as a way to shape and mold society. The Prussian elites didn’t actually send their own children to the mass education system. They wanted to indoctrinate certain “habits of mind” in the general population. Curriculum and text books were standardized so the masses would be receiving the same “authorized” message. The elites wanted to use a national education system as a way to

**A=A:** The Only Formula to Save America!

*Identify things as they are. Eliminate Contradiction.*

maintain orderliness, manipulate the labor market, shape career choices of citizens, and keep kids off of the streets.

The implementation of State education in Prussia was quite successful in achieving its stated aims. Soon other nation-states began implementing a similar model. To a large extent, this is the education model we are following today. Yet, it is never questioned how this model came to be. It is never questioned what goals this model is designed to achieve. It is never questioned. Could it be because this is the system in which we are all schooled? We are spoon fed a statist narrative of history, economics, and literature. Essential thinking skills, like those that would be taught in a logic course, have long since been removed from the curriculum.

This analysis leads to a very radical conclusion: **As a society, our whole idea of education is radically impoverished.**

The conventional historiography of public education is wrong in so many ways. I will leave you with one example, but plenty more can be readily identified with a little research.

The traditional narrative we get in school is some version of the following: Everyone in the past was ignorant and most people couldn't read. People sunk into hedonism or expropriation. Luckily, the state stepped in and provided compulsory educational with the goal being "educational enlightenment". There is no way the population would learn anything if we didn't have State education. State education holds society together.

As it turns out, in Britain during the first half of 19th century and prior, there were a whole host of varied educational institutions. The system was not uniformed in the sense of a modern State education system. For example, it was common to see educational outlets like "Dame Schools" where woman in the neighborhood taught elementary education to children. In 1860, a study on education in Britain showed that 90% of children were enrolled in school of some kind and that 80% had a 14+ year old reading level. England passed their first compulsory education act in 1870. Today, after 140 year of State education, the average reading level in Britain is 10 years old.

I doubt anyone could seriously argue against the fact that the modern school system is an incredibly inefficient way to learn anything important (if that is the goal). Once we understand that the goal of the system is not education, but standardization and indoctrination, it is easy to see how State education has been such a success for the growth of government.

The aim of the State education is to take intelligent, independent, inquisitive children and turn them into conforming dullards. In the past it was designed to make for an acquiescent populace and an obedient military. Today it is designed to make for an acquiescent populace and a society of obedient corporate drones. In that respect, State education is a success. It's no coincidence that the rise of compulsory State education corresponds nicely with the rise in power of modern nation-state.

**Command, Control, Indoctrinate!**

Please see the A-equals-A.com [\[Mis\]Education of America](#) page for more information regarding the damage government schools continue to do to our society.

[A \\$ A](#)

**www.A-equals-A.com**

**A=A: The Only Formula to Save America!**

*Identify things as they are. Eliminate Contradiction.*