

## Education

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To my way of thinking, and in my understanding, education is the gaining and in some ways the regaining of knowledge through life's experiences. "Yes," some may say, "but what is knowledge?" This throughout the centuries has been a difficult word to define, and so one must be content by saying that it is, the capability to understand oneself and what one is doing and why one is doing it, to the satisfaction of one's state of mind. This of course is only my humble attempt at defining the noun 'knowledge', which I find very difficult to say what it is yet discover many things to say on the point of what it is not.

Knowledge is not the three 'R's - reading writing and arithmetic, or the suffering of little mortals under the sentence of eleven years' hard thinking and pencil sharpening. How can a mortal gain education under these quite horrendous limitations that it must survive so as to enter into that 'big, bad jungle' or the 'rat race', as so many of us who have survived the system remember our guides through the system constantly reminded us. Once we have undergone our sentence, we can then enter into the real system of education - the World. We learn how to live, to survive, how to act on certain occasions, how to dress, how to talk and even, in some societies, how to think.

If this opinion is true, then, this country and other countries' systems of education are totally wrong. To make it compulsory for a child, when it reaches its sixth year of life, to enter into an eleven year sentence of learning the accepted doctrines that that specific country believes in. Some may argue yes, but compulsory education was brought in so that this nation's children, who were in the majority illiterate, would become literate, and so bettering their conditions which previous to the 1870 Forster's Education Act, were being exploited by the less honourable members of that society, by using them as cheap labour and so restricting their childhood days. - but I would argue that society has now changed, employers no longer find it necessary to employ young children due to the many adults who have been 'educated' into the view that all they need is a job with money for survival and so lose all ambition of rising in social status and so are willing to take these rather miserable jobs. As is described by Karl Marx, education is an agency of social control, by which the bourgeoisie is able to control the working classes by teaching them their rung, a lower rung, might one note, of society's ladder.

Although it would be utterly naive of me to suggest that education is not necessary in some form; prior to the basic form of education that we now know, people survived only by muddling through life, a very difficult form of living. If the example of the cavemen may be looked at, they lacked education of any sort, as far as the historians know, they did not acquire the knowledge of things through being taught but only by learning through experience and so due to lack of understanding there were fights and squabbles between different sects. Through the advent of education man was able to gain the knowledge of language and so is able to communicate via language with these other sects and so theoretically can end the dispute through talking to each other. Naturally language cannot solve all problems, yet it does solve many, as in the case of domestic rows or family rows. Looking forward into the next century, one may see a positive outlook for education due to the advent of computers and cheaper microprocessors.

With computing the knowledge that was previously transmitted from the teacher's brain to the pupil's brain which is obviously subjective, it now may become objective. All the facts that are necessary to pass these examinations, that so many societies find necessary for a child to enter the world as an intelligent adult, may be put onto a computer system and so the child may learn the facts and only the facts, not the opinions of other humans, so enabling it to become an adult. This proposition may sound quite horrific to many but in fact if looked at logically it is not really, as we are just replacing one computer (the human) with another computer (the micro-processor). Of course this system is not infallible, facts may be altered so giving a biased picture of that particular subject, but it is rather safer than that of human teaching human if a parent wants its child to have an unbiased view before it actually has time to make up its own mind, which cannot be realised in the situation as it is now, with one human's interpretations of the facts being transmitted to another human.

As humans, we will never be satisfied with our lot, there will always be grumblings about something or other. Maybe the education that we are now getting is not perfect; of course it needs change, as the teachers of the nation are now complaining, work must now begin on a reconstruction of this quite out of date system, which came into being in the last century, and so we will go on fighting for better than we've got and the government will carry on resisting change, but one question we all must ask ourselves is, "Do we actually understand ourselves enough to know what we want on the education front?" If we answer, "yes", we are liars; if we answer, "no", we are fools.