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Still So Little for the Mind: The Enduring Relevance of Hilda Neatby's Defense of Liberal Education in Public Schools

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David Livingstone

Education supplies all other industries, including those concerned with the government and the defense of the country. If the educational industry falters it necessarily follows the whole structure of the nation is threatened.

– Hilda Neatby, *So Little for the Mind: An Indictment of Canadian Education*. Toronto: Clarke Irwin & Company, 1953

By the time *So Little For the Mind: An Indictment of Canadian Education* was published in 1953, author Hilda Neatby had risen from prairie poverty to establish herself among the first ranks of academic historians, served on a Canadian Royal Commission investigating higher culture in Canada, and was quietly writing speeches on behalf of the Governor General of Canada.^[1] She knew what it meant to work hard to achieve academic distinction and to serve her country. So the deterioration she perceived among her university students in terms of their readiness and ability to learn history distressed her, causing her to wonder about the changes occurring in public school curricula at the time. The results of her study led her to write *So Little for the Mind*, a stinging critique of progressive school reforms and a timeless defense of liberal education and its essential connection to liberal democracy.



Neatby was disturbed by the education system's sudden and enthusiastic rush to embrace John Dewey's philosophical ideas. The reforms being implemented in Canadian public schools in the 1940's and 50's were promising to reduce the amount of rote learning, to place less emphasis on facts in order, apparently, to stimulate conceptual learning, and to increase students' engagement by immersing them in "discovery learning" methods and by appealing to their individual passions and interests. These terms have not disappeared; indeed, in many Canadian provinces and US states they being re-packaged as the key to "twenty-first century" learning objectives. They rest, ironically, on exactly the same philosophical principles Hilda Neatby criticized more than sixty years ago. Since curriculum "experts" in the twenty-first century continue to advocate that teachers should abandon a genuine liberal education for the sake of Dewey-inspired "discovery learning," Neatby's critique is worth reviving as part of the ongoing debate about the purpose of education.

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Neatby's analysis begins with John Dewey's writings. "Dewey has been to our age what Aristotle was to the later middle ages, not a philosopher, but *the* philosopher." He has been "looked upon as the fountain at which every novice must drink; in truth he is no fountain, he is rather a marsh, a bog where armies of school teachers have sunk, and, one might add, many of them have never risen but speak with muffled accents from the depths" (23). Those who ascribe to Dewey's pragmatist philosophy are self-styled "progressives," and "'Traditional' and 'traditionalist' from the lips of progressivists are terms of abuse" (7). This disparaging of tradition flows from Dewey's historicism. He dismissed the notion that there are permanent truths available to the human mind through the careful and difficult contemplation of the works of past authors or in the direct confrontation with nature. There is no room for metaphysics or religion, and "Dewey himself regarded [the elimination of God] as fundamental in his philosophy" (28). Philosophers and artists in previous ages may have worried about questions of transcendent meaning, but now, thanks to Dewey, we are encouraged to concentrate on pragmatic issues dictated by our "urgent," practical interests.

In fact, "[I]ntellectual progress usually occurs," Dewey tells us, "through sheer abandonment of questions together with both of the alternatives they assume—an abandonment that results from their decreasing vitality and a change of urgent interest. We do not solve them: we get over them. Old questions are solved by disappearing, evaporating, while new questions corresponding to the changed attitude of endeavor and preference take their place."^[2] We simply need to adjust our attitude, and the attitudes of students, and they will stop asking some of the difficult questions human beings have always asked, such as "What is a good life?" or "Can human beings guide themselves through reason alone, or do they also need divine assistance?" Referring to R.M. Hutchins' Marfleet Lectures, which he delivered at the University Toronto the year before she published *So Little for the Mind*, Neatby worries that, with this new attitude ingrained, the Great Conversation, the West's unique and priceless gift to human civilization, will simply evaporate (257).

Nonetheless, Dewey promises that in the ongoing "development" of human society "progress" will still occur. Democracy and equality ensure a dynamic, never ending flow of social development extending into the unfathomable future. Those individuals who cling to false permanencies, such as natural rights or natural law, should not be allowed to hamper these developments. If you oppose Dewey's definition of democracy and equality, you are simply a barrier to progress. It is easy to see why the word "conservative" quickly becomes synonymous with "immoral" in the lexicon of the progressives. This also explains why progressives are more concerned with "relevance" than with the study of old books or history. We leave behind what is in the past just as we abandon old questions. Allan Bloom complains in the *Closing of the American Mind* that "Liberalism without natural rights, the kind that we knew from John Stuart Mill and John Dewey, taught us that the only danger confronting us is being closed to the emergent, the new, the manifestations of progress. No attention had to be paid to the fundamental principles or the moral virtues that inclined men to live according to them." ^[3] Hilda Neatby anticipated Bloom's critique by some thirty-five years.

Freedom is somehow supposed to be a product of history's movement, though clearly, for Dewey, freedom cannot rest on the permanent foundation of natural rights that pre-exist the state and limit its legitimate powers. "Natural rights and natural liberties exist only in the kingdom of mythological social zoology," Dewey informs us.^[4] Thus for Dewey, Neatby concludes, "Morality is simply socialized conduct which must be learned by experience" (27). Yet society is always changing, Dewey asserts, and so morals must always be changing. But since we were also told that there are no permanent principles, there can be none by which to assess whether the changes in society are good ones or not. We simply have to accept the verdicts of history or, these days, the verdicts of our Supreme Courts who have adopted the living constitution jurisprudence and assumed the role of society's moral tutors.^[1]

It might give us pause, however, if we recall that Mussolini, who many early progressives in Dewey's time outwardly admired, also argued that there were no moral principles beyond those immanent within the dynamic and developing state.^[5] A cardinal dictate of fascism, as Mussolini explains, is that "Everything is in the state, and nothing human or spiritual exists, much has value, outside the State."^[6] There is no "natural law," nor are their natural rights or any permanent standard more fundamental and of greater dignity than the state itself by which, say, a Martin Luther King Jr. could judge a portion of his society morally deficient. Dewey's historicism, it turns out, is a form of moral relativism. Therefore, Neatby concludes, "Dewey is frankly and even ferociously amoral in his method and discipline...Formal morality and transcendentalist ideas are repugnant to the natural pragmatic process of growth and education" (26-7).

If morality is merely socialized conduct, schools will need to mold pupils in accordance with progressive ideals. Our educational experts, Neatby argues, "obsessed with the magnitude of the 'social engineering' task that they have voluntarily assumed," insist on indoctrinating rather than liberating their students. While they announce that we must "have faith" in the ability of all to "solve problems" they withhold access to the great works of our intellectual tradition on the grounds that these only promote "passive reading" rather than "active learning." But why, Neatby wonders, "do they not open to all, as far as they are able, the best of our civilization in literature, science, mathematics, history, art, and then 'have faith' that they, like their predecessors, will build on the foundation?" It turns out that the:

faith of our experts is not faith in the ability of all to solve problems but the reverse. The material which would enable the individual to work out his own salvation is practically withheld in order that he may be more receptive to the ready-made solutions that are handed out. Few experts in education show any appreciation of the rewards of disinterested scholarship. And this is not surprising; few indeed have experienced them. (59)

Needless to say, Neatby has little faith in the educational experts who are setting the curriculum.

Progressive education theorists try to win converts among well-meaning citizens and parents by claiming to promote democracy. However, by democracy progressives no longer mean the limited form of liberal democracy actually established in constitutional forms by America's

founders in 1787 and Canada's founders in 1867. The progressives are educating citizens for a regime that is yet to come, one that will require dismantling what we have inherited in order to make way for the new democracy.[7] They have a different regime in mind, one that pushes for greater equality of conditions. Theirs is a "living constitution," more Darwinian than Newtonian. By contrast, Neatby reminds us that our constitutional founders realized that "Political democracy, as Aristotle knew, is a dangerous kind of government. The society that supports it lives always on the brink of dictatorship from which it is saved only by cultivating a kind of fluid and voluntary aristocracy" (47-8).

Here Neatby expresses a belief also held by Thomas D'Arcy McGee, one of the architects of Canadian Confederation. He praised early Canada both because of its freedom and because of its aristocracy, taking the latter term in its Aristotelian sense. "This is a new land" he enthused, "a land of young pretensions because it is new; because classes and systems have not had that time to grow here naturally. We have no aristocracy but of virtue and talent, which is the best aristocracy, and is the old and true meaning of the term." [8] One can hear echoes of Thomas Jefferson's praise fifty years earlier of the "natural aristoi" in America.[9] But for progressives, this kind of aristocracy needs to be replaced by more egalitarian conditions.

Progressives believe in democracy but not liberal democracy, so they tend to drop the modifier "liberal" and speak of "pure" democracy. The principle of democracy is equality, so they object to hierarchy, which they rename "elitism." Neatby takes aim at Dewey's simplistic conception of democracy. "Dewey more than any other single person, must be held responsible for the intellectual, cultural and moral poverty of much modern teaching. In his enthusiasm for democracy and his almost superstitious horror of the aristocratic he emphasizes that all learning emerges from the *activity* and the (apparently) resulting *discovery* on the part of the pupil. Book learning reminds him of the 'aristocrat' who did not work with their hands; and instruction directly imparted from teacher to pupil is, it seems, a denial of democratic equalitarianism" (24-5). The result, she argues, is that Dewey and his disciples are positively anti-intellectual and they unwittingly undermine liberal democracy. "They are spreading 'education for democracy' at the expense of the best liberal traditions of education. In their desire to 'teach' democracy and social morality they have quite forgotten that both must be founded on a true liberation of the mind" (235).

Moreover, Dewey's enthusiasm for democratic equality leads to an artificial leveling between the teacher and the student. There is little recognition, Neatby says, that "'democratic society' in the name of which education is being steadily watered down lives only on the creative efforts of the gifted few in all forms of endeavor, and on the ability of the majority in varying degrees to inspire, support, and use them" (47). And for all its talk of equality, Dewey's approach is actually totalitarian. "In practice...the teacher and the curriculum are instruments in the hands of the administrator for conditioning children in an approved manner according to the listed 'value' of 'democracy' or occasionally of 'social living' or of 'effective living'." Progressive education in Canada is not liberation; it is indoctrination both intellectual and moral" (42).

Dewey's "child-centered," discovery learning denies to students a genuinely *liberal* education

intended to sustain a liberal democracy:

It is no use answering that this [discovery learning] amounts to the same thing. It does not. Experience has shown that pupils who receive a liberal education at the hands of teachers of character have at least a good chance of being enlightened, cultivated and responsible citizens. To suggest, however, that this result is best achieved by requiring the teacher to concentrate not on the tortured Hamlet but on 'the way in which literature functions in the pupil's daily life' is to deprive him and his pupil of the unique, incomparable satisfaction of losing themselves together in the contemplation of a great work of art. One must note indeed, with regret, that the contemplative life has little appeal for the expert in education. (43)

Hardly a ringing endorsement for a theory that remains so influential in contemporary public education.

Neatby was not advocating that we return to the "bad old days" when students were apparently compelled to memorize facts and never think for themselves. In fact, she argues, those days probably never existed. Instead, progressives commonly use this "fashionable fling at the bad old days" (39) in order to undermine the past and to make way for their reforms. According to Kevin S. Krahenbuhl, this caricature continues to be paraded in teacher colleges today: "One of the primary approaches taken by advocates of pure constructivist pedagogy is to offer up a boogeyman of some essentialist teacher who sits and lectures 'at' his or her passive or disengaged students for the vast majority of the class."^[10] Neatby provides examples of questions derived from exams given to Canadian students in the pre-Dewey education system, test questions that clearly call upon higher order thinking but that also demand students know enough facts of history to answer the question coherently and concretely (227-9). The progressive reformers' mischaracterization of past education not only distorts history, it establishes in the mind of their intended audience a false dichotomy between facts and conceptual learning, as if one has to choose between them. Yet it is "a question of 'both...and' and not of 'either...or'". Nor is there any need to say which of the two is more important. We do not say, 'The important thing is not to consume food but to digest it'" (44-5).

The progressives also believe that students will only become engaged in their school work if they see the immediate, practical use of their activities. The trend continues even today. "Deeper learning is better achieved through 'doing' than through passive listening or reading" claim the experts guiding the new British Columbia curriculum arriving in the fall of 2016. According to the same Ministry of Education's document, "What and how we teach our students has been redesigned to provide greater flexibility for teachers, while allowing space and time for students to develop their skills and explore their *passions and interests*" (emphasis added). ^[11] Again, what Dewey proposed seventy years ago is re-packaged today as part of the "brand new approach" called twenty-first century learning. Yet Neatby finds it strange that "self-styled Democrats should have such contempt for the average pupil [as] to believe him too stupid, too lazy, too blind to his interests and duties to be able to exhibit, even in adolescence, a reasonable readiness to take directions from one competent to give them unless he feels himself 'interested'. This is an extraordinary exhibition of democratic faith" (145).

One result is that “The pupils are becoming so accustomed to the idea that they should do nothing which does not interest them that they find it hard to concentrate on any difficult technique” (214). The other effect is that it re-enforces their sense of entitlement and hardly prepares them to be ruled and to rule in turn (practically Aristotle’s definition of self-government). “The pupils and their interests are ostentatiously put first; the pupils’ problems and frustrations are the subjects; the pupils’ personalities and motivations are the aims. How can young people in such an atmosphere be anything but self-centred little automatons?” (232). Those of us who see these ill equipped students slumped in our university lecture halls know too well that they have not acquired the habits of reading required to get them through long and difficult works. And the assigned reading lists tend to get shorter and shorter each year as professors realize their students either refuse to read or cannot sustain the concentration required to complete them. If not immediately “motivated” or interested by the work, they have a hard time finding the self-discipline to persevere with it even though, if they did, they might discover something beautiful and timeless, something which might provide more lasting and “incomparable satisfaction” over their lifetime.

Unfortunately, the reaction by many university administrators to reports of student disengagement has been to establish so-called “centers for effective teaching.” These centers, often staffed by “teaching experts” drawn from the field of public education. Their job is to encourage university faculty to adopt “best practices” and to employ the same progressive techniques of “student engagement” through “discovery learning” and “experiential learning” that produced our ill-equipped students in the first place. The goal, apparently, is to make university learning nearly indistinguishable from elementary and high school instruction.^[12]

Neatby found elements of the traditional approach to education lingering in the Nova Scotia curriculum prior to 1950. Compared to the other provinces that quickly jumped on board with Dewey’s discovery learning model, this province, Neatby quips, took a “unique and radical” approach to the whole problem of teaching history. “Nova Scotia is one of the two provinces to explain that the best way to make history interesting is for the teacher to know some history” (160). An outlandish thought! The wholesomeness of this tactic is “remarkable because it is so rare” (161). Nevertheless, Neatby notes that the authors of this same document remain realistic about how much information their students are likely to retain: “Much of the detailed matter found in the school history text...will soon be forgotten,” they lament. At this point the progressives would conclude that this proves their point: merely memorizing “facts” is useless.

But pre-Dewey Nova Scotia draws a different conclusion: “Nonetheless, such as its statements as touch on the friendly or unfriendly attitudes and acts of alien nations in times past, will... remain...vivid in the memory...international goodwill may be fostered inside the schoolroom, if unpleasant truths of history be intelligently explained and inter-racial outbreaks of past times be both frankly confessed” and condemned (161). Unlike the progressive’s caricature of “old” education, there is no encouragement to present a jingoistic, one-sided account of history nor to present “mere” facts with no analysis of their deeper significance. But neither is there a cynical and equally one-sided focus on all the bad things done by the West’s “colonial oppressors.” Instead, there is an appeal for balance and, at minimum, for accuracy. The

“unpleasant truths of history need to be intelligently explained.” Incidentally, this is the approach Thomas D’Arcy McGee recommended for Canadians if they were to maintain the freedom he had helped establish for them in the British North American Act, 1867. He called upon his fellow Canadians to cultivate a certain state of mind needed to sustain their free government:

I do not mean a state of mind puffed up on small things; an exaggerated opinion of ourselves and a barbarian depreciation of foreigners; a controversial state of mind; or a merely imitative apish civilization. I mean a mental condition, thoughtful and true; national in its sympathies; gravitating inward. Not outward; ready to learn from every other people on one sole condition, that the lesson when learned, has been worth acquiring.[13]

The traditional Nova Scotia curriculum affirms McGee’s good advice: “History” the curriculum guide goes on to state, “is essential to... Intelligent loyalty... [because] one cannot love a country knowing nothing of its history”, but “Love...cannot exist if kept blindfolded.” “History, if it is properly taught, should lead to the development of a critical and judicial mind” (161). The traditionalists, it turns out, were equally concerned with producing critical thinkers and judicial minds; they just thought that one did this best by acquainting students with all of the facts and with the best authors from the past.

Turning from history to the study of great literature, Neatby says the modern educational expert also follows Dewey in believing that the:

technique of the modern psychologist can tell us more about human nature than the insights of all the poets, dramatists, and moralist of the ‘aristocratic’ and ‘feudal’ past. In short, no student of Dewey will be led to believe that one great duty of the teacher is to open his pupils to the heritage of his own and of other civilizations. He will be much more likely to consider contemplation of the past as at best a harmless form of escape, and at worst an undemocratic operation. (26)

The insistence that the students study what educational elites deem “relevant” often means that they are encouraged to read only contemporary works. Some of these may be fine, but often they betray the same sets of ideas and concerns that are currently fashionable and which infect the curriculum generally. Certain authors may even be chosen precisely because they reinforce the dominant, liberal point of view. Fine. But then students should be given the opportunity to really challenge the dominant views of their age by considering the far different (and possibly superior?) views of other ages. These contemporary authors are also unlikely to rival the quality of writing and depth of thinking found in a Homer, a Milton or an Austen. Great works of literature have been looked to for generations as sources of deep insight and moral guidance about love, marriage, friendship, patriotism, war, and peace.

Are progressives implying that these topics are no longer relevant? Is the contemporary learner so different from all previous human beings who have graced the earth that we need to keep those authors generally recognized as providing the deepest insight into these universal themes and questions from the students’ view? Perhaps, but only if one already accepts the

questionable historicism that lies at the heart of progressivism. If the twentieth century learner really is a different sort of being, one whose nature has been fundamentally transformed by the mere passage of time, then the great truths of the past touching human nature would be meaningless to this new species. However, the educational experts assume rather than argue the point, and it is a very questionable hidden premise leading, potentially, to rather frightening dreams of a post-human future.

By contrast, Neatby held the unfashionable view that the school should “convey to all, insofar as they are capable of receiving it, the intellectual, cultural and moral training which represents the best in a long and honourable tradition of Western civilization. On the proper performance of this task depends the future of society.... Informed individuals outside the progressive schools speak of the crisis in civilization with seriousness and intelligence. Progressive educators have apparently not even heard of it; they continue blandly to socialize for a society which threatens every moment to cease to exist” (14).

As in any industry that employs thousands of people, there will of course be variations in quality of personnel, yet it should be said that most classroom teachers in Canada and the United States work very hard, and they usually genuinely care about the welfare of the young people they have charge over. In a sense the public school teachers are the victims of the educational bureaucracy, too. Since the modern university has also tended to abandon its mission to provide a liberal education, probably too few of them were ever provided a solid grounding in great works of the past.^[14] Today’s teachers were once university students, and like most university students now, they were likely subjected to similar progressive and constructivist ideas and teaching methods in undergraduate degrees like Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, or English. And when they arrived in the faculty of education after completing their BA major in some other field, they were drilled in the latest methods of pedagogy. Dewey’s influence is felt but not acknowledged, and a deep study of alternative philosophies of education is probably rarely available. What Neatby observed in 1953 may still be more or less true: “Educational philosophy, if it takes in more than the twentieth century, does so only to condemn, with perhaps a qualified approval of Rousseau’s *Emile*” (124). (The exception now, which proves the rule, might be Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.)

Neatby complains that the career educator can become “a specialist in ‘education’ without ever having been subjected to a liberal education” (95). The student entering into a “post-baccalaureate” educational program may not have sufficient background in intellectual history to challenge any of the new material that will shape their career as an educator. Anyway, they can see that the education diploma is the necessary ticket to the job they want, and, at least in Canada, they cannot teach unless they successfully jump through the hoops set out for them by the faculty of education. In Canada, at least, the educational experts have, essentially, a monopoly on education training and curriculum development. So every prospective teacher in Canada and a great many in the United States will wander “for some time in the Dewey maze” (90), and it is only by a stroke of good luck that they will ever hear a serious critique of progressivism or be compelled to think through any alternative teaching philosophies.

The educational reforms Neatby criticized in the 1950’s keep coming back in only slightly

disguised form.[15] The irony of “twenty-first century” education is that it comes straight out of Dewey’s nineteenth century philosophy. Perhaps the public education of today is not all bad. “The virtues of the new system [of education] are none of them entirely new,” Neatby points out.

The vices, however, are new in this sense that they are typical twentieth century vices, representing equalitarianism and totalitarianism masquerading under the cloak of democracy. Educational experts probably do not know this because they are generally ignorant of history and of philosophy; but no respect for their good intentions, their enthusiasm or their industry should blind us to the fact that the new philosophies and the new procedures constitute a danger for the liberal education which must be the foundation of a free society. (133)

Despite what its present day adherents believe, progressivism does not really represent twenty-first century education; it does not even represent a path to genuine freedom; it represents, instead, a fundamental failure to defend liberal education born out of neglect as to what liberal education is and why it might be essential to the maintenance of liberal democracy.

Perhaps it is no surprise that our educational elites do not see the irony of labelling an educational reform that is sixty-five years old as “new” and designed for the “twenty-first century” learner. They disparage historical knowledge and “facts.” How can we trust these educators to teach Canadian history, American history, or world history when they betray such a lack of awareness of their own recent history? Perhaps it is time to remember one of Canada’s great historians, Hilda Neatby, and to introduce her defense of liberal education into the teacher training colleges.

Notes

[1] See Thomas M.J. Bateman, “The Supreme Court of Canada as Moral Tutor: Religious Freedom, Civil Society, and Charter Values” in *Liberal Education, Civic Education, and the Canadian Regime: Past Principles and Present Challenges*, ed. David W. Livingstone (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015).

[1] Canada Post featured Hilda Neatby on a postage stamp in the “Great Thinkers” millennium collection issued in 2000. Biographical information about Hilda Neatby can be found in Michael Hayden, *So Much To Do, So Little Time: The Writings of Hilda Neatby*(Vancouver: UBC Press, 1983), p.32.

[2] Dewey, “The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy,” in *Classics of American Political and Constitutional Thought: Vol. 2, Reconstruction to the Present*, ed. Scott L. Hammond, Kevin R. Hardwick, and Howard L. Lubert (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2007), p.317.

[3] Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), p.29.

[4] Dewey, "Liberalism and Social Action" in *The U.S. Constitution: A Reader* (Copyright © 2012 by Hillsdale College Press), p.619.

[5] Jonah Goldberg, *Liberal Fascism: The Secret History of the Left from Mussolini to the Politics of Meaning* (New York: Doubleday, 2008), p.135. Goldberg points out that H.G. Wells coined the term "Liberal-Fascism" to convey his hopes for the future of an America transformed by progressive principles.

[6] Benito Mussolini, "The Doctrine of Fascism," in *Political Ideologies*, ed. James Gould, Willis Truitt, (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1973), p.104.

[7] See for example Portelli and Solomon, *The Erosion of Democracy in Education: From Critique to Possibilities* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd, 2001). "This collection is based [on the conception of democracy] which builds on Dewey's characterization of democracy as a way of life rather than as a form of government" (p.18). "Following Dewey (1951) and Greene (1985), we believe in the ongoing reconstructive nature of democracy. Living the democratic spirit is not easy or straightforward; we need to *continue the struggle of reconstructing democracy*" (emphasis added, p.16).

[8] Thomas D'Arcy McGee, "Speech on Motion for an Address to Her Majesty in Favour of Confederation," Legislative Assembly, 9 February 1865, in *D'Arcy McGee: A Collection of Speeches and Addresses: Together with a Complete Report of the Centennial Celebration of the Birth of the Honourable Thomas D'Arcy McGee at Ottawa, April 13th, 1925*. Selected and arranged by the Honourable Charles Murphy, K.C., L.L.D. (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1937), p.233.

[9] "Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 28 October, 1813." *The Founders' Constitution*, (The University of Chicago Press).

[10] "Student-centered Education and Constructivism: Challenges, Concerns, and Clarity for Teachers," *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, June 30, 2016, p.3.

[11] *Building Student Success: BC's New Curriculum* (Copyright © 2015, Province of British Columbia), <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum-info#interests-passions>

[12] In a talk entitled "On Schools in Need of Re-Education," (TV Ontario, 21 June, 2013), education consultant Michael Fullan claims that kids in school need to be "engaged" and "they won't stand to be bored any longer." Fullan also expressed his hope that these students will carry this same impatient attitude to the universities, thereby pressuring faculty to change their teaching methods. At the end of the talk he likens his approach to Machiavelli's introduction of "new modes and orders." Hence, one of the stated objectives of progressive, public education reform is to trigger more changes in the university. Fullan was an education policy advisor to Prime Minister Tony Blair and to Ontario's Premiere, Dalton McGuinty. Fullan's website indicates he is currently helping the state of California change its education system "across the entire system and at all of its levels" (<http://michaelfullan.ca/>).

[13] McGee, "Mental Outfit of the New Dominion," from the *Montreal Gazette*, 5 November 1867.

[14] See Anthony T. Kronman, *Education's End: Why our Colleges and Universities Have Given Up on the Meaning of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). Also see Ron Srigley, "Dear Parents: Everything You Should Know About Your Son or Daughter's University But Don't", *Los Angeles Review of Books*, December 9, 2015.

[15] P.A. Kirschner, J. Sweller, and R.E. Clark report the following: "In each decade since the mid-1950s, when empirical studies provided solid evidence that the then popular unguided approach did not work, a similar approach popped up under a different name with the cycle then repeating itself. *Each new set of advocates for unguided approaches seemed either unaware of or uninterested in previous evidence that unguided approaches had not been validated*" (emphasis added). "Why Minimal Guidance during Instruction Does Not Work: An analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-based, Experiential, and Inquiry-based Teaching," *Educational Psychologist*, 41 (2), 2006, p.79.