

Freedom of the student as an individual

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The world is a constant struggle between freedom of the individual and the needs of a group.

An example of a restriction on the freedom of the individual is what students are taught in school. Today, students are taught Common Core along with other traditional studies. Students are rarely taught life skills that they can use later in their careers. Students should be taught more life skills to be better prepared for the “real world”. We should learn about professions, taxes, buying a house, making an income, etc. Students should act more as an individual, rather than working as a group.

Students, as a whole, are not appropriately prepared for life after college. In the average public school, students are taught little to no life skills. Students are relying on their teachers and schools to further prepare them for life after college and a potential career. It is becoming apparent that students have not been prepared for the “real world”. A survey was done by the Association of American Colleges and Universities on students readiness in the workplace.

They found that,” 70% of college students think that they possess the critical thinking skills needed to succeed in the workplace. Employers, on the other hand, are far less optimistic. Less than one third think that newly minted college grads are ready for the real world”(Hyde-Bravo). Employers seem to value skills that are not taught on the average college campus. Most students are completely unaware of employer’s demands because they fail to plan for life outside the academic bubble.

Students are not being taught how to conduct themselves outside the schooling environment. The teaching system is to blame for student's blind ignorance to what the real world is seeking of them. Regular schooling is very discouraging for the average student. Modern-day students are being molded by their teachers to all think similarly. They are put into a " cookie cutter" to make the ideal student, anyone who differs from the majority is reprimanded. Students cannot have their own views on a topic.

They are forced to think as the teacher does. There is no room for diversity within this teaching method. Students should explore their own ideas and learn the best way possible for the individual student. In the article " Life Lessons Are More Important Than School Lessons" by John Taylor Gatto, Gatto states " You have to find out who you are by experience and risk-taking, then pursue your own nature intensely. School routines are set up to discourage you from self-discovery.

People who know who they are make trouble for schools". Institutionalized schooling is about obedience in exchange for rewards. Students are taught to follow demands without individual thoughts. Students should not have to confine to what the educational system wants them to be. Students need to think for themselves and have more self discoveries while learning.

Students should work more as an individual rather than as a group. In the " real world" we will need to be able to think for ourselves and have more of a personalized opinion. We should be taught this individuality earlier on. " When someone puts their head down to achieve their goals by themselves, as an independent adult, their outcome will reflect what they learned in both

high school and college" (Svitak). Our ability to think independently comes from our education.

Modern-day students who are being taught under the Common Core system are being taught to work as a group and achieve the needs of the group.

Later in life, when we have to think for ourselves, we will not be able to achieve goals independently due to the fact that we were taught to ignore our independent thoughts and think as a group. Students need to work independently and become more familiar with their own opinions. In the novella Anthem by Ayn Rand, the main idea is the concept of individualism, which is a social pattern that places the highest value on the interests of the individual. Throughout the novella, the protagonist goes after what he wants in his life despite the barriers in his way. We should have this same mentality in our education systems.

We should know what we want to do in our lives and take the necessary steps to achieve our goals. Rand says that we should " Know what you want in life and go after it. I worship individuals for their highest possibilities as individuals, and I loathe humanity for its failure to live up to these possibilities" (68). Students have unlimited possibilities to go after what they want and learn exactly what they need to achieve their goals. Schools should give their students more freedom in what they want to learn. Students should be able to explore future professions that they might be interested in.

Ayn Rand would support the freedom of students education. Students should learn to act more like the protagonist in Anthem in the way that he took control over his needs. In the novel Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse, the main

concept to grasp is a journey of self-discovery. Siddhartha goes on a spiritual journey as an individual. This idea should translate onto students and the traditional education system.

Students should be encouraged to self discover. In the novel Hesse says, “But where were the Brahmins, the priests, the wise men, who were successful not only in having this most profound knowledge, but in experiencing it?” (7). To have a profound knowledge in a certain subject, you need to have experience with it. Students should be able to pick a profession that they may be interested in pursuing and be able to experience what they would encounter. For example, if a student wanted to become a doctor, they could work as an intern in a hospital and be taught in that environment.

There is a major difference between learning about a subject and actually experiencing it. Some people may have reason to believe that teaching is fine as it is. They may think that Common Core (modern-day teaching) is beneficial to students. Supporters of Common Core believe that it is a more unified way of teaching, as it improves instruction. Supporters, also, have been told that Common Core accountability policies hold students and teachers responsible for meeting certain standards that evaluate student learning.

These arguments for Common Core have many holes in them. Common Core seems to be about fixing teaching, not learning. Supporters are more concerned about how curriculum is being taught rather than how the students are perceiving the information. If all students are being held to a certain standard, there is no room for independent thought or discovery.

Keeping all students at the same level not only discourages productivity but also refutes uniqueness and creativity.

Some educators may be concerned that teaching lessons around more real-world topics would take away from traditional studies like calculus or Shakespeare, but not all students are going to be able to take what they learned from those traditional studies and relate it to outside topics. Our education should relate to future professions and lifestyles. The whole point of learning, is to be able to take away information and be able to use it in your own life. Common Core does not support individuality and therefore should not be our education system. The modern-day student is taught by an educational system that supports the needs of the group over the individual.

Students should be thinking more as an individual while being taught more life skills that will become useful to them in the future. Our students are not appropriately prepared for what they will face in the “real world” and are left in the dark as to what future employers are seeking of them. Common Core discourages individuality, which is a necessary tool to a successful adult. Students should not be grouped as one and not allowed to stray or think differently from the majority. Independent thoughts should be encouraged.

If students are taught, basically, the opposite of what the “real world” is seeking of them, how are they to succeed? We need to better prepare our students for their future by changing the face of our education systems.