

Two authors, two views

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Two Authors, Two Views School is a place where the youth of America goes to become educated to achieve their potential, and to further their knowledge of life. People often criticize our school system by saying it's a place where kids learn to be "book smart" and not "street smart." Others say that students need to spend more time outside of the classroom to gain further knowledge about the world. These two ideas about education are the main ideas that that authors John Gatto, and Dave Eggers have. John Gatto, a teacher in the Manhattan school system for thirty years wrote, "Against School: How Public Education Cripples Our Kids, and Why." Gatto claims to have taught in some of the worst conditions, and some of the best. Teacher of the year in New York for multiple years, Gatto claims to have seen it all. Just like Gatto, Eggers sees that the school system should be run in a different way. Eggers, the author of, "Serve or fail" developed a successful nonprofit organization that helps teach kids necessary writing skills. He sees that volunteer work plays an important role in growing up. He argues that it should be mandatory to do volunteer work while in college and that it will make students become better people. Both authors have their own different view on how they think the school systems should work. Both have strong views about why the school systems need to change. From students having too much spare time on their hands to boring classrooms, it's the way we incorporate different learning environments that will make us be successful in our everyday life. Gatto has many different arguments about how our public school systems are corrupt. Gatto writes, "School trains children to be employees and consumers; teach your own to be leaders and adventurers" (Gatto 30). He is explaining that in today's society children are being taught

to become followers and not leaders. Consumers are important in our society, but Gatto explains that schools need to teach students more about becoming their own individuals instead of following society's guidelines. Gatto also argues that students are only as smart as the dumbest kid in the classroom. He claims that classrooms slow down the pace of material being taught so no student is left behind. He claims that the way students are taught and the structure they have to follow creates boredom in the classroom. Gatto explains, "...if you asked the kids, as I often did, why they felt so bored, they always gave the same answer: They said the work was stupid, that it made no sense, that they already knew it" (Gatto 23). Gatto asserts that classes are so structured and so basic that learning the same thing over and over again becomes boring not only to the students, but to the teachers as well. Gatto talks about how bored he became as a teacher. He claims that the structure he had to teach in became so repetitive and boring, that he stopped enjoying teaching. He goes on to compare factories and jail cells to classrooms. Gatto concludes that, "The solution, I think, is simple and glorious. Let them manage themselves" (Gatto 30). Students should manage themselves and they should decide what they want to become instead of the structure of public schools telling them what to become. Dave Egger, the author of "Serve or Fail," argues that college students have too much free time and can do better things with their time like volunteer work. He argues that with all the time students have off they could be graduating in three years instead of four. He asks the question, "Do they deserve the time off?" and he replies by saying, "No, because a good deal of the four years of college is spent playing foosball" (Egger 19).

He is saying that students could be putting their times towards better educational purposes, instead of goofing off and having fun. He goes on to say, "...there are many hours in the days and weeks that need killing-as opposed to thinking about giving a few of these hours to our communities in one way or another-colleges should consider instituting a service requirement for graduation" (Egger 20). Egger proposes students be required to perform at least 25 hours of community service to be able to graduate. He discusses how this will help students learn more about the jobs they could pursue in the future. Egger discusses how helping a World War II veteran by bringing him food could help bring new insight to the student. His point is that by helping out the community through community service, students could become more educated about the world, and become better off in the real world outside of school. The power of public education has a different outcome for everyone. People need to make the most of the opportunities schools have to offer. Personally, I wouldn't have applied to so many colleges and worked so hard in high school if I didn't believe the opportunities public education had. However I do believe that having street smarts is the most important thing you can gain from growing up. If a student spends all day with their nose in their book then they will be missing out on the reality of life. Being a High school graduate, I agree with Gatto's points about how the structure of high school education creates boredom. Many times I have caught myself drawing mountains or playing on my phone because I was so uninterested in the lecture. However, without these lectures, information we need to become doctors, engineers, etc wouldn't be transferred. From the time public education became available today, the US

has become a modernized and well established country. Would we really like to go back to before that? I know that street smarts is essential to be successful in life, but the structure of schools and being book smart is an important factor to being strong and a successful citizen. I agree with many things Egger has to say, but I believe that without having time off, students will not learn the importance of interacting with one another. I believe the purpose of the time off is to study, work, and learn to be social. However, I do believe community service would be an advantage to a college graduate, but I think students should make the most of their time off and focus on the things they enjoy. Life shouldn't be so structured. Students can learn new information outside of class without being told what to do. A simple visit with a family member you haven't seen in ten years could give new insight on life. Personally I have learned more about this world from family, than any of my 12 years of schooling has taught me. Both authors prove great points in each essay which some I agreed with and others I disagreed with. However, through my readings I found I like the way the school system works today. Eggers pointed out that school is too easy, and Gatto made a clear point about how boring schools are. But in today's society I believe public education is the key to success. If we are fortunate enough to have public education, why not use it? Students just have to make the most of their education, and free time. There are flaws with every structured thing in life, the real test is who can work through those flaws and become successful. Work Cited Gatto, John T. " Against School: How Public Education Cripples Our Kids and Why." Readings For OSU Writers. 4th ed. New York: Bedford/St.

Martins, 2010. Print. Egger, Dave. " Serve to Fail. " Readings For OSU Writers. 4th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2010. Print.