

Discussion Forum 1: 2/2/11

In Mike Rose's book, "Why School", there are many reasons stated why he thinks we educate. Some of the reasons include; equalizing social classes, self-betterment, a route to exploring the world and finding where we fit as individuals. The reason to educate that I find most interesting is "the affirmation of human ability" (p. 41). Do we really need knowledge and education to affirm that humans are capable of being? I think that we do. Each year new things, ideas or creations are invented. As students we are continually trying to find ways to make things better, or faster, or more efficient. This ties back into confirming humans' capability. As individuals we can make a difference and make ourselves better at the same time. Education gives us the resources to repeatedly affirm humans are able beings and strive to better themselves.

Classmates discussion 2/3/11

The question "are we a society that knows a little about everything and have a mastery of nothing" made me think of how we are taught compared to other cultures. I have worked with many students from European or Australian backgrounds. In their schooling they are instructed to pick an area of interest before entering high school and that is what they would study and eventually become their career. Being brought up in the American schools, I can only be overwhelmed to think I had to choose my career path when I was still a young teenager. We may be a society that knows a little bit of a lot of things and dabbled in many work areas, but I think that is what makes us more well rounded as people. Eventually, I feel like we are a culture that does master one area, just not as soon as other cultures.

Discussion Forum 2: 2/25/11

The authors Pulliam and Van Patten in the article *History of Education in America* discuss the purpose of schools. One of the purposes they discuss is to keep up with what is next, the evolution of education. They speak of the "three waves" (p. 11) that humans have to keep up with and adjust to over time. The first wave of education is the hunting and gathering stage. Then we moved into the agriculture phase when we were learning how to have cattle and grow crops to sustain living. This led us into the industrial revolution and put us into our third wave, the wave we are in now, the "space wave", as Pulliam and Van Patten liked to call it.

Schools have been organized to help us prepare since the beginning of schooling. In my opinion, times have not changed. As students and teachers, we are still trying to maintain a balance of what is coming so we do not fall behind. The bureaucracy of education is still to stay on top of what is next; to be the first country to invent, the first to discover, a race to be the best and set the bar.

Overall, the scholars conclude they can make the greatest impact on education. Eliot and Harris were two advocates for higher education and were able to put in place a

foundation for future educators. They pushed liberal education and the idea that we need to make students knowledgeable and be able to understand how to learn and develop. I agree that the educators have a lot of power still today with a close eye from the government.

Classmates discussion 2/25/11

I would agree with the statement that teachers do not the core values that are to be taught. There are so many values, who is the person or group of people to say what is most important. In private schools, teachers have more control over what is taught in their classrooms. On the other hand, public school teachers are to follow a strict curriculum designated to what the state feels is most worthy of teaching. What a person values is personal choice, therefore, I think it makes it very difficult for teachers to decipher what is most important to pass onto their students.

Discussion Forum 5: 3/14/11

Based on the readings this week and the PBS special "Need to Know", the scholars believe that there is a positive correlation between extra-curricular activities (EA) and students' performance. I would 100% agree with the scholars in this area. I believe that doing other activities outside of schooling helps keeps students balanced and enthused for each subject. If EA were not offered, I feel students would become bored of a subject and their attention span would be shorter.

I can relate most to the school in Illinois on the PBS show with incorporating exercise into their daily regime. I believe that exercise really does stimulate the brain. It goes back to the simple saying we are all familiar with, "an active body is an active mind". I am a college coach and our competition season is in the fall. That makes the teams fall schedule very full and scheduled. Each year, we consistently see better grades in the fall than in other semesters. I attribute this to being more focused on school work due to the fact the student athletes are concentrating on EA as well.

Classmates Discussion: 3/15/11

I appreciate you posing questions for debate purposes. I too was thinking about the people who have the opposite viewpoint of me regarding EA and their benefits. The idea that schooling should be all school work and no activity to stimulate other parts of your mind and body seem very old fashioned to me. That is a time I would have a hard time relating to.

To try to answer your question: should education demand EA or physical activity to graduate? I would say yes. I have never thought about this issue as black and white as graduate or not graduate, but it seems it could be. If we mandated EA for graduation many positive attributes would come forth. Schools would see better grades, self-esteem would rise, school camaraderie would boost, and if it were physical activity the nations obesity issue would be addressed. I do think it would be difficult for all students. Like we read about in Gerber's article that students of lower SES could have a difficult time fulfilling

these requirements. That is where I think the administration and faculty need to be creative and find alternative issues that can be practiced with special cases.

Discussion Forum 3: 3/14/11

Ravich's chapter is titled the educational ladder because it is describing how education had to climb to get where it is right now. When education started, similar to today, scholars argued what was the best way to fully educate. Whether to educate to have a well rounded citizen or to focus strictly on a few subjects and become a master in that specific area. The educational ladder ties in nicely with Pulliam and Van Patten's article *History of Education in America*. In their article they divided the steps of education into three revolutionary parts; the agricultural, industrial and space age. Education is constantly changing, but we are seeing the same patterns as in the past. Ravich wrote, "there is no longer any general consensus on the central purpose of schooling" (p. 17). I think that this quote was relevant at the start of educating and is still relevant now. There are many views of what is the best way to educate and what to educate and they are all a part of the "educational ladder" that is still growing.

Classmates Discussion: 3/15/11

I thought that your perspective of the educational ladder was very interesting. Although, it makes perfect sense, my understanding of the ladder was almost the complete opposite. I think that this resembles exactly what Ravitch, Pulliam and Van Putten were portraying. Education is seen in so many different ways. Where you understood these articles as the ladder from elementary school to college and onto the world, I comprehended the articles differently. I understood the ladder to mean the climb to find the how education works best in this society. Education comes down to what the student is going to take from the lesson and how they interpret the knowledge in front of them.

Discussion Forum 6 and 7: 4/4/11

In the article, "Unseen Forces: The Impact of Social Culture on School Leadership", by Philip Hallinger and Kenneth Leithwood, the importance of culture amongst a society is vital in regards to educational leadership. The authors iterate how different cultures can be in countries, and continue to show the drastic change around the world. One quote I felt captured the articles' message and the significance of culture is, "we must accept that the processes associated with leadership are intimately associated with the cultural norms that predominate within a given social culture". I think this sentence stresses how leadership is directed by what is important to that particular culture. Therefore, the role of educational leadership can vary drastically from culture to culture as well as playing an intricate role.

Classmates Discussion: 4/4/11

I liked what you had to say about leadership. The sentence that keeps playing over in my head is, "great team's and leader's are synonymous". This made me think for awhile,

are they? I pose this more as a discussion question. I think back on great sports team and I can find a important leader amongst the team. Was the team great before they arrived, or has that individual leadership reshaped the team? I also think that if someone is truly a great leader, they will bring and create greatness around them, that is what makes them ultimately a leader; the skill to inspire and motivate to accomplish a common goal.

Discussion Forum 9: 4/29/11

After reading Cuban's (2001) article and watching the ASCD's video, they both reflect that change and development need to continue to occur. Schools need to continue to grow and develop and try to find new ways to help students succeed. The schools that are making student resumes electronically could be exactly what the country is going to. The schools that are not keeping up, are these students going to be forever left behind? Is this a way to separate the top from the bottom even sooner? The ideas for action that Cuban (2001) presents for urban schools are not rocket science. They are simple systems that need to be followed through. The idea that resources are not even getting to the schools that need them and are getting caught up in bureaucracies is disturbing. It seems that could be the easiest, most beneficial and immediate change for urban schools. Schools need to keep up with change and continue to make adjustments to better themselves.

Classmates Discussion: 4/29/11

I agree and love the idea of it takes a village to raise a child. One thing that I would see difficult with this is to find an urban school with active parents. Isn't that one of the biggest problems in urban schools, lack of parental guidance or involvement? It reminds me of my friend how taught in Boston who had a 4th grader that would sleep through every one of her classes. Comes down to it, the student was taking care of his 4 younger siblings because his parents were not around. She was unable to teach this student because the student was just trying to get by. If there were supportive parents, I don't think any school would be in awful shape. It is asking a lot of parents especially when the parents in poorer schools are most likely single parents with little help. I think in a perfect world, all parents would be each student's first teacher.