

School Will be Remembered Like Leeches and Cigarettes

We humans have little knowledge of the past or imagination for the future. Present bias makes us dumb, accepting creatures. We assume what is is what must be.

People think schooling and education are the same thing. This is revealed in the way statistics are presented. "Educational level" is measured by years spent in institutional schooling.

Yet school as we know it is only about 150 years old.

Wait, what? How did humans learn stuff the other several thousand years of civilization? How were 80% of colonial Americans literate with no standardized institutional schooling, and when books were rare and costly and most jobs didn't even require reading? How did people invent stuff, start businesses, write books, create great art, and expand the corpus of human knowledge for thousands of years without certified teachers and grades and degrees?

Really we should ask the opposite. How does anyone retain any of the natural, insatiable human hunger for learning after years in compulsory academic prison cells?

Schooling is a blip on the learning radar in human history. It will die, then we'll look back on it like other blips. Remember when smoking cigarettes was good for your health? Remember when leeches were needed to suck out the bad blood and cure disease? Remember when people all the sudden thought, despite thousands of years of evidence to the contrary, that nobody would learn anything without being stuck in cinder block cells for 50 minute segments and forced to turn the wonders of the universe into horrible tedium?

Weird epochs in human history.