

Spooner #9, Fallacy #18, Hard Work



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"Finding the Challenges" is an original column appearing every other Wednesday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by Verbal Vol. Verbal is a software engineer, college professor, corporate information officer, life long student, farmer, libertarian, literarian, student of computer science and self-ordering phenomena. Archived columns can be found [here](#). FTC-only RSS feed available [here](#).

A review of my columns shows the enduring theme of misdirection. Not my attempts to misdirect you, but institutional attempts to misdirect us all. Below follow three more analyses of misdirection.

Lysander Spooner Quote #9

If there be any such principle as justice, it is, of necessity, a natural principle; and, as such, it is a matter of science, to be learned and applied like any other science. And to talk of either adding to, or taking from, it, by legislation, is just as false, absurd, and ridiculous as it would be to talk of adding to, or taking from, mathematics, chemistry, or any other science, by legislation.

Anything that is artificially derived from or falsely grafted onto the fundamentals is *justification*

not *justice*. This morning, I was listening to Dan Carlin's latest podcast episode of "Common Sense," wherein he is reporting on a cop killer apprehended in Pennsylvania. Dan says this guy is probably going to receive capital punishment, but life imprisonment at best. The mystery is that the authorities have tacked on charges of terrorism, which will have no effect on the eventual sentencing. The complaint here is that law which was passed for show, post 9/11, is now being used in disjunct areas. Much the same effect can be seen when the RICO statutes, originally targeted for the Mafia, are used in small bore price collusion cases.

We have too many legislations (as distinguished from laws tied to fundamentals). If

murder is against the law, why gild the lily by adding a terrorism charge? Murder alone would still be against the law. This is a snake with legs.

Minarchists will often make the argument that some government may be needed to administer justice, but government always ends up administering justification. How long will it be before Senate hawks propose a new math for the Pentagon's budget? Many politicians are currently proposing new physics in the gripe fest over climate change.

Logic Fallacy #18 — What About the Roads?

About a week ago, I made a post on Facebook that asked the rhetorical question whether education would cease if the state ceased the mandatory provision and control of education. My two splendid daughters immediately took issue with my sassy tone, and one or more of my libertarian Facebook friends immediately became agitated about the funding of state education. In my view, all of these responses fell victim to the the logic trap of limiting one's inquiry to that which stands rather than asking should it stand.

The, generally considered, most infamous argument between libertarians and statistes lies in the question, "What about the roads?" In the days before the War of the American 1860s, the question was, "Who will pick the cotton?"

This is a fallacy based on the invalid premise of "but ... but, we've always done it this way!" That adequately explains politics and evil (but I repeat myself), although not anything else.

OK, well, what about those roads? Who will build the roads if we do not suffer the (lesser?) evil of government. There is an easy answer, to this and all such fallacious questions, who will benefit by (*fill in the blank*)?; in this case, we will fill in the blank with "building and maintaining and using roads?" Did not roads exist before the US federal government asserted its control? Some people are surprised to learn that the federal government did not get involved substantially in roads until the 1920s. More is the pity. On a recent trip to Chicago, I was reminded again that spaghetti junction in Louisville, KY is still under repair and/or reconstruction — I cannot recall a time in the past 40 years that this has not been the case. Furthermore, the length of I-65 through Indiana was mostly orange cones/barrels and shifting lanes. Uncharacteristically, however, the streets and expressways of Chicagoland were in tiptop shape — but ask yourself, where does POTUS call his home district, and who, as a recent retiree from Whitehouse Chief-of-Staff, is Hizzoner Mayor of the windy city? Who will benefit? *Cui bono*?

Another question of interest is when in natural history have living beings not built modes of transportation. Mobility is the very thing that distinguishes animals from vegetables and minerals.

Now, let's cast our jaded eye on the presumption that government schooling must be good because it is. Not really. Education is good because it is universally practiced. Animals, in the wild, learn. All human beings, in all conditions, learn. Animals are called *animals* because they move. They could just as well be called something like *educals* because they learn, just as indelible a feature as the power to change location.

How can a rational being presume that education only happens within the straitjacket of the state? What will really happen is indoctrination. No state is capable of not serving itself first. It is an unreasonable expectation to believe otherwise. If a state has the opportunity to indoctrinate, under what circumstances would it refrain from doing so?

Government schools indoctrinate students, first of all, to believe that government schools or government-control of schooling is absolutely necessary. This belief is far from factual, far from intuitive, but part of the indoctrination is to impair the ability to see fabrication apart from information, to impair intuition.

I need to get back for a moment to my terrific daughters and to my fine libertarian Facebook friends. When I asked the simple question of whether education would end if government schools ended, all of the responses I got were personal agenda type responses. My daughters gave their personal examples as public school students, and the personal examples of their stunning daughters. Long story short, these are exceptions that prove the rule, not justifications for government school. My friends grouched about the tax iniquities of the government schooling system — good libertarian arguments, but entirely subsidiary to the question of whether state-control is a prerequisite to education. In reality both comebacks were based on an assumption that my question posited the continuation of government school in any form.

Education is a natural force. The current processes, which may be labeled “education,” do not alter what education is.

Hard Work

A recent headline story brings to mind a long-standing peeve. A multi-billionaire is getting a divorce. His lawyers argued that since he has no control of the (petroleum) market that most of his fortune was through chance and not his “hard” work, nor the “hard” work of his spouse in supporting his efforts. An excellent friend points out that this argument is counter to the normal argument that wealth is directly proportional to “hard” work.

My view is that chance is a far more operational variable relative to fiscal wealth. What, after all, is wealth, what is hard work, what is hard? My friend also contends, correctly in my view, that there are endless variables which may or may not predict wealth.

There are just too many examples of wealth or poverty apart from the presence of physical

industriousness. Good results are often incorrectly linked to “hard” work alone. Have you ever seen a person who looks busy all the time, but on calm reflection no one knows what is being done?

I remember once when there was a SNAFU in the Bush 43 administration (that really pins it down, eh?), POTUS came on TV saying “they” were working “hard” on the situation, even coming in to the office on Sunday. But there was not a single word presented that could be translated into fact relative to a correction or solution. Before anyone objects, Obama is an exact replica of Bush 43, a pretender spouting weasel words.

I regard both the hatred of the rich and the despising of the poor as a tragic flaw in the American character. It is misdirection and it is massively destructive.

All of these issues illustrate the need for the thinking voluntaryist to keep a clear head. Not only are we inundated with information these days, we are drowning in badly garbled misinformation. We make far too many distinctions based on wobbly ideas such as “hard” work (I’m tempted to put quotes around “work” as well). We have completely lost sight of what natural, or scientific, rules might look like, while we are swamped with justifications. And we are deceived by the misperception that what is here must be right. It is every individual’s lot to care for self, and to guard against the junk thought that others push at us, those others hoping that one or more of us will fall asleep at the wheel.

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