

The Universal Social Problem



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"Insight for the Young and Unrestrained" is an original weekly column appearing every Thursday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by Gregory V. Diehl. Gregory is a writer, musician, educator, and coach for young people at EnabledYouth.com. Archived columns can be found here. IYU-only RSS feed available here.

There is a social problem which affects every person born on this planet. It is the mental phenomenon called culture. It shapes us from birth. It determines how we will interpret information and stimulation throughout our lives. The influences we grow up with stick with us for a long time, and they can be difficult to alter, erase, or add to later in life. Most people grow incapable of seeing the world in terms other than the ones under which they were raised.

Part of what makes childhood so magical and amazing to hardened adults is the overwhelming amount of curiosity and enthusiasm for new adventure children typically hold. Most older people have long lost this inherent drive toward new things. People feel threatened by it, and will take great measures to diminish it in their children. This is the danger that lies in parenting, education, and culture itself. Every bit of influence an adult has upon a child is potentially very powerful, and it may stay with them for the rest of their lives, for better or for worse.

Culture exists for a reason, of course. Generations spent living under roughly the same conditions will develop patterns of action based upon their experiences, which become tradition, and are passed on during the childhood of the latest progeny. Culture is the software installed into the minds of budding young processors so that they will be well-equipped with the acquired knowledge of ancestors to handle the challenges of living in one time and place.

The world is changing faster than it ever did before. Because we can now travel to and access information from new environments faster than our ancestors ever could have imagined, the lessons of the past are no longer necessarily relevant. Yet, they persist. Pride, intellectual rigidity, and an insatiable urge to spread our ideas to others mean that the modern world is now a battlefield of warring practices and beliefs. Many of these practices are found to have an underlying objective nature to them, and the universally

true principles which form them make up our scientific understanding of reality. Other ideas persist only because of the exceptional marketing abilities of the people who endorse them.

As intelligent adults tasked with the upbringing of children (whom are blank slates to the cultures and practices of the world) we have to decide what ideas we will introduce into their minds. If we are going to be responsible about it, we have to always remain open to the possibility that the way we do things or interpret events is not the best way to show our kids. We do these things because we love them and want them to benefit from our knowledge, but by pushing our adopted culture too strongly upon them we could be closing them off to other options. We could be inadvertently hurting them.

The victims of culture are the people who are anomalous in their surroundings. Some children see the world differently than their peers and their parents. Maybe they think faster, or their curiosity guides them in a different direction than other people. These are the children who have the hardest time fitting in at school or performing well under conventional education. They quickly reach the practical limits of what their culture has to offer them. Without the necessary further stimulation, they may grow restless and irritable. They may accrue a large amount of emotional damage from being forced to live at the pace of a world so much different than they are. These are the ones we need to enable to live at their highest potential in spite of a world which tries to keep them controlled and submissive to culture.

Sooner or later, clashing ideals will escalate and a victor will remain. The future belongs only to those who are most capable of abandoning their most cherished beliefs and adapt to changing times. It belongs to the children who cannot force fit themselves into the surroundings they were thrust into by accident. It belongs to the rebels and innovators, the people who challenge simply for the sake of challenge and the desire to understand why people act the way they do. They may feel alone in the world. Technology will change that when by accident or intention they make contact with others like themselves. Alone, they are all weak, but together, they are stronger than the unchangeable people around them.

The parents and caretakers of these extremely special young people can provide a safe space for them to grow in their own time and own way apart from the warring cultures around them. They can defend them from the people who would unconsciously seek to override their impressionable minds with their own thoughts and agendas. They can, in time, even create new places on the earth where these unadulterated minds can live more or less freely from interference from those would seek to change them. These innovative communities and institutions are the solution the universal social problem of cultural domination, and it is our duty to our children to create them.