

New World Order Education: Useful Engines in the “One World Schoolhouse”

By [James F. Tracy](#)

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*He's a really useful engine, you know
All the other engines they'll tell you so
He huffs and puffs and whistles
Rushing to and fro
He's the really useful engine we adore[1]*

A Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-funded online education service seeks to introduce and control a one-size-fits-all worldwide school curriculum. The strategy aptly fits alongside historically persistent schemes to further restructure education en route to an internationally-based technocratic order.

A seemingly benign and playful lyric from the overwhelmingly popular toddler's animation *Thomas the Tank Engine* captures the *modus operandi* and consequence of American public education over the past century. Like the child subjected to years of compulsory schooling, Thomas is an entity devoid of meaningful social agency and reduced to demonstrating his overall worth by being “useful” in Sir Topham Hatt's enterprise.

As an institutional process definitively influenced over the past century by the world's most wealthy and influential figures, public schools equip individuals with a performativity code that functions along the lines of how Thomas behaves for his overseer, with the implicit knowledge that life has largely been planned; his intellectual and creative faculties reduced to an instrumental motivation to merely stay “on track.”

Contrary to the jingoistic and contradictory claim that modern education “equips young people for democratic citizenship,” the actual development and employment of educational techniques suggests how the overall environment and method utilized in today's public education system has for years been increasingly reshaped to produce “useful engines” largely incapable of independent thought and personal enfranchisement.

The system's strong sociopolitical underpinnings lie in the fact that most public school teachers are also products of such training and thus oblivious to schooling's overall dehumanizing rituals and scope. This, is in addition to the tremendous monetary support of teachers' unions by philanthropies such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation,[2] all but ensures that significant resistance against the continued obsession with streamlined and bureaucratized measures, proposed privatization of the schools and curricula, and genuinely innovative curricular reforms carefully tiptoe around Gates' technophilic obsessions.

The Khan Academy

Against this backdrop the arrival of the Gates-funded Khan Academy—a 501(c)3 charity

overseeing an exclusively computer-based array of Youtube-delivered tutorials—is entirely fitting. Already the Khan Academy claims that children around the world “have done nearly half a billion exercises” through its software.[3] Yet Gates’ fascination with the new “school” almost certainly lies in the potential for where surveillance and control of the public education enterprise may be easily exercised with a few key strokes.

“This is great,” Gates exclaimed after meeting Khan Academy founder Salman Khan in 2009, who he refers to as his “favorite teacher.”[4] Indeed, Khan, a former hedge fund manager who developed a soft-spot for tutoring children online, is poised to do for public education what Monsanto is doing for global agriculture—make it over along the lines of a one-size-fits-all model. Such a system is capable of rapidly accelerating the standardization and execution of curricula by a handful of individuals fawningly beholden to Gates while enforcing a strict set of controls on teacher and student alike.

“I passionately believe that the Khan Academy is a tool that can empower at least an approximate model of what the future of education should look like,” Khan writes in his new book *The One World Schoolhouse*. The ex-financier asserts that his virtual school makes possible “a way of combining the art of teaching with the science of presenting information and analyzing data, of delivering the clearest, most comprehensive, and most relevant curriculum at the lowest possible cost.”[5]

The obsession with exerting control over curricular content and delivery is not new. Long before the internet and computer software made such an arrangement possible educational reformers successfully applied science to education in the form of German “experimental psychology,” with the same goal: weakening the curriculum and streamlining the educational process for the creation of “useful engines.” The Gates/Khan collaboration, however, takes the project to an entirely new level: implementation of a worldwide systematized mode of information production, delivery, and reiteration akin to the political and technocratic vision of their intellectual forebears from the early twentieth century.

Sabotaging Public Education: The First Chapter

Since the early 1900s the American classroom has steadily been turned in to laboratory for the positioning and development of psychological methods; the educational institution a means for the expert mapping of childhood and the enforcement of “proper” behavior protocols (good citizenship). These are the preconditions toward molding a particular socio-biological component for a coming global design overseen by a multifaceted and pervasive scientific elite responsible for carefully measured and calculative control of the masses.

“Before we can talk politics, finance, business, or morals, we must see that we have got the right mental habits and the right foundation of realized facts,” British essayist and social engineer H.G. Wells wrote in the late 1920s.

The new world demands new schools, therefore, to give everyone a sound and thorough mental training and equip everyone with clear ideas about history, about life, and about political and economic relationships instead of the rubbishy head-content at present prevalent. The old-world teachers and schools have to be reformed or replaced.[6]

Upon such a transformation in education, Wells envisioned the global population overseen by a well-trained and specialized scientific elite interwoven with virtually every human

activity. “This little army, this scientific world of today,” Wells forecast, “numbering ... not a couple of hundred thousand men, will certainly be represented in the new world order by a force of millions, better equipped, amply coordinated, free to question, able to demand opportunity.”[7]

Wells’ plan for education’s fundamental role in an international, scientifically-infused socialism conforms to views of American elites decades earlier joined by the old school tie and occultic ritual. In light of the thoroughgoing misadventure public education has become for young minds subjected to its well-crafted regimentation—one in which we are invited to conclude has been a series of errors and oversights—the late economic historian Anthony Sutton provides a compelling (if unconventional) thesis.

According to Sutton’s classic study the entire twentieth century educational enterprise was undermined by a small coterie of Yale University alums bound together in purpose through their membership in Yale’s exclusive Order of Death, popularly known as “Skull and Bones.” The ambition of these individuals is broad social domination and education is among several activities of particular significance for any thoroughgoing system of control since it determines “how the population of the future will behave,” Sutton argues.

Of course, to suggest that a small group of wealthy white male necromancers have a hand in influencing events from behind the scenes runs against the readily held notion that such elites play by the rules, are popularly elected and thereby proceed to act in the people’s “best interest.” Yet Sutton, who knew little about the affiliation until he was provided with its secret membership lists by author and education reform advocate Charlotte Thompson Iserbyt, whose father was an initiate, provides compelling evidence to the contrary. “The activities of The Order are directed towards changing our society,” Sutton writes, “changing the world, to bring about a New World Order. This will be a planned order with heavily restricted individual freedom, without Constitutional protection, without national boundaries or cultural distinction.”[8]

A significant portion of The Order’s membership remains actively devoted to bringing this grand project to fruition. While it would be foolish to regard such a group as the sole determinant of national and world events, its membership is undeniably constituted by individuals who have gone on to occupy the most powerful positions in academe, finance, government, the military, and the corporate sector.

In 1873 Skull and Bones alum and first president of the University of California Daniel Coit Gilman, who Sutton describes as “the key activist in the revolution in education by The Order,” was appointed president of the newly-established Johns Hopkins University. In the 1850s while studying in Germany Gilman and his Yale classmate and fellow Bonesman Andrew Dickson White, who would later become US ambassador to Germany and first president of both Cornell University and the American Historical Association, became familiar with the new “experimental psychology” being taught at the University of Leipzig by Prussian Wilhelm Wundt.

Gilman subsequently expedited the introduction of “experimental psychology” into American universities and grade schools in 1881 by bringing Wundt’s first assistant, G. Stanley Hall, onto faculty at Hopkins as Professor of Psychology and Pedagogy. Among Hopkins’ first dozen professors, Hall was given a psychological laboratory, a one thousand dollar annual stipend for equipment, and was encouraged by Gilman to establish the *American Journal of Psychology*.

Fresh out of graduate study, the young academic expressed astonishment at being chosen for the prestigious post above older and more experienced faculty in the field. “The psychology I taught was almost entirely experimental,” Hall recalls, involving “for the most part the material that Wundt had set forth in the later and larger edition of *Physiological Psychology*.”

As Wundt and Hall’s students began to take root across the United States the “new psychology’s” methods would be incorporated into university research and teaching curricula, and eventually elementary classrooms. “Educational laboratories” were established at the University of Chicago and Columbia University, spawning

100s of PhDs to teach the new educational conditioning system. One of the first of these Johns Hopkins doctorates was [Hall’s mentee] John Dewey. The result we well know. The educational morass of the ‘80s where most kids—not all—can’t spell, read or write, yet can be programmed into mass behavior channels.[9]

Cementing the illusion of intellectual freedom and legitimate academic debate, thereby ensuring the unquestioning acceptance the new psychology being foisted on American children, Gilman presided over the founding of the Russell Sage Foundation and the Carnegie Institution, both of which significantly aided in establishing the authority of psychology and other then-newly-founded disciplines—economics, history, political science, and sociology—by aiding in the formation of their respective professional organizations and thereby guiding the collective trajectory of their members’ intellectual pursuits.

In facilitating the careers of academics who proselytized the Wundtian creed, influential figures such as Gilman perched atop powerful academic and philanthropic entities exerted decisive, long-lasting, yet largely hidden influence over the American educational enterprise. Aside from having Dewey as intellectual progeny, Hall advanced the idea of what today is called “child development,” introducing the word “adolescence” into the American lexicon in 1904.[10] Armed with the central Wundtian tenet that the student was devoid of a soul—an inner being and understanding of abundant purpose—Hall, Dewey and several other influential experimental psychology practitioners, including Edward Lee Thorndike, James McKeen Cattell, H. H. Goddard, and James Earl Russell “set out to change the conception of what constitutes education,” John Taylor Gatto explains.

Ground zero for such educational reforms was the Rockefeller-funded Columbia Teachers College, managed by Russell, also the chair of Columbia University’s psychology department. Harold Rugg, a Teachers College professor and an influential advocate for psychologizing the classroom, estimated the transnational thrust of their project. Echoing H. G. Wells, Rugg proclaimed, “Through schools of the world we shall disseminate a new conception of government—one that will embrace all the collective activities of men; one that will postulate the need for scientific control and operation of economic activities.”[11]

In addition to the mass conditioning process of public education vitally influenced by The Order, the formation and expansion of an international apparatus under United Nations auspices consisting of the World Health Organization and the World Federation for Mental Health to oversee and potentially enforce acceptable worldviews, not to mention the proposed practice of mandatory mental health “screenings” of children and veterans and the forced medication of schoolchildren on the weakly reasoned premise that psychotropic

drugs will increase academic performance, confirms in many ways an almost complete fulfillment of the vision Wells and Rugg articulated eighty years ago.[12]

Integrated Being in the New World Order

A central method springing from the Teachers College repertoire and manifest in the Khan Academy's technophilic approach to education involves the transformation of the human subject from an autonomous yet cooperative social being to an individual forever conscious of external constraints and reliant on institutional support, observation, and intervention. Such a change involves the reshaping of the psyche through reworked curricular content and orientation.

When the Teachers College psychologists realigned course content to accommodate such newly devised subjects as "social studies," thus weakening the formerly distinct symmetries between areas of study, they provided the framework for recasting the individual along lines much more easily managed through technocratic means.

The educational method for which Dewey and other Wundtians are especially known is instrumental progressivism. Such an approach is mainly concerned with transforming the scholastic process into one that serves the economic, political, or cultural "needs" of the given society. Yet it is also about cultivating a disciplined social subject where external social controls are replaced by those of deliberate cooperation. According to sociologists Kevin Robins and Frank Webster, instrumentalism recognized the distinct "interrelationship between knowledge structures on the one hand, and power structures and principles of control on the other." [13]

Education theorist Basil Bernstein explains how the ordering of educational knowledge falls into one of two sorting codes—collection or integrated. The collection code is characterized by the presentation of knowledge with strict subject hierarchies while an integrated code arises from an attempt to reduce the taxonomic concentration. The collection code incorporated a teaching approach evident in the traditional educational practices that experimental psychologists sought to jettison in favor of a more loosely coordinated disciplinary arrangement.

This approach decisively altered the status of knowledge and in the process introduced "a disturbance of existing authority structures." In much the same way that Dewey's instrumental progressivism sought to dissolve Cartesian subject-object dualism, immerse the student in experience, and thereby dissipate her will, the integrated code tends to emphasize the dispositional attributes of the student, to "encourage more of the pupil/student to be made public; more of his thoughts, feelings and values." The result, Bernstein observes, entails that "more of the pupil is available for control ... socialization could be more intensive and perhaps more penetrating." [14]

Individuals subject to such social and educational conditioning are thus more readily integrated into a "disciplinary society" overseen by a therapeutic state where an increasingly broad array of formerly private practices—from health, nutrition, child rearing and sexuality—are subject to observation, documentation, and control. In this way the human being has been transformed along the lines laid out by the early twentieth century social-psychological technicians in preparation for a new social order pointed to in their own writings, one where the careful administration of life processes will be accepted without force by those adequately indoctrinated under the integrated code of learning still widely

prevalent in modern public education.[15] This dynamic is especially heightened through the technologized means that will increasingly characterize education under such endeavors as the Khan Academy.

One whose life is to a significant degree devoted to communicating with and mentoring young adults will, if they have been made familiar with the unorthodox history of American education, recognize an uncertainty and sadness in many of their students, arguably borne out of a structure intended to ensure their combined intellectual disenfranchisement and blind allegiance to a system of which they know little. These individuals by some means know how something is seriously wrong yet they cannot quite recognize the origins of their own limited awareness and curiosity. Instructed to be useful engines all, bound to the limited views and opinions provided through mass media echoed in various ways by their peers, depoliticized and lacking historical context, they unceremoniously chug along through their stations of life.

Over a century ago social engineers enacted an agenda for public education that alongside the lifelong conditioning encompassed in the mass media has largely succeeded in transforming the intellectual essence and emasculating the political will that defined an individual's humanity. Aside from the hi-tech tools and speed with which such processes may now be applied, little has changed early in the twenty-first century. Indeed, Bill Gates' intent to internationalize, surveill and control the educational process and an entire strata of the population through the Khan Academy suggests the opening of an important new chapter toward individuals' further integration into the unfolding global technocratic order.

Notes

1. Gullane Limited, *Thomas and Friends, It's Great to Be an Engine*, Publications International Ltd, 2010.

2. Between 2007 and 2010 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation gave the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association over \$6 million. Millions more have been apportioned to a variety of education-oriented interests. "Annotated Excerpts of the Gates Foundation 990 Form 2009," New York Times, n.d., http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/05/22/education/20110522_GATES_DOCUMENT.html?ref=gatesbillandmelindafoundation

3. Salman Khan, *The One World Schoolhouse: Education Reimagined*, New York and Boston: Twelve, 2012.

4. Salman Khan, "When Salman Khan Met Bill Gates," CNN Money/Forbes, October 9, 2012, <http://money.cnn.com/2012/10/09/news/companies/sal-khan-bill-gates.fortune/index.html>

5. Khan, *The One World Schoolhouse*.

6. H. G. Wells, *The Open Conspiracy: What Are We to Do With Our Lives?* 1928/1930, http://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/Wells_The_Open_Conspiracy.pdf

7. H. G. Wells, *The New World Order*, 1940, <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks04/0400671h.html>

8. Anthony Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment: An Introduction to Skull and Bones*, 1983/2002, Trine Day, <http://ebookbrowse.com/antony-sutton-americas-secret-establishment-an-introduction-to-skull-and-bones-pdf-d266099093>.

9. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment*.

10. G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, D. New York: Appleton and Company 1904. <http://archive.org/details/adolescenceitsps002hall>

11. John Taylor Gatto, *The Underground History of Education: An Intimate Investigation Into the Problem of Modern Schooling*, New York: Oxford Village Press, 281-182. <http://www.johntaylorgatto.com/chapters/index.htm>

12. Dave Hodges, "Government Sponsored Mind Control in America: The Teen Screen Scam," [thecommonsenseshow.com](http://www.thecommonsenseshow.com), October 6, 2012, <http://www.thecommonsenseshow.com/2012/10/06/government-sponsored-mind-control-in-america-the-teen-screen-scam/>. See also Jon Rappoport, "Psychiatrists Drugging Children for Social Justice," October 11, 2012, <http://jonrappoport.wordpress.com/2012/10/11/psychiatrists-drugging-children-for-social-justice/>

13. Kevin Robins and Frank Webster, *Times of the Technoculture: From the Information Society to the Virtual Life*, New York: Routledge, 1999, 177.

14. Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control, vol. 3: Towards a Theory of Educational Transmission*, London: Routledge, 1975, 109.

15. Robins and Webster, *Times of the Technoculture*, 177-179.

An Associate Professor of Media Studies at Florida Atlantic University, **James Tracy's** work on media history, politics and culture has appeared in a wide variety of academic journals, edited volumes, and alternative news and opinion outlets. Tracy is editor of *Union for Democratic Communication's* journal [Democratic Communiqué](#) and a contributor to *Project Censored's* forthcoming publication [Censored 2013: The Top Censored Stories and Media Analysis of 2011-2012](#). Additional writings and information are accessible at memoryholeblog.com.

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About the author:

James F. Tracy was a tenured Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Florida Atlantic University from 2002 to 2016. He was fired by FAU ostensibly for violating the university's policies imposed on the free speech rights of faculty. Tracy has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the university, with trial set to begin November 27, 2017. Tracy received his PhD from University of Iowa. His work on media history, politics and culture has appeared in a wide variety of academic journals, edited volumes, and alternative news and opinion outlets. Additional information is available at [MemoryHoleBlog.com](#), [TracyLegalDefense.org](#), and [jamesftracy.wordpress.com](#).

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