

#100,000
per year
(believe it)

And In This Corner...



Education is the securest form of wealth.

Ivan Illich

intentionally or not) as a powerful system of structural inequality. And this is true in capitalist, socialist, or communist countries.

Education is the securest form of wealth not simply because certification slots people into certain socio-economic positions but mostly because the system is self-justifying, educating the drop-out to blame himself for his "failure" and society to respect the monopoly that the professions at the top of the pyramid have on their knowledge and entrance restrictions. Generally we don't question the right of a doctor to regularly receive ten times as much as a grade ten drop-out. Nor do we have easy access to the lawyer's knowledge of legal procedures and regulations affecting our lives, or to information on restrictions such as UNB law school having 1100 applications for 38 positions last year. Schooling obscures instead of enlightening; this is particularly true for certification and its results. And "improvements" in the schools such as increased spending, innovations, facilities, and years of schooling won't change this situation.

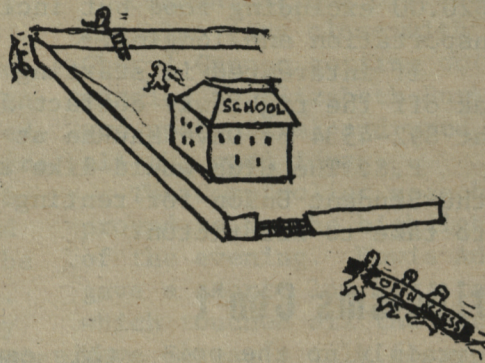
(Editor's note: Art Reddin has agreed to do a series of articles on schooling and its impact on society. As many people know, Art is a person with many exciting ideas on education, as well as having a lot of experience putting his ideas into practice. He has worked in alternative schools and alternatives to schooling in Ch'town and Anglo Tignish and is also a student rep on our illustrious Board of Governors.)

"Whereas it appears that however certain forms of government are better calculated than others to protect individuals... and are better guarded against degeneracy, yet experience hath shown that even under better forms, those entrusted with power have in time perverted it into tyranny; and it is believed that the most effectual means of preventing this would be to illuminate as far as practicable the minds of the people at large and more especially to give them knowledge of the experience of other ages and countries that they may be enabled to know ambition under all its shapes and defeat its purpose."

Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge

When Thomas Jefferson first proposed the right to three years of free public education in 1804 he had hoped that this beneficial service would strengthen democracy and equality in his country. Public schooling still parades under the banner of equal opportunity and liberty but if Jefferson could see the state of the present-day system he would be "spinning in his grave".

Since it became compulsory less than a century ago, public schooling has served (whether



Unfortunately, it doesn't end there. Most of our systems or tools in both goods and service production in industrial society have gone beyond their natural limits of benefit and in the process have caused greater polarization of rich and poor. For example, it is common place in most countries of the world for governments to fly professionals off to this or that convention or conference. This special treatment is often rationalized by bureaucrats as some sort of upgrading for progress. It is not only the expenditure of public money that is unjust but it is also the transportation system itself.

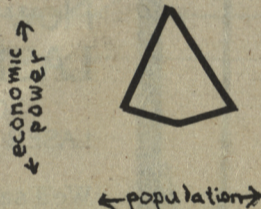
Airports, access roads, computers, employees, jets, etc are wholly or partly financed through public funds, yet the use of air travel is restricted to those who can pay the high cost for such "mobility" either out of their incomes or contract benefits. (Incidentally, similar "packaging" necessarily puts many consumer services and goods out of reach of the poor, e.g. the fisherman gets 8¢ a lb. for fish yet his wife can't afford the specially wrapped, decorated, deboned, frozen, shipped, handled, and advertized \$1 a lb. supermarket product.) Anyway, open ended systems which benefit the certified well-educated at the expense of the

un-schooled add to stratification and modernize poverty - and the pyramid takes off like a rocket:

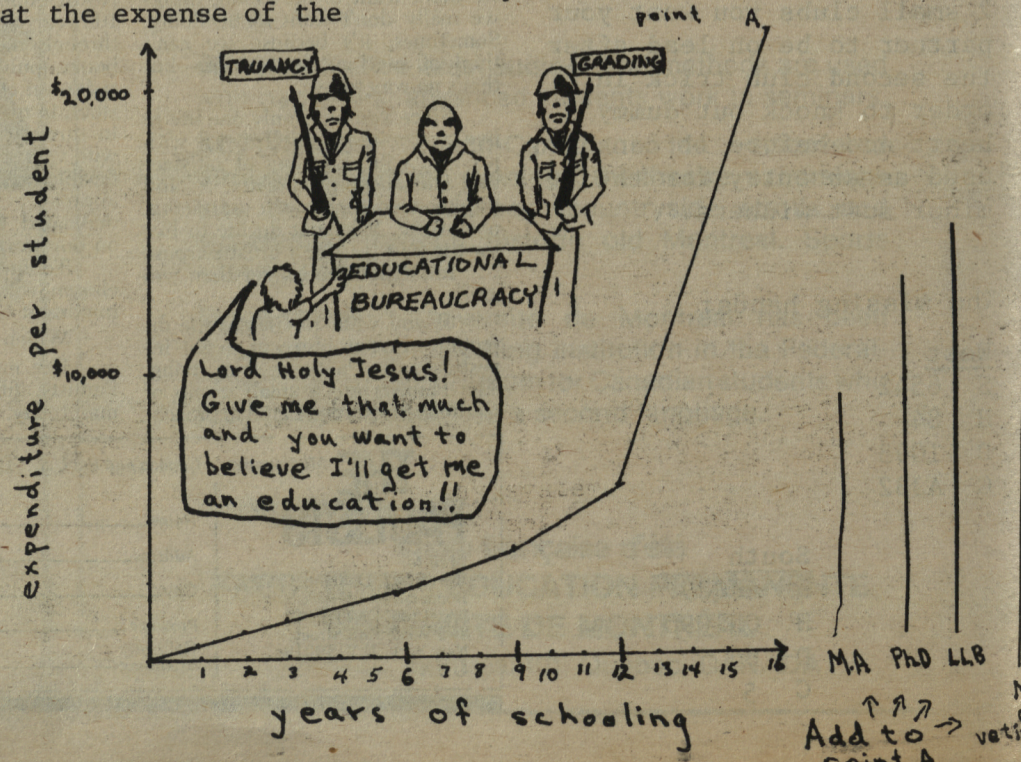


It's almost funny nowadays when school administrators talk about the equality of the public school system. Often we reflect some of the same "knowledge-capitalist" mentality in seeking out greater student aid or better facilities or even our degree (perhaps mostly our degree)

Economic inequality isn't the only problem in a compulsory system of "treatment to make one better", although it is the most clear-cut. The view is sometime put forward: "What difference does it make if someone's rich or not? Having material wealth isn't the way to find happiness and it doesn't interest me at all." I agree and would rather talk of liberation than of "equal ability to purchase consumable goods and services". Yet, although man isn't intrinsically an economic being, economic inequalities are at least symptomatic of certain unjust human conditions. Please contact me if you can help in this question or if you have "special insight" about fundamental contradictions in the school system. Also there are plans for running a seminar on education, and a skill exchange is being set up at the bulletin board in Main, - so, if you're interested, get active!



The inequality, however, doesn't stop at simply being a pyramid. In the upper echelons of the certified society the professionals get additional contract benefits (free from income tax) such as travel communication, vacation, & convention expenditures, which often are as great as their salaries - as in Ronnie J!'s case. There are many indications that the definition of progress as being ever increasing service and goods is a direct result of a schooled mentality or logic. If you've received a lot, than you're allowed to receive a lot more (see chart) → With these extra professional benefits, the pyramid stretches out:



M.D. or veterinarian
Add to Point A