

C.S. Lewis Explains How Governments Create 'Tame Human Animals'

Have you ever considered what type of school you would send your child to if you didn't have to worry about cost?

That question is one which EdChoice annually asks the American public. This year, [they found](#) that 83 percent of parents have a child attending public schools, but only 28 percent would keep that child in public school if money was no issue.

I was reminded of this interesting disparity when I came across an essay by C.S. Lewis entitled, [Is Progress Possible?](#) In the course of the essay, Lewis explains how modern government has become one in which the experts are in charge and determined to conform us to their mold:

*"The modern State exists not to protect our rights but to do us good or make us good – anyway, to do something to us or to make us something. Hence the new name 'leaders' for those who were once 'rulers'. We are less their subjects than their wards, pupils, or domestic animals. There is nothing left of which we can say to them, 'Mind your own business.' Our whole lives **are** their business."*

Lewis goes on to say that there are two problems we encounter when our government gets to this stage. The first is that we no longer know how to act on our own. The second is that we can't think for ourselves because we have been indoctrinated by government education:

"Here, I think, lies our real dilemma. Probably we cannot, certainly we shall not, retrace our steps. We are tamed animals (some with kind, some with cruel, masters) and should probably starve if we got out of our cage. That is one horn of

the dilemma. But in an increasingly planned society, how much of what I value can survive? That is the other horn.

I believe a man is happier, and happy in a richer way, if he has 'the freeborn mind'. But I doubt whether he can have this without economic independence, which the new society is abolishing. For economic independence allows an education not controlled by Government; and in adult life it is the man who needs, and asks, nothing of Government who can criticize its acts and snap his fingers at its ideology."

Such an observation should cause us to stop and think. The government has kindly offered its education to the masses "free of charge" for years. But has that "free" education come at the expense of free thought? If we want our children to be free and independent thinkers who are able to recognize and repudiate the flaws in government, do we, as Lewis implies, need to remove them from government schools?

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