

The 4 Gods of the Public Education System

In the eyes of most people, America's public education system is the secular alternative to religious, faith-based schools.

[But as I and others have argued](#), this dichotomy is false. The public education system also promotes a kind of religion, which has its own creed, rituals, and gods.

In his book [The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School](#), former NYU professor Neil Postman names the four "gods" that he believes America's children are being taught to worship within the walls of today's public schools. They are:

1) The god of Economic Utility

Postman describes this god as follows:

"As its name suggests, it is a passionless god, cold and severe. But it makes a promise, and not a trivial one. Addressing the young, it offers a covenant of sorts with them: If you will pay attention in school, and do your homework, and score well on tests, and behave yourself, you will be rewarded with a well-paying job when you are done. Its driving idea is that the purpose of schooling is to prepare children for competent entry into the economic life of a community. It follows from this that any school activity not designed to further this end is seen as a frill or an ornament—which is to say, a waste of valuable time."

To see evidence for the existence of this god, one need go no further than what the U.S. Department of Education [defines](#) as the goal of America's education system: to make students "college- and career-ready."

2) The god of Consumership

According to Postman, the push to make students “career-ready” is closely tied to a materialistic worldview. It is implied that today’s students should want successful jobs so they can live a comfortable existence in modern society: