Assignment #2

Conservative vs. Progressive View of Education

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| Idea | E. D. Hirsch, Jr.  (conservative view) | John Dewey  (progressive view) |
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| Core knowledge | A fixed set of content taught across schools per grades is a way to ensure fairness within a society. This core content does not exclude the inclusion of additional materials as it may be made up of approximately fifty percent of the material covered. (Hirsch, 1992) | Educators are considered leaders in the field of education and should be given the opportunity to teach utilizing topics and tools that spark the minds of children.  (Tampio, 2016) |
| Intellectual capital | Intellectual or human capital is the set of skills and knowledge a person has at any one particular time. These can increase and decrease over time and are less important than developing tools for future learning. (Coppola, 2011) | Dewey advocated for teaching and learning that allowed one to be self-aware and independent, or adaptable to environments and situations that are not predictable. Students were taught in a manner that didn’t view them as a commodity. (Roth, 2012) |
| Learning builds on learning | Learning builds on learning is the idea that the process of learning takes effort. Tasks such as repetitive practice and drills are a necessary part of the process. (Coppola, 2011) | For John Dewey, experience is key to educational philosophy and believes there is a combination of active (trying) and passive (undergoing) component to learning. A learner can go back and forth between the two. (Berding, 2012) |
| Opportunity | Providing everyone with the best opportunity can be achieved through a process of a common curriculum. This allows those that are disadvantaged to have an equal chance as those that are more privileged. (Coppola, 2011) | It could be viewed that that by allowing society, large or, more particularly small, allows for a greater level of self-determination or less oppression by a more powerful interested party. So, Dewey’s view may be more democratic in nature and allow for more opportunity for society as a whole. (Davis, 2016) |
| Achievement Gap | There are different measurable gaps, such as academic performance, language, etc., across different segments of the population. These can be addressed or the effects mitigated through the implementation of an early childhood curriculum that is consistent across society. This process allows for the continuous ‘normalization’ of student knowledge in a democratic manner. (Hirsch, 2007) | Dewey’s view of education is that of a continuing and social process and is dependent up on the environment in which they learn. If this is the case, then those in systems with fewer or poorer resources may be less likely to have the same level of achievement, thus perpetuating the achievement gap. (Davis, 2016) |
| Role of society | Society has a role in offering a standard of education to the population and the responsibility is upon parents and teachers to make sure this takes place. (Coppola, 2011) | Society is made up of individuals and the both should work together to strike a balance to meet the current needs of both. Education should look to meet the needs of the current individual and society not potential future needs. (Berding, 2012) |
| Theory of Consensus | Having a consensus within a society on how to provide education to its children is difficult and often divided among party lines and confounded by technical terms not commonly understood by non-educators. | Dewey’s philosophy on education was more hands on and focused on the student as a learner. A student should be able to be presented with a problem and self-direct learning. This would allow for a very individualized approach in contrast to one that is more standardized and society approved. (Stern, 2014) |
| Role of the teacher | Hirsch is in favor of whole class instruction so as to not favor one student over another coupled with a core content specific for a certain grade level. Teachers should reject the idea of natural or innate ability to focus on this core content. (Coppola, 2011) | John Dewey’s view of teacher roles changed over time. Early in his career, he felt that the role of teacher was more spiritual and lofty including training and formation of a socially just citizen. Later in his career, he had a more practical view but still had teachers in a key social position in society. (Nebeker, 2013) |

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