



The Benefits of Alternative Education Curriculum in Preparing Individuals for Self-Development

Alexander Halpren, Matthias Vogel

University of Oregon, Department of Global Engagement



Introduction

- What Americans think of education.
- How Holden Caulfield can show us our current situation and how we can “get out” of it.
 - Two examples of Experiential Education.

Research Question

What is a viable alternative to the status quo which gives way to an environment of self-improvement, growth, and engagement?

Methods

- Read “Catcher in the Rye” and analyzed how Holden Caulfield behaved.
- Looked at the Montessori, Gordonstoun, and Outward Bound curricula.
- Looked at what Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle thought of education.
- Analyzed various surveys detailing who thought the education system needed some sort of change.

Results

- In two separate sources from Pew Research, about 2/3's of the US population in 2013 and 2018 respectively believed that higher education needed major changes, along with most Americans saying higher education is going in the wrong direction.
- The character of Holden Caulfield within “Catcher in the Rye” exhibits various forms of alienation that can be extrapolated to students within education in the 21st century, especially during COVID-19.
- Ancient Greek philosophers generally thought that students should reach and rise to their highest potential (“The Good”) even if they had differences on what that potential might be.
- Experiential education, with Montessori and Outward Bound as examples, can show us what possible alternatives there are that can better the student in terms of physical and mental improvement, along with improvement in terms of identity.

Conclusions

- Most people thinks the educational system needs work.
- Students can be alienated from their work, closure, and social relationships.
- Montessori and Outward Bound are two examples we can look toward when trying to refine education so that students can develop into their best selves.
- To be continued, can go in many new directions.

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