

The Passy Press

Letter to the Editor

From: pam.riahi@undisclosed.com

To: Nick Gardiner enpg@thepassypress.com

Date: September 28, 6.45pm EST

Subject: Comments on John MacMurray's Essay on US Education

Dear Sir,

Thanks for writing this article about the national education goal. Please see below few thoughts, reinforcing some of your points. My thoughts were inspired by Plato's book "The Laws" (427-347 BC) that I would like to share with you. The writings in cursive are paraphrases of Plato's book¹.

Following are 3 main things I suggest we should improve in the Education System: its content, its goals, its method.

It's Content:

The study of philosophy is important in order to develop a critical mind, in order to question things, to create new concepts and ideas. For this reason philosophy should be mandatory in US classes. The study of classics from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle who laid the foundation of the modern world, whose ideas were taken over from the Romans, whose works were translated into Latin, should be mandatory.

No one better than the Greeks in their books discussed civic duties, the virtuous man and what he/she is supposed to do, the pursuit of knowledge, courage, temperance and fairness than in Plato's work and would be an inspiration and guide to youth (see page 103).

In his book Plato describes how greed, ambition, and pride lead a society to destruction. It describes the importance of education in insuring the future of countries and governments (page 439).

Gymnastic and music are very important for educating the youth. Gymnastic is important for the body, music for the soul (page 581)

Plato describes the Egyptian society and the education of their youth. He takes as model Egyptian children who study arithmetic, geometry and astronomy (page 653)

Goal:

Education versus Formation (educazione verso formazione)

Education of the child must aim the love for the beauty, for virtues, instill the desire to become a model citizen, able to govern and obey based on justice. While formation based on achieving richness, power must be considered vulgar and servile (page 141).

If a society instead is lead by an individual or oligarchy whose goal is to fulfill his pleasures, passions and abundance, be full, this kind of society will never be satisfied and is oppressed by a never ending and unsatisfying sickness; this small group of people will govern the country stumping on its laws (page 355).

The ministry of education and the electorate must understand that teaching is the most important job of the country. Man is a domestic creature; if he obtained the right education, he becomes savvy and mild, while if he did not receive the right education he is the most wild of the creatures that earth creates. For this reason the legislator needs to understand that the education of the youth is not a secondary issue or of minor importance, but in first place the most important one. He must start to choose the best citizen as a guide, leader of the youth (page 499).

Method:

Unified, Same Standards Everywhere

I agree with John MacMurray about the need and support for the Common Core Standards. The standards need to be applied to the content as well as to the books. Right now every school has a different text, every director is at the mercy of editorial companies trying to sell this or that book. Kids who change school and district or city are disorientated.

Pam Riahi

Pam Riahi is an Italian citizen living in New York. She did her Bachelor and Master Degrees in Economic Sociology at the University of Rome, Italy: "La Sapienza" and at the University of Bielefeld in Germany. She did her doctoral studies at the University of Constance in Germany with all but dissertation. She is the founder of Prisma Cargo Solutions, LLC, the international moving and relocation company, is a student of philosophy, speaks five languages, and is a former member of the Italian National Women's Basketball Team.

1. Plato "Le Leggi" BUR Bibliotheca Universale Rizzoli, first edition February 2005. Original Title of Book: Nomoi