

Does Culture Matter? Understanding Educational Outcomes in America 'An Experience Driven Information Society' by revisiting Edward T. Hall

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ABSTRACT

The problem addressed in this paper is whether or not there is a serious educational crisis in America- are American students falling behind academically or just a reflection of 21st century American information society as a low context, monochronic culture? To illustrate this problem, I have chosen to look at culture and its role in an information society – basing on the premise that information society 'equals' social reality – information exchange experienced by a group in a place over time. By doing so, it is determined that the problem will be located in the 'experience' of exchange of information. The work of Edward T. Hall will be used as support toward the problem.

Introduction

Does culture matter? What kind of culture turns out educated people? Those are difficult questions to answer. In many academic circles and mainstream media, there have appeared concerns over America's youth and their educational outcomes. Those concerns stem from the fact that *we have now reached the point in the United States where only 1 out of 2 American high school students in major cities even graduates* according to recent statistics put out by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES 2013).

A 2007 study by the National Endowment for the Arts tells us that *Americans read far less than previous generations*. This 2007 study also shows striking statistical links between reading, advanced reading skills, and other individual and social benefits, according to Sunil Iyengar, NEA Director of Research and Analysis. *"To Read or Not to Read" compels us to consider more carefully how we spend our time, since those choices affect us individually and collectively*, Sunil Iyengar (NEA 2007). One could ask is that because here in the United States there is no one kind of culture that all Americans participate in or that culture does not matter.

Jeremy Rifkin, internationally renowned social critic, a fellow at the Wharton School's Executive Education Program, wrote in "The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream", that *American kids today expect an 'A' just for showing up* (2004:31). Where did such expectations come from and do they reflect a nation without a specific and or stricter practiced culture where everyone knows what to expect from each other? Perhaps, it reflects a kind of American culture where showing up is the experience and as long as you do that, you should expect something for doing that.

Even if we were to take that and use it as some kind of excuse or explanation we still find ourselves wondering why American educational outcomes are behind in comparison to other nations and or cultures in the world today. According to a very recent study, it turns out that when it comes to education, culture does matter. Just this month, the Learning Curve published a report through Pearson Education Inc. that shows culture does matter when it comes to educational outcomes. Specifically, as it turned out, culture appears to matter more than income in context of successful educational outcomes (The Learning Curve 2013). The report was based on research that looked at factors that lead to successful education outcomes — both economic and social². The research team looked at a range of international data from over 50 countries, and did intensive interviews with 16 international educational experts³.

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² The Learning Curve Pearson Ed Report, 2013 - <http://thelearningcurve.pearson.com/the-report/executive-summary>

³ *ibid*

It was found that culture matters more than income. According to the report, *on the surface, money and education seem to create a virtuous circle, with rich countries — and individuals — buying good educations for their children who, in turn, benefit economically* (Crotty: in Forbes. 2013). Upon taking a closer look, though, *there was indicated that both higher income levels and better cognitive test scores are the result of educational strategies adopted, sometimes years earlier, independently of the income levels existing at the time. More important than money, in this respect was found to be the level of support of education within the surrounding culture*⁴⁵.

It was noted, by Dr. Chester Finn President of the Thomas Fordham Institute, in the Learning Curve Report, in view of the United States educational outcomes in comparison to other nations, that...*if there is no positive re-enforcement of educational achievement taking place outside the school – if, for example, the larger culture glorifies celebrities who can barely read – you will have huge trouble* (Crotty: in Forbes 2013). The report goes to state that parental input is crucial however, the main finding was that students who come from cultures, communities or countries where being educated is a moral duty perform far better in school, career and, thus, life⁶. This paper looks at possible reasons why this appears to be the case; specifically, does culture matter and do such outcomes reflect what kind of culture the US is.

What kind of Culture is the United States?

The United States is like any other culture. It is an information society – social reality is in the exchange of information – communication in a place; communication either about doing or being in a place or both and depends on perception of time and space. It is the exchange of information in a place that causes behavioral patterns to develop and to become codified and communicated over and over establishing - culture. Though, in this respect, we can say that the US is like any other culture it is rather more unlike any other culture because there is no American culture that is true for all Americans.

What is culture? Culture is information acquired in a place through language. We could say then that culture is a codified composition or the language of a group in a place over time made legitimate in language as it is constantly and consistently transmitted. Hence, what is ultimately achieved is the ultimate goal –what works in a place by those that use live in it and share in its expression an exchange of information-communication. Culture is information society.

What matters most in terms of the shape of culture and or the continuity of it is consistent information exchange where all participants understand the benefit of this exchange as a group; they understand who they are and are not in a place. Americans as a group are engaged in this activity. Therefore, we can say that Americans are members of a culture; but, what kind of culture, what is American culture?

Before answering that question, let us look again at culture as communication. American anthropologist, Edward T. Hall saw culture as communication; and that in all social reality, communication is culture (1990, 1959). For Hall and other social scientists, from Charles H. Cooley (1964) to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), most of what is known about communication has been learned from the study of language as it is acquired in context, it is the realm in which we exchange information.

For Cooley, it was a fact that language developed through personal intercourse and was imparted to the individual in this way (1964). Thus, there can never be dissociated from personal intercourse in the mind; and since higher thought involves language, it is always a kind of imaginary conversation (Cooley 1964: 91-

⁴ Crotty, J.M. (2013) Report: Culture More Important Than Income In Educational Outcomes. Forbes. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesmarshallcrotty/2013/06/07/report-culture-more-important-than-income-in-educational-outcomes/>

¹ ibid

⁵ Judeo-Christian influence and Roman – Greek Political Philosophy are significant determiners for Western Civilization. http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Western_civilization and Birken, L. *The History Teacher* Vol. 25, No. 4 (Aug. 1992), pp. 451-461 Published by: Society for History Education . Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/494353>

⁶ Manifest Destiny was a phrase which invoked the idea of divine sanction for the territorial expansion of the United States. It first appeared in print in 1845, in the July-August issue of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. The anonymous author, thought to be its editor John L. O'Sullivan, proclaimed "our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our multiplying millions." <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h337.html>

92). This is because, according to Cooley, the word and the interlocutor are correlative ideas as the impulse to communicate is not so much a result of thought as it is an inseparable part of it (1964).

Berger and Luckmann, in their work, "The Social Construction of Reality...; realized that language becomes the deposit of a large aggregate of collective sedimentations where the transmission of typification takes place, in context (1966: 31). All together, in view of Hall, Cooley, Berger and Luckmann, context is essential to understanding the communication of social reality by a group in a place. Again, anthropologist, Edward Hall can be reiterated here for the realization that the context of exchange was vital in understanding communication (1959); the exchange of cultural data in a place by a group in a place, understood as a space experienced over time.

In Hall's work, it is stressed that people's view of the world and their behavior are largely determined by a complex grid of unconscious cultural patterns (1959). For Hall such a complex grid is created by communicating (1990), exchanging information in a place over time. Still, a complex grid is communicated in context, in a place.

When it comes to High/Low Context, America is on the Low End

Perceptive anthropologist Edward T. Hall saw America is a low-context culture whereat very little is taken for granted (1959, 1990). This means that it is necessary to get to the point, don't be poetic, be blunt, don't be long winded, be straightforward, and if necessary provide more explanation which means according to Hall that there is less chance of misunderstanding particularly when visitors are present(1959). This may already begin to explain why we have lower educational outcomes in America. Odd as that may sound it means that simplicity is not valued as a sign of the acquisition of higher education. The way in which people exchange information is a sign of competence in a place.

Communication is language and that equals social reality. Cooley made it clear that the locus of society exists in the mind (1964:119). If that is true, it also means culture is acquired; a group of people in a place is able to recognize itself as a group in a given place and out of that behave in a certain way, conducive to that place where they exchange information. For this to appear as 'social reality', the exchanges of information must all happen in context – in a place over time. This context allows for the acquisition of language which is based on word usage (Hall 1959, 1990) and out of that the acquisition of culture.

What is important about word choice in a place is the context. Word choice as Hall explained becomes very important in a higher context communication (where members in a place are of that place in context of experience of time and space making them in a sense- indigenous to that place), since a few words can communicate a complex message very effectively to an in-group but less effectively to an outside group (1959,1990); while, in a lower context culture, the communicator needs to be much more explicit as the value of a single word, though explicitly important, is less valuable in a culturally 'rich' sense as Hall described (1959).

The United States, excluding the southern regions, is a low context culture. What did Hall mean by low context? Hall described high-context culture as group who are more embedded in a place, they share the same experience in a place and language becomes part of that experience as users have many words to express the same thing or one to mean many (1959, 1990) creating richness of word diversity among them. This can be very confusing for a person who does not understand the 'unwritten rules' of a homogeneous culture. To reiterate, in a low-context culture, very little is taken for granted which means that more explicit information is needed; it also means there is less chance of misunderstanding particularly in the mix of people present (Hall 1959,1990).

Low-context cultures (including most of North America and much of Western Europe) are logical, linear, individualistic, and action-oriented (Hall 1959, 1990). People from low-context cultures value logic, facts, and directness which was for Hall a way forward in solving a problem means lining up the facts and evaluating one after another; and hence, decisions are based on fact rather than intuition (1959,1990) Discussions end with actions - doing. Following Hall's low context, we come to realize this is why communicators are expected to be straightforward, concise, and efficient in telling what action is expected (1959). To be absolutely clear, they strive to use precise words and intend them to be taken literally and in

this way, I find what I like to call the experience of 'doing' and not being in a place which is very different from communicators in high-context cultures who depend less on language precision and legal documents (1959).

Revisiting and applying the insights of Hall, we begin to understand that highly mobile environments, like the US, where culturally diverse people come and go, actually depend on lower-context culture. Within a stable 'homogenous' population, however, a higher context communication culture is more likely to develop out of the need for diversity created through word usage, what many have called the 'richness of a culture' (Hall 1959,1990). This is reason is that with less diversity among people, there is greater need for and even allowance room for high context in communication because in a homogeneous culture (where people think of and understand themselves implicitly in a place) there is less need to be specific and a greater need to create diversity through language or diversity through rhetoric which simply means creating individualism through words.

In light of Hall's outlines, a high context communication culture is about being in a place and not so much about doing. Not that they don't do things, it means that doing is not what they are about in a place. Americans are about doing, they are about having the experience of doing in a new space. Thorstein Veblen wrote about the 'will to do something' (1994 [1899]). Veblen understood that the will to do something was about the need to do something in a place. He proposed it firstly in the division of labor and secondly in the desire and need to consume which sets up the need to make rules or have authority in order to get things done (1994). The aim of this inevitably is to have more leisure time to do what one likes and not what one has to do.

Given Veblen's contribution toward understanding Hall's cultural taxonomies, to be sure, let us clarify once again between high and low in that in communication, individuals face many more sensory cues than they are able to fully process (Hall 1959, 1990). In any culture, members *have been supplied with specific filters that allow them to focus* only on what society has deemed important in an immediate situation (1959, 1990). In general, we can conclude that groups who are inclined toward low-context communication will pay more attention to the literal meanings of words than to the context surrounding them as the surrounding context is not conducive or does not claim participants as it would if the 'culture' in place was binding or the catalyst for their being in a place; who we are and are not as a group in a place is readily apparent. Out of this, we begin to see and understand how educational outcomes are affected through either high or low context.

Exercising Veblen, the United States of America being known as an immigrant country has been the draw for people to escape being and experience the will to do something. This is what has made the United States exceptional. Here there exists high diversity among people and therefore for everyone to be able to do need to 'get it' in the meaning of using basic commands the context of communication must be simple among their diverse fellow Americans, there must be low context to allow greater freedom. America ranks lower in context, and it is arising out of the will to do something in a large space. The culture shared becomes the experience in a new place and that experience makes Americans exceptional.

Experience of Time, Space in a Place- America Exceptionalism

Returning again to Hall, we find that time and space shape context of communication exchange by a group of people in a place. Regarding time, according to Hall there are two basic distinctions - monochronic and polychronic (Hall 1990). Monochronic people tend also to be low context. Americans are strongly monochronic as it assumes careful planning and scheduling (doing in a place- hence, the most common introduction among Americans, "Hello, and what do you do?" (1990) while someone from a Mediterranean culture or even from the American South has a much greater tendency for being polychronic (being in a place) (1990) - thus, such a person may turn up to a meeting late and think nothing of it as 'being' in a place is more important than doing something in it. This experience of time 'being' suggests human interaction is valued over 'doing' time and material things. People living this experience in a place have a lesser concern for 'getting things done' -- things do get done, but in their own 'being' in place time. In this comparison of Veblen and Hall, we begin to appreciate the significance difference between 'being and doing' in a place as an exceptional experience internalized by a group in a given geography.

Time as part of the experience of information exchange differs and it has an impact reflected in cultural patterns/behaviors. Yes, we can observe western cultures, namely Europeans, varying in their motivation regarding time experience either as monochronic or polychronic time. Hall (1990) saw polychronic time, 'being' time as I refer to, as doing many things at once and monochronic time, 'doing' time as I refer, more about doing one thing at a time. For Hall, American culture overall is about doing one thing at a time which we can also apply to our word usage (1990), explicit.

What is the most distinguishing about time context in all western cultures is that individuals of a western civilization (Judeo-Christian doctrine with Roman/Greek political philosophy)⁷ delight in the experience of time spent- engaged in experience. Perhaps, that is why Hall concluded so distinctly that low context monochronic cultures are most observed in western cultures as they tend to approach time more individually as seen in the discipline of personal time management (1990).

Also, interesting as Hall pointed is that monochronic time context is also more visible in colder climates (1990). What makes this time perspective significant in terms of living in 'information society' is that time is of the essence and the responsibility of doing falls largely on the individual. Getting information out there and to the right persons in the situation of doing 'getting things done' is essential and the order of that is agreed upon. If colder climate has such an impact, then we should agree that low context functions to get things done on time, rather than spend time engaged in time passing. We will come back to time context discussion later on in framework of Christian values in Western cultures.

Edward T. Hall was not only interested in time but also look to the experience of space in communication as a way to better understand the shape of culture by which a group identifies and communicates with others in a given space. In, *Hidden Dimension*, Hall called the study of such space *Proxemics* (1966). Anthropologists understand that we have concerns about space in many situations, from personal body space to space in the office, parking space, space at home (1966). Some people need more space. People who encroach into someone else's space are seen as a threat. Personal space according to Hall is an example of a mobile form of territory and people need less or greater distances between them and others (Hall 1959, 1966, 1990). When comparing, for instance, a Japanese person to an American, we observe that space use has a cultural implication; the Japanese will stand closer to an American, making the American uncomfortable (Hall 1990).

The wide open spaces of the United States have shaped who Americans are. This was noted a long time ago by American journalist, John O' Sullivan. He called the experience of wide open space - American Manifest Destiny⁸. Edward Hall himself an American realized that people living in such a space develop the need to further experience a greater use of and authority over space i.e. big homes, big cars, and big offices and so on (1990). Americans are seen as being high territoriality because they have a greater concern for ownership. In fact, Hall noticed that Americans seek to mark out the areas which are theirs and perhaps having boundary wars with neighbors and observed as happening right down to desk-level, where co-workers may do battle over a piece of paper which overlaps from one person's area to another (Hall 1990). Territoriality, as Hall recognized, also extends to anything that can be considered 'mine' and with that 'mine orientation' comes the idea of ownership extending to all material things; and thus, security becomes a subject of great concern for people with a high need for ownership (1990); certainly, something we see being the concern of all Americans still or more so today.

People with lower territoriality have less ownership of space and boundaries are less important to them (Hall 1990). They will share territory and ownership with little thought about who did what (which is opposite to high context/low territoriality culture) and if the intention was to possess 'own' what they did having greater concern for material ownership in a given space, then they would have a different sense of 'stealing' as it would be more developed (this is more important for highly territorial people) in comparison to people with low territoriality tend also to be high context communication (1990).

⁷ Judeo-Christian influence and Roman - Greek Political Philosophy are significant determiners for Western Civilization. http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Western_civilization and Birken, L. *The History Teacher* Vol. 25, No. 4 (Aug. 1992), pp. 451-461 Published by: Society for History Education . Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/494353>

⁸ Manifest Destiny was a phrase which invoked the idea of divine sanction for the territorial expansion of the United States. It first appeared in print in 1845, in the July-August issue of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. The anonymous author, thought to be its editor John L. O'Sullivan, proclaimed "our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our multiplying millions." <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h337.html>

In my own observations, this low territoriality/high context cultural distinctiveness was witnessed in Poland during my 12 year stay before and after their accession to the European Union. If you know the history of Poland and its occupation by the Soviet Union, then you will grasp Hall's space perceptiveness and its outcomes. One would, as I did, also notice the educational outcomes due to this regarding Poles treatment of education and student expectations, by teachers, administrators and even by pupils themselves. Of course, expectations drop today as Poland is now in the EU and affected by progressive political correctness. Not only observed in Poland but also in Japan.

Western Culture, western values – impact on the American Experience

Western values, where do they come from. Certainly, anyone can notice the difference between Asian and Western cultures. Space, as Hall noted, has a lot to do with cultural values. Already pointed was the mindset of mine by Americans over the use of space and its further application toward all other material things. Western culture throughout the history of western civilization has shown fervent need for ownership of land. This has been seen as stemming from Judeo-Christian dogma which in Genesis states that God created the human person to have as a responsibility dominion over the earth.

Classic social theorist, Max Weber, recognized and commented that Judeo-Christian world view 'experience' was that of world mastery (1966). The culture of the United States is primarily a western culture which is rooted in western civilization's world view. According to Shepard Clough (1960), cultures have symbols of their beliefs, like totem poles and national flags. They have characteristics ways of communicating their ideas and learnable knowledge; therefore, we are culture bound (Clough 1960). We acquire who we are and are not in a place; in this way, culture is transmitted from generation to generation.

Yes, most people think that the United States does not have 'a' as in any particular culture as we can recognize in other places, Japan or Poland i.e. yet, we as Americans have a western socio-historical heritage that began when British citizens and other northern Europeans set foot in the new world. Though many Europeans who came over should be acknowledged as not typical Europeans, many were seeking to escape from tyranny, they were non conformists, and they were seeking to master the world which was impossible in the place they found themselves. The idea of world mastery, individual prosperity and right to seek a state of grace was Christian dogma.

In the Weberian observation, the individual in the Christian world view seeks to overcome or master the world (1966). Shepard Clough repeats in his book, "Basic Values of Western Civilization (1960) this Weberian view; western civilization organized under Christianity, stresses the individual. This individual of the 'West' aims to bring nature under its control to prevent want and suffering, to make life more agreeable, and especially to provide leisure from the production of necessities in order to realize still other values.

Clough (1960) saw much evidence of the glorification of the individual in Western culture. Christianity as Clough declared stresses a behavior of individuals which exemplifies the life of Christ (1960). This is because in Christian religion there is a loving Heavenly Father, the object of God's love is God's creation. The Judeo-Christian ethic lays down specific rules of conduct which aim directly at the individual which are about the making life of the individual more orderly and more responsible in attaining state of grace. The main experience of an individual is to realize ever more fully the total complexity of the personhood in a place. Which is why, Christianity holds that the individual can achieve salvation and immortality by one's own efforts in seeking God's grace (Clough 1960: 16).

For Shepard Clough, the ultimate concern of growing up a western individual. The major schools of philosophy in Western culture glorify the individual (1960). Regarding education, even our own John Dewey acted because of the glorification of the individual experienced in this place, given that social reality – exchange of information in a place over time is inescapable. It is the hard wiring 'basic programming' that socializes every person living born into or living in a place; in our case, the experience of a western socio-historical heritage in a big space where diversity is high demanding a low context monochronic culture.

Western civilization for Clough (1960) has as a basic program the western person neither honoring a deity or deities, nor being the servant of any small group, nor sacrificing their individualism for the advancement of some social institution. This is the humanistic view wherein we find the idea that the masterpiece of any person is a better person, living in a better society, experiencing a fuller life = producing and enjoying more

of what we consider to be the finer things of human existence (Clough 1960:15). This aids and adds to evidence of the glorification of the individual in Western culture.

In our 'humanistic' doing we extend that the glorification of the individual to be the right of every American. Our social norms are based on that and it stems from what Clough (1960) pointed asserted and Weber (1966) as well as the foundation of Judeo-Christian doctrine tells us - every 'human being' was created in God's image and because of that everyone has rights and or the right to be the person that God created.

This is exemplified again in our passion for private property and the understanding of property as a sign of individual wealth and why most Americans today are horrified by the decline in property values; hence every other news media broadcast is propping up the housing market. It seems that no other space in the world allowed this to flourish as much as the wide open spaces of the United States of America. This view on individual wealth in 'taking up space' is one of the highest symbols of individuality in America and what many have called American exceptionalism.

Experience of American Exceptionalism, is it still relevant?

The American political culture that Alex de Tocqueville⁹ described in the 1830s has changed over the years, but in many ways, it has remained the same, ever since the nation was settled from coast to coast. The American experience was characterized by de Tocqueville in several familiar elements¹⁰.

- *Liberty, which means that most people believe in the right to be free, as long as another's rights are not abused* (1968 [1835-40]); applying Hall, we could relate this to stemming from low context in high territoriality.
- *Equality, which translates as "equality of opportunity," not absolute equality* (1968 [1835-40]).
- *Democracy which likes elected officials who are accountable to the people* (1968 [1835-40]). This can also be related to Hall's low context communication.
- *Individualism whereat individual's rights are valued above those of the state (government); individual initiative and responsibility are strongly encouraged* (1968 [1835-40]). Certainly, stemming from western values as put forward by Clough (1960).
- *The rule of law whereby government is based on a body of law applied equally and fairly, not on the whims of a ruler* (1968 [1835-40]); an evolved Western value rising from Judeo-Christian doctrine.
- *Nationalism ...a value included by Tocqueville because of resounding belief among Americans as being stronger and more virtuous than other nations* (1968 [1835-40]). A value stemming from high territoriality put forward by Hall (1990).
- *Capitalism ... de Tocqueville observed then the idea of the right to own private property* (Hall's high territoriality) *and to compete freely in open markets with as little government involvement as possible* (1968 [1835-40]).

De Tocqueville (1968 [1835-40]) saw then which one can still see today that American culture reflects what Hall concluded largely to do the mix of diversity among people in a place. Of course, we can observe in the United States there are a variety of expressions due to geographical scale and cultural diversity. Given that, what remains interesting, is that one can observe the cultural taxonomies presented in this paper. One can appreciate this as a kind of exceptional culture though in low context; exceptional and yet traditional (in the sense of traditional culture definition) in that there is a strong symbolic nature leading some researchers to categorize American 'diversity' as a culture which is simply exceptional.

⁹ Alex de Tocqueville went to the United States as a special ambassador for France largely to examine American prisons. During his stay, he made other observations of America and compiled them into the classic historical account *Democracy in America*. *Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont in America: Their Friendship and Their Travels* edited by Oliver Zunz, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (University of Virginia Press: 2010)

¹⁰ Alex de Tocqueville made these observations (bulleted in this text) during his visit to the United States. He acted as an ambassador to America on behalf of the French authority in place at the time. His notes were published as a compilation in the book *Democracy in America* (1968 [1835-40]).

Educational Outcomes - American Culture Matters

Culture matters because it is acquired through language. It is information exchanged in a place over time, a social reality. For philosopher/educator John Dewey, the essential matrix of social reality which is basically inquiry in a place is cultural (Dewey 1997 [1938]). Inquiry is propelled by the very problems of living and the relations among people as Dewey reminds us that the *environment is not merely physical and inference is made regarding the subtle implicate social/environmental order of living patterns as ways of cultural transmission*; and, because in that, Dewey finds the subject matter of education to consist of bodies of information and skills that have been worked out in the past and the role of school is to transmit (Dewey 1997 [1938]: 17). What then is the problem in regards to America's education system? If culture matters, was Dewey a culturalist?

Here in the United States, it has been recognized that as a diverse society, Americans cohesiveness has been built on social capital rather than cultural capital. Social capital is about social networking and building trustworthy patterns of reciprocation between individuals who are culturally diverse- this reflects 'doing' in a place. Cultural capital is about retaining tradition in a place, practiced as being in a place which is the experience of shared time and space not solely one's own space – private property.

Yet, if we take cultural capital at face value, then we too as Americans can apply it in context of what it means to do something as an American generating capital 'use value' for its users who do something in a place for the sake of experience – for the sake of exchange of information – social reality. To further prop up such cultural capital in America; earlier, we looked at Veblen as a way to illustrate Hall's contextual insights of time and space context in America. Moreover, the Veblenian 'will to do something' the human drive to consume experience was also fixed upon by Dewey who applied it to American education in the sense of duty to American nationhood in his book, *Experience and Education*. In that work, we may find his view as a kind of dedication to the American experience as a kind of culture in itself; thereby answering if Dewey was a culturalist.

Supporting Dewey in this regard, in the writing of Pierre Bourdieu and J. C. Passeron "Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture" (1990 [1970]) there is posited that in any group, the tendency is toward social stability via reproduction in education. Thus, such reproduction becomes a culture. Though their argument led to observations of social iniquity, we realize that social iniquity is an inescapable aspect of any culture in that the exchange of information experience in a place by any group reproducing information even when the intent to have equal exchange of information can face a loss of detail in the process or skip over if someone is not there or ready to receive. Anyone ever play the game of telephone? Hence, the determination for better nationwide 'culturally wide' education becomes obvious.

We are reminded of it in the Learning Curve Research published by Pearson (2013), *the larger culture glorifies celebrities who can barely read - ...*; given that criticism, one has to conclude that all Americans can face a deficit in the experience of information exchange – social reality. Americans are bombarded daily by mass media: surfing the internet, watching television and flocking to cinema whose producers too are followers of the western value - glorifying the individual. In that case, no matter what your income, class status, educational outcomes are likely to be poorer in comparison to other cultures. We can criticize that comparison, but in our social reality, we are still doing which is striving toward a capital of leisure in a Veblenian analysis. Mass media, celebrities, certainly glorify that.

There will be those that argue such a statement is untrue. Some will say that western values have no relevance in that America has no one particular. Those some are misled. One could argue that 'glorifying the individual' if we agree is a practice here, is problematic or becoming problematic and reflected in our educational outcomes. However, in a low context culture where individuality is high and territory, we will find value in experience and a fierce drive toward innovation as it leads us closer to the higher experience of leisure.

There is seriousness to this which lies not in the lower or middle classes of American society with regard to education but to for them in context of the higher classes. Likely, this is what was observed by Bourdieu and Passeron in their conclusion on social iniquity and its reproduction in education (1990 [1970]). To better understand that, let us point to Professor emeritus of international relations at Boston University Angelo Codevilla's book, *The Ruling Class 2010*. In that work, Codevilla, *saw the ruling class recruiting and renewing itself using order and agreeability through education* (2010: 15) as they control the top schools;

and, not that their children are of some higher cultural capital, no... *their children are not necessarily the ones with the best SAT scores* (Codevilla 2010).

What is then the seriousness of this? Is the ruling class obligated to the rest of society? If we agree that there is an American culture, as we have pointed thus far, then yes they are. What is ironic is that they too are subject to low context monochronic culture in a diverse population? This complicates the complex grid of communication as the means of control lays in their hands established to replete the loss of order and agreeability among common among us cultural members.

Studies have shown that all groups – cultures, have social hierarchies for the purpose of order in terms of who is who among them which retains cultural capital; in America it retains that and social capital for the higher classes which have grown stronger affecting the exchange of information in a place – American culture as the will to do something. We find that information dissemination lends not to provide stability but instability limiting experience in a place. Is that really the results of the ruling class? Yes and no, as we can even locate limitations put on people in local ordinances... and who allows that to happen? Ironically, the answer is the same, the ruling class in that place.

Conclusion

In retrospect of Western values, Hall, Clough, Weber, Codevilla, and even Dewey, not excluding the Pearson report, we find that education in American information society (geared toward experience) is threatened not because of the glorification of the individual, or because of the ruling class, or poor institutional organization, or celebrities, poor students, mass media, or technology but more so due to the amount of cultural diversity in a low context *monochronic* (Hall 1959,1990) time background exacerbated by the *proxemics* (Hall 1966) of wide open space where the will to do something is teased by drive to be leisure (Veblen 1994 [1899]) affording a higher experience of life, so tantalizing is the pursuit of happiness. What is the role of education in that? That is a good question.

The answer is what we can already know to be the case. This is a nation of information exchange like any other only our exchange is representative of an information society that is culturally diverse in a space that causes distance and in that kind of space a low context, monochronic context functions whereat experience can continue to be the main aim. If I were a biologist, I would say that the United States is a laboratory for experiencing information society wherein cultures mix and interact seeking new information exchange experiences in a space that can offer such an experience.

Experience as a mode of being and doing is an educational experience. In fact, this is what universities offer today in their marketing approach to students. They offer experience. The pitch to students is this is the experience we offer you; unlike any other place. This experience is the clout you want that will get you through this information society of ours, whereby exchanging experiences is the key to success. This is American culture – it always has been in comparison to European or other cultures in the world.

In consideration of educational outcomes in this country, this culture, perhaps Dewey said it best, *everything depends on the quality of the experience* (1997 [1938]); or, maybe it was Edward T. Hall who stressed that *there is no such thing as experience in the abstract, as a mode separate and distinct from culture* experience rests in context as there is *no experience independent of culture* (1990) - culture matters with regard to educational outcomes.

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