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Education, what education? No one, it seems to me, is actually educated (prepared for the big wide world) as you're always told at school.

Oh yes, of course everyone can count to a hundred and so on, and of course everyone can spell yesterday, today and tomorrow and know what order they come in, but is this type of "education" any real use to anyone? It is, yes, if you're going on, like everyone else, to do something like working in a shop, factory, garage, building shops, factories, garages - but is this only because the pupil has never been 'educated' beyond believing that that is all they can, and will, do?

Individuality is a word which the teacher or education body seems to dismiss nowadays as more trouble than it is worth.

A child is taken in at one end, taught its maths, english, biography, science, woodwork, metalwork, etc, etc, etc, not to mention only cooking for the girls and no needlework for the boys. Then after all this, put into the big, wide world, or rather dumped with no thought perhaps that the boy may have to sew and cook for himself, and that the girl may have to do a bit of metalwork, perhaps fix the odd car at sometime. If at anytime of going through this 'invaluable process', you should show yourself to be a little different (shock), a bit individual (horror), if you're a boy with a desire to sew, design, and make garmets for woman (must be bent), you're automatically outcasted, it seems.

"You should be doing the proper things, boy" a teacher once bellowed at me when I announced that I'd rather dance the part of a rat than pull one apart for 'scientific reasons'. Of course if I was about to join the school of the Royal Ballet, that would have been different, then my individuality wouldn't have been so 'misplaced' in the school curriculum, but why do you have to go so far to prove something that is so natural a feeling - as natural as whatever that rat had in its guts.

It is funny how education in general seems to me to frown upon individuality so much, when so much earlier in a person's life it breeds it. I'm talking about our wonderful '11 plus' system. Of course we couldn't all pass our '11 plus', think of all the chaos that would bring. There wouldn't be enough space in all the 'pass' schools, would there now? So even if you did make enough points to go to the 'pass' school you may not ever get there. So early in a young, and at this moment fragile transformation of a young person's life friendships are lost. Your best friend goes to a 'pass' school, while you go to a second(ary) school. Automatically one is stupid while the other gets a new bike for doing so well. Of course you may well deserve a new bike, you may have in fact had the points, but "sorry, sorry, not enough desks". In one end, ('pass' or failed) and out the other. No time to be creative, individual, "sorry haven't got the time for that, or money, or books, so stop being so bloody much of a problem, and just do your maths, your english, your biography, your science, your metalwork, your woodwork, and no you can't make what you want, you'll build a box like everyone else, and stop being so bloody different!"

The system kills any creativity a young person has emerging or is trying to find, when in fact I believe it should be all about making that person as different and as independent as possible: helping them to learn more about themselves.

Drama, for instance, is a subject that is always so rare on a pupil's programme of studies, something that is given way so often to other subjects. It is a subject that always seems to help those young shy pupils, helping them to be more strong and independent. It has also proved to be calming to those who are a little 'over the top', over active, helping them to question themselves and divert their energies more constructively.

If a boy was to experience soccer hooliganism, a girl, early pregnancy in the comfort of a drama class under professional tutorship so it can be seen, acted and talked about properly, then perhaps there would be a lot of young people thinking much more about what they are about to do on that football terrace, or in that bed.

It seems to me obvious that they are going to turn to violence and sex to let off all that energy after being cooped up with their heads in a book, a biro in their hand, being made to SIT and STUDY on order. How can you get creativity out of someone so young in such circumstances? Of course they want to move, feel new experiences. Do everything that they have not been explained about or shown all day long.

If they were perhaps given the chance to move, to express, to voice their independent views, a balance of learning, studying, I think could be found. Two lessons of netball or football do not get rid of all that energy.

There are some teachers who do not want to move on from where they have arrived. They just, it seems, teach what is there with no interest as to what else there could be learnt about their, or any other, subject.

The pupil is almost scared into thinking that he or she must have those exams, so therefore has no time to be creative and different. No time, just mainstream maths, mainstream english, mainstream biography, mainstream science, mainstream woodwork, mainstream metalwork, etc., etc., etc.

And that, my girl, if you have not had time to express or experiment your individuality, will get you as far as Woollies. If the pupil was allowed in perhaps a drama class to act out, to experience, leaving school with or without exams, with or without the choice of individual thinking, then perhaps they would understand and believe more in what the tutor is trying to practice with them. Instead, they, as many I believe do, feel that they are just being driven, sucked and plopped out the other end, with no real care or attention being given to them at all.

Education is more learning than teaching.