

them reflecting a Communist conspiracy that, needless to say, eventually moved beyond the control of Communists.

I can recall, four decades ago, a Red Diaper baby named Kathie Amatniek telling me that she wanted to make political films that would have the influence of folk songs. This didn't happen for her or anyone else like her at the time. (Instead,

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Kathie became the founder of the radical feminists called Red-stockings, as she took the name Kathie Sarachild.) It couldn't happen because filmmaking is a much tougher, more expensive business.

Libertarians who tried to make politically engaged films should have thought about writing songs instead. With examples from Woody Guthrie in mind, consider writing a classic merely entitled "Liberty."
— Richard Kostelanetz

Free to choose — Perhaps I'm a dreamer, but I believe that the obvious merits of free choice in K-12 education (often labeled "vouchers") will eventually defeat the anti-choice propaganda funded by the teachers' unions. When free choice for K-12 has been tried (such as in Florida and in Milwaukee), parents rush to embrace it.

The merits of free choice in K-12 schooling include efficiency, of course. Competition works in every other area of economic life to increase quality and lower cost, so why wouldn't it work in the educational service sector? Those who think that competition wouldn't work in K-12 should remember that it works in higher education — the Pell Grant and the GI Bill of Rights programs are just vouchers by different names.

But there is another advantage of choice in education: consumer choice inevitably creates more options, and this increases student interest. That thought occurs to me every weekday morning when I drop my daughter off at the Orange County High School of the Arts, a large charter school devoted to arts-oriented education. The students who attend OCHSA chose to be there — indeed, competed to get in. The result is a palpable spirit akin to that of a private school. When parents and students choose a school that matches their interests, they're more motivated than students who are forced to attend a school they didn't choose.

What makes students attend a charter or private school is the school's orientation — to art, or science, or a faith, or an elite course of study. One reason for the widespread boredom and high dropout rates in public schools is that the vast majority of them derive from a single, basic model: the general prep school, where all students take basically the same courses, with some AP and elective courses thrown in. Moving toward free choice will promote the development of more types of schools, just as consumer choice in the restaurant industry has given consumers a dazzling variety of restaurants.

The general prep school is good for students who don't

have a clear, strong orientation for any field of endeavor, or a commitment to higher education. But there are other kinds of school. Elite prep schools are great for kids who are unusually studious and plan to pursue college study, especially in the humanities and social sciences. Plenty of these schools exist already, mainly private schools and schools in university towns, but most are available only to the wealthier families. Vouchers would expand the number of elite prep schools and allow children from poorer families to attend.

There are some arts schools for students interested in drama, music, writing, cinema, painting, or dance. And there are a few schools for students with a particular interest in science, math and engineering — most famously the Bronx High School of Science, whose graduates include seven Nobel Prize-winning physicists. With vouchers, many more such schools would sprout.

Again, military schools are useful for students who intend to follow careers in the armed forces or in law enforcement; they have often been able to transform undisciplined or disruptive boys into decent men. Vocational schools have trained generations of young people in the still vital skilled trades. Vouchers would increase the number and availability of these schools as well. But that's not all. The consumer power of vouchers would create even more types of schools. We could have schools oriented toward business and economics, medical science schools for students who plan to work in the healthcare industries, and even schools for students interested in becoming lawyers, paralegals, or . . . (dare I say it?) politicians.

Perhaps we might even get to see the emergence of some intelligent, well-educated politicians, politicians who understand the importance of a free and competitive society. It's certain, however, that innovation always flourishes with consumer freedom.
— Gary Jason

Do the evolution — It's hard to believe that the debate over evolution is still taking place in Kansas. Evolution is pretty much a fact that only a small segment of Christians dispute anymore. The crux of the debate today is whether evolution was intentional or accidental.

Many of those on the accidental side of the argument are using science to disguise their real agenda: teaching atheism in public schools. Much like the communist predecessors who forged their doctrines, the American Left wants all children taught that there is no Creator, and no higher authority beyond the state.

Other than that, what could the Left be fighting for? It's not really about education. Let's say that the entire state of Kansas teaches all their children that evolution is a farce, for a full twelve years of public schooling. Are those children really going to be disadvantaged? Except for a handful of jobs, in a few branches of science, that ignorance will never affect their lives. Perhaps they'll be mocked at Manhattan cocktail parties (which happens to people from Kansas anyway), but other than that, those kids will all move on to live happy, productive lives.
— Tim Slagle

What went wrong — Robert McNamara had been president of Ford Motor Co. for only seven weeks when President-elect Kennedy asked him to become secretary of defense. "I am not qualified," McNamara remembers telling Kennedy.