

Summer Semester 2003

EDUC 250 - 3

Kieran Egan

**Studies in the History of Education in the
Western World
D01.00**

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Thursdays 13:00-16:50
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PREREQUISITE:**DESCRIPTION**

To introduce students to the variety of ideas people have held about education in the Western world, and the practices that these have been used to justify. We will look at what has been done to children in the name of "education" in oral cultures long ago, in the time of Plato in ancient Greece, and up to the present day in North America. Our main focus will be on how our current conception of education has been built over the centuries out of sometimes conflicting ideas, and the kinds of problems for current practice that this strange history has generated.

OBJECTIVES

Education in the Western world has had two quite distinct phases. In the first, education was largely about how to prepare males to run society; in the second, beginning roughly during the nineteenth century and continuing today, education is largely about preparing everyone to become democratic citizens who will be useful to the state and be able to live fulfilling lives. Our objective for the course is to understand how these ideas have grown and changed, and see the challenges to their achievement. To aid this understanding, we will study:

- Education in oral cultures: making the harmonious person;
- Education in Plato's view: how to perceive the truth about reality;
- Medieval education: the mirror of moral perfection;
- Renaissance and Enlightenment: bourgeois ideals;
- Revolution and Romanticism: Education in Rousseau's view;
- The scientific revolution: evolution, biology, and recapitulation;
- Education for all: psychology and method;
- The resulting chaos in modern conflicts about education.

REQUIRED READINGS

- John Locke. Some Thoughts Concerning Education.
 J-M-G. Itard. The Wild Boy of Aveyron.
 Mary Wollstonecraft. A Vindication of the Rights of Women
 John Dewey. Education and Experience.

Mary Wollstonecraft On the Education of Daughters (will be provided in class).