

The pluralistic nature of Russia and the lack of central control over the education system mimic the American experience and the problematic outcomes we suffer as a result of a decentralized, oftentimes chaotic, system of education. The unfunded mandates of NCLB and the unfunded mandate of Russian literacy speak to the difficulty in realizing many educational ideals without an overwhelming commitment from those in power that honors the diversity of those they serve.

Another important aspect of Russian education under the Soviet model is that of indoctrination. “The Party” in Russia exercised total control over the press and used the press to promote socialist and communist ideals. As in Cuba, this element was considered a necessary part of the revolution, an integral part of doing away with the old and building a new social order. Once again, whereas American educators reject the notion of indoctrination, those in socialist revolutions embrace indoctrination as something positive and necessary. Counts captures Russia’s conscious rejection of the past:

In the case of Soviet Russia, the distinguishing feature is not that the child is imposed upon by his elders. This happens wherever human culture has appeared. It is rather that the process is being done more methodically and consciously than ever before, that a most extraordinary break is being made with the past.⁵⁵

The frank discussion of imposition, political education, and indoctrination, are not subjects often included within the American pedagogical paradigm. However, the common sense idea that American education does not engage in indoctrination must consider the values that *are* implicitly and explicitly expressed in American classrooms.

footnote numbering starts over at 1 with each new chapter

⁵⁵ George Counts, *The Soviet Challenge to America* (New York: John Day Company, 1931), 328.