

Schools of the Future

Guests: Deborah Meier, Roger Schank, Lynn Olson

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The Merrow Report

(MUSIC)

JOHN MERROW

I'm John Merrow. You're listening to the Merrow Report. The 21st Century is upon us, and a lot of people are wondering what the future has in store. What I want to know is, what will school be like in say 2050? Virtual phys ed. Field trips to Mars? Knowledge chips embedded in our brains? Or how about a worldwide curriculum. On this edition of the Merrow Report, we'll look ahead to what school might be like in the future. I'll talk with two provocative thinkers about their predictions of the future of schools.

Also in this hour, what do Dr. Seuss, Dr. Spock, Dick and Jane, Albert Shanker, Phyllis Schafly of the Eagle Forum, Steve Jobs of Apple Computer, Thurgood Marshall, and Annie Sullivan have in common? We'll take a look back at the past 100 years, and talk about some of the people who shaped American education as we know it today. All that's coming up after this.

(COMMERCIAL)

JOHN MERROW

I'm John Merrow. You're listening to the Merrow Report. We're talking about what schools will be like in the future. My guess is Deborah Meier, who has in the past shaped what was then the future, that is today's present. She founded Central Park East Elementary School in 1974. And then in 1985 Central Park East Secondary School, both in New York City. Schools which value what Deborah Meier calls habits of mind.

Today, she's principal of Mission Hill Pilot School in Boston, part of the Boston public schools. Welcome to the program.

DEBORAH MEIER

It's a pleasure to be here.

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JOHN MERROW

Would you care to make a prediction about the future of public schools in the 21st Century.

DEBORAH MEIER

I ... I wouldn't mind making a prediction if my past predictions were ever accurate, I would do it with readiness, but mostly I decided all I have are hopes.

JOHN MERROW

So you just shape the future. You don't predict it.

DEBORAH MEIER

I ... I do what I love to do and what I think is best for kids. And then I hope it influences other people.

JOHN MERROW

What ... what ... what are your hopes?

DEBORAH MEIER

Well I hope in a way that more schools are like the schools that I've been involved with. And I'm sort of stunned by the number of people around this country who have, either totally on their own, completely unrelated to us, or related to our work, built schools that are like Central Park East.

JOHN MERROW

So they're ... you find that happening?

DEBORAH MEIER

I find that happening. And gives me hope that we resonate with something. And I also hear lots of people talking about the kinds of things that matter to me: like schools being small. Around ... when we started Central Park East, we were in New York City, we were thought sort of peculiar, to insist that the smallness was good. And it's still true around this country that everybody wants to consolidate their schools and make big ones. But the fact of the matter is, the rhetoric is now in favor of small schools. The research is now in favor of the school ... small schools. And I gather some of the presidential candidates are now talking about the importance of small schools. So ...

JOHN MERROW

But there is, on the other side of that, this massive debate about ... not even debate, this momentum it seems in favor of ... of standards, and more testing, and ...

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DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah ...

JOHN MERROW

And you wrote ... I just want to read you something ...

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah ...

JOHN MERROW

... you wrote in your book ...

DEBORAH MEIER

(Overlap/Inaudible)

JOHN MERROW

"The Power of Their Ideas," for ... almost five years ago now, that "There is no public language for high hopes for all. But there's a lot of mean- spirited anger at those responsible for 'today's youth.'" Alongside of highly abstracted employer driven hype about "schools for the 21st century. Meanwhile parents are left with deep anxiety," and so on. That's kind of a pessimistic view that ...

DEBORAH MEIER

Well, and ... and it's produced something interesting, hasn't it? We have adopted the language of high hopes. You know, Central Park East Secondary School was ... almost the first public school in this country that didn't graduate kids on the basis of credit areas(?), but on the basis of standards. And of high ho- ... of high hopes you'd want, and articulated, clear language about what we wanted all of our children to be able to do when they left us. and yet, oddly enough, these high hopes have now been translated into standards that are driven by some of the meanest feelings about kids. So we have married the idea of high hopes for children with what I described in that as a kind of mean attitude towards children and their teachers and their parents. And ... and I think it's a bad marriage. High hopes are one thing. But high hopes by people who are driven by thinking that if the kids don't meet it, if the kids don't do it, we'll punish them, we'll show them.

JOHN MERROW

Kind of a "Gotcha!"

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DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah. And a ... and a kind of assumption that the only reason kids aren't reaching our highest hopes is because they're lazy, not trying hard, and not ... not afraid enough. We haven't made the punishments tough enough. And in my experience nothing could be farther from the truth. It's not what drives people to genuinely high aspirations, is fear.

JOHN MERROW

Well, now as we sit here trying to divine the future, as it were ...

DEBORAH MEIER

I don't know ... (Overlap)

JOHN MERROW

... it sounds like two ...

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah ...

JOHN MERROW

The battle.

DEBORAH MEIER

And I don't know how it's going to play out. You know, I can ... I can scare myself witless some evenings, thinking, well maybe we really don't want so many kids to be well educated. And maybe when 50 percent of the kids don't graduate high school and they go back to 1945, gradu- ... maybe that's really ... I can develop a conspiratorial feeling that maybe they have a plot. But at other times, I think, we'll come to our senses. We've been through this route before. Every two- ... 20, 25 years, we announce a crisis. Looking at this Life Magazine, 1950. "U.S. Schools," it says, "They Face a Crisis. Special Issue. October 16th, 1950." Exactly 50 years ago, right?

So maybe we have to go through this every once in a while and come up with solutions. And when they don't work, we go back to trying to look at more fundamental issues. The way standards have been interpreted is a short cut solution that ignores the reality that children, teachers, schools, families, parents, what we know about how people learn, motivation ... (Overlap)

JOHN MERROW

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How have standards been interpreted? You mean ...

DEBORAH MEIER

It's just lots of tests ...

JOHN MERROW

Machine-scored tests?

DEBORAH MEIER

Lots of tests. Machine-scored or otherwise. Just lots of tests and tests that most kids won't do well at, because then they will try harder, and it doesn't matter. Everybody in this country's got a different test. The only thing in common about them is that kids don't do well in any of them. Even the most ... the kids we think of as being the best educated in the world. Well, the United States educates still the best educated. We have an enormous gap between what the best and the worst do. But our ... our citizens on the whole attend schools that are the best in the world. And even on test scores, do better than any other nation in the world.

So then to turn that around and say these kids are all failing these tests, 80 percent of the kids in Massachusetts just recently were demonstrated on fourth grade as failing math and English tests. Massachusetts is third in the nation, and the nation is second in the world on fourth grade academic abilities as tested.

JOHN MERROW

So you're saying we just test too much.

DEBORAH MEIER

(Overlap) ... well we test too much, and we have set the benchmarks in order to have lots of kids fail; with the theory as far as I can tell, that if kids have failed, they'll try harder. And that's a theory of human behavior, which works for a few kids. Some kids, when they fail, work harder. But most of us when we fail repeatedly, work less hard.

JOHN MERROW

If ... if you could shape the future, Debbie, would you ... either do less testing. You have ... you have kids demonstrating their abilities ...

DEBORAH MEIER

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Yeah, I think kids are (Inaudible) test. There are driver's test, you have to get in a car and show us that you can drive. So I would have more kids showing their community, their parents, their community, their business leaders, their political leaders, their civic leaders, their teachers, showing off to them what they can do in a variety of ways. So that you build a public for a school, but it's the public that belongs to that school.

I think we have abandoned our public, our own communities a long time ago. You know, when I was a little girl there were 200,000 school boards in this country, and there are less than 20,000 now. Just think of the number of people who used to be involved in children's education. And we need to bring more of our citizens involved in seeing what kids can do and can't do.

JOHN MERROW

So ... so it's make schools public in the sense of being open.

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah.

JOHN MERROW

Not public in the sense of publicly funded.

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah ...

JOHN MERROW

But a public event is I ... I show that you ... I ... I demonstrate to you that I can do this.

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah. We should have lots of events, in which kids show their community what they can do. And the community can ask kids questions. And the community can interact with kids. Sort of a kind of a graduation activities that we engaged in Central Park East Secondary School, where we brought in other adults who kids had to present their work to. It's kind of old-fashioned.

It's a kind of 19th Century show and tell, when I used to go to the little towns around the country, and there's ... school kids got up on the stage, and had to show what they knew, and what states they knew and what ... how to spell words as well as more difficult oratorical questions. We ...

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we need to go back to helping our kids be appreciated or criticized by the adults who are close at hand. Kids don't know grown-ups. The other thing is I want ... I imagine future schools, if we're going to have a ... an exciting democratic life, is we need to bring grown-ups and kids in greater contact with each other.

JOHN MERROW

It's a lot of segregation ... by age ...

DEBORAH MEIER

We ... I mean ... I mean ... never in the history of the world have young people been so separate from adults. And the closer they get to adulthood, the less relationship they have with adults. We've organized high schools so kid barely ever ... I mean the only adults they see are ... is when they're in a group of 30, and there's a grown-up in front of the room. And then every 40 minutes, they run into another grown-up, and they have three minutes in between. There's no time for contact and interaction.

The thing that people were impressed about our kids at Central Park East Secondary School, and which I think has the most ... probably the most to do with their extraordinary, unexpected success in later life, was that they knew how to interact, negotiate with grown-ups. They had been ... they had been part of grown-up company. It was a school full of powerful grown-ups all these kids had to negotiate with, had to learn how to talk with, had to learn how to argue with and persuade. And they had to learn how to be civil, because that was... there were people who were going to make the important decisions.

JOHN MERROW

You used the adjective, "powerful." It strikes me that most adults in schools have very little power. They can tell a kid, sit down, shut up. But in terms of power over their own lives ...

DEBORAH MEIER

Yeah ...

JOHN MERROW

... they have very little.

DEBORAH MEIER

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That's ... there was an article in the paper the other day talking about ... I don't know if it was true or not ... but it's claiming that this ... the ninth graders coming into our high schools in Boston are so disrespectful and ... and, you know, just not to be around. Well, let's assume there's some truth to that. But I think, what's it like to be an adolescent who has ... who's dealing always with grownups who the outside world has just told them are dumb, stupid, un- ... who would ... no one has been willing to give any trust to, and respect for, who are not asked to make any important decisions, because their decisions are not respected. And then we tell kids, you should go in there and obey those people and treat them with respect. You should say "Yes, sir," and "Yes, ma'am." But the adults, every adult around you, and every newspaper around you ... a politician has just said, these are the dumbest people in America.

JOHN MERROW

These teachers.

DEBORAH MEIER

These teachers. We've set our schools up for being places in which kids don't imagine they're surrounded by powerful and interesting and attractive and appealing grown-ups, whom they would like to become.

JOHN MERROW

And so the teachers themselves can't feel very good about it either, so they probably take it out on the kids.

DEBORAH MEIER

I mean in some ways we leave them when someone else sets the standard because they can say, well don't get mad at me, I didn't have any- ... don't get mad at me; I have nothing to do with this. But I want grownups who say to kids, get mad at me if you want. I had everything to do with this.

JOHN MERROW

So in your school of the future, there'd be more adults and fewer kids ... smaller schools.

DEBORAH MEIER

Mm hmm (Affirm).

JOHN MERROW

The adults would have some power. But then I guess, so do the kids ... (Overlap)

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DEBORAH MEIER

Well ...

JOHN MERROW

It's not dictated on high.

DEBORAH MEIER

You can't give kids power if you don't have powerful adults. That's dangerous. I want grownups, who can look kids in the face and say no. As the adult responsible for this, this cannot be. You know, I want adults who'll feel confident enough that they often do help kids to ... meet their needs as well. And that they negotiate with them, and they compromise with kids, and that they listen to what kids are interested in, what kids' ideas are. But a weak teacher is the last person in the world who's in a position to do that.

JOHN MERROW

Now, see, you ... you would like schools in the future, then, to be much more based ... the decision's made right there.

DEBORAH MEIER

Yes.

JOHN MERROW

The adults have the power.

DEBORAH MEIER

Mm hmm (Affirm).

JOHN MERROW

And you ... you also would encourage what you call habits of mind, concern for the evidence, viewpoint, cause and effect, (Inaudible) real, real questions, not curriculum that's handed down from on high?

DEBORAH MEIER

No, I mean ... you know, you could imagine a small spare list of things that we all agree. Although it's amazing how hard it is to get that list small.

JOHN MERROW

Of ... what we all should learn?

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DEBORAH MEIER

(LAUGHS) Everybody had their own little list. My list overlaps yours, but his list is a little bit more, and his list overlaps him a little bit more. So I used to think it would be pretty easy to get a small list that we would all agree to, and then let every school add to it their own. But ... and I still have that utopian view. I don't know if it's possible, but you have to have people in the school who are invested in that curriculum, who feel they own it. And then let outsiders, the external world, have tons of opportunity to critique that school.

JOHN MERROW

So again, the school is public. It's open.

DEBORAH MEIER

It's public ... it's someone ...

JOHN MERROW

It's ... (Inaudible) closed (Inaudible) for kids ...

DEBORAH MEIER

Group of people can come in and say, we think this is a stupid education that they're giving here. And denounce us in the newspaper. That's fine.

JOHN MERROW

So you ... you're saying you want choice, but that means you'd have to have variety. So you'd have a lot of different kinds of schools.

DEBORAH MEIER

Mm hmm (Affirm) ... have different definitions of what a well-educated 18-year-old is. I don't think there is a single good definition of what a well-educated 18-year-old should know and know how to do and be like.

JOHN MERROW

And ... and you'd have the public more involved, not just the parents, because it's a small group, a small percentage of our population that actually has children school age. So you'd have a lot of ... more adults involved in the school being open ...

DEBORAH MEIER

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Yeah. For example, our board of governors. It consists of a third of parents, third teachers, and a third public members. That is people who live in this community and are known by parents and teachers. And we decided on them. So that's another way of involving. So that we get closer back to that old day when every school had its own board.

JOHN MERROW

Well ... do ... do ...

DEBORAH MEIER

... of trustees.

JOHN MERROW

Do you fear for the future of public schools?

DEBORAH MEIER

I fear for the future sometimes, you know. I think ... that the importance of personal one on one relationships, not just virtual relationships, is essential for trust. And I think as our ... as we expand our technological possibilities, we may forget that it's built at root, it needs to be trust between human beings. Human beings who can't touch each other and haven't learned how to touch each other and look each other in the eye, and know each other day after day, and watch each other. And be part of a common community. That, without that, we lose something very critical to our humanity.

The adult world is ... is a world that is not fashioned by people who love them, care about them ... just who they are. People who have something to get from them. Something ... some other purposes. I think need ... kids need to be surrounded by grownups who first and foremost have a self interest in those kids per se.

JOHN MERROW

Grownups like you and thank you very much, Debbie Meier. We must take a break right now. I'll be back. Don't go away.

(MUSIC)

JOHN MERROW

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I'm John Merrow. You're listening to the Merrow Report. And we're talking about schools in the future. And how will technology drive changes in schools in the 21st Century. Roger Schank is a leader in the field of artificial intelligence in multi-media based training. He wears a bunch of hats. Director of the institute for Learning sciences at Northwestern University. He's also professor of computer science, education, and psychology at Northwestern University. He's chairman and chief technical officer of Cognitive Arts, a software company. He's the author of several books including "Engines for Education," and "Virtual Learning," which will be published this spring by McGraw-Hill.

He's written a very interesting paper called "Extra-Curriculars As the Curriculum." It's a vision of education for the 21st Century. And that's why I asked him to be my guest today. Thanks for coming in.

ROGER SCHANK

Happy to be here.

JOHN MERROW

What is your vision when you say "extra-curricular." You're essentially saying school as we now have them ... (Inaudible) constructed, that's obsolete?

ROGER SCHANK

Well what I'm saying is there's going to be some interesting forces of change coming soon. You're starting to see it in this so-called distance education movement. A lot of universities are beginning to think of building multi-media software, as a way of educating.

So imagine the following, okay? Imagine that the best physicists in the world sit together and design a learn by doing, simulation based electronic physics course. It would be better than sitting 500 kids in a classroom listening to some guy lecture. And furthermore, it would be better than the current AP physics course, which is taught by the football coach in Dubuque. So the issue is, would the high schools begin to take these courses, which would essentially grant college credit to their high school students? And the answer is yeah.

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So if you start ... if they start to ... getting produced, suddenly the senior high school is exactly equivalent to the first year in college, but all done electronically. It's only a short leap of faith after that, to start to understand that course after course is going to come in electronically better ...

JOHN MERROW

... working its way down.

ROGER SCHANK

Working its way down.

JOHN MERROW

Down to seventh grade. Down to ...

ROGER SCHANK

Right ... and then that leaves the high school sitting there saying, well what do we do? All these kids can do that, what do we do?

JOHN MERROW

And what do we do?

ROGER SCHANK

Well I think it's a wonderful question, because it turns out there's a lot of stuff they should do. I ... I was very struck during the ... the ... at this whole Com- ... Columbine shootings with ... thinking about what those kids were thinking during that period of time, just prior to it. Well, do you think about algebra? Were they thinking about their boyfriends and their girlfriends and who makes the team and who's going to be the school editor, and why this kid doesn't like me, and how come I'm having trouble at home?

Why isn't high school about adolescence? Why is ... why is high school about trigonometry. When was the last time you took a sine or a cosine. When was the last time anybody in the entire listening audience took a sine or a cosine? Here we have this stuff rammed down our heads, when we're thinking about who are we, how do we get along, how do we manage to function, how do I deal with the problems in my life, all those stress-related issues, all those adolescence issues should be the subject matter of school.

JOHN MERROW

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Oh, boy, (Inaudible) ... so we'd still go to high school.

ROGER SCHANK

Mm hmm (Affirm).

JOHN MERROW

But our courses would be on line?

ROGER SCHANK

Courses would be on line. And I don't think it would be a fairly fun thing to sit on line 20 ... you know, the whole entire day. I think that can be really irritating. So I don't believe in that. So the subject matter would be on line. The best physicist would be in your classroom virtually. Your physics teacher doesn't ... isn't the best physicist.

JOHN MERROW

But am ... am I going to sit in front of a computer half the day?

ROGER SCHANK

Some of the time ... no, it isn't that ... Doesn't have to be half a day. But let's say a third of the day, okay?

JOHN MERROW

Okay, and the rest of the time? You ... you say you want teachers to be more like coaches or camp counselors.

ROGER SCHANK

I want tea- ... I want it to be like summer camp. When I ... every summer I went to summer camp. Okay? And in summer camp, I had a wonderful time. It wasn't just that I played baseball. I also learned a lot. I learned about how you get along with the other kids. How to function in a ... in a ... in a group. I mean it was ... it was a living exercises and life exercises, which were pretty important. It's always where I had my first romantic experiences. Everything that mattered to me, important in my life, occurred in summer camp, not in school.

JOHN MERROW

Well, oh, so you're ... you're suggesting something very radical and ... and let me just ... let's step back. You said in the paper that technology is on the verge of fundamentally reshaping the entire

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education system. How will that happen is my question. But you say it's on the verge. I've heard that song before. (Overlap)

ROGER SCHANK

Yeah, well something different ...

JOHN MERROW

Thomas Edison said that ...

ROGER SCHANK

Yeah, well something ...

JOHN MERROW

... when he invented the moving picture. And that teaching machines in the 50s were ... were on the verge. They said the schools will never be the same. Well schools are still the same.

ROGER SCHANK

Well, there's a couple of things that are different. The first off, we've learned in the field of cognitive science a great deal about how the mind works. The idea of teaching machines is a ... was a silly idea in the first place. But we've learned a lot about what makes people learn. The simple answer to that is people learn by doing. They don't learn by being lectured at. You can talk over and over again to them. They won't get it. That's why we have all these exams and all this studying. And what happens after you finish studying? Could you pass the same exams after ... the next year? I've never seen a student who could. Every student I ask, could you pass last year's exams? I'll give you right now? No, I couldn't.

Well then what's the point? It's all about temporary memorization of meaningless knowledge that never comes up again. You see "Peggy Sue Got Married"? She goes back in time. She says I know for a fact that I'll never need algebra? Right. She won't. So the issue we have to ask ourselves is, well what will you need? And one thing is, what are kids thinking about? Well, I know what they're thinking about. They're thinking about. They're thinking ... I ... I raised kids.

JOHN MERROW

You're getting off the point there. You're saying this ... this technology is different? The older technology ...

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ROGER SCHANK

The technology's completely different. The technology is hard to describe. The best example is the air flight simulator.

JOHN MERROW

Mm hmm (Affirm).

ROGER SCHANK

Today, when you want to learn to be a pilot, you go to United Airlines. They don't let you fly ... fly a few 747s and try it out. You try an air flight simulator first. And those air flight simulators look and feel exactly like the real airplanes. Now imagine if they were a physics simulator, right? Or a ... or a economics simulator. Instead of learning economics, you ran the economy. Instead of learning chemistry, you prescribed drugs to ... to patients.

JOHN MERROW

You're talking about sim city ... (Overlap)

ROGER SCHANK

Well, no, I'm talking about something way better than sim city. Sim city is (Inaudible) ... first off, not fundamentally a teaching program. Second off, it doesn't have experts in there. Third, it doesn't relate to reality. Supposing in sim city, you built Newark. Would it ever say you just built Newark; you made a mistake. Would you have experts and urban planners come up? Would you have mayors discuss things with you. The possibility for having the world's experts on line sitting there in video, telling you their favorite stories, connected to things you were doing in the simulator that didn't quite work, with a goal you were trying to accomplish is technology that now exists.

My company creates this stuff for corporations. All the big companies have it. Why won't the schools have it?

JOHN MERROW

Now, let me tell you about an argument I had with an advanced placement physics teacher a couple of years ago. I was arguing that when ... he ... he needed to teach the kids the theorem of flight, why planes fly. And I said, why don't you put them on a cad-(?) ... where they can design a

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plane. And see if it flies. And if it flies, then they have to explain why, and if it crashes, they have to explain why. And that way they'd learn Berludi's(?) theorem or whatever, all that stuff.

And he said, well that's a great idea, John, but we can't do that because they have to know ... memorize the formulas for the advanced placement exams.

ROGER SCHANK

Well of course you're exactly right. We live in a country which is entirely based upon standardized testing at the moment. It's getting worse. Okay? And by worse, I mean all it's about is memorize, memorize, memorize. There's only one way around that testing thing. And that is to drop in full scale replacements that don't require it. So I'm not suggesting AP credit. I'm suggesting, suppose we get the best physicist to build the best physics course. We don't get you to pass AP. It wouldn't even be on the same subject matter. What we get is a college to accredit it.

JOHN MERROW

You're just by-passing advanced placement.

ROGER SCHANK

Suppose Harvard says okay, I ... I ... I'll certify that course, and you get credit. Then no one ... who needs advanced placement credit? They just get Harvard credit. Is that lay- ... say better?

JOHN MERROW

So you're not talking about evolution, then. You're talking about revolution.

ROGER SCHANK

I'm talking about rev- ... I'm an educational revolutionary.

JOHN MERROW

I ... I'm interested in ... in a ... what strikes me as a paradox. You talk about technology. You talk about the alienation of kids and they're ... part of which you attribute to sitting in front of computers playing games or whatever. Not being connected. And yet, technology is the means of salvation, is a way of ... around this alienation. they're going to use these tech- ... this ... at least a paradox, maybe a contradiction.

ROGER SCHANK

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It's the Trojan mouse. It isn't as if we were going ... that ... that technology is actually the answer to these problems. But there's a reason why technology happens to be the answer. First off, it's what's ... will be allowed into the schools. The schools wouldn't take a new biology curriculum. Let's just talk about biology for a second.

Kids are doing biology. They're memorizing phyla, the names of unicelled animals. What should they be doing in biology? Health? Reproduction? You notice there's no course in medicine in this country? Not ... never required for high school students, never required for college students. Why is that? No one can figure out how to change things to make it rational. So instead, why people learning plant phyla, they're not learning about the things that might matter to them. How to make a nutrition decision. The issue is how do we change it? You can't do it. The Educational Testing Service doesn't allow it; the school boards don't allow it; the book publishers don't allow it. This is the possibility of a change. Dropping in entirely new curriculum [sic] that face all the real issues of our times.

JOHN MERROW

And ... and that is technology based.

ROGER SCHANK

Well that's how you can drop them in. Because if I did when it wasn't technology based, no one would take it. Everyone would fight it.

JOHN MERROW

So that this ... so taking that course won't end the alienation. What you're saying will end the a- ... alienation will be the extra time you have for the ... to focus on the stuff kids are really interested in.

ROGER SCHANK

No, I think the ... they core- ... both. Because the course that will end the alienation ... because if we're talking about biology that's relevant to your life, it all of a sudden become ... and it's interesting, and it's one on one, and you can make mistakes and you know, you don't get ridiculed. And there isn't a test at the end. What there is, is you're doing biology. Right? You're running ...

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let's say you're running the Center for Disease Control and you're trying to di- ... diagnose diseases. It becomes int- ... a ... a ... it becomes like an interesting game.

JOHN MERROW

But the ...

ROGER SCHANK

But it's more interesting than a video game.

JOHN MERROW

Did ... does it require ... it's a simulation. Are kids ... it ... it becomes real to the kids? Is that the idea?

ROGER SCHANK

Yes. The ... it's as if they're a character in the movie.

JOHN MERROW

Yeah.

ROGER SCHANK

And everything's in video and you actually are ... it's being ... the movie characters are running around and yelling at you if you make mistakes, and you're having to interact with them and you have to do ... a whole range of social situations. It's not typically only about one subject.

Example, in a program that teaches you how to run the Center for Disease Control, you've got to deal with ethical problems, political problems, biological problems, a lot of different issues going on.

JOHN MERROW

And ... and you have to make the decisions right on the spot.

ROGER SCHANK

You have to make the decisions right there. And what you do affects how characters change. We film all the possible reactions that characters have, so you make more mi- ... mistakes, people will be excited by what you do, or get mad at you.

JOHN MERROW

Some ... there ... there are courses like that in medical school where you have to make real-life decisions, should you operate right now.

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ROGER SCHANK

Yes.

JOHN MERROW

Field-based, that sort of thing.

ROGER SCHANK

That's right.

JOHN MERROW

That ... You're saying that's what ought to be in schools.

ROGER SCHANK

That's what ought to be in high school.

JOHN MERROW

Okay. But to do that, you're going to have to have a national curriculum, aren't you?

ROGER SCHANK

No. Because what happens is ... is as ... the more of these things you do, the more there becomes a level of diversity possible.

JOHN MERROW

But you're calling for the government to get involved, the federal government to start exper- ...

ROGER SCHANK

Honestly I don't expect the federal government to get involved. The federal government should get involved. It should sit there and say, you know what? Let's start building courses. But that's not what's going to happen. We are now living in the Internet economy. And the Internet economy means investors are going to get involved. So they're going to start building the courses and investing in the courses, which are the highest profile and poss- ... biggest possibility. So there will be economics courses and psychology courses, and biology courses. That's where the demand is.

Where I think the government has to get involved, is to say, well maybe there should also be a course in, you know, something obscure. For something that isn't the most economically viable,

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but something which will be important for kids, which, you know, wouldn't be supported by the ...
by the Internet investors.

JOHN MERROW

Now ... now you assume that technology is the salvation. But technology is not value free.
Technology is driven by values. And I've been in lots of schools where technology is in fact used
for drill and kill.

ROGER SCHANK

Oh, don't ... don't ...

JOHN MERROW

It's use to imprison kids.

ROGER SCHANK

Don't misunderstand me. I think a vast majority of the computer instruction in the schools is
awful. I think almost everyone's experience with it is awful. It's all drill and practice to pass tests.
But you have to remember, that's not an issue of technology. Okay? That's an issue of we're
living in a test-crazed society, which thinks that what education is, is pasting- ... passing tests.
Here's a way I have of putting this, okay? Let's suppose that tomorrow, by some miracle everyone
in the ... every school child in the United States got 100 percent on his math standardized test.
Then what? What good would come from that? How would that be a good thing? Would we
have a better society? Would we all be able to make more money? Would we even be happier?
What exactly would happen?

Alternatively let's talk about my idea about adolescence. Let's say, suppose tomorrow, every kid
were phenomenally happy and comfortable in life? Then we'd have a good society. Then we'd
have a more interesting place to live. So I know what's important to work on. It isn't math. This
... the ... the obsession with math scores is based upon pol- ... politicians looking for very quick
hits, when they make investments of money.

JOHN MERROW

Well ... well how will my kids do on the tests? And in terms of learning, if ... if we use ...
(Overlap)

ROGER SCHANK

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The tests will disappear. The tests will disappear. The tests are the problem. The tests have to go. Because you can't make any change in any subject matter, without a test that is rigidly sitting there for a long period of time, forcing you to teach the same old stuff.

JOHN MERROW

Well ...

ROGER SCHANK

I couldn't put a new biology curriculum in because ... because the existing test that's given by ETS is about phyla.

JOHN MERROW

Well ... well then, wait a minute. How are you going to persuade me ... I'm a school board guy ... to use this curriculum? Is there going to be some measure of what these kids have learned? Because there has to be some sort of measure.

ROGER SCHANK

Of course, but not measure of what they've learned; measure of what they can do. It ... it ... the best way of looking at this is the Department of Motor Vehicles. They got two tests: A) can you drive the car and B) can you memorize a lot of irrelevant crap and spit it back in a multiple choice test. The school system in its infinite wisdom has eliminated one of those tests.

JOHN MERROW

But you ... but you would put in ... you would just ... put in the other tests? The doing ...

ROGER SCHANK

Only the doing tests. Can you do this? Could you run the ... if you're running the economy and ... (Inaudible) did your economy succeed? Would ... would ... your example about ... about ... about physics. If you were doing something in physics, did it occur? Did it work? Did your ... did your rocket ship fly. The ... the issue is, how long does it take you to make the thing, the event occur that you were trying to get to occur in the software?

JOHN MERROW

So are ... are you going to save us money by doing ... doing this?

ROGER SCHANK

Save who money?

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JOHN MERROW

The system. The ... society ...

ROGER SCHANK

(Overlap) ... in the end, I don't think the question is money. I think what we're going to do is save a lot of children who are very miserable about learning and make them excited about learning.

JOHN MERROW

But ... but, the way you'll sell this will be to persuade me that, gee, I can save money. I won't need as many teachers, or I won't need as much ... (Overlap)

ROGER SCHANK

I don't think we ...

JOHN MERROW

... testing ...

ROGER SCHANK

I think we do need as many teachers. Because I think what happens is, once we put all the software into the schools, what happens is the teachers, as I ... this is where my idea about teachers as summer camp counselors come, your average teacher goes to work because they like kids. Because they want to help kids out. They enjoy interacting with kids. And then we make them stand up there and be authorities on physics, which by the way, they're not. I'd rather have them be authorities on how to get along and how to be a human, involved in human kinds of situations. So I want them involved in that kind of stuff. Not instruction. Counseling.

JOHN MERROW

E- ... even if it's the physics teacher?

ROGER SCHANK

No. I think you have a new set of people. New training is needed.

JOHN MERROW

Well it says here ... in your conclusion: "On line courses will remove from teachers the responsibility for teaching academic subjects."

ROGER SCHANK

Exactly.

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JOHN MERROW

It ... it strikes me that ... that you're 180 degrees wrong. That I would think that you'd need even more skilled teachers, because it would be possible, especially with the Internet, to download all kinds of stuff, and say this is mine. I did this. And hand it in to you. And if you don't know anything from (Inaudible) ... about physics, I may dupe you. But rather ... if you instead know physics, and you've worked with me through seven steps, as we develop this rocket ship or whatever it is, then you'll know that I'm learning it. But you'll have to know it. I would think that teachers in the future, where this will require different skills, but they'll still require a deeper ... you won't be able to use the football coach from Dubuque.

ROGER SCHANK

So the issue is, how do we get the best people available to be physics tutors? They can be available by e-line- ... by e-mail or be on line.

JOHN MERROW

And so the teacher, you're seeing the teacher, the physics teacher really doesn't have to know much physics?

ROGER SCHANK

I don't want there to be a physics teacher. I want physics instruction to be on line. I want there to be a human teacher. I want there to be a teacher about ideas, about interactions, about how we solve problems. I want there to be teachers dealing with the more human skills.

JOHN MERROW

If you brought a doctor from 100 years ago and dropped him or her into a hospital, that person would be lost. Same thing in the military. You brought a soldier from 100 years ago, and didn't know ... what ... how to operate the weapons. But a teacher from 100 years ago would feel right at home. Schools haven't really changed. Now, you're arguing for radical change in an institution which hasn't changed very much in the past 100 years.

(SIDE B)

JOHN MERROW

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Principal, democratic, public institutions. Can radical change of the kind you're asking for take place within public education, which ... without the political will of parents, schoolboards, and so on and so forth?

ROGER SCHANK

Well, it has to take place. I think that the parents are against it, actually. If you tell kids, for example, here's a radical conception. I ... Want to talk about radical? I don't think mathematics should be taught in the schools. After you can do multiplication, you should be done. You say that to your average parent who struggled through geometry, and they'll defend it. "Oh, it's very important." They don't know why. They never used it. But they think it's important. Nobody really wants change. I mean, politicians absolutely don't want change. Book publishers have a tremendous vested interest in things being the same. They write these books. They've been selling them for a long time. They don't want a whole new curricula to occur. They would be lost, especially if they came in electronically, didn't require books.

JOHN MERROW

How about ... how about school boards? You're almost contemptuous of school boards?

ROGER SCHANK

Well, the schoolboards are the big killer of innovation in this country. There's no school board that's willing to innovate in an interesting way. They're all only concerned with these numbers. You ask any teacher in the system right now, and what the teachers are being tortured by, the fact the test scores are down two percent in their district, and they'd better hurry up and put them up. So, there's a lot of forces against the system. But you have to remember that that schoolteacher who's dropped in in 1850 came from a time when they were trying to train factory workers that ... what was going on, and you can read this in the ti ... in the educational tracts of the time was: Let's make sure we can create docile students who'll sit there quietly, so they can learn to turn things on the ... on the assembly line. Well, you know what? That era is over.

JOHN MERROW

Question about money, about fairness, equity. What you're ... what you're proposing just somehow intuitively to me sounds as if it's going to happen in the wealthy districts, long before it would happen in the poor districts.

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ROGER SCHANK

No. Exactly the opposite. Curiously. Here's why. Okay? If you walk in tomorrow, to the South Side of Chicago, where Northwestern is, and you say, "I've got a completely radical, new curriculum in physics, which is gonna teach kids to ... to drive cars on icy roads and design rocketships and so on and so forth, totally electronically, you take it." The South Side of Chicago says, "Yes! Sign us up. We're havin' a lot of trouble teaching physics. Our students don't really like physics. We're having trouble finding a physics teacher. This is great."

JOHN MERROW

That is the poor part of Chicago.

ROGER SCHANK

Yes. South Side is the poor part. South Side is the Harlem of Chicago. Okay. Now, you go to the ... Now, you go to the Nutrier(?), which is fancy ... the fancy school district ... in the suburbs, and you say, "We'd like to put this course in your school." They say, "Well, we have a grade(?) for this curriculum. We're very proud of it. We don't really want to do this. Maybe we'll use it as a little extra curriculum." We've had this experience. I can tell you that the poor schools want this stuff. Now, the issue is: Can they afford it? Sure. Computers are cheaper and cheaper.

JOHN MERROW

If teachers' roles are different, are they going to make the same amount of money? They going to make more, make less?

ROGER SCHANK

Well, I see them as having to have a special ... a new specialty, which is basically a specialty being counselling. But teachers can be trained more effectively in, you know, how to do guidance and how do hand-holding and deal with psychological problems, which is what I'd like to see them be doing, more easily than they're trained to teach physics, frankly.

JOHN MERROW

How are they going to make more money, the same money, less money?

ROGER SCHANK

Same money.

JOHN MERROW

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Will the union go along with this?

ROGER SCHANK

Now, the union will hate it. The union does not like the teachers to have to do other things than they've already been doing. This is their problem.

JOHN MERROW

So, everybody's gonna hate it?

ROGER SCHANK

Everybody's gonna hate it except the kids. You see, the thing is, I care about the kids. The kids are gonna love it.

JOHN MERROW

Now, is this happening, what you're asking for? The government should experiment now with schools that separate the roles of academic learning and social skills, even for courses are all on line. Start a school building ... start a ... start building a school based on Outward Bound. Is that happening?

ROGER SCHANK

Well, I don't think, at this moment, could happen. As long as ... as long as we all have the ideal that our kids have to go to Harvard, and Harvard dictates the terms. And Harvard is not gonna accept a kid from Outward Bound as one of its students. Harvard is gonna have ... wants you to have two years of this and three years of that and so many scores. As long as Harvard gets to dictate that, no change will occur. What I'm saying to you is: There are certain impediments into the system from being able to make the systemic change. You can send ... You can drop your kid out of the system and say, "Okay. Now, I want you to do the Outward Bound school." But that kid's not going to Harvard. What I'm saying is, "I want the ... I want the system to be such that you can do all those things and also be successful and go to the good schools and have a normal, more normal educational life."

JOHN MERROW

We're at the dawn of a new century. Do you think this will happen in our lifetime?

ROGER SCHANK

Oh, absolutely. I think you're gonna see it in the next five years.

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JOHN MERROW

Really? Next five years?

ROGER SCHANK

Yes. Next five years.

JOHN MERROW

Big changes.

ROGER SCHANK

Big changes.

JOHN MERROW

An opti ... an optimist. It's always nice to talk to an optimist.

ROGER SCHANK

I'm building it. So, I kind of know the state that it's in.

JOHN MERROW

All right. We have to take a break now. We're just about out of time. That's Roger Schank, though, of Northwestern University and a Cognate of Arts, fascinating, deep thinker about what schools could be like in the future, fewer tests and much happier kids. I'm John Merrow. Don't go away. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL)

JOHN MERROW

I'm John Merrow. You're listening to the Merrow Report. Now, we're taking a look back. Education Week just printed its "Top 100 Most Influential People In Education In The Past 100 Years." Here to talk about it with me are Lynn Olson, senior educator at "Education Week" and Steve Drummond, deputy managing editor at Ed Week. Welcome, both of you. Thanks for being with me. And let me, before you even say, "Hello," say: Most influential people. Is that most famous? Most noteworthy? What? How do you ...

STEVE DRUMMOND

Yeah, John. We talked a lot about that. It wasn't ... It's not really the most famous people. Some of these are people that you and us and most people have never even heard of. And some of these people are not people who improved education either. Some of them were hindrances or road

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blocks to improvement. But what they are is 100 people who shaped the century, who made a difference in some way large or small, obscure or famous, ranging from presidents of the United States on down.

JOHN MERROW

For better or for worse? I mean, you do have the two shooters in Columbine, Ed Harris and Dylan Klebold.

LYNN OLSON

That's right, and we also have a Howard Jarvis, for example, famous author of Proposition 13 in California who, you know, many people would argue that that tax limitation measure really led to some of the declines in California's public school system. So, these aren't all positive influences.

JOHN MERROW

It is an interesting list. I said in the ... in the introduction to the hour ... I mentioned some names, Dr. Seuss, Dr. Spock, Dick and Jane, Albert Shanker, Phyllis Schlafly, of the Conservative ... of the Eagle Forum, Steve Jobs of Apple, Thurgood Marshall, Annie Sullivan. I mean, they're not all teachers. That's for sure.

LYNN OLSON

Yeah. One of the philosophical issues in putting this together was, you know, to remind people that education doesn't all occur in school houses. And a lot of the people who have really shaped our views about schooling and about kids really are not teachers. Then we also have some teachers and principals on the list as well.

STEVE DRUMMOND

And students, too.

JOHN MERROW

Yeah. And you only have one, I think, one president of the United States.

STEVE DRUMMOND

Two, actually. Truman signed the School Lunch Program and and L.B.J. (Overlap)

JOHN MERROW

Excuse me. I missed L.B.J. But you don't have (Overlap) ...

STEVE DRUMMOND

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Johnson, the Great Society legislation, the huge expansion of the federal involvement in education and the major federal programs that we have now stem from the 60s.

JOHN MERROW

But you don't have Eisenhower and sort of federal aid to education really began under NDEA when Ike was President.

LYNN OLSON

That's right. You know, we ... we sort of made a decision. You know. Would we include every president and ... and big things that happened? We did, I believe, at one point, have one of the health members who was most influential in the battle to prevent federal aid to education and held things up for a long time. And I'm trying to remember if he ended up making our final list.

JOHN MERROW

Who did not make it? I mean, Ike didn't make. Who else? I mean, Jimmy Carter didn't make it. He started the Education Department. Who else did not make it? Anybody ...

STEVE DRUMMOND

I think there are no Secretaries of Education on the list except Harold Bell(?) who was in the Reagan administration in The Nation At Risk Report. But Richard Reilly, for example, didn't make the list.

JOHN MERROW

Was there anybody personally you think should have made it? Lynn? That did not?

LYNN OLSON

You know, certainly looking sort of out into the future now, I think you could argue about whether Jim Kelly who helped get the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards started in this century should have made the list. You know, I think that will become more important as we head into the next 100 years.

JOHN MERROW

Did you have big fights over this list?

STEVE DRUMMOND

Oh, there was a couple that we had discussions over, and there were some ... we came up with a draft list, and we circulated around the office and, too, a lot of us spent a lot of time on the phone,

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talking to ... I spoke with a professor of mine from graduate school and ... and other people. The ... the two Columbine kids, I think were ... one of the ones that some people raised some eyebrows over.

JOHN MERROW

Is there anybody that you think should ... should have made it, that didn't, Steve (sic)?

STEVE DRUMMOND

I was pretty pleased at the outcome. There's nobody ... nobody really jumpin' out at me right now that I thought should have been on there.

JOHN MERROW

What's been the reaction? Have they called you up and said, "Hey! How come I didn't make it?"

LYNN OLSON

No. You know, I haven't heard that much reaction to this since that came out. I think, in the office it's been fun, you know, ah, it's ... it's fun for us as journalists enmeshed in sort of the daily news to be able to step back and look back at the past. And, so, within the office, it's really been a great endeavor.

JOHN MERROW

I was, as it happens, I was, yesterday, at two different times with two people who are on the list. One of them didn't mention it at all. The other person mentioned it. Actually, I mentioned it, I congratulated this person, and this person's reaction was to say, "Oh, to heck with it." She looked at and she said ... first thing she did was look to see if she made it, and then she didn't see herself in the air but she saw someone else, and thought, "Oh! wow! if that person made it and I didn't, I'm gonna be mad." And then she (Inaudible)

STEVE DRUMMOND

So, I'm dying to know who that is, John.

MERROW

I bet you are. I bet you are. My lips are sealed. Can you ... Can you tell me ... could you narrow the 100 down to a Top 10? Say, well, who are the ten most influential people in the ... in the century ... in education?

STEVE DRUMMOND

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Well, I think you could probably do that as well as we can. The diversity is so great on the list, and ... and many of the people on there made it not so much for who they were but for the cause they represented, or because they're at the right place at the right time. John Scopes is a good example. He was a ... an obscure teacher in ... in Dayton, Tennessee, and once he agreed to be the guinea pig for this evolution lawsuit, he really had ... you know, very little to do with the whole trial and all the ... the Monkey Trial and all that came after and ... and he quickly faded back into history. But in ... in terms of focusing national attention on issues of science and education and religious beliefs, that's sort of how he represents. So, to pick out ten, I mean, you have some ... some giants of the civil rights movement on there, like Thurgood Marshall. And if you looked at in that way, ah, you know, it would be easy to name some sort of heroes like that, the Little Rock Nine, or something.

LYNN OLSON

Right. There are some philosophical giants in education, obviously, like John Dewey, James Bryan Conant, you know, people who ... whose work and thinking had ... had lasting influence on the field.

JOHN MERROW

Now, Brown didn't make it, of Brown v Board of Education. That ... you have other kids there.

STEVE DRUMMOND

Yeah. And ... and that was an interesting discussion. If you notice Felicitas and Gonzalo(?) Mendez, who were involved in a similar desegregation lawsuit involving Latino farmers in California a few years before the Brown case. At one point, we did have some of the original Brown plaintiffs on the list, and then it got to be a discussion of why we had Thurgood Marshall, we had the nine students from Little Rock, we had the Mendezes, we had Earl Warren, who led the Supreme Court to the unanimous decision in the Brown Case, and it was ... it was touch-and-go to not let the desegregation battles dominate the whole thing, and yet, also to sort of represent what a huge leap forward that was in the middle of the century.

JOHN MERROW

Now, you know, someone who didn't make it is Madeleine Murray O'Hair. You have her co-plaintiffs, the Shemps.

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STEVE DRUMMOND

And then she's mentioned in there, and that's, again, some of the ... the discussion ... internal discussions we had where we were using people to represent a cause or an issue and ... and it was sort of a six of one and half dozen of the others, too (Overlap). Yeah.

JOHN MERROW

Another case that didn't make is the School Finance Decision. Rodriguez. The case that ...

LYNN OLSON

Well, and we also had discussions about that, because, obviously, you could look at Rodriguez, you could look at Serrano, which is the one we ended up running. You could also look at the Finance Case out in New Jersey. There, you know, as you recall, there were a host of school finance cases around the country that really became important in shaping the finance debate. And so, at some point, we picked one as emblematic of a whole set of ... of school finance decisions and ... and arguments that are still continuing.

JOHN MERROW

I guess, that would be my argument that Rodriguez belongs just because he was a real activist and continues to be, actually. He's fighting the same battles for his grandchildren now down in Texas, looking for a fair shake in funding, what he sees to be a fair shake. But, of course, at the state level, because the Supreme Court ruled, and Rodriguez said it was a state issue.

STEVE DRUMMOND

We should have talked to you before we put this together. It was a lot of discussions like that. One of the things that ... I mean, you raised a really good point about how many plaintiffs there are on the list and ... and what it really showed to us, we had to consciously limit that. A lot of these people stood up and ... and made their voices known to the courts. And what it really pointed out to us was how involved the court system has been in education, especially in the second half of this century.

JOHN MERROW

That is ... that is an interesting point. I guess, when you read through, you do get that sense. You have some marvelous names in here. You have Frank W. Sir ... Seer? The father of ...

STEVE DRUMMOND

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Oh, the father of school busing.

JOHN MERROW

Yes. Yeah. I mean, people I'd never heard of, not that that means anything.

STEVE DRUMMOND

We wrote a little story about him, and he was the guy who picked out that color, yellow, and they call it National School Bus Chrome, is the official name of it. And again he's a guy, who, emblematic of this shift to you know, transporting rural kids to schools and, you know, making public schools accessible out in, you know, out into the countryside, even, and safe, of course, as well.

JOHN MERROW

And I hope people were paying attention to that, because I know that's going to ... Regis Philbin is probably listening in. That's going to be a question on that ... "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" kind of show? Now, what about decade by decade? You don't want to do a top ten. But is there a ... someone who jumps out at you in any particular decade as really dominating? Maybe John Dewey, very early in this century.

STEVE DRUMMOND

Al Shanker would be the one for the ... if you ... split the century into two, probably, Dewey in the early part, and I would argue that Shanker was as influential and ... and outspoken across decades from the, you know, from his sort of in-the-street kind of strike battles in the 60s to becoming sort of a thinker and a policy expert all the way up into the 90s.

JOHN MERROW

So ... so, that defines Albert Shanker as kind of the father of a modern teacher union movement that's willing to strike and so on. But you should tell us who John Dewey is, for those who don't know.

LYNN OLSON

Well, for those who don't know, you know, Dewey, ah, has, ah, sometimes been called, really, one of the most influential writers not ... not just on education but about American philosophy and politics in general. And rightly or wrongly, he is often both idolized and blamed for the progressive movement in education. He, ah, was a professor at the University of Chicago, started

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a lab school there to try to out some of his ideas, at the time, really, trying to get away what was ... from what was viewed as very rigid, bookish, learning, to have kids get more hands-on activities and stray away a little bit from textbooks. And those ideas remain very controversial to this day.

JOHN MERROW

But they live powerfully in the works of Debbie Meier, the work in action of Debbie Meier and Ted Sizer ...

LYNN OLSON

Absolutely.

JOHN MERROW

Two ... two names on your list now.

LYNN OLSON

Absolutely. You can ... You can continue to trace his ideas right down to the present time. As well as critics, E.D. Hirsch in his books, has been quite critical of Dewey. So, his ... his stature lives on.

JOHN MERROW

Dick and Jane made it. Did you fight about that?

LYNN OLSON

Actually, that was an easy one for all of us who grew up going to public schools during a certain era.

STEVE DRUMMOND

I saw that picture, and it brought back the most vivid memory of the ... of the day in kindergarten that I learned how to read, and it was again ... a desire to sort of have a fun one on there but also really millions of children in this country learned how to make letters into words and words into sentences, looking at these, you know, these same pictures, and these very common characters, and even though they've sort of fallen by the wayside, I think there was a, you know, from the 30s to the 70s, they were just virtually ubiquitous in school.

JOHN MERROW

Now, I may be wrong but I don't think Mr. Rogers made it, although "Sesame Street," the show Joan Cooney did. But Fred Rogers didn't.

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LYNN OLSON

That's right.

JOHN MERROW

And Buffalo Bob of Howdy Doody.

LYNN OLSON

Captain Kangaroo.

JOHN MERROW

Captain Kangaroo. I mean, where are ... where are all those good teachers?

STEVE DRUMMOND

The pop culture is tough, and Mr. Rogers, being the classic example but... and we had sort of made it ... had a discussion at one point to limit children's television, and we went with the creator of "Sesame Street," which is really regarded as a, you know, such a landmark in educational programming. But Captain Kangaroo. There could have been a pretty ... pretty long list there.

JOHN MERROW

This is great trivia. I mean, it's significant and fascinating intellectually to think about the currents. But it's also wonderful, too, like, for example, Paul W. Updegraf(?). Never heard of him. But I ... I go through your list in Ed Week and I see that this Oklahoma taxpayer set out to prevent the state from issuing paychecks to public employees, including teachers who've not taken anti-subversive loyalty oaths. But his lawsuit had the opposite effect. The Supreme Court declared the oath unconstitutional in 1952.

(OVERLAPPING VOICES)

LYNN OLSON

There are a couple of people on here who are here most notably because their efforts backfired. Another one in that regard is Walter Pearce(?), who was a Governor of Oregon who ran on a platform that included Ku Klux Klan support, essentially to force all children to attend public schools. What happened is they passed a law. The Supreme Court came back and said, in fact, children have a right to a private school education. So ... so, some of these people are on the list because they tried and ended up with a different result than they had sought.

JOHN MERROW

The Merrow Report
“Schools of the Future”

How about ... We're gonna run out of time soon. But how about a prediction for people who are going to be influential in the ... in the new century? Let's get a head start on next century's list.

We may not (Overlap) ...

STEVE DRUMMOND

I don't know if I could ... I don't know if I could pick the people themselves. But the ... clearly, the choice movement and the involvement in the sort of business world. We sort of hint at it with our Chris Whittle and Steve Jobs. But I think you would see a lot more of that. There is going to be somebody who figures out a way to make a lot of money off of public education and to ... to sort of crack this nut and to make money and, you know, do some of the goals that public education sets out to do, and I think you'll see ...

JOHN MERROW

They'll be on the list.

STEVE DRUMMOND

You'll see some ... Yeah.

JOHN MERROW

He or she will be on the list. Well, that's Lynn Olson and Steve Drummond of "Education Week," talking about "The Faces Of The Century, The Top 100 Most Influential People In Education." Thanks very much.

(COMMERCIAL)

JOHN MERROW

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