

Philosophers at the Policy Table: A Theory of Schooling Confronts Real School Reform

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Schools are stubborn. Major voices in school reform — theorists and practitioners alike — share the conviction that something deep within schools and schooling defies substantial change. Elliot Eisner refers to the “robust” quality of schools.¹ Barbara Benham Tye speaks of the “deep structure” of schooling.² David Tyack and Larry Cuban posit a persistent “grammar of schooling”³ that comprises what Mary Metz has described as “the real school.”⁴

Metz, Tye, Tyack, and Cuban label the widespread school practices that together comprise persistent cultural notions of what a school is and should be. The persistent school practices referred to include such features as the separation of elementary schools into self-contained classrooms, a September to June calendar, and students receiving grades. In the aggregate these practices perpetuate themselves with great tenacity because the ways in which schools organize time, space, and people leave a lasting imprint on our notions of what schooling really is and, therefore, should continue to be.

School reform experts, though, typically stop pursuing their intriguing line of thought just when they are on the verge of real discovery. In speaking of the “real school,” the “deep structure of schooling,” or “the grammar of schooling,” these and other experts have labeled a set of phenomena that they fail to explain. They do not ask such fundamental questions as: *Why* is there a “grammar of schooling?” or *What* makes the “deep structure” of schooling so persistent?

A premature endpoint is not the only shortcoming of existing literature on school reform. Without completing the line of thought to which they have gestured, even the most observant school reform experts have reached wrongheaded conclusions about the inertia of schooling. They have mistakenly pathologized the inertia of schools. In employing the “robustness” of the “real school” to explain the implementation failure of school reform efforts, the experts rashly imply that the inertia of schools is a negative force. School reformers seek to make schools more malleable. They want to cure their stubbornness.

In turning to the phenomenology of Ernst Cassirer and building a theory of schooling as a “cultural form,” this essay, by contrast, argues that the deep structures that make schooling sluggish in the face of dramatic reform efforts are not menacing roadblocks to change. Instead the structures will turn out to be navigable bridges toward achieving schools that thrive. By taking a philosophical detour to the cultural theory of an almost-forgotten phenomenologist, this essay will gesture towards the kind of work where philosophers of education can exert a real influence in the improvement of our public schools.

Why turn to Cassirer, a phenomenologist of culture whose work is little discussed in this country? First, I would suggest that Cassirer’s rich corpus, setting

forth a comprehensive anthropology and theory of culture, remains unexplored and promising territory for philosophy of education. The only philosopher to have addressed the potential value of Cassirer's work in reference to education is Maria Amilburu, a Spanish philosopher who, at a European conference three years ago, presented a brief exegetical essay entitled, "Man and Culture: The Basis for a Philosophy of Education in Cassirer's Anthropology." In the essay, Amilburu merely announced that Cassirer's notions of "man" and "culture" "may be of interest in order to clarify some questions in Philosophy of Education."

Further, Cassirer's phenomenology can be productively used to form the basis for an illuminating theory of schooling as a "cultural form." Schooling hereby emerges as one of the fundamental ways in which human beings organize their social experience and give it meaning. Viewing schooling in this way will help us to explain why there are underlying, configuring structures in schooling and why these structures are so persistent. This understanding will, in turn, permit us to explain better the implementation failure of major school reform initiatives and guide us towards possible, ameliorative reforms.

CASSIRER'S ANTHROPOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE

The likelihood that many in this essay's audience will not be familiar with Cassirer's theory of symbolic forms necessitates a summary of Cassirer's anthropology and philosophy of culture.

Ernst Cassirer took as his point of departure Kant's epistemological Copernican revolution. Although agreeing with Kant on the unknowability of the thing-in-itself and the appropriateness of a critical epistemology, Cassirer modified and extended Kant's project.⁵ First, Cassirer modified Kant's schema by suggesting that symbols and not images are the basic ingredient of the schema.⁶ Second, he extended Kant's schema by positing that there are six other fundamental ways in which human beings create intermediate symbols according to which they are able to construct reality and express their essence. These six ways, which Cassirer refers to as the symbolic or cultural forms, are religion, myth, art, language, history and science.

Third, Cassirer asserted — again going beyond Kant — that philosophy, in order to reach a sufficiently full understanding of human beings, must study the products not only of Kant's reason but also and more importantly of the six cultural forms. He sought to avoid the "radical intellectualization of human life" that he perceived in Kant's philosophy.⁷ Cassirer insisted that philosophy should study *all* of the ways in which human beings synthesize subject and object, world and spirit, into symbolic worlds. "The critique of reason became the critique of culture."⁸ In his major works on culture, *The Problem of Knowledge* (1920), *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1923-1929), *An Essay on Man* (1944), and *Myth of the State* (1946), Cassirer carried out that task.

Cassirer's project aimed at ultimately explaining what a human being is. With his Kantian approach and its abandonment of the knowability of substance, Cassirer knew that he was "under no obligation to prove the substantial unity of man" (*EM*, 222). He would instead provide a *functional* definition of human beings.

Cassirer defined human beings according to their symbolic function. A human being is inevitably an *animal symbolicum* (*EM*, 26). But what exactly is symbolic function? According to Cassirer, it is the original, spiritual process that is the essence of consciousness. By means of symbolic function our consciousness meets impression with expression. As such, symbolic function is creative:

Man is surrounded by a reality that he did not make, that he has to accept as an ultimate fact. But it is for him to interpret reality, to make it coherent, understandable, intelligible — and this task is performed in different ways in the various human activities, in religion and art, in science and philosophy. In all of them man proves to be not only the passive recipient of an external world; he is active and creative.⁹

As a result of their symbolic function, human beings are meaning (*Bedeutung*) makers who organize their feelings, desires, and thought to create their experience, thereby expressing themselves and building up culture (*EM*, 63, 224). “What we call human culture,” Cassirer maintained, “may be defined as the progressive objectification of our human experience — as the objectification of our feelings, our emotions, our desires, our impressions, our intuitions, our thoughts and ideas.”¹⁰

The various forms of culture can best be thought of as complex systems of related symbolic functioning. Cassirer’s cultural forms are the various “roads by which the spirit proceeds towards its objectivization, that is, its self-revelation.”¹¹ Each form resembles the other in the underlying function of symbolic activity but differs from each other form in its particular “constitutive principle which sets its stamp, as it were, on all the particular forms within it.”¹²

Three key features of each cultural form differentiate each one from the others: (1) the form’s raw material (my term, not Cassirer’s), that is, that which the particular form objectifies; (2) its method; and (3) its product. Language objectifies sense-perceptions by bringing them under class-concepts which are designated by names.¹³ Science objectifies thoughts, creating order among them by means of classification and systematization (*EM*, 81). History organizes a symbolic universe of past events into a re-formed historical process (*EM*, 185). Through history, “Man emerges from the mere flux of things, striving to eternize and immortalize human life” (*EM*, 184). Myth objectifies primitive feelings such as anxiety and fear that arise in social experience and organizes them into images.¹⁴ Religion, which arises from the awareness of myth’s images as mere symbols, also objectifies feelings. But where myth organized feelings such as fear and anxiety, religion organizes “affections of confidence and hope, of love, and gratitude.”¹⁵ It also differs from the other forms in recognizing a center, a sole reality; only things that are related to this center have content and significance.¹⁶ Art objectifies intuitions, creating forms and giving rise to order in the apprehension of appearances (*EM*, 168). Art differs from the other forms because it presents forms and does not worry about representing (*EM*, 169). And yet like all the other forms, “it is one of the ways leading to an objective view of things and of human life” (*EM*, 143).

In continually processing certain data of experience into organized, systematized, meaningful constructs, each form is a process of objectification of consciousness. Although the term “process of objectification” seems to imply progress we should note that Cassirer does not view objectification as a linear process. It is a

dialectical process in which old and new constantly interact, “a ceaseless struggle between tradition and innovation, between reproductive and creative forces” (*EM*, 224).

A summary of Cassirer’s philosophy of culture is not complete without a closer look at myth, the cultural form which figured most prominently in his mind at the time of his sudden death in 1945. Mythical consciousness is a non-theoretical symbolic mode wherein the human being “does not recognize the dividing line between real and unreal, between reality and appearance, which theoretical objectivization draws and must draw.”¹⁷ The symbolic function of myth organizes strong feelings, especially of anxiety or fear in social situations, by means of non-reflective attachments of signification and value.

Mythical symbolic function operates non-theoretically, but it does not operate without order: “it is rather a certain hypertrophy, a preponderance and exuberance of the ‘classifying instinct.’”¹⁸ In its structuring of space and time, mythical symbolizing expresses the “desire of human nature to come to terms with reality, to live in an ordered universe, and to overcome the chaotic state in which things and thoughts have not yet assumed a definite shape and structure.”¹⁹

Early in his career, Cassirer had believed that mythical consciousness was a primitive form of consciousness that human beings outgrew as they progressed out of non-theoretical myth into highly image-conscious religion. By 1945, though, the frightening effectiveness of Nazi ritual and propaganda had confronted Cassirer with the possibility that human beings at any stage of civilization never fully escape myth. He broadened the persistence of myth to apply to all of his cultural forms: “in all fields of human culture...in language, religion, poetry, and art, myth always is present as *aufgehobenes Moment*.”²⁰

The role that mythical consciousness plays in the other cultural forms is enabled by the passing of young children through a mythical stage of development. In so doing, children recapitulate the passage of “primitive” human beings through a mythical stage (*EM*, 77). Even if a culture as a whole has outgrown the primacy of mythical consciousness, each individual that dwells within that culture passes through a mythical stage, configuring the time, space, and social encounters of that “advanced” culture in mythical forms.

SCHOOLING AS CULTURAL FORM

With Cassirer’s philosophy of symbolic forms outlined, we can now build from it a theory of schooling as a cultural form.²²

The first move in nominating schooling as a cultural form is to accept Cassirer’s underlying anthropology of human beings as both “*animal symbolicum*” and “*zoon politikon* (political animal)” In fact, the social/political nature of human beings plays a particularly crucial role in the theory of schooling as a cultural form because the social/cultural data of experience serve as the raw material for the cultural form of schooling.

The second move is to justify the portrayal of schooling as a cultural form in accordance with the features that Cassirer claimed were required of a cultural form.

A summary of Cassirer's prerequisites for a cultural form will help to make this second move clear. In Cassirer's system, a cultural or symbolic form is characterized by the following:

1. It is a process of objectification of consciousness.
2. A cultural form has a "unity of form" according to which the particular form actively configures "all the diversity of the objective material it presents."²³ This unity of mode is functional and does not restrict a cultural form to exhibiting invariable outward traits.
3. In accordance with both (1) and (2), the symbolic form can be looked at as a mode of seeing reality (*EM*, 170) or a form assumed by humanity's understanding of the world.²⁴
4. A cultural form is creative. There is a constant process of productivity and creation as consciousness confronts impression with expression.²⁵
5. It is a constitutive condition of society, especially a "society of thought and feeling." On this important point it is worth citing from Cassirer:

In the case of man we find not only, as among animals, a society of action but also a society of thought and feeling. Language, myth, art, religion, science are the elements and the constitutive conditions of this higher form of society. They are the means by which the forms of social life that we find in organic nature develop into a new state, that of social consciousness. Man's social consciousness depends upon a double act, of identification and discrimination. Man cannot find himself, he cannot become aware of his individuality, save through the medium of social life. But to him this medium signifies more than an external determining force. Man, like the animals, submits to the rules of society but, in addition, he has an active share in bringing about, and an active power to change, the forms of social life.²⁶

6. A cultural form has a connection with the elements of mythical consciousness, especially through mythical configurations of space and time.²⁷
7. It exhibits an internal dialectic, a struggle between tradition and innovation (*EM*, 224).

The appropriateness of a theory of schooling as a cultural form becomes evident when we note how easily and thought-provokingly schooling meets each of Cassirer's seven prerequisites:

1. Schooling as a cultural form is a process of objectification wherein symbolic activity organizes a certain type of data of experience into meaningful configurations. Whereas the raw material for science is thoughts about the natural world, and for myth is feelings arising from social encounters,²⁸ schooling's raw material is thoughts about the social world. As a result, schooling is a symbolic *uhr*-form. In schooling, symbolizing human beings endow with varying significance and thereby organize thoughts about all types of encounters with the social world. Schooling organizes not only thoughts about other people but also thoughts about the other cultural forms which comprise social life. In this sense schooling can involve the organization of thoughts about language, myth, religion, art, history, science, or even about culture as a whole. It also involves the organization of thoughts about other people and groups of people.

2. Schooling as a cultural form has a “unity of form” according to which the process of objectification proceeds. The unity of form that animates schooling is classification and systematization, just as it is for the other thought-organizing form, science.

3. As a cultural form, the process of schooling yields a mode of seeing reality (*EM*, 170). Through schooling human beings perceive and structure the forms of knowledge that in themselves comprise cultural/historical ways of knowing (for example, science, history, language, art and many other disciplines) *and* their thoughts about social life. This combination causes schooling to yield a particularly complete mode of seeing reality.

4. Like the other cultural forms, schooling involves a process that is inevitably creative. Confronted with the data of social experience, schooling responds with classifying and systematizing the data of human social experience into new configurations. Because of this creative process, society does not merely replicate itself in schooling but rather re-creates itself.

5. Schooling is certainly a constitutive condition of society, especially a “society of thought and feeling.” As Dewey suggested, schooling is perhaps the primary way in which existing forms of social life are creatively organized and transmitted in our society.

6. As a cultural form schooling maintains connections with mythical consciousness. The strong connection with myth finds partial explanation in the fact that human beings often begin their schooling when they are still children whose consciousness is in the mythical stage. Perhaps that explains why the ways in which time (for example, the regularization of calendar time in American schooling with its enduring legacy of the sense of renewal in September and closure in June) and space are structured by school experience prove so enduring.

7. Schooling easily — and in the context of this essay, obviously — meets the final prerequisite to schooling’s status as a cultural form, namely that it exhibits an internal dialectic, an ongoing struggle between tradition and innovation.

At least on Cassirer’s terms, it seems reasonable to view schooling as a cultural form. Adopting a theory of schooling as a cultural form, however, requires more than reasonableness. The theory must offer explicative and practical advantages.

The theory of schooling as a cultural form first proves valuable in its expansion of the vision of what schooling is for. With the theory we see that schooling involves much more than instruction and academic learning. Schooling forms and reforms cultural life, it shapes and reshapes the social consciousness of those who participate in schooling. In schooling, society and culture are in a continual process of creative transmission. In this aspect the theory closely tracks Dewey’s.

The theory, however, accommodates a wider definition of schooling than Dewey’s century-old theory. “Schooling” could refer to everything from a twentieth century American comprehensive secondary school or a one-room schoolhouse of the nineteenth century, to a tutor instructing two young princesses in a room of a

sixteenth-century palace, or a group of Neolithic tribesmen gathered in a village to tell young boys stories about the recent hunt.

The theory also expands the notion of *who* experiences schooling. While schooling might exert the most profound influence on those who are the youngest and/or least experienced in schooling — that is, people who are termed “students” — the theory suggests that schooling is a powerful pathway of the formation of consciousness of *all* who experience it. In our current form of schooling in this country “all” would include teachers, administrators, staff, parents, people within the community who are involved in providing outside services to schools, and even all of the former students in the population. The expanded definition of the “experiencers” of schooling provided by the new theory is, in fact, prerequisite to the notion of portraying schooling as a cultural form, that is, as one of the pathways through which not only individual but also collective consciousness proceeds towards its objectification.

The new theory’s comprehensive definition of the “experiencers” of schooling in turn helps to explain why the public cares so deeply about what our schools do, how they teach, what they teach, whom they teach, and whom they serve. So many people clamor for or against school reforms because so many people participate in schooling and have formed their own configurations of what schooling and the social world are. They have visions of what schools should be and should not be. Moreover, whether they realize it or not part of their concern is that schooling, in being the process of objectification of our thoughts about the social world, reflects what the social world is. To lobby for a particular change in our public schools is to lobby for a particular vision of society.

Schooling’s particular power to perpetuate its outward form finds amplification in the strong role that mythical consciousness appears naturally to play within schooling — at least as schooling is configured in our current society. I speak here not of the kind of self-conscious, intentionally employed myth that Cassirer perceived in the Nazi’s use of political myth within the state (although we can certainly find instances where myths are intentionally created and deployed within schools), but rather the mythical configurations of time, space and the social world that occur naturally in schooling. The operation of mythical consciousness in schooling particularly illuminates the “deep structure” of schooling and the resulting inertia of schools in the face of reform efforts.

The time, space and social encounters of schools confront young children who, in their mythical symbolic function, must configure these data of experience into images that have meaning. Otherwise they would dwell within a chaos that they could neither comprehend nor, therefore, bear. Children endow with significance predictable, regular cycles in time; space is configured into zones or into meaningful *versus* insignificant spaces. In a nursery school classroom, for example, children first configure time as a duration between drop-off and pick-up. The return of the parent or other care-giver is the meaningful point of time around which all other time is configured. As their experience of the nursery school routine unfolds they begin sensing certain recurring cycles. Perhaps there is circle time where the class and

teacher gather at a certain time each day. Perhaps a music teacher visits the class at a certain time each week. You can see this process at work if you ask a three-and-a-half-year-old what Tuesday is. She will typically respond that it is “x” or “the x day,” where x is the activity that happens on Tuesday. Although she is old enough to understand that the days of the week cycle through in a predictable order, she is not yet old enough to look at this cycle purely conceptually. Her response is not, “Tuesday is the second day of the week.”

As children age within school their notions of school time and school space become increasingly conceptual and less mythical but the original mythical endowments of meaning and significance upon important divisions of time and space in schooling are never fully outgrown. Thus, for example, the teacher who participates in the schooling situation brings with him his own residual mythical images of the classroom and the school. As does the parent who enrolls her child in the school. And the policy maker who lobbies for a particular type of school reform.

The penetration of mythical ways of “thinking” in schooling helps to explain the *strength* of the inertia of schooling in the face of reform efforts. We should recognize, though, that schooling would have a substantial amount of inertia even without its mythical aspect. *Any* cultural form has significant inertia. A cultural form is a process. The form cannot substantially change from moment to moment. It can only change incrementally.

Thus, for example, language cannot be changed overnight but over the course of a century a given language will have changed in important ways. Certain words will have come and gone from the vocabulary. New areas of human experience for which there was formerly not adequate vocabulary may have been opened up to perception. But the world-view embodied in a language cannot be changed by decree or with any immediacy. This is not to say that change is impossible. Providing there are sufficient points of contact between a new approach and its predecessor, change and — depending on one’s perspective — improvement are possible. Continuity may restrict us to tinkering but tinkering, as Cuban and Tyack affirm, can carry us “toward Utopia.”²⁹

Indeed, our theory allows us to see that change and strivings for change are an inherent part of schooling. In each experience of schooling an individual receives the products of past schooling but also shapes that schooling into a new configuration. Our theory thus helps us to understand the dual tendency of schooling to be both traditional and innovative and to be at the center of a struggle between conservatives and progressives.

What, then, does the theory of schooling as a cultural form imply for school reform? The theory would immediately suggest two things to would-be reformers: (1) schools will be inert in the face of substantial change, and (2) incremental changes will be much more easily received and made. Admittedly these concepts are old news to school reformers. Even in these simplistic and oft articulated concepts, though, the theory proves valuable.

The theory provides deeper, more full explanation for the inertia of schooling. Understanding the inertia more thoroughly allows reformers: (1) to recognize which

reforms might therefore have little hope of working overnight, and (2) to discern strategies to get the public to embrace an idea. If, for example, a school reformer understands in advance that a proposal for year-round schooling will meet resistance if for no other reason than that summer is not-school in the minds of schooled Americans — and summer has been not-school for them for most of their lives — her first step can be to address this roadblock in the public's thinking. She might consider the merits of gradual, incremental lengthening of the school year. She might attempt to bridge from the old calendar's rhythms to new ones, providing events or spaces that will invoke the feelings of closure and renewal experienced at the beginning and end of traditional summer holidays.

The value of the theory of schooling as cultural form is not limited, though, to deeper explanation of old concepts. It introduces worthy new concepts as well. The theory asks school reformers to look at the very inertia that might thwart their reform efforts not in a negative light but rather as an opportunity, as a source of power for improving the schools. Schools can be vital, meaningful institutions that encourage the creation of meaning and expression by our society and culture precisely *because* they carry with them inertia-producing symbolic configurations of past thoughts of the social world. This is not to claim that schooling can reliably avoid perpetuating bad meanings and bad structures of power. But it does mean that reformers should always think twice before deciding to throw away a lot of good in order to get rid of the bad. Reformers should work on restructuring schools to avoid perpetuation of ideologies that distort and oppress. They should do so, however, by making use of what is acknowledged to be desirable in schooling as a tool for working to eradicate the undesirable. In this way, the very structures that make schooling inert can be used as powerful tools to make school reforms palatable to the public and to the people that work in schools. Inertia can produce momentum.

Further, the theory reminds those who think about school reform that students are not the only “experiencers of schooling.” Changes in schooling can not be framed merely in terms of how they benefit children, or even children and teachers. The theory asks us to consider that the vitality of schooling as a public institution will depend on how well all of the “experiencers of schooling” are served by our public schools.

Specifically, our public schools must continue to thrive as places where a wide range of people in our society are able to construct social meaning. The theory exposes to school policy-makers the reality that schooling is the process of constructing meaning out of social experience. Schooling is one of the few ways left in our society where individual and collective meaning is constructed in our political space. Organized religion, for example, has receded in its role of providing this meaning-making opportunity to society in a sufficiently broad sense. The theory of schooling as a cultural form directs our attention towards the importance of ensuring not merely the perpetuation of public schools but the relevant and socially-ameliorating survival of public schooling as a vibrant political institution.

1. Elliot W. Eisner, *The Kind of Schools We Need* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998), 158.

2. Barbara Benham Tye, *Hard Truths: Uncovering the Deep Structure of Schooling* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000), 3.
3. Larry Cuban and David B. Tyack, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 86.
4. Mary H. Metz, "Real School: A Universal Drama Amid Disparate Experience," in *Education Politics for the New Century*, ed. Douglas E. Mitchell and Margaret E. Goertz (New York: Falmer Press, 1990), 75-91.
5. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 2: Mythical Thought*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 20.
6. Charles Hendel, "Introduction," in Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 1* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 50.
7. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man — An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture*, 2d ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 172. This text will be cited as *EM* for all subsequent references.
8. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 1: Language*, 80.
9. Ernst Cassirer, "Language and Art II," in *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, ed. D.P. Verene (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), 195.
10. *Ibid.*, 167.
11. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 1: Language*, 78.
12. *Ibid.*, 97.
13. Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, 2d ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 45.
14. *Ibid.*, 45-47.
15. Cassirer, "Language and Art," 176.
16. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 2*, 246.
17. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 3: The Phenomenology of Knowledge*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 67.
18. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, 15.
19. *Ibid.*, 15.
20. Ernst Cassirer, "The Technique of our Modern Political Myths," in Verene, *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, 246.
22. The terms "education" and "school" require clarification, especially in their relation to the term, "schooling."

I take "education" to apply quite comprehensively across the range of activities and behaviors in which human beings engage. I do not limit education to something that happens in schools or any particular institution or situation. Education may occur in schools, in churches, in interactions between people, in interactions between a person and a text, in a moment of artistic creation. Education, to use Cassirer's terminology, is the general process of reorganization and reconstruction of impressions which we experience in the symbolic functioning inherent to all cultural forms. Each moment of symbolic function is an inevitably educative moment that involves a new understanding of the world. Each stage in the progressive build-up of the world of the "I" is a stage in an educative process. Further, education need not be limited to an *individual's* education. One could speak of the education of society or the education of a culture or, as one might construe Hegel's *Phenomenology*, of the education of Spirit.

As a cultural form is just one mode of symbolic functioning, so schooling is just one mode of education. The nature of that mode is, of course, developed in the body of the paper.

A "school" is a particular instance in space and time of schooling. It is a manifestation of the form. The terms school and schooling can, in speaking of our current, western civilization be used synonymously without significant error. In our culture, schooling occurs in schools. However, I define both school and schooling broadly in making this equation. I do not limit schools to public K-12 institutions with classrooms, teachers and students. "School" encompasses such institutions as independent schools, parochial schools, higher education institutions, trade schools, even home schools.

23. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 2: Mythical Thought*, 235.

24. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 3*, 13.
25. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 2*, 23.
26. *Ibid.*, 223.
27. Ernst Cassirer, "Critical Idealism as a Philosophy of Culture," in Verene, *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, 87.
28. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, 37 and 45.
29. Cuban and Tyack, *Tinkering Toward Utopia*.