

Georgia State University

ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

Educational Policy Studies Dissertations

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Spring 5-1-2023

George S. Counts on the Role of Indoctrination in Education: An Exegesis

James Alexander Aucoin Keller

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/eps_diss

Recommended Citation

Keller, James Alexander Aucoin, "George S. Counts on the Role of Indoctrination in Education: An Exegesis." Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2023.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/35387389>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Educational Policy Studies at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Educational Policy Studies Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.

ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, *GEORGE S. COUNTS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION: AN EXEGESIS*, by JAMES ALEXANDER AUCOIN KELLER, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the College of Education & Human Development, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

Deron Boyles, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

Chara Bohan, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Qiana Lachaud, Ph.D.
Committee Member

David Johnson, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Date

Jennifer Esposito, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Department of Educational
Policy Studies

Paul Alberto, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education &
Human Development

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

By presenting this dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the advanced degree from Georgia State University, I agree that the library of Georgia State University shall make it available for inspection and circulation in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I agree that permission to quote, to copy from, or to publish this dissertation may be granted by the professor under whose direction it was written, by the College of Education & Human Development's Director of Graduate Studies, or by me. Such quoting, copying, or publishing must be solely for scholarly purposes and will not involve potential financial gain. It is understood that any copying from or publication of this dissertation which involves potential financial gain will not be allowed without my written permission.

James Alexander Aucoin Keller

NOTICE TO BORROWERS

All dissertations deposited in the Georgia State University library must be used in accordance with the stipulations prescribed by the author in the preceding statement. The author of this dissertation is:

James Alexander Aucoin Keller
Educational Policy Studies
College of Education & Human Development
Georgia State University

The director of this dissertation is:

Deron Boyles, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Policy Studies
College of Education & Human Development
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303

CURRICULUM VITAE

James Alexander Aucoin Keller

ADDRESS: 1275 Elizabeth Ave. SW.
Atlanta, GA. 30310

EDUCATION:

Ph.D.	2023	Georgia State University Educational Policy Studies
Master's Degree	2013	Georgia State University Behavior and Learning Disabilities
Bachelor's Degree	2008	Ithaca College Psychology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2021-present	Director of Student Services and Federal Programs Northwest Classical Academy
2018-2021	Special Education Lead Teacher Atlanta Classical Academy
2016-2018	Director of Programs GivingPoint

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Aucoin, J. A. (2017, October). *Creating the Public: Reimagining the Purpose of Public Education*. Ohio Valley Philosophical Society's annual conference, Mundelein, Illinois.

Aucoin, J. A. (2015, September). *The U.S. Working-Class Intellectual: Education, 21st Century Grass-Roots Organizing, and the Development of a (Re)New(Ed) School of Thought*. Ohio Valley Philosophical Society's annual conference, Dayton, Ohio.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

**GEORGE S. COUNTS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION:
AN EXEGESIS**

by

JAMES ALEXANDER AUCOIN KELLER

Under the Direction of Deron Boyles, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

In his famed pamphlet *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* George S. Counts claims that “for Progressive Education...to be genuinely progressive, it must... become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination.”¹ The current and prevailing definitions of progressive education and of indoctrination are antithetical to one another making Counts’ challenge and argument from the 1930s contradictory. This quandary calls into question the validity and relevance of Counts’ challenge for educators and educational policy today. Critiques of Counts’ work decry his use of indoctrination, yet little evidence exists regarding Counts’ beliefs on indoctrination and education and his definition of the term. Has this lack of evidence perpetuated a misrepresentation of Counts’ beliefs and diminished the value that his work should have in the greater scholarly efforts to study the Social Foundations of Education? This research is a historical/philosophical study and exegesis of indoctrination in Counts’ work. The goal is to understand why he would argue for indoctrination in education and claim it to be a more progressive act.

INDEX WORDS: George S. Counts, Indoctrination, Imposition, Education

¹ George S. Counts, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969).

GEORGE S. COUNTS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION:

AN EXEGESIS

by

JAMES ALEXANDER AUCOIN KELLER

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Social Foundations

in

Educational Policy Studies

in

the College of Education & Human Development

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA

2023

Copyright by
James Alexander Aucoin Keller
2023

DEDICATION

To my wife and children, and all the students—past, present, and future—for whom I do this work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my wife for her consistent support of me as I struggled through my own self-doubt. Thank you for always supporting and motivating me. I would also like to thank my children who inspire me and who's existence pushes me to pursue my goals of making this world better for them to live in.

I would like to acknowledge my good friend Chris Sherwood for helping me in my archive search. Thank you for taking a road trip with me and for scanning all those documents. Without your help, I would have been there for days.

I would like to acknowledge my advisor and Committee Chair, Dr. Boyles, for challenging me and forcing me back to the drawing board. The continued effort that I had to put in helped to produce this dissertation and has helped me to finally see the path I'd like to take in the future.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge George S. Counts for blazing the trail and articulating the vision that has given color and life to the words I have been wrestling to find on my own. I hope that my work does adequate justice to your legacy.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES	v
1 THE PROBLEM.....	1
Research Questions.....	6
Purpose.....	6
The Meaning of Indoctrination: Historical and Contextual views in the United States ..	7
Significance of the Study	16
2 GEORGE S. COUNTS: The Conservative.....	19
3 INTERPRETING COUNTS: ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT FRAMING OF COUNTS' EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS – A Review of the Literature	28
4 COUNTS' WRITINGS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION..	113
<i>Principles of Education (1924).....</i>	<i>114</i>
<i>American Road To Culture (1930).....</i>	<i>123</i>
<i>Dare The School Build a New Social Order (1932)</i>	<i>133</i>
“Education for What?: The Ten Fallacies of the Educators” (I) and “Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy” (II) (1932)	160
<i>The Social Foundations of Education (1934).....</i>	<i>162</i>
<i>The Prospects of American Democracy (1938)</i>	<i>172</i>
“The Promise of American Democracy” (1939).....	182
<i>The Schools can Teach Democracy (1939).....</i>	<i>184</i>
<i>The Education of Free Men in American Democracy (1941)</i>	<i>187</i>
“Presidential Address” (1941)	193
“Education in an Age of Decision” (1942)	195
“Education and Post War America” (1944)	196
<i>Education and the Promise of America (1945).....</i>	<i>199</i>
<i>Education and American Civilization (1952)</i>	<i>203</i>
“The Moral Foundations of American Civilization” (1953)	215
<i>Decision Making and American Values in School Administration (1954)</i>	<i>216</i>
“The Intangible Supports of Liberty” (1956).....	223
“Education and the Foundations of Liberty” (1958).....	225

“A Rational Faith in Education” (1958)	227
“The Spirit of American Education” (1958).....	228
<i>Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom</i> (1962)	230
“The Redirection of Public Education: A Frontier of the Sixties” (1962)	233
“Dare the School Build the Great Society” (1965).....	235
“Education and Catastrophe” (1966).....	237
“Education For Tomorrow’s World” (1969).....	237
“Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” (1969)	239
“International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education” (1971).....	245
“What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript).....	246
“Education and the Great Transition” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)	248
“Education and the Fate of the Republic” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)	249
“The Challenge of These Times to the University” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript).....	250
5 ANALYSIS OF COUNTS’ VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION	252
6 IF EDUCATION IS INDOCTRINATION, THEN... ..	290
What Should be Indoctrinated and Who is Responsible?.....	291
Counts, Indoctrination, and the Progressive Education Movement: Are they Contradictory?	296
Reframing Counts’ Educational Theory: Indoctrination is the Cornerstone.....	301
Suggestions for Further Research	304
REFERENCES.....	306

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Principles of Education</i>	115
Table 2. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>American Road to Culture</i>	124
Table 3. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?”	134
Table 4. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education Through (Thru) Indoctrination”	137
Table 5. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership”	146
Table 6. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Dare the School Build the New Social Order?</i>	147
Table 7. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education for What? I: The Ten Fallacies of the Educators” and “Education for What? II: Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy”	160
Table 8. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>The Social Foundations of Education</i>	162
Table 9. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>The Prospects of American Democracy</i>	172
Table 10. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Promise of American Democracy”	183
Table 11. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>The Schools Can Teach Democracy</i>	184

Table 12. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>The Education of Free Men in American Democracy</i>	187
Table 13. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Presidential Address”	193
Table 14. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education in an Age of Decision”	195
Table 15. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and Post War America”	197
Table 16. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Education and the Promise of America</i>	199
Table 17. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Education and American Civilization</i>	204
Table 18. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Moral Foundations of American Civilization”	215
Table 19. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Decision Making and American Values in School Administration</i>	216
Table 20. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Intangible Supports of Liberty”	224
Table 21. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Foundations of Liberty”	226
Table 22. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “A Rational Faith in Education”	227
Table 23. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Spirit of American Education”	228

Table 24. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in <i>Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom</i>	231
Table 25. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Redirection of Public Education”	233
Table 26. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Dare the School Build the Great Society?”	235
Table 27. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and Catastrophe”	237
Table 28. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education for Tomorrow’s World”	238
Table 29. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?”	239
Table 30. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education”	245
Table 31. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?”	246
Table 32. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Great Transition”	248
Table 33. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Fate of the Republic”	249
Table 34. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Challenge of these Times to the University”	250
Table 35: A Framework for Countsian Definition of Indoctrination	272

1 THE PROBLEM

The legislative actions of many States in the US during the first part of 2022 have centered around a key educational issue: Who has the right to define what is and is not educationally acceptable to teach in classrooms across our nation and how much say should parents have on the public education experience of their children? A key example of the Republican position is Florida House Bill (HB) 7 that Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law on April 22nd, 2022.² At the press conference after signing the bill, Governor DeSantis stated, “No one should be instructed to feel as if they are not equal or shamed because of their race... In Florida, we will not let the far-left woke agenda take over our schools and workplaces. There is no place for indoctrination or discrimination in Florida.”³

Governor DeSantis framed his actions as a defense against indoctrination. His use of the concept of indoctrination as a principal reason for signing this educational policy into law is the central concern of this dissertation. As this fight continues around the teaching of so called “divisive content,” others may be similar to Governor DeSantis and use the term indoctrination as a label for particular educational ideas. The term indoctrination is arguably being used as a “dog whistle,” a politically charged term or idea used and intended to bolster support from a particular group of people susceptible to respond emotionally to action.

Today, the concept is becoming more and more prominent as a reason for the actions of certain groups who argue for restrictions in education in the interest of protecting children from harm. The example of Ron DeSantis and the attacks on the use of Critical Race Theory in public

² Staff, “Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Legislation to Protect Floridians from Discrimination and Woke Indoctrination,” Office of the Governor of Florida News Release, April 22, 2022, accessed, June 8, 2022, <https://www.flgov.com/2022/04/22/governor-ron-desantis-signs-legislation-to-protect-floridians-from-discrimination-and-woke-indoctrination/>.

³ Staff, “Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Legislation.”

education is just one instance. The term indoctrination has also been brought up by those arguing against the implementation of a new AP African American Studies course recently proposed and developed by the College Board.⁴ Florida has also been at the front of the attacks on the College Board, going so far as to ban the course from being taught in the state.⁵ The deputy secretary for Governor Ron DeSantis, Jeremy Redfern, is quoted as saying that the AP course “is a vehicle for a political agenda and leaves large, ambiguous gaps that can be filled with additional ideological material... As Governor DeSantis has states, our classrooms will be a place for education, not indoctrination.”⁶

Also more recently, the term indoctrination has been used to support a wave of book bannings across the country. The increase in bannings has been linked to a coalition of conservative organizations and indoctrination has been one of the primary reasons given for the effort. For example, the executive director of, Patriot Mobile Action, a political action committee, is quoted as stating that “the committee’s aim is to eliminate ‘critical race theory’ and ‘L.G.B.T.Q. indoctrination’ from schools.”⁷ PEN America, a Non-Profit focused on the defense of liberties that protect the free expression of individuals, has been investigating and tracking the recent book banning action since July of 2021. Since then, the organization has published two reports, “Banned in the USA: Rising School Book Bans Threaten Free Expression and Students’

⁴ Giulia Heyward and Juma Sei, “College Board’s Revised AP African American Studies Course Draws New Criticism.” NPR. NPR, February 2, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/01/1153434464/college-boards-revised-ap-african-american-studies-course-draws-new-criticism>.

⁵ Eliza Fawcett and Anemona Hartocollis, “Florida Gives Reasons for Rejecting A.P. African American Studies Class.” The New York Times. The New York Times, January 22, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/21/us/florida-ap-african-american-studies.html>.

⁶ Jon Jackson, “DeSantis Admin Defends Banning African American Studies Class.” Newsweek. Newsweek, January 20, 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/ron-desantis-administration-defends-banning-african-american-studies-class-florida-1775151>.

⁷ Elizabeth A. Harris and Alexandra Alter, “A Fast-Growing Network of Conservative Groups Is Fueling a Surge in Book Bans.” The New York Times. The New York Times, December 12, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/12/books/book-bans-libraries.html>.

First Amendment Rights” and “Banned in the USA: The Growing Movement to Censor Books in Schools.”⁸ In both of these reports they document the number of books actually banned according to their definitions and categories. PEN latest report counted 2,532 instances of a book that was banned from use in schools in 138 different school districts in 32 states between July 2021 to June 2022.⁹ In addition, to tracking book bannings, PEN has also begun tracking a growing legislative trend they call, “Educational Gag Orders.”¹⁰ PEN ascribes these efforts to a growing group of organizations, two of which they note, “have curated lists of ‘radical’ books that they view as ‘indoctrination,’ and have actively sought to mobilize disaffected parents under the banner of ‘parents’ rights.’”¹¹

In this educational landscape, it seems essential that educational policy researchers clearly define the term indoctrination and adequately determine its relation to education and education policy. By making the concept of indoctrination more tangible in the national consciousness, clearly defining what indoctrination means, and articulating its position in and relationship to education in the United States, educational researchers can assist in removing indoctrination as a political bogey man, a specter that is currently haunting education and stifling the meaningful discussion of diverse concepts and ideas that could have the potential to bring our country more in congruence with its founding principles.

⁸ Jonathan Friedman and Nadine Farid Johnson, “Banned in the USA: Rising School Book Bans Threaten Free Expression and Students’ First Amendment Rights (April 2022),” PEN America, December 20, 2022. <https://pen.org/banned-in-the-usa/#trends>; Jonathan Friedman and Nadine Farid Johnson, “Banned in the USA: The Growing Movement to Ban Books.” PEN America, January 3, 2023, <https://pen.org/report/banned-usa-growing-movement-to-censor-books-in-schools/>.

⁹ Friedman and Farid Johnson, “Banned in the USA: The Growing Movement to Ban Books.”

¹⁰ PEN America, “PEN America Index of Educational Gag Orders.” Google Sheets. Google. Accessed February 4, 2023. https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Tj5WQVBmB6SQg-zP_M8uZsQQGH09TxmBY73v23zpyr0/edit#gid=267763711.

¹¹ Friedman and Farid Johnson, “Banned in the USA: Rising School Book Bans.”

Among US educational researchers who have considered the role and effect of indoctrination in US public education, George S. Counts is a major figure. Through investigating Counts' work in this dissertation, I seek to consider what indoctrination might mean for education from the perspective of someone who did not shy away or shun the concept. In order to fulfill the goals of this dissertation, Counts' own work must be scrutinized.

This research stems from my first reading of *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* by George S. Counts.¹² Just like Governor DeSantis did this year, Counts, speaking in 1932, used indoctrination in a way that triggered emotional agitation for his audience.¹³ Counts raised striking concerns about progressive education and the role of teachers in society. In *Dare the School*, Counts presents this challenge to the progressive educators in his time:

If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate itself from the influence of [the upper-middle class], face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination.¹⁴

One word from this statement and its usage served as a challenge and a curiosity: *indoctrination*.

There is a contradiction that exists between Counts' argument that progressive education needs to be more progressive and his belief that to do so progressive educators need to be more open to using indoctrination in education. This argument is contradictory if the modern definition of indoctrination is applied to Counts' use of the term. The problem is that Counts does not provide a definition of indoctrination in *Dare the School* which leaves the receiver of his

¹² George S. Counts, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969).

¹³ See Richard Niece and Karen J. Viechnicki, "Recounting Counts: A Review of George S. Counts' Challenge and the Reactions to 'Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?'" *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue de La Pensée Éducative* 21, no. 3 (1987): 149–54.

¹⁴ Counts, *Dare the School*, 40. Unless the full title is used, I will refer to the central text as *Dare the School* throughout the dissertation.

challenge left to infer what he means rather than to understand clearly. As a result, a reader applying the modern definition of indoctrination to Counts' challenge could arguably misconstrue his meaning. The challenge of applying a definition of indoctrination to Counts' work possibility raises a number of questions: Could the use of indoctrination in education when Counts was writing have been something different than how it is understood today? Was the use of indoctrination progressive? Was Counts' use of indoctrination in this piece simply a momentary case of a progressive educator influenced by the war years of the early 1900s and the growing movements of Communism and Fascism? What did Counts mean when he called for progressive educators to be less frightened of indoctrination in education? Was Counts really advocating for the use of indoctrination in the modern sense in education? *Did George S. Counts advocate the use of indoctrination in education? If so, what did he advocate?* Without a clear understanding of what Counts means by indoctrination his challenge only serves to ignite debate about the problems with indoctrination from a modern viewpoint, leaving his original goal of bringing the actions of public education more in line with the ideals of American civilization unfulfilled. At first blush Counts' challenge might appear to align with the words and deeds of Governor DeSantis and others who seek to promote democracy by restricting the learning of particular concepts. A thorough investigation of Counts' beliefs will reveal if the opinions of Governor DeSantis and others are the same as his view or whether there is any other way to view the role of indoctrination in education.

One might think that Counts' *Dare the School* would be the first place to look to find what Counts meant. The problem is that he offers no adequate answers in *Dare the School*. In fact, Counts only used the word "indoctrination" four times throughout the text.¹⁵ Counts offers

¹⁵ Counts, *Dare the School*.

no definition of indoctrination at any point in this work. Additionally, he provides no explanation for the way that progressive education should embrace and use indoctrination. The writing in *Dare the School* does not offer satisfactory answers regarding what Counts means by “indoctrination” and, greater still, how to grapple with the apparent contradiction that exists between his argument and his challenge to progressive educators. Thus, it is essential to enlarge the scope of this inquiry and to look throughout Counts’ work for answers to these questions.

Research Questions

This research seeks answers to the questions that were raised after my initial reading of *Dare the School Build a New Social Order*? I investigate the role that indoctrination plays in Counts’ educational theory to address whether it is valid to see a contradiction in Counts’ challenge to progressive educators. Through analysis of the findings, I answer the following questions: “*Did George S. Counts advocate the use of indoctrination in education? Did Counts believe that education and indoctrination were one and the same? And if so, what purpose and process did he set forth for indoctrination in the formalized educative process of schooling in the United States, and why?*”

Purpose

The purpose of this research is twofold. The central purpose for this research is to specifically address what appears to be a contradiction in George S. Counts’ promotion of indoctrination in his challenge to progressive educators and to determine, on a larger scale, how his understanding of indoctrination affects his overall views on the organization and purpose of public education in the United States. As will be shown in an analysis of the previous research, Counts’ use of indoctrination has either been used to deem him a supporter of antidemocratic ideas or his use of indoctrination has not been given much attention resulting in the conclusion that he failed to define a clear solution to the educational issues he raised. Clarity is needed to

determine what indoctrination meant to Counts and what he believed the relationship was between indoctrination and education. The contradiction is not solved easily by reading one or a few of his works, but instead requires an attempt to trace his beliefs around indoctrination in education through the whole of his career as an educational theorist.

The necessity of tracing his beliefs throughout his writings serves as the secondary purpose for this research. Previous attempts to define the essential elements of George S. Counts' educational theory do not address with fidelity the importance of the concept of indoctrination to his overall understanding of education. The lack of emphasis has arguably limited the potential effect that Counts' work has had on educational policy in the United States. Additionally, this lack of understanding has arguably allowed the debate regarding indoctrination and neutrality in education to go unresolved and to inspire the contradictory actions of educational policy makers and politicians who decry indoctrination in education while at the same time signing into law policies designed to restrict the teaching of particular information.¹⁶ The lack of emphasis is arguably driven by a lack of understanding around what Counts believed about indoctrination. This work seeks to establish the evidence needed to clearly understand a tenet of Counts' educational theory, a tenet that feasibly is the central concept in his theory of education.

The Meaning of Indoctrination: Historical and Contextual views in the United States

To adequately understand Counts' use of indoctrination it is important to establish a frame of reference for this research. This frame will be used as the lens to view Counts' use of the term and to assist in determining his meaning. This frame is developed in two ways: 1)

¹⁶ A prime example of this is the actions of Governor DeSantis mentioned earlier. The recent attacks on the concept of Critical Race Theory are not limited to Florida. As of the writing of this dissertation, eighteen states have a law that bans the teaching of Critical Race Theory in schools. Additionally, twenty-one other states have had a bill "vetoed, overturned, or stalled indefinitely." Sarah Schwartz, "Map: Where Critical Race Theory Is under Attack." Education Week. Education Week, February 3, 2023. <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/map-where-critical-race-theory-is-under-attack/2021/06>.

understanding and establishing working definitions for indoctrination for the purpose of analysis; and 2) providing the historical context around indoctrination which existed at the time Counts was writing.

Counts suggests in *Dare the School* that addressing the problems in education in the United States begins with addressing the role of indoctrination in education. While I will show in the next few pages that there is an educative definition of indoctrination, use of indoctrination in education today is understood to be authoritative and nefarious; education is believed to be the opposite of indoctrination.¹⁷ The terms indoctrination and education are antithetical to one another, making his suggestion problematic and contradictory. In the same text, Counts also calls for emancipation and the creation of a “compelling and challenging vision of human destiny.”¹⁸ It appears that Counts is arguing for greater freedom while using an educational practice that is currently believed to restrict freedom. The idea that a leader of progressive education could be advocating for a restrictive formation of education and instruction in a democratic society is the opposite of progressivism and entirely in conflict with the whole of Counts’ argument in *Dare the School*, and yet this is what Counts arguably appears to be doing in this text.¹⁹

It is important then to understand the history of the term indoctrination through an American educational context, to investigate the definition of indoctrination as it was understood prior to the early 1900s, and to address how it is currently understood. The history of the term

¹⁷ For the purposes of this dissertation, education is defined as “The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction.” More specifically an education is defined as “an enlightening experience” (See <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/education>) Education should be understood to be a liberating process which frees the individual by providing the information needed to allow for the person educated to determine what is true.

¹⁸ Counts, *Dare the School*, 9.

¹⁹ Counts is arguably a leader of progressive education during his lifetime based on a few points. He was the first editor of *The Social Frontier*, the premier progressive education journal of the time, he taught at Columbia’s Teachers College, the premier location for progressive educational thinkers at the time, from 1927 to 1956, and he was also known for his countless speeches and presentations on progressive education in the US and around the world.

indoctrination provides context for this dissertation while also establishing a lens through which to view Counts' words regarding indoctrination in education. By holding his words up to the definitions established in this section, I clarify Counts' meaning of indoctrination.

Two definitions

The modern definition of indoctrination is “the process of teaching a person or group to accept a set of beliefs uncritically.”²⁰ Indoctrination uses the tools of instruction to eliminate the liberating elements of education, restricting rather than freeing the mind. Restricting occurs when what is taught is stated to be true absolutely and not open to interpretation or argument. Indoctrination requires an externalizing force, an individual or group of people, that determines what information should be presented and what should be omitted. The use of indoctrination in education molds the human mind to the acceptance of a particular set of beliefs. The use of education in this way arguably makes people more controllable and less likely to engage critically with the externalizing force, such as the government or the group in power. The phrase “tools of instruction” refers to the use of propaganda. This propaganda, what Edward Bernays defines as insidious propaganda, is defined as “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.”²¹ Quoting from an issue of the *Scientific American*, Bernays notes that propaganda becomes the type presented here “only when its authors consciously and deliberately disseminate what they know to be lies, or when they aim at effects which they know to be prejudicial to the common good.”²² The

²⁰ “indoctrination,” Lexico.com, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indoctrination>, accessed January 2022.

²¹ “propaganda,” Lexico.com, <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/propaganda>, accessed February 2022; Edward L. Bernays, and Nancy Snow, *Edward Bernays Reader: From Propaganda to the Engineering of Consent*. (New York, N.Y.: IG Publishing, 2021), 115.

²² Bernays and Snow, *Edward Bernays Reader*, 62.

application of this propaganda leads people to accept a particular view and to then hold that view as their own without criticality.

There is also an archaic definition of indoctrination. Etymological analysis reveals a different definition of indoctrination which was more common in the past. The root of indoctrinate is related to the Latin word “doctrina” which means teaching, instruction, learning, education.²³ Current etymological analysis reveals that the word indoctrinate, first seen in 1626, was defined as “teach or instruct,” derives from the earlier word *indoctrine*, meaning teach or instruct from 1509, is linked to the Middle English word *endoctrinen*, originating around 1450, and is borrowed from the Middle French word *endoctriner*.²⁴ Etymologically, indoctrinate means, “teach a doctrine, belief, or principle to.”²⁵ In its original form, indoctrination was about teaching specific information with the intent to inform.

For the purposes of this dissertation, both definitions for indoctrination are considered. The conditional language of “authoritative” and “educative” are added in this dissertation to clarify what definition should be applied in the analysis. Indoctrination of the authoritative nature is defined as “the process of teaching a person or group to accept a set of beliefs uncritically.”²⁶ Indoctrination of the educative nature is defined as “teach a doctrine, belief, or principle to.”²⁷

The history of the shift from one definition to the other

²³ Kevin Mahoney, “Latin Definition for: Doctrina, Doctrinae.” Latin Definition for: doctrina, doctrinae (ID: 18345) - Latin Dictionary and Grammar Resources - Latdict. Accessed October 3, 2021. <https://latin-dictionary.net/definition/18345/doctrina-doctrinae>. Ernest Klein, *Klein’s Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*. Elsevier, 1966, 375. See also, Gatchel, “Evolution of the Concept,” 8.

²⁴ Robert Barnhart and Sol Steinmetz, *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* (Bronx, N.Y.: H.W. Wilson Co, 1988), 522.

²⁵ Barnhart, *Dictionary of Etymology*, 522.

²⁶ “indoctrination,” Lexico.com, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indoctrination>, accessed January 2022.

²⁷ Barnhart, *Dictionary of Etymology*, 522.

The use of indoctrination in the modern sense appears misaligned with the spirit of the rest of Counts' work in *Dare the School*. Additionally, the fact that there are two definitions for indoctrination, calls Counts' intent into question and raises concerns about his intent in using the term. It could be that he did not intend for progressive educators to exert greater control over education while restricting access to any other information, as indoctrination is understood to mean today, and he meant something else. Another point that raises the potential that Counts did not intend for progressive educators to exert greater control over education is true is the closeness of Counts' work to the time when the educative definition of indoctrination was the most prominent. In his chapter about the "Evolution of the Concept," Richard Gatchel notes, writing in 1972, "that little over half a century ago the employment of 'indoctrination' was no more offensive in educational circles than the use of 'education.'"²⁸ It could be that Counts viewed and intended to use indoctrination very differently than it is viewed today. In addition to understanding the definitions of indoctrination, it is also important to grasp the historical shift from one definition to the other and to keep that context in mind throughout the analysis of Counts' work.

Writing in 1972 in his book *Indoctrination and Education*, I.A. Snook states in the very first paragraph that,

'Indoctrination' belongs to a family of concepts which includes 'teaching', 'education', 'instruction', and 'learning'. It is therefore of concern to the educationist. It also has affinities with concepts such as 'bad', 'dishonest', 'unjust', and 'immoral'. For this reason it is of interest to the moral philosopher.²⁹

It is the latter part of this statement that articulates the general feelings towards indoctrination today. The feelings towards indoctrination were shaped heavily by the early 1900s, the

²⁸ Richard Gatchel, "The Evolution of the Concept," in *Concepts of Indoctrination: Philosophical Essays*, ed. Ivan Snook, International Library of the Philosophy of Education (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1972), 7.

²⁹ I. A. Snook, *Indoctrination and Education* (Routledge and K. Paul, 1975), 1.

ideological storylines of World War I and World War II and the defining of a democratic society juxtaposed with one founded on Fascism or Communism. It was the morality of the use of indoctrination in education that was argued over most prominently. In his chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, Craig Kridel states that,

Negative connotations [of indoctrination] stem from 1930s educational issues in which the role of the school in society—to establish “democracy as a way of life”—was placed in ideological combat with the forces of fascism that used deliberate mass persuasion to threaten free speech and public opinion.³⁰

Mary Anne Raywid in her article “The Discovery and Rejection of Indoctrination,” states that, “It is important to note at the outset that our hesitations about indoctrination are of relatively recent origin. Well into this century [20th], the terms “education” and “indoctrination” remained synonymous, providing simply alternative labels for naming the same process.”³¹ She writes that the New England Dictionary in 1901 defined indoctrination as “formal teaching.”³² Referencing the work of Richard Gatchel, she goes on to note that no direct challenge to the synonymous use of indoctrination and education existed before 1919.³³ She claims that it was the work of Dewey in defining the difference between authoritarian and democratic education that helped to cultivate the soil for the modern notion of indoctrination to develop.³⁴

The work of Progressive educators in the United States is arguably central to the shaping of the concerns over indoctrination in education in the United States. Kridel notes that a central aim of the work of early progressive educators like Dewey was directed towards addressing the

³⁰ Craig Kridel, “Instruction, Indoctrination, Imposition: Conceptions of Propaganda in the Field of Education” in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, ed. Jonathan Auerbach, and Russ Castronovo, Oxford Handbooks (New York: Oxford University Press 2013), 164.

³¹ Mary Anne Raywid, “The Discovery and Rejection of Indoctrination,” *Educational Theory* 30, no. 1 (Jan, 1980): 1-10, 2.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

influence of adults on children and to offer “‘imposition free’ conceptions of instruction” through a focus on the interests of the child as the driving factor in learning.³⁵ By raising concerns about adult imposition on the development of children, progressive educators created a distinction that defined adult influence in education as a negative in the development of freedom and democracy. By getting students “more involved in determining their own curricular content” early progressive educators believed they could combat “the presence of propaganda and indoctrination” in education.³⁶ There was no simple solution to this concern, but the presumed opposite of indoctrination was the concept of neutrality: the effort by an adult to inform/instruct without directing the child towards valuing one piece of information or choice over another.

Challenges to this idea began to emerge as the efforts for neutrality in child-centered schooling ranged into extremes. Issues with a focus on the child brought about questions of whether children could naturally produce valuable learning opportunities on their own. It also raised the question about whether children had the developmental capacity to make appropriate educational choices for themselves. On the teaching side, in the attempt to limit influence, the teaching role became ill defined. The tendency of teachers to strive for neutrality by removing themselves in an extreme way from the learning process for fear of providing any influence on the child became a concern. As Kridel notes, the increased consideration of child-centered education raised questions such as:

Should not the “informed” professional teach the “uninformed” novice and determine educational experiences in recognition of what students should know and how knowledge should be organized? And, if so, is this an “acceptable form of imposition”?³⁷

³⁵ Kridel, “Instruction, Indoctrination, Imposition,” 166.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid, 167.

Attempts to reconcile these issues and to clearly define the new role that teachers should take helped to provide the first models for project-based learning.³⁸ Other efforts, like the Eight-Year Study, attempted to establish a different parameter altogether for the development of the classroom curriculum.³⁹ Rather than focus on content, the Eight-Year study researchers began with the premise that education should center around meeting the fundamental needs believed to be inherent to human living. By focusing on needs, values would not have any influence on meeting of those needs since they are biological and driven by the individual; however, issues of indoctrination and imposition arose when the researchers sought to define an “inventory of needs.” The development of a specific list of needs would cause the selection or elimination of needs based on the person making the curriculum or completing the list.

The argument around how much influence adults should have on the education of the younger generations became more of a central and public debate with Counts’ use of the term indoctrination in *Dare the School*. His collection of speeches is credited with enlarging the debate in the United States and in progressive education about the nature and issues of indoctrination and starting the “educational movement of the 1930s and 1940s known as *social reconstructionism* that called for schools to help reconstruct society and to develop a more thoughtful, equitable social vision for America.”⁴⁰

The debate about the relationship between indoctrination and education went largely unresolved during the progressive era; however, the negative connotation held fast. Today, the legacy of the progressives’ concerns about the morality of indoctrination in education continues.

The titles for some articles written since 2000 illustrate the way that indoctrination is still

³⁸ See William Heard Kilpatrick, *The Project Method: The Use of the Purposeful Act in the Educative Process* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929).

³⁹ Kridel, “Instruction, Indoctrination, Imposition,” 167.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

thought of today: “Parents must get backbones, stand up to classroom indoctrination,” “Against Civic Schooling,” “‘My job isn’t to tell them what to think’: The Fear of Indoctrination and How it Shapes Education for Sustainable Development,” “Teaching Values, Teaching Stereotypes: Sex Education And Indoctrination In Public Schools,” “Academic Freedom And Political Indoctrination,” “Brainwashing 101,” “Teaching with critical pedagogy in ELT: the problems of indoctrination and risk,” “Indoctrination and Common Sense Interpretation of Texts: The Tucson Unified School District Book Banning,” “Indoctrination and Social Influence as a Defense to Crime: Are We Responsible for Who We Are?” “Is Indoctrination a Factor in So Much Homeschooling Growth?” and “More Classroom Indoctrination.”⁴¹

This sampling of articles suggests continuing concern about the influence of adults on children. There also appears to be continuing concern about teaching subjects from civics to sex education and the use of critical theory. Issues surrounding academic freedom, book bans, and what curriculum should be taught all constitute examples of the negative influence of indoctrination in education. In nearly all of these articles, indoctrination is undefined and yet it is presented as a negative. Indoctrination is only clearly defined in two of these articles and in both

⁴¹ Thomas Sowell, “Parents Must Get Backbones, Stand up to Classroom Indoctrination,” *Capitalism Magazine* 33, no. 36 (March 2004): 26; James Bernard Murphy, “Against Civic Schooling,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 21, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 221–65; Ahmad Qablan, Sherry A. Southerland, and Yavuz Saka, “‘My Job Isn’t to Tell Them What to Think’: The Fear of Indoctrination and How It Shapes Education for Sustainable Development,” *Electronic Journal of Science Education* 15, no. 2 (September 2011): 1–28; Jennifer S. Hendricks and Dawn Marie Howerton, “Teaching Values, Teaching Stereotypes: Sex Education and Indoctrination in Public Schools,” *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law* 13, no. 3 (March 1, 2011): 587–642; Kenneth L. Marcus, “Academic Freedom and Political Indoctrination,” *Journal of College and University Law* 39, no. 3 (January 1, 2013): 725–48; Jack Kenny, “Brainwashing 101,” *New American* 29, no. 15 (August 5, 2013): 23–27; Joanna Joseph Jeyaraj, and Tony Harland, “Teaching with Critical Pedagogy in ELT: The Problems of Indoctrination and Risk,” *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 24, no. 4 (December 2016): 587–98; Emily J. M. Knox, “Indoctrination and Common Sense Interpretation of Texts: The Tucson Unified School District Book Banning,” *Journal of Intellectual Freedom & Privacy* 2, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 11–23; Paul H. Robinson and Lindsay Holcomb, “Indoctrination and Social Influence as a Defense to Crime: Are We Responsible for Who We Are?” *Missouri Law Review* 85, no. 3 (June 15, 2020): 739–802; Brian Ray, “Is Indoctrination a Factor in So Much Homeschooling Growth?” *Old Schoolhouse* (Winter 2021): 20–22; and Alexander F. C. Webster, “More Classroom Indoctrination,” *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 34, no. 5 (September 2021): 40.

cases the modern, authoritative definition is provided. Only one article makes mention of the fact that there is another definition of indoctrination, but still settles for the modern negative definition of the term.

The dualism of the definition of indoctrination, the time that Counts was writing, the lack of a definition of indoctrination in *Dare the School*, and the ongoing concerns about indoctrination in education help to articulate the central problem of interest in this dissertation. Without understanding clearly what Counts meant by indoctrination, it is impossible to act on his challenge properly because the use of indoctrination in education is easily attacked for being immoral or antidemocratic. To apply the modern definition of indoctrination to his challenge conceals what Counts was advocating. Clarifying his definition of indoctrination is the first step to addressing whether there is a contradiction in his challenge to progressive educators.

Significance of the Study

There is a contradiction in George S. Counts' challenge to progressive educators in the 1930s. This contradiction affects our abilities to understand and meet the challenge that Counts set forth in his pamphlet *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* and to use that knowledge to meet the challenges facing education policy today. The contradiction stems from Counts' pairing of two concepts that are antithetical to one another in a modern context: Indoctrination and Education. This perceived contradiction in his argument makes it difficult to agree with his suggestion that progressive educators should be more willing to use indoctrination and that it is possible that progressive education could be more progressive by doing so.

Indoctrination is viewed today as undemocratic, but in the past indoctrination was not viewed with such negativity. Hidden behind this perceived contradiction in Counts' work is something profoundly important about the relationship between schooling and society in general and more specifically in the United States. This contradiction also masks the value of Counts'

role in the progressive education era and has resulted in the development of a potential blind spot in the larger study of the social foundations of education. Overcoming the restrictive notions about the concept of indoctrination and seeing indoctrination through Counts' perspective can help future researchers come to terms with this contradiction and act accordingly.

The concept of indoctrination was not as set in Counts' Day as it appears to be today; however, Counts was aware of the negative connotation for indoctrination. The issue central to this dissertation then is why Counts would use this word and challenge progressive educators by claiming that they would be more progressive if they were more willing to embrace indoctrination. The fact that Counts would make this argument means that one of two assumptions must be true. Either: 1) Counts had a very different view of indoctrination; or 2) Counts knew he was calling for an undemocratic approach to American education. If it is the first then understanding and presenting that view to others might make his challenge more palatable to a modern educator. If the second is true then clarifying his views on the meaning of indoctrination would add to the body of work that argues his approach is not valuable to the modern researcher and would confirm that his challenge to progressive education is unrealistic.

My initial review of Counts writing shows that there is more evidence in Counts' own writing to support the first assumption rather than the second. I hypothesize that: *A) Counts did not advocate for the modern form of indoctrination in education and was opposed to indoctrination designed any way to deny the growth of the individual within his or her given society either through excessive molding or excessive enlightenment; B) Counts believed that education and indoctrination were inseparable regardless of how one views indoctrination because a specifically organized education is essential to the development and growth of a specific civilization; and C) given the conclusions of A and B, Counts' conception of*

indoctrination is not supportive of either definition of indoctrination, authoritative or educative, and exists somewhere in between.

The unknown in all of this is what Counts meant by indoctrination. As noted above, indoctrination has two definitions: as teaching/instructing/learning or as uncritical partisan training for the purposes of control by one over others. The literature review in this work shows that some researchers have provided information about Counts' beliefs on indoctrination and seem to argue that Counts meant indoctrination in the authoritative sense; however, there is an inadequate amount of evidence to explain Counts' beliefs on the matter and no real consensus on that point. Additionally, there is currently no research which investigates Counts' thinking on indoctrination throughout the whole of his career to determine what he believed about indoctrination and whether it is valid to find a contradiction in his challenge to progressive educators. In the rest of this dissertation, I explore Counts' views on indoctrination in education beginning with a presentation of who Counts was, reviewing the previous literature about his ideas, and concluding with a presentation and analysis of Counts' uses of the term indoctrination throughout his writings on American education.

2 GEORGE S. COUNTS: The Conservative

It is helpful to have some context about Counts since this research is focused on the thinking of one individual. This section presents, as much as possible, Counts' own view of himself and his work. One piece exists that serves to both give context to the mind of Counts and to critique his work, his autobiographical essay. His essay will be used primarily in this section; however, some additional texts are also used to add some context where relevant. A presentation of Counts' life is valuable in two ways. First, to understand the characteristics of the man and the events that shaped his life and guided his thinking. These might help to reveal whether there is any relation to indoctrination in his own life and how his upbringing and experiences might have shaped his understanding. Second, this information adds to the greater work of the dissertation by potentially showing how it might be possible for Counts to advocate two seemingly contradictory ideas: education and indoctrination. It is helpful to understand his educational and social upbringing as it might serve to provide a clearer view of the contextual frame that helped to shape Counts' beliefs and arguments.

George S. Counts was born on December 9th, 1889, on a farm three miles from the town of Baldwin, Kansas. Counts notes in his chapter titled "A Humble Autobiography," in the book *Leaders in American Education*, that the time in which he lived had "been a period of unprecedented changes in [his] country and the world."⁴² In addition to the times being turbulent, Counts was also born into a location with great potential for the nurturing of a future analyst of American society. Counts grew up near Baker University, "the oldest and finest college in Kansas."⁴³ Because of their position and prestige, Baker University and Baldwin City brought prominent spokespeople to town allowing for Counts to be exposed to political engagement

⁴² Counts, "Autobiography," 152.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 158.

throughout his early life.⁴⁴ Counts even recalled his parents taking him to rallies and parades as a child.⁴⁵

In Counts' autobiography, he reflects on his childhood and growing up on a farm. He notes, "with very few exceptions, the years of my childhood and youth were lived on this farm [one 3 miles from Baldwin] and a second farm which my father bought closer to the town so that his children could attend a town school."⁴⁶ He states that life on the farm was difficult, but it was the main way that he learned and "acquired most of the practical skills and knowledges necessary for life on the farm in those days."⁴⁷ He stated that "the youngster acquired not only knowledges and skills [from farming], but also moral character and discipline."⁴⁸ Such an upbringing shaped Counts' interest in the agricultural foundations of American society.

Counts was greatly influenced by the model that his parents set for him. Counts states that the most important quality of his "parents was their system of values and their code of ethics."⁴⁹ He witnessed their treatment of people, especially those who came to work on the farm, and he saw first-hand what it meant to take "the second of the two great commandments" seriously as he observed his parents treating all people "as if [they were] a member of the family' regardless of background."⁵⁰ In addition to living out biblical teaching, his parents raised him under the strict discipline of the Methodist Church.⁵¹ Counts believed the Methodist Church and its social gospel served as an important source for his ideology.⁵²

⁴⁴ Claudia Keenan, "The Education of an Intellectual," *Kansas History* 25, no. 4 (Winter- 2002): 258-71, 262.

⁴⁵ Keenan, "The Education of an Intellectual," 263.

⁴⁶ Counts, "Autobiography," 152.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁵² Keenan, "The Education of an Intellectual," 270.

Counts also recalls that he learned lessons about the value of a person's ancestry from his father. As a child, Counts inquired about his parents' ancestry, but he was warned off inquiring about it by his father because he might not like something he learned about an ancestor.⁵³ He also grew up learning that it was undemocratic to boast about one's forebearers.⁵⁴ He had, however, investigated his ancestry later in his life and found that he came from colonial pioneer stock.⁵⁵ On his mother's side his lineage traced back to a signer of the Mayflower Compact and his father's side was likely of German ancestry who emigrated before the war for independence. Counts recalls that he knows "of no ancestor who came to America after the War for Independence."⁵⁶

It is significant to note the importance that Counts' family placed on public education. It was mentioned previously, but early in Counts' life, his parents purchased a farm and moved the family closer to town. Counts states that his father's purpose for their move was "so that his children could attend a town school."⁵⁷ In addition to this parental interest and investment in education, Counts notes that even though his parents had not attended college, they had finished some high school and both were well educated.⁵⁸ His father was always reading and Counts notes that he "had an excellent command of the language and was an artist."⁵⁹ His mother, he notes, was "a talented musician" who "played the organ" and sang.⁶⁰ Counts says that aside from a brief stint as a "dropout" when he was 5 and one year when he was thirteen, where he had to

⁵³ Counts, "Autobiography," 155.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 152.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 156.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

help work on the farm, he attended the local public school.⁶¹ This support for education allowed all of the Counts' children to complete high school and attend post-secondary schooling.⁶²

Counts graduated from high school in 1907. From there he went on to earn his undergraduate degree at Baker University where he studied and majored in the Classics. Counts notes that all told, he had seven years of Latin training and four years of Greek training between his high school and college studies.⁶³ In addition to studying the Classics, Counts also began to develop his interest in the study of peoples through courses in history, philosophy, and natural sciences.⁶⁴ Counts also took pride in his active participation in school life. During his high school and university years, Counts was active in student affairs and served as the president of multiple organizations including the athletic association and as class president.⁶⁵

Although his life could have turned out differently several times, Counts continued on the path of education and study.⁶⁶ After graduating from Baker University in 1911, Counts spent two years as a teacher and principal at a high school before attending the University of Chicago. He studied sociology on scholarship.⁶⁷ Counts states that his reason for attending the University of Chicago was because "it was regarded at that time as a champion of radical ideas in the fields of biology, social science, philosophy, and theology."⁶⁸ Counts' timing was indeed valuable to the development of his thinking. By attending the University of Chicago when he did he was able to

⁶¹ Ibid., 157.

⁶² Keenan, "The Education of an Intellectual," 264.

⁶³ Counts, "Autobiography," 158.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ In his autobiography, Counts notes a number of turning points in his life including his acceptance of the position as associate director for the International Institute at Teachers College, the influence of his brother-in-law on his major in graduate school, and his marriage to his wife which disqualified him from accepting the Rhodes Scholarship. Counts' article "A turning point in my life" also details a moment where he very nearly moved to Canada to live his life as a fur trapper instead of competing his studies at Baker University.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

study “with a number of respected educators and social scientists who were establishing the standards of excellence in their disciplines.”⁶⁹ Counts originally attended the University of Chicago to study sociology, but his future brother-in-law convinced him to speak to Charles Hubbard Judd, a well-known psychologist and the head of the School of Education at the time.⁷⁰ Counts notes that this encounter “changed profoundly the course of [his] life.”⁷¹ Although this experience shifted Counts’ original plan, he notes that it “did not [lead him to] abandon [his] interest in sociology and thus [he] became the first of Judd’s students to take a minor in that field.”⁷² Counts notes that during his studies at the University of Chicago he “took more courses in [his] minor than [his] major.”⁷³

Following the completion of his doctorate, Counts’ primary job was as a professor at various colleges around the country.⁷⁴ Throughout his professional career he focused on two things, commentary about American society and education and the study of education in other countries around the world. Counts states, “I have written in whole or in major part twenty-nine or thirty books and monographs and several hundred articles for professional and popular magazines.”⁷⁵ Aside from his many writings on American education, Counts is most well-known for his analysis of the Soviet Union and their educational efforts. He was invited in 1925 to come to Teachers College, Columbia “to serve as the associate director of the International Institute.”⁷⁶ His interest in the Russian revolution and the fact that no other member at the institute had

⁶⁹ Gutek, *Counts and American Civilization*, 6.

⁷⁰ Counts, “Autobiography,” 158.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 160.

chosen the Soviet Union led him to choose this area as the focus of his research at the institute.⁷⁷

Throughout his life he made a number of trips to Russia, including one trip where he drove a Ford Model T across the country for six months which gave him unique insights into the Bolshevik Revolution and the efforts to develop a society based on Communism.⁷⁸

Later in his life, Counts turned his attention to political efforts in the United States. He joined the American Federation of Teachers and served as its president from 1939-1941.⁷⁹ He also joined the American Labor Party and served as its chairman for two years beginning in 1942. He was nominated by the Liberal Party of New York to serve as its candidate for United States Senate in the 1952 election.⁸⁰ He lost that election.

Counts ended his prolific career in Carbondale, Illinois as a professor at Southern Illinois University. He taught there from 1962 until “he left teaching for the final time to live in a retirement home” in 1971.⁸¹ Counts died on November 10th, 1974, at the age of 84.

In his autobiography, Counts raises a few other points about his life that are worthy of consideration. One interesting fact that he shares is that he “had never planned to become a teacher and, while in college, had not taken a single course in pedagogy.”⁸² Counts also says about himself, “wherever I have taught and regardless of the titles of my courses, I have always worked in the realm of the social and cultural foundations of education.”⁸³ Counts also makes an interesting comment about what he was taught about Russia when he was young: “As a boy in the public schools of Kansas I had been taught to regard the tsarist government as a peculiarly

⁷⁷ Ibid., 161.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 161-3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 164.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 165.

⁸¹ Lawrence J. Dennis and William Edward Eaton, eds., *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), 15.

⁸² Counts, “Autobiography,” 158.

⁸³ Ibid., 160.

unenlightened and tyrannical despotism and to expect a revolution. Consequently, when the regime of Nicholas II collapsed in March 1917, I hailed the event as a great victory for the cause of democracy and human freedom.”⁸⁴ Although Counts admits that he hoped the evils of the Bolsheviks would disappear over the years, he recognized the challenges they posed and was ultimately resigned to his doubts about the dictatorship.⁸⁵

Counts also defines the overall aim of his life’s work in his own words: “Sensing from early manhood the great dangers threatening... democracy due to the rise of our urbanized and industrialized society, I have ever sought to make organized education serve the purposes of democracy - democracy conceived both as social ends and as social means.”⁸⁶ Because of this focus, Counts labels himself as a cross between a Jeffersonian democrat and a Lincolnian republican, even stating that he told his students that he is a conservative, meaning, in his words, “that I have striven throughout my life to “conserve our radical tradition.”⁸⁷

Counts’ autobiography gives unique insights into the nature of his thinking and what drove his work and his writings. Counts even takes time to reflect on the concepts and ideas that he thinks influenced him the most. He defines seven concepts that he states greatly influenced him: “The geographical frontier, the rural household and neighborhood, the Judeo-Christian ethic, the democratic tradition, the warfare between science and theology, and, with the passing of the years, the transformation of our society and the annihilation of distance.”⁸⁸ In reflecting on his life, Counts also addresses the critiques put towards him based on his arguments presented in his 1930s works. In his autobiography, Counts defines the thesis of his work from the ‘30s as the

⁸⁴ Ibid., 161.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 164.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 166.

contention that “the school should assume responsibility for the improvement of our society, for the fulfillment of the age-long “promise of America” for bringing our actions in harmony with our professions.”⁸⁹ Counts also points to a few of his statements from his *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* One quote he discusses reads, “the school is but one formative agency among many and certainly not the strongest one at that.”⁹⁰ Another quote he raises shows what he argued should be the goal of the school. He states:

This does not mean that we should endeavor to promote particular reforms through the educational system. We should, however, give to our children a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead and endeavor to enlist their loyalties and enthusiasm in the realization of the vision. Also our social institutions and practices, all of them, should be critically examined in light of such a vision.⁹¹

This quote and the presentation of Counts’ life provide a lens through which to view Counts and his work.

In the interpretation of a persons’ work, their identity and their own feelings about themselves can be helpful for understanding their meaning or revealing an interpretation of their work that may not be obvious when reading them in a modern context. In Counts’ case, it is helpful to have this chapter supported by his own autobiographical writing to hold up as a lens to view the proceeding chapters of this work. In addition to being a prolific writer, Counts’ own words about himself provide evidence to support his devotion to democracy as an ideal and provide context that supports his intent in doing the work that he did. The most profound idea that I take from his autobiography is his framing of himself as a conservative. Viewing Counts as a conservative, intent on “conserving our radical tradition” of democracy, stands in stark contrast to the way that he has been defined and represented in the research on his beliefs. The next

⁸⁹ Ibid., 172.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 172-3.

chapter helps to show the research that has already been done on Counts. Considering those works in relation to this account of Counts' own interpretation of his work adds to my feeling that his work has been largely misunderstood.

3 INTERPRETING COUNTS: ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT FRAMING OF COUNTS' EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS – A Review of the Literature

This research is being done nearly 100 years after Counts first put his challenge to progressive education. As a result, it is reasonable to think that others might have identified the same contradiction in Counts' challenge and that someone might have tried to address it. Given my concerns regarding Counts' beliefs and the perceived contradiction in his challenge, it is now helpful to investigate what research has already been done about Counts' educational theory. Looking at the previous research will help to show whether this line of thinking has been addressed already by other researchers and to possibly reveal what effects the conclusions of others might have on my own work. This literature review will specifically examine research into Counts' American educational theory and writings concerning Counts' use of indoctrination in education.

Additionally, in all of my research no other dissertation provides a review or analysis of the collective works that have been done on Counts. Given the time in which I am writing, it seems both essential to my work and relevant to future researchers to provide this analysis. A major concern that I find in this literature review is the varied conclusions that researchers settle on. These conclusions are important for future researchers to ponder before beginning their own work. One major conclusion that some of the most prominent writings on Counts come to is that his work is irrelevant or not useful for current educational researchers. By viewing the previous research that has been done on Counts, I hope to show the inadequacy of the previous analyses and how the reliance on and existence of only a few authorities on Counts' work could be both damaging to his important legacy and to the future of educational theory.

To date, there are three published books about George S. Counts. Two books are written by Gerald L. Gutek: *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts* (1971) and *George S. Counts*

and American Civilization (1984). The other book is called *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age* (1980) and was edited by Lawrence J. Dennis and William Edward Eaton. An additional book exists that is not directly about Counts but focuses on his friendship and correspondence with Charles A. Beard. Titled, *George S. Counts and Charles A. Beard: Collaborators for Change*. This book, also written by Lawrence J. Dennis, chronicles the conversations between the two men and offers Dennis' perspective on what their correspondence reveals about their respective intellectual evolutions. Because this book does not focus specifically on Counts or his educational theory, it is not discussed in this literature review.

In addition to these texts, there are numerous dissertations and articles that focus specifically on Counts. Following the analysis of the books on Counts, I address each of the dissertations that have been written specifically about him and his work, and I present some of the most relevant investigations from articles that have been written about Counts. By providing a review of the literature, I hope to offer a clear representation of what research has been done on Counts, to consider whether my research assists in providing information to address the contradiction that I see in Counts' argument, and to provide evidence to show a gap that I see in the research.

Research into Counts' Educational Theory

The first published text written about Counts and his beliefs is *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts*. As the title suggests, Gerald L. Gutek has attempted to evaluate the whole of George S. Counts' educational theory in this text.⁹² The text spans 277 pages and includes 11 chapters with the titles: "A Culturally Oriented Approach to Education," "The American Educational Tradition," "Educational Responses to the 1930s," "Education and Democratic

⁹² Gerald Gutek, *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1971).

Collectivism,” “The Nature of Imposition,” “The Curriculum,” “Teacher Education,” “Proposed Educational Program,” “Counts and Marxism,” “Counts and American Social Reform,” “Counts’[sic] Educational Position.”⁹³ Gutek argues in this book that Counts’ educational theory is based on cultural relativism and that he held a “civilization-oriented” philosophy of education.⁹⁴ Gutek defines cultural relativism as an “outgrowth of pragmatic thought” in which “social and cultural development was particular or specific to the various climatic and geographical region of the earth” and that “institutional life... developed as a particular response to varying environmental factors.”⁹⁵ Gutek also holds that a central component of Counts’ theory was “democratic collectivism.”⁹⁶ He states that “Counts firmly advocated social planning and social engineering.”⁹⁷

The idea that Counts had a “civilization-oriented” philosophy of education makes sense. Counts believed that an education system could not be developed without considering the civilization and society that it was to be built in. The notion that Counts was arguing for democratic collectivism is challenging. Given my research and analysis, Counts’ writings about indoctrination appear to be arguing for something quite different, but it will be important to consider this notion as it relates to my findings.

In his conclusion, Gutek argues that Counts was “one of the most articulate advocates of the socially oriented school,” but that Counts “never indicated the precise formula which should be used to implement his brand of “social reconstructionism.”⁹⁸ Gutek argues that Counts did not

⁹³ Gutek, *Educational Theory of Counts*, ix.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 251.

make any further developments or contributions toward social reconstruction efforts after the 1930s.⁹⁹ Based on his research, Gutek determined that Counts' beliefs did change over time. He notes that "since World War II, Counts has changed his orientation from that of economic problems to the problems faced by the nation in the postwar world. The pleas for democratic collectivism have been stilled and replaced by the pleas for civil liberties and the preservation of the democratic processes."¹⁰⁰ As a result, Gutek claims that Counts' post World War II work "emphasized a qualitative emphasis which demanded a more equalitarian distribution of the things necessary to satisfy basic life needs."¹⁰¹

As my work will show, Gutek is incorrect in determining that Counts "never indicated the precise formula which should be used to" implement his brand of "social reconstructionism."¹⁰² Counts' use of indoctrination and, furthermore, his use of imposition and the "program" that he wished to enact points to his vision for education. While his work may not exist as a manual to be followed word for word, it does not mean that Counts did not provide clarity on how to address social ills and the role the school should play. The evidence and the resulting analysis provided in the later chapters of my work help to challenge this critique of Counts.

In the final pages of his last chapter, Gutek turns to his critique of Counts and argues whether Counts' work can be useful to the modern educational researcher and if it can even be determined to amount to a theory at all. Gutek concludes that "Count's theory was weak in that much of what seemed to be a social theory at the time was in reality a description of the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 253.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 255.

¹⁰² Ibid., 251.

problems of the period in their historical setting.”¹⁰³ He argues that Counts’ writings include too many generalities and vagueness related to key terms and that his arguments cannot be used with any validity as “instruments of analysis.”¹⁰⁴ Gutek also states that Counts’ work and its application in the schools was “rendered inoperative by the change engendered by the shift” of the times and that Counts’ work might have been relevant when it was written, but it serves a limited relevance for today.¹⁰⁵ This conclusion leads Gutek to ultimately determine that Counts “failed to elaborate a precise methodology of adjudicating social conflicts” rendering his work relatively useless for active policy development or educational analysis.¹⁰⁶

Gutek does note, however, that Counts’ “civilizational approach to educational problems remains a significant contribution to educational theory.”¹⁰⁷ He states that educational theory failed to “translate current socio-economic trends into educational theory” until Counts and others raised the issue.¹⁰⁸ He determines that Counts “undoubtedly was a pioneer in developing the socially-oriented approach to educational problems.”¹⁰⁹ He ends his book by saying that “in many ways, Counts’ [sic] pioneering work in the social foundations of education was prophetic of the continuing tasks which face American educators.”¹¹⁰

Gutek’s conclusions about Counts’ work in this book are considerably mistaken. For one, Counts’ work is not intended to be used as a model or instrument for analysis, so to critique him on this point is inappropriate. Secondly, Counts’ works, while couched in the issues of his time,

¹⁰³ Ibid., 256.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 257.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 260.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 261.

continue to be relevant today simply because little has been done to address the major concerns that Counts was trying to push progressive educators to address. Focusing on Counts' beliefs around indoctrination and imposition in education might help to show that Counts did elaborate a methodology for "adjudicating social conflicts" and that his work is relevant for policy development and educational analysis if it is understood properly.¹¹¹ In this work, Gutek does address Counts use of indoctrination, which will be presented in the next section of this chapter, but he again falls short in his analysis and valuation of Counts beliefs around indoctrination. Gutek is correct, however, to identify Counts' civilizational approach to educational problems as a vital approach for educational researchers to keep in mind and to expand in the future.

Gutek's second book on Counts, *George S. Counts and American Civilization*, does not appear to change his perception on the relevance or validity of Counts' educational theory but instead explores the aspects of American civilization at the time that Counts was living and considers their impact on his conception of American civilization. In the preface, Gutek states that his particular focus for this book is to "illuminate the process by which a leading educator entered into the arena of social and political analysis."¹¹² In this text, Gutek argues that:

Counts... was a broad contextual thinker who located the school in its historically evolving social, political, and economic contexts. Even as the school was a potent agency of enculturation and formal education, Counts remonstrated that Americans often had an immature and naïve faith in organized education's power to solve all sorts of social, personal, and political problems.¹¹³

Gutek states that Counts was "using educational theory as a rationale for particular social and political policies and programs."¹¹⁴ He also determines that each of Counts' writings reveal a

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Gutek, *Counts and American Civilization*, 2.

¹¹³ Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

consistency in Counts' thinking and hold to the same general argument, that "American civilization... rested on the democratic heritage that was born on the frontier freehold" and that, for Counts, "the American challenge" was to create "a revitalized and reconstructed democracy that could function and give order to a technological society."¹¹⁵ Gutek argues that "what Counts attempted to fashion was the framework for an American *paideia*, a culture that would be a self-renewing civilization."¹¹⁶ Gutek also notes, however, that Counts thought that Americans had an irrational faith in "organized education's power" and that "Counts persistently held that organized education, or formal schooling, was but one of many educative forces in the United States."¹¹⁷

This book specifically focuses on the influences which drove Counts' thinking. Gutek argues that economic conditioning, the rise of industrial society, and the rejection of totalitarianism shaped Counts' educational theory.¹¹⁸ Gutek believes that the events of the 20th century drove Counts to formulate his "civilizational philosophy of education" and that his international work "helped to imprint his thought on American Democracy in a time of profound social and economic transition."¹¹⁹ Gutek also brings in the influence of Counts' religious upbringing and states that this upbringing was a primary component which shaped Counts' thinking.¹²⁰

Gutek raises a few new aspects that he believes to be part of what shaped Counts' educational theory that were not part of his first analysis. In this text, Gutek argues that "Counts

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 14.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 30. Italics in the original.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 33.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 32 and 9, respectively.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 150.

believed that the time had come for the new pleasure economy of plenty, comfort, and leisure to replace the old pain economy based on scarcity.”¹²¹ He also determines that Counts’ writing shows that “[he] found that the historical development of American democracy had experienced three stages: (1) the economic equality of the freehold farmers; (2) the social equality of the frontier society; and (3) the political equality of Jeffersonianism and Jacksonianism.”¹²² Gutek contends that this frame of reference is what led Counts to fear the rise of the economy under industrialization. He states that, “with the decline of its equalitarian economic and social foundations, Counts feared that the very survival of political democracy in the United States was jeopardized.”¹²³ Gutek also concludes this text differently than his previous text and appears to afford more quality to Counts’ contribution than his previous text offered. He concludes:

If there is any phrase that captures [Counts’] contribution to American life, it is perhaps that he was an ideologist on behalf of a democratic conception and program of education for the United States. He was an ideologist in the sense that he had developed an interpretation of the American past oriented toward a future program of action that embraced politics, society, and education.¹²⁴

In reviewing Gutek’s second book, it seems that it holds more closely to Counts’ thinking than his first text, however, Gutek still develops a narrow view of Counts’ thinking and what helped to shape his approach to educational theory. By viewing Counts’ thinking through the lens of imposition and indoctrination, my work helps to show that Counts’ faith in education was quite rational and more grounded than Gutek makes it seem. Because Gutek has written two books about Counts’ educational beliefs and they present Counts in this light, more research into Counts’ thinking is needed to offer a varied perspective and to call attention to some valuable

¹²¹ Ibid., 50.

¹²² Ibid., 65.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 162.

aspects of Counts' work that might have been overlooked or misunderstood. Additionally, it is problematic that these two texts are the only published books that present a general synopsis of Counts to a larger audience. Gutek's conclusions, have an impact on other researchers who look to investigate Counts after him, as will be seen in the dissertations and articles I analyze below. Gutek's conclusions and general framing of Counts has likely been detrimental to Counts' legacy and has arguably aided in the underutilization of Counts' work and ideas in educational theory today.

George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age, edited by Lawrence J. Dennis and William Edward Eaton, offers only a brief analysis of Counts' theory or methods. The primary focus of their book is on re-presenting several excerpts from Counts' writings in an anthology. They argue that the selections they have chosen show Counts' beliefs through his "work... that deals with culture and with schooling and the relationship between them."¹²⁵ They argue that Counts' works exhibit five main themes:

(1) a view of national character shaped both by the history of the American people and by the topography of the land; (2) an examination of the nature of the social forces that affect formal schooling; (3) a conviction that this life spanned the great watershed of human history as civilization moved from an agrarian to an industrial age; (4) a faith that the twentieth century stands witness to the struggle between totalitarianism in several forms and democracy in imperfect forms; and (5) a belief that teachers can make small but appreciable differences in shaping the course of the future.¹²⁶

In focusing on these themes, the editors claim that "Counts did not, significantly change his views during his mature years, that is from around 1928."¹²⁷

The editors do provide one chapter where they briefly offer insight into "The Professional Life of George S. Counts." In this chapter, they provide a broad overview of his life and present

¹²⁵ Dennis and Eaton, *George S. Counts, Educator for a New Age*, vii.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid., viii.

an analysis of what they see as his theories/arguments. They determine that his works show that “Counts viewed history as depicting the sweep of collective human experience from which one could draw usable generalizations about mankind, from which one could extract pattern and form, and from which one could glean the essence of human meaning and purpose.”¹²⁸ They claim that this perception led to his preferred style of writing which did not adhere to historical analysis technicalities and led him to “sometimes... depreciate the daily labors of historical scholarship.”¹²⁹

The editors define Counts’ educational philosophy as reconstructionism and argue that it developed from his views of history and national character.¹³⁰ “Indeed,” they claim, “the philosophy makes no sense at all apart from these views, for Count’s believed that educational practice essentially reflected the society of which it was a part.”¹³¹ They also take time to combat some of the critics of Counts who labeled him a utopian. They argue that “Counts’ [sic] reconstructionism should not be viewed as Utopian, but rather as the recognition, the rediscovery, and the reevaluation of America’s vital roots.”¹³²

The editors also determine that Counts’ writings show that he was calling for central planning in the United States. They claim that “what was required, thought Counts, was a different social structure, one not entirely new, but one already grounded in the roots of the past: the United States Constitution, the basic governmental organization, and the traditions of freedom would be sufficient.”¹³³ The creation of a different social structure would then lead to

¹²⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 9.

the development of a different economic form, one where “free enterprise would be displaced by a planned economy.”¹³⁴ They state that the development of a different economic form was his intention behind his idea of “democratic collectivism” which they believe was part of his earlier texts.¹³⁵ They note that Counts drops the use of “democratic collectivism” from his later texts, but continues to discuss the concept and instead calls it “general planning” or “general economic planning.”¹³⁶ It seems clear to them that “[Counts] believed that it was essential to develop some type of benevolently planned society that would be in the best interests and general welfare of all.” The editors conclude their analysis of Counts’ work by noting that “much of his work was first delivered in speeches, which probably explains the immediacy of his style.”¹³⁷ They argue that “when his work is pruned down to its essential ingredients, Counts’[sic] thought is not at all complex.”¹³⁸

The authors’ themes appear appropriate; however, all of these could potentially be seen very differently in the light of Counts’ views of indoctrination and imposition. Their idea that Counts was calling for central planning in the United States is viewed very differently if Counts’ meaning for indoctrination and imposition are clarified. It is possible to see how Counts’ writings around the Soviet Union and even his arguments about indoctrination and imposition could be interpreted as social planning, however, given the evidence presented in my dissertation, it is likely that Counts meant something very different.¹³⁹ The analysis in the following chapters leads to a clearer picture of the idea of social planning in Counts’ work. It is

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 18.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ See chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation

problematic that, like Gutek, the authors determined that Counts' thought is not at all complex. This opinion and appropriately clarifying Counts intent serve as a challenge for the work of my dissertation.

The next writings which are of value in this section are dissertations that focus on Counts. Four dissertations provide a treatment of Counts' educational theory and attempt to synthesize his ideas and determine their validity for relevance in educational research. The first is "A Critical Study of the Major Writings of George S. Counts" by Albert Vogel.¹⁴⁰ Gerald Gutek's dissertation also came out in the '60s and is titled: "An Analysis of the Social and Educational Theory of George S. Counts During the Depression of the 1930s."¹⁴¹ Gutek's dissertation will not be discussed here because it was turned into his first book, presented above, and his books, previously discussed, serve as more definitive representations of his beliefs and arguments regarding Counts and his educational theory. The third dissertation was written by George Raymond Knight and is titled "An Analysis of the Educational Theory of George S. Counts."¹⁴² It serves as both a critique of Vogel and Gutek's work and provides a different framing of Counts' concerns, one that mainly expresses that Counts' writings continue to be relevant. The fourth dissertation providing an analysis of Counts' educational theory is "An Historical Analysis of the Educational Ideas and Career of George S. Counts," written by Bruce Romanish.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Albert Vogel, "A Critical Study of the Major Writings of George S. Counts" (PhD diss., American University, 1960).

¹⁴¹ Gerald Gutek, "An Analysis of the Social and Educational Theory of George S. Counts During the Depression of the 1930s" (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 1964).

¹⁴² George Raymond Knight, "An Analysis of the Educational Theory of George S. Counts," (PhD diss., University of Houston, 1976), 2.

¹⁴³ Bruce Romanish, "An Historical Analysis of the Educational Ideas and Career of George S. Counts," (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1980), iii.

Albert Vogel's dissertation provide some insights that are important to the framing of my work. Vogel sets out in his dissertation to "1) attempt to sort out Counts' educational ideas as they appear in his major works, and 2) ... attempt to evaluate the ideas to see whether they are as profound as Counts' reputation would lead us to believe."¹⁴⁴ In Vogel's analysis, he determined that Counts' work can be separated into three distinct periods which he deems: "1922—1929, the apprentice years; 1930-1940, the time during which Counts was concerned with shaping an educational theory for American democracy; and 1945—1957, the time of greatest concern with the dangers of Soviet totalitarianism."¹⁴⁵

Investigating Counts' early writings, 1922-1929, Vogel determines that "nothing in these early studies adds up to a coherent philosophy. Counts has merely done for education what the economists and sociologists had done elsewhere."¹⁴⁶ He elaborates, saying:

The most one can say is that he seemed to be a kind of left-wing liberal who was familiar with the realities of class in American civilization, but who was not deeply committed to any extreme or consciously thought-out point of view. Nowhere in these studies does Counts offer any suggestion as to his beliefs concerning ultimate reality — much less the ultimate purpose of education.¹⁴⁷

Vogel argues that Counts' analysis during these early years is "the very shallowest kind of social analysis."¹⁴⁸

Addressing Counts' later works, Vogel labels Counts a social utopian and criticizes him for not spelling out "how the teachers should go about seizing control of society from the "vested interests" that Counts described in his early works."¹⁴⁹ Vogel likens Counts to a general who

¹⁴⁴ Vogel, "A Critical Study of the Major Writings of George S. Counts".

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 166.

fails to give his people a target or the weapons to fight.¹⁵⁰ Vogel also argues that Counts “failed as an educational philosopher during the thirties... because he did not describe clearly enough either his goals or the tactics necessary to achieve the goals.”¹⁵¹ Vogel states that:

The most valuable thing that Counts did during this period was to insist that education was an integral part of society, and not a social step-child set off somewhere by itself. To this might be added the observation that by suggesting that the schools take the lead in changing society, Counts made education aware — perhaps for the first time — of its power as well as its responsibilities.¹⁵²

Vogel then turns to an analysis of Counts’ post-war writings. Again, Vogel characterizes Counts’ work as “the same vague utopianism.”¹⁵³ Wrapping up his analysis, Vogel concludes that “Counts’ ideas do not have universal and timeless meaning for all men, and they are not based on a philosophical analysis of man or the ultimate nature of reality, the world, or for that matter, education.”¹⁵⁴ Vogel argues that, since Counts’ arguments are couched in the contemporary problems of the time, “his solutions speak only to the time during which they were published.”¹⁵⁵

Putting aside the fact that Vogel completed this dissertation while Counts was still living and writing, a major problem of his critique is akin to my concerns about Gutek’s conclusions from his first book. Vogel seems to be hung up on the fact that Counts was challenging the social ideas of the time that he was writing in, and Vogel fails to recognize that Counts raised these issues as examples of how education in America was disconnected from the civilization it was being conducted in. Vogel is also hung up on the “shallowness” of Counts’ analysis. His

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 169.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 170.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 175.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

conclusion fails to consider the type of writer that Counts was. Much of, maybe all of his writings could arguably be considered for general public consumption, as a result, Counts' writing was not meant to be academic and high-minded but was seeking to lead everyday people to action. Vogel is not wrong to believe that Counts' solutions were meant to serve the time that they were published, but as will be shown later in my work, his approach to those issues has a greater universality than Vogel leads readers to believe.

Vogel's analysis of Counts is just as problematic as the ones offer by Gutek in his books. By coming to the conclusions that he does, Vogel all but slams the door on anyone taking Counts' analysis seriously. If one was to read just Vogel and Gutek's works on Counts, they would be hard pressed to find any reason to consider or use Counts' for their own research in a modern context. What I believe is most lacking from their research is an understanding of Counts. Gutek attempts to do this in his second book, but his effort does not do enough justice to overcome the criticisms of Counts in any way. Their conclusions serve to make any researcher reconsider researching Counts and instead turn to someone else, to their detriment. Luckily, there are other researchers who have investigated Counts and offer a different perspective.

Writing his dissertation in 1976, George Raymond Knight notes that his purpose for his study was to show how the issues that Counts faced were still central and ongoing even in the 70s.¹⁵⁶ Additionally he notes that in his review of the other attempts to analyze Counts' educational theory that previous studies had failed in setting "Counts works in a way that expounded their central theme and showed their relevance for the post-seventies."¹⁵⁷ Knight believes that there is a central theme that flows through all of Counts work. He defies this as "a

¹⁵⁶ Knight, *An Analysis of the Educational Theory of George S. Counts.*, 3.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

call for an education system that would lead to the preservation of democratic values in a world that had undergone a major transformation from agrarianism to industrialism and was continuing to undergo accelerating change and ever increasing interdependency.”¹⁵⁸

Similar to Vogel, Knight breaks his analysis into sections based on the decades that Counts was writing in: “one, the 1920s and domestic threats to American democracy; two, the 1930s and economic, social, and political threats to democracy; three, the post war world and international threats to American democracy, and four, Counts’ relation to education in the post-seventies.”¹⁵⁹ He begins each section with a general overview of the historical events and social context of the time. Following this contextual information, Knight provides a synopsis of each of the books that Counts wrote during that period and follows that by discussing the major educational issues that he believes Counts was addressing during that period. Knight expresses that he focuses specifically on Counts’ books because he believed “the ideas set forth in [his articles] received greater exposition and wider circulation in his published books.”¹⁶⁰

In his introduction, Knight briefly discusses the work of Gutek and Vogel. He only offers a single critique of Vogel’s writing, noting that the analysis was focused on individual books rather than a cohesive analysis of Counts’ work or main theme.¹⁶¹ Regarding Gutek, Knight believes that he did an acceptable job discussing Counts’ educational ideas, but that his work was only expository and lacked the historical context needed to understand Counts nor did it properly integrate Counts’ work on American and Soviet Education.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶² Ibid., 9.

In the section on the 1920s, Knight argues that Counts was focused on two beliefs: “first, that American society had left its agrarian roots behind; second, that secondary education must be adjusted to the reality of the new industrial order if it was to perform its function properly.”¹⁶³ Knight notes that for Counts, this shift was profoundly dangerous to the foundations of democracy in the United States. Counts’ solution was to seek “a transformation in the nature of the educational system and the social philosophy upon which it was founded.”¹⁶⁴ According to Knight, Counts contended that “the new secondary education with its expanded population was a product of a new social order which he called industrial civilization.”¹⁶⁵

In his section on Counts’ writings from the 1920s, Knight also addresses Counts’ work on the selectivity of high schools. Counts’ works studying the selectivity of the early American secondary schools showed that the new industrial civilization was allowing for the continued education of only select members of the population based on the occupations of their parents at a far greater extent than promotion by natural talent and merit. The selectivity of students based on economic advantage brought on by industrial civilization was unlike life in the agrarian era where natural talent and merit played a far greater role in extending a person’s educational opportunities. Knight notes, “to Counts the problem of selectivity at the secondary level created the unjust spectacle of a privilege being extended at public expense to those very classes that already occupied the privileged positions in society.”¹⁶⁶ Similar to his concerns about the growing influence of industrialization, Counts’ solution, according to Knight, was to be found in the fusion of “democratic theory and educational practice.”¹⁶⁷ Arguably, the selection of

¹⁶³ Ibid., 36.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 36-7.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 38.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 44.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 45.

individuals for future educational opportunity was unavoidable and potentially essential; it occurred in both agrarian and industrial civilization. The problem was whether the result was beneficial for democracy when promotion was not based on talent, but on privilege. Knight believes that Counts' solution was to push educators and educational leaders to determine and to be able to defend a clear principle of selection with the ideals of democracy and in the service of every person in the community.¹⁶⁸ Knight states that Counts' principle of selection was based on two ideas: social leadership and responsibility.¹⁶⁹ Through these two principles as the basis for selection to higher education, Counts saw the best outcome for the continued maintenance of a democratic society.

Knight also addresses Counts' work around the curriculum and the influences on the administration of education through the methods of business. Both, for Counts, served as further examples and methods of the influence of the industrial order on American public education.¹⁷⁰ Knight believed Counts' work of the 1920s was focused on "internal threats to American democracy" driven by the rapid changing of the social order from an agrarian society to an industrial one.¹⁷¹ In doing so, Knight sees Counts' 1920s work as laying "the foundations for his more aggressive work of the thirties."¹⁷²

In discussing Counts' work from the 1930s, Knight notes that in addition to internal threats to democracy, Counts began to tackle the external threats to American democracy and as a result, "advocated social planning, a form of democratic collectivism, and social

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 48.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 72-79.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 92.

¹⁷² Ibid., 96.

reconstruction.”¹⁷³ According to Knight, Counts believed that “the democratic basis of American life has been undermined and was on the verge of being destroyed” by the growth of an economic aristocracy.¹⁷⁴ Knight, unlike Gutek and Vogel, argues that “Counts had a definite plan that he advocated for the improvement of society.”¹⁷⁵ According to Knight:

He called for an intelligent reconstruction of the social order in the light of the democratic ideal and the reality of industrial civilization. He pointed to the need for Americans to create a social ideal that would be just for all men and would inspire the youth of the nation with the vision of a good society based on democratic principles... He advocated a democratic collectivism and social planning in a social order in which laissez faire and individualism were no longer functional.¹⁷⁶

His plan was not intended to articulate the “pattern for this new social order. Rather he set down parameters within which some form of democratic collectivism needed to be constructed.”¹⁷⁷

Knight makes a point of noting that Counts’ call for action was directed at the teachers of the nation and by doing so that Counts knew he was calling for “the imposition of social ideas in the schools.”¹⁷⁸ Counts determined that imposition already existed in the school and was the imposition of the views of the ruling classes and the economic aristocracy.¹⁷⁹ To combat the existing imposition and to bring about a new order, Counts “recommended a social science curriculum that reached in to the affective domain in an attempt to develop habits, dispositions, and loyalties to the principles of human justice upon which democracy relied.”¹⁸⁰ Within this curriculum would be a “cognitive approach to civic education that would openly examine such issues as the nature of propaganda, the actual conflicts in the American socioeconomic system,

¹⁷³ Ibid., 122.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 229.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 229-30

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 230.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 231.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 232.

and the possibilities of new forms of economic democracy, and the nature and ramifications of industrial civilization.”¹⁸¹

Concluding his section on Counts’ work during the 1930s, Knight notes that the same themes Counts was working through in the 1920s came to be fully developed once they were “stimulated by the economic and political crises of the thirties.”¹⁸² Additionally, Counts work on the Soviet Union originally served as an example for Counts of a country attempting to “harmonize human values with industrial civilization;” however, according to Knight, Counts came to realize this was mere “rhetoric produced for the use of an unjust political system.”¹⁸³ Knight saw through Counts’ writings during this time that he was seeking for America to address the same issues that the Russians claimed to be addressing and to do so by learning “what they could from Soviet ideas concerning education and social institutions.”¹⁸⁴ Knight states that Counts “consistently pointed out that America needed to develop its own road to the future in harmony with its own heritage, democratic ideals, and industrial reality” and that America could learn how to go about developing its own process by analyzing the actions of other systems.¹⁸⁵

Addressing Counts’ work in the post-World War II years (the forties, fifties, and early sixties), Knight believes that Counts maintained “his central theses of the twenties and thirties, [but] shifted the focus of his approach from the national to the international arena just as he had changed his focus from the local to the national in response to the depression of the thirties.”¹⁸⁶ In making this shift, Counts was again making a claim about the impact of industrialization and

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid., 233.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 222.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 233.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 334.

the landscape that had pushed countries so far so fast that their “moral sophistication had lagged dangerously behind [their] technical know-how.”¹⁸⁷ The concerns over a lag in moral sophistication in the United States just further supported Counts’ call for “the needs of coming to grips with the fundamental realities of the age if a free democratic government or people was to be able to continue to exist in the new world order.”¹⁸⁸

Knight concludes his section on Counts’ work from the postwar years by showing how Counts “proposed a program of education for postwar America that was based on what [Counts] believed was the essence of the “American Way of Life.”¹⁸⁹ This call stemmed from Counts’ belief that “America needed to take education far more seriously than it had in the past.”¹⁹⁰ According to Counts, Americans had been raised on the false notion that education was naturally democratic and that it “could not be effectively used by despotisms and autocracies since these forms of government wanted to keep their people in ignorance.”¹⁹¹ The war era had shattered this idea and yet, no effort had been done to change the false notion that education was always beneficent. “The implications of this position meant that America needed to strive to build the foundations of liberty in the institutions of society and in the hearts and minds of the members of the coming generation.”¹⁹² In effect, the American people needed to learn from the intentional use of education by despotisms and apply the same efforts driven towards the ideals of democracy rather than autocratic control. According to Knight, Counts believed learning about

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 335.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 336.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. 338.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 299.

¹⁹² Ibid., 301.

the uses of education started with a critical inquiry into the “moral and social foundations of education.”¹⁹³

Knight concludes his work by arguing that Counts’ arguments continue to be relevant because they tackle the larger theme of “democratic survival in the changed and changing world order.”¹⁹⁴ By pulling out this theme, Knight, unlike Gutek and Vogel, determines that Counts’ arguments and solutions continue to be relevant and can be applied to new and ongoing issues. Knight uses his conclusion to articulate how the issues Counts addressed “were still central problems in education and society in the mid-seventies.”¹⁹⁵

Knight’s general analysis of Counts’ work aligns more strongly with my own views and my reading and analysis of Counts’ beliefs. Knight’s dissertation offers more detail than Vogel and Gutek offered and appears to use a more complete analysis based on all of Counts books. Because Counts was a prolific writer during his life, it is a large task to look at his argument through all of the books that he wrote; however, by restricting his analysis to just the books, Knight is missing some of the details of Counts’ beliefs that are found in his articles. This work, then, is arguably an extension of Knight’s work and addresses what I believe he missed.

In his conclusion, Knight turns to a comparison of other more modern arguments similar to Counts’ and by doing so he shows that the same issues continue to exist, but he fails to address what is actionable today in Counts’ educational theory. Although Knight does raise Counts’ use of indoctrination, he does not see the way Counts’ educational theory is driven by this concept. By addressing the importance of the concept of indoctrination in education to Counts’ educational theory, I believe that I can show not only that Counts’ concerns are relevant and

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 341.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

persist today but also that Counts' solution to the issues are also essential to consider and to apply to education today.

The final dissertation that addresses the whole of Counts' educational theory is "An Historical Analysis of the Educational Ideas and Career of George S. Counts" by Bruce A. Romanish. This dissertation evaluates the educational philosophy of George S. Counts and focuses on his major areas of educational emphasis, which the author argues "include the role of the teacher in American society and the issue of neutrality and indoctrination in education."¹⁹⁶ Romanish states that his study "attempts to fill the void that exists in the examinations that have been done on George S. Counts."¹⁹⁷ Romanish completed his dissertation because he felt the previous works of Vogel, Gutek, and Knight lacked the appropriate completeness, stating that "Major aspects of Counts' career such as the A.F.T., the *Social Frontier*, and Soviet writings were ignored."¹⁹⁸

In his attempt to provide what he sees as a more complete examination of Counts' beliefs, Romanish chose to focus chapters on what he sees to be central themes in Counts' educational philosophy: the importance of democracy in education, neutrality and indoctrination in education, and the role of the teacher in American society. In addition to providing support for these themes, Romanish also provides a "historical account of Counts' role as President of the American Federation of Teachers," explores his work on the Soviet Union, and provides a comparison of Counts' beliefs to those held by John Dewey.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Romanish, "An Historical Analysis of the Educational Ideas and Career of George S. Counts," iii.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 13.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 12.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 13.

Romanish begins by laying out what he sees as Counts' educational position. He states that Counts' educational philosophy was based on his "interpretation of the history of humankind," was driven by his belief that "education was always a "representation of a particular culture in a particular setting" and led him to determine that the ideal education for American society could be found through "a careful assessment of the society in its historical and worldly setting."²⁰⁰ Romanish begins this chapter by expressing that Counts believed in the ideals of democracy and that "something as vital as freedom and liberty could not be left up to chance."²⁰¹ Romanish also claims that Counts "was convinced that education, in a generic form, did not by itself ensure democracy" and as a result, education for democracy must be designed with that intent in mind. "There was nothing in an educated population which inherently provided an appreciation of liberty."²⁰²

Romanish notes that Counts saw the American educational ladder as a system that challenged the traditional European aristocratic educational model and allowed for the masses of people opportunity through a single educational system.²⁰³ While the ideal was evident in the original design, Romanish claims that Counts believed "the schools had been guilty of misinterpreting the idea of equality in their seeming unwillingness to recognize that excellence was needed" and that that excellence should be driven by the natural aristocracy promoted by Jefferson.²⁰⁴

In Romanish's section on "Democratic Faith," he claims that Counts extrapolated articles of democratic faith that helped to define the remarkable achievement of American constitutional

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 17.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 27.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 28-9.

democracy and were relevant to its perpetuation.²⁰⁵ Romanish claims that the first article was that “the individual human being is of unsurpassing worth.”²⁰⁶ The second article was, “that the earth’s materials and human culture belong to all men.”²⁰⁷ Third, “that men can and should rule themselves.”²⁰⁸ The fourth article he claimed was, “that the human mind can be trusted and should be set free.”²⁰⁹ The fifth article, Romanish states, was focused on the “method of peace as immeasurably superior to the method of war.”²¹⁰ The final article of democratic faith, Romanish defines as the toleration, respect, and value of racial and political minorities.²¹¹

Although Romanish claims these “articles” were central to Counts, he summarizes these ideas based off one of Counts’ articles written in 1941. By only focusing on this one text that was written in the middle of Counts’ career, Romanish misses an opportunity to establish these concepts as foundational to Counts’ educational philosophy by not elaborating on these and not looking for these same concepts in other pieces of Counts’ writing. In his attempt to pull in information that the previous authors might have missed because they focused only on Counts’ published books, Romanish claims the idea of democratic faiths to be universal to Counts’ beliefs without providing sufficient evidence. The allusion to these same concepts in a more mature text later on in Counts’ career would add credibility to the idea that Counts held these “articles” as central to American civilization and as a result essential to education in the United States.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 29-31.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 31.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 32.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 33.

²¹¹ Ibid.

A similar issue occurs when Romanish also establishes Counts' beliefs about education and the individual. I generally agree with Romanish that Counts believed that the individual child was an active participant and not a passive recipient in education and that the school should 1) "assist each child in growing to his or her full physical, intellectual, and moral structure," 2) "create in the young an allegiance to human equality, brotherhood, dignity, and worth," 3) develop "a loyalty to free discussion, criticism, group decision, and rational foundations" and a toleration and protection of diversity, 4) "develop an attitude which obliges every person of social mind and body to engage in some form of socially useful labor," and 5) promote "an enlightened devotion to the common good;" however, these concepts serve merely as touchstones of Counts' ideas on the place of the individual in education in relation to the way the individual was defined both in progressive education efforts and in modern economic thinking.²¹² Romanish again uses one text, published in 1939, to articulate Counts' thinking on this point. By only using one text, he defines Counts' educational position without proving consistency or providing any evidence of the maturing of his thought from the beginning to the end of his career. He would have, on my view, been better served by tracing these themes through different pieces of Counts' writing. In this way, he could have established the proof necessary to claim these pillars to be essential to Counts' educational position.

The same is true of Romanish's section regarding Counts thoughts on Economic Democracy and the Social Order. The changing of the economy from agrarian to industrial was an essential concern for Counts; however, Romanish spends the last half of this section focused on a mini argument about capitalism, Marxism, and the idea of a "static-state economy," a

²¹² Ibid., 38-9.

concept that is not developed by Counts' nor is it related to his thinking.²¹³ Romanish does turn back to how Counts economic concerns relate to education by stating that "Counts' economic position demonstrates an outlook which he called for among teachers, that is a desire to understand the forces at work in society which either directly or indirectly influence and affect education."²¹⁴ He also states that "Counts' economic ideas had an effect on his educational position generally since that relied heavily on reordering society along more democratic lines."²¹⁵ Just like with the other sections, there is little evidence provided to support these statements. Romanish claims, "throughout it all, however, he [Counts] never wavered in his commitment to a democratic future," but his evidence provided in this chapter is lacking for such a claim.²¹⁶

Romanish's next chapter on "Neutrality, Imposition, and Indoctrination" will be discussed in the next section of this literature review which specifically focuses on the research and writing into Counts' beliefs on indoctrination in education. It is important to note that Romanish is the first to focus on this concept in a dissertation about Counts' educational philosophy. Following this chapter, Romanish discusses Counts' views of the "Teacher in American Society," Counts' time as the president of the American Federation of Teachers, a comparison of Counts and Dewey, and Counts' work on Soviet Education. These chapters serve more as a representation of Counts' effort to live out the vision that he had for the whole of education.

²¹³ Ibid., 44.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 45.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 46.

In his conclusion, Romanish states that “The foregoing thesis makes several valuable additions to the accumulated knowledge of the topic at hand.”²¹⁷ It is in this way that his dissertation should be read. Rather than being an attempt to right the errors of previous dissertations, Romanish’s work should be read as an addendum or an epilogue to those previous works as it mainly adds to them by discussing some concepts that Romanish feels were important and left out of the previous researchers works. In doing so, his work does not provide a strong defense or evidence to support a clear framing of Counts’ educational philosophy and his own work might have been more valuable on this point if he pointed to the previous works to support his claims. This is a point of consideration that I keep in mind in my own analysis. Romanish expresses that “this study adds a dimension, the personal one, not present in other works.”²¹⁸ In his effort to do so, Romanish perhaps moves too quickly through Counts educational theory in his effort address the personal aspects of Counts for this work to be relied on as a historical analysis of Counts’ educational ideas.

The dissertations presented above represent the attempts to synthesize the whole of Counts’ educational beliefs. Each generally serves to add more and more to the previous attempts, but each fall short in some way. Some, like Gutek and Vogel’s analyses, apply critiques based on what the author wished to see Counts do rather than focusing specifically on Counts ideas. Some offer a more accurate depiction of Counts’ beliefs but miss opportunities to fully develop his ideas either by not bringing in other writings that he did like articles, or by not using enough of his texts to provide a cohesive defense of an argument. One of the central concerns that I see is that each previous dissertation, by not understanding or addressing the

²¹⁷ Ibid., 204.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

importance of indoctrination to Counts' educational theory, struggle to articulate the cohesive throughline in Counts' beliefs. Knight comes the closest, and as a result, I would recommend that any future researchers use his work as a place to begin in their own critiques.

The next two dissertations analyzed address Counts' work to focus on a specific concept either in his thinking or in his career. Analyzing these works is relevant to my own work because I attempt to do the same by focusing on the place of indoctrination in Counts' educational theory. While I believe that indoctrination is central to understanding the whole of Counts' argument, I will not attempt to provide an analysis of the whole of his thought. Seeing how others have analyzed a specific concept in Counts' thinking is helpful and adds additional context in areas perhaps missed by the researchers who attempted cohesive analyses. The review of these works also reveals additional issues in the way Counts' beliefs have been analyzed and critiqued.

The first piece in this group of dissertations is called "An Evaluation of the Democratic Conception of Education as found in the Writings of George S. Counts."²¹⁹ This thesis was completed by Chanan Singh in 1941 and takes a broad look at all of Counts' writings concerning his thoughts on the democratic conception of education. Singh states, at the time of his writing, that "the United States at present claims one prominent man who advocates unequivocally that democracy can be safeguarded through education and, furthermore, through democratic education. The man in view is George Sylvester Counts..."²²⁰ Singh was seeking to analyze Counts' works that address democracy and education and to clarify what it was that Counts believed. Singh, writing in 1941, noted that there had been no collective evaluation of Counts' works up to that time. One interesting note is that Singh argues in 1941 that Counts was a

²¹⁹ Chanan Singh, "An Evaluation of the Democratic Conception of Education as found in the Writings of George S. Counts," (Masters thesis, The University of Southern California, 1941).

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

prolific writer and had written so much up to that time that a synthesis of his thoughts and ideas was necessary.²²¹

Singh states that he read and analyzed all of Counts' writings up to that point and attempts to synthesize them into the central argument made by Counts.²²² He begins with a discussion of Counts' beliefs on the relation between education and democracy, addresses Counts' views on education as a social function, and Counts' views on progressive education.²²³ Singh concludes that Counts believed "democracy and education... are interwoven and they must cooperate to survive."²²⁴ He argues that Counts believed that "the democratic tradition here in America had come to the end of an era" and required radical change in order to survive.²²⁵ Singh also concludes that Counts believed that politics must be kept out of educational affairs.²²⁶ Regarding progressive education, Singh concludes that Counts saw planning for social welfare as the fundamental purpose of progressive education and progressive education had too much focus on the interests of the child and the needs of a selected group.²²⁷ Singh states that "the public as a whole must be made aware of the fact that progressive education ought to be universal, and the chief task of progressive education is to sell itself to the public."²²⁸

In summarizing Counts' beliefs, Singh rests his argument about him on a few statements made by Counts in a small set of texts. Singh misses an opportunity to actually synthesize Counts' views into a common or cohesive narrative. His work would have been better served by

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid., 5.

²²³ Ibid., 6-7.

²²⁴ Ibid., 78.

²²⁵ Ibid., 79.

²²⁶ Ibid., 80.

²²⁷ Ibid., 81.

²²⁸ Ibid., 81-82.

focusing on each specific area and showing through multiple examples what Counts believed and then explaining how Counts defended his position in a particular way. Singh instead seems to use Counts and other theorists' writings to state what he believes more than what might be a summary of the whole of Counts' thinking. In an attempt to synthesize a persons' beliefs on a concept, it can appear easier to draw conclusions from others' summarizations; however, this could lead to misinterpretation. My dissertation makes a similar attempt to synthesize Counts' beliefs, and as a result, it will be important to approach Counts' thinking in a way that presents all his thoughts and arguments together to show cohesiveness. The benefit and challenge of my work is that I can look at Counts' thinking across the whole of his career. It will be important then to follow his thinking through all the texts in order to build a cohesive understanding of what Counts believed.

Another dissertation is Eunice D. Madon's 1993 work, "An Historical Analysis of George S. Counts' Concept of the American Public Secondary School with Special Reference to Equality and Selectivity."²²⁹ This dissertation evaluates Counts' earlier works into Secondary Education and investigates his thoughts on reforms that were needed and how those reforms might still be relevant today. Just like Romanish and myself, Madon, starts her work with a biographic sketch of Counts. Madon provides an extensive sketch tracing the breadth of Counts life and energies including the professors that influenced him during his graduate studies at The University of Chicago. She concludes this first chapter by returning to his time just after completing his dissertation to focus on five of Counts' works from early in his career. All of those works focused on secondary education.

²²⁹ Eunice Madon, "An Historical Analysis of George S. Counts's Concept of the American Public Secondary School with Special Reference to Equality and Selectivity" (PhD diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1993).

In her second chapter, Madon reviews Counts' investigation into the development of the secondary school in the United States. She notes that "Counts sought to examine the educational history of the United States. Calling it a "living theory of education" rather than a purely theoretical one."²³⁰ Her chapter lays out Counts' investigation into American education by first highlighting Counts' "analysis of the principles and ideas upon which American education was founded," then moves into a summary of his investigations into the growth of the American secondary school, the development of the secondary curriculum, and the function of secondary schools.²³¹

In presenting the overall scope of Counts' educational theory, Madon uses Counts' ideas from his text *American Road to Culture*, published in 1930. She does state that he had written his most mature and thoughtful volume on the subject in his book *Education and American Civilization*, written in 1952, but she chooses to present his ten principles from his earlier text rather than his more mature thoughts. She does not address why this choice was made. Madon then summarizes Counts thoughts on each of the ten principles: "(1) faith in education, (2) governmental responsibility, (3) local initiative, (4) individual success, (5) democratic tradition, (6) national solidarity, (7) social conformity, (8) mechanical efficiency, (9) practical utility, and (10) philosophic uncertainty."

Madon provides a strong explanation of Counts' ideas and uses evidence from a variety of his texts; however, she relies on his earlier texts not addressing any nuances or changes in his beliefs over time. Using Counts' earlier texts appears to make some sense for her piece because she is focused on his earlier works regarding the development of secondary schools, but she does

²³⁰ Ibid., 37.

²³¹ Ibid., 38.

not clearly address the lack of analysis of his later texts. At the conclusion of her chapter on Counts' development of the concept of American Secondary education she notes that it was after his development of this concept that "Counts began to look towards the reality of American public secondary education" to analyze what was really happening in the schools and districts.²³² This statement does not fit with the timeline of Counts' work since each of the writings about secondary education came prior to the publishing of *American Road to Culture* or most of the other texts that Madon uses as her primary sources for Counts conception of the American Secondary school.

Madon's third chapter provides a detailed depiction of the various studies that Counts conducted during the 1920s as he investigated American secondary education. She works through each one showing how Counts' interest in the democratic ideal lived up to the reality of the schools and their formation in a growing and changing society. She states that, "Based on his studies, Counts concluded that his facts revealed that secondary education at that point in time did not meet the ideal of democracy."²³³ She believes that Counts saw the family as a central reason for the issues with selectivity in the secondary school stating that, "the circumstances and goals of the family were the prime reasons children continued their formal education."²³⁴ Even though it is possibly true that Counts felt this way, he also noted that the makeup of families themselves were unequal leading those economic inequalities to also impact the inequality seen in the schools. Madon notes that Counts was not opposed to selectivity and saw natural selectivity in everyone's capability, the concern was the outsized role that nurture, or the conditions of the family was having on who attended and was afforded the opportunity of a

²³² Ibid., 77.

²³³ Ibid., 114.

²³⁴ Ibid.

secondary education. Madon determined that Counts saw only two options, either the complete opening of secondary school to all, allowing for individuals of intellectual ability to rise above their station, or a restricting of secondary attendance based on a truly “defensible principle” that represented a means for finding the people capable of meeting the social obligation of securing democratic freedoms for all.²³⁵ She saw his preference being the opening of secondary education to all children as the most likely to further the cause of democracy.

In the second half of her dissertation, Madon focuses on what Counts proposed as the solution to address the undemocratic nature of secondary education and the drift away from democratic values with the growth of an industrial society. She concludes that Counts saw teachers as the solution. “With their enormous power wielded through the schools, teachers could impose upon their students, the future generations of Americans, the collectivist, democratic ideals needed in the new society and could mold the schools into models of equality.”²³⁶ Madon only briefly touches on Counts’ idea of imposition in education, missing what I believe is central to his solution to the problems he saw in the 1920s. She focuses on his call to teachers rather than what it was that Counts was calling teachers to do. From here she turns to a discussion of how the same issues Counts saw in the 1920s continue to persist at the time she is writing.

The first half of her piece is helpful as a depiction of Counts’ earlier works and his journey to understand the influences on American secondary education. By focusing on these earlier works, Madon does not have the same issue that the previous dissertations did. She does well in representing the information and using a variety of texts. Given the time she was writing,

²³⁵ Ibid., 115-17.

²³⁶ Ibid., 145-46.

where she falls short is in summarizing and viewing Counts' beliefs through the totality of his thought from the early years to the end of his career. By not investigating the maturing of his ideas, I believe Madon misses the opportunity to suggest what might be actionable in her time from what Counts argued and believed. She raises the fact that the same problems with secondary schooling from Counts' time persist into her own, but she stops short or misses the opportunity to consider whether Counts' solution might also still be relevant. I feel that this missed opportunity comes from not pursuing his thoughts through his later writings.

As the review above shows, Counts' general ideas and concepts have been reviewed by multiple people with various approaches and conclusions. The most recent of these dissertations is from the 1990s. The lack of more current dissertations could mean that the ideas for research have been exhausted, or that Counts' work has not been found to provide anything of great value for further investigation in the current age. It could also mean that other researchers might not have seen or been interested in the concept that I am concerned about analyzing. The critiques written by the early researchers, one that turned into the first text about Counts, could also be having an outsized influence on the use of Counts' work. Thus, the biggest gap in the research is the overall lack of attention to Counts' beliefs. Couched within this gap appears to be a lack of cohesion around what Counts' theory was and whether his work is relevant to educational research in any timeframe.

Although some of the above works mention Counts' thoughts on imposition and indoctrination, there is only one dissertation that appears to address this idea specifically, and none of them consider the contradiction that exists in Counts' call for progressive educational theorists. The absence of information on Counts' views on indoctrination represents a gap in the research about Counts that I believe is necessary to fill. It is important to address Romanish's

work and what he says about Counts' use of indoctrination because it serves as the one piece which questions the relevance of my own work. In addition to there being little evidence in these texts about the relation of the concept of indoctrination to Counts' beliefs, each of the previous works also relies heavily on Counts' published texts. The large focus on his books leaves a gap in the research because the previous researchers are possibly missing the development of Counts' beliefs that is more evident in his articles.

An analysis of the writing about Counts in articles is also relevant to this work. Articles can help to reveal what the consensus is in academia about a particular topic or researcher. The following articles, although likely not exhaustive relating to the writings done on Counts, offer a strong enough sample size to consider the way that Counts beliefs have been understood and applied. The next few paragraphs present the articles, their conclusions about Counts, and more specifically how their conclusions relate to my own work.

In the article "Prophecy or Profession? George S. Counts and the Social Study of Education," Ellen Condliffe Lagemann argues that Counts achieved so much in his lifetime, and yet he seems to only be remembered for his controversial pamphlet, *Dare the School?* She claims that the focus on *Dare the School* is "myopic and unfortunate" and "masks the full significance of Counts' thought and career as a scholar, teacher, public intellect, and politician."²³⁷ Lagemann, writing in 1992, argues that Counts' work has relevance for education researchers today and should be reappraised to truly understand Counts' viewpoint. To address this herself, Lagemann seeks to enlarge the view of Counts' beliefs outside of *Dare the School* and to consider his arguments from that famous pamphlet "within the context of [Counts'] education

²³⁷ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Prophecy or Profession? George S. Counts and the Social Study of Education," *American Journal of Education* 100, no. 2 (February 1, 1992), 137.

and career.”²³⁸ Although it is her hope to bring a wider scope to Counts’ work, Lagemann’s article does little to address this point. The focus of her article is a recounting of events in Counts’ life rather than a specific investigation of arguments in *Dare the School?* and how understanding his life and educational background helps us better comprehend what he was arguing and why. Underlying her piece seems to be the belief that Counts approached his education writing in the same way that a minister or prophet would. She seems to believe this about Counts because of his upbringing, although she never comes out to say it directly.

Lagemann’s review of Counts’ educational history and career somehow leads her to the conclusion that “Counts has not received his due and that his ideas have not been sufficiently scrutinized or widely built on because his perspective remains dauntingly demanding.”²³⁹

Lagemann believes that “Counts’ perspective on education is far more relevant to current problems than a brief, decontextualized acquaintance with *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* might suggest.”²⁴⁰ She ends her article by claiming that a reappraisal of Counts’ work may be needed and through this, Counts’ arguments about education could be vindicated and viewed as prophetic.

Her piece is valuable to my research in two ways. First, it raises a concern that there is both a lack of clarity in the educational research around what Counts believed and that this is because of the audacity of the arguments in *Dare the School*. The lack of clarity leads to the reason that it is necessary to review the concept of indoctrination throughout the whole of Counts’ writings. Second, Lagemann raises the argument that there is a gap in the body of research about Counts and that his work needs to be reevaluated. Her argument lends credence to

²³⁸ Ibid., 138.

²³⁹ Ibid., 161.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

the importance of my analysis. This dissertation addresses this gap and enlarges the effort to show that Counts was more than just his arguments in *Dare the School*.

Another paper, “Governmental Surveillance of Three Progressive Educators,” by Murry R. Nelson and H. Wels Singleton, provides a review of the FBI’s surveillance of Counts, Dewey, and Rugg as a result of their work during the 1930s and 1940s. Within this paper is a summary of the investigation into Counts by the FBI. The authors argue that “The case of George Counts is perhaps the saddest among the three.”²⁴¹ From their research the authors detail how Counts was investigated from the 1940s to the 1960s under suspicion of being a communist. Although he was surveilled and investigated for over 20 years, the authors seem to show that no strong evidence was ever provided to lead the FBI to charge Counts with any crime. The authors argue that the persistent investigation by the FBI led Counts to “cave in” on his beliefs and to disavow components of his work to make the case that he was against communism, something apparently Dewey and Rugg did not do.²⁴² The authors do not appear to offer any evidence to support this claim, but they do provide evidence of the countless documents in Counts’ FBI files which show the surveillance of him and the special interest groups that found Counts’ work problematic.²⁴³ The authors note that this paper was just preliminary, but it shows that there is still more about Counts and his career yet to be understood. This article raises the issue of whether Counts had a consistent argument throughout his career and whether the effects of anti-communist fervor caused him to change his beliefs. This idea has been both supported and refuted by other researchers, discussed above, leading to a lack of consensus about the consistency of Counts’ thinking over time. My research helps to show whether there is a significant shift in Counts’ core

²⁴¹ Murry Nelson, and H. Wells Singleton, “Governmental Surveillance of Three Progressive Educators,” American Educational Research Association paper presentation (March 1, 1978), 19.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 20-24.

beliefs. The lack of consensus reveals a gap in the research and points to the value of my work to the body of knowledge about Counts.

In the article, “Social Reconstructionism: Views from the Left and the Right, 1932-1942,” C. A. Bowers investigates the responses of the extreme Left, which he defines as communists, and the Right, political conservatives, to the work of progressive educators which he identifies as Social Reconstructionist.²⁴⁴ Bowers includes Counts in this article as one of the progressive educators that he calls Social Reconstructionists. In reviewing the responses of the Left and the Right, Bowers shows how both viewed the work of progressive educators as a challenge. Bowers appears to find that Counts’ work specifically was more of a challenge to political conservatives than to Communists because, as he shows, there were many challenges to Counts’ work by conservatives. Bowers provides only one mention of Counts’ work in his writing about the Communists’ efforts. This article helps to raise questions about the way Counts’ work was interpreted when it was presented versus the reality of what Counts was trying to argue. Seeing his work apart from the lenses of anti-communist fervor could help to reveal what people of the time might have missed from what Counts was arguing. Understanding the affect that viewing Counts’ work through anti-communist fervor has on an understanding of his work reveals the value of my open approach to the term indoctrination and how my dissertation could help to identify what aspects of Counts’ work critics both then and now really should focus on.

The authors of the article “Social Class Analysis in the Early Progressive Tradition,” Peter S. Hlebowitsh and William G. Wraga, argue that Counts’ work is the best example of

²⁴⁴ C. A. Bowers. “Social Reconstructionism: Views from the Left and the Right, 1932-1942,” *History of Education Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (April 1, 1970): 22–52, 22.

social class analysis in the progressive tradition.²⁴⁵ The authors point to Counts' early work from his career as the research that led Counts to his beliefs as presented in *Dare the School*. They claim that his challenging pamphlet was "the philosophical apotheosis of Counts' [sic] earlier scholarly efforts in social science, reinforcing his early message that democracy and educational opportunity in the American public schools were still largely unfulfilled."²⁴⁶ Hlebowitsh and Wraga note that Counts' work helped to call attention to the relationship of class issues and their impact on schools. The authors believe that Counts' call to progressive educators was an effort "to involve the school more directly in the social and economic affairs of democracy by using it as an instrument for social planning."²⁴⁷ They believe that Counts fell into a "conceptual trap when he tried to use the school to impose the 'good indoctrination' of democracy upon youth."²⁴⁸

They state that,

Counts opened himself up to criticism by advancing the radical cause of rejecting neutrality and embracing ideology in the educational program. Thus, quite paradoxically it was Counts' [sic] radicalism (for instance, his belief in using the school to directly recast the economy of the nation) that led him to be subject to the accusations of indoctrination and social planning.²⁴⁹

Hlebowitsh and Wraga claim that Counts' support of "the idea of indoctrinating youth toward a particular ideological viewpoint, helped contribute to the notion that progressives stood for planned social control working in the interests of planned social harmony."²⁵⁰

While the authors make these claims with little reservation, they do so after focusing on Counts' earlier works. The authors claim that Counts argued for indoctrination, but they do not

²⁴⁵ Peter Hlebowitsh, and William Wraga, "Social Class Analysis in the Early Progressive Tradition," *Curriculum Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (April 1, 1995): 7–21, 14.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

provide any direct evidence for this. While Counts' argument for indoctrination is not the focus of their work, their conclusion about Counts' views on indoctrination shows an example of how Counts' work is interpreted, how pieces of his work are used to create arguments about the totality of his thinking, and how assumptions of his work lead to conclusions which may not be warranted. By providing a more comprehensive analysis of his beliefs, my research will assist others in the future by providing a complete view of Counts' thinking grounded in the totality of his thought over time.

In the article "Can the Schools Build a New Social Order?" Herbert Kohl uses Counts' work to present his responses to what he calls "Counts' assumptions" in an effort to define what he considered to be the political and social responsibility of teachers in 1980s.²⁵¹ Kohl presents five different assumptions he claims exist in Counts' thinking. Although he begins with *Dare the School?*, Kohl does not tie these assumptions to that work directly and appears to set them up for his own purposes rather than prove they exist in Counts' work. Kohl discusses the following assumptions, "1) social and economic democracy is good; 2) the schools potentially have the power to change society; 3) teachers are capable of being major agents of change; 4) the school should not be a neutral place, but one advocating a socially and economically democratic view of society; and 5) propaganda on the good side is part of good educational practice and that this implies changing the curriculum and the social role of the teacher."²⁵² Kohl appears to make an assumption of his own. By associating these statements with Counts and then offering no evidence from Counts' work at all, he appears to believe that his audience would agree with him that these ideas are Countsian in nature. The concern that this raises for me is that it possibly

²⁵¹ Herbert Kohl, "Can the Schools Build a New Social Order?" *Journal of Education* 162, no. 3 (July 1980): 57–66.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 58.

perpetuates a misleading narrative of Counts' work which is based on opinion rather than grounded in the evidence of what he actually wrote. The other issue raised here for me is specifically Kohl's use of the word propaganda in relation to Counts. My research seeks to question Kohl's assumption that Counts' argument was for "propagandistic and dictatorial methods of teaching."²⁵³ By claiming to talk about Counts' work and using terms like propaganda, Kohl's work could perpetuate a false narrative about Counts that might lead to a misunderstanding of what Counts was really seeking. This piece further adds to the value that my research could have on the body of knowledge about Counts and shows why clarity about his beliefs is still needed.

"Education, Democracy, and Social Discourse: A Contemporary Response to George S. Counts and Boyd H. Bode" by William J. Collins appears to run into a similar issue as many of the other scholarly writings. In claiming to provide a response to Counts, Collins only focuses on *Dare the School*. He makes a claim that "[Counts] says that schools, under the capitalist system, function as a tool of the capitalist rulers" without connecting that with anything directly stated by Counts.²⁵⁴ Collins also claims that "Counts asserts that there needs to be fundamental changes in the economic system if the country is to reroute its course," again without providing any direct evidence.²⁵⁵ In another instance where he fails to provide evidence, Collins addresses imposition in his presentation of Counts' thinking, claiming,

Counts says that since students will be imposed on in some fashion by their environment, society needs to determine where such imposition will come from. Most people assume that most imposition will occur in the schoolhouse, led by the teachers. He says that if teachers could increase their stock of courage, intelligence, and vision, they might become a social force of some magnitude.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Ibid., 63.

²⁵⁴ William J. Collins, "Education, Democracy, and Social Discourse: A Contemporary Response to George S. Counts and Boyd H. Bode," *Schools: Studies in Education* 10, no. 2 (September 1, 2013): 298–303, 299.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 299.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 300.

Collins is supportive of what he believes Counts to have been arguing for, stating, “I tend to align my educational philosophies with those of Counts. I believe, like Counts, that the school should be a place where students can find a model of what society should strive to become.”²⁵⁷ Collins claims to agree with Counts’ educational philosophies and yet bases those philosophies, in this paper at least, on only one of Counts’ writings while offering little direct evidence to prove that what he believes Counts argued for is actually true. Written in 2013, this article reveals another example of the possibility that there is a lack of clarity about exactly what Counts was advocating, or simply represents a tendency to assume that what Counts argued for is so commonly known by researchers today that citing evidence or defending your opinion on the matter is unnecessary.

In the article “Recounting Counts: A Review of George S. Counts’ Challenge and the Reactions to ‘Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?’” Richard Niece and Karen J. Viechnicki seek to reflect on Counts’ charge from his speech and to consider whether any progress has been made. To assess the impact of Counts’ charge, they spend most of their article summarizing the various reactions to Counts’ work. From time to time, they offer one or two lines of reflection regarding their own time, but like other researchers, they do not offer evidence to support their statements. Like the other articles, Niece and Viechnicki provide their own interpretations of Counts’ argument rather than providing an in-depth, evidence-based explanation of exactly what it was that Counts said. In providing summaries of the arguments of others to Counts’ thinking and not offering a presentation of what Counts said, the authors present the criticisms of Counts’ arguments as more valid than what Counts actually argued.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 302.

After completing their review, the authors boldly conclude that Counts' speech, "Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?" split the progressive education movement. They claim that "instead of achieving unity based on a singular philosophical stance, the challenge split the movement even more."²⁵⁸ They assert that Counts' challenge separated the progressives into two camps: "child-centered supporters and social welfare advocates."²⁵⁹ They appear to find Counts' challenge to be a central reason they think the progressive education era ends. They claim that the polarization they believe Counts' speech and later publication created, "began the demise of a once proud and influential era."²⁶⁰ The conclusion they draw is questionable because of the way that it paints Counts and his work. This framing of Counts seems highly problematic because readers of this work are led to believe that Counts' challenge failed because, in an effort to unify the movement his words instead drove the movement to its end. Rather than considering that the demise of the era could possibly have been caused by the progressive educators who refused to take up the challenge Counts presented, they instead provide an argument that wonders where education would be today if Counts never made the challenge at all. They end their conclusion by suggesting that Counts, speaking today, would likely receive a standing ovation, but they do not see that the result would be the same. The issue is not Counts' challenge but the response to his challenge. The authors do not provide the information needed to avoid the same misunderstandings that lead to the disparate viewpoints when Counts first presented his challenge. As a result, they miss the opportunity to correct errors in judgement that would possibly lead to more than just a standing ovation, but actual action towards meeting Counts

²⁵⁸ Richard Niece and Karen J. Viechnicki, "Recounting Counts: A Review of George S. Counts' Challenge and the Reactions to "Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?"" *Journal of Educational Thought* 21, no. 3 (December 1987): 149-54, 153.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

challenge. This article seems to further help to show that Counts is misunderstood or at the least possibly misrepresented.

“Dare Public School Administrators Build a New Social Order?” By Catherine A. Lugg and Alan R. Shoho is one of the articles that actually uses Counts’ own words from his work to support their argument. Early in their article, Lugg and Shoho state that they “believe a close examination of Counts – the man, the times in which he wrote, and his writings – can help inform contemporary researchers and leaders who wish to pursue socially just agendas.”²⁶¹ Before getting into their own argument, Lugg and Shoho present a review of Counts’ argument in *Dare the School*. Lugg and Shoho come to different conclusions than those presented by the researchers previously cited. They claim that Counts critiqued progressive education for its promoting of democratic welfare while not providing a theory of social welfare and that this caused progressive education to be a practice “of, by, and for, social and economic elites.”²⁶² They also use Counts’ own words to argue that Counts called for school to “not be political institutions that simply socialized children into accepting – if not embracing – the unjust status quo. Instead, educators should ensure that the public schools would become models of democratic and socially just practices.”²⁶³ They believe that Counts was seeking to form a new social order where the schools served as “exemplars of American democracy” and where “teachers and students would work for the further democratization of American society, including the move to a socialized economy...”²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Catherine Lugg and Alan R. Shoho, “Dare Public School Administrators Build a New Social Order?: Social Justice and the Possibly Perilous Politics of Educational Leadership,” *Journal of Educational Administration* 44, no. 3 (January 1, 2006): 196–208, 198.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 200.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Their evidence is lacking regarding their support of their claim that “by far [Counts’] most controversial proposal in *Dare the Schools* was his call for public school students to be politically indoctrinated by their teachers.”²⁶⁵ The evidence that they use in this paragraph is a statement by Counts from *Dare* where he states that progressive educators should endeavor to enlist the students’ loyalties and enthusiasms towards some vision.²⁶⁶ The authors do not explain how the quote they mention directly relates to or shows that Counts was advocating for teachers to politically indoctrinate their students. They also do not clarify how enlisting students’ loyalties and enthusiasms was specifically about politics and not simply about living in a particular way.

Following their claim about *Dare the School*, the authors take on a larger set of Counts’ writings and address his thoughts and how they see them changing through his later works after *Dare the School*. They argue that Counts faced continual pressure and challenge to his work following the publication of *Dare* which they claim, caused “Counts to eventually alter his writings.”²⁶⁷ They state that “[Counts’] educational writings would remain far more cautious [sic] than those of the 1930s or even late 1920s, thanks to the relentless attacks on his work,” however, they do not provide examples or evidence of this from his writings nor do they cite another work where this might have been investigated and proven.²⁶⁸

The authors seem to view Counts in a positive light and seek for others to do the same. At the conclusion of their article, they state, “There are few stronger examples of working for social justice than Counts. It is a legacy well worth embracing.”²⁶⁹ Lugg and Shoho’s work appears to be a more accurate depiction of Counts’ beliefs and seems to present different conclusions about

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 201.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 202.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 205.

Counts' arguments which are grounded in his actual work, however, there still appears to be a gap in their presentation of evidence about Counts' beliefs about indoctrination. Their conclusion helps to support my research and to show how important it is to base any analysis of Counts on his actual words and work rather than on interpretations of his work.

In the article, "Ideas That Shaped American Schools," Franklin Parker reviews the books he believes "represent major turning points in American education."²⁷⁰ One of the books that he reviews is *Dare the School*. Parker, in his review, claims that "Counts asked school leaders to go beyond transmitting culture, conserving values, and assuring social stability; beyond child-centeredness and adaptation to change. He asked educators and the public consciously to use schools to remake American society, to determine the direction it should go and then to indoctrinate in that direction in the public schools."²⁷¹ Parker also comes to the conclusion that Counts' writing in *Dare the School* shows that he believed that teachers were too afraid and inexperienced which caused them to be unable to seize and wield their power to change schools. According to Parker, Counts' view of the weaknesses of teachers led him instead to push for the government and not the teachers to be the group who "would build the great society."²⁷² Parker concludes that the question of Counts' work, which he sees as "How should schools serve a changing social order?," is what makes his work so important even if the ideas of social reconstructionism, according to Parker, faded with the deaths of its advocates.²⁷³ Parker's conclusions are considerably different than the conclusions of any other author.

²⁷⁰ Franklin Parker, "Ideas That Shaped American Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan* 62 (1981): 314-319.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 317.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

This piece is important to this literature review because Parker includes Counts' *Dare the School* in what he argues are the 10 most important books which lead to major turning points in American education. If readers are to give value to Parker's claims about these 10 books, then they would possibly view Counts, through Parker's review, as an advocate for governmental intervention in education which seems to be significantly different than the claims of other researchers. No other research claims that Counts was calling for governmental intervention, and it seems that most other articles argue the opposite. This article is example of how Counts' work is possibly misinterpreted or misunderstood and how this is potentially problematic to future researchers who could find value in Counts' actual work but avoid using it because articles like this present his work incorrectly.

William B. Stanley wrote two articles in 1981, "The Radical Reconstructionist Rationale for Social Education" and "Toward a Reconstruction of Social Education" which are two parts of the same argument. In the first article, Stanley provides an account of what he believes to be Counts' and one other progressive educator's "rationale for social education" which Stanley labels as "radical reconstructionism."²⁷⁴ Stanley considers Counts to be "most responsible for developing the early views of the reconstructionists."²⁷⁵ In his section on Counts' views, Stanley uses Counts' writings from the 1930s as the basis for his evidence. Stanley's depiction of Counts' beliefs falls in line with many of the other writers who have presented Counts' arguments from the 1930s. Stanley notes Counts' challenge to the Progressive Education Association and his apparent support for indoctrination and imposition. Stanley claims that

²⁷⁴ William Stanley, "Toward a Reconstruction of Social Education," *Theory & Research in Social Education* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 67–89.

²⁷⁵ William Stanley, "The Radical Reconstructionist Rationale for Social Education," *Theory & Research in Social Education* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 55–79, 57.

Counts argued “that indoctrination will take place regardless of what teachers do. Therefore, it should be used by them to check the power of less enlightened or more selfish groups.”²⁷⁶

Rather than putting Counts’ argument in his own words, Stanley offers a number of direct quotations from Counts’ text to support his presentation of the ideas of radical reconstructionism, which is different from the other writers previously cited. Stanley also spends considerable time presenting Counts’ argument about imposition and indoctrination, pointing to Counts’ words to show that Counts had several reasons why he argued for the consideration of indoctrination and imposition. Stanley properly applies Counts’ own words to help him define Counts’ beliefs and to set up the characteristics of radical reconstructionism. In doing so, Stanley comes to similar conclusions as other writers which may provide evidence that there is some consensus about Counts’ thinking.

The one area where Stanley falls short is in his determination that “after 1941, Counts added little to his reconstructionist views although he did not seem to abandon them.”²⁷⁷ Stanley makes a brief reference to an article Counts wrote in 1966 (“Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?”), and argues that Counts “reasserted his views on indoctrination” in this article, but that the remainder of Counts’ writings seem to avoid the controversies that marked Counts’ early career.²⁷⁸ There is no reference to other texts which a reader could go to in order to confirm his claim. Also, by not providing evidence that Counts continued to hold to his reconstructionist beliefs and by not addressing the argument that Counts apparently “reaffirms his beliefs in indoctrination” in 1966, Stanley is basing his conception of Counts’ radical reconstructionism only on the earliest theoretical arguments. Accepting Stanley’s conclusion might make a reader

²⁷⁶ Stanley, “The Radical Reconstructionist,” 57.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

think that Counts abandoned his own ideas. If Counts did turn from his ideas, then this might call into question the value that radical reconstructionism really has for researchers today. A return to Counts' work in his section "Reconstructionism since 1945," might have helped address this, but Stanley only addresses the work of Theodore Brameld in that section. Gaps in Stanley's approach leaves a potential research gap regarding whether Counts ever changed his mind about reconstructionism.

Stanley concludes his first paper by defining the following as the characteristics of radical reconstructionism:

It focuses attention on the need for a philosophy of education to embody a theory of social criticism. It emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary analysis of major social issues, especially in terms of their economic dimension. It attempts to define the purpose and role of social education as it relates to the need for cultural transformation. And finally, it deals directly with the issue of teacher neutrality and imposition.²⁷⁹

In his second paper, "Toward a Reconstruction of Social Education," Stanley uses these characteristics to analyze and critique the categories which have come, in his view, to characterize social education, as of the start of the 1980s. Counts' work is summarized in this work as a recap of what Stanley found in his first article. The value of this second article is the conclusion that Stanley comes to after comparing what he thinks radical reconstructionists like Counts were arguing for and what was the modern framing of social education at his time. In his conclusion, he determines that social education during his time did not, in his view, meet the challenge presented by the radical reconstructionists.²⁸⁰ He believes that the efforts of Counts and others provided the issues and guidelines for social education and are worthy of debate. In the end, he hopes that "modern social educators will give more attention to such questions and

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 76.

²⁸⁰ Stanley, "Toward a Reconstruction," 83-85.

the implications they have for revising current rationales.”²⁸¹ This article provides evidence that there is still value to be found in Counts’ work for modern researchers and possibly still questions raised by Counts that are yet to be answered. Both of Stanley’s articles provide support for the value of my research.

The article “Affecting Social Change: The Struggle for Educators to Transform Society” By William C. Sewell offers a few claims about Counts and his work which are different from the other articles reviewed here. For one, Sewell, claims that “Counts came to prominence for his promotion of a new educational system based upon ideas formulated during his travels” to the Soviet Union.²⁸² Sewell claims that Counts provided “zealous acclaim for the Soviet model of education,” and points out that this was not because Counts was a communist, but because of the way that the Soviet Union endeavored “to remedy its failed state.”²⁸³ Sewell does not offer evidence from Counts’ own work, but relies on the statements of Gerald Gutek as evidence that Counts promoted a Soviet model of education and, as he claims, that Counts was “looking for alternatives to the U.S. model” as a result of the economic problems of the Great Depression in the US.²⁸⁴ Sewell does use some of Counts’ own words, but he claims that Counts was making “a case for a radical rethinking of social organizations” which appears to claim that Counts was talking about more than just education.²⁸⁵

Sewell’s presentation of Counts’ ideas is confusing. In two paragraphs in particular, Sewell uses Counts’ work and presents two ideas that seem to contradict each other. In one paragraph, Sewell claims that Counts argued for the development of a particular individual best

²⁸¹ Ibid., 85.

²⁸² William Sewell, “Affecting Social Change: The Struggle for Educators to Transform Society.” *Educational Foundations* 19, no. 3–4 (January 1, 2005): 5–14, 6.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid

equipped for the modern society, one who was “agile” and not bound to any particular views or loyalties, then in the next paragraph Sewell presents what he sees as Counts’ “radical call to indoctrinate students.”²⁸⁶ Sewell does not address how it could be that Counts argues for an “agile” individual and yet also calls for indoctrination to the specific ideals of democracy. After defining Counts as a zealot for the use of Soviet Education in the US and presenting two seemingly contradictory claims together, saying that Counts advocated for both of them, Sewell provides his conclusions about the value of Counts’ work.

Sewell concludes that Counts’ “efforts stalled because he emphasized organizational change that a strong bureaucracy readily resisted” and that Counts’ issue was that “he misread the power structures that control society.”²⁸⁷ Sewell does not define who or what make up the so called “strong bureaucracy” or the “power structures that control society.” Sewell also concludes that “Counts misgauged teachers’ abilities to significantly affect change.”²⁸⁸ Sewell does not appear to provide evidence for his conclusions about Counts’ work. Sewell’s article presents Counts’ work in a way that is different from other researchers and raises questions about exactly what Counts believed. His work also calls into question whether Counts was aware of the audience he was speaking to and the potential challenges to his work.

The title of the next article is “Social Foundations in Exile: How Dare the School Build a New Social Order,” by Brian Dotts. Dotts appears to be in support of Counts’ work and maligns the influence of the government and interest groups on education. In his conclusion, Dotts states, “Imagine if we were to stop reifying our economic system and reconstruct education and teacher

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 7.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

preparation institutions in ways that are compatible with the social reconstructionists' agenda."²⁸⁹

In calling for a return to the ideas and challenges of the progressive era and authors like Counts, Dotts lays out what he sees as Counts' argument. According to Dotts, there were three main components of Counts' argument: 1) "educators serve a unique capacity to critique the status quo with the aim of improving 'human existence' and 'the democratic ideal'"; 2) "this pursuit [is] an attempt to affirm and actualize for everyone the moral claims put forth in the Declaration of Independence', namely, "that 'all men are created equal' and are entitled to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'"; and 3) "Every important educational event, institution, theory, and program' will be subject to 'critical review,' ... in order to fulfill the final goal of social reconstructionists: identifying and positively remedying the root causes of social injustice."²⁹⁰

Dotts' conclusion is very different from the conclusions made by Sewell, and Dotts makes no reference to Soviet-style education whatsoever. Another critique of Dotts' piece is the complete absence of any discussion about Counts' arguments for indoctrination. Although Dotts is not speaking directly about Counts, Dotts claims that "witnessing the capture of public education by interest groups and corporate America, the Social Reconstructionists sought to highlight the fact that schooling, like other public and political institutions, was being infiltrated by special interests intent on utilizing this social institution as a venue to indoctrinate masses of children."²⁹¹ This claim appears to serve the interest of his argument, which is that neoliberalism is having a negative influence on education, however, his argument could possibly be challenged quite easily by the claim that others make about Counts and his potential support of indoctrination in education by progressive educators.

²⁸⁹ Brian Dotts. "Social Foundations in Exile: How Dare the School Build a New Social Order," *Educational Foundations* v. 28, no. 1-4 (January 1, 2015): 51-72.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

Dotts states that there are two “polarizing purposes” for education: 1) “indoctrination of the values, customs, ideologies, beliefs, and rituals, circumscribed by the current generation’s most powerful interest groups” and 2) “education ... as a means of critique and social reconstruction in order to improve society.”²⁹² Aside from possibly having a significant error in his argument due to the fact that he does not address Counts’ use of indoctrination when compared with the other presentations of Counts’ beliefs, Dotts’ article does add further evidence that there is possibly an issue of misinterpretation or misunderstanding of Counts’ arguments at play.

The article, “Reconstructing George S. Counts: An Essay Review,” by Barbara Arnstine serves as both a presentation of Counts’ work and as a critique of Gerald Gutek’s first book *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts*. Arnstine notes that “Gutek’s book has been hailed as the comprehensive study of Counts and advertised as a definitive work on Counts’ [sic] writing” and yet she points to several possibly significant concerns with Gutek’s interpretations and conclusions about Counts and his beliefs.²⁹³ She opens her critique of Gutek’s book by arguing that he treats Counts’ work “in a dispassionate, objective and scholarly way” and by doing so, she appears to believe that Gutek lends support to Counts’ challengers rather than highlighting the value of his work.²⁹⁴

Arnstine addresses what she believes to be Counts’ views and points to why Counts himself might have had concerns with Gutek’s presentation of his beliefs. Her central issue is the impartiality with which Gutek presents Counts’ work. Arnstine states that “Counts was suspicious of the aim of impartiality, both as a pedagogue and as a scholar” and that impartiality

²⁹² Ibid., 64.

²⁹³ Barbara Arnstine, “Reconstructing George S. Counts: An Essay Review,” *Educational Theory* 24, no. 1 (January 1974): 110–19, 111.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

leads to misleading judgments.²⁹⁵ While she does not prove her viewpoint to be true by presenting Counts' own words as evidence, Arnstine uses this concept as the basis of her argument. She also argues that scholarly writing should be objective, but that "objectivity is only achieved by the deliberate and controlled presentation of the author's own values."²⁹⁶ She addresses her own positionality at the beginning of this review, noting, "This review is biased in favor of Counts' [sic] view of both teaching and scholarship."²⁹⁷ As a result of her views on impartiality in analysis and her views on Counts' work, Arnstine concludes that "Mr. Gutek has not written a book with [his own values and purposes] in mind; thus his book contributes little to an understanding of Counts' thought or of his place in history."²⁹⁸

Arnstine also provides a secondary criticism of Gutek's book arguing that it fails to have a clear audience because of his approach to Counts' work. She argues that each chapter requires a different reading ability and knowledge base to understand, from the sophisticated to the basic. Additionally, she claims that Gutek could have appealed to readers interested in tackling the types of social problems Counts was interested in, but he never appeals to these readers.²⁹⁹ The focus of the rest of her paper provides evidence for her criticisms by addressing what she sees as three false conclusions that Gutek makes in his book about Counts: "(1) the alleged vagueness of Counts' educational theory, (2) the clarification of Counts' position towards Communism and Marxism, and (3) Counts' ideas of 'new history.'"³⁰⁰ Arnstine addresses each of the conclusions

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 112.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

in turn. She begins by presenting an example from Gutek's writing and then explains what she feels is the proper evaluation of Counts' work.

First, Arnstine addresses Gutek's conclusion that Counts' work was vague and lacked a clear plan of action. She directs her readers back to another chapter in Gutek's book where he presents a detailed review of Counts' curricular views. Given the information presented in that chapter, Arnstine argues that "One's initial response might be that there is a great deal of "program" in Counts' writing."³⁰¹ Arnstine then explains what she sees as Counts' actual position. She believes that Counts never intended to provide a clearly defined program and that he never intended "to tell anyone exactly what to do."³⁰² Arnstine argues that Counts was more interested in the conditions which would allow for people to attack the problems that needed to be solved and to promote the values that were needed to allow for the development of the right conditions.³⁰³ Arnstine's viewpoint is possibly a significantly different conclusion from what many other authors have concluded about Counts; however, Arnstine does not provide evidence from Counts' work to back up her conclusion.

This lack of evidence persists throughout Arnstine's critique. She raises a few seemingly valid questions about Gutek's presentation of Counts, but by not providing alternative evidence and proof of Counts' thinking directly, Arnstine allows for Gutek's conclusions to stand. If Arnstine had provided direct evidence from Counts' own writing to back up her conclusions, then that could possibly have pushed for someone to look at Counts' work again. As it stands, Arnstine's argument raises unanswered questions and seems to still leave Gutek's work as "a

³⁰¹ Ibid., 113.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

definitive work on Counts' writing."³⁰⁴ The lack of evidence in Arnstine's writing raises the question of whether there is any validity to her claims. If there is validity to her argument and there is evidence from Counts' own writing to support it, then this might mean a significant change in the valuation of Counts' work and its relevance to education policy. My work helps to focus on Counts' actual words and offer evidence that might address the conclusions of Gutek's work and Arnstine's article.

In the article, "The Progressive Educator as Radical or Conservative: George S. Counts and Race," Ronald Goodenow considers Counts' thoughts in light of the pressures mounting against liberal policies to address racial inequality in the 1970s. Goodenow states that Counts was "one of the most influential and out-spoken figures in American educational history" and "one of the most prominent proponents of liberal ideology, stressing the role of the democratic idea as a social curative..."³⁰⁵ Goodenow states that "The purpose of this paper is to examine briefly the complex and somewhat shifting nature of Counts' liberalism by focusing upon the ways in which he dealt with problems of race and ethnicity in the 1920s and 1930s."³⁰⁶

Goodenow states that "Counts' empirical study of the education of blacks began with the publication in 1922 of *The Selective Character of American Secondary Education*."³⁰⁷ Goodenow notes that Counts, in his analysis "alluded to 'historical forces' which placed blacks in their socially disadvantaged position;" however, Goodenow is critical of Counts because he argues that he preferred to ascribe some of the blame for the disadvantage on "the state of the black family."³⁰⁸ He levels another critique on Counts when reviewing his research into the

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 111.

³⁰⁵ Ronald Goodenow, "The Progressive Educator as Radical or Conservative: George S. Counts and Race," *History of Education* 7, no. 1 (July 1978): 45-57, 45.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 46.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 47.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

secondary curriculum. He notes that Counts acknowledged the restrictions on black students owing to what they were allowed to take in school, but Goodenow believes Counts “neglected to provide detail on the employment ceiling and what happened to these students upon graduation.”³⁰⁹

Goodenow does note that Counts’ intentional focus on racial disparities was ahead of its time.³¹⁰ He states that “...in *School and Society in Chicago*...” Counts “made his most trenchant comments on economics, political power, ethnicity and schooling” addressing the impact that organized interest groups had on the schools.³¹¹ Goodenow notes that in talking about pluralism, Counts argued that schools, regardless of separation by race, needed more increased political representation not more professional representation.”³¹² Goodenow further identifies Counts as different from his fellow researchers at the time through his 1930s text *American Road to Culture* where Counts argued that democracy in education could not exist if social democracy favored the upper social classes.³¹³ Goodenow also raises Counts’ “Dare Progressive Education be Progressive” and *Dare the School* because Counts placed the challenge of addressing issues like racial disparities squarely on progressive educators.³¹⁴ Goodenow sees Counts challenge as leading an effort in progressive education to address these challenges, but he believes it did little in the end to change the landscape as “progressive literature paid but scant attention to discrimination in education and in society at large.”³¹⁵

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 48.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid., 49.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 51.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 52.

In his conclusion, Goodenow acknowledges that Counts' attention to race was important, but he ultimately agrees with Gutek's conclusion that Counts did not establish a means by which newly enlightened students "once made aware of racism, were to act on it."³¹⁶ Goodenow believes this was due to a lack of understanding by Counts and other researchers regarding "the nature of 'race' and, in a larger sense, what it meant to be a member of a racial or ethnic group."³¹⁷ In addition to agreeing with Gutek, Goodenow also feels that Counts' later work shifts him away from the empirical work he did earlier in his career which provided evidence of racial issues. He does not blame Counts for this change but feels that it fits with what he sees as in line with "the paradoxes and contradictions in progressivism and in the broader political economy" of the time that Counts was writing.³¹⁸

Goodenow improves the validity of his analysis simply by recognizing and using other works by Counts; however, his conclusions come only after using Counts' earlier works and relying on the conclusions of Gutek. In doing so, he misses how Counts' work on larger ideological issues in American education were in the service of all Americans and intended to build the citizenry that could address the systemic nature of racism. The concern with Goodenow's work is that it makes a broad conclusion about Counts regarding racial inequality in the United States without providing a comprehensive analysis of his work. His conclusion appears to serve to direct future researchers with an interest in addressing racial inequality through schools away from considering Counts' later works. While my own work is not related to Counts' writings related to race and racism, it provides a challenge to the notion that Counts did not establish a means for ameliorating the social issues that students would face in using

³¹⁶ Ibid., 56.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 57.

modern society as their text for analysis. My investigation into Counts' beliefs around indoctrination, the "ideological" work that Goodenow finds less valuable, will shed new light on Counts and how his views on education might be far more valuable to those seeking to challenge racial inequality today.

The articles discussed above may only be a portion of the research that has been done on Counts. They show that Counts' work appears to be mostly summarized without strong direct references to his actual words, and the conclusions about Counts' beliefs vary widely. One of the biggest concerns with work around Counts is that researchers assume they understand the whole of Counts' thinking, and yet often only cite one or only a few of Counts' writings and at other times appear to offer no direct evidence from his work at all. Even with all these limitations, previous researchers form conclusions. The approach of previous researchers has led to a variety of different opinions and no clear consensus about what Counts was actually arguing. Although there seem to be some common themes, the fact that researchers have come to multiple conclusions is an issue, especially if Counts' arguments are as simplistic as many of the researchers claim. Thus, my dissertation is valuable to the body of knowledge simply because it attempts to provide a look at the totality of Counts' thinking about a specific concept across his entire career. My approach will help to establish a definitive conclusion about his beliefs and limit the need for speculation in the future. My hope will be to clear up the possible misinterpretation and to address any misunderstanding of Counts' beliefs around a key concept in Counts' educational theory.

Research into Counts' Use of Indoctrination

To address the research around my specific area of focus, Counts' meaning for and use of indoctrination, I specifically searched for texts which attempted to investigate this point. The

previous section noted some discussion about indoctrination in some of the works, but this section is specifically focused on texts which make indoctrination and Counts' views a central feature of the text. The question of this section is whether my focus on indoctrination in Counts' work will add to the body of research, or whether someone else has completed an analysis of the scope that I intend to complete. It is important to note at the outset that, to date, I have found no research which solely and directly investigates Counts' belief about, use of, and meaning for indoctrination. I have found that some of the writings mentioned in the previous section do take time to discuss indoctrination, and there are two articles that seek to articulate the role of indoctrination in Counts' arguments and in the theory of Social Reconstructionism in general. This information is reviewed below.

Although my own critique and the critique by Arnstine, presented above, raise questions about his work, Gerald Gutek's *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts* currently stands as the preeminent text regarding Counts' educational theory and serves as one of the most complete analyses of Counts' beliefs about indoctrination. In his first book, Gutek presents a chapter entitled, "The Nature of Imposition" about this subject.³¹⁹ In this chapter, Gutek argues that Counts was motivated by his interests in democratic collectivism and that he "urged the schools to deliberately impose" a philosophy which would facilitate the social transition to the age of democratic collectivism.³²⁰ He notes that part of Counts' argument referred to the original debates about indoctrination in American education which had to do with the application of religion in public schools. According to Gutek, Counts believed that religion was "baked" into

³¹⁹ Gutek, *Educational Theory of Counts*, 115.

³²⁰ Ibid.

our education system simply because of the foundations of the nation, so the idea that removing religion from education somehow made it free from indoctrination was false.³²¹

Guttek believes “Counts argued that all education involved imposition or indoctrination” and “at no point could the school assume complete neutrality and at the same time become a concrete, functioning reality.”³²² Guttek notes that Counts believed “the typical progressive failed to distinguish between the various contents of the various indoctrinations but rather condemned all imposition.”³²³ According to Guttek, “Counts emphasized that no educational program was unbiased since every educational program had form and substance, pattern and value, aversion and loyalty. He stated that there existed an appropriate and distinctive education for every social order.”³²⁴ Guttek also noted that Counts’ writing shows that he believed “if the tradition was vital and suited to the times, imposition released energies, established standards of excellence, and facilitated achievement.”³²⁵ Guttek concludes his analysis regarding Counts’ beliefs on indoctrination by stating:

By stressing the crucial importance of cultural imposition for education, Counts came to the purpose for his analysis of the American cultural heritage. By isolating and analyzing the key elements of democracy and technology and by emphasizing the economic role in bringing about a collective society, Counts reached what he believed to be a viable concept of American civilization, democratic collectivism. An educational profession committed to this concept could advance the new social order by transmitting the goals and instruments needed to construct the emergent society.³²⁶

Guttek’s writing about indoctrination adds some additional context and challenges to my work. The first challenge is that Guttek believes Counts was arguing for indoctrination to bring

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid., 118.

³²³ Ibid., 117.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid., 119.

³²⁶ Ibid., 121.

about a form of democratic collectivism and that he was seeking to make schools the vehicles by which his beliefs on democratic collectivism would come to be. My analysis of Counts' use of indoctrination or imposition does not show this to be the case; however, this line of inquiry is one that would help in determining Counts' intent for indoctrination in education. Gutek's writing also appears to trace Counts' beliefs throughout his career. Gutek reaches similar conclusions to my own, mainly that Counts believed education and indoctrination were intertwined. Additionally, Gutek's chapter addresses some of the criticisms of Counts and his rebuttal to those criticisms.

There are a few points of concern with Gutek's analysis. The first is that he appears to situate imposition as more prominent than indoctrination, but he uses both terms within this chapter, does not appear to determine them to be equal in Counts' thinking, and does not point to the specific definition that Counts had for either of these terms. The fact that Gutek uses imposition in the title of this chapter and uses imposition more than indoctrination helps to support that there is an important distinction that needs to be made regarding these two words if Counts is to be understood. The second point of concern is that Gutek has the same issue as the articles above. Most of this chapter is an analysis of Counts' thinking with little direct evidence from Counts' own writing. By not providing source material, Gutek appears to assume that the reader will trust his expertise and take his word for it that what he writes is what Counts meant. Although some of his conclusions appear valid, my approach to this same research will help to situate my conclusions properly within Counts' writing, thus limiting the potential pitfall of my own views and word choice affecting the conclusions of the analysis.

The third point of concern is the presentation of the analysis in this chapter. In addition to discussing what he sees as Counts' thoughts, Gutek also provides information from critics and

supporters of Counts along with a comparison of Dewey's beliefs and Counts' arguments. The presentation of the critics' responses to Counts feels incomplete. Gutek presents the responses of critics while bringing up the work of other researchers like Kilpatrick and Dewey. Also, he offers no real rebuttal from Counts to his critics, nor does he mount his own defense of Counts' ideas around imposition. He seems to just place the opinions out there, leaving the reader unsure of how to view Counts and indoctrination. This lack of clarity is further fueled by the Dewey/Counts comparison which follows the information about Counts' critics.

The inclusion of the comparison of Dewey's thinking with Counts' ideas appears ill-placed especially since the supposed focus of this chapter is on imposition. This inclusion causes the chapter to veer into a conversation about Dewey and the idea of building a new social order. Gutek makes this even more confusing when he concludes his comparison by stating, "It would seem that both Dewey and Counts were not widely separated on the view that the school could share in building the new social order."³²⁷ This statement leaves one to wonder, did Dewey support Counts' ideas on imposition? This is a question that Gutek does not answer. Gutek's presentation of Counts' thoughts on imposition is also muddled in this section when he suddenly jumps back to Counts' beliefs about the concept briefly raising Counts' article, "Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?" Following his presentation of Counts' thoughts on imposition, Gutek abruptly concludes the chapter with a paragraph about what the next chapters will be about. He does not offer a synopsis of his conclusions about Counts' beliefs on indoctrination in education.

Gutek's writing on Counts and indoctrination seems to lend support to the view that Counts believed indoctrination and imposition in education were inevitable. Gutek adds to this

³²⁷ Ibid., 133.

view that Counts thought that the imposition of tradition, if designed properly, would release energies and bring about greater opportunities for people. This idea is addressed in my analysis of Counts' thoughts in the later sections of this work. The problem is that Gutek's chapter is the most complete and only published analysis of Counts' work and his beliefs on indoctrination and imposition in education, but it significantly falls short in its clarity and accuracy and does little to help researchers who might be struggling to address the perceived contradiction in Counts' challenge to progressive education. Gutek does not even directly address that this concept might even be contradictory to the other work that was of interest to Counts. My research helps to clarify exactly what it is that Counts was arguing for, explain his aim for indoctrination and imposition in education, and do greater justice to Counts' beliefs making them more valuable to researchers in the future. Gutek's failure to address the lack of clarity around indoctrination in Counts' educational beliefs significantly masks the value of Counts' work for educational policy today.

An analysis of Counts' use of indoctrination is also included in the dissertation "The Problem of Indoctrination: As Viewed from Sociological and Philosophical Bases" completed by Michio Nagai in 1952. Nagai utilizes Counts' position on indoctrination to shape his understanding of the Indoctrination Controversy. Nagai claims Counts believed "that any school education, be it conservative or progressive, contains after all a large element of indoctrination. Indoctrination is inevitable; and furthermore, it is desirable if it is directed to the "right" ends."³²⁸ Nagai notes, "even a position that claims neutrality in teaching, Counts argues, turns out to be an unconscious indoctrination for the liberal-minded upper middle-class point of view."³²⁹

³²⁸ Michio Nagai, "The Problem of Indoctrination: As Viewed from Sociological and Philosophical Bases," (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1952), 7.

³²⁹ Ibid., 7-8.

Nagai argues that Counts had developed a socially oriented philosophy of education, and if this was used as a guiding principle “for an educative practice that would represent the most desirable kind of indoctrination.”³³⁰ Nagai expresses that many thinkers went along with Counts and admitted with him that there was indoctrination involved in education and in teaching. “However,” Nagai notes, “their admission was qualified. Some scholars maintained that indoctrination, though it may not be avoidable, is not desirable. Others maintained that some kind of indoctrination is desirable, while another kind is not. Still, others showed how indoctrination may be converted to proper teaching.”³³¹

Nagai further investigates the concept of indoctrination in relation to Counts’ thinking and raises the arguments offered by both *The Social Frontier*, a periodical that Counts was affiliated with, and Theodore Brameld’s concept of “defensible partiality.” Nagai uses these as foils for Counts’ conception of indoctrination. Nagai first states that *The Social Frontier’s* final position positioned the editors as against indoctrination. He argues that the consensus of the group behind *The Social Frontier* was that, “Proper teaching which should be differentiated from indoctrination, is based on the premise of the democratic tradition; viz., reliance on intelligence for a better life.”³³² Brameld’s concept of “defensible partiality,” on the other hand, argues Nagai, did not go as far as Counts’ conception of indoctrination, but leaves the door open for the fact that an instructor must be partial at times.³³³ Where Brameld expounded, according to Nagai, was in the use of the instructor’s ability to defend that partiality in the face of “open, unrestricted criticism and comparison.”³³⁴ Nagai’s comparison of these three appears to define Counts’ form

³³⁰ Ibid., 8.

³³¹ Ibid., 9.

³³² Ibid., 11. Counts was an editor of *The Social Frontier* at the time that this position was developed.

³³³ Ibid., 12.

³³⁴ Ibid. See also: Theodore Brameld, *Ends and Means in Education: A Midcentury Appraisal* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1969).

of indoctrination as a “closed form” i.e. not open to scrutiny or debate, while Brameld’s and the position of *The Social Frontier* were “open” or did not constitute forms of indoctrination due to the scrutiny they were placed under in the public eye.

Nagai’s work adds a second confirmation to the view that Counts believed that education contained a large amount of indoctrination, and that it was inevitable. He also appears to show that Counts saw indoctrination as good if put to the right purposes. This conclusion is important to my work because it serves as further confirmation of the possibility that Counts viewed indoctrination in education as a foregone conclusion. Nagai’s work is also important because of the comparison of Theodore Brameld’s work. By analyzing these two together, Nagai is interpreting Counts’ view of indoctrination to be of an authoritative nature even though he understands that Counts intended it to be used for positive means. This conclusion adds a challenge to my work to properly determine if Counts truly believed that he was advocating for indoctrination in the authoritative sense. I will seek to clarify this point in the concluding chapters of the dissertation.

Nagai’s analysis and treatment of Counts’ conception of indoctrination spans only two pages in his dissertation and is primarily used to establish what he considers “the indoctrination controversy.” Additionally, Nagai presents his conclusions about Counts after citing only *Dare the School*. He does mention other texts written by Counts, but he does not use these to help clarify or confirm Counts’ theory of indoctrination. Additionally, it is important to note that Nagai completed this work in 1952, two decades before Counts died. While Nagai’s framing of Counts’ beliefs seems to connect well with my analysis, his evaluation does not treat this concept with the breadth that is warranted. It is also concerning that Nagai determined that Counts argued for indoctrination in an authoritative sense without much data from Counts’ work to support it.

Nagai's comparison of the writings of others from the same time helped him define Counts' position. This approach is interesting and might possibly be something worth considering as an extension in the future. The gaps in Nagai's research, the minimal use of Counts' work and the time when his research was completed, make it necessary to address Counts' beliefs about indoctrination in a definitive manner.

It is helpful to now turn to an analysis of Counts' ideas on indoctrination as presented more recently. One article, written in 2014, entitled "Social Reconstructionist Philosophy of Education and George S. Counts - Observations on the ideology of indoctrination in socio-critical educational thinking" by Ari Sutinen attempts to articulate and define Counts' conception of indoctrination. A critical piece to note for this article is that it relies on only four of Counts' writings and each of those writings is from 1932. Apart from these texts, Sutinen also uses writings by Gerald Gutek as support for his opinions about Counts' views on indoctrination, about which I have already raised concerns.

In his article, Sutinen presents a review of the whole of Social Reconstructionist philosophy, and he focuses on indoctrination as a central component of this philosophy. He states that progressive education believes "firstly [that] it is the function of education to socialize the educatee for loyal and just social activity. Secondly, as a result of education, the educatee should be able to evaluate and change social reality for a "new social order."³³⁵ Sutinen claims social reconstructionists believe that the only way to achieve the goals of progressive education is through indoctrination.³³⁶ For Sutinen, "the extreme leftist wing of the social reconstructionist

³³⁵ Ari Sutinen, "Social Reconstructionist Philosophy of Education and George S. Counts - Observations on the Ideology of Indoctrination in Socio-Critical Educational Thinking," *International Journal of Progressive Education* 10, no. 1 (February 2014): 18–31, 20.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

philosophy of education advocates educational thinking in which the teachers at school indoctrinate the pupils to accept a revolution in the capitalist society.”³³⁷

Before his discussion specifically about Counts, Sutinen defines indoctrination using Gerald Gutek’s 1988 book *Philosophical and Ideological Perspectives on Education* as support.³³⁸ Sutinen states that “indoctrination refers to manipulation of the rising generation for a pre-designed social, political and economic social reality.”³³⁹ Sutinen claims that “indoctrination is the nature of the interaction related to education in the social reconstructionist philosophy of education.”³⁴⁰ Although he cites, Gutek’s work after defining indoctrination, this definition does not appear at the reference he notes nor anywhere else in Gutek’s book. The page that Sutinen references from Gutek’s text discusses what Gutek sees as the ideology and philosophy of social reconstructionism. In turning to his discussion of Counts, Sutinen starts by placing him as the founder of the social reconstructionist philosophy of education.³⁴¹

After placing Counts as the founder of social reconstructionism, Sutinen claims that “Counts’ educational philosophical thinking is based on the indoctrination of the rising generation into the desired social order.”³⁴² Sutinen then adds further context, stating that Counts does not suggest this and reject human freedom, but instead believes freedom is “only part of human activity.”³⁴³ To Sutinen’s understanding, Counts came to this conclusion through his analysis of American capitalism. He determines that Counts believes “society can be changed into something better in the form of systematic social thinking,” and a “reconstruction of society

³³⁷ Ibid., 22.

³³⁸ Gerald Lee Gutek. *Philosophical and Ideological Perspectives on Education*. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988).

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Sutinen, “Social Reconstructionist Philosophy,” 22.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid., 23.

³⁴³ Ibid.

means the change of “private capitalism” into a “socialized economy”.³⁴⁴ According to Sutinen, Counts concludes:

That education is not a child-centered activity, as the analysis of the contents of educational activity based on the principles of communal activity rests with the educators. As the contents are based on the principles of a better society, the educators have the right to transfer the principles reconstructed from communal activity to the next generation through indoctrination.³⁴⁵

Based on Sutinen’s understanding of Counts’ work, three premises underly Counts’ views in favor of indoctrination. “Firstly, as the operations of capitalist society drift into a crisis, an opportunity arises to change communal methods of activity through a revolution” ...; “Secondly, the justification of indoctrination is connected with the moral idea of reaching, through revolution and indoctrination, ‘a more beautiful society’ than what communal activity was before;” and “Thirdly, the educatee’s relationship with the educator and the social community is always one of subordination, whereby the educator and culture are the main influencers on the educatee.”³⁴⁶

Sutinen claims that, for Counts, indoctrination can be understood to be similar to enculturation.³⁴⁷ He provides four examples, he says come from Counts’ work, to prove the direct influence of culture: (1) The “child is born in a given cultural medium” with set forms of language and communication; (2) “the educatee does not have any personal traits at birth” but rather the potential to learn various things under influences in a particular way; (3) the culture influences the child and gives allowance for the educator to do so by their value judgments; and

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 24.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 25.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

(4) leaving the child to develop blind or to conceal the influence on a child as activity even for the benefit of the child is problematic.³⁴⁸

Sutinen utilizes the arguments made by Gutek to critique what he has determined to be Counts' conception of indoctrination. He argues first that "indoctrination by the educator in educational activity is problematic because a finalistic, unchanged idea of issues is generated in the educatee as a result of the indoctrination."³⁴⁹ He argues that this amounts to an absence of the educatee's critical thinking ability as a result of the indoctrination conducted by the educator. Second, he claims that educatee's point of view, or his or her human rights to be an individual, are deemed to be irrelevant in a process where the educator uses indoctrination.³⁵⁰ Sutinen states that Counts' conception of indoctrination centered greater importance on the one performing the indoctrination with little care for the one being indoctrinated.³⁵¹ The third point of Sutinen's critique is that Counts' support for indoctrination creates the problem of who determines what is acceptable educational activity and what is not. Sutinen states, "The issue is who shall decide on the 'new social doctrines' that will finally lead to the 'salvation of the world.'"³⁵² Sutinen does not explain how this issue aligns with Counts' conception of indoctrination in education.

In this part of his critique, Sutinen also raises the concerns of two other writers, I.A. Snook and C.A. Bowers. He claims that Snook raised the issue that "the social reconstructionist philosophy of education about indoctrination in education and about the educatee's growth into a democratic actor is conflicting."³⁵³ The citation that Sutinen uses directs the reader to a part in

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 25-26.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 27.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

Snook's text where Snook explains that some critics had issues with the social reconstructionist's use of indoctrination as a method of instruction mainly because they believed that social reconstructionist could not support indoctrination and also claim to promote the teaching of discussion and the scientific method. At no point on the page Sutinen cites from Snook does Snook mention anything about a democratic actor.³⁵⁴ Additionally, Snook appears to be offering this information as context to his reader, not as his own conclusions about social reconstructionist philosophy.

Sutinen then mentions Bowers who he claims sees the same logical problem raised by Snook. Interestingly, Snook refers his readers to Bowers to provide a "succinct account of this controversy" directly after presenting his summary of the critics' attitudes towards the social reconstructionist's use of indoctrination in education.³⁵⁵ Sutinen's citation of Bowers' text does point to a conclusion that he makes regarding a conflict he sees in the aims of social reconstructionists. Bowers states, "The primary problem that confronted them involved obtaining the cooperation of all classes... to construct a socialistic economy consonant with the nation's democratic ideals. Because democratic cooperation was the key to the self-repairing society, the social reconstructionists could not, without jeopardizing the very principle of democracy they wanted the school to instill, employ undemocratic methods of coercing groups that did not want to restructure society along socialistic lines."³⁵⁶ Bowers follows this conclusion by mentioning that social reconstructionist's promoted "methods," but he never states what those methods are. Stuienen appears to fill this in for Bowers by calling those methods "educational

³⁵⁴ I. A. Snook, *Indoctrination and Education* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1972), 19.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁵⁶ C. A. Bowers, *The Progressive Educator and the Depression: The Radical Years* (New York: Random House, 1969), 107.

indoctrination.”³⁵⁷ Regardless of the thin nature of his citations, Sutinen uses this conception of Counts’ to conclude that indoctrination and democratic activity are antagonistic of one another. Sutinen states that “an undemocratic education cannot produce a democratic actor.”³⁵⁸

In his final critique, Sutinen also appears to agree with C. A. Bowers and his critique of Social Reconstructionism because of its weak social analysis and faith in education’s ability to improve communal activity causally and unambiguously.³⁵⁹ Bowers wrote a book in 1969 titled, *The Progressive Educator and the Depression: The Radical Years*, and in this text, he traces what he determines to be the development of the social reconstructionist movement while critiquing what he sees as its central tenants. Sutinen presents Bowers’ critique as representative of his own thoughts and feelings. According to Sutinen, Bowers believes that social Reconstructionist philosophy failed because:

[F]irstly, the advocates of social reconstructionist philosophy of education have not presented any systematic social analysis that would provide the outline for new communal activity. Secondly, they have not presented how the educator should act, if a social analysis was presented and if it was found to be realistic to put into effect. Thirdly, which is the true operational forum for decision-making by the teachers? Fourthly, the teachers’ analysis of social problems and their solution, which are transferred to teaching activity, is too slow a method to solve current social problems.³⁶⁰

Sutinen presents this assertion with no rebuttal or argument to the contrary. He also cites the book *Curriculum for Utopia* by William B. Stanley in this section because Stanley provides a summary of Bowers’ critique. What Sutinen does not mention is that after presenting Bowers’ critique, Stanley points out a number of issues with Bowers’ conclusions.³⁶¹ Sutinen either was not swayed by Stanley’s concerns with Bowers’ book or disagreed with the issues Stanley raises.

³⁵⁷ Sutinen, “Social Reconstructionist Philosophy,” 27.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 28.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ William B. Stanley, *Curriculum for Utopia: Social Reconstructionism and Critical Pedagogy in the Postmodern Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 60-62.

Either way, Sutinen gives Bowers critique authority by restating it with no critical investigation. Sutinen simply concludes his analysis by stating, “The advocates of the social reconstructionist philosophy of education only present their hopes for a utopia in which the values of the capitalist economic system are changed to give rise to a ‘new social order.’”³⁶²

Sutinen’s work offers a prime example of why my research is important. His work misinterprets Counts because of its reliance on only a few pieces of Counts’ writing. He also provides a potentially dangerous and inaccurate interpretation of Counts’ thinking that might lead other educational researchers to write off Counts’ work as too controversial. Analyzing Counts’ works more fully will provide a more accurate picture of Counts’ thinking.

Sutinen’s conclusions about what social reconstructionism is and its belief system provide a challenge to my work. Counts was not presenting some utopia or even calling for a “new social order” and this misinterpretation is problematic. Sutinen does raise the fact that there appears to be a contradiction with the support of indoctrination and its usage as a method of educating within a democracy; however, Sutinen does not offer efficient evidence to support his claim that there is a contradiction in Counts’ support for indoctrination. Sutinen’s work serves to confuse potential researchers and might lead to a belief that Counts and possibly the whole social reconstructionist movement was undemocratic when that is quite possibly not the case. Developing true clarity on the intent of the social reconstruction movement, at least in relation to Counts’ thinking, is both valuable and necessary.

Considering Gutek’s and Sutinen’s framing of Counts’ beliefs around indoctrination, it is important to look at other writers’ analyses of this same subject. As stated earlier, Bruce

³⁶² Ibid.

Romanish, who wrote his dissertation on George S. Counts, also published an article in 2012 titled, “George S. Counts: Leading Social Reconstructionist.” It is important to look at Romanish’s two pieces in comparison to one another as it relates to Counts and his beliefs about indoctrination in education. Additionally, these works serve as challenges to the conclusions presented by Nagai, Gutek, and Sutinen.

In his dissertation, Romanish devotes his chapter “Neutrality, Imposition, and Indoctrination” to Counts’ beliefs on this topic. Opening his chapter Romanish summarizes what he sees to be Counts’ beliefs around indoctrination in education. Romanish states that the controversy of neutrality was central to Counts’ criticism of progressive education.³⁶³ Romanish claims that Counts’ “entire argument for using the school as an agency for bettering society” hinged on his views about neutrality.³⁶⁴ Like other researchers, Romanish claims that Counts, “satisfied by reason and evidence,” believed “the school could never be neutral in the true meaning of the term.”³⁶⁵ Romanish argues that Counts, based on his belief that schools could never be neutral and the belief that attempting to make them so was a futile effort, sought to control the forces of imposition and indoctrination “toward positive ends.”³⁶⁶ In the remainder of the chapter, Romanish seeks to “examine and explain Counts’ endorsement of imposition,” how Counts sought to break the suppositions of school neutrality arguments, and to explain Counts’ “view on the nature and role of indoctrination and imposition in education.”³⁶⁷ Romanish also

³⁶³ Romanish, “An Historical Analysis,” 52.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 53.

spends time providing criticisms from other researchers at the time to provide context and “evidence from both sides of the issue.”³⁶⁸

Romanish begins the core of his argument by summarizing what he sees as Counts’ reason for critiquing progressive education. He notes that Counts was equally supportive of the movements focus on the child as a central actor in the educative process, but that “Counts took issue with the movement because it lacked a solid social foundation.”³⁶⁹ This lack of social foundation was rooted in the fears of the adults towards any notion of imposing on a child. Romanish, without providing support from Counts’ writing, believes that he saw the progressives fear as rooted in their own childhoods.³⁷⁰ In an attempt to make an education “freer” than the one they experienced, they tore at the democratic and educational principles essential to the fabric of American society leaving the children vulnerable to other influences and undemocratic systems.

Romanish claims that Counts selected neutrality as the issue to address because “it was the antithesis of what he had held to be the democratic and political purposes of the public school.”³⁷¹ Romanish then explains how Counts saw the trust in neutrality stemming from a “naïve faith in the good that results from education.”³⁷² Counts used modern history to articulate this point showing how well-educated countries still created the catastrophe of World War II. Just being educated, Romanish claims Counts argued, was not enough and did not naturally lead to democracy.³⁷³ If democracy is the desire, “then the educational apparatus must be faced in such a direction.”³⁷⁴ In Romanish’s view,

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 54.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 55.

³⁷¹ Ibid. 56.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid., 57.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

Counts objected to the claims that schools ought to be neutral and defended his position on the grounds that all education contained a large element of imposition, that this was inevitable, that society's existence and evolution depended upon it, that as a result it was eminently desirable, and that the frank acceptance of this fact by the educator was a major professional obligation. Moreover, he argued that a failure to do this represented a repudiation of a most crucial educational responsibility, the clothing of one's own prejudices in the garb of universal truth, and the introduction into the theory of education of an element of obscurantism.³⁷⁵

Romanish notes that Counts' desire was for education to serve democratic ends and that "political liberty, if it was to endure, had to be something which was imposed because of the demands it placed on human nature and on the character and mind of men and women."³⁷⁶

Later in the chapter, Romanish spends some time attempting to provide a definition of indoctrination according to Counts. Romanish claims that Counts "expressed his concern over the employment of the word by asserting that he did not intend its interpretation to be pejorative and that it was possible that indoctrination was too strong and uncompromising a word to apply to the kind of influence which he had in mind."³⁷⁷ Additionally, Romanish believes that Counts felt that imposition might be better, stating that, "[Counts] warned that even this term should be made to carry its milder connotations."³⁷⁸ Although he makes this claim and notes that this clarification was made before Counts' *Dare the School* was published, Romanish does not cite any supporting evidence. Referring to Counts, "Should the Teacher Always be Neutral," Romanish relays Counts' recollection of his argument with John Dewey about the term indoctrination. Romanish shares how Dewey later notes that "indoctrination" in the dictionary at the time was defined as "teaching."³⁷⁹

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 58-9.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 61-2.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 68.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid. 69.

Returning to his effort to define indoctrination according to Counts, Romanish lays out what he sees as the characteristics that Counts determined were “definitely not to be incorporated under indoctrination.”³⁸⁰ He uses a quote from an NEA Department of Superintendence – Official Report from 1932, where Counts denounces that indoctrination refers to the establishment of a state church or the teaching of a sacred set of dogmas as fixed and final.³⁸¹ Romanish also uses Counts’ strong opposition to the blind teaching of patriotism as an example of what Counts did not want education for democracy to be.³⁸² From there, Romanish does not come to any sort of conclusion about Counts’ definition. This section veers off into an extended discussion of Counts’ concerns about patriotism in schools and then into a recounting of some of Counts critics. It concludes unsatisfactorily without providing clarity regarding a definition of the term.

Romanish’s chapter on “Neutrality, Imposition, and Indoctrination” is the best representation I have found that depicts both the importance of indoctrination to Counts’ work and the meaning/intent of indoctrination for Counts. Romanish also comes to some of the same conclusions I have found in my own work; however, the evidence Romanish uses condenses this concept too much and it does not fully articulate the scope and meaning behind Counts’ beliefs. Another point of concern is that Romanish’s dissertation was written in 1980. Considering the texts written after this time, most importantly Sutinen’s article written in 2014, the view regarding Counts and his relation to indoctrination was not shifted by Romanish’s work, further raising the essential nature of a proper analysis of Counts and his beliefs around indoctrination in education.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

The intent of Romanish's dissertation was to add to the dissertations already completed on Counts. In considering that effort, this chapter calls attention to a concept little discussed anywhere else and is deserving of that recognition. Reading it through though, I am still left with questions. Romanish's chapter reveals that this concept is important to an understanding of Counts and warrants further investigation. Taking up his own call again, Romanish acknowledges the need for further investigation in his article from 2012 titled, "George S. Counts: Leading Social Reconstructionist." Romanish frames this article as a biography of Counts where he "provides an analysis of important segments of Counts' career that have received limited attention or are underdeveloped in the literature."³⁸³ One of the areas that he addresses is Counts' position on indoctrination.

According to Romanish, Counts was different than many of his fellow progressive educators, and rather than focus on the child, he put all of "his efforts to the social aims and purposes of schooling."³⁸⁴ Romanish makes a similar claim that the other works about Counts have made when he states that Counts held "a belief that the future would be more collectivist in nature and therefore it was critical [to him] that it be organized with fundamental commitments to a democratic ethos."³⁸⁵ Romanish then turns to a discussion of indoctrination and Counts' thinking specifically. He states that Counts used the term indoctrination, but the concept was never sufficient enough for him to use it "in its historic and more literal sense."³⁸⁶ Romanish claims that Counts "leaned on a Webster definition [for indoctrination], which meant to instruct

³⁸³ Romanish, "Leading Social Reconstructionist," 38.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

in doctrines, principles, theories, or beliefs; to instruct; to teach,” however, Romanish does not cite any source for this claim to allow for it to be confirmed.³⁸⁷

Continuing his section on indoctrination, Romanish claims that Counts “acknowledged that indoctrination was possibly too strong and uncompromising in its vernacular and that imposition might be a better term to use,” however, on this point, just as with his dissertation, he does not offer any source to support this claim. At this point in his piece, Romanish does address Counts’ article, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” written later in Counts’ life, where he notes that Counts defends “the idea of “imposition” as a basic and inescapable aspect of the process of rearing the young in any society.”³⁸⁸

Returning to the timeline of Counts’ thinking on indoctrination, Romanish presents what he sees as Counts’ attitude towards the idea of the inculcation of patriotic values, something that was on the rise in educational discussions as a result of World War II.³⁸⁹ He notes that “Counts opposed attempts to bring what he saw as despotism into public schools under the guise of teacher patriotism.” He provides a citation for this section which points to Counts’ article “The Teaching of Patriotism.” According to Romanish, Counts supported the teaching of patriotism if it was approached from a democratic nature, but if the focus was on the “mindless indoctrination of the flag-waving variety” then Counts was against it.³⁹⁰ According to Romanish, Counts actually warned “against the teaching of blind loyalties” and that if that was done with the machinery of traditional democracy it “would doubtless be the surest way of destroying it.”³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 42-43.

Romanish critiques Counts on this point arguing that Counts was seeking to “have it both ways” and that, to him, is impossible.³⁹² He argues that “there is a great difference between the socialization everyone receives by virtue of being born into a given culture or civilization, and the political education one receives through a formal school curriculum.”³⁹³ Romanish argues that Counts would have been better served by the sociological notion of “covert and overt socialization.”³⁹⁴ He argues that, in presenting his argument, Counts “failed to incorporate the necessity of critical thought as part of democratic citizenship, and as something to serve as a counterbalance to socialization or imposition,” a critical notion he sees as “common to nearly all notions of autonomy [and] at the core of a democratic education.”³⁹⁵

Romanish argues that Counts’ framing of indoctrination positions the students as a means to achieve democracy, which he finds problematic.³⁹⁶ He believes that Counts assumed too easily that “some forms of imposition on the young are inevitable, unavoidable, and to a degree necessary if not desirable, [and was too willing] to use that as a basis to support direct, overt imposition or indoctrination.”³⁹⁷ Romanish believes that categorizing certain forms of socialization as necessary was highly problematic and that by doing so, Counts was more closely related to the aspects and actions of the authoritarian political systems that he critiqued.³⁹⁸

One of the most valuable aspects of this article is that Romanish states that Counts’ ideas on indoctrination have received limited attention and are underdeveloped in the literature. Romanish’s article gives credence to my research. Romanish does attempt to provide a clear

³⁹² Ibid., 43.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

framing of Counts' ideas, but it is presented in a section of an article, and he does not delve into this concept with the approach that I am seeking to in my dissertation. Romanish does confirm that Counts had beliefs around indoctrination, even providing a definition that he claims was used by Counts for indoctrination. This definition offered by Romanish proposes a challenge to my work and shows that further and complete analysis of all of Counts' works is still warranted. Romanish brings up the contradiction that exists in Counts' thinking, however, Romanish does not determine whether it is appropriate to consider Counts' view of indoctrination as authoritative. Romanish appears to attach this label himself and this leads to his conclusions that Counts was in error in his support of indoctrination in education. Defining whether Counts' views align with indoctrination of the authoritative nature is an issue that is central to my work because I am interested in determining if there is a contradiction and if critiques like Romanish's are even warranted. Given Romanish's argument, it is necessary to provide a robust analysis of Counts' thinking. I will challenge Romanish's argument by getting to a closer understanding of what Counts was really arguing for.

It is important to note one additional framing of Counts and his beliefs around indoctrination which comes from the first chapter of the book *Concepts of Indoctrination: Philosophical Essays* by I.A. Snook. The chapter is called, "The Evolution of the Concept" by Richard H. Gatchel. In this chapter, Gatchel addresses Counts briefly as he traces the evolution of the concept of indoctrination, however, what he presents is interesting. Just like Romanish, Gatchel offers a different take than that of Sutinen and Gutek. Gatchel argues that Counts asserted "that indoctrination for liberal-mindedness was just as progressive as the Progressives and much more stable."³⁹⁹ Gatchel defined the Countsian position as one that asserts "the

³⁹⁹ Richard Gatchel, "The Evolution of the Concept," in *Concepts of Indoctrination: Philosophical Essays*, ed. Ivan Snook, International Library of the Philosophy of Education (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1972), 10. For this

necessity of indoctrination in American education.”⁴⁰⁰ While this seems like Sutinen’s argument, Gatchel’s brief review of Counts in his chapter offers a differing perspective on the motive and intent behind Counts’ supposed support of indoctrination. Unlike Sutinen and Romanish, Gatchel argues that when Counts used indoctrination he meant, attention focused “on the problems of a philosophically consistent perpetuation and improvement... of social democracy’s core values.”⁴⁰¹ In this way, Counts was not arguing for indoctrination as a total aim of education, but rather that American education should be focused on the core values of social democracy. Gatchel argues that Counts’ conception of indoctrination ultimately “lost out to the experimentalists’ derogation of the word” leading to more “conceptual support, especially among educators and educationists” that any use of indoctrination was only ““indoctrination in the bad sense.””⁴⁰² The fact that Gatchel determines that Counts’ conception of indoctrination “lost” to “indoctrination in the bad sense” raises questions about which side of the indoctrination debate Counts was on. Taken from the view of Gutek, Sutinen, and Romanish, one would think that Counts was calling for the “bad” type of indoctrination, but Gatchel frames Counts differently.

Gatchel’s argument helps to question whether there is consensus regarding Counts’ beliefs, and this supports that further research might help to shed more light on the subject. Gatchel brings up several ideas that affirm the value of this research. My work will help to provide additional evidence to confirm or deny that Counts’ ideas on indoctrination lost out to “indoctrination in the bad sense” and that Counts could possibly have been arguing for something other than authoritative indoctrination. Gatchel also raises the possibility that Counts

statement Gatchel is citing George Counts, *The American Road to Culture* (New York: The John Day Co., 1930), 193.

⁴⁰⁰ Gatchel, “Evolution of the Concept,” 11.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

was not advocating for indoctrination to be the aim of education, but rather the frame for what type of education we should be providing. This conclusion is a critical note about Counts' writing that only Gatchel has raised. My work seeks to determine if this view of Counts' thinking on indoctrination can and should be the way that we view Counts' work.

The review of the writings about Counts and his beliefs on indoctrination show that there is much still that is left to understand. The fact that there are so few pieces about this subject also shows that this area has not been fully addressed. The small sample size is concerning especially given the identification of indoctrination in education as a central component of social reconstructionist theory and a centerpiece of Counts' beliefs.

This literature review helps me to identify a few issues that I seek to avoid in my own work. The research into Counts' views on indoctrination continue to have the same issues as the literature that exists about Counts' beliefs in general. Many of the conclusions made in the writings in this section have come from a small sampling of Counts' writings rather than the totality of his thinking. I make a concerted effort to utilize Counts' own work as the source of my evidence, and I have attempted to gather the largest sample size possible from Counts' own words to ensure that I am warranted in making claims about Counts' beliefs. Additionally, while there is some consensus, there seem to be conflicting conclusions about what Counts really meant. It also appears that the conclusions about Counts' beliefs on this subject have largely been presented as the opinions of others rather than based on exactly what Counts said. The differing opinions are to be expected, but the greater concern that comes out of this is the overwhelming consensus that Counts' work either has no value for current researchers or is his thoughts are undemocratic and harmful. These misinterpretations have the greatest impact on me and are a central reason a concerted effort must be made to address Counts' beliefs properly.

These concerns represent the reasons why my focus on this topic and my approach to this research are necessary and beneficial to the larger body of educational scholarship. By addressing the issues with these pieces, I add to the body of knowledge and help to determine exactly where Counts should sit amongst the great educational theorists of the United States, as a radical utopian with useless ideas because he sought to change the society into something undemocratic or as a visionary ahead of his time whose ideas, if understood properly, could help to bring about the democratic society the founding fathers envisioned.

4 COUNTS' WRITINGS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION

As noted before, Counts was a prolific writer. This chapter provides evidence of every instance of Counts' use of indoctrination in all his writings that I have been able to gather. It is a methodical and thorough exegesis of Counts' writings with a specific focus on his use of the term indoctrination. To avoid making the same mistakes I have charged others within my literature review, I present the full quotation for each of the instances of the use of the term indoctrination, rather than summarizing his thoughts in my own words. Also, to avoid losing Counts' meaning for each instance, I summarize each text prior to sharing the quotes and I follow each table of quotes with an explanation of the context surrounding each use of the word. This thorough detailing of each quotation and the relevant context is important also to show how it is that Counts use of the term related to his larger arguments in his writing.

The presentation of the information in this way is essential for two reasons. The first is to present Counts' words as he intended them to be read. Viewing his use of the term in the context in which he is writing, will help to reveal his thinking rather than my own. Additionally, I have mentioned previously that much of Counts' work was made for public consumption. I believe that Counts' word choice was not made without conscious effort. He knew he was speaking to an audience and pulling his words out of context would not do him justice. The second value of presenting the information this way is to allow others to view Counts' words for themselves and consider whether the previous researchers have accurately interpreted his work or whether there has been a large amount of misinterpretation in the presentation of Counts' ideas. Many researchers summarize Counts' work because he wrote so much. I offer a balance between summarization and direct presentation of Counts' work.

For the purpose of my later discussion, I also include Counts' use of the term "imposition." The inclusion of a methodical presentation of the term imposition serves two

purposes in the analysis to follow, one to consider whether Counts should be more associated with the concept of imposition rather than with indoctrination, and second to articulate the fullness of the meaning of indoctrination to Counts. I argue that Counts likely saw these terms as two sides of the same coin, or that the concept of imposition better articulates the activities of indoctrination that Counts intended. As a result, failing to address his use of imposition would leave a gap in the understanding of Counts' beliefs around the role of indoctrination and education.

The following texts were identified using the bibliography of Counts' writings written by John P. Casey and found in the George S. Counts archives at Southern Illinois University as well as the bibliography provided by Dennis and Eaton's *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age*.⁴⁰³ Some additional unpublished manuscripts were also found through a search of the George S. Counts archives at Southern Illinois University.

Principles of Education (1924)

The first text is *Principles of Education* co-written by James C. Chapman and Counts. *Principles of Education* is part of a series of textbooks designed for the training of future teachers. The intent behind the series was to offer foundational writings in the philosophy and evolution of educational thought in order to assist the young teacher in the formation of their own "sound working philosophy of the educative process."⁴⁰⁴ In the editors' note, the editor, Ellwood P. Cubberley, states that the purpose of *Principles of Education* was to provide the material needed for a "course on the philosophy of the educative process."⁴⁰⁵ He describes that this text is written in a way to address modern concerns, noting, "Discarding the old

⁴⁰³ Dennis, and Eaton, *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age*, op. cit.

⁴⁰⁴J. Crosby Chapman and George S. Counts, *Principles of Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), vii.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, viii.

philosophical conceptions and terminology, the two authors have based their work firmly on the conceptions of modern biology and psychology and the changing needs of an economic and industrial civilization.”⁴⁰⁶

The text was written in a way “to give material aid to the teacher” of a modern focused philosophy of education course.⁴⁰⁷ In addition to the authors’ discussions of education in relation to a variety of modern contexts, they also provide discussion questions at the end of each chapter. The book went through use in practice with students before it was published allowing for the material at the end of each chapter to be tailored based on real questions and discussions had between the authors and their own students.⁴⁰⁸ Although Cubberley notes that the text, written by two authors, is a synthesis of both writers ideas and experiences and was done in a way “that practically every page reflects the point of view of the two authors,” it is important to keep in mind that there are two voices in this text when viewing the quotes presented below since this is the only text where Counts is not considered the primary author.⁴⁰⁹

Ellwood P. Cubberley concludes his editors statement this way:

In the form as presented it is believed that this book on the Principles of Education offers a thoroughly modern philosophy of the educative process, and that this, coupled with its readable style and good teaching organization, serves to make it an important textbook for use in colleges and universities giving courses in the Principles of Education.⁴¹⁰

Table 1. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Principles of Education*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

“What are the advantages and disadvantages of imposing the folkways of one generation on the succeeding generation?”	36
“Whenever possible, arrange the conditions of learning that the connections established shall be the outcome of self-initiated and self-driven activity, rather than the result of externally-imposed and artificially motivated labor.”	83
“Their problems are solved for them; their life plans are imposed by others.”	109
“To more robust minds, especially, does externally imposed authority tend to be irksome.”	140
“The check of a conscience which has been built up from habits imposed by the approval and disapproval of our fellows, is often willingly accepted when the direct restrictions of society seem arbitrary and unjust.”	140
“In this sense the internal monitor serves a most valuable function in reconciling the individual to the rules imposed by the community.”	140
“If, for a considerable number of the pupils, such attendance means continuous coercion in externally imposed activities under conditions of anti-social competition, perchance the moral disintegration brought about by such process may more than counter-balance the small amount of book knowledge gained.”	187
“The obvious benefit derived by some of the more intellectually gifted pupils should not blind us to the equally obvious futility of imposing this type of education on all.”	188
“If universal compulsory education is to justify itself, educators, recognizing the intellectual limitations imposed by nature, must embark on fearless experimentation in the attempt to make the activities of the school more meaningful and more serviceable to its diverse clientele.”	188
“Furthermore, in the practical absence in America of aristocratic orders erected about other principles, an aristocracy of wealth has had little difficulty in securing the general acceptance of its own badge of excellence and in imposing on an unresisting society the standards of a commercial civilization.”	251
“This unfortunate state of affairs is due in part to an economic system in which the individual workman is a means to production, in part to an education that exalts routine over freedom, in part to a native endowment that limits the powers of appreciation, and in part to the conditions imposed on mankind by natural forces.”	296
“Expenditures on secondary education have increased many fold since 1890; the number of high schools has grown from about twenty-five hundred to more than fifteen thousand; the high-school building has developed into the most imposing edifice found in many a community; the number of teachers has increased approximately nine hundred per cent; and in the more populous centers the curriculum has been greatly enlarged.”	446
“With this smaller and more highly selected student body, the intellectual temperature of the college of liberal arts would be raised; instructors would be relieved from the onus which the presence of mediocre students imposes and could direct their attention to the consummation of the major aims of the college.”	486
“At every turn the social obligation which the advantages of a college education impose must be stressed: too often have we preached the monetary value of a college education; too widely have we bred the conviction that the training is advantageous because it enables the individual to get ahead; too insidiously have	498

we spread the doctrine that the college opens up avenues to the exploitation of the less capable men.”	
--	--

The first use of the term imposition in this text comes from a discussion question provided at the conclusion of the chapter titled, “Problem 3: What Properties of Society Make Education Necessary.” In this chapter, the authors set out to provide a context to explain group living and how, because of the nature of living together, education is essential to sustaining this group life. The use of the term imposition in the first quote directly relates to the concept of “folkways” discussed by the authors. The authors define folkways as, “ways of doing and thinking” that are “conserved and transmitted to each succeeding generation.”⁴¹¹ The question posed in the first imposition quote also refers to advantages and disadvantages. In the section about folkways, the authors describe how group living eventually leads to the development of customs, laws, and practices. As a result, the older generation seeks to conserve these past achievements and pass them to the next generations. The authors note that this is done for two reasons, “to secure stability within the group and to maintain their own [the elders] supremacy.”⁴¹² The authors see the promotion of folkways as a resistance to change and a desire to maintain privilege for the older members of a group. They note that “As nothing is more certain than the eventual death of each member, the education of the young in the customs of the group — the ways of the folk — is absolutely essential to the stability and perpetuity of society.”⁴¹³

The second quotation that uses the term imposition comes from a section on the general rules that should control habit formation in the chapter “Problem 6: How is Education Conditioned by Habit Formation?” Counts and Chapman define five rules that should govern

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 26-7.

⁴¹² Ibid., 27.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 27.

habit formation: the Rule of Repetition, the Rule of Distribution of Practice, the Rule of Direct Action, the Rule of General Motivation, and the Rule of Self-Motivation. In this section, the authors are drawing on their determination that “the problem of education and of human engineering consists in building up certain connections within the individual.”⁴¹⁴ The use of the term imposition comes in when they are presenting their fifth rule. When defining their rule for self-motivation and how it relates to building and strengthening the connections within the individual, they juxtapose externally imposed and artificially motivated labor with that of self-initiated and self-driven activity.⁴¹⁵ Essentially, the authors are arguing that habits/learning that is self-initiated or self-driven is far more likely to result in sustained connections within the individual.

The next quotation comes from a section that answers the question: “Why must society cultivate the reflective attitude in its members?”⁴¹⁶ The term imposition is used in this section when talking about a person “whose inability to reflect renders him incapable of taking heed to his ways [and] is so dangerous to society that special institutions have been created... to guard him and others from the consequences of his action.”⁴¹⁷ The authors use the term imposition in this instance to denote the way that life is for inmates in prison, noting that they cannot make decisions for themselves, and instead follow those plans “imposed” on them by the institution.

The next three quotes come from the authors’ response to the question, “What is the function of the conscience?” in the chapter about “Problem 9: How does Personality Emerge Through Education?” In this section, the authors begin by defining what they mean by conscience. They note that, “conscience is usually regarded as “the active principle” which

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 82.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 109.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

drives a man to choose what he believes to be the right way.”⁴¹⁸ They restate this to plainly mean “an internal monitor which controls behavior.”⁴¹⁹ They follow this definition by discussing how the conscience has been vital in the process of “reconciling man to the stern environmental and social conditions under which he has been compelled to lead his life.”⁴²⁰ It is at this point that the authors use the term imposition. They note that it is at the point that something is imposed on a person that the conscience comes into play and eases the pressure caused by the imposition. Here the authors state is when the conscience takes on the process of providing “inner sanction and direction” for the reasoning behind the imposition by an external force. As a result, the person, “feeling that he is no longer a mere subject but rather a directive agent, accepts, without murmur, the restraining influences.”⁴²¹ The authors’ address the reinforcing nature of peer pressure which helps to shape the response of the conscience when the individual might feel a need to challenge the larger restrictions of the society. The authors note that, “in this sense the internal monitor serves a most valuable function in reconciling the individual to the rules imposed by the community.”⁴²²

The next two quotes come from the same section “How must the school recognize the fact of individual difference?” in the chapter, “Problem 11: How is Education Conditioned by Individual Differences?” The authors begin this section stating that “the school must have a diversity in its objectives and methods which is comparable with the diversity in human nature.”⁴²³ The authors note that the offering of schooling to the wider population means that the curriculum and procedure must be varied and flexible enough to meet the wide array of needs,

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., 139.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Ibid., 140.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Ibid., 186.

only being limited by the particular needs at the given time and the actual resources of the school.⁴²⁴ Additionally the authors critique the singular aim of schooling for the purpose of intellectual book knowledge. They argue that the singular approach gives students that are unable to meet it an “inferiority complex.” This conclusion then leads them to question if compulsory education is actually good for all if the only aim is “high academic attainment.” The first use of imposition in this section comes when they suggest that the force of such a limited scope likely leads to a “moral disintegration” that outweighs the book knowledge students might gain in the process.⁴²⁵ The authors also address the “abounding confidence” in the United States that “mere bodily presence” in school is better for a student regardless of what is being taught. They raise the concern that the high performance of some students under this rigid aim serves to mask the concerns with the “futility of imposing this type of education on all.”⁴²⁶ Because of the central attention being on intellectual achievement, the authors see the school failing when by broadening its aim and considering other possibilities and the individual needs of students, it could likely achieve more.

The next quote that uses the term imposition, comes in the very next section of this chapter. In the section, “Why must universal education have a great diversity of aim?” the authors argue that universal compulsory education must be made to have more meaning and be more of a service to the diverse student population. If education is not directed at a diversity of aims, then they think universal compulsory education is hard pressed to justify itself. The use of imposition here relates to the intellectual limitations established by a students’ nature. This view considers that the students’ intellectual limitations serve as a ceiling on the amount of intellectual

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 187.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 188.

progress that he or she can make. The authors argue that as a result of this “different aims, different curricula, different social organizations must be tried.”⁴²⁷ In this section they argue for schools to serve a more utilitarian aim that prepares “children of modest intellectual capacity” with the skills befitting “the simpler walks of life” and allows them to participate in the activities needed to “induct the individual into a fuller physical, family, economic, civic, recreational, and religious life.”⁴²⁸

The authors use imposition in a statement in the section, “Is education responsible for Extravagant consumption in the chapter, “Problem 14: How May Education Order and Humanize the Economic Life?” In this section, the authors address what they see as the extravagance of Americans. They see this extravagance and lack of thrift as the result of business practices that inflate “wants” into “needs.” They also think this extravagance exists because it is the one thing that the aristocracy in the United States is built on. Their use of imposition in this context is to point out the way that the aristocracy maintains and promotes its dominance by pushing “the standards of a commercial civilization” on to the people.⁴²⁹

The authors’ next use the term imposition in their section on, “What is the relation between play and work?” in chapter 16. The authors begin this section by noting that work and play can be found within one another and they note that for some, “work becomes identified with play.”⁴³⁰ They argue, however, that this idea of work as play is affected by the way that the American economy operates, by an education that promotes routine, personal ability to appreciate the “play” in work, and by the imposition of natural forces that limit the means of

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 188-9.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 251.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 296.

“play.” The authors suggest the way to address this concern is to equip “the individual to supplement his hours of labor with a rich recreational life.”⁴³¹

The authors also use the term imposition when discussing the development of the high school. In their section, “How is the high school abandoning the selective principle?” the authors begin by addressing the growth of the four-year public high school. They note the increase in funding for the development of the high school and the imposing size of high school buildings in communities.⁴³² The documentation of increase in the high school is used to show the influence that growth of secondary education was having at the time.

In the chapter, “Problem 21: What is the Function of College?” the authors use the term imposition when describing the function of a college of liberal arts. Prior to this section in this chapter, the authors argue that “each student should be encouraged to leave the college for the occupation or for the specific vocational training as soon as the return from the general education received becomes socially unprofitable.”⁴³³ By allowing for some students to self-select out of liberal arts college, they argue there would then exist a “smaller and more highly selected student body.”⁴³⁴ The authors believe that with a smaller student population, the instructor of the college of liberal arts would not be burdened by the “mediocre students” which pull the attention of the instructor, thus imposing on the instruction.⁴³⁵

The last use of the term imposition comes in the section, “Why must the college stress social responsibility?” in the chapter, “Problem 21: What is the Function of the College.” In the

⁴³¹ Ibid., 297.

⁴³² Ibid., 446.

⁴³³ Ibid., 485.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 485-6.

proceeding sections of this chapter, the authors lay out an argument that makes the aim of the college,

...to train leaders who will be capable of viewing broadly and disinterestedly the problems of a cooperative society; leaders who will rise above class interests and class prejudices, who will be dominated by a spirit of service, who honestly and courageously will tread the paths which lead to progress. Into these chosen individuals must be inculcated, by a special type of education, those social ideals without which our material advance is mere emptiness.⁴³⁶

To achieve the aim of the liberal arts college, the authors stress that vocational training should be separated from collegiate training.⁴³⁷ Doing so would leave the students specifically suited to a liberal arts education and focused on a role in the leadership of the country. In the specific section where imposition is used, the authors begin their discussion of other changes to college “if the college is to render a fuller service to its students and to society.”⁴³⁸ Before going into these, they lay out their main points from the earlier sections. The authors use the term imposition as they are restating their point that social obligation is a vital aim of college, how college is a privilege, and that students who receive a college education should repay this advantage by giving back to their fellow man by serving in leadership. The authors state that “higher education involves higher responsibility and nobler cares; this cardinal truth must be impressed upon every recipient of its advantages.”⁴³⁹ The use of imposition here specifically refers to the pressure that should exist within the recipient of a college education.

American Road To Culture (1930)

This text serves as the first known piece on American Education where Counts uses the term indoctrination. *American Road to Culture* is Counts’ attempt at a “broad social and theoretical interpretation of American education” and is his attempt “to abstract from American

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 487.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 489.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 498.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

social and educational practice the principles and ideas that shape the conduct and evolution of education in the United States.”⁴⁴⁰ Counts notes in his preface to this text that he tried to take an objective view in writing this text and to write as if he was a “foreign observer” of America and American education.⁴⁴¹

Table 2. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *American Road to Culture*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
"They fear that the central government, if it had administrative control over the schools, might fall under the influence of some unscrupulous minority and that the entire educational system from one end of the country to the other might be employed to keep this minority in power and to indoctrinate the coming generation with a social philosophy inimical to the common good."	44
"This position may perhaps be clarified by examining the widespread notion that indoctrination is undesirable and dangerous."	184-5
"In general the American people express a fear of using the schools for purposes of indoctrination."	185
"As a consequence, when any segment of the American people teach to their children that their views of the universe, from the functions of the county sheriff to the destiny of man, are good, true, and right, they do not feel that they are indoctrinating the coming generation with the peculiar set of beliefs which they have inherited from their fathers."	185
"To be sure, when they behold their neighbors behaving in similar fashion, they recognize the process at once as indoctrination of the most dangerous and unjustifiable character; but when they behave thus themselves they sincerely believe that they are merely guarding their boys and girls from error."	185
"American educators, however, are developing a more thoughtful form of opposition, to indoctrination in the schools."	186
"They begin by defining indoctrination as the authoritative teaching of any attitude or belief as fixed, final, and unchanging."	186
"Other opponents of narrow forms of indoctrination who make the nature of modern society their point of departure seem to be standing on much firmer ground."	187
"They argue very cogently therefore that the indoctrination of the child with a set of fixed beliefs and attitudes is to unfit him for life in the world as it is."	187
"Thus, at the very time that the Americans are becoming fearful of all forms of indoctrination they may be in danger of becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism."	188

⁴⁴⁰ George S. Counts, *The American Road to Culture*, (New York: The John Day Company, 1930), vii.

⁴⁴¹ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, viii. *Quotations in the original*

"The theoretical opposition of the Americans to indoctrination and their insistence on the separation of education and politics find expression at the higher levels of the educational system in the doctrine of academic freedom."	189
"Afraid of social forces, fearful of indoctrination, and trustful of experience, they refuse to give the positive guidance which is the only alternative to superficiality and drift."	193
Imposition Quotes	
"Thus, the imposing register of the names of the students, which is often prominently displayed in the catalogues, is obviously calculated to impress the prospective patron with the aristocratic tone of the school."	81
"Their hope is that the citizens of the future will thus be equipped to bear their particular civic burdens in the way that seems best to them, and that they will impose upon themselves whatever of discipline the conditions of life may make necessary."	114
"Thus learning becomes primarily an acceptance by the child of an externally imposed order and consequently an instrument of social conformity."	127
"At present the theory that learning is after all a matter of imposition whether it is skillfully and efficiently or crudely and wastefully done, seems to be generally accepted in practice."	128-9
"Just why imposition of this character, regardless of the quality of the pattern selected, is undesirable is a question which remains unanswered."	186
"It would seem that any imposition which society might make upon the child through the school is a small matter in comparison with the imposition of which the parents are guilty in bringing the child into the world at a particular point in time and place and endowed with a particular set of inborn qualities."	186
"They should observe, however, that the order of society implicit in their proposals is anarchy, and that in shaping the environment in which they place the child they are imposing their adult wills upon him just as surely as though they taught him a particular doctrine about the universe."	187

Aside from the use of the term indoctrination in the title of the fourth section of Counts' final chapter, "Philosophic Uncertainty," Counts' first use of the term indoctrination in this text comes from chapter four, titled "Local Initiative" in a section about "The Weakness of the Federal Government." Counts opens this section by broadly discussing the union of the thirteen colonies and the creation of the American Federal government. He addresses how the Federal government was given explicit powers while any power not mentioned was reserved to the individual States, education being one of the latter. He then explains the ways that the Federal government has been involved in education even though it is not explicitly in its list of powers.

He concludes that section by expressing how careful the American people are generally to ensure that the rights of the individual states are secured. Counts uses the term indoctrination when addressing the opposition to federal control in education. The quote that uses the term indoctrination follows his statement that, “according to the American point of view, education is too powerful an instrument to place in the hands of any single authority.”⁴⁴² It is the idea of a single authority in power that Counts uses indoctrination, noting that the American people generally fear the education system would be used to “indoctrinate the coming generation with a social philosophy inimical to the common good.”⁴⁴³ He follows this by noting the belief that experimentation exists since each of the states is capable of approaching education in their own way, leading to the “advance in the theory and practice of education.”⁴⁴⁴ He further states that Americans argue that this decentralized system avoids the establishment of a rigid and unchanging system.

The next eleven quotes that use the term indoctrination all come from Counts’ final chapter of this text titled “Philosophic Uncertainty.” This chapter serves as his investigation of this idea of philosophic uncertainty which he states is “distinctly characteristic of the American way of thought on educational matters.”⁴⁴⁵ Counts notes in his last section of this chapter that American educational theory is “dominated by a strong positivistic and agnostic tradition” which leads to what he sees as uncertainty; “an attitude of mind deliberately adopted.”⁴⁴⁶ He argues that this uncertainty is partially by choice and also forced by the changes brought on by industrialism.

⁴⁴² Ibid., 44.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 44-5.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 173.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., 192.

He states that, “the American people are consequently between two civilizations and are the inevitable victims of doubt and uncertainty.”⁴⁴⁷

Counts starts off the main discussion of the chapter by addressing what he sees as the ways that American society is both planned and unplanned. He discusses the ebb and flow of American society through a determination to avoid rigid plans while grappling with times when planning and structure are essential. Counts looks at the struggle of planning through the interplay of various social forces. The work of these social forces provides evidence of planning in America but also show that the social planning is intended for particular individuals and groups but also has a larger impact on the structures of the society as a whole. Counts applies his views of the effect of social forces by discussing the relationship of education to politics. He argues that the American people are continually fighting the ideological battle to separate education and politics; however, he believes that “since education must always be one of the major concerns of any advanced culture, it should be recognized as one of the central problems of politics.”⁴⁴⁸ He perceives that the feeling that education be separated from politics stems in part from a “strange notion regarding the nature of education.”⁴⁴⁹ “In some of their pronouncements they [Americans] seem to regard education as possessing a pure and independent quality which removes it from the passions generated by social conflict and which gives it a sort of transcendent authority in human affairs.”⁴⁵⁰ It is this notion about education which leads Counts to his discussion of indoctrination.

Counts states that Americans “tend to agree in the abstract that education is to be distinguished clearly and radically from all forms of propaganda and that the latter are the natural

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 182.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., 184.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

and inevitable consequence of the incursion of political forces in the school.”⁴⁵¹ Counts sees this distinction between propaganda and education best articulated in the fear Americans express about “using the schools for the purpose of indoctrination.”⁴⁵² Counts states that this fear is only held in its naive form because Americans firmly believe themselves to be “the chosen people of God, that their culture is obviously superior to all others, and that their institutions are the pure product of human reason.”⁴⁵³ These naive notions lead people all over the country to teach their children explicit concepts as good, true, and right, but to deny that this is in any way indoctrinating their children. He notes that they are quick to judge others and to see indoctrination occurring in their neighbors and to denounce that, but to “sincerely believe that they are merely guarding their boys and girls from error” when they act in the same manner.⁴⁵⁴

Counts turns his discussion to the way that American educators specifically oppose indoctrination in schools. Here he states that American educators define “indoctrination as the authoritative teaching of any attitude or belief as fixed, final, and unchanging.”⁴⁵⁵ While he sees American educators as generally uniform in this belief, he states that the theory underlying the opposition depends on the writer. Here Counts begins a specific discussion of imposition which he relates as one of the reasons some educators raise concerns about indoctrination in education. His specific statements regarding the concerns over indoctrination in education will be addressed in the following section. He sees the other general argument against indoctrination as based on the dynamic quality of a society built on science. He notes that “they argue very cogently therefore that the indoctrination of the child with a set of fixed beliefs and attitudes is to unfit

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid., 185.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 185-6.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 186.

him for life in the world as it is.”⁴⁵⁶ It would be better, in their opinion that the individual be equipped to change with the development of new innovations. Counts sees a weakness in this argument. He addresses this through the issues of the rapid growth of industry. By promoting “individual advancement” and having an open mind that can change with the times, Counts sees the people as being “in danger of becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism.”⁴⁵⁷ Counts suggests that “a society which is dominated less by the thought of individual advancement and more by certain far-reaching purposes and plans for social construction might find a firmer and more steadfast mentality desirable.”⁴⁵⁸

One of Counts last uses of indoctrination in this text come from his discussion of “the doctrine of academic freedom.”⁴⁵⁹ Counts states that academic freedom is an expression of Americans opposition to indoctrination and political influence in education. Academic freedom in the Collegiate space is an example of a desire to have no outside influence on the individual in the effort to promote innovation and to remove the influence of outside parties (politics) from directing what constitutes appropriate research and teaching.

Counts uses indoctrination one last time in this text in his final discussion of philosophic uncertainty. In this section, Counts addresses the issues he is seeing with the growth of industrialism and the lack of a clear path forward. He states that, “the intellectual classes have abandoned the old and as yet have not created a new outlook upon the world.”⁴⁶⁰ As a result, Counts sees that education “faces an enormous task of construction.”⁴⁶¹ Counts use of the term indoctrination comes from his chastisement of educational leaders who have not addressed the

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 187.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 188.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 189.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 192-3.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 193.

problem. He notes that their approach has been largely an evasion of the problem and “to formulate a philosophy of negation.”⁴⁶² Counts argues that “afraid of social forces, fearful of indoctrination, and trustful of experience, they refuse to give the positive guidance which is the only alternative to superficiality and drift.”⁴⁶³ Counts sees this refusal to address the problem as leading other forces, social and political, to address the problem instead. Counts concludes by stating, “American education to-day, like American society at large, is in need of a conception of life suited to the new civilization.”⁴⁶⁴

Counts’ first use of imposition in this text comes from his discussion of “The Single System” of education in his sixth chapter about “Democratic Tradition.” Counts’ use of the term imposition comes specifically from his discussion about how the American education system is not a single system but includes public and private schools. He states that these schools use certain tactics to attract students. One of the ways is through the “imposing register” of student names printed and “calculated to impress the prospective patron with the aristocratic tone of the school.”⁴⁶⁵

His next use of the term imposition comes from his chapter, “National Solidarity.” In the section titled, “Emphasis on Civic Training,” Counts addresses the discussions around civic education in schools. He discusses the viewpoints of two sides, conservatives and radicals. He states that the conservatives blame the issues of decline in the social order on “soft pedagogy” and their solution is to “restore the principle of discipline to its historical place in the school, introduce a little “iron” into the methods of instruction, and teach children their duties in the

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 81.

social order."⁴⁶⁶ Radicals, on the other hand, see the issues in society stemming from industrialism. Count notes, "They are confident that there must be a general reconstruction of society, but they have no positive social program to propose."⁴⁶⁷ He states that they would prefer that the school make "the coming generation intelligent about this new industrial civilization and its problems" and by doing so the future citizen would "impose upon themselves whatever [sic] discipline the conditions of life may make necessary."⁴⁶⁸

Counts next use of imposition comes from his section on "The Conception of Learning" from his chapter on "Social Conformity." In this section, Counts discusses the American conception of learning. He states that American education is dominated by "a process of absorption." Counts describes this process as the passing down of the vast store of knowledge from generation to generation. Counts notes that learning in this process is not done through living, but through a review of "the records of mankind."⁴⁶⁹ Counts defines learning in America then as "primarily an acceptance by the child of an externally imposed order and consequently an instrument of social conformity."⁴⁷⁰ Following this statement, Counts details the efforts by educational theorists in the United States to fight against this conception of learning.

His discussion about the efforts of reformers to change the conception of learning in the United States leads to his next use of the term imposition. Counts discusses the two camps of reformers, one which favors the teacher who arranges the learning so that the child becomes interested and the other who argues that the teacher follows the spontaneous interests of the child. What he considers not to be in dispute in practice is "the theory that learning is after all a

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 113. Quotations in the original

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 114.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 127.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

matter of imposition.”⁴⁷¹ He finishes this section by making the claim that child-centered supporters have failed to show how they are not promoting a type of “social anarchy.”⁴⁷²

The next four uses of the term imposition come in Counts’ chapter about “Philosophic Uncertainty” and each of them is used in the section titled “The Fear of Indoctrination.” This section discusses what Counts sees as Americans fear of indoctrination. He shares how the people teach their children an explicit set of beliefs and do not feel that what they are doing is indoctrination, but then will call out their neighbors for the same behavior and call that indoctrination. Counts’ use of imposition comes specifically in his discussion about the response of American educators to indoctrination in education. After stating what he sees as the educators’ definition of indoctrination, Counts addresses the different theories that educators use to defend their opposition to indoctrination. His first use of the term imposition comes from what he sees as the sentimental argument that “helpless little children should not be imposed on by their elders.”⁴⁷³ Counts follows this statement by noting that “they appear to regard with genuine horror anything that resembles the molding of the child according to a preconceived pattern.”⁴⁷⁴

Counts next use of the term imposition come from his own questioning of and response to this sentimental argument against indoctrination. Counts wonders what makes imposition from a school and ultimately brought on by the society so particularly undesirable. He notes, “It would seem that any imposition which society might make upon the child through the school is a small matter in comparison with the imposition of which the parents are guilty in bringing the child into the world at a particular point in time and place and endowed with a particular set of inborn

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 128-9.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 129.

⁴⁷³ Ibid. 186.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

qualities.”⁴⁷⁵ He tries to offer what he thinks could be the reasoning behind this horror towards indoctrination. He notes that maybe it could be due to a “strong sense of justice” and a desire to come to the aid of children who cannot defend themselves, or a belief that children are naturally good, and society is essentially evil, or that the educators own experience has led them to conclude that “better human beings are developed under the conditions of freedom which they advocate.”⁴⁷⁶ Counts’ response to those concerned with protecting the goodness of children is to call their proposals a promotion of “anarchy” and that by the proposals the educators are making “they are imposing their adult wills upon [the child] just as surely as though they taught him a particular doctrine about the universe.”⁴⁷⁷

Dare The School Build a New Social Order (1932)

Dare the School Build a New Social Order is arguably Counts’ most widely known publication. In the forward to this text, Counts notes that *Dare the School* is the compilation of three papers that he “read at the national educational meetings in February” 1932.⁴⁷⁸ The three papers used as the basis of *Dare the School* are “Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?”, “Education Through (Thru) Indoctrination,” and “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership.”⁴⁷⁹ All three of the speeches were able to be found separately from *Dare the School*. There are components of each of the pieces which are not present in the combined text of *Dare the School* including additional uses of the terms indoctrination and imposition. Given the relation of these texts, they are presented collectively in this section. The individual speeches are addressed, followed by a presentation of the whole text of *Dare the School* where all uses of the key terms are mentioned but only the additional context is mentioned when it deviates from the

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 187.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Counts, *Dare the School*, 1.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

original speech or is an additional use of imposition and indoctrination that is not in any of the other texts.

“Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?”

Table 3. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
"If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate itself from the influence of this class, face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination."	4
"You will say, no doubt, that I am flirting with the idea of indoctrination. And my answer is again in the affirmative."	11
Imposition Quotes	
"We may all rest assured that the younger generation in any society will be thoroughly imposed upon by its elders and by the culture into which it is born."	11-12

Counts first use of the term indoctrination in this piece, comes during his review of the progressive education movement at the start of this text. He first opens by defining the concepts that progressive education is focused on, noting, “It has focused attention squarely upon the child; it has recognized the fundamental importance of the interest of the learner; it has defended the thesis that activity lies at the root of all true education; it has conceived learning in terms of life situations and growth of character; it has championed the rights of the child as a free personality.”⁴⁸⁰ Counts responds that this is not enough, and that its “too narrow a conception of the meaning of education.”⁴⁸¹ He continues, arguing that progressive education does not express any specific orientation or direction and while it is valuable to consider the “good individual,”

⁴⁸⁰ Counts, George S. “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive? George S. Counts.” *“Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?”*, <https://talkcurriculum.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/counts-g-1932-dare-progressive-education-be-progressive.pdf>. 2.

⁴⁸¹ Counts, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” 2.

this concept means nothing without a conception of the good society. Counts states that “man without human society and human culture is not man. And there is also no good education apart from some conception of the nature of the good society.”⁴⁸² Counts then turns to what he sees as the great weakness of Progressive Education, that “it has elaborated no theory of social welfare.”⁴⁸³ He continues arguing that this theory is missing because progressive education and its schools are dominated by well-off persons of the liberal minded upper middle class, who would rather “guard their offspring from too strenuous endeavor and from coming into too intimate contact with the grimmer aspects of industrial society.”⁴⁸⁴ Counts concludes his critique of the social class behind progressive education stating, “According to their views, education should deal with life, but with life at a distance or in a highly diluted form.”⁴⁸⁵ Counts response to this includes his first use of the term indoctrination:

If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate itself from the influence of this class, face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination. In a word, Progressive Education cannot build its program out of the interests of children: it cannot place its trust in a child-centered school.⁴⁸⁶

Counts’ initial challenge leads into the focus of his piece which is to articulate the issues he believes progressive education should address.

Counts’ second use of the term indoctrination in this text comes when he begins to describe what he believes should be done. Counts begins by acknowledging that progressive schools should study the issues, but believes it should move further outside of the school to

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

“engage in the positive task of creating a new tradition in American Life — a tradition possessing power, appeal, and direction.”⁴⁸⁷ Counts brings up the idea of reconstituting and revitalizing what “the American Dream — a vision of a society in which the lot of the common man will be made easier and his life enriched and ennobled,” means in a modern context. He argues that his idea is needed “because men must have something for which to live” and “ordinary men and women crave a tangible purpose for which to strive and which lends richness and dignity and meaning to life.”⁴⁸⁸ Counts suggests, “I would consequently like to see progressive education come to grips with the problem of creating a tradition that has roots in American soil, is in harmony with the spirit of the age, recognizes the facts of industrialism, appeals to the most profound impulses of our people, and takes into account the emergence of world society.”⁴⁸⁹ Following this statement, he addresses the concern that this approach is outside the comfort zone of teachers, but he concludes that “neutrality with respect to the great issues that agitate society, while perhaps theoretically possible, is practically tantamount to giving support to the most powerful forces engaged in the contest.”⁴⁹⁰

Addressing his audience and their concerns, Counts uses indoctrination a second time. He states, “You will say, no doubt, that I am flirting with the idea of indoctrination. And my answer is again in the affirmative. Or, at least, I should say that the word does not frighten me.”⁴⁹¹ Counts determines that indoctrination by the school in the life of the child should not be a concern because children are being influenced by their elders and the culture around them. Counts argues that “for the school to work in a somewhat different direction with all the power at

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

its disposal could do no great harm. At the most, unless the superiority of its outlook is unquestioned, it can serve as a counterpoise to check and challenge the power of less enlightened or more selfish purposes.”⁴⁹² Counts further defends this suggestion by arguing that tradition “does not necessarily close the mind or dry up the springs of energy.”⁴⁹³ If the tradition is suitable then “it may illuminate the world, release the powers of youth, and fill every department of life with significance.”⁴⁹⁴

Counts uses the term imposition once in this section. When discussing why the term indoctrination does not frighten him, Counts states, “We may all rest assured that the younger generation in any society will be thoroughly imposed upon by its elders and by the culture into which it is born.”⁴⁹⁵ This level of imposition by adults outside the school and by the culture and society as a whole seems to Counts to be far more powerful than anything that the school could do, unless, as he notes, the “superiority of [the schools] outlook is unquestioned.”⁴⁹⁶

“Education Through (Thru) Indoctrination”

Table 4. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education Through (Thru) Indoctrination”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“In undertaking the defense of the theory of indoctrination, I realize that I am assuming a thankless task.”	193
“Our generation has been so thoroly indoctrinated with the idea that indoctrination is always an evil thing that we all feel ourselves in the presence of a moral outrage when we see the word coupled with education.”	193
“This feeling is so widespread that even Mr. Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education in the R. S. F. S. R. until 1929, assured me in the summer of 1927 that the Soviet educational leaders did not believe in the indoctrination of children in the ideas and principles of communism.”	193
“If indoctrination is made to imply the establishment of a state church, the adoption	193

⁴⁹² Ibid., 12.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., 11-12.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., 12.

of a set of sacred dogmas, and the teaching of these dogmas as fixed and final, then few of us while in our right minds would care to subscribe to the idea.”	
“It is quite possible that indoctrination is too strong and uncompromising a word to apply to the kind of influence which I have in mind.”	194
“Perhaps that is the reason we are so fearful of indoctrination.”	197
“Those who fear indoctrination seem to feel that the school may impose a single point of view upon all children and mold them all according to a single pattern.”	197
Imposition Quotes	
“On the other hand, I am prepared to defend the thesis that all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that it is consequently eminently desirable, and that frank acceptance of this fact by the educator is a major professional obligation.”	194
“Perhaps imposition is better; but even this term should be made to carry its milder connotations.”	194
“In the development of this thesis I shall first examine a number of rather wide spread fallacies which seem to me to underlie the opposition to imposition.”	194
“By being nurtured on a body of culture, however backward and limited it may be comparatively, the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”	194
“The child is terribly imposed upon by being compelled thru the accidents of birth to learn one language rather than another, but without some language man would never become man.”	194
“One of the most important elements of any culture is a tradition of achievement along a particular line — a tradition which the group imposes upon the young and thru which the powers of the young are released and disciplined.”	195
“One might argue that the imposing of these traditions upon children involves a severe restriction upon their freedom.”	195
“My thesis is that such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”	195
“Any defensible educational program must be adjusted to a particular time and place, and the degree and nature of the imposition must vary with the social situation.”	195
“My thesis is that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that schools must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”	195-6
“Recently Professor H. H. Horne took me to task for defending the principle of imposition and then in the very next breath stated that we should “cultivate democratic sentiments” in children.”	196
“This suggests that perhaps the real question is not whether imposition will take place (that we may take for granted) but rather from what source the imposition will come.”	197
“In that event, they would have to assume some responsibility for the more fundamental forms of imposition which, according to my argument, are inevitable.”	197-8
“This brings us to the final question of the kind of imposition in which teachers should engage, if they had the power.”	198

“This vision I would introduce into our schools as the supreme imposition but one to which our children by right of inheritance are entitled to — a priceless legacy which it should be the first concern of our profession to refashion and bequeath.”	199
---	-----

The term indoctrination is the central focus of this piece. Counts opens first by stating, “In undertaking the defense of the theory of indoctrination, I realize that I am assuming a thankless task. Our generation has been so thoroughly [sic] indoctrinated with the idea that indoctrination is always an evil thing that we all feel ourselves in the presence of a moral outrage when we see the word coupled with education.”⁴⁹⁷ He follows this statement by expressing an interaction he had with the Commissar of Education of Russia who assured Counts that “the Soviet educational leaders did not believe in the indoctrination of children in the ideas and principles of communism” but that the students still none the less became “good communists” which the Commissar credited to proper teaching of the “truth about human history. As a consequence, all of the more intelligent boys and girls, he asserted, adopted the philosophy of communism.”⁴⁹⁸ The conclusion of the Commissar, Counts notes, reminds him of his own Methodist upbringing where the church spoke of truths as well.

Counts continues stating that “much of the confusion regarding this question undoubtedly arises out of a failure to define terms. If indoctrination is made to imply the establishment of a state church, the adoption of a set of sacred dogmas, and the teaching of these dogmas as fixed and final, then few of us while in our right minds would care to subscribe to the idea.”⁴⁹⁹ He notes that he does not wish to set up indoctrination in that way, but that he is willing “to defend the thesis that all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the

⁴⁹⁷ George S. Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” (*Official Report, Department of Superintendence of the NEA*, Washington D.C. 1932): 193-99. National Education Association Archive, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. 193.

⁴⁹⁸ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 193.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that it is consequently eminently desirable, and that the frank acceptance of this fact by the educator is a major professional obligation.”⁵⁰⁰ Counts provides a footnote when he uses the term imposition in this quote. In the footnote he states, “it is quite possible that indoctrination is too strong and uncompromising a word to apply to the kind of influence which I have in mind.”⁵⁰¹

Counts’ next use of the term indoctrination comes towards the end of his discussion of a set of fallacies that he believes underly peoples’ aversion to the idea of indoctrination in education. The sixth fallacy that Counts describes is the fallacy that “education is primarily intellectualistic in its processes and goals.”⁵⁰² What Counts sees as lacking in American education is an understanding of “meaning, direction, and significance to life.”⁵⁰³ Counts critiques the schools and specifically the intellectual class saying,

We are able to contemplate the universe and find that all is vanity. Nothing really stirs us, unless it be that the bath water is cold, the toast burnt, or the elevator not running. Perhaps this is the reason why we are so fearful of indoctrination. We are moved by no great faiths; we are touched by no great passions. We can view a world rushing rapidly towards collapse with no more concern than the outcome of a horse race; we can see injustice, crime, and misery in its most terrible forms all about us and, if we are not directly affected, register the emotions of a scientist studying white rats in a laboratory. And in the name of freedom, science, and the open mind, we would transmit this general attitude towards life to our children.⁵⁰⁴

Counts sees the apathy of the intellectual class as akin to moral and spiritual bankruptcy and argues against perpetuating that apathy in the future generation. He states that the “younger generation” should be given “a vision which will call forth their active loyalties and challenge them to creative and arduous labors.”⁵⁰⁵ Without being given this vision, he believes they will be

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 194.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid., 197.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

set up for “a life of absorption in self, inferiority complexes, and frustration.”⁵⁰⁶ Counts concludes stating that “the genuinely free man is not he who spends his day contemplating his own navel, but rather he who loses himself in a great cause or in the service of others.”⁵⁰⁷

Counts’ last use of the term indoctrination in this text comes from his discussion of the seventh fallacy, “that the school is an all-powerful educational agency.”⁵⁰⁸ Counts states, “Those who fear indoctrination seem to feel that the school may impose a single point of view upon all children and mold them all according to a single pattern.”⁵⁰⁹ Counts argues that this view of the school in America is not possible given the complexity of life and the fact that the school is not the strongest educational agency. Counts states that “if the school endeavored vigorously and consistently to win its pupils to the support of a particular social reform... it could act only as a mild counterpoise to the most powerful forces of society. The chances are, however, that the school will work in more or less harmony with these forces and thus serve to fasten upon the coming generation an outworn philosophy of life and society.”⁵¹⁰

Counts’ first use of the term imposition in this text comes when he presents his thesis, mentioned in full above. Counts prepares to defend the thesis that education contains a large element of imposition and that this is not only inevitable but also desirable. He provides a footnote for the term imposition used in this thesis. He notes that the term indoctrination might be too strong of a word for what he means and instead he states, “perhaps imposition is better; but even this term should be made to carry its milder connotations.”⁵¹¹ After laying out his thesis

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., 194.

and argument, Counts states that he will “first examine a number of rather widespread fallacies which seemed to [him] to underlie the opposition to imposition.”⁵¹²

Counts’ next use of the term imposition comes in his discussion of the first fallacy, “that man is born free.”⁵¹³ Counts argues that man “is born helpless. He achieves freedom, as a race and as an individual, thru the medium of culture.”⁵¹⁴ As a result of this view, Counts believes that a discussion of indoctrination and imposition must start fundamentally with the “fact that the individual is born into a particular culture.”⁵¹⁵ Counts argues that being born into a culture is the price of birth, but “by being nurtured on a body of culture, however backward and limited it may be comparatively, the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”⁵¹⁶ While the child is “imposed upon by being compelled thru the accidents of birth to learn one language rather than another,” Counts believes “without some language man would never become man.”⁵¹⁷ Counts argues that this requires no additional elaboration because he believes the connection of culture is obvious, but it’s concerning because it is “commonly disregarded by those who are fearful of molding the child.”⁵¹⁸

Continuing his argument that culture is foundational to the question of imposition and indoctrination in education, Counts moves on to discuss the “tradition of achievement along a particular line — a tradition which the group imposes upon the young and thru which the powers of the young are released and disciplined.”⁵¹⁹ After giving examples of possible traditions and arguing that a society is built on a number of traditions that work together to express the culture,

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

Counts addresses the concern that “the imposing of these traditions upon children involves severe restriction upon [children’s] freedom.”⁵²⁰ Counts argues instead that “such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”⁵²¹ Counts then considers that a person may go against the traditions of the society and as a result “enjoy a certain type of freedom” but not a freedom a parent would want for their children or for themselves.⁵²²

Counts next uses the term imposition in his third fallacy, “that education is some pure and mystical essence which remains unchanged, from everlasting to everlasting.”⁵²³ He argues that this fallacy perceives education as separate from culture and has led to efforts to impart education in other countries without understanding that what is being promoted is American education. Counts argues that “any defensible educational program must be adjusted to a particular time and place, and the degree and nature of the imposition must vary with the social situation.”⁵²⁴ He continues stating that society can be held together under ordinary situations simply by the social structure, “but when the forces of disintegration become sufficiently powerful it may well be that a fairly large measure of deliberate control is desirable and even essential to survival.”⁵²⁵

Counts’ use of the term imposition continues in his discussion of the fourth fallacy, “that all education should be impartial in its emphases, that no bias should be given to instruction.”⁵²⁶ In arguing against impartiality, Counts begins by restating that he has shown how the individual is molded by the culture. He argues that this molding by the culture also occurs to the school and

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 195.

⁵²¹ Ibid.

⁵²² Ibid.

⁵²³ Ibid.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

that the shaping of the school is done “to a degree of conscious direction.”⁵²⁷ Counts argues instead “that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”⁵²⁸ He argues that partiality is essential because selection is a natural fact of the school and that selection involves weighing in favor of one thing over another. He contends that this selection factor cannot be disregarded, and it is imperative to any discussion of this topic. At this point, Counts alludes to Dewey’s *Democracy and Education* and notes that Dewey calls for the school to “provide a purified environment for the child.”⁵²⁹ Counts agrees with this view, arguing that no one would support the teaching of pornography in schools, but the refusal to teach something, “means the stacking of the cards in favor of the particular systems of value which we or our society may happen to possess.”⁵³⁰

Counts follows this illustration with another example and uses the term imposition in the description. He describes a discussion he had with another professor, H. H. Horne, who “took [him] to task for defending the principle of imposition and then in the very next breath stated that we should ‘cultivate democratic sentiments’ in children.”⁵³¹ Counts argues in support of cultivating such sentiments, but against the idea of leaving that up to chance. He concludes that “as educators we must make many choices involving the development of attitudes in boys and girls and that we should not be afraid to acknowledge the faith that is in us or mayhap the forces that compel us.”⁵³²

Counts’ next use of imposition, aside from its use in his discussion of the seventh fallacy which was already discussed in the indoctrination section above, comes from his conclusive

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 196.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² Ibid.

statements following his presentation of the seven fallacies. Three uses of the term imposition come in one paragraph. Counts states,

This suggests that perhaps the real question is not whether imposition will take place (that we may take for granted) but rather from what source the imposition will come. If we were to answer this question in terms of the past, there could, I think, be but one answer: on all really crucial matters the school will follow the wishes of the groups or classes that actually rule society; on minor matters the school may be allowed a certain measure of freedom. But the future may be unlike the past. It is possible that the teachers, thru powerful organizations, might come to exercise a larger measure of control over the schools than hitherto. In that event, they would have to assume some responsibility for the more fundamental forms of imposition which, according to my argument, are inevitable.⁵³³

Counts then turns to his beliefs and desires regarding teachers and how they should take action knowing the power education holds.

Given his view that teachers should take an active role in shaping education, Counts turns lastly to “the final question of the kind of imposition in which teachers should engage, if they had the power.”⁵³⁴ Counts imagines first that basic economic questions and issues have been solved for people with the growth of industrialization. If it is that the economic question is addressed, then the school could focus on “the more challenging opportunities of cultural advance.”⁵³⁵ It is here that Counts articulates a vision that schools should impose, “a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead and endeavor to enlist their loyalties and enthusiasms in the realization of the vision.”⁵³⁶ He goes further, arguing that Americas’ “chief contribution to the heritage of the race” lies in the “creation of what [James Truslow Adams] calls the ‘American Dream’ — a vision of a society in which the lot of the common man will be made easier and his life enriched and ennobled.”⁵³⁷ Counts wonders why we would not consider rearticulating this

⁵³³ Ibid., 197-8.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 198.

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Ibid., 199.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

vision for modern times if it had been such a driving force in the creation of the country. He argues that he would introduce this vision “into our schools as the supreme imposition, but one to which our children by right of inheritance are entitled.”⁵³⁸ concludes stating,

I do not of course mean that here is something to be rammed down the throats of resisting pupils without criticism or examination. On the contrary I believe it should be freely and critically examined. But if the task is well executed [sic] they would be about as likely to reject this spiritual legacy as they would be to reject a tangible legacy of land and property. Thru it they would find their energies released and their lives made significant. And as a people we would then be on the road to give expression to our particular genius and thus make our particular contribution to the cultural heritage of the race.⁵³⁹

“Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership”

Table 5. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“It is here that the question of imposition and indoctrination assumes its most acute form.”	3
Imposition Quotes	
“The real question, therefore, is not whether some tradition will be imposed by intent or circumstance upon the coming generation (we may rest assured that this will be done), but rather what particular tradition will be imposed.”	4
“Our present educational difficulty lies not in the fact that tradition is being imposed by the coming generation but rather in the fact that the tradition which we impose, whether in the sphere of politics, religion, morals, or art, has lost its vitality?”	4

Counts’ use of the term indoctrination comes in the first part of his thesis where he discusses the relationship of freedom and culture. In his thesis, Counts first claims that freedom, genuine freedom is “relative and derivative” and is an “achievement rather than a gift or a condition.”⁵⁴⁰ Counts claims that “the freedom of mankind has come thru the development of

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁰ George S. Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” (*National Council of Education*, Washington, D. C., 1932) 3-7. National Education Association Archive, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. 3.

culture; the freedom of the individual comes thru the mastery of culture.”⁵⁴¹ Counts then presents two aspects of culture that he sees as relevant to education: the basic tools needed for the survival of the society and the virtues, values, and traditions of that culture. He notes that the second aspect of culture brings up “the most severe educational controversies” and where “the question of imposition and indoctrination assumes its most acute form.”⁵⁴²

Counts’ use of the term imposition comes up following his use of indoctrination. It comes after Counts states his thesis as,

[T]radition gives meaning not only to the life of a people but also to the life of the individual and to the educative process. Human energy is consequently released, not by freeing the individual from tradition, but rather by inducting him to identify himself most completely with a vital and growing tradition and to find the fulfillment of his life in that tradition. Only as he is influenced by and nurtured upon some particular tradition can his life become integrated and effective.⁵⁴³

Moving on in his thesis, Counts concludes that the focus should then be “not whether some tradition will be imposed by intent or circumstance upon the coming generation (we may rest assured that this will be done), but rather what particular tradition will be imposed.”⁵⁴⁴ He concludes that refusing the determination of what particular tradition will be imposed “is to evade the most crucial, difficult, and important educational responsibility.”⁵⁴⁵

Dare the School Build the New Social Order?

Table 6. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Dare the School Build the New Social Order?*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate itself from the influence of this class, face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with	9-10

⁵⁴¹ Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” 3.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., 3-4.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination.”	
“And when the word indoctrination is coupled with education there is scarcely one of us possessing the hardihood to refuse to be horrified.”	10
“This feeling is so widespread that even Mr. Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education in the Russian Republic until 1929, assured me on one occasion that the Soviet educational leaders do not believe in the indoctrination of children in the ideas and principles of communism.”	10
“Far more terrifying than any indoctrination in which the school might indulge is the prospect of our becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism.”	27
Imposition Quotes	
“In many cases they feel themselves victims of narrow orthodoxies which were imposed upon them during childhood and which have severely cramped their lives.”	11
“On the other hand, I am prepared to defend the thesis that all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that it is consequently eminently desirable, and that the frank acceptance of this fact by the educator is a major professional obligation.”	12
“In the development of this thesis I shall examine number of widespread fallacies which seem to me to underlie the theoretical opposition to all forms of imposition.”	12
“By being nurtured on a body of culture, however backward and limited it may be comparatively, the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”	13
“The child is terribly imposed upon by being compelled through the accidents of birth to learn one language rather than another, but without some language man would never become man.”	13
“One of the most important elements of any culture is a tradition of achievement along a particular line — a tradition which the group imposes upon the young and through which the powers of the young are focused, disciplined, and developed.”	14
“One might argue that the imposing of these traditions upon children involves a severe restriction upon their freedom.”	14
“My thesis is that such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”	14-15
“Any defensible educational program must be adjusted to a particular time and place, and the degree and nature of the imposition must vary with the social situation.”	18
“My thesis is that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”	19
“Other vigorous opponents of imposition unblushingly advocate the “cultivation of democratic sentiments” in children or the promotion of child growth in the direction of “a better and richer life.””	20
“The first represents definite acquiescence in imposition; the second, if it does not mean the same thing, means nothing.”	20

“On the one hand, they speak continually about reconstructing society through education; and on the other, they apparently live in a state of perpetual fear lest the school impose some one point of view upon all children and mold them all to a single pattern.”	23-4
“Many who would agree that imposition of some kind is inevitable seem to feel that there is something essentially profane in any effort to understand, plan, and control the process.”	24
“Here we have imposition with a vengeance, but not the imposition of the teacher or the school.”	27
“Nor is it an enlightened form of imposition.”	27
“Rather it is the imposition of the chaos and cruelty and ugliness produced by the brutish struggle for existence and advantage.”	27
“If we may now assume that the child will be imposed upon in some fashion by the various elements in his environment, the real question is not whether imposition place, but rather from what source it will come.”	27
“They would then have to assume some responsibility for the more fundamental forms of imposition which, according to my argument, cannot be avoided.”	28
“This brings us to the question of the kind of imposition in which teachers should engage, if they had the power.”	31
“Such a vision of what America might become in the industrial age I would introduce into our schools as the supreme imposition, but one to which our children are entitled — a priceless legacy which it should be the first concern of our profession o fashion and bequeath.”	54

Counts’ first use of the term indoctrination in *Dare the School* comes in the same quote and in the same context that it is used in “Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?”

Counts’ next use of the term indoctrination comes in a quote similar to one from “Education Thru Indoctrination” but it is more tailored to the writing of *Dare the School*. After Counts’ quote challenging Progressive Education, he states that, “Progressive Education cannot place its trust in a child centered school.”⁵⁴⁶ Counts argues then that the most crucial question in education is “the question of the nature and extent of the influence which the school should exercise over the development of the child.”⁵⁴⁷ What complicates this is the “advocates of extreme freedom” who Counts states have even convinced people whose job it is to persuade

⁵⁴⁶ Counts, *Dare the School*, 10.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

people of their opinion to “disclaim all intention of molding the learner.”⁵⁴⁸ It is here that Counts uses the term indoctrination when he states, “and when the word indoctrination is coupled with education there is scarcely one among us possessing the hardihood to refuse to be horrified.”⁵⁴⁹ Counts follows this statement by presenting the same example of “Mr. Lunacharsky,” the Commissar of Education in Russia, that he used in “Education Thru Indoctrination” to show how widespread the attitude against indoctrination in education is. There are two changes to this quote, but they do not change the central focus of his statement. Counts shows how the Commissar of Education in Russia denied that children in Russia were made into Communist and instead “naturally” became so by learning the “truth.”

Counts’ last use of the term indoctrination is different from any other text. In *Dare the School*, Counts addresses “the fallacy that in a dynamic society like ours the major responsibility of education is to prepare the individual to adjust himself to social change.”⁵⁵⁰ Counts acknowledges that this argument is realistic given the rate of change and the uncertainty that exists in the future. He also notes that because of this uncertainty the argument under this fallacy is that “the individual who is to live and thrive in this world must possess an agile mind, be bound by no deep loyalties, hold all conclusions and values tentatively, and be ready on a moment’s notice to make even fundamental shifts in outlook and philosophy.”⁵⁵¹ Counts argues that,

Under this conception of life and society, education can only bow down before the gods of chance and reflect the drift of the social order. This conception is essentially anarchic in character, exalts the irrational above the rational forces of society, makes security an individual rather than a social goal, drives every one of us into an insane competition

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., 25-6.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., 26.

with his neighbors, and assumes that man is incapable of controlling in the common interest the creatures of his brain.⁵⁵²

Counts argues that this leads the person to be imposed on by “the chaos and cruelty and ugliness produced by the brutish struggle for existence and advantage.”⁵⁵³ It is here where Counts uses the term indoctrination again. He raises the concern that “far more terrifying than any indoctrination in which the school might indulge is the prospect of our becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism.”⁵⁵⁴ Counts argues that instead of a nimble mind and character, “a firmer and more steadfast mentality would be preferable.”⁵⁵⁵

Counts’ use of imposition mostly falls in the same context as it is used in “Education Thru Indoctrination;” however, there are some changes to some of the quotes and there are some additional uses of imposition in *Dare the School* that do not show up in the other three pieces. The first use of imposition, aside from the use of the term in his stated challenge to progressive education, comes after Counts discusses his example of Lunacharsky, which has been explained. After detailing the example of Russian students naturally becoming good communists through the teaching of “truth,” Counts argues that the champions of extreme freedom are products of an age that has broken from “the past and is equally uncertain about the future.”⁵⁵⁶ Counts continues arguing that these advocates are responding to their own upbringing, feeling that they were “victims of narrow orthodoxies which were imposed upon them during childhood and which have severely cramped their lives.”⁵⁵⁷ These feelings towards their own pasts are causing them to overreact to any suggestion of adult influence and to feel that any suggestion of adult influence is

⁵⁵² Ibid., 26-7.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 27.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

tantamount to the “establishment of a state church, the formulation of a body of sacred doctrine, and the teaching of this doctrine has fixed and final.”⁵⁵⁸ Counts argues that this particular argument against adult influence in education then creates an artificial choice between “an unenlightened form of pedagogical influence and a condition of complete freedom for the child,” and while most would choose the second option, “neither extreme is possible.”⁵⁵⁹

Counts’ next use of imposition comes when he presents the same thesis that he offered in “Education Thru Indoctrination” that indoctrination is inevitable, that it is desirable, and that acceptance of this fact is a professional obligation of educators. Before he discusses this view, Counts adds an additional statement. In “Education Thru Indoctrination” Counts states just before his thesis that “a critical factor must play an important role in any adequate educational program, at least any such program fashioned for the modern world.”⁵⁶⁰ In *Dare the School*, Counts clarifies this critical factor stating, “an education that does not strive to promote the fullest and most thorough understanding of the world is not worthy of the name. Also, there must be no deliberate distortion or suppression of facts to support any theory or point of view.”⁵⁶¹ Counts then states his thesis which is the same in both texts. In both texts, Counts follows this statement arguing that avoiding teaching about the world is to setup prejudices as universal truths and to introduce obscurantism into education, the intentional act of preventing facts or details to be known.

Counts then states that he will address the “widespread fallacies which seem to [him] to

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 194.

⁵⁶¹ Counts, *Dare the School*, 12.

underlie the theoretical opposition to all forms of imposition.”⁵⁶² Counts alters this quote slightly from its original form in “Education Thru Indoctrination.” In *Dare the School* he adds the words “all forms” denoting the opposition to any argument for imposition. Counts concludes noting that he believes the discussion of these fallacies will help to clarify the issue.

Counts begins with the same fallacy in both “Education Thru Indoctrination” and *Dare the School*, that man is born free. Both quotations, using the term indoctrination, in this section are the same. Counts argues that being born into a culture is what defines freedom and how someone achieves freedom and that being born into and being raised by a culture “the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”⁵⁶³ Counts notes that language is an example of the imposition of culture that occurs from birth. Language is imposed on the child with no say by them, but at the same time, by learning the language of the culture, the child is freed to full expression within that culture. Counts argues, “without some language man would never become man” and as a result any language is better than no language at all.⁵⁶⁴ In *Dare the School*, Counts adds that “in the life cycle of the individual many choices must of necessity be made, and the most fundamental and decisive of these choices will always be made by the group.”⁵⁶⁵ Counts sees the imposition of culture as obvious, but believes it is “disregarded by those who are fearful of molding the child.”⁵⁶⁶

Counts then continues by discussing tradition. The quotes in this paragraph are similar between “Education Thru Indoctrination” and *Dare the School*, but in *Dare the School*, Counts changes the last part of the sentence regarding how tradition is imposed on children from, “...the

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 13.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

powers of the young are released and disciplined” to “the powers of the young are focused, disciplined, and developed.”⁵⁶⁷ Counts discusses tradition and addresses that some might think that imposing traditions on children restricts their freedom; however Counts proposes instead that “such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”⁵⁶⁸ Counts notes a person not participating in the tradition of the civilization might experience freedom, “but it is scarcely a kind of freedom that anyone would covet for either himself or his children. It is the freedom of mediocrity, incompetence, and aimlessness.”⁵⁶⁹

In *Dare the School*, Counts’ third fallacy from “Education Thru Indoctrination” becomes his fourth fallacy. The paragraph is relatively unchanged between the two except for the second sentence of the paragraph which Counts breaks into two sentences in *Dare the School*. Following the statement of the fallacy that education is something pure and unchanging, Counts states, “according to this view, genuine education must be completely divorced from politics, live apart from the play of social forces, and pursue ends particular to itself. It thus becomes a method existing independently of the cultural milieu and equally beneficent at all times and in all places.”⁵⁷⁰ As in “Education Thru Indoctrination,” Counts argues that “any defensible educational program must be adjusted to a particular time and place, and the degree and nature of the imposition must vary with the social situation.”⁵⁷¹

Counts continues into the next fallacy from “Education Thru Indoctrination” that the school should be impartial, and bias should be avoided. He argues that “complete impartiality is

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 14-15.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 15.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

utterly impossible that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”⁵⁷²

Counts provides the same argument in support of this in *Dare the School* as he provided in “Education Thru Indoctrination.” A change comes when Counts removes the name of Professor H. H. Horne and simply states, “other vigorous opponents of imposition unblushingly advocate the ‘cultivation of democratic sentiments’ in children or the promotion of child growth in the direction of a ‘better and richer life.’”⁵⁷³ He adds that,

The first represents a definite acquiescence in imposition; the second, if it does not mean the same thing, means nothing. I believe firmly that democratic sentiments should be cultivated and that a better and richer life should be the outcome of education, but in neither case would I place responsibility on either God or the order of nature. I would merely contend that as educators we must make many choices involving the development of attitudes in boys and girls and that we should not be afraid to acknowledge the faith that is in us or mayhap the forces that compel us.⁵⁷⁴

Counts’ next use of imposition in this text comes in his discussion of the fallacy that “the school is an all-powerful educational agency.”⁵⁷⁵ This paragraph is completely reworked from its original form from “Education Thru Indoctrination.” Following the statement of the fallacy, Counts addresses how professional groups tend to exaggerate their influence and importance and teachers are no exception. Counts notes that, “the leaders of Progressive Education in particular seem to have an over-weening faith in the power of the school. On the one hand, they speak continually about reconstructing society through education; and on the other, they apparently live in a state of perpetual fear lest the school impose some point of view upon all children and mold them all to a single pattern.”⁵⁷⁶ Counts argues that this view of the school is unreasonable since the “world is far too complex” and that “the school is but one formative agency among many,

⁵⁷² Ibid., 19.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., 23-4.

and certainly not the strongest at that.”⁵⁷⁷ He argues instead that the “major concern consequently should be, not to keep the school from influencing the child in a positive direction, but rather to make certain that every Progressive school will use whatever power it may possess in opposing and checking the forces of social conservatism and reaction.”⁵⁷⁸ Counts concludes that if the school was focused on promoting a particular social program it would only be “a mild counterpoise to restrain and challenge the might of less enlightened and more selfish purposes.”⁵⁷⁹

Counts continues using imposition in his discussion of another fallacy “that ignorance rather than knowledge is the way of wisdom.”⁵⁸⁰ He begins by stating,

Many who would agree that imposition of some kind is inevitable seem to feel that there is something essentially profane in any effort to understand, plan, and control the process. They will admit that the child is molded by his environment, and then presumably contend that in the fashioning of this environment we should close our eyes to the consequences of our acts or at least should not endeavor to control our acts in the light of definite knowledge of their consequences. To do the latter would involve an effort to influence deliberately the growth of the child in a particular direction — to cause him to form this habit rather than that, to develop one taste rather than another, to be sensitive to a given ideal rather than its rival. But this would be a violation of the ‘rights of the child,’ and therefore evil.⁵⁸¹

Counts responds that it seems from this approach that the only way to protect the rights of the child is to cloak adult influence “under a heavy veil of ignorance.”⁵⁸² Counts states that if this is the best schools can do, they should not exist. He sees this approach as “the doctrine of *laissez faire*, driven from the field of social and political theory, seeking refuge in the domain of pedagogy.”⁵⁸³ Counts concludes, “Progressive Education wishes to build a new world but refuses

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., 24-5.

⁵⁸² Ibid., 25.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

to be held accountable for the kind of world it builds.”⁵⁸⁴ The school,” he argues, “should know what it is doing, in so far that this is humanly possible, and accept full responsibility for its acts.”⁵⁸⁵

Counts also uses imposition in the final fallacy that he discusses, “that in a dynamic society like ours the major responsibility of education is to prepare the individual to adjust himself to social change.”⁵⁸⁶ This fallacy was discussed earlier because Counts used the term indoctrination in this section. Counts first relays what he sees as the basis for this belief. He concludes that this argument sets up the individual to “be as willing to adopt new ideas and values as to install the most up-to-the-minute labor saving devices in his dwelling or to introduce the latest inventions into his factory.”⁵⁸⁷ Counts argues that,

This conception is essentially anarchic in character, exalts the irrational above the rational forces of society, makes of security an individual rather than a social goal, drives every one of us into an insane competition with his neighbors, and assumes that man is incapable of controlling in the common interest the creatures of his brain. Here we have imposition with a vengeance, but not the imposition of the teacher or the school. Nor is it an enlightened form of imposition. Rather it is the imposition of the chaos and cruelty and ugliness produced by the brutish struggle for existence and advantage.⁵⁸⁸

Counts concludes that the character needed is not “the nimble mind responsive to every eddy in the social current,” but instead “a firmer and more steadfast mentality would be preferable.”⁵⁸⁹

Counts then uses the term imposition in his conclusion. He opens the section stating, “if we may now assume that the child will be imposed upon in some fashion by the various elements in his environment, the real question is not whether imposition will take place, but rather from what source it will come.”⁵⁹⁰ Counts’ conclusion is similar to his conclusion from “Education

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., 25-6.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., 26-7.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 27.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

Thru Indoctrination,” but he provides more elaboration in *Dare the School*. He starts by considering the position of the school in the past and how it is has mainly been following the wishes of the ruling class in society. He argues for a possible future where “teachers, if they could increase sufficiently their stock of courage, intelligence, and vision, might become a social force of some magnitude.”⁵⁹¹ He is not faithful that this future is possible, but believes the society is lacking leadership and teachers might be willing to offer leadership as a result. He states that, “through powerful organizations they might at least reach the public conscience and come to exercise a larger measure of control over the schools than hitherto. They would then have to assume some responsibility for the more fundamental forms of imposition, which according to [his] argument, cannot be avoided.”⁵⁹²

After providing some more argument in support of teachers having a greater say over education, Counts then considers “the question of the kind of imposition in which teachers should engage, if they had the power.”⁵⁹³ He begins his argument noting first that the social situation helps to answer this question. He defines the social situation as “the rise of a civilization quite without precedent in human history — a civilization founded on science, technology, and machinery, possessing the most extraordinary power, and rapidly making of the entire world a single great society.”⁵⁹⁴ Counts argues that this new civilization has already changed things so much that “we cannot afford for a single instant to remove our eyes from the social scene or shift our attention from the peculiar needs of the age.”⁵⁹⁵ Counts argues and presents his thoughts on the economic issues being the most pressing social problem of the age.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 31.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., 32.

While he sees the economic problems as overwhelming, he also sees much possibility in the moment and argues that “the only cause for doubt or pessimism lies in the question of our ability to rise to the stature of the times in which we live.”⁵⁹⁶ Counts refers to a piece written by Dewey where he pointed out that the school and the nation are in need of a central purpose. Following his reference to Dewey, Counts concludes,

This suggests, as we have already observed, that the educational problem is not wholly intellectual in nature. Our Progressive schools therefore cannot rest content with giving children an opportunity to study contemporary society in all of its aspects. This of course must be done, but I am convinced that they should go much farther. If the schools are to be really effective, they must become centers for the building, and not merely for the contemplation, of our civilization. This does not mean that we should endeavor to promote particular reforms through the educational system. We should, however, give to our children a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead and endeavor to enlist their loyalties and enthusiasms in the realization of the vision. Also our social institutions and practices, all of them should be critically examined in light of such a vision.⁵⁹⁷

Counts’ last use of the term imposition comes in his conclusion. He concludes that capitalism has failed to provide a sure foundation for the new civilization and that industrialism has created too many changes for society to turn back to the agrarian foundations of American society. Counts argues that with industrialization, “the justification, or at least the rational basis, of the age-long struggle for property has been removed” and that the growth of technology has removed the need to fight over material goods.⁵⁹⁸ Yet, the systems of scarcity remain. Counts argues that “the times are literally crying for a new vision of American destiny.”⁵⁹⁹ Counts states, “such a vision of what America might become in the industrial age I would introduce into our schools as the supreme imposition, but one to which our children are entitled — a priceless

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 36.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 37.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 52.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 54.

legacy which it should be the first concern of our profession to fashion and bequeath.”⁶⁰⁰ Counts concludes stating,

Only through such a legacy of spiritual values will our children be enabled to find their place in the world, be lifted out of the present morass of moral indifference, be liberated from the senseless struggle for material success, and be challenged to high endeavor and achievement. And only thus will we as a people put ourselves on the road to the expression of our particular genius and to the making of our special contribution to the cultural heritage of the race.⁶⁰¹

“Education for What?: The Ten Fallacies of the Educators” (I) and “Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy” (II) (1932)

“Education for What” is a two-part argument that was published in a weekly journal called *The New Republic*. The first, “Education for What? I: The Ten Fallacies of the Educators,” (EfW 1) was in the May 18th edition and the second, “Education for What? II: Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy” (EfW 2) was published in the May 25th edition. Since these two pieces are part of the same argument, they have been included together in this section. The locations of the quotes and which part of the argument they come from are notated by the initials next to the quotations. Comparing these two pieces to *Dare the School* shows that this is a republication of the *Dare the School* with some omissions of paragraphs and some shifting of information and formatting. No additional language appears to be added. As a result, please see the context provided under *Dare the School* as the quotes here which use indoctrination and imposition are exactly the same.

Table 7. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education for What? I: The Ten Fallacies of the Educators” and “Education for What? II: Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy”

	Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes		
EfW 1	“If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate	13

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 55-6.

	itself from the influence of this class, face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination.”	
EfW 1	“And when the word indoctrination is coupled with education, there is scarcely one among us possessing the hardihood to refuse to be horrified.”	13
Imposition Quotes		
EfW 1	“On the other hand, I am prepared to defend the thesis that all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that it is consequently eminently desirable, and that the frank acceptance of this fact by the educator is a major professional obligation.”	13
EfW 1	“In the development of this thesis I shall examine a number of widespread fallacies which seem to me to underlie the theoretical opposition to all forms of imposition.”	13
EfW 1	“By being nurtured on a body of culture, however backward and limited it may be comparatively, the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”	13
EfW 1	“The child is terribly imposed upon by being compelled through the accidents of birth to learn one language rather than another, but without some language man would never become man.”	13
EfW 1	“One of the most important elements of any culture is a tradition of achievement along a particular line — a tradition which the group imposes upon the young and through which the powers of the young are focused, disciplined, and developed.”	13
EfW 1	“One might argue that the imposing of these traditions upon children involves a severe restriction upon their freedom.”	13
EfW 1	“My thesis is that such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”	13
EfW 1	“My thesis is that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”	14
EfW 1	“Other vigorous opponents of imposition unblushingly advocate the “cultivation of democratic sentiments” in children or the promotion of child growth in the direction of “a better and richer life.””	14
EfW 1	“The first represents definite acquiescence in imposition; the second, if it does not mean the same thing, means nothing.”	14
EfW 1	“On the one hand, they speak continually about reconstructing society through education; and on the other, they apparently live in a state of perpetual fear lest the school impose some one point of view upon all children and mold them all to a single pattern.”	15
EfW 1	“Many who would agree that imposition of some kind is inevitable seem to feel that there is something essentially profane in any effort to understand, plan, and control the process.”	15

EfW 1	“Here we have imposition with a vengeance, but not the imposition of the teacher or the school.”	16
EfW 1	“Nor is it an enlightened form of imposition.”	16
EfW 1	“Rather is it the imposition of the chaos and cruelty and ugliness produced by the brutish struggle for existence and advantage.”	16
EfW 2	“If we may now assume that the child will be imposed upon in some fashion by the various elements in his environment, the real question is not whether imposition will take place, but rather from what source it will come.”	38
EfW 2	“This brings us to the question of the kind of imposition in which teachers should engage, if the power.”	38
EfW 2	“Such a vision of what America might become in the industrial age I would introduce into our schools as the supreme imposition, but one to which our children are entitled — a priceless legacy which it should be the first concern of our profession to fashion and bequeath.”	41

The Social Foundations of Education (1934)

The Social Foundations of Education is Part IX of the Report of the Commission on the Social Studies for the American Historical Association. In the preface, it states that this text “deals with the social background of American education from the beginnings of national organization and activity.”⁶⁰² The preface also notes that Counts “came to feel that contemporary activity and thought about education were insufficient to explain or even reveal the full purpose and function of the public school” and this is what led him to “examine the development of American society from the time of its definite organization to the present.”⁶⁰³ Counts was working through his thoughts on this idea when he was tasked with writing this report for the commission.⁶⁰⁴

Table 8. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *The Social Foundations of Education*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“As a result of the disclosures, public resentment was aroused and the activities	212

⁶⁰² George S. Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, (Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, American Historical Association. Pt. IX. New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1934.), vii.

⁶⁰³ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, vii.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, vii-viii.

were curbed for a time; but publicity organizations are still maintained and the indoctrination of the utility point of view, even if now done in a more covert fashion, is still carried on.”	
Imposition Quotes	
“Consequently, in the light of the data provided by the social sciences and within the limits imposed by necessity, as revealed by the data, educational leaders are obliged to make an interpretation of contemporary history and with full recognition of all the hazards involved, submit their interpretation in educational program to the judgment of time.”	3-4
“To multitudes throughout the earth, laboring under the disabilities imposed by centuries of class or despotic rule, America was a land of hope, freedom, and opportunity to which they were drawn as by a magnet.”	10
“To be sure, by the enactment of blue laws, the imposing of censorship, and the prohibition of recreation practices that run counter to traditional standards of right and wrong, they have given expression from time to time to the Puritan strain running through their mores.”	307
“Thereafter, because of the discovery of new evidence and the wide interest in the case, their fate hung in the balance until April 9, 1927, when the sentence of death was imposed on them.”	417
“Life in army or navy may unfit men for the ordinary occupations; the ravaging of fields destroys homes and drives families into poverty; the destruction of cities spreads disease, starvation, and death; and the imposition of taxes bows the back of labor and deprives children of educational opportunities.”	470
“The foregoing argument, however, is not intended to convey the impression that education, since it involves a large measure of imposition, requires a severe regimentation of the mind, a rigorous teaching of a body of doctrine as fixed and final.”	537
“This does not mean that high achievement would be frowned upon or that a single standard of mediocrity would be imposed upon all.”	545
“Industrial society is marked by various powerful and competing groups and interests, each of which seeks to impose its will upon the school.”	560

Counts uses the term indoctrination, in any of its forms, only once in this text. It comes in the chapter titled “Communication,” and specifically in the section about “The campaign of the power industry.” The focus of the chapter on “Communication” is a review of the way that the communication industry has developed over time in American society. Specifically, Counts notes that this chapter is devoted to a review of how the growth of communication has “made possible mass production and the exchange of commodities on an enormous scale” while also

complicating “the problems of government and profoundly [affecting] the cultural life of the people.”⁶⁰⁵

The term indoctrination comes in a section where Counts discusses the efforts during the 1920s by “managers of the power industry... to persuade the American people that public utility corporations are benevolent agencies which serve the public with a maximum of efficiency and which... do not operate for private profit as do other forms of business enterprise.”⁶⁰⁶ Counts discusses the use of the newspapers to carry out the power industries “campaign of propaganda.”⁶⁰⁷ He states that “the press deluged the country with articles glorifying private ownership, demonstrating the fairness of rates charged, and attacking as ‘socialistic,’ ‘communistic,’ or ‘bolshevistic’ all proposals for public interference.”⁶⁰⁸ Counts notes that “the efforts of the power industry to mold public opinion through the schools, the press, and other agencies” went on and even included the assistance of social clubs in promoting the propaganda until it was “exposed by the investigations of the Federal Trade Commission.”⁶⁰⁹ He noted that the investigations conducted by the FTC called attention to the problem and slowed it for a time, “but publicity organizations [were] still maintained and indoctrination of the utility point of view, even if now done in a more covert fashion, is still carried on.”⁶¹⁰

Counts’ first use of the term imposition comes in the introduction to the text, titled: “Education as Statesmanship.” Counts opens the chapter by stating that “the historical record shows that education is always a function of time, place and circumstance” and that “there can be no all-embracing educational philosophy, policy, or program suited to all cultures and all

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 189.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 210.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 211.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., 212.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

ages.”⁶¹¹ This view, Counts argues, means that any shaping of educational theory should begin with “an examination of the society to be served.”⁶¹² Counts’ first use of imposition comes in his discussion of the important role that educators play. He notes that “educational leaders are obliged to make an interpretation of contemporary history” that is limited only by the studies that exist and the imposition, or restrictions that are set on the educators.⁶¹³ He goes on to say,

Since, being denied the privilege of neutrality, they must act, no other rational course is open to them. But it should never be forgotten that in acting they, in proportion to the power of organized education, mold the minds of the coming generation and thus share in shaping the future of the nation and even of world society.⁶¹⁴

Counts next use of imposition comes from his chapter on “Democratic Tradition.” His use of the term comes during his introduction to the chapter and in a paragraph where Counts is describing the way that Americans have projected themselves to the world and how they have been seen by others around the world. He starts by describing how Americans “proclaimed to themselves and to the world their devotion to democracy” and how these efforts in both words and deeds were recognized by “the downtrodden of other nations.”⁶¹⁵ Counts use of the term imposition in this context comes from a sentence which describes the situation of the “multitudes around the earth who have to live “under the disabilities imposed by centuries of class or despotic rule.”⁶¹⁶ It was these people who, Counts notes, saw America as a land of freedom and opportunity. He concludes this paragraph by noting that those who saw America as a land of hope, freedom, and opportunity were not only “lured by the material riches of the new continent”

⁶¹¹ Ibid., 1.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Ibid., 4.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

but also “by the promise of escape from a state of society in which the masses of men were bound to poverty of body and spirit by the forces of law and custom.”⁶¹⁷

Counts’ next use of imposition does not come for nearly another 300 pages. It comes in his chapter about “Recreation” and specifically it is in a section of the chapter titled, “The problem of recreation.” In this section, Counts addresses a concern he sees around recreation. He states, “The American people have formulated no adequate theory of recreation; they have given little consideration to the function of play in the evolution of culture.”⁶¹⁸ In a rebuttal to this argument, Counts acknowledges that American history shows some attempts to govern play through “the enactment of blue laws, the imposing of censorship, and the prohibition of recreation practices that run counter to traditional standards of right and wrong,” but he sees this censorship relating more to Puritan ideology rather than a true attempt to provide a clear social understanding of the appropriateness and bounds of recreation and play.”⁶¹⁹ Here the use of imposition is relating to the restrictions established to bar some forms of recreation because of a religious beliefs.

Counts’ third use of imposition in this text comes in the chapter about “Justice” and is in the section about “Justice and political non-conformists.” In this section, Counts seeks to provide evidence for the belief that in the struggle over political dissent, “the spokesmen of change and of the laboring classes have commonly been denied free and equal justice in the American courts.”⁶²⁰ To defend this view, Counts discusses three “world-famous cases.” Counts’ use of imposition comes in his discussion of the third case, the Sacco-Vanzetti case of Massachusetts. Counts relays the basic points of the case, a double murder and robbery. He states how “Nicola

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 307.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid.

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 413.

Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian workmen... known for their radical activities, were arrested and charged with the crime” and found guilty.⁶²¹ Although the supposed crime occurred in 1920 and the men were convicted in 1921, Counts notes that the “sentences of death was imposed upon them” in 1927 and they were executed just a few months after sentencing.⁶²² Following the depiction of the events, Counts notes that “the trial was conducted in a prejudicial atmosphere which the judge apparently made no effort to dispel.”⁶²³ Counts uses this information to support the idea that “they were deliberately sent to the electric chair, not for murder or robbery, as charged, but for their ideas.”⁶²⁴

In the chapter “World Relations,” Counts uses imposition in a section titled “Human cost” which addresses “the human cost of war.”⁶²⁵ Counts uses imposition when specifically showing how the economic costs of war are interconnected with human costs. His quote, “Life in [the] army or navy may unfit men for the ordinary occupations; the ravaging of fields destroys homes and drives families into poverty; the destruction of cities spreads disease, starvation, and death; and the imposition of taxes bows the back of labor and deprives children of educational opportunities” specifically refers to the ways he sees the cost play out in society.⁶²⁶ His use of the term imposition specifically relates to the increased taxes that are levied during war time to fund the war effort. He sees these taxes as being forced or imposed on the poor and specifically costly to workers and the educational opportunities for children.

Counts next use of the term imposition specifically relates to his ideas around education.

In his chapter on “The Public School,” Counts uses the term imposition in a section titled

⁶²¹ Ibid., 417.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 417-18

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 469.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 470.

“Education as a form of action.” In this section, Counts specifically sets out to examine “the relation of education to social action.”⁶²⁷ He first discusses what he sees as two conceptions of a faith in education held by different groups in American society. One faith sees education as the “only true road to safety” while the other holds a faith that an education unguided by adults will lead the younger generation to grow up without the prejudices of the past. Counts notes that both are short-sighted. Of the second, he specifically states that “it is a refuge of ignorance — an escape from reality — a shirking of responsibility.”⁶²⁸ In his foregoing argument prior to his use of imposition, Counts defines his beliefs about education. He notes first that, “if education is to grapple with a given social situation, it must incorporate a social philosophy adequate to that situation — a social philosophy that has substance as well as form — a social philosophy that represents great historic choices.”⁶²⁹ He notes also that “a practicable educational program or theory cannot be generic: it must be specific: it must be suited to a particular time and place in history.”⁶³⁰

Counts also states that education has a role to play in the future, but not just any education, “an education that is carefully designed, both as method and as content, for the present day and generation;” “an education that recognizes the impossibility of moving in all directions at once...”⁶³¹ Counts also states that “these grand choices will be made for children by adults,” that “partiality is the very essence of education, as it is of life itself,” and that “each choice involves rejection as well as selection.”⁶³² As a result of this view about selection and the consequence of the expression of some theory of governance brought about by the choices made,

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 533.

⁶²⁸ Ibid., 534.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Ibid.

⁶³¹ Ibid., 535.

⁶³² Ibid.

Counts notes that “every school must make some decision concerning the motives to which to appeal in stimulating and guiding the process of learning.”⁶³³ Since the school is dealing with living growing beings it cannot remain neutral and must have growth and direction of its own.⁶³⁴

Counts concludes his argument by noting that “the major object of education since the beginning of time has been the induction of the immature individual into the life of the group.”⁶³⁵

Education, Counts argues, includes “not only the development of intellectual powers, but also the formation of character, the acquisition of habits, attitudes, and dispositions suited to a given set of living conditions, a given level of culture, and a given body of ideals and aspirations.”⁶³⁶

Following his definition of education, Counts uses imposition in his quote, “The foregoing argument, however, is not intended to convey the impression that education, since it involves a large measure of imposition, requires a severe regimentation of the mind, a rigorous teaching of a body of doctrine as fixed and final.”⁶³⁷ Counts notes that the idea of rigid teaching might have been beneficial in the past, but it would be “extremely dangerous in the highly dynamic social order of today.”⁶³⁸ In defending his position and arguing that he is not seeking a teaching of a fixed and final body of doctrine, Counts states that education should promote a full and thorough understanding of society and also permit and encourage students “to question all things.”⁶³⁹ In trying to find the boundary lines, Counts follows this quote by saying that “this does not mean that a particular educational program may not be dominated by certain great social ideals.”⁶⁴⁰ Counts use of imposition in this section calls attention to the fact that there are

⁶³³ Ibid., 536.

⁶³⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.

⁶³⁷ Ibid., 537.

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

decisions being made which impose on students, but that there is a dynamism that is equally important and both must serve as boundary lines in the development of education in a dynamic society.

Counts' next use of the term imposition in this text comes from a section devoted to the "Curriculum" in Counts' chapter on "The Public School." In this section, Counts relays his thoughts about the curriculum and how he sees it meeting the great purpose he set for it:

The great purpose of the public school therefore should be to prepare the coming generation to participate actively and courageously in building a democratic industrial society that will co-operate with other nations in the exchange of goods, in the cultivation of the arts, in the advancement of knowledge and thought, and in maintaining the peace of the world.⁶⁴¹

Counts notes that the curriculum should serve this purpose and that shifting education in this direction would not require any discernable changes to the subjects or the organization of the school.⁶⁴² What would be different would be the "the spirit, the approach, the orientation" of the curriculum.⁶⁴³ He notes that changes would be made to remove "the egoistic and possessive tendencies," and "social and cooperative and creative impulses" would be emphasized.⁶⁴⁴ He notes that the school would be organized around this idea and "no individual would be rewarded merely for overcoming or surpassing another."⁶⁴⁵ Counts uses the term imposition in an effort to articulate what he means. He seeks to assure the reader that by promoting this ideal it would not lead to the opposite occurrence where "high achievement would be frowned upon or that a single standard of mediocrity would be imposed on all."⁶⁴⁶ Counts argues instead that the opposite would be the case. He states that "in a closely integrated society the fullest development of the

⁶⁴¹ Ibid., 544.

⁶⁴² Ibid.

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 545.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

varied gifts and abilities resident in the population is demanded by the common welfare” and that this would “be one of the major objects of organized education.”⁶⁴⁷ He notes that not recognizing and developing the talents of individuals would have a negative cost on the group and would be a waste of a natural resource. Counts believes the important shift is in what we qualify as achievement. Individual or group achievement would be recognized when it added to the “material and cultural level of the total population.”⁶⁴⁸

Counts’ final use of the term imposition in this text comes in his section about “School and society” in his chapter on “The Public School.” Counts uses this section to provide what he says is “a word of caution... regarding the powers of organized education.”⁶⁴⁹ Counts notes that “although the school is the focal point of the educative process and the only form of education under conscious and reasoned direction of society, its power for influencing social change is strictly limited.”⁶⁵⁰ He raises the point that “various powerful and competing groups and interests, each of which seeks to impose its will upon the school” have an effect on the school and require strong leadership to hold at bay.⁶⁵¹ However, Counts does not spend the rest of the section discussing these interest groups, but instead turns to a discussion of the “non-scholastic educational agencies” like the family, the church, the community organization, and the various forms of media communication.⁶⁵² This viewpoint leads him to conclude that although the school has grown rapidly, “it is clearly but one among many educational agencies.”⁶⁵³

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., 560.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

The Prospects of American Democracy (1938)

In *The Prospects of American Democracy*, Counts seeks to present the American heritage of liberty and democracy “and to suggest how it may be employed in the task of adjusting our democracy to the conditions of the industrial age.”⁶⁵⁴ In the first half of this text, Counts attempts to lay out information about the founding of American democracy along with the challenges and lessons from the events of the past and present in his time and to defend the need for an explicit plan to ensure democracy’s survival. In the second half, beginning with the chapter “A Program for Democracy,” Counts lays out the plan that he feels is necessary to address the challenges to democracy brought about by the industrial age and to face the threat posed by authoritarian governments. All of Counts’ uses of the term indoctrination in this piece come from the second half of this text while just over a half of the uses of imposition come in the first part of his discussion and the rest come from his solution to the problem.

Table 9. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *The Prospects of American Democracy*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“The more immediate task, however, is to subject to constant scrutiny those modern and far-flung organs of news, opinion, and political indoctrination — the press, the radio, and the cinema “and those professed artists and purveyors of propaganda — advertising public relations counsellors.”	203
“In the absence of a clear analysis here there is certain to be much confusion regarding such fundamental issues as indoctrination, freedom of teaching, and the formulation of educational policy.”	293
“In the same breath or in a single page an educational leader may oppose the slightest suggestion of indoctrination, advocate the teaching of democracy in schools, and demand the formulation of a highly specific list of objectives.”	293
“A program that emphasizes the former to the entire exclusion of the latter, an actual impossibility in fact, would result, if successful, in an indoctrination of the most extreme type, in the reduction of learning to a mere matter of conditioning, in the absolute fixing of loyalties to social ideas and institutions, and in the development of minds impervious to new conceptions, dominated by servility to authority, and lacking elasticity, resilience and creativeness.”	302

⁶⁵⁴ George S. Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy* (New York: The John Day Company, 1938.), vii.

“In no case should an effort be made to enforce a narrow indoctrination upon the minds of the younger generation.”	335
Imposition Quotes	
“It imposes itself starkly on all who read the newspapers, attend the movies, listen to the radio, or even take the trouble to observe casually the world in which they live.”	49
“For at least two centuries and a half, beginning with the blind peasant revolt led by Stenka Razin in 1667, the blackest autocracy of the western world, modeled after the despotism imposed upon the Slav by the ‘Tartar, was threatened with revolution in practically every generation.”	141
“And, in view of the basic differences between the two countries, it is self-evident that any attempt to impose upon America a precedent established in Moscow is doomed from the start to futility and disaster.”	148
“Being incapable of distinguishing between the despotism of the Tsar and the liberalism of the Weimar Republic, between the general cultural backwardness of the Slav and the high cultural level of the Teuton, the extremists in German endeavored to impose upon Berlin a pattern fashioned in Moscow.”	170
“Equally important is the absence of a military caste, proud and arrogant, scornful of peaceful persons and pursuits, confident of its natural right to rule, and ready at all times either to impose its own will upon the state or to ally itself with some faction for the protection or promotion of its special interests.”	257-8
“The intrusion of political forces here might impair the efficient operation of the school and therefore prevent the most complete fulfillment of the purposes which those very forces might wish to impose upon the institution.”	297-8
“Moreover, even if they had the power arbitrarily to impose their will upon the schools, they would be violating the principles of their calling if they should do so.”	307
“Even though boards so constituted may refrain generally from positive acts of censorship and dismissal of instructors, they will invariably impose their outlook by methods of indirection—by appointing “safe professors,” by withholding promotions, by manipulating the budget, by sending out invitations to tea, by employing their vast resources of social prestige and respectability.”	345

Counts’ first use of indoctrination in this text comes in his chapter “A Program for Democracy.” Specifically, it comes in a section on the “Exposure of political propaganda.” In this section, Counts is explicitly arguing for the exposure of “all major campaigns of political propaganda.”⁶⁵⁵ He argues that they should not be outlawed because propaganda is essential to democracy, but “that secrecy, deception, and manipulation be removed from the process as

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., 200.

thoroughly as possible.”⁶⁵⁶ Counts argues that propaganda is necessary because, the concentration of economic power has led to a manipulation of truth to the benefit of those in power. This imbalance restricts the natural power that the Founding Fathers believed truth would have in winning out over errors in judgement.⁶⁵⁷ By bringing it into the light, Counts argues that truth in the democracy can function effectively. Counts then argues that this “careful selection and preparation of the mental pabulum on which the people are nourished” is a cornerstone of autocratic rule.⁶⁵⁸ He then addresses how this same thing plays out in American democracy for the benefit of the aristocracy in order to turn the people away from addressing the true issue of “the control of economic power.”⁶⁵⁹

In his solution to address this issue, Counts uses the term indoctrination. He notes that the school plays a role in preparing the next generation to detect the use of propaganda, but that adult education should also educate against the use of propaganda and that “modern and far-flung organs of news, opinion, and political indoctrination” need to be held under scrutiny.”⁶⁶⁰ His use of indoctrination specifically refers to political propaganda. He argues that liberal newspapers might help combat this propaganda, but that the “most promising suggestion is the establishment of a powerful bureau or institute” that would trace all propaganda campaigns and expose their sources.⁶⁶¹ This institution would also appraise the other forms of media and present its findings through multiple outlets.⁶⁶²

Counts next two uses of the term indoctrination come from his chapter on “Education and American Democracy” and more specifically, from his section about “Education and politics.” In

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., 201.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 202.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 203.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

this section, Counts tries to clarify the relationship between education and politics. He notes that without this analysis, “there is certain to be much confusion regarding such fundamental issues as indoctrination, freedom of teaching and the formulation of education policy.”⁶⁶³ To show this confusion, Counts describes the way that educational leaders talk. He states,

In the same breath or on a single page an educational leader may oppose the slightest suggestion of indoctrination, advocate the teaching of democracy in schools, and demand the formulation of a highly specific list of objectives. He may argue that the school is controlled to the last detail of its program by the economic aristocracy and then proceed to advise teachers to participate in the radical reconstruction of society. He may contend that the school is completely free from external pressures and immediately caution teachers about the dangers attending the discussions of all controversial subjects. Or he may maintain that the scholar should be indifferent to the tendencies of the social structure and at once lament the regimentation of the intellectual life characteristic of dictatorships.⁶⁶⁴

Counts then proceeds into his discussion of three “divergent and conflicting conceptions of the relation of education to politics:” first, “education is by nature entirely separate from politics,” second, “education is itself an original and positive political force, a child of history and geography and yet a creative factor in the world,” and third, “education is by nature wholly an instrument of politics.”⁶⁶⁵ Counts finds a measure of truth in each of these.

Counts’ next use of the term indoctrination comes a few pages later. Leading up to it Counts describes how “organized education has two phases or aspects,” one “technical, the other political.”⁶⁶⁶ Counts spends the next few pages elaborating on the political aspect of education. In his elaboration Counts argues that,

[B]esides the transmission of technical knowledge and powers indispensable in any modern society, every educational program embraces the apparently logically contradictory processes of molding and enlightenment. A program that emphasizes the former to the entire exclusion of the latter, an actual impossibility in fact, would result, if successful, in an indoctrination of the most extreme type, in the reduction of learning to a

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 293.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid., 293-4.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid., 294-5.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., 297.

mere matter of conditioning, in the absolute fixing of loyalties to social ideas and institutions, and in the development of minds impervious to new conceptions, dominated by servility to authority, and lacking elasticity, resilience and creativeness. Such a view of education is approached historically in the practices of various religious denominations and today in the totalitarian states of Europe and the Orient. On the other hand, a program that endeavors to repudiate the molding process completely, and actual impossibility also, would result, if successful, in the cultural disinheriting of its subjects and in the rearing of a generation without roots in any society or epoch — futile, amorphous, purposeless, lacking in common loyalties, and wholly unfitted for life in this world. Indeed, enlightenment itself can have no substance or meaning apart from personalities formed and created by the molding influences of a given culture and system of social arrangements.⁶⁶⁷

Counts notes that enlightenment has never been practiced fully simply because by its existence it would destroy the process of organized education and to that point, he notes that “the architects of organized education have almost uniformly erred in the other direction, and grievously. The molding process has been so generally and powerfully emphasized that in many minds it has been identified with education.”⁶⁶⁸

Counts’ final use of the term indoctrination in this text comes in Chapter twelve: A Program for Public Education. Counts states “from the standpoint of the preservation of free institutions and the successful operation of democratic processes, the program of popular education is primary.”⁶⁶⁹ Counts then articulates that knowledge through the school should be provided under eight categories: “the nature and history of man, the story of American democracy, the rise of industrial civilization, the present structure of American society, the contradictions and conflicts of the contemporary world, the social ideas, philosophies, and programs now in competition, the agencies and methods of propaganda in current use, and the purposes and potentialities of American democracy.”⁶⁷⁰ Counts use of the term indoctrination

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., 302-3.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., 303.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., 321.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid., 330.

comes when he discusses the sixth point regarding the teaching of the “social ideas, philosophies, and programs which are competing for survival and mastery in the world.”⁶⁷¹

In this paragraph, Counts argues that the school should address U.S. doctrine and also “the doctrines and practices associated with communism, fascism, socialism, syndicalism, the cooperative movement and any current ‘new deal.’”⁶⁷² Counts uses the term indoctrination when he addresses where people might be critical of the teaching of these concepts. He states, “in no case should an effort be made to enforce a narrow indoctrination upon the minds on the younger generation. On the other hand,... the approach to these rival systems would not be lacking in bias and orientation.”⁶⁷³ He argues that the bias and orientation would be “democratic values and the necessities of industrial civilization.”⁶⁷⁴

Counts first use of the term imposition in this text comes from his chapter, “American Democracy Today” and the discussion of economic democracy. Counts describes the effect that industrialization has had on the self-contained rural household and the free-hold farmer and how industrialization has resulted in “the concentration of economic power.”⁶⁷⁵ Counts believes that the concentration of economic power does not need to be described explicitly, because “it imposes itself starkly on all who read the newspapers, attend movies, listen to the radio, or even take the trouble to observe casually the world in which they live.”⁶⁷⁶ He concludes that Alexis de Tocqueville observing the America of Counts’ time would probably not find *Democracy in America* an appropriate title and would likely get no pushback if he changed the title to *Plutocracy in America*.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷¹ Ibid., 335.

⁶⁷² Ibid.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., 336.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., 49.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

Counts' next use of the term imposition comes nearly one hundred pages later in his chapter, "Some Lessons from the Present." He starts out this chapter by discussing Russia and uses the term imposition when describing the history of challenges to Russia's despotic government. He states, "for at least two centuries and a half, beginning with the blind peasant revolt led by Stenka Razin in 1667, the blackest autocracy of the western world, modeled after the despotism imposed upon the Slav by the Tartar, was threatened with revolution in practically every generation."⁶⁷⁸ Counts also uses the term imposition in the same chapter towards the end of the section on Russia. In the second to last paragraph, he describes a few aspects that make America and Russia different. Following this comparison he concludes, "in view of the basic differences between the two countries, it is self-evident that any attempt to impose upon America a precedent established in Moscow is doomed from the start to futility and disaster."⁶⁷⁹

In the same chapter, Counts also uses imposition in his conclusion where he provides a general synopsis of the "record of political democracy abroad."⁶⁸⁰ Counts uses the term imposition when describing the way that the political left in each country generally lost its way in its pursuit to rid itself of despotism. Counts argues that the left, "being enslaved by a body of rigid revolutionary dogma, lost their powers of original social analysis and forced all capitalistic societies into the Procrustean bed of an ossified Marxism."⁶⁸¹ As an example of the weakening of political democracy, Counts describes the experience of Germany. "Being incapable of distinguishing between the despotism of the Tsar and the liberalism of the Weimar Republic, between the general cultural backwardness of the Slav and the high cultural level of the Teuton,

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., 141.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 168.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid., 170.

the extremists in Germany endeavored to impose upon Berlin a pattern fashioned in Moscow.”⁶⁸² These events he sees as leading to a division that allowed for the rise of a dictator in Germany.

Counts next use of imposition comes in his chapter, “Some Assets” where he describes the aspects of American history which have made it a viable place for the development of political democracy. He defines ten assets that he considers to be most important: “the liquidation of feudal institutions and mentality, the democratic heritage, the experimental temper of the people, the tradition of ‘good neighborhood,’ the contemporary European spectacle, the weakness of the aristocracy, the natural and technical resources of the country, the security of the nation from external attack, the high political sense of the population, and the growing body of precise knowledge of man and human affairs.”⁶⁸³ Counts use of imposition comes from the first asset, the “Liquidation of Feudal Institutions and Mentality.” Imposition is used specifically when he discusses the “absence of a military caste, proud and arrogant, scornful of peaceful persons and pursuits, confident of its natural right to rule, and ready at all times either to impose its own will upon the state or to ally itself with some faction for the protection or promotion of its special interests.”⁶⁸⁴ Counts notes that when a particular caste like this has existed, the historical record shows that “democracy is rendered extremely precarious.”⁶⁸⁵ He goes on noting that the Founding Fathers were aware of this and as a result, “the constitution subordinates the military to the civil authority and guarantees ‘the right of the people to keep and bear arms.’”⁶⁸⁶

Counts’ next use of the term imposition comes from his explanation of organized education from his chapter, “Education and American Democracy” and specifically in his section

⁶⁸² Ibid.

⁶⁸³ Ibid., 252.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., 257-8.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., 258.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid. *Quotations in the original*

discussing “Education and Politics.” After stating that the technical and the political are the two aspects of organized education, he defines what he means by technical. He states that the technical are,

[T]hose professional knowledges and powers which are the special possession of persons trained to perform the functions associated with the conduct of education — understanding of the nature of the human organism, with particular reference to the learning process; knowledges of the individual disciplines and activities composing the school program; mastery of the various methods and procedures involved in teaching, management, organization, and administration.⁶⁸⁷

Counts argues that each of these certainly have a political component, but what sets them apart is that these are areas that educators “might most appropriately claim a high degree of sovereignty.”⁶⁸⁸ He argues also that, “The intrusion of political forces here might impair the efficient operation of the school and therefore prevent the most complete fulfillment of the purposes which those very forces might wish to impose upon the institution.”⁶⁸⁹

In the same chapter, Counts provides a section called “The Responsibility of the Profession” where he describes his conception of the teaching profession. His use of imposition comes in his opening paragraph of this section when he first argues that “the responsibility for the development and propagation of a conception of education designed to guard and nourish democratic values must rest largely on the teaching profession.”⁶⁹⁰ He takes this further and argues that the teachers need to be supported by the public in this effort. He notes, “the teachers of the country, constituting but a small minority, cannot themselves wield sufficient authority to make any conception of education prevail. Moreover, even if they had the power arbitrarily to impose their will upon the schools, they would be violating the principles of their calling if they

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 297.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid., 297-8.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 306-7.

should do so.”⁶⁹¹ While they may not have this ability and doing so would go against their moral code, they do, in his mind, have the ability to start the conversation and to “make the problem of education a major public interest.”⁶⁹²

Counts’ last use of the term imposition in this text comes from his chapter “A Program for Public Education” where he spends time discussing higher education. He argues, “while a well-conceived and competently administered program of popular education is essential to the preservation of American democracy, the full realization of the potentialities of a society of free men and women, particularly in the industrial age, requires an equally appropriate and excellent system of higher learning.”⁶⁹³ Counts argues that just like public education, higher learning institutions must be changed to “meet most effectively the challenge of dictatorship and class rule.”⁶⁹⁴ He then lays out eight propositions to “stimulate discussion and provide a modicum of guidance.”⁶⁹⁵

Counts’ use of imposition comes in his eighth proposal which is that “the control and conduct of the higher learning should be liberalized and democratized.”⁶⁹⁶ He argues that the current structure of higher education rests too much in the hands of the higher social and economic class. His proposal to combat the influence of the upper classes is to have boards of control “composed largely of persons representing immediately popular causes, movements, and sympathies.”⁶⁹⁷ He argues this board is more preferred to the current situation because,

[T]o expect bankers, corporation officials, owners of great properties, and their habitual associates and servitors in the professions to favor liberation of the higher learning is to ask too much of human nature. Even though boards so constituted may refrain generally from positive acts of censorship and dismissal of instructors, they will invariably impose

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., 307.

⁶⁹² Ibid.

⁶⁹³ Ibid., 339.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., 344.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., 345.

their outlook by methods of indirection — by appointing ‘safe professors,’ by withholding promotions, by manipulating the budget, by sending out invitations to tea, by employing their vast resources of social prestige and respectability.⁶⁹⁸

Counts continues noting that the “principle should be established that the loyalty of the teacher or investigator is to society rather than the state or any creature of the state.”⁶⁹⁹ He also argues that college and university faculty should present their work periodically for public review and criticism and “they must assume the responsibilities of self-discipline, devise ways and means of removing incompetents, and develop a defensible philosophy of their relation to society.”⁷⁰⁰

“The Promise of American Democracy” (1939)

“The Promise of American Democracy” is a chapter in the text, *Democracy and the Curriculum: The Life and Program of the American School*, edited by Harold Rugg.⁷⁰¹ The chapter is adapted from Counts’ text *The Prospects of American Democracy*. The purpose of the whole book is to provide “a guide for teachers, youth, and parents in the study of The American Problem.”⁷⁰² They define the American problem as, “to bring forth on this continent — in some form of cooperative commonwealth — the civilization of economic abundance, democratic behavior, and integrity of expression which is now potentially available.”⁷⁰³ The authors wrote the book “to help citizens generally, and especially teachers, to make their constructive contribution” towards addressing the problem.⁷⁰⁴ This text is written in chapters authored by separate writers and is intended to provide a cohesive position on the schools role in supporting and growing democracy in the United State. Counts’ chapter comes in part two of the text which

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁰¹ George S. Counts, “The Promise of American Democracy,” in *Democracy and the Curriculum; the Life and Program of the American School*, ed. Harold Rugg (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1939).

⁷⁰² Ibid., v.

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid., viii.

is titled “The Creative Resources of America.” Counts’ chapter is the first one in this section of the text.

Table 10. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Promise of American Democracy”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“It imposes itself starkly on all who read the newspapers, attend the movies, listen to the radio, or even take the trouble to observe casually the world in which they live.”	200

In this chapter, Counts does not include a mention of the term indoctrination, however there is one use of the term imposition. His use of the term imposition comes from his section about “American Democracy Today.” This section discusses the differences between the American Democracy of Jefferson and Jackson to what he sees in American society today. Counts specifically focuses on the changes in the economic foundations of American democracy. He describes the statistics relating to workers, noting that farming makes up a small percentage of the working population at his time. He also argues that the concept of the “freehold farmer” from the founding age is starkly different and arguably non-existent in the early 1900s. Although Counts sees the loss of this foundation as concerning, he believes that “of greater significance is the concentration of economic power which has marched hand in hand with the conquest of the continent and the growth of industrialism.”⁷⁰⁵ Here, Counts uses the term imposition in his description of the pressure that the concentration of power has on individual people. He states that “it imposes itself starkly on all who read the newspapers, attend the movies, listen to the radio, or even take the trouble to observe casually the world in which they live.”⁷⁰⁶ Counts sees

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid., 200.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid.

this imposition of industrial society as being pushed by a new aristocracy led by the merchant and financial classes.⁷⁰⁷

The Schools can Teach Democracy (1939)

The book jacket for this text notes that it was born out of a speech presented before the Progressive Education Association on Washington’s Birthday in February 1939. The speech was then edited and expanded to be presented in pamphlet form for public consumption. The book jacket summarizes the text by stating that it articulates a challenge that Counts put to the American people. The challenge this text addresses is Counts’ belief that there has been a failure to educate for democracy, and his conclusion that it is essential for teachers and school leadership to focus their attention on remedying that failure by determining the responsibility that the school has in making educating for democracy a reality.

Table 11. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“In no case should an effort be made to enforce a narrow indoctrination upon the minds of the younger generation.”	28
Imposition Quotes	
“To those who would see in the dedication of the school to the teaching of democracy an unfair imposition of the viewpoint of the adult world upon the child, or of the present upon the future, the point can be made that the ideas, values, and outlooks of democracy are quite as much the product of man’s creative genius as language or number, and quite as precious.”	16

In this text, Counts only uses the term indoctrination once. It comes in the latter half of this text when Counts describes what he sees as the responsibilities of the school. He summarizes this in the following way,

...the school, besides giving an account of the nature and history of man, with particular emphasis on the content and fortunes of the great liberal and humane tradition developing

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., 200-1.

through the ages and on the contributions of diverse races and peoples to our common culture, should instruct the coming generation in the story of democracy, the rise of industrial civilization, the present structure of American society, the conflicts and contradictions of the contemporary world, the social ideas, philosophies, and programs now in competition, the agencies and methods of propaganda current today, and the great organizations and movements tending to increase the power and make effective the will of the people.⁷⁰⁸

The following paragraphs then expound on each of these areas. Counts' use of the term indoctrination comes in the section where he discusses "the various social ideas, philosophies, and programs which are competing for survival and mastery in the world."⁷⁰⁹ He argues that the school should be the place where these varied viewpoints are put through "honest and critical review."⁷¹⁰ Counts argues that American "social, economic, and political tradition" should be reviewed as well as "doctrines and practices associated with communism, fascism, socialism, syndicalism, the co-operative movement, and any current 'new deal.'"⁷¹¹

Counts' use of indoctrination comes immediately after the mention of these varied concepts. He argues that even though he is calling for the teaching of such concepts, "in no case should an effort be made to enforce a narrow indoctrination upon the minds of the younger generation."⁷¹² While at the same time, he acknowledges that any approach to the discussion of "these rival systems would not be lacking in bias and orientation."⁷¹³ Using the American context, Counts then sets his preferred bias and orientation by stating that, "every one of them would be appraised in terms of democratic values and the necessities of industrial civilization."⁷¹⁴ In doing so, Counts considers that "useful ideas and suggestions" might be

⁷⁰⁸ George S. Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy* (New York: The John Day Company, 1939). 23.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹¹ Ibid., 28.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

identified, but that those suggestions would be interpreted and adapted to the unique American society.⁷¹⁵

Counts' use of the term imposition also only occurs once in this text. The use of imposition appears earlier in the text and after Counts' argument that the teaching of democracy has not advanced since the founding of the country. Counts argues that this "failure is traceable at bottom to a widespread assumption that education is a self-determining process, that it is indifferent to social values and systems, that it moves forward in accordance with its own timeless and universal laws, and that when so conceived it inevitably and automatically serves the cause of democracy."⁷¹⁶ Counts argues that the way to turn from this false assumption is to reject social and moral neutrality and "direct the energies of organized education without reservation to the defense and strengthening of the democratic tradition and way of life."⁷¹⁷

Counts use of imposition comes as his response to the obvious critical challenge he knows will be leveled at his view, one specifically that raises "the respect for individual personality cherished by democracy."⁷¹⁸ He believes this challenge to his view helps to prove his basic argument. He says,

To those who would see in the dedication of the school to the teaching of democracy an unfair imposition of the viewpoint of the adult world upon the child, or of the present upon the future, the point can be made that the ideas, values, and outlooks of democracy are quite as much the product of man's creative genius as language or number, and quite as precious. To live by them is far more difficult than the conquest of the alphabet or the mastery of the multiplication table.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid., 15-16.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid., 16.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

The Education of Free Men in American Democracy (1941)

Counts was tasked by the Education Policies Commission to complete a text that was “first outlined and planned by the commission in 1938.”⁷²⁰ The acknowledgements at the beginning of the text note that the Commission had been “exploring the relationships between American democracy and the American school” for several years leading up to the publication of this text.⁷²¹ They consider this text to be an extension and synthesis of the past research. The Commission notes that it chose Counts to complete this task because of his ability to state the views of the Commission “clearly, honestly and convincingly” and for his “broad knowledge of education and its social background and [his] devotion to American democracy which have made him an invaluable collaborator in the Commission’s entire program.”⁷²² The text, similar to some of the other pieces that Counts wrote, is designed for use in the classroom or by citizens in their discussion of this topic. After the body of the text, a study-guide is provided which offers a summary of each chapter along with discussion questions. The study guide was not developed by Counts but was developed from Counts’ text by R. I. Grigsby, a curriculum consultant for the U. S. Office of Education.

Table 12. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“With the initiative in their hands the totalitarian powers appear resolved to impose their pattern upon the world, to place the whole earth under the rule of a few great military states.”	9

⁷²⁰ George S. Counts, *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy* (Washington, DC: National Education Association of the United States, 1941), acknowledgements.

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² Ibid.

“The source of this error seems to reside in the assumption that democracy is the “natural” form of human society, that men have not had to devise and learn the peculiar ways of democracy, that men, if liberated from the arbitrary compulsions imposed by tyrants, turn instinctively to these ways, that men are born with the qualities, dispositions, and loyalties essential to the guarding and fulfillment of the democratic faith.”	47
“Although some may recoil from such a program on the ground that it would be an unwarranted imposition of the old upon the young, the fact is, as indicated above, that only thus can the immature achieve maturity and the bound be set free.”	53-4
“In a democracy all of the people, in the light of their knowledge and in obedience to their basic loyalties, impose upon themselves, voluntarily and resolutely, the restraints necessary to the guarding and advancing of the common interest.”	79
“The first school of thought has believed that discipline must be imposed by an arbitrary and all-powerful authority; the second that it will develop from within in any properly conducted education.”	88
“Members of the first school, like all supporters of authoritarian doctrine, have assumed that man is evil by nature and must be remade according to a pattern imposed by some external power; members of the second, like all followers of the romantic tradition, have assumed that man is good by nature and should be permitted and encouraged to develop in accord with his own inner tendencies.”	88
“Government should guarantee to the teacher of proven worth a just wage, economic security, reasonable tenure, opportunity for continued study, and protection from the assaults of all busybodies and pressure groups seeking to impose upon him and the school their special and peculiar brands of morals and patriotism.”	107
“While guarding education from the pressures and encroachments of other forces, government should not make the mistake of imposing a host of its own regulations and prescriptions.”	108

In this text, the term indoctrination only appears once, but it is in the Study Guide which is not written by Counts. R. I. Grigsby uses the term indoctrination in one of his discussion questions associated with Counts’ chapter titled “The Loyalties of Free Men.”

Counts uses the term imposition several times in this text. His first use of imposition is in his summary of the rising movements of despotism and the growth of fascism and communism. In his section “Hopes Deferred,” Counts reflects on the hopes that existed after the first World War. His use of the term imposition supports his concerns regarding the pressure he sees rising from totalitarian states. Rather than a League of Nations devoted to peace, Counts notes that

dictators lead much of Europe and Asia. It is these dictators that Counts notes “appear resolved to impose their pattern upon the world, to place the whole earth under the rule of a few great military states.”⁷²³The result is a second World War.

Counts’ second use of the term imposition occurs many pages later in his section about “The Nature of Democracy in Relation to Education.” In the previous section, Counts talks through the “Nature of Education in Relation to Democracy.” In that section, Counts addresses the idea that education is always democratic and that totalitarian states seek to keep their people uneducated. He describes how totalitarian states have not avoided education but perfected it for their particular aims. As a result, American people have not properly perceived the nature of education in relation to democracy and it seems the same issues exists in their perception of the nature of democracy in relation to education. The issue Counts’ seeks to tackle is the perception,

That democracy is the ‘natural’ form of human society, that men have not had to devise and learn the particular ways of democracy, that men, if liberated from the arbitrary compulsions imposed by tyrants, turn instinctively to these ways, that men are born with the qualities, dispositions, and loyalties essential to the guarding and fulfillment of the democratic faith.⁷²⁴

Counts questions how it could be possible that Americans came to hold this perception given how much people had to struggle to bring American democracy into existence. Counts use of the term imposition in the above quote, relates to the perception of the actions of tyrants and in the idea that democracy liberates people from this imposition.

Counts next uses imposition in his section on “The Cultivation of Democratic Loyalties.” Counts argues that the only way for democracy to survive is for it to employ its own methods to cultivate its essential loyalties and the nature of those loyalties in the children, youths, and adults

⁷²³ Ibid., 9.

⁷²⁴ Ibid., 47.

of the country.⁷²⁵ Counts use of the term imposition here comes in his acknowledgement that people might be taken aback by such a suggestion, but he argues that this imposition is the only way that “the immature achieve maturity and the bound be set free.”⁷²⁶ Counts follows this conclusion by stating that, “appropriate loyalties constitute one of the indispensable conditions for the maintenance of individual liberty as a general and enduring quality of social life.”⁷²⁷

Counts’ next utilizes of the term imposition in his section called “Democratic and Totalitarian Disciplines” in his chapter “The Disciplines of Free Men.” In this chapter, Counts addresses the concept of discipline, a discipline designed to sustain the democratic faith. He addresses discipline because it appears as a central argument from authoritative countries, that a democracy cannot be disciplined enough to sustain itself.⁷²⁸ Counts defines discipline as “the putting of loyalties and knowledge to efficient use, the ordering of life in the light of understanding and toward the attainment of purpose.”⁷²⁹ In leading up to his discussion of disciplines for democracy and disciplines for totalitarianism, Counts argues that democracy requires a social discipline and that “social discipline is a form, though a particularly severe form, of individual discipline.”⁷³⁰ In coming to this conclusion, Counts is arguing that democracies need just as much discipline as despotisms, and perhaps more.

His section about “Democratic and Totalitarian Disciplines” is an attempt to define the difference between discipline in a democracy and discipline in a totalitarian state. He defines the discipline of totalitarian states as “the discipline of slaves,” and the forced surrender of self, while on the other side, “the discipline of democracy is the discipline of free men” in the

⁷²⁵ Ibid., 53.

⁷²⁶ Ibid., 54.

⁷²⁷ Ibid.

⁷²⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁷²⁹ Ibid., 76.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., 77.

conscious surrender of self.⁷³¹ Counts states that, “in a democracy all of the people, in the light of their knowledge and in obedience to their basic loyalties, impose upon themselves, voluntarily and resolutely, the restraints necessary to the guarding and advancing of the common interest.”⁷³² Counts acknowledges that some physical force might still be needed in a democracy, but that more attention is placed on seeking for the “understanding of consequences, rather than on fear of punishment by some authority.”⁷³³ As a result of his conception of the locus of control in a democracy, Counts argues that “the educational task is to achieve the degree of devotion to the general welfare that the totalitarian systems arouse toward the person of the dictator.”⁷³⁴ To achieve this devotion without resorting to the methods of control employed by totalitarian regimes, Counts argues that “democracy must be presented to the young as a way of life and a social faith immeasurably superior to all others.”⁷³⁵

The next two uses of imposition are found in the same chapter as the one above, but they are later in the chapter in a section called, “The Teaching of Discipline.” In this section, Counts states that “at no time in the history of American education has a concerted effort been made to rear a generation in the discipline of free men.”⁷³⁶ Counts again addresses the two camps of thought, democratic and totalitarian. He notes that “one has been inclined to identify education with discipline, the other has tended to associate it with liberty.”⁷³⁷ He on the other hand, believes both “are needed in the schools of a free society” and the problem lies in the way that each conceives of the concepts of discipline and liberty.⁷³⁸

⁷³¹ Ibid., 78-9.

⁷³² Ibid., 79.

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ Ibid., 87.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ Ibid.

Counts' first use of the term imposition in this section relates to the belief of totalitarian governments that "discipline must be imposed by an arbitrary and all-powerful authority."⁷³⁹ Counts uses the term imposition in a series of statements meant to show the contrasting views of totalitarian states versus democratic ones. He sees the confusion exists from the view that each has of human nature, conceptions he sees as false and fundamentally alike. He defines the authoritarian notion as a belief that man is evil by nature and must be "remade according to a pattern imposed by some external power" while supporters of the democratic tradition "have assumed that man is good by nature and should be permitted and encouraged to develop in accord with his own inner tendencies."⁷⁴⁰ Counts believes that "man is neither evil nor good by nature, but rather becomes evil or good, according to a given set of standards as he grows to maturity in a given society or culture."⁷⁴¹ In both cases in this section, Counts use of the term imposition focuses on the efforts made by totalitarian states.

The final two uses of imposition in this book are in the chapter, "Government, the Teacher, and the People." More specifically, both are found in the section dealing with the "responsibilities and obligations of the government." The first use of imposition in this text is in his discussion of the fourth responsibility of a democratic government, "to safeguard the integrity of the teacher and to encourage him to grow to his full stature" while the second is used in the fifth responsibility of the government "to restrain itself and refuse to make full use of its power."⁷⁴² Counts uses imposition in the first sentence when he addresses the fourth responsibility. Counts argues that government must protect teachers "from the assaults of all busybodies and pressure groups seeking to impose upon him and the school their special and

⁷³⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Ibid., 107-8.

particular brands of morals and patriotism.”⁷⁴³ Counts argues that government should work to support teachers in order to treat them as the “free men” that he claims should exist. He states that this protection for teachers should not be done for their benefit, but to ensure that teachers can continue to do their jobs. Counts states “if the American people desire to defend the democratic faith against assault from within or without, they can scarcely pay too high a price to place such men and women in the public schools of the country.”⁷⁴⁴

The second use of the term imposition in this text comes from Counts’ concern that government exhibits just as much pressure and force as outside groups. He states, “while guarding education from the pressures and encroachments of other forces, government should not make the mistake of imposing a host of its own regulations and prescriptions.”⁷⁴⁵ He argues instead that the government should do what it needs to protect schools and the teaching profession but otherwise allow the public school to govern itself under the guidance of the teaching profession.

“Presidential Address” (1941)

While serving as the president of the American Federation of Teachers, Counts wrote this presidential address which was published in the October 1941 edition of *The District Teacher*. *The District Teacher* was a quarterly publication by the Teachers’ Union of the District of Columbia. It is believed that this address was presented to the American Federation of Teachers at their twenty-fifth annual convention.

Table 13. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Presidential Address”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	

⁷⁴³ Ibid., 107.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid., 108.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.

Imposition Quotes	
“Victory in Russia, even if not followed by a successful invasion of Britain, would lead to the imposition of the Nazi pattern of life and society upon more than three-fifths of the earth.”	6
“On the other hand, we must resist all efforts, from whatever source, to impose a narrow orthodoxy upon the schools.”	7

There is no use of the term indoctrination in Counts’ presidential address; however, he uses the term imposition twice. The larger sentiment of his address is a reflection on the realities of World War II and a call for a unified effort to defeat the aims of Hitler even if that means allying with another dictatorship in Russia to succeed. Counts states that, “We must realize further that the fortunes of the American people are irrevocably involved in that stupendous and bloody struggle which is now being waged on the vast plains of western Russia.”⁷⁴⁶ Counts then details the reality if the Nazi’s were to win out against the Russians. This depiction of a hypothetical situation leads to his first use of imposition, when Counts states, “victory in Russia, even if not followed by a successful invasion of Britain, would lead to the imposition of the Nazi pattern of life and society upon more than three-fifths of the earth.”⁷⁴⁷

Counts second use of the term imposition comes from a section where he turns his attention to a discussion of the future. He states that there are five “great tasks” facing the American Federation of Teachers:

First, defend public education in the United States; second, continue to fight for the ever more complete democratization of public education; third, prepare for the impact of the return of peace on public education; fourth, develop a positive educational program for the post-war world; and fifth, work for the defense and advance of democracy here at home in the United States.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁶ George S. Counts, “Presidential Address,” *District Teacher* 12, (October 1941), 5-8, 6.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., 7.

He continues by stating that the most important task is the defense of public education. He then defines two ways that this defense should be done. The first is the defense of “school budgets in the face of powerful and sustained pressures emanating from those who are opposed to expenditures for public education either because they dislike paying taxes or because they fear a thoroughly enlightened people.”⁷⁴⁹ The second is where Counts uses the term imposition. He states, “On the other hand, we must resist all efforts, from whatever source, to impose a narrow orthodoxy upon the schools.”⁷⁵⁰ Following this statement, he mentions four specific efforts that he was referring to in this quote: totalitarian movements, “abuses of legislative committees,” “and the attacks of a National Association of Manufacturers or a Governor Talmadge.”⁷⁵¹ Each of these was a driving effort to shape the aims of public schooling for particular purposes suitable to special interest and not to the nation as a whole.

“Education in an Age of Decision” (1942)

This article was published in the November 1942 edition of the *Curriculum Journal*. The central purpose of this text is to call for the making of key decisions in the face of the threats of World War II and the need to defend democracy.

Table 14. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education in an Age of Decision”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“This means in general that we must remove the severe disabilities which the strong, ourselves among them, have sought to impose on the world.”	306

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

There is no use of the term indoctrination in this text and only one use of the term imposition. It comes in the third part of this piece. In this section, Counts describes three things that he believes should be done through the schools. He states that schools “should give to the young an understanding and appreciation of the great technological revolution that has swept over the earth,” “a great and challenging conception of American life and destiny,” and “give to the young a vision of a world order in which the American people can live as a free nation.”⁷⁵² He uses the term imposition in his discussion of the third point. Counts believes that a “world order is coming” and depending on the outcome of the war, it could be “an order ruled by a master race or people” or “an order of free and equal peoples.”⁷⁵³ It is in pursuit of the second outcome that Counts uses the term indoctrination. In order to achieve an order of free and equal people Counts believes “we must remove the severe disabilities which the strong, ourselves among them, have sought to impose upon the weak in this world.”⁷⁵⁴ He follows this conclusion by saying, “only as we succeed in guaranteeing freedom and justice to others can we place freedom and justice to ourselves on a durable foundation.”⁷⁵⁵ In calling for this, he specifically mentions recognizing and honoring the right of “the colored peoples of the earth... to the material and spiritual heritage of mankind,” which is the same as his call in the previous text, “Education in an Age of Decision.”⁷⁵⁶

“Education and Post War America” (1944)

“Education and Post War America” was published in May of 1944 in *The American Teacher*, the journal of The American Federation of Teachers. This article is based off an address

⁷⁵² George S. Counts, “Education in an Age of Decision,” *Curriculum Journal* 13 (November 1942): 303-307, 305-6.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*, 306.

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 306-7.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 306.

that Counts gave during the American Federation of Labor’s Post War Forum April 12th and 13th in 1944. It’s noted in the piece that Counts was serving as the vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers at the time. The address was then turned into this text. It represents “the major portion of Dr. Counts’ address.”⁷⁵⁷ Counts opens this piece by arguing that World War II, like the first World War, “revealed many perfectly shameless deficiencies in the education of the greatest and richest democracies” and that the failure to develop the talents of the people “weakened our military effort both at home and abroad and has thus imperiled our existence as a nation.”⁷⁵⁸ As a result, the central argument of this piece is that more attention to education is needed to ensure the development of a strong future military.

Table 15. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and Post War America”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“This means in general that we must teach the young to work for the removal of those severe disabilities which the strong have sought to impose on the world.”	11

Counts does not use the term indoctrination in this text and only uses the term imposition once in a similar manner to the previously described text. The first half of this text is a defense of greater federal funding for education and the growth of research and attention into areas of education like early childhood education, youth education, and adult education. Following this defense, Counts then turns to address the conception of education. He argues that the problems in education are more than just programmatic or structural and require a “conception of education equal to the tasks.”⁷⁵⁹ Counts describes three guiding principles that would “give to our

⁷⁵⁷ George S. Counts, “Education and Post War America,” *American Teacher* 28 (May 1944): 9-12, 9.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid., 10.

education a grandeur suited to the age in which we live.”⁷⁶⁰ First, the young should have an understanding and appreciation for the revolutions of science and technology and how they have “destroyed much of the world of our fathers and has set the framework of the world for our children.”⁷⁶¹ Second, the young should have a “great and challenging conception of the history, life, and future of the American people.”⁷⁶² Third, the young should have “a vision of a world order in which the American people can live as a free nation.”⁷⁶³

Counts’ use of imposition comes in his discussion of the third point. Here he considers the creation of a world order, acknowledges what it would have been like if Hitler had won, and holds out hope that when the war is finally won, America will “build an order of free and equal peoples.” It is following this hope that Counts expresses that the young need to be taught to “work for the removal of those severe disabilities which the strong have sought to impose upon the weak in this world.”⁷⁶⁴ He follows this statement concluding that, “it means in particular that we must teach them that the colored races of the earth, including the American Negro, should enjoy equal rights to the material and spiritual heritage of mankind.”⁷⁶⁵ Counts concludes by arguing that to meet the “aims of the United Nations in the present war, we must cultivate both in ourselves and in our children a definite world-mindedness, an awareness of world citizenship, a feeling of responsibility toward all nations and peoples, a sense of belonging to a common humanity.”⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

⁷⁶² Ibid., 11.

⁷⁶³ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

Education and the Promise of America (1945)

This text is the seventeenth volume in the Kappa Delta Pi lecture series and the editor’s introduction states that, in this text, Counts “critically reexamines our fundamental traditions and envisages their future modification and refinement in terms of the emerging technological, humanistic and industrialized age.”⁷⁶⁷ In his authors preface, Counts states that this text is a “treatment of a great theme — the theme that education always expresses a conception of civilization and that our education should express a great conception of our civilization in its historical and world setting.”⁷⁶⁸

Table 16. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Education and the Promise of America*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“Here were few noble lords, of either church or state, who by armed retainers or by “motto and blazon” imposed their will upon the “rabble.””	32
“The abolition of war is the most urgent task that industrial civilization has imposed on mankind.”	70
“Moreover, if the nations fail to establish a peace based on co-operation, it is quite possible that some totalitarian state may take the job in hand and impose a peace on the world conceived in tyranny and dedicated to the proposition that the races of men are created very unequal.”	98
“Clothed with practically unlimited power and authority, the dictator is able to impose on the educational agencies unity of purpose and singleness of direction.”	106

There are no uses of the term indoctrination in this text; however, the term imposition is used a number of times. The first use of the term imposition comes in the third chapter of the text, “American Civilization — Our Heritage,” and in the second section of the chapter titled “America is a child of the modern age.” In this section, Counts recalls the time when America

⁷⁶⁷ George S. Counts, *Education and the Promise of America* (New York: Macmillan, 1945.), v.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, vii.

was founded and the effect that had on development of the country. Particularly, Counts focuses on the social system of the Old World and how America was born in a time when the traditional aristocracy of the Middle Ages was greatly losing power. Counts notes that while it was difficult for Europe to make the transition, America was a place where it was far easier to establish a new social system and the potential of a new land brought people who were all seeking freedom from the restraints of the old world. His use of the term imposition comes from his description of what made America a fertile land for the establishment of a different social system. He notes,

Here were no vested rights and interests deeply and firmly rooted in law and custom. Here were few great landed estates that had been passed from father to son for generations and centuries. Here were few noble lords, of either church or state, who by armed retainers or by ‘motto and blazon’ imposed their will upon the ‘rabble.’ Here were few prisons and dungeons and torture chambers for breaking the bodies and spirits of dissenters and rebels. Here, with rich and unoccupied land ever beckoning, men and women craving freedom could not be held in bondage.⁷⁶⁹

Counts first use of imposition relates to the way people of lower status were forced to live because of the pressures of a caste society.

Counts next use of the term imposition comes in the chapter “American Civilizations — our New Frontiers” and specifically in the fifth section titled “Industrial civilization opens up new vistas.” In this section, Counts starts by stating that all civilizations “have rested almost wholly or largely on the energy of man.”⁷⁷⁰ This is no different in industrial civilization, just that “industrial civilization has given man a new equation of power.”⁷⁷¹ Counts uses the war effort as an example of this power. Considering the results of industrialization during the war years, Counts states “when our productive energies are fully released and harnessed, when our

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid., 68.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

knowledge is fully utilized, we can perform miracles. There is no rational justification for poverty and economic insecurity in industrial America.”⁷⁷²

Counts use of imposition comes in his discussion of how war has changed because of industrialization. He notes the vast increase in the weapons of war and the uses of science to create such horrors also brings about the chance that “one nation, exalting the military virtues and guided by a policy of utter and calculated ruthlessness, will subjugate and hold in bondage all of the rest.”⁷⁷³ Counts notes that such a “power must be kept in the hands of those who love justice and are resolved to keep peace.”⁷⁷⁴ Because of the way that industrialization has accelerated the weapons of war, Counts states that, “the abolition of war is the most urgent task that industrial civilization has imposed on mankind.”⁷⁷⁵ Prior to the industrial revolution and its effect on war, the need for peace was not considered essential to the survival of the human species. With the powers of war created because of the innovation of industrialization, that reality changed making human extinction by human hands a very real possibility.

Counts other use of imposition comes in the same chapter, but is in the section titled, “America is committed to world peace.” In this section, Counts argues that a “hatred of war is deeply rooted in our mores.”⁷⁷⁶ He continues his argument that “industrial civilization has increased immeasurably the urgency of the task of establishing a just and durable peace.”⁷⁷⁷ He notes also that industrial civilization is changing the dynamics of power where some countries are losing their positions of power while relatively young civilizations are growing in strength. Counts sees America as one of the rising superpowers and states that this new position elicits a

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ Ibid., 70

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., 95.

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

responsibility. He sees that the new capabilities of war could be turned in the service of peace and in a spirit of cooperation. As a word of warning, Counts uses the term imposition. He states, “if the nations fail to establish a peace based on co-operation, it is quite possible that some totalitarian state may take the job in hand and impose a peace on the world conceived in tyranny and dedicated to the proposition that the races of man are created very unequal.”⁷⁷⁸ Counts uses language familiar to American democracy to raise the importance of pursuing peace.

Counts’ last use of imposition in this text comes in the chapter “Education for America in the Industrial Age” and in the second section called “New educational horizons.” In this section, Counts notes that the power of organized education was proven between the great wars by totalitarian states. He addresses critics who argue that the educational experiences of totalitarian states are not relevant to democracies. He presents the argument of the critics who state that the educational power of totalitarian leaders is due to the “unlimited power and authority” of the dictator which allows them “to impose on the educational agencies [a] unity of purpose and singleness of direction.”⁷⁷⁹ Counts notes that the critics argue that education in a democracy “must always be relatively aimless, dispersive, and even marked by contradictions” because of its regard for freedom and differences.⁷⁸⁰ Counts sees this view as a defeatist attitude and detrimental to the survival of democracy.⁷⁸¹ The use of the term imposition in this section is meant to show how critics give dictatorships the ability to shape education but deny that democracy, which still requires leadership, has the ability to do the same.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid., 98.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., 106.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

Education and American Civilization (1952)

The forward to this book notes that it is a publication of The Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, which was part of Teachers College, Columbia University. It is stated that Counts' book is the third of three studies initiated by the Institute. The first two, focused on the nature of child development and the nature of the curriculum, had already been published. Counts' book it is stated, "is about our American civilization."⁷⁸² The forward articulates the basic premise of Counts book: first the need of a great education because of the changing over of one civilization to another and second an argument for and analysis of the American heritage and the relationship between culture and education.⁷⁸³

Counts, writing in the preface to this text, states that it "represents an effort to meet in the field of education the challenge of totalitarianism in its several forms" and "it represents an effort to develop a conception of American education which will support the values of free society in the present troubled age as effectively and vigorously as the educational conceptions of the totalitarian states support the purposes of despotism."⁷⁸⁴ Through his analysis, he seeks to provide "an exploration of the dynamics of industrial society, an examination of the major realities of the contemporary epoch, and an affirmation of the values which should guide us in the rearing of the young in the coming years."⁷⁸⁵ He notes that his approach "is based upon the assumption that an education always expresses a conception of some living civilization and that a great education must express a great conception of civilization."⁷⁸⁶ Bringing it all together,

⁷⁸² George S. Counts, *Education and American Civilization* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), v.

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid., ix.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.

Counts states that this text “is essentially a study of the social, cultural, and moral foundation of the program and curriculum of our American common school.”⁷⁸⁷

Table 17. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Education and American Civilization*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“It is argued, moreover, that any positive interference by members of the older generation is a form of imposition or indoctrination and is certain to lead to frustration”	31
Imposition Quotes	
“Here were few noble lords, of either church or state, who by armed retainers or by “motto and blazon” imposed their will upon the “inferior orders.”	54
““We have already attained such proficiency in the ways of destruction that another world-wide struggle might either utterly destroy civilization everywhere or impose an enduring tyranny on all peoples.”	176
“As we play a central role in the defense and the strengthening of the free world, we must avoid like the plague the development of a messianic complex which would lead us down the road of imperialism and the forcible imposition of our policies, ideas, and institutions on other peoples.”	199-200
“Unless some particular pattern is imposed by force on all nations, it will be profoundly influenced everywhere by the particular character, the history, the heritage, and the geographical setting, of each people involved.”	214
“The principle of equality as applied to peoples and races is dismissed as a fraud which the weak have endeavored to impose on the strong.”	228
“Moreover, if the nations fail to establish a peace based on cooperation, it is quite possible that some totalitarian state may take the job in hand and impose a peace on the world conceived in tyranny and dedicated to the proposition that the races of man are created very unequal.”	231
“We might begin with universal military service and then be driven by an inexorable logic to impose the military mind on economy, government, education, science, and art.”	288
“Clothed with practically unlimited power and authority and able therefore impose all the educational agencies unity purpose and singleness of direction, the dictator is able achieve miracles.”	297
“If such a program is to be more than an expression of individual preference, if it is to affect practice anywhere in the world, it must be rooted in the history and culture of some living society, unless it is imposed by force from without.”	433
“But even if thus imposed, to be effective it must articulate in some measure with the traditions and institutions of the people involved.”	433

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid.

“Thus policies formulated at headquarters in Washington, New York, Chicago, or some smaller city may be imposed on a great organization and carried throughout the nation by an obedient and disciplined membership.”	445
“Powerful groups play upon the school, each striving to impose its will on the substance and process of education.”	452
“That system was not imposed from above by a strong central government or an influential intellectual class.”	454

The term indoctrination is found only once in this text. Counts uses the term indoctrination in Chapter 2: Education and Civilization. More specifically, it is found in a section in that chapter titled, “Current proposals for educational reform are inadequate.” In this section, Counts reviews three proposals that have grown out of the interest in education, and which are set before Americans as the future of education. Before addressing the summary of each proposal, Counts states that even though there has been great interest and vast amounts of discussion, research and experimentation in education, no current proposal is appropriate, “because of our general and persistent failure to probe deeply into the nature of education as a moral and social undertaking.”⁷⁸⁸ Counts sees American education as good, but not truly great, resulting in an education that is “below the possibilities of our civilization.”⁷⁸⁹

Counts’ use of the term indoctrination comes from his review of the second proposal. The first proposal Counts reviews is the efforts of improving education through Mechanical Efficiency which sees the school system as comparable to an assembly line, raw material in, finished products out. The second proposal that Counts discusses is that of Child-Centered education. Counts reviews the basic premises of child-centered theorists. One of those premises he notes as a belief that “any positive interference by members of the older generation is a form of imposition or indoctrination and is certain to lead to frustration.”⁷⁹⁰ Counts response to this

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., 29.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid., 31.

premise is to state that it “undoubtedly is the most romantic interpretation of human nature since Rousseau.”⁷⁹¹ He follows this by noting that the proposal of the child-centered camp is a romantic one, the value of their argument is in the recognition of “the psychological truth that interest is a condition of effective and economical learning.”⁷⁹² He agrees as a result that “the immediate concerns of the young... should always play a large role in education;” however, he argues that “the responsibility of the school is, not to follow the interests of the young, but rather to assist in arousing and building worthy and fruitful interests.”⁷⁹³

Counts follows this argument by also highlighting what he sees as a great moral affirmation in the child-centered theory, in that “in conformity with the democratic ethic, it affirms that the child is a person and that his personality should be treated with respect and regarded as precious. He acknowledges that history shows the horrors done to children by adults, and he argues that “the liberation of boys and girls from the reign of adult tyranny and ignorance is one of the marks of a high civilization.”⁷⁹⁴ Counts concludes, however, that “respect for the personality of the child is expressed most fully in an educational program designed to develop a mature personality deserving of respect.”⁷⁹⁵

The term imposition, besides being used alongside indoctrination in the quote discussed above, is seen thirteen other times in this text. The first use of imposition discussed here is used in a very similar way to its first use in the text discussed prior to this one. It comes in the third chapter of the text titled, “A Child of the Modern Age” and is found in a section titled, “The spirit of the new age found an easier birth in North America.” This section discusses the

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Ibid., 31-2

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

changing of the social system and how, because of the time America was being developed, a new conception of man's relationship to man could be developed. Counts concludes that "the whole continent was a virgin seed-bed for the 'dangerous thoughts' then agitating the Old World."⁷⁹⁶ Counts then describes the elements of the Old World that were missing in the new and by their absence allowed for the new system to grow. Using a very similar quote to the one used in the previous text, Counts describes the power of "noble lords" and how they by force or by propaganda of honor and duty, "imposed their will upon the 'inferior orders.'"⁷⁹⁷ His use of imposition here relates to the way people of lower status were forced to live because of the pressures of a caste society.

Counts' next use of the term imposition comes in his discussion of the effects of industrialization on man's ability to cause destruction to himself and others. In his chapter, "New Vistas of Power" and in the section, "Technology has increased immeasurably man's power to destroy himself and his civilization," Counts raises the concern that "man seems to have given quite as much attention to the 'improvement' of the instruments of warfare, to making them ever more deadly and terrifying, as to the perfection of the instruments of peace."⁷⁹⁸ Counts use of the term imposition comes from the juxtaposition of two realities that he sees. He states, "we have already attained such proficiency in the ways of destruction that another world-wide struggle might either utterly destroy civilization everywhere or impose an enduring tyranny on all peoples."⁷⁹⁹ Here Counts' use of imposition refers to the authoritative actions that would be used

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid., 54.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid., 176.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid.

to restrict the world if a totalitarian government won the next world war. He concludes as a result, that “mankind’s most fateful hour of decision has struck.”⁸⁰⁰

In his chapter “Old Minds in a New World,” Counts discusses what he sees as examples of “cultural lag” brought about by the failure of “functional ideas, moral conceptions, and social organizations” to keep up with the changes brought about by the new “modes of livelihood, forms of communication, use of mechanical energy, and scientific knowledge.”⁸⁰¹ Counts next use of imposition comes from his discussion of one of these areas where he sees old/outdated cultural ideas being unable to deal with a new modern reality. In his section, “We enter a period of unsurpassed national prestige, power, and responsibility with a mentality bred in the days of immaturity, weakness, and isolation,” Counts first talks through how America was in no strong global position prior to the world wars. While America talked a big talk, there was little to show for it and many nations largely ignored it. This conception of America was no longer valid. Now, countries around the world see America as a powerful force, and to Counts, this also brings great responsibility. Here he uses the term imposition in a warning. He notes, “we must be watchful lest we become corrupted by our great power...We must avoid like the plague the development of a messianic complex which would lead us down the road of imperialism and the forcible imposition of our policies, ideas, and institutions on other peoples.”⁸⁰² Counts sees the lack of attention to this new responsibility as a real concern because generally, as a people, the approach is immature, where the country does not have a clear sense of direction or a realization of how impactful certain actions will be to the rest of the world. Counts concludes that, “morally and intellectually we have not kept pace with our material strength.”⁸⁰³

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid., 185.

⁸⁰² Ibid., 199-200.

⁸⁰³ Ibid., 200.

In the next chapter, “Values and Choices,” Counts uses the term imposition when discussing what the future might hold. In his section “Neither a dark age nor a golden age is fated,” Counts argues that we will always deal with problems like “error, greed, and thirst for power” but that industrial civilization still holds the potential of the ideal out on the horizon.⁸⁰⁴ Counts addresses his viewpoint that industrial civilization will spread, but it will be affected by the unique characteristics of each society. The only way it would not be affected by the characteristics of each society is if “some particular pattern is imposed by force on all nations.”⁸⁰⁵ He warns that the people “should be extremely skeptical of those apostles of a new order who insist that there is only one road to the future and that they alone are able to chart its course.”⁸⁰⁶ Counts is referring to the use of force to make the global order perform in only one way in his use of imposition in this quote.

The next two quotations come from Counts’ chapter, “The Hebraic-Christian Ethic.” The first is found in the section, “The foregoing elements of the Hebraic-Christian ethic are threatened by contemporary totalitarian movements,” and the second is found in “The Hebraic-Christian ethic is challenged by the conditions and forces of industrial civilization.” Counts first use of imposition in this chapter follows his presentation of the Hebraic-Christian ethic as central to foundation of American society and social and moral thought. The approach of fascism challenges one particular Hebraic-Christian value, the principle of equality. Counts notes that “The Nazis... openly brand the entire [Hebraic-Christian] ethic as a shameful betrayal of the true German spirit,” and particularly dismiss the principle of equality applied to all people “as a fraud which the weak have endeavored to impose on the strong.”⁸⁰⁷ Here Counts use of imposition

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., 214.

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid., 228.

refers to forcing a moral viewpoint on a group who disagrees with that view. In this case, the belief that “all men are created equal” is being forced by democratic societies on an arguably unwilling country. Counts sees the atrocities waged by the Nazis against the equality of all people as “a demonstration of the worth of the Hebraic-Christian ethic.”⁸⁰⁸

Following his analysis of the Hebraic-Christian ethic, Counts uses imposition when discussing the challenge that industrial civilization puts to the Hebraic-Christian ethic. He argues that “the foremost challenge which industrial civilization throws out to the Hebraic-Christian ethic is that of war.”⁸⁰⁹ He sees the pursuit of peace as central to the Hebraic-Christian ethic, while industrialism has helped to make war total in its reach and inescapable. Counts believes that industrialization has helped to make world wars possible, but it also brings with it the chance to establish peace. He argues that the technology of war could serve a policing function and assist in the maintenance of peace around the world. He raises the use of the term imposition when he hypothesizes what would happen if the nations did not come to terms and make peace. In a quote, also used in other texts, Counts states, “If the nations fail to establish a peace based on cooperation, it is quite possible that some totalitarian state may take the job in hand and impose a peace on the world conceived in tyranny and dedicated to the proposition that the races of man are created very unequal.”⁸¹⁰

Counts’ next use of the term imposition comes from his chapter “The Democratic Faith” and in the section, “Our American democracy is challenged as never before in its history.” In this section Counts again addresses the challenge of war and discusses its impact on American democracy. Counts addresses the new technologies which were created for war and used with

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid., 229.

⁸¹⁰ Ibid., 231.

devastating effect and the thought of another war waged with the growth of new technologies leads him to question whether democracy would survive if this way of the world was to continue.⁸¹¹ Considering the impact of war and technology on democracy leads Counts to imagine what a democratic society would need to become in order to survive. He states, “we would be compelled to marshal and organize all of our resources, material and spiritual, against the day of conflict.”⁸¹² This change, he thinks, would likely start with universal military service and lead the country “by an inexorable logic to impose the military mind on economy, government, education, science, and art.”⁸¹³ Here, Counts sees the challenge of a world at endless war imposing pressure on democracies and changing them into military states. As a result, Counts argues, “the survival of our democracy through the long future depends on the success of the present generation in its efforts to abolish both war and the fear of war.”⁸¹⁴

The next use of the term imposition by Counts comes in his chapter, “The Resources for a Great Education.” He uses the term in the section, “We need an education for free men that is conscious of its worth and power.” In this section, Counts argues that “if the values of civilized life are to endure, we must come to regard education as one of our most serious undertakings.”⁸¹⁵ Counts then argues that the way that education was used by totalitarian states should call attention to the great power of organized education and how it has the capacity to be used to promote the ideals of authoritarianism.

Counts follows this discussion with an argument made in an earlier piece. He contends with the feelings of some critics that the success of totalitarian educational efforts “can have no

⁸¹¹ Ibid., 287-8.

⁸¹² Ibid., 288.

⁸¹³ Ibid.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid., 296.

meaning for a democracy.”⁸¹⁶ Counts uses the term imposition in his explanation of the critics argument. He notes that the use of unlimited power and authority allows for the dictator to “impose on all the educational agencies unity of purpose and singleness of direction.”⁸¹⁷ Counts notes that critics follow this viewpoint by arguing that in a democracy “respect for minorities and its fear of concentrated power” take precedent, so education is forced to be aimless. Counts questions this conception by stating that, “according to this view the citizens of a democracy can have no common interests, purposes, or loyalties beyond the defense of the fatherland against external aggression.”⁸¹⁸ Counts argues that “such a negative attitude must be rejected if free societies are to survive in the industrial age.”⁸¹⁹

Counts’ next use of the term indoctrination is in the introduction to his chapter “The American Community.” He uses the term twice in this section. He opens this section by stating,

The central argument of the present volume is that every educational program expresses, either unreflectively in terms of wont and custom or deliberately in light of knowledge and clear purpose, some conception of life and civilization. If such a program is to be more than an expression of individual preference, if it is to affect practice anywhere in the world, it must be rooted in the history and culture of some living society, unless it is imposed by force from without. But even if thus imposed, to be effective it must articulate in some measure with the traditions and institutions of the people involved. An education conceived in Utopia, though it may challenge and stimulate in the manner of an education conceived in another age or place, can actually function only in Utopia, that is, nowhere.⁸²⁰

Counts use of the Utopia as an example articulates his point. While education for a Utopia might be ideal and also give challenge to the education systems of others, if it was imposed on that other society, it would fail to work. Imposition is used here in relation to the forced application of education from one society onto another.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid., 297.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

⁸¹⁹ Ibid.

⁸²⁰ Ibid., 433.

The next use of imposition is found in the same chapter as the one above. It is located in the section, “These organizations generally are engaged in a perpetual struggle to guard and advance their purpose.” In the previous section Counts describes the proliferation of associations and the variability in their existence and impact. In this section, Counts seeks to address the effect that these organizations have in their pursuit of their particular aims and purposes. Counts concludes this section by describing how undemocratic these organizations are in their practices and structures. He notes that because of their self-interest, the organizations set themselves up defensively, are led by men of ambition, suppress individual difference and establish discipline, solidarity and loyalty to leaders. The interests of these groups lead them to apply “authoritarian or quasi-authoritarian practices” solidified as the “rules and customs” of the organization.⁸²¹ Counts also notes how members in many organizations have little say over policy and a small body of people govern over the organization. Counts uses imposition in an example for this last point. He argues, because of the centralization of power, “policies formulated at headquarters in Washington, New York, Chicago, or some smaller city may be imposed on a great organization and carried throughout the nation by an obedient and disciplined membership.”⁸²² Counts concludes by noting that the more pressure there is to defend their position of power, the more likely the organization is to use authoritarian tactics.

In the chapter, “The American Teacher,” Counts uses the term imposition in his opening section, “The conception of education developed in the present volume makes heavy demands on the teacher.” In this section, Counts describes what teachers are tasked with accomplishing. His use of the term imposition comes in his discussion of the way the teacher’s task is made harder

⁸²¹ Ibid., 445.

⁸²² Ibid.

“by the sweep, complexity, and dynamism of the American community.”⁸²³ He describes the way that national and political issues or crisis may end up directing their attention at the school and how local and national organizations, in their effort to achieve their purposes will put pressure on the schools as well. In an assertion similar to statements made elsewhere in his writing, Counts argues that “powerful groups play upon the school, each striving to impose its will on the substance and process of education.”⁸²⁴ Here the use of imposition is to note the outside pressures seeking to direct schools for their own purpose. Counts argues that teachers and schools must not hide from the pressures or surrender to them, but instead be prepared to confront and make “decisions regarding the most fundamental issues of value and purpose.”⁸²⁵

Counts’ last use of the term imposition in this text comes from the same chapter as the one above. In his section discussing “The teacher is inadequately equipped to discharge the duties of his profession in the present age,” Counts argues that “the teacher is a victim of a severe cultural lag.”⁸²⁶ He argues that the cultural lag exists because society has changed, but the definition of a teacher has not and remains the same as it was in the pre-industrial age. Counts use of imposition comes in his effort to articulate why it is that the role of the teacher has not been redefined in light of the Industrial Revolution. He argues that the common school “system was not imposed from above by a strong central government or an influential intellectual class,” but grew from the initiative of untutored farmers who saw “the school [as] a minor social and educational institution.”⁸²⁷ Not seeing much value in education besides the basic learning of the

⁸²³ Ibid., 452.

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ Ibid.

⁸²⁶ Ibid., 453.

⁸²⁷ Ibid., 454.

three Rs there was no need for further investment or training which led to the undervaluing of the teaching profession.

“The Moral Foundations of American Civilization” (1953)

Counts’ article, “The Moral Foundations of American Civilization,” was presented at the Fortieth Annual Schoolmen’s Week Convention which in 1953 was a joint meeting with the Southeastern Convention District of the Pennsylvania State Education Association. Counts’ piece was presented in the publication of the proceedings under the header of “Secondary Education.”

Table 18. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Moral Foundations of American Civilization”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“Yet others have opposed the inculcation of values on the ground that children and youth should be entirely free to create and develop their own values without any imposition on the part of their elders.”	188

There is no use of the term indoctrination in this text and only one use of the term imposition. Counts opens this text stating, “education always expresses a conception of civilization or of way of life” and that “the most central and abiding feature of a civilization or way of life is its body of values.”⁸²⁸ Setting the purpose for the piece, Counts then states that values should serve a basic role in the development of the education system and that “there has been a tendency to neglect this question.”⁸²⁹ His use of imposition comes from some potential reasons that this question has not been addressed. He notes that some may think it will work

⁸²⁸ George S. Counts, “Moral Foundations of American Civilization” *Schoolmen’s Week Proceedings* (January 1953): 188–94, 188.

⁸²⁹ *Ibid.*

itself out, while others avoid it because it creates controversy. Some others he notes, “have opposed the inculcation of values on the ground that children and youth should be entirely free to create and develop their own values without any imposition on the part of their elders.”⁸³⁰ Counts responds to this view by calling it a utopian notion and stating that, “in the absence of careful guidance and instruction children would be no more successful in creating the great values of our civilization than in creating the higher mathematics or in penetrating the secrets of the atom.”⁸³¹

Decision Making and American Values in School Administration (1954)

According to the forward of the text, *Decision Making and American Values in School Administration*, this piece was developed following a “series of full-day conferences” held at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1952-53. It states that “the participants identified certain typical and critical situations which confront school administrators in these troubled times and which tax their powers of judgement and decision.”⁸³² This piece was written by Counts because of the deliberations and it was intended to “contribute to the thinking of those who seek to minimize expediency and maximize principle in the basic decisions which underlie action in the educational enterprise.”⁸³³

Table 19. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Decision Making and American Values in School Administration*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“Should children be “indoctrinated” in “the American way of life”?”	9
“The solution would seem to be found in the resolute avoidance of partisan indoctrination and the encouragement of the freest possible discussion of all issues by the students.”	43
Imposition Quotes	
“Others doubtless derive more pleasure from criticizing policies imposed upon them than from helping to frame policies of their own.”	21

⁸³⁰ Ibid.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² George S. Counts, *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1954), iii.

⁸³³ Ibid., iii-iv.

“Although a majority may have the power to impose its will on a minority, and although the author of the Declaration of Independence once observed that ‘the lex majoris partis is the fundamental law of every society of individuals of equal rights,’ the Fathers of our Republic wrote into the constitution certain provisions designed to protect minorities against the tyranny of majorities.”	24
“The curriculum then was limited largely to the “fundamentals” of reading, writing, and arithmetic; and teaching was paid poorly, marked by insecurity of tenure, and hedged about by all sorts of petty restrictions and annoyances imposed by a school board of untutored farmers.”	52
“The object would be not only to build soundly for the future but also to avoid the tyranny imposed by crises.”	88

In this text, there are two uses of the term indoctrination. The first comes in the second chapter, “The Role of the School Administrator.” The chapter focuses on the great influence that the school administrator has and some guidance on how the school administrator, primarily superintendents, should approach decision-making. In this chapter, Counts discusses two types of decisions that he sees as important for the school administrator to understand, decisions of procedure and decisions of substance. His first use of the term indoctrination comes in the paragraph about decisions of substance. He first defines decisions of substance as choices relating to “the purposes, content, emphases, and tendencies of the educational program.”⁸³⁴ One of the ways that he articulates the difference between decisions of procedure and decisions of substance is to provide questions as examples. His use of the term indoctrination comes from one of these questions in his paragraph about decisions of substance. He writes, “Should children be ‘indoctrinated’ in ‘the American way of life’?”⁸³⁵ He notes that this question is a one that administrators should consider. He follows this idea by adding a question for administrators on how “indoctrination” and “American way of life” should be defined. This question about indoctrination is included in a series of questions ranging from topics such as whether a

⁸³⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁸³⁵ Ibid.

communist should be allowed to teach in public schools, whether children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds should learn together, and questions relating to what should be included in the curriculum. This paragraph is followed by Counts' argument that "all decision-making involves values."⁸³⁶

Counts' next use of the term indoctrination comes in the chapter, "Students in Politics." As with all of the chapters in part two of this text, this chapter opens with the description of a scenario to be considered and discussed. In the chapter on students in politics, the scenario relates to a group of students, who, inspired by their history class, become active in a political campaign and begin participating and hosting presentations by the candidates at the school. This concerns the public and a complaint is lodged with the principal and the superintendent. Counts follows this example by detailing a sample argument that the superintendent and principal would lay out at a town hall meeting addressing the community's concerns. It would start by addressing the fact that the students' behavior was an intentional outcome of a researched and planned component of the social studies curriculum designed to address the criticism that students leave school unprepared to participate in their political duties as citizens.

Counts' use of the term indoctrination comes from his paragraph discussing the hazards of high school students learning about and participating in politics. The first hazard that he addresses is the concern that, "the teacher will tend to influence the students towards one party or another, according to his own political preferences."⁸³⁷ Count states that "the solution would seem to be found in the resolute avoidance of partisan indoctrination and the encouragement of the freest possible discussion of all issues by the students."⁸³⁸ Counts argues that the approach to

⁸³⁶ Ibid.

⁸³⁷ Ibid., 43.

⁸³⁸ Ibid.

this is that the curriculum used in the classroom would direct the teacher to encourage free discussion. In the next paragraph, Counts discusses the “conduct of the democratic political process” and notes that the principal and superintendent might suggest that goal of the curriculum would be to “make a genuine contribution toward raising both the intellectual and the ethical level of political discussion” and to practice participation in politics “under the guidance of qualified teachers who are more concerned with the purification and elevation of the process than with the triumph of doctrine or the victory of party.”⁸³⁹

The term imposition shows up four times in this text. The first comes from chapter one in the decision-making situations section, “Patterns of Administration.” The scenario presents a situation with a retiring superintendent and a new one stepping in and inheriting an institution dominated by authoritarian ideas of leadership and the teachers’ lack of trust in the district leadership. The superintendent is then tasked with investigating the situation and offering solutions. The result is that the superintendent finds his predecessor was at the leading edge of school improvement and driven by the research done in that area, but where the issues arose were in the previous superintendents “conception of the role of the teacher in the educational enterprise.”⁸⁴⁰ There appeared to be a lack of respect and dignity for the work of the teacher in the pursuit of the efficient school. Here Counts’ hypothetical superintendent notes,

Obviously, a teacher who does not experience a sense of worth and dignity in his own life and calling can scarcely be expected to transmit it to his pupils. We do not ask a teacher who does not himself know how to read to teach reading. No more should we expect him to teach the values of democracy if he is not allowed to practice them. No procedure therefore which tends to degrade the person of a teacher or which fails to contribute the maximum to his growth as a person can be justified in terms of efficiency.⁸⁴¹

⁸³⁹ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid., 18.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid., 18-19.

The focus of Counts' example is that the use of authoritarian methods to direct the teacher is antithetical to the productive function of the school in a democratic society and the use of an authoritarian approach is what has led to the tension between the previous superintendent and the teachers. The resulting solution of Counts' hypothetical superintendent in this scenario is the development of more cooperative relationships.

Counts' use of the term imposition comes at the end of this scenario when his hypothetical superintendent cautions the school board at the conclusion of his presentation of the problem. The hypothetical superintendent cautions against moving too rashly to change. He notes that, "social traditions and established patterns of behavior are as real as the material world of buildings and landscapes. They cannot be transformed overnight or by any magical formula."⁸⁴² Failure could occur from moving too fast toward democratization, just as it could in holding too firmly to authoritarian patterns. He notes next that the teachers themselves have some patterns that need to be addressed. Some teachers might prefer the authoritarian approach and like the ordered routine, while "others doubtless derive more pleasure from criticizing policies imposed upon them than from helping to frame policies of their own."⁸⁴³ As a result, Counts' hypothetical superintendent suggests that the change that needs to be done should be approached as an educational undertaking and should involve the teachers and the community. "He proposes further that in this undertaking he himself assume the role of a teacher — one of the highest and most essential roles of an administrator in a free society."⁸⁴⁴

The next use of the term imposition comes in the next chapter, "The Minority Teacher." In this chapter, a hypothetical teacher of a specific religious background applies to teach in a

⁸⁴² Ibid., 21.

⁸⁴³ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

community dominated by another religious denomination. The teacher appears to be the most qualified out of all of the candidates, but the community is intolerant and a teacher with her religious background has not taught in that community; however, the superintendent recommends that she be hired. The president of the school board requests that the superintendent withdraw his recommendation or that the school board delay approving the new teacher's hiring. This leads to controversy in the community.

Counts' use of the term imposition comes from the hypothetical superintendent's response to the situation. In a statement to the community, the superintendent attempts to address why discrimination in the employment of this or any other teacher would be detrimental to the system of free public education. The superintendent notes that what is important in the employment of the teacher is not their religious beliefs, but their agreement and adherence to the basic principles of free public education in the United States. In the argument against discrimination, Counts' hypothetical superintendent notes how the discrimination in hiring for the school could lead to further instances of discrimination in the community, separating people by religious beliefs. The hypothetical superintendent then notes that, "although a majority may have the power to impose its will on a minority, and although the author of the Declaration of Independence once observed that "the *lex majoris partis* is the fundamental law of every society of individuals of equal rights,' the Fathers of our Republic wrote into the constitution certain provisions designed to protect minorities against the tyranny of majorities."⁸⁴⁵ The use of the term imposition notes the power held by those with the larger numbers in the community to exert and apply their will on those in the minority. The difference is that there are protections written

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid., 24. Italics in original.

in the constitutions by the Founding Fathers which protect minorities. As a result, the superintendent recommends that the hiring of the teacher proceed.

In the chapter “Teachers in Politics,” Counts sets up another hypothetical scenario where a teacher decides to run for political office, leading to challenges due to the perception that teachers should be partisan because they teach children, and that by engaging in politics she is neglecting her teaching duties. The school board disapproves of the teacher’s choice to run for office and determine the effort to be a dangerous precedent, hoping to take action that will discourage the behavior in other teachers. The superintendent and the school board decide to hold a meeting with the teacher before deciding what to do.

Counts’ use of the term imposition comes in the section where the teacher is allowed to speak on her own behalf. The teacher notes that one of the reasons she decided to engage in politics and eventually to run for office herself was because “the teacher in America today is a victim of a tradition established long ago” which holds the teacher as non-political.⁸⁴⁶ The teacher explains the history of the teaching profession noting that the curriculum was focused on the fundamentals, teachers were not paid well and did not keep their positions for long, and they were “hedged about by all sorts of petty restrictions and annoyances imposed by a school board of untutored farmers.”⁸⁴⁷ The teacher continues noting how the teaching profession was not seen as a career, but a “steppingstone to marriage or some adult calling or profession.”⁸⁴⁸ The teacher notes that the teaching profession has changed, but the beliefs about the teacher’s position in society has not. As a result, she felt the tradition needed to change leading her to run for office.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid., 52.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid.

Counts last use of the term imposition comes from the third part of the text, “Decision Making in Perspective.” In the last chapter titled, “Some Guiding Principles,” Counts summarizes the decision-making process from the perspective of American values and offers some guiding thoughts. Counts use of the term imposition comes from his fifth suggestion to superintendents. In the first four, Counts’ suggests that superintendents know the school system, staff, and community, establish communication with teachers and the community, and use the teachers in the development of policy. In the fifth suggestion, he notes that “superintendents should advise the board of education to hold regular meetings devoted to the formulation of long-range policy.”⁸⁴⁹ Counts believes this approach to long range policy is important so that the long-term goals do not get lost in the immediate decisions that have to be made. He also notes that, “the object would be not only to build soundly for the future but also to avoid the tyranny imposed by crises.”⁸⁵⁰ By stepping back and looking ahead, the superintendent and school board can be on alert for possible issues in the future. The focus of this suggestion is that many issues could be headed off if action is taken ahead of time. The final few suggestions that Counts makes are for the superintendent to avoid being seen as knowing it all or always being right, to have a mature mind when dealing with critics, to cultivate virtues required for leadership, and to know and understand himself.

“The Intangible Supports of Liberty” (1956)

The article, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty,” was published in the *Educational Forum* journal in January of 1956. In the first part of the article, Counts describes the current situation at the time he is writing. He details the impact of the world wars and the rise of Fascism and Communism. He then explains what he sees as a severe deficiency of American people in

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

their understanding and engagement with the wider geo-political concerns of the time.

Discussing a study conducted at the time, he argues that its results show that “many of our citizens seem unable to distinguish Communism from democratic socialism, or even from the principles of liberalism and the ethical teachings of the Judeo-Christian faith.”⁸⁵¹ The perceived failure of the general public to discern differences in political approaches leads Counts to the central point of his argument, that attention needs to be given to a clear understanding of the intangible supports of liberty.

In the rest of the piece, Counts defines both tangible and intangible supports for liberty, but the intangible supports are of central focus in this piece. Counts defines these intangible supports as, “unwritten codes of responsibility, self-reliance, and moral courage living in the hearts of individual men and women,” “knowledge and understanding on the part of the citizen of the nature of man and the world and the age in which he lives,” a thirst for the knowledge needed for freemen, and an awareness of the “totalitarian mind” and other intangible destroyers of liberty.⁸⁵²

Table 20. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Intangible Supports of Liberty”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“It cannot be a regime under which the citizen is relieved of responsibility and freed from all restraints not imposed by law or necessity.”	138

Counts does not use the term indoctrination in this piece, but he uses the term imposition once. In this text, Counts uses the term imposition in his discussion of the first intangible support

⁸⁵¹ George S. Counts, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty,” *The Educational Forum* 20, no. 2 (1956): 133–140, 135.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, 137-40.

of liberty. After noting that the laws that support liberty are considered tangibles, Counts notes that it is the intangible support of the people through character, traditions, loyalties, ideals, and values to the laws themselves that brings liberty to life. In his defense of this idea, Counts discusses Montesquieu who he states defined three forms of government and argued that virtue served as the distinguishing mark of a republic. “By ‘virtue’ he meant ‘love of the laws of our country,”⁸⁵³ Noting that this “love” does not come naturally, Montesquieu argues that the whole power of education is essential to build the support for liberty in the people. Counts notes then that liberty cannot mean that every person lives for him or herself or that loyalty to one political party or group is most important. Counts instead argues that “the maintenance of a regime of individual liberty is thus a social undertaking.”⁸⁵⁴ He also argues that “it cannot be a regime under which the citizen is relieved of responsibility and freed from all restraints not imposed by law or necessity.”⁸⁵⁵ Here Counts uses the term imposition to denote the limits that laws place on the individual in the society to draw attention to the restraints which are not written into law. Counts concludes this section stating,

The power of law is clearly limited. It can scarcely be expected to make good citizens in a free society or enforce itself, but good citizens are absolutely essential to both the making and the administration of good laws. Love of liberty, and even love of country, cannot be compelled by legislation. And the same may be said of a sense of fairness, a spirit of tolerance of differences, an abhorrence of injustice, an acquiescence in majority rule, devotion to the Bill of Rights, and an experimental and inquiring mind. These great values of a free society can only be incorporated into the character of the individual through the processes of nurture and education.⁸⁵⁶

“Education and the Foundations of Liberty” (1958)

The article, “Education and the Foundations of Liberty,” was published in the September

⁸⁵³ Ibid., 138.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid., 139.

1958 edition of *The Educational Digest*. At the top of the piece is a question: ““What are the tangible and intangible supports?”⁸⁵⁷ This text is a scaled down version of the previous text, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty.” Some information is removed, and some wording is changed, but the larger argument remains the same between the two pieces.

Table 21. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Foundations of Liberty”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“It cannot be a regime under which the citizen is relieved of responsibility and freed from all restraints not imposed by law or necessity.”	3

Just like with the previous piece, there is no use of the term indoctrination in this text, but there is a use of the term imposition. The term imposition is used in the same quote in this text as it is used in the previous piece. The difference in these two pieces is that Counts removes the discussion of Montesquieu. In this piece, Counts starts the section on intangibles stating, “It is the unwritten code of responsibility, loyalty, self-reliance [sic], and moral courage living in the hearts of individual men and women which seems to make the difference.”⁸⁵⁸ Given this conclusion, Counts shares his argument that political liberty cannot mean the same as achieving one’s personal interests. It is here that Counts again uses the quote, “it cannot be a regime under which the citizen is relieved of responsibility and freed from all restraints not imposed by law or necessity” denoting that political liberty has laws both written and unwritten that need to be acknowledged and adhered to if political liberty is to survive as a practice and as an ideal. Counts

⁸⁵⁷ George S. Counts, “Education and the Foundations of Liberty,” *Education Digest* 24 (September 1958): 1-5, 1.

⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

concludes the paragraph about political liberty noting that, “every right or freedom carries with itself a corresponding responsibility.”⁸⁵⁹

“A Rational Faith in Education” (1958)

“A Rational Faith in Education” is part of a series of lectures that Counts gave in Brazil at the invitation of The Brazilian Center of Educational Research of Rio de Janeiro. According to the introduction of this piece, the Center intended to organize a series of lectures under the title “Education and Society.” The lectures would “be given every year by a national or foreign educator of outstanding eminence, and involving great contemporary problems relating to education.”⁸⁶⁰ Counts was the first lecturer invited for this series. His lectures titled collectively, “Education for a Society of Free Men in the Technological Era,” were published separately in *Teachers College Record* after their presentation in Brazil during Counts’ lecture tour. This piece particularly discusses the specific faith that Americans have in the power of education, the problems Counts sees with current approaches to improving education, and how Counts believes education can be made to encompass all of the aspects needed for a great society.

Table 22. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “A Rational Faith in Education”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“It is argued, moreover, that any positive interference by members of the older generation is a form of imposition or indoctrination and is certain to lead to frustration and regimentation of the mind.”	6
Imposition Quotes	

In this article, Counts uses the terms indoctrination and imposition once and both are used in the same quote. Similar to other texts discussed previously, Counts use of the terms

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ George S. Counts, “A Rational Faith in Education,” *Teachers College Record* 59, no. 5 (1958): 1–8, 1.

comes in the section where he is describing the approach of child-centered education in his section regarding the proposals currently offered to improve education. Counts defines child-centered education as the idea that:

The child achieves maturity through a process of spontaneous generation or inner unfoldment which the adult world through its educational agencies should merely guard and nourish. ...[T]he child and not the teacher or the school, should play the decisive role in shaping both process and the ends of education. The interest and problems of boys and girls are assumed to constitute a more trustworthy guide than the experience and wisdom of their elders. It is also argued, moreover, that any positive interference by members of the older generation is a form of imposition or indoctrination and is certain to lead to frustration and regimentation of the mind.⁸⁶¹

Here, the concepts of imposition and indoctrination are concepts of great consternation and reveal the child-centered theorists concerns over adult influence on children.

“The Spirit of American Education” (1958)

“The Spirit of American Education” is the fourth and final lecture in Counts’ Brazil series titled, “Education for a Society of Free Men in the Technological Era.” In this piece, Counts sets out to explain American education by discussing the “factor of control and then proceed to an examination of a few of the more characteristic expressions of the American spirit in the conduct of the schools.”⁸⁶²

Table 23. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Spirit of American Education”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“The citizens fear that the central government, if it had administrative control over the schools, might fall under the influence of some unscrupulous minority and that the entire educational system from one end of the country to the other might be employed to keep this minority in power and to indoctrinate the coming generation with some authoritarian social philosophy.”	3
Imposition Quotes	
“As I have maintained throughout these lectures, education, unless it is imposed from without, always constitutes a response to the traditions, the value	1

⁸⁶¹ Ibid., 5-6.

⁸⁶² George S. Counts, “The Spirit of American Education,” *Teachers College Record* 59, no. 8 (1958): 1–8, 2.

commitments, the life conditions, and the genius of a people, influenced of course by the prevailing factors of power in a society.”	
“Education in the United States has never been imposed from above.”	2

Counts uses the term indoctrination once in this lecture. In the first part of his lecture, Counts discusses the concept of localized control in American education and how little control the federal government holds over education. He addresses both the history of this process and how education became a responsibility of the States because it was not included in the powers given to the Federal government. Counts then turns to an explanation of the ways that the Federal government has played a role in growing and unifying the education system across the country and how much opposition has existed in the face of these efforts. Counts uses the term indoctrination in his discussion of the Federal government and the people. Counts notes that, according to American belief, “education is too powerful an instrument over the mind to be placed in the hands of a single authority.”⁸⁶³ The root of this belief is a “fear that the central government, if it had administrative control over the schools, might fall under the influence of some unscrupulous minority and that the entire educational system from one end of the country to the other might be employed to keep this minority in power and to indoctrinate the coming generation with some authoritarian social philosophy.”⁸⁶⁴ As a result, the concept of State control is central to and a point of pride for American society. Here the term indoctrination is related to the fear of centralized control and training in an unamerican social philosophy.

Counts use of the term imposition is in two parts of this piece. Counts’ first use of imposition comes from his statement of his central argument regarding his beliefs on education. Counts states, “As I have maintained throughout these lectures, education, unless it is imposed

⁸⁶³ Ibid., 3.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid.

from without, always constitutes a response to the traditions, the value commitments, the life conditions, and the genius of a people, influenced of course by the prevailing factors of power in a society.”⁸⁶⁵ Counts uses this idea to lead into his discussion of the unique characteristics of American education. Counts use of imposition in this quote, like in others where he says something similar, is intended to address the idea of an education system placed on a society from an outside authority, like after the loss of a war when the victorious country seeks to impose their will in the defeated country.

Counts’ next use of the term imposition comes in his discussion about control in education. In his introductory paragraph to his section about where educational control sits in the United States, Counts states that “education in the United States has never been imposed from above.”⁸⁶⁶ He notes that there are privileged classes throughout the historical record but reviewing that record shows that there was no collective or concerted effort to establish education by one group and that a school only came to be if the community wanted it. Counts notes that education in the US “is the authentic work of the people, with of course the assistance of inspired leaders.”⁸⁶⁷ Here Counts juxtaposes the local efforts to establish education with the concept of a forced system placed on the people by a centralized authority that is not part of the local community.

Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom (1962)

Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom is the Horace Mann Lecture from 1962 commissioned by The School of Education of the University of Pittsburg and the Tri-State Area School Study Council. The brief introduction about the lecture at the start of this book

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., 1.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

notes that “the purpose of these lectures [shall be] to reaffirm [Mann’s] faith in free schools and to call to their service all citizens of this generation. It is vital that all understand the purpose and function of a free public school system in American democracy.”⁸⁶⁸ Counts notes in the early pages of his piece that the subject of this year’s Horace Mann lecture is: “Have we lost our sense of dedication to the ‘cause of liberty?’”⁸⁶⁹ Counts response to this question is that many are focused on “defending something vaguely called the ‘American Way of Life’ rather than with fulfilling the ‘promise of America.’”⁸⁷⁰ Counts puts his concern in plain language stating, “we appear to think that in the sphere of moral values we have arrived and that there is nothing more to do but to increase our material values.”⁸⁷¹ The central focus of the piece is first to provide historical context regarding the world at the time and then to “consider in perspective the role of education in the cause of human freedom.”⁸⁷²

Table 24. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“There is no escape under the aegis of rescuing the child from the ogre of indoctrination.”	75
Imposition Quotes	
“Consequently, there is no single authority capable of proclaiming and imposing the “one truth” in the realm of religion and morals.”	67

In this text, Counts uses the term indoctrination once. It comes in the section, “The intangible supports of liberty.” Counts opens this section, which follows a section about the

⁸⁶⁸ George S. Counts, *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), ii.

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*, 9.

tangible supports of liberty, with a focus on the question: “why do men obey the laws?”⁸⁷³ It is true, according to Counts, that there are tangible consequences that can be stated as answers to this question, but on a deeper level he believes the “character of the people and [sic] the realm of traditions, habits, values, and loyalties” play a pivotal role.⁸⁷⁴ After a review of whether tangibles like laws or constitutions are enough to sustain a society, which he finds lacking, Counts then seeks to address the “realm of values, the most neglected aspect of our educational endeavor.”⁸⁷⁵

Counts opens his discussion on values with a question: “What are the basic values, the fundamental loyalties and moral commitments, on which a truly free society rests?”⁸⁷⁶ It is in his response that Counts uses the term indoctrination. Counts states:

...[T]here is an essential morality for every social and political system or way of life. If the morality decays or is taken for granted as a gift of nature, the system itself will pass into history to be studied in some future age by scholars working in the social sciences. An education that assumes an agnostic posture on this issue, pursues a policy of *laissez faire*, or leave all decisions to chance or the child is utterly unrealistic and Utopian. As a matter of fact, it is quite impossible to launch and operate a school or any other educational agency without making a thousand choices positively involving values, from the architecture of a building, to the materials in a textbook, to the personality of a teacher. Our first responsibility is to know, in so far as possible, what we are doing. There is no escape under the aegis of rescuing the child from the ogre of indoctrination.⁸⁷⁷

Here then, the term indoctrination refers to the impact of values and choices by adults on the life of the child. Counts follows this discussion by turning to what he sees should be the focus if we cannot avoid having one. He notes that “we should strive through the entire educational program... to inculcate a deep love of liberty.”⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷³ Ibid., 70.

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., 74.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid., 74-5.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., 75.

Counts also only uses the term imposition once in this text. It comes in his section about the “Tangible supports of Liberty.” In discussing the tangible supports of liberty, Counts defines “power” as the most important. Counts states, “freedom without power in some form for either the individual or the group has no meaning.”⁸⁷⁹ Throughout the next part of the section, Counts discusses the various ways that power can be displayed: political power, economic power, military force, class structures, ecclesiastical power, and voluntary organizations. Counts uses the term imposition when discussing the relation of ecclesiastical power in the United States.

Counts notes that ecclesiastical power “reaches its climax in the state church,” but this has been of little concern in the United States. He notes that because of the Bill of Rights and the makeup of the society there are many religious groups. Counts also notes that in the United States, “there is no single authority capable of proclaiming and imposing the ‘one truth’ in the realm of religion and morals.”⁸⁸⁰ Here, the term imposition is used to denote the pressure of a State church dictating what is appropriate in morals and in religious behavior.

“The Redirection of Public Education: A Frontier of the Sixties” (1962)

This text is a chapter in the book, *The Redirection of Public Education* edited by Francis T. Villemain. Counts’ chapter is the first one in the text following the introduction. In the introduction, Villemain notes that the chapters provided in this text offer “sobering criticism and more basic and important conceptions for directing educational reconstruction.”⁸⁸¹

Table 25. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Redirection of Public Education”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid., 59.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid., 67.

⁸⁸¹ Francis T. Villemain, *Redirection of Public Education* (Toledo: College of Education, University of Toledo, 1962), 3.

Imposition Quotes	
“We certainly do not want an all-powerful Central Committee to impose its will upon us.”	25

In this text, Counts does not use the term indoctrination. He only uses the term imposition once. Counts’ use of the term imposition comes at the end of this text. In his section, “A Federal Council on Education,” Counts considers whether a democracy is capable of doing something similar to the effect of the Central Committee of the Communist party when it reconstructed the entire system of schools in Russia. Counts questions, “Is a democracy capable of subjecting its own system to a comparable re-examination and reconstruction in terms of its own experiences, conditions, resources, institutions, values, and goals?”⁸⁸² Counts responds that “we certainly don’t want an all-powerful Central Committee to impose its will upon us. The time has come, however, for an educational awakening surpassing in depth, sweep, and grandeur the awakening which gave birth to our glorious system of public schools.”⁸⁸³ Counts uses the term imposition to denote the exertion of control that would concern anyone in the United States if the suggestion was the development of a centralized group which dictated education for the rest of the people. Counts does, however, call for a Federal Council to be created and “composed of our most distinguished citizens, representative of our diverse interest groups and equal in moral and intellectual stature to the justices of the supreme court.”⁸⁸⁴ The purpose that Counts gives to this federal council is to study and “make recommendations, “without administrative authority, for the bringing of our total education program abreast of the conditions and challenges of the second half of the twentieth century.”⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸² George S. Counts, “The Redirection of Public Education: A Frontier of the Sixties,” in *Redirection of Public Education*, ed. Francis T. Villemain (Toledo: College of Education, University of Toledo, 1962), 24-5.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

“Dare the School Build the Great Society” (1965)

“Dare the School Build the Great Society” is Counts’ book review of his *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* The brief statement provided at the beginning of this piece states, “Few books in education have been as widely discussed as was *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* when it appeared early in the Great Depression. Here is a wise and witty review and updating by a mysterious ‘relative’ of Author George S. Counts.”⁸⁸⁶ As is stated, Counts plays the reviewer in this piece and positions himself in the writing as a close relative to the author.

Table 26. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Dare the School Build the Great Society?”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“And he is ‘terribly imposed upon by being compelled to learn one language rather than another.’”	29
“Thus, ‘while many would agree that imposition of some kind is inevitable’ in the education of the young, they ‘seem to feel that there is something essentially profane in any effort to understand, plan, and control the process.’”	29
“The conclusion of the author, therefore, ‘is that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.’”	29

The term indoctrination is not used in this text, except in mention of the titles of the three speeches which were used as the basis for *Dare the School*, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?;” “Education Through Indoctrination,” and “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership.”

⁸⁸⁶ George S. Counts, “Dare the School Build the Great Society?” *Phi Delta Kappan* 47 (September 1965): 27-30, 27.

Counts does use the term imposition a few times in this piece. In retelling the argument from *Dare the School*, Counts uses quotes from the original text. Specifically, he does this with the term imposition in his summarization of the ten fallacies about the nature of education. The first quote comes in relation to the first fallacy which is that man is born free. Counts, using his own words, quotes that man is born helpless and that it is through culture that he is given the tools of freedom. The direct example of the impact of culture and its ability to be freeing is the use of language. To think that freedom is separate from culture is naive and is like expecting the individual to “learn no language until he reaches the age of twenty-one. Then he should be allowed to choose from all the languages of the world.”⁸⁸⁷

The next use of imposition comes from the presentation of the ninth fallacy about ignorance vs knowledge. Here Counts just uses his own words to describe that many can accept that imposition is a part of education and inevitable but cannot bring themselves to make any effort to control the process.⁸⁸⁸ Counts instead, considers the need for control and determines that the one acting should have clear understanding of why a choice is made and be ready and willing to take responsibility for that choice.

Counts’ last use of the term imposition comes when he describes the conclusion of *Dare the School*. He notes, “The conclusion of the author, therefore, ‘is that complete impartiality is utterly impossible, that the school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.’”⁸⁸⁹ Counts follows this analysis up in this piece by stating, “Also it should know what it is doing and assume responsibility for the results.”⁸⁹⁰ Here, as in *Dare the School*, the term imposition relates to the giving of particular ideas to students through the school.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid.

“Education and Catastrophe” (1966)

The only means found for reviewing this piece was its manuscript in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. Its original publication, according to the bibliography provided in Laurence J. Dennis and William E. Eaton’s book *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age*, was as a Kappa Delta Pi lecture. It was published by Kent State University.

Table 27. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and Catastrophe”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“Consequently, educational systems in history and in the world today are as different as the societies and cultures which they serve, unless they are imposed by force from without.”	13

In this text, there is no use of the term indoctrination. Counts does use the term imposition in a quote that is similar to previous quotes and is also seen in varied forms throughout the rest of the pieces discussed in this paper. In the fourth section of this paper, Counts discusses the idea that “Education is always an expression of a particular society and culture.”⁸⁹¹ He follows his view of the relationship between education and civilization by noting that education systems vary just as much as cultures. The only caveat to the view of education as born from cultures is if the system is “imposed by force from without.”⁸⁹² This use of imposition refers to the forced control of one country on another after war or by other means.

“Education For Tomorrow’s World” (1969)

The only means found for reviewing this piece was its manuscript in the George S.

⁸⁹¹ George S. Counts, “Education and Catastrophe,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box. 3, folder 4, 13.

⁸⁹² Ibid.

Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. Its original publication, according to the bibliography provided in Laurence J. Dennis and William E. Eaton's book *George S. Counts: Educator for a New Age*, was in the *Daily Egyptian* in Carbondale, Illinois.

Table 28. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education for Tomorrow’s World”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“We must understand, without equivocation, that education is always an expression or a function of a given society with its culture at a particular time in history, unless it is imposed by force from without or is a legacy from a world that is passing away.”	1

Again, Counts does not use the term indoctrination in this piece. His use of imposition comes in a similar form as the previous text discussed.

Counts use of imposition in this text comes in the very first paragraph of this text which reads,

First of all, we must realize that education is not an autonomous process, always and everywhere the same and governed by its own laws, and that what we need today is not simply more and more education. We must understand, without equivocation, that education is always an expression or a function of a given society with its culture at a particular time in history, unless it is imposed by force from without or is a legacy from a world that is passing away. We must realize therefore that an education which would be appropriate for one society might destroy another, or that an education which would be appropriate for one generation in a swiftly changing world might carry its successor to disaster.⁸⁹³

Here, Counts’ use of imposition is a common one for him. Education is representative of the culture it is in, unless it is not a product of that culture, meaning that another country or people

⁸⁹³ George S. Counts, “Education for Tomorrow’s World,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 6, 1.

has, by greater power (i.e., through the winning of a war), gained the ability to force their education system on the country.

“Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” (1969)

“Should the Teacher Always be Neutral” is an article written to address the “subject of indoctrination and imposition in the educative process.”⁸⁹⁴

Table 29. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
“However, I shall merely attempt to write a few words relative to the subject of indoctrination and imposition in the educative process.”	186
“I defended the thesis that a measure of indoctrination is inevitable, although I rejected the proposition that anything should be taught as absolutely fixed and final and rather defended the idea of “imposition” as a basic and inescapable aspect of the process of rearing the young in any society.”	186
“When the time came for questions and remarks from the floor the great philosopher stood up and said that he had checked the meaning of the word “indoctrination” in Webster’s dictionary and discovered that it meant “teaching.””	186
Imposition Quotes	
“Here is the supreme imposition.”	187
“Without this imposition of the culture, as all of this makes clear, man would not be man, except in a biological sense — if he could survive.”	187
“The language which is imposed on the child from the moment of his birth may well be regarded as symbolic of the culture.”	187
“It is clear therefore that language constitutes a tremendous imposition on the individual.”	187
“I have often told my students that, if we do not want to impose anything on the individual, we should not allow him to learn a language until he becomes 21 years of age and then let him choose the language which he prefers.”	187
“To have done so would have required a revolutionary form of imposition.”	188
“Political liberty, with all of its demands on human nature, if it is to endure, is certainly one of the most extraordinary impositions on the mind and character of man in the entire history of homo sapiens.”	188
“The nature of the imposition must be radically altered.”	188
“I have often told my students that, if we want to avoid imposing anything on our children, we should alter the architectural style of the building every day.	188

⁸⁹⁴ George S. Counts, “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” *Phi Delta Kappan* 51 (December, 1969): 186-89, 186.

“The need for developing the independent and critical mind in the members of the younger generation is implicit in much that I have written and is clearly a form of imposition.”	188
“The big question therefore is not whether we should impose anything on the child in the process of education but what we should impose.”	188
“A final illustration of the critical importance of the question of imposition in the rearing of the young in our democracy is clearly revealed in our treatment of the Negro down through the generations.”	188
“But to achieve this goal the teacher cannot be neutral and the essence of the traditional pattern of imposition in our culture must be reversed.”	189

Counts uses the term indoctrination in this text three times, including in the quote used above to introduce this text. In saying a few words about indoctrination, Counts recalls the debate he had with John Dewey regarding the issue of indoctrination and imposition in the educative process. Counts states, “I defended the thesis that a measure of indoctrination is inevitable, although I rejected the proposition that anything should be taught as absolutely fixed and final and rather defended the idea of ‘imposition’ as a basic and inescapable aspect of the process of rearing the young in any society.”⁸⁹⁵ Here, Counts’ use of the term indoctrination to note the teaching of doctrine, but he clarifies that doctrine is not taught to be “fixed and final.”

Counts next use of the term indoctrination comes when he describes an incident following an event where he was speaking. He notes that John Dewey was in the audience and spoke up at the time for discussion following his presentation. Dewey, Counts claims, had looked up the definition of “‘indoctrination’ in Websters dictionary and discovered that it meant ‘teaching.’”⁸⁹⁶

Counts uses the term imposition a number of times including the two already mentioned that were used in conjunction with the term indoctrination. Counts uses the term imposition thirteen additional times throughout this text. The first use of imposition on its own comes in

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid., 186.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

Counts' attempt to provide a contextual foundation for his argument regarding the role of imposition in education. Counts begins by stating that, "it is impossible to discuss the question under consideration without understanding the role of culture in the life of man."⁸⁹⁷ Counts continues noting that in his view, man is born helpless and the society that he is born into gives him form and direction. He notes, "Although every individual is unique, he is molded by his culture and thus becomes a human being."⁸⁹⁸ Counts continues, arguing that the "nature of the human being is dependent on the culture which inherits him" and in his first use of the term imposition on its own, Counts notes that this "is the supreme imposition."⁸⁹⁹ A person is unable to choose the culture they are born into, thus it is placed on them by the happenstance of birth and it inevitably shapes the human they become.

Counts continues his argument in support of the idea that culture is essential with his next use of the term imposition. Counts first defines education as "the total process of inducting the young into a given society with its culture, its ways of acting, feeling, and thinking, its language, its tools, its institutions, its ethical and aesthetic values, its basic ideas, religious doctrines, and philosophical presuppositions."⁹⁰⁰ He then notes that "without this imposition of culture,... man would not be man, except in a biological sense — if he could survive." Imposition here refers to the confines of a culture which help to shape the human existence and give it substance and meaning outside simple biological parameters.

Counts moves on to further articulate his point by discussing language as an example. He notes, "the language which is imposed on the child from the moment of birth may well be

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., 187.

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid.

regarded as symbolic of the culture.”⁹⁰¹ Discussing the problems with translation of one language to another, Counts notes the impact that values and meaning have on the words in a language. One language may not be able to confer the same meaning elicited emotionally in the language of origin causing incompatibility in translation. This example exhibits how a language expresses the distinct character and culture that it comes from. Counts uses a book of poetry on the topic of freedom as an example. Although the authors tried to include poetry from many different languages, poems in English were dominant in the text, arguably because the concept of freedom carries more meaning in English. As a result, Counts concludes that “language constitutes a tremendous imposition on the individual.”⁹⁰² He concludes this section on culture and imposition noting a suggestion he makes to his students, “if we don’t want to impose anything on the individual, we should not allow him to learn a language until he becomes 21 years of age and then let him choose the language which he prefers.”⁹⁰³

In the next section, Counts moves on to address education and more specifically to frame education in American society given its cultural foundation. He begins the section noting that, “A given society is always a bearer of a particular culture, and societies vary as their cultures vary. Consequently, an education which would be appropriate for one society might destroy another.”⁹⁰⁴ He follows this view of the relationship between education and the maintenance of societies by touching on concerns related to the comparison of American education to Soviet education following the launching of Sputnik. He argues that the comparison is a faulty one because the two societies are profoundly different. A more appropriate question, in his mind, is to consider how well the education systems in each country serve the purpose of the society. He

⁹⁰¹ Ibid.

⁹⁰² Ibid.

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid.

concludes then that Soviet education might be better than American education at serving the purposes of the society because “education for a democracy is far more difficult than education for a dictatorship.”⁹⁰⁵

He expounds on his views by discussing the importance of virtue, self-discipline in a democracy and using the words of Montesquieu, Thomas Jefferson, and an author from the late 1800s, he notes that there is particular human nature required for a democracy to survive. He believes that schools, even though they have expanded much during his time have not been able to develop the type of human nature required to sustain a democracy. “To have done so” he argues, “would have required a revolutionary form of imposition.”⁹⁰⁶ Counts continues noting that the concept of political liberty places specific demands on human nature and “is certainly one of the most extraordinary impositions on the mind and character of man in the entire history of *homo sapiens*.”⁹⁰⁷

Counts moves on to note the way that American society is being changed as a result of industrialization. He raises the concern that “since crossing the great watershed we have never sat down and considered seriously how our children and youth should spend their years in our urbanized and industrialized society.”⁹⁰⁸ He also notes the way that industrialization is shrinking the earth and making it far easier for societies and civilizations to interact. As a result of these large shifts, Counts argues that “the nature of the imposition must be radically altered.”⁹⁰⁹

In Counts’ final section of this piece, he addresses the school specifically. He argues first that, “whenever choices are made in the launching of a program values are involved.”⁹¹⁰ He

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid., 188.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid. Italics in original.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid.

mentions a number of examples from the curriculum to what is hung on the walls of the classroom. He remarks at this point on another comment that he usually makes to his students. He states, “if we want to avoid imposing anything on our children, we should alter the architectural style of the building everyday.”⁹¹¹ He follows this argument by noting also how “textbooks transmit to the younger generation countless social, political, and moral ideas — for the most part a white middle-class culture.”⁹¹²

Counts then argues, “the need for developing the independent and critical mind in the members of the younger generation is implicit in much that I have written and is clearly a form of imposition.”⁹¹³ Following this statement, Counts goes on to set some further parameters which he feels need to also be taught. He argues against criticality just for the sake of being critical. He notes that it must come with discipline. He also argues that “with every right or freedom there goes a responsibility.”⁹¹⁴ As a result he believes, “the critical mind should be armed with knowledge and understanding, and perhaps with a modicum of humility and wisdom.”⁹¹⁵

This led Counts to his main conclusion about imposition. He states, “the big question therefore is not whether we should impose anything on the child in the process of education but what we should impose.”⁹¹⁶ Counts focuses on the great aims of American society as found in the Declaration of Independence and the hope that the younger generation can see that promise fulfilled. He sees the use of science and technology as being helpful for “bringing our practices into harmony with our historic professions.”⁹¹⁷

⁹¹¹ Ibid.

⁹¹² Ibid.

⁹¹³ Ibid.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid.

⁹¹⁶ Ibid.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid.

Counts uses the term imposition once more in his effort to illustrate this final point. He writes, “A final illustration of critical importance of the question of imposition in the rearing of the young in our democracy is clearly revealed in our treatment of the Negro down through the generations.”⁹¹⁸ Using the words of another author, Counts expresses how incongruous the treatment of the negro is with the ideals set down in the founding of the country. He seeks for that problem to be addressed in the shortest possible amount of time and concludes that “to achieve that goal the teacher cannot be neutral and the essence of the traditional pattern of imposition in our culture must be reversed.”⁹¹⁹

“International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education” (1971)

The only means found for reviewing this piece was the manuscript in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. Its original publication, according to the bibliography provided by Dennis and Eaton in *Viewpoints* in September of 1971.

Table 30. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“It is as much an integral part of a society with its particular culture as an economic, political, or social system, unless it is imposed by force from without or is the result of cultural lag.”	1

Counts starts this piece like he has many others. He states, “Education is never a purely autonomous process, independent of time and place and conducted according to its own laws. It is as much an integral part of a society with its particular culture as an economic, political, or

⁹¹⁸ Ibid.

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., 189.

social system, unless it is imposed by force from without or is the result of cultural lag.”⁹²⁰

Counts continues in this introduction stating, that “the very way in which education is conceived, whether its purpose is to free or enslave the mind, is an expression of the society and culture which it serves” and that this is where the differences in educational philosophy can be found.⁹²¹ Given the purpose of this piece is to discuss the interplay of cultures and the growing need for a collective effort to tame the powers of science and technology, Counts argues that while “educational programs in the world today, including our own, should embrace the conception of a common humanity, no such program as a whole should be regarded as an article of export either with or without the support of dollars or machine guns.”⁹²²

“What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)

This text is an unpublished manuscript found in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. The premise of this brief piece seems to be to provide an argument regarding what the values in American society are and to suggest what they should be.

Table 31. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“We cannot evade our obligation here by saying, as some educators have in my generation, that we must not impose our values on the young, that we should permit them to grow up and choose their own values.”	2

⁹²⁰ George S. Counts, “International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 7, 1.

⁹²¹ Counts, “International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education,” 1.

⁹²² Ibid.

In this piece, Counts does not use the term indoctrination, but he does use the term imposition. He opens the piece in consideration of the title question and stating that it is hard to determine a simple answer to this question because of the pluralistic nature of American society and the way that different groups aims mix together in the country. He does, however, believe that there is a history “of social and moral values which can be traced back to the founding of the Republic and on through the centuries of the English liberal tradition to the Magna Carta and beyond.”⁹²³

Counts turns from this discussion to note that while there is a heritage of social and moral values, the practice “falls far short of the ideal.”⁹²⁴ Quoting another researcher, Counts considers the argument that the values of the world need to be rearranged and morality should be the first value while money is placed last. Counts considers this need to rearrange the important values of American society as “the most critical and urgent problem in American education.”⁹²⁵ Counts considers, “What are and what should be the basic values which should permeate the curriculum of our schools from the kindergarten through the university.”⁹²⁶ He follows by claiming, “we cannot evade our obligation here by saying, as some educators have in my generation, that we must not impose our values on the young, that we should permit them to grow up and choose their own values.”⁹²⁷ He calls this notion romantic and instead argues that “the molding [sic] process goes on from the moment a child is born. Otherwise, he would not become a human being.”⁹²⁸ He concludes then, given this belief, that education in the United States must be

⁹²³ George S. Counts, “What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 4, folder 8, 1.

⁹²⁴ Counts, “What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?” 1.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

shaped according to the creeds set out in the founding. He counts those as the enduring values in the society.

“Education and the Great Transition” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)

This text is an unpublished manuscript in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. The premise of this piece is that there are significant changes in the society brought about by science and the industrial age and there is a serious need to address them squarely through education.

Table 32. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Great Transition”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“The time has come for us to realize that education is always an expression of a particular society and culture at a particular time in history, unless it is imposed by force from without.”	4

Counts does not use the term indoctrination in this text, but he does use the term imposition. The use of the term imposition comes in a similar quote seen in other texts. Counts spends the first part of this text presenting briefly his conception of education and discussing the differences in society that education has not kept up with. In his final paragraph of this piece Counts states, “the time has come for us to realize that education is always an expression of a particular society and culture at a particular time in history, unless it is imposed by force from without.”⁹²⁹ He continues noting that the planet is going through an age of revolution. He follows asserting that teachers should be aware of this change, and it should be included in their training. Counts states, “in the years ahead the entire program or process for the rearing of the younger

⁹²⁹ George S. Counts, “Education and the Great Transition,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 6, 4.

generation must be and will be profoundly changed.”⁹³⁰ As a result, the teacher will play a vital role in educational policy and must be trained as more than just a technician.

“Education and the Fate of the Republic” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)

This text is also an unpublished manuscript in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. The premise of this piece is a discussion of the challenge of Soviet educational reforms to America. Counts concludes this piece saying, “the republic is in danger, not perhaps for today, but certainly for tomorrow.”⁹³¹

Table 33. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “Education and the Fate of the Republic”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“Since education is always a most intimate expression of the life and the institutions of a given society, unless it is imposed by armed force from without, comparison of different systems is extremely difficult and hazardous.”	7

Counts does not use indoctrination in this piece, but the use of the term imposition comes up once and it is used in a statement seen in a similar format to other pieces. This particular use of the term imposition comes in the third section of this piece which discusses the question of whether the Soviet education system is better than the American education system. Responding to this question is particularly dangerous and difficult Counts notes because “education is always a most intimate expression of the life and institutions of a given society, unless it is imposed by armed force from without.”⁹³² Counts then turns to a discussion of Montesquieu and notes his

⁹³⁰ Counts, “Education and the Great Transition,” 4.

⁹³¹ George S. Counts, “Education and the Fate of the Republic,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 6, 11.

⁹³² Counts, “Education and the Fate of the Republic,” 7.

belief that the laws of education should be guided by the principles of the government. As a result of this close tie of education to government, Counts concludes that “a program of education entirely suited to one society might destroy another.”⁹³³

“The Challenge of These Times to the University” (date unknown, unpublished manuscript)

The final piece in this review is also an unpublished manuscript found in the George S. Counts Archive at Southern Illinois University. Counts notes at the outset of the paper that the central premise of this piece relates to a quote by Konrad Lorenz, “Man appears to be the missing link between anthropoid apes and human beings.”⁹³⁴ Counts states that “if man is to survive on the earth, we must become human beings.”⁹³⁵

Table 34. Direct quotations — Use of Indoctrination and Imposition in “The Challenge of these Times to the University”

Quotation	Page #
Indoctrination Quotes	
Imposition Quotes	
“It is as much an integral part of a particular society and culture as an economic, political, or social system, unless it is imposed by force or prestige from without or is the result of cultural lag.”	1

Counts does not use indoctrination in this piece, but he does use the term imposition. Counts starts at the outset noting that there are still elements of barbarism and savagery in man and that “if this condition is to be changed, formal education from the kindergarten to the university must assume an important role.”⁹³⁶ It is here that Counts uses his oft-stated opinion that education is not an autonomous process. He also notes that education “can serve any purpose

⁹³³ Ibid.

⁹³⁴ George S. Counts, “The Challenge of These Times to the University,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 5, 1.

⁹³⁵ Counts, “The Challenge of These Times to the University,” 1.

⁹³⁶ Ibid.

and even bring catastrophe to mankind.”⁹³⁷ Counts then states that education “is as much an integral part of a particular society and culture as an economic, political, or social system, unless it is imposed by force or prestige from without or a result of cultural lag.”⁹³⁸ Counts follows this statement by noting that the issue of lag is one seen throughout the world. From here, he turns his focus to the role of the university in addressing the issue.

⁹³⁷ Ibid.

⁹³⁸ Ibid.

5 ANALYSIS OF COUNTS' VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF INDOCTRINATION IN EDUCATION

The central premise of this dissertation has been that there is a contradiction in Counts' challenge to progressive education. Debatably antithetical to a basic view of progressive education, Counts argued that progressivism could become more progressive if it was less frightened and more willing to consider the use of indoctrination in education. The meaning of the term indoctrination is central to determining if there is a contradiction in Counts' argument. Without understanding the term, it is hard to discuss the relationship that indoctrination has to the educative process or to even consider whether the use of indoctrination could lead to achieving the goals of progressivism. Counts acknowledges this key issue in his article "Education Thru Indoctrination." He states plainly that, "much of the confusion regarding this question undoubtedly arises out of a failure to define terms."⁹³⁹ Although he clearly understood a key issue in this discussion, a review of the whole of Counts' works on American education and each use of the term indoctrination in context reveals that he never provides his definition of indoctrination. Sifting through what Counts does say is the only means of eliciting the best possible definition of the term indoctrination from a Countsian perspective.

The context of Counts' understanding was provided in the previous chapter. This chapter presents an analysis of that context to elicit the meaning of indoctrination to Counts. This analysis establishes Counts' view of the relationship of indoctrination to education. After presenting Counts' views and establishing a Countsian definition of indoctrination, I provide two key arguments Counts made to address why indoctrination, of the type he promotes, should not be feared. This analysis along with a definition of indoctrination from a Countsian perspective demonstrates that there is no contradiction in Counts' challenge to progressive education.

⁹³⁹ Counts, "Education Thru Indoctrination," 193.

It is important to address Counts' use of the term imposition in the process of developing his definition of indoctrination. The evidence gathered from Counts' writings and presented in the previous chapter shows that the term imposition was used more often in his writings than the term indoctrination. Counts acknowledges his preference for the term imposition in his text, "Education Thru Indoctrination." In a footnote in that text he states, "It is quite possible that indoctrination is too strong and uncompromising a word to apply to the kind of influence which I have in mind. Perhaps imposition is better; but even this term should be made to carry its milder connotations."⁹⁴⁰ Additionally, unlike indoctrination, Counts provides a definition of imposition in one of his texts. In the article, "Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?" Counts states that he "was not using the term [imposition] in a pejorative sense but in its original meaning derived from the Latin verb, *imponere*, 'to place on.'"⁹⁴¹

While imposition plays a prominent role in Counts' writing it should not be considered over the term indoctrination. Throughout his writing Counts continues to use the term indoctrination. Several times throughout his writings, Counts uses the term indoctrination in the title to a section or as the stated aim of his writing and then proceeds to use the term imposition more often throughout that piece. For example, in "Education Thru Indoctrination," Counts uses the term indoctrination in the title and in the stated purpose for the piece which is to undertake "the defense of the theory of indoctrination." While indoctrination is given a position of prominence it does not get the same representation in the piece. Counts uses the term indoctrination seven times in the text and uses the term imposition seventeen times.⁹⁴² Over thirty years later, Counts continues to give the term imposition prominence in his text, "Should

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁴¹ Counts, "Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?" 186.

⁹⁴² Counts, "Education Thru Indoctrination."

the Teacher Always be Neutral?” The stated purpose of that text is “to write a few words relative to the subject of indoctrination and imposition in the educative process.”⁹⁴³ In that text he uses the term indoctrination three times while he uses the term imposition fifteen times. Throughout his writings, Counts’ stated purpose of his work is never solely an analysis of imposition in education. Imposition should be understood as a synonym for indoctrination in Counts’ writing, rather than a separate concept.

The terms imposition and indoctrination are linked in Counts’ thinking. Counts’ continued use of the term indoctrination throughout his writing and the position he gives it helps to show that he meant to discuss influence in education with the force and weight that the term indoctrination brings with it. Counts subsequent use of imposition when explaining the force of influence in education helps to give a wholeness to his conception of indoctrination. To discuss one concept without the other is to miss the whole of Counts’ understanding. As a result, in the effort to define Counts’ conception of indoctrination, his use of the term imposition must be considered and is included in this analysis.

At the beginning of this dissertation, I established two definitions for indoctrination, one derived from the linguistic roots of the term and the other formulated in more recent history. I identify each of these by the labels “educative” and “authoritative.” Indoctrination of the authoritative nature is defined as “the process of teaching a person or group to accept a set of beliefs uncritically.”⁹⁴⁴ Indoctrination of the educative nature is defined as “teach a doctrine, belief, or principle to.”⁹⁴⁵ Counts’ own uses of the term indoctrination show that he was aware of

⁹⁴³ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” 186.

⁹⁴⁴ “indoctrination,” Lexico.com, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indoctrination>, accessed January 2022.

⁹⁴⁵ Barnhart, *Dictionary of Etymology*, 522.

these two conceptions of indoctrination, yet he does not definitively come down on one side or the other.

If these two definitions serve as opposite ends of an indoctrination spectrum, as I intend to use them here, then Counts' conception of the term indoctrination is unique and sits between these two. I intend to use these two definitions in this way because they are representative of what Counts viewed as two processes that the school was responsible for in modern society: molding and enlightenment. He determined these to be logically contradictory from one another, setting them at opposite ends of a spectrum.⁹⁴⁶ Both of the definitions that I am using for indoctrination align with these two logically contradictory processes. The authoritative definition is focused on "conditioning," on molding the individual to accept a key set of beliefs and to do so without criticality, while the educative definition is focused on the teaching of information with no context or limitation given, i.e., learning for learning's sake, the pursuit of knowledge, which is the essential aim of enlightenment. In the next sections, I will investigate what Counts argued was the indoctrination he supported and what was not. By viewing his argument in relation to the two sides of indoctrination, Counts' conception is revealed.

Indoctrination is Not

Within Counts' writing he addresses what indoctrination is not to mean in three ways, by addressing the general feelings towards indoctrination by the American public, by addressing the definitions of indoctrination provided by educational researchers, and by stating clearly what indoctrination is not to mean in specific contexts or in stating what type of indoctrination is to be avoided. In each of the following instances, Counts presents the views of others related to the term indoctrination and its role in public education and establishes that he is not in support of the

⁹⁴⁶ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 303.

view. Instead, he offers his alternative understanding. Without a direct definition, these examples from Counts' writings help to articulate the bounds that Counts sets for indoctrination.

Helping to define what indoctrination was not, Counts reflected on the general fears about indoctrination and the role of the school as an institution of the government. Counts understood the general fears that Americans had towards the concept of indoctrination. He understood that the people generally felt that education in the hands of a central government meant that there was the likelihood that a minority could use the education system to “indoctrinate the coming generation with a social philosophy inimical to the common good” or with “some authoritarian philosophy.”⁹⁴⁷ Counts believes that this fear of the government and “the concern that education is too powerful an instrument to place in the hands of any single authority” is what makes American education unique and what is valuable about the American education system.⁹⁴⁸ Although Counts acknowledges that this fear is a real one, one that is based in the experience of the Founding Fathers and one that Americans witnessed with the rise of totalitarian states in the 1900s, he argues that it is not something Americans should fret over because by design education is a state responsibility and not a federal responsibility in the United States. The weakness of the federal government in education in the United States is essential to Counts because it allows for experimentation amongst the states, promotes continued advances in the exploration of educational theory, and keeps the system from becoming too rigid or stale.⁹⁴⁹ For Counts, indoctrination is not driven by a central authority dictating education for the whole country.

Additionally, Counts acknowledges the general fear “that the school may impose a single

⁹⁴⁷ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 44. Counts, “The Spirit of American Education,” 3.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁹ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 44-5.

point of view upon all children and mold them all according to a single pattern.”⁹⁵⁰ Similar to his feelings about a central government authority in the United States, Counts sees this fear as impossible in the United States because life is far too complex, and the school is not the strongest educational agency in the country.⁹⁵¹ Counts states that “if the school endeavored vigorously and consistently to win its pupils to the support of a particular social reform... it could act only as a mild counterpoise to the most powerful forces of society. The chances are, however, that the school will work in more or less harmony with these forces and thus serve to fasten upon the coming generation an outworn philosophy of life and society.”⁹⁵² For Counts, indoctrination is not used for the creation of one single individual through the school; the school in America neither has the ability to do this, nor is there enough of a will to go against the flow of cultural trends. Counts argues instead that the “major concern consequently should be, not to keep the school from influencing the child in a positive direction, but rather to make certain that every Progressive school will use whatever power it may possess in opposing and checking the forces of social conservatism and reaction.”⁹⁵³ Thus the school is offering some direction to the child, but not shaping them wholly and completely.

A main concern of Counts’ work is his effort to shift the focus of American educators. His reflections on the views of other educators also help to show what he perceived was not indoctrination and how he perceived the concept. One of the ways he did this was by looking at the arguments of two educational camps. His arguments related to these two groups is best seen in his book, *American Road to Culture*. In that text, Counts’ addresses why American educators oppose indoctrination in education.

⁹⁵⁰ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 197.

⁹⁵¹ Counts, *Dare the School*, 24.

⁹⁵² Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 197.

⁹⁵³ Counts, *Dare the School*, 24.

The first camp Counts critiques are the child-centered educators. Counts addresses this first camp by considering the definition that he sees American educators applying generally to indoctrination. He states, "They begin by defining indoctrination as the authoritative teaching of any attitude or belief as fixed, final, and unchanging."⁹⁵⁴ Counts pushes back on this definition of indoctrination not by denouncing it but rather by questioning, "why imposition of this character, regardless of the quality of the pattern selected, is undesirable."⁹⁵⁵ Counts' specific question here relates to fear of the school as the means for transmitting such indoctrination. He argues that "it would seem that any imposition which society might make on the child through the school is a small matter in comparison with the imposition of which the parents are guilty in bringing the child into the world at a particular point in time and place and endowed with a particular set of in-born qualities."⁹⁵⁶ Implicit in the definition of these American educators is the fear of adult influence on the child.⁹⁵⁷ Counts argues that their solution to this perceived problem, promoting the idea of child-centered learning and teacher neutrality, is short sighted because removing the direct adult influence from the child's learning does not stop adult influence from happening, it merely changes what the child learns about his or her relation to others. Counts argues that this teaches a form of social anarchy and in creating the environment which promotes child-centered learning and teacher neutrality, these American educators "are imposing their adult wills upon [the child] just as surely as though they taught him a particular doctrine about the universe."⁹⁵⁸

Although Counts questions why such a definition of indoctrination is problematic, looking at other pieces of his writing helps to reveal that he agrees in principle with the

⁹⁵⁴ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 186.

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁷ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 31.

⁹⁵⁸ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 187.

avoidance of teaching anything as fixed and final and that interest, especially the interest of the child is essential to effective teaching and learning. In his texts, *The Prospects of American Democracy* and *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, Counts states explicitly that, while promoting the teaching of concepts like fascism and totalitarianism, “in no case should an effort be made to enforce a narrow indoctrination upon the minds of the younger generation.”⁹⁵⁹

Additionally he states that “the immediate concerns of the young... should always play a large role in education;” however, he argues that “the responsibility of the school is, not to follow the interests of the young, but rather to assist in arousing and building worthy and fruitful interests.”⁹⁶⁰ Counts views his approach differently from that of the American educators he is critiquing. Where he sees their arguments lacking is in their refusal to accept that in the teaching of any concepts there is the need for “bias and orientation.”⁹⁶¹ This bias and orientation is inescapable according to Counts, and even though he believes that education “involves a large measure of imposition” that does not also mean that “it requires a severe regimentation of the mind, a rigorous teaching of a body of doctrine as fixed and final.”⁹⁶² For Counts, “the liberation of boys and girls from the reign of adult tyranny and ignorance is one of the marks of a high civilization,” but if the goal is “respect for the personality of the child,” then this “is expressed most fully in an educational program designed to develop a mature personality deserving of respect.”⁹⁶³

In *American Road to Culture*, Counts also addresses the other camp of American educational theorists who oppose indoctrination in education, defined as the teaching of anything

⁹⁵⁹ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 335. Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 28.

⁹⁶⁰ Counts, *Education and American Civilization.*, 31-2.

⁹⁶¹ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 335. Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 28.

⁹⁶² Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 537.

⁹⁶³ Counts, *Education and American Civilization.*, 32.

as fixed and final. This group, unlike the first was not concerned about indoctrination in order to protect the child from the influences of adults, but instead they disagreed with indoctrination because they believed that to indoctrinate a child in a dynamic society driven by innovation through industrialization and science would be “to unfit him for life in the world as it is.”⁹⁶⁴ As a result, the individual would be better suited to training and teaching that kept him at pace with the newest innovations and flexible to change at a moment’s notice.⁹⁶⁵ Counts, finds more in common with this group and perceives that their views on indoctrination are on “firmer ground.”⁹⁶⁶ He acknowledges that the idea of rigid teaching might have been beneficial in the past, but it would be “extremely dangerous in the highly dynamic social order of today.”⁹⁶⁷ Additionally, although he cautions that this concern over adult influence is being taken to “absurd extremes,” he argues that industrialization “is placing a premium increasingly on the elastic mind.”⁹⁶⁸

The problem that Counts sees with the argument against indoctrination presented by the second group of American educators is that by promoting “individual success” and having an open mind that can change with the times the people are “in danger of becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism.”⁹⁶⁹ Rather than being guided by a foundation of society rooted in a moral or social good, people are driven to “keep up with the Joneses” even if the choice is ultimately detrimental to their overall health or well-being or to the cohesive fabric of the collective society. To Counts, this focus on material aims gives a “reason

⁹⁶⁴ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 187.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁷ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 537.

⁹⁶⁸ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 188.

⁹⁶⁹ Ibid.

for believing that civilization in the United States is losing that moral quality or passion which gives the central meaning to life.”⁹⁷⁰ Counts argues that,

Under this conception of life and society, education can only bow down before the gods of chance and reflect the drift of the social order. This conception is essentially anarchic in character, exalts the irrational above the rational forces of society, makes security an individual rather than a social goal, drives every one of us into an insane competition with his neighbors, and assumes that man is incapable of controlling in the common interest the creatures of his brain.⁹⁷¹

Counts suggests that what is missing is a social theory which gives the individual a greater reason for innovating or adapting to the innovations created by science and industrialization than the individual fear of missing out. There must be some cultural ideal or values that give meaning to life, thus “a society which is dominated less by the thought of individual advancement and more by certain far-reaching purposes and plans for social construction might find a firmer and more steadfast mentality desirable.”⁹⁷²

In defending his position and arguing that he is not seeking a teaching of a fixed and final body of doctrine but cannot also be aimless or driven by individual success, Counts states that education should promote a full and thorough understanding of society and also permit and encourage students “to question all things” while education should also being “dominated by certain great social ideals.”⁹⁷³ These social ideals would be expressed in “an education that is carefully designed, both as method and as content, for the present day and generation;” “an education that recognizes the impossibility of moving in all directions at once...”⁹⁷⁴

Counts recognizes that “these grand choices will be made for children by adults,” that “partiality is the very essence of education, as it is of life itself,” and “each choice involves

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid., 189.

⁹⁷¹ Counts, *Dare the School*, 26-7.

⁹⁷² Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 188.

⁹⁷³ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 537.

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid., 535.

rejection as well as selection.”⁹⁷⁵ A theory of governance is expressed as a consequence of the choices made and “every school must make some decision concerning the motives to which to appeal in stimulating and guiding the process of learning.”⁹⁷⁶ Since the school is dealing with living growing beings it cannot remain neutral and must have growth and direction of its own.⁹⁷⁷ Counts concludes his argument by noting that “the major object of education since the beginning of time has been the induction of the immature individual into the life of the group.”⁹⁷⁸ This education, Counts argues, includes “not only the development of intellectual powers, but also the formation of character, the acquisition of habits, attitudes, and dispositions suited to a given set of living conditions, a given level of culture, and a given body of ideals and aspirations.”⁹⁷⁹ As a result, just having the aim in education of developing a character that is flexible and able to change with the times is insufficient and unsustainable. This aim would simply serve to mold the individual to the whim of industrialization.

Counts’ views on the concepts of molding and enlightenment also help to reveal what he determined was not indoctrination. Counts addresses the problem of establishing molding, whether it is for the purposes of keeping up with industrialization or for totalitarian control, as the only aim of education in his text *The Prospects of American Democracy*. For Counts, this definition of indoctrination is too “narrow.” It exhibits a particular “bias and orientation,” but the wrong type of bias and orientation necessary in the United States since it fails to acknowledge the essential link between education and politics.⁹⁸⁰ Counts argues that “since education must always be one of the major concerns of any advanced culture, it should be recognized as one of

⁹⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid., 536.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁹ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 536.

⁹⁸⁰ Counts, *Prospects of American Democracy*, 335; Counts, *Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 28.

the central problems of politics.”⁹⁸¹ In *The Prospects of American Democracy*, Counts argues that,

“In undertaking the formulation of a conception of the relation between the school and politics it is helpful to note that, besides the transmission of technical knowledge and powers indispensable in any modern society, every educational program embraces the apparently logically contradictory processes of molding and enlightenment. A program that emphasizes the former to the entire exclusion of the latter, an actual impossibility in fact, would result, if successful, in an indoctrination of the most extreme type, in the reduction of learning to a mere matter of conditioning, in the absolute fixing of loyalties to social ideas and institutions, and in the development of minds impervious to new conceptions, dominated by servility to authority, and lacking elasticity, resilience and creativeness. Such a view of education is approached historically in the practices of various religious denominations and today in the totalitarian states of Europe and the Orient. On the other hand, a program that endeavors to repudiate the molding process completely, and actual impossibility also, would result, if successful, in the cultural disinheriting of its subjects and in the rearing of a generation without roots in any society or epoch — futile, amorphous, purposeless, lacking in common loyalties, and wholly unfitted for life in this world. Indeed, enlightenment itself can have no substance or meaning apart from personalities formed and created by the molding influences of a given culture and system of social arrangements.”⁹⁸²

For Counts, indoctrination in the narrow sense is not just possible on the molding/authoritative side, but a bias and orientation can also happen if education is focused only on individual enlightenment. Counts argues that organized education designed “to reinforce the democratic method in society and serve the purpose of achieving social change with a minimum of disorder... must strike a balance between the processes of molding and enlightenment.”⁹⁸³ Thus rather than focusing on either democratic values or the necessities of industrial civilization, Counts argues that education should provide an indoctrination focused on democratic values and the dynamics of industrialization, on both molding and enlightenment. A molding *and* enlightenment focused “in terms of the achievement of the composite goal of

⁹⁸¹ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 182.

⁹⁸² Counts, *Prospects of American Democracy*, 302-3.

⁹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 303.

economic efficiency, material security, personal freedom, cultural diversity, popular intelligence, majority rule, and peaceful change.”⁹⁸⁴

Besides setting up arguments against the beliefs of others regarding the use of indoctrination in education, Counts also makes several direct statements throughout his writings which show his views on indoctrination and provide clear evidence of what he was not advocating. A key statement supporting this view comes from his text, “Education Thru Indoctrination.” In that article, Counts states definitively that “if indoctrination is made to imply the establishment of a state church, the adoption of a set of sacred dogmas, and the teaching of these dogmas as fixed and final, then few of us while in our right minds would care to subscribe to the idea.”⁹⁸⁵ He states that he will “make no attempt to defend any such conception of education.”⁹⁸⁶ Instead Counts argues that “an education that does not strive to promote the fullest and most thorough understanding of the world is not worthy of the name. Also, there must be no deliberate distortion or suppression of facts to support any theory or point of view.”⁹⁸⁷

In his “Presidential Address” to The American Federation of Teachers in 1941, Counts gave his view of what needed to be done to address the external pressures affecting the American school stating, “we must resist all efforts, from whatever source, to impose a narrow orthodoxy upon the schools.”⁹⁸⁸ Counts argues that The American Federation of Teachers’ first responsibility is the defense of public education and to fight for the protection of school budgets and the democratization of education. He states,

We must continue the fight to place on boards of education representatives of organized labor and of the working people generally; to bring equality of opportunity to all of our children regardless of race, nationality, religion or family circumstances; to lift the-status

⁹⁸⁴ Counts, *Prospects of American Democracy*, 335-6; Counts, *Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 28.

⁹⁸⁵ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 193.

⁹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 193-4.

⁹⁸⁷ Counts, *Dare the School*, 12.

⁹⁸⁸ Counts, “Presidential Address,” 7.

of the profession, to improve and make secure working conditions, to encourage teachers to participate actively in the life of both school and community, to collaborate as equals in the framing of both educational and social policy. Also we must give vigorous and sustained attention to the problem of developing an educational program that is truly and positively democratic, an educational program designed to give to the young the knowledge, the loyalties, the discipline of free men.⁹⁸⁹

For Counts, the promotion of restrictions on public schools for selfish or anti-democratic purposes was antithetical to American society and must be vigorously defended against.⁹⁹⁰

Counts view on indoctrination can also be seen in his response to a hypothetical situation involving the teaching of political concepts within schools and the way that the teacher should engage students. In his response in the text “Decision-Making and American Values,” Counts addresses the perception that in teaching about politics “the teacher will tend to influence the students towards one party or another, according to his own political preferences.”⁹⁹¹ Counts states that “the solution would seem to be found in the resolute avoidance of partisan indoctrination and the encouragement of the freest possible discussion of all issues by the students.”⁹⁹² The ideal curriculum used in the classroom would direct the teacher to encourage free discussion. Additionally, Counts discusses the “conduct of the democratic political process” and notes that a principal and superintendent faced with addressing this concern might suggest that the goal of a curriculum that teaches political action would be to “make a genuine contribution toward raising both the intellectual and the ethical level of political discussion” and to practice participation in politics “under the guidance of qualified teachers who are more

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid., 7-8.

⁹⁹⁰ Counts was addressing concerns like the efforts of then Governor Talmadge of Georgia who, beginning in the summer of 1941, enacted a purge of higher education institutions in Georgia by firing “professors, administrators, and members of the Board of Regents.” He started with an attack on the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Georgia for perceived communist sympathies and the promotion of racial integration. See James F. Cook, “Cocking Affair,” *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, 12 Aug. 2002, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/government-politics/cocking-affair/>.

⁹⁹¹ Counts, *Decision Making and American Values*, 43.

⁹⁹² Ibid.

concerned with the purification and elevation of the process than with the triumph of doctrine or the victory of party.”⁹⁹³ Thus for Counts, the teaching of politics should be encouraged, but the teaching of the process without discussion or the teaching of only one viewpoint should be avoided.

In his text “The Redirection of Public Education,” Counts considers whether a democracy is capable of doing something similar to the effect of the Central Committee of the Communist party in Russia when it reconstructed the entire system of schools in the country. Counts clarifies his intent in this question stating, “is a democracy capable of subjecting its own system to a comparable re-examination and reconstruction in terms of its own experiences, conditions, resources, institutions, values, and goals?”⁹⁹⁴ This questioning and its inspiration from Russian Communism appears concerning, but Counts responds that “we certainly don’t want an all-powerful Central Committee to impose its will upon us. The time has come, however, for an educational awakening surpassing in depth, sweep, and grandeur the awakening which gave birth to our glorious system of public schools.”⁹⁹⁵ Counts does call for a Federal Council to be created and to be “composed of our most distinguished citizens, representative of our diverse interest groups and equal in moral and intellectual stature to the justices of the supreme court.”⁹⁹⁶ Counts restricts the council in ways that promote his aim and distinguish it from the educational committee’s powers under Russian Communism. The purpose that Counts gives to this federal council is to study and “make recommendations, “without administrative authority, for the bringing of our total education program abreast of the conditions and challenges of the second

⁹⁹³ Ibid., 44.

⁹⁹⁴ Counts, “The Redirection of Public Education,” 24-5.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁹⁶ Ibid.

half of the twentieth century.”⁹⁹⁷ Thus, for Counts, a serious evaluation of American values and the American education system was necessary and a central committee could accomplish this task, but it does not need to mean that that committee is endowed with the power to force solutions on the society.

Indoctrination Is

Counts’ use of the term indoctrination also reveals examples of how he believed indoctrination should be understood. These examples are affirmative statements regarding indoctrination that help to clarify what Counts believed indoctrination is. These examples also illustrate Counts’ beliefs articulated in the previous section but add further context in developing a framework by which to derive a Countsian definition of indoctrination.

Counts’ responses to the more restrictive definitions of indoctrination, ones driven towards molding, narrow, or authoritative approaches to indoctrination show that he was not a proponent of those views; however, Counts affirmed that he did not have some utopian view of indoctrination. He acknowledged that his views on indoctrination still contained an element of the authoritative viewpoint. After arguing against the concept of neutrality in teaching in “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” Counts states,

You will say, no doubt, that I am flirting with the idea of indoctrination. And my answer is in the affirmative. Or, at least, I should say that the word does not frighten me. We may all rest assured that the younger generation in any society will be thoroughly imposed upon by its elders and by the culture into which it is born. For the school to work in a somewhat different direction with all the power at its disposal could do no great harm. At the most, unless the superiority of its outlook is unquestioned, it can serve as a counterpoise to check and challenge the power of less enlightened or more selfish purposes.⁹⁹⁸

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁸ Counts, “Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?” 11-12.

By promoting neutrality as a characteristic of an ideal teacher the teaching profession was failing in its essential duty and declining to develop the future generation who can address “the great issues that agitate society.”⁹⁹⁹ American educators focused on increasing teacher neutrality were instead “giving support to the most powerful forces engaged in the contest.”¹⁰⁰⁰

While Counts acknowledged that his promotion of indoctrination in education included an element of authoritative control and adult influence on the child, he did not take that to its extreme and tried to limit the bounds of adult influence. Counts sought to avoid rigid or narrow indoctrination, but he also acknowledged the inevitability of influence in education and sought to direct it. Counts’ thesis from his text “Education Thru Indoctrination” helps to articulate this view. He states, while he is not willing to defend authoritative indoctrination he is

Prepared to defend the thesis that all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that it is consequently eminently desirable, and that frank acceptance of this fact by the educator is a major professional obligation. ...[T]hat a failure to do this represents a repudiation of a most crucial educational responsibility, the clothing of one’s own prejudices in the garb of universal truth, and the introduction into the theory of education of an element of obscurantism.¹⁰⁰¹

Counts argues instead that educators should acknowledge that man is not born free, but he “is born helpless. He achieves freedom, as a race and as an individual, thru the medium of culture.”¹⁰⁰² As a result of his conception of man, Counts believes that a discussion of indoctrination and imposition must start fundamentally with the “fact that the individual is born into a particular culture.”¹⁰⁰³ Being born into a culture is the price of birth, but “by being

⁹⁹⁹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰⁰³ Ibid.

nurtured on a body of culture, however backward and limited it may be comparatively, the individual is at once imposed upon and liberated.”¹⁰⁰⁴

Counts understands that this view drives at the very core of the fears of educators seeking to avoid indoctrination and acknowledges that they “have opposed the inculcation of values on the ground that children and youth should be entirely free to create and develop their own values without any imposition on the part of their elders.”¹⁰⁰⁵ Counts argues that influence in education is necessary and unavoidable, and “in the absence of careful guidance and instruction children would be no more successful in creating the great values of our civilization than in creating the higher mathematics or in penetrating the secrets of the atom.”¹⁰⁰⁶ Teaching just the facts without any directionality or understanding or leaving the child to find meaning on their own is to promote social anarchy and to unfit the future generation for life as it is. He concludes that American Educators that are, “afraid of social forces, fearful of indoctrination, and trustful of experience, [sic] refuse to give the positive guidance which is the only alternative to superficiality and drift.”¹⁰⁰⁷

What Counts seeks in this “positive guidance” is the promotion of a tradition built on and related to the cultural foundations of the society. He argues, “my thesis is that such imposition, provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times, releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and makes possible really great achievement.”¹⁰⁰⁸ Counts states, “to my mind, a movement honestly styling itself progressive should engage in the positive task of

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Counts, “The Moral Foundations,” 188.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 193.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 195; Counts *Dare the School*, 14-15.

creating a new tradition in American life – a tradition possessing power, appeal, and direction.”¹⁰⁰⁹

In his “Theses on Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership” Counts presents his ideas around tradition.¹⁰¹⁰ Counts states,

...Culture is an expression and the repository of the hopes, the aspirations, the values, the soul of a people. To this aspect of culture, which is integrative, directive, dynamic, and qualitative, the term tradition is sometimes applied. Thus we speak of the Christian, the Mohammedan, the democratic, the communistic, the artistic, or the scientific tradition. It is here that the most severe educational controversies arise. It is here that the question of imposition and indoctrination assumes its most acute form.¹⁰¹¹

Counts argues that “tradition gives meaning not only to the life of a people but also to the life of the individual and to the educative process.”¹⁰¹² As a result, a human is not more human or free by releasing them from tradition, “but rather by inducting him to identify himself most completely with a vital and growing tradition and to find fulfillment of his life in that tradition.”¹⁰¹³ Counts perceives that it is only through being influenced and learning such a tradition that a persons’ life is given meaning and made effective.¹⁰¹⁴

A final quote from Counts regarding his view of what indoctrination is comes in his text, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” In that text, Counts argues, “the need for developing the independent and critical mind in the members of the younger generation is implicit in much that I have written and is clearly a form of imposition.”¹⁰¹⁵ Counts states that criticality just for the sake of being critical is not valuable. Along with the development of a critical mind, “a

¹⁰⁰⁹ Counts, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” 10.

¹⁰¹⁰ George Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership.”

¹⁰¹¹ Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” 3.

¹⁰¹² Ibid.

¹⁰¹³ Ibid., 3-4.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰¹⁵ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 188.

precious resource in a free society,” should come discipline.¹⁰¹⁶ He also argues that “with every right or freedom there goes a responsibility.”¹⁰¹⁷ As a result he believes, “the critical mind should be armed with knowledge and understanding, and perhaps with a modicum of humility and wisdom.” Thus, criticality, tempered by understanding and the application of values related to the interplay of individuals engaged in a given society, is an ideal characteristic necessary for a well-developed critical person in a democratic society.

Counts’ use of indoctrination in his texts show no wholesale support for either of the established definitions for indoctrination. Counts neither ascribes to indoctrination of the authoritative nature, “the process of teaching a person or group to accept a set of beliefs uncritically” nor to indoctrination of the educative nature, to “teach a doctrine, belief, or principle to.”¹⁰¹⁸ The first definition is too narrow in scope and the second is too broad and lacks acknowledgement of the clear defining characteristics of culture which are inseparable from education. Counts’ use of indoctrination also does not completely discard both definitions but sits in between these two conceptions, establishing an integrated definition that encompasses the essential elements of each definition and yet sets anew “the traditional pattern of imposition in our culture.”¹⁰¹⁹

A Countsian Definition of Indoctrination

The root of Counts’ beliefs must begin with his definition of education, his conception of the roots of education, and the roots of a great education. Counts states,

Fundamentally and comprehensively considered education is a process of inducting the young and immature into the life and culture of the group — into its ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, into an appropriation of its material and spiritual possessions — its

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁸ “indoctrination,” Lexico.com, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indoctrination>, accessed January 2022. Barnhart, *Dictionary of Etymology*, 522.

¹⁰¹⁹ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 189.

folkways and mores, its institutions and social arrangements, its skills, knowledges, and appreciations, its arts, sciences, and philosophies.¹⁰²⁰

Education always expresses a conception of civilization. Education can never be a purely autonomous process, independent of time and place and conducted according to its own laws. It is as much an integral part of a civilization as an economic or political system. The very way in which education is conceived, whether its purpose is to free or enslave the mind, is an expression of the civilization which it serves. The great difference in educational philosophy and practice from society to society are due primarily to differences in culture and civilization.¹⁰²¹

A great education always expresses a great conception of civilization. ... it can come only from a bold and creative confronting of the nature, the values, the conditions, and the potentialities of a civilization. An education can rise no higher than the conception of civilization that pervades it, gives it substance, and determines its purpose and direction.¹⁰²²

Civilization is central to Counts' beliefs about education. Education, good or bad, cannot have any meaning outside of a civilization, and a civilization does not exist without a specific form of education which passes the essential components of the civilization from one generation to the next. It is with this context in mind that we can begin to understand the Countsian definition of indoctrination.

Given that Counts does not provide a definition of indoctrination on his own, one must be elicited from the language that he used. The argument that Counts provided related to what indoctrination is and what indoctrination is not, organized appropriately, can be used as a framework to develop a definition of Countsian indoctrination.

Table 35: A Framework for Countsian Definition of Indoctrination

Countsian Indoctrination Includes	Countsian Indoctrination Does Not Include
Positive Guidance: Dominated by certain great social ideals rooted in the society where the instruction is taking place and the instructed individual is to live	A severe regimentation of the mind or a rigorous teaching of a body of doctrine as fixed and final or unchanging

¹⁰²⁰ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 296.

¹⁰²¹ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 33-4.

¹⁰²² Counts, *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*, 75.

Bias and orientation: acknowledges a large measure of imposition and partiality in the teaching process	Narrow indoctrination: a single point of view or the molding according to a single pattern
Promotes the fullest and most thorough understanding of the world	The teaching of an outworn philosophy of life and society
Promotes the development of a firmer and more steadfast mentality	An individual achievement or individual success mentality
Promotes experimentation and the ideal in American Public Education of local control	Singular control by a government, organization or adult
Includes the development of intellectual powers and the formation of character, the acquisition of habits, attitudes, and dispositions suited to a given set of living conditions, a given level of culture, and a given body of ideals and aspirations	A focus only on molding or enlightenment and the deliberate suppression of facts to support a particular theory or point of view
Recognizes the interests and the immediate concerns of the young	An approach driven only by the individual or the child
Promotes discussion while establishing disciplines needed to make that discussion productive	The denial of discussion or discussion without discipline

Given these characteristics, Countsian indoctrination can be defined as, the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, adjusted to a particular time and place to maintain vitality, and integrated within the individual to promote the release and discipline of energies essential to give meaning to the life they live in the society and time they are born into.

Civilization is the foundation of Counts' beliefs about indoctrination in education. Education is not universal, but instead is only understood through the lens of the civilization where the education is taking place, and a civilization does not exist without a specific form of education to maintain it. As a result, education requires the selection of information for this purpose. This selection of what is taught is the base act of indoctrination. Given this conclusion, indoctrination and education are inseparable. Education, especially education of the form most suited to the specific culture and society and most likely to further the growth and perpetuation

of that civilization requires the selection and the teaching of a specific set of culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions. A society based on the concepts of democratic ideals and governance, could not avoid indoctrination any more than an authoritarian government could.

What sets the selection of information under Countsian indoctrination apart from the selection of information for authoritarian or educational indoctrination is the outcome of the individual. For Counts, authoritarian indoctrination would fasten the individual into a mold and restrict the growth of the individual to limits that only serve the need of the government to maintain power and control. On the other side, educational indoctrination would affix the person to nothing. Teaching for teaching's sake alone would result "in the cultural disinheriting of its subjects and in the rearing of a generation without roots in any society or epoch — futile, amorphous, purposeless, lacking in common loyalties, and wholly unfitted for life in this world."¹⁰²³ As was stated earlier, Counts understood that to promote democratic ideals and be flexible enough to change with the times, education "must strike a balance between the processes of molding and enlightenment."¹⁰²⁴ Selection under Countsian indoctrination, is driven by the civilization that the indoctrination is intended to promote. If Countsian indoctrination was used in an authoritative society, it would, from an outside perspective, look like the fastening of restrictions on the individual, but from within the country it would serve to promote the fullest life possible within that society's ideals. Countsian indoctrination, applied to American society, begins with the selection of democratic ideals and values over all others and the cultivation of the individual who can best live out those ideals and inculcate those same ideals in the next

¹⁰²³ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 303.

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*

generation. Selection under Countsian indoctrination is intended to produce the outcome best suited to the perpetuation of a given culture.

Why there is No Reason to Fear Countsian indoctrination

One of Counts' central efforts throughout his life was to try to convince American educators to come to terms with the relationship between education and indoctrination and to see the need for a concerted effort to establish the balance between the processes of molding and enlightenment. One of the main ways that Counts attempted to persuade people was to urge them to see past their fear of authoritative indoctrination and to recognize that, "there is no escape under the aegis of rescuing the child from the ogre of indoctrination."¹⁰²⁵ He tried to show this in two ways: 1) by arguing that indoctrination is already happening; and 2) by arguing that democracy and democratic principles required explicit teaching, the indoctrination of specific, culturally relevant, knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions just as much, if not more than any other way of living currently devised by man. By calling attention to the dual issues, that indoctrination is unavoidable, and not indoctrinating in democracy is tantamount to self-destruction, Counts sought to release American educators from the fear of indoctrination and to set them to the task of civilizational maintenance and development. There is no escape from indoctrination and neutrality is not neutral. To fight against influence in education is to fight against the very nature of education and to give space and support to the ideals that threaten democracy and the ideals of political liberty, the freest system man has devised.

One of the main reasons that Counts' view of indoctrination did not have the effect that it should have had is his failure to clearly define the term indoctrination and to give people the ability to view the process in a new light. Having a clear definition of Countsian indoctrination

¹⁰²⁵ Counts, *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*, 75.

provides the means for setting aside concepts of indoctrination that are narrow and acknowledging the reality that influence is unavoidable and essential in the educative process. Holding this definition as the frame of reference for indoctrination in education allows for a reconsideration of Counts' arguments in support of indoctrination in education and to consider why it should not be feared.

Indoctrination is Already Happening: Neutrality is Impossible

Counts was writing at a time where the world was going through profound changes. He perceived that "the American people are consequently between two civilizations and are the inevitable victims of doubt and uncertainty."¹⁰²⁶ The protection of the United States from the influences of the other nations of the world were all but eroded by the pace of industrialization and the speed at which ideas and the events in other countries could affect thoughts and behaviors in the United States. As a result, the American people were not protected by geographical barriers anymore and had to address the part that influence plays in their everyday lives, from the interactions of families to the impacts of industrialization and war.

Counts tried to show how everyday families could not avoid indoctrination, the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions. In *American Road to Culture*, he notes that the American peoples' fear of indoctrination is naïve and rooted in the indoctrinated idea that Americans are "the chosen people of God, that their culture is obviously superior to all others, and that their institutions are the pure product of human reason."¹⁰²⁷ As a result of this set of beliefs,

[W]hen any segment of the American people teach to their children that their views of the universe, from the functions of the county sheriff to the destiny of man, are good, true, and right, they do not feel that they are indoctrinating the coming generation with the peculiar set of beliefs which they have inherited from their fathers. To be sure, when they

¹⁰²⁶ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 192.

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.*, 185.

behold their neighbors behaving in similar fashion, they recognize the process at once as indoctrination of the most dangerous and unjustifiable character; but when they behave thus themselves they sincerely believe that they are merely guarding their boys and girls from error.¹⁰²⁸

What Counts describes is clearly indoctrination, whether the people choose to accept it or not.

Parents teach their children specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, all things that they consciously or unconsciously believe are needed to fit their child for life in this world and to “guard their children from error.”

Another example of the basic influence of the family we are born into is the process of language acquisition. Counts states, “the child is terribly imposed upon by being compelled through the accidents of birth to learn one language rather than another, but without some language man would never become man.”¹⁰²⁹ Language is an essential component of living together as humans and “the language which is imposed on the child from the moment of his birth may well be regarded as symbolic of the culture.”¹⁰³⁰ Words in one language fail to elicit the proper meaning or to find a comparable word in another language. Counts notes the folly of fearing or denying that this is imposition when he suggests “if we do not want to impose anything on the individual, we should not allow him to learn a language until he becomes 21 years of age and then let him choose the language he prefers.”¹⁰³¹

There is no avoidance of influence, whether it is to teach a child a language or to deny language to the child, both are influential and shape the individual. There is also no logically valid reason for parents to stop applying this influence in their children’s lives. As Counts states, “we may all rest assured that the younger generation in any society will be thoroughly imposed

¹⁰²⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁹ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 194; Counts, *Dare The School*, 13.

¹⁰³⁰ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 187.

¹⁰³¹ Ibid.

upon by its elders and by the culture into which it is born.”¹⁰³² Understanding that children are imposed upon by their culture puts the influence of the school into proper context. By not acknowledging the influence of the family on the individual, the thought of the influence of the school or other adults appears more problematic. Counts wanted people to consider “that any imposition which society might make upon the child through the school is a small matter in comparison with the imposition of which the parents are guilty in bringing the child into the world at a particular point in time and place and endowed with a particular set of inborn qualities.”¹⁰³³

Counts also argued that the influences of society are unavoidable and must be recognized in order to be controlled, particularly that of industrialization. While the United States did not have the influence of the caste system like Europe, Counts argued that industrialization has allowed the growth of an “aristocracy of wealth” which has succeeded “in securing the general acceptance of its own badge of excellence and in imposing on an unresisting society the standards of a commercial civilization.”¹⁰³⁴ Counts raised concerns about this influence a number of times in his writing, noting, “Far more terrifying than any indoctrination in which the school might indulge is the prospect of our becoming completely victimized and molded by the mechanics of industrialism.”¹⁰³⁵ In *Dare the School*, Counts argues that the imposition of industrialization is “imposition with a vengeance;” “the imposition of the chaos and ugliness produced by the brutish struggle for existence and advantage.”¹⁰³⁶ He notes that the imposition of

¹⁰³² Counts, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” 11-12.

¹⁰³³ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 186.

¹⁰³⁴ Chapman and Counts, *Principles of Education*, 251.

¹⁰³⁵ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 188; Counts, *Dare the School*, 27.

¹⁰³⁶ Counts, *Dare the School*, 27.

industrialization is easy to see if one simply considers “the newspapers, attend the movies, listen to the radio, or even take the trouble to observe casually the world in which they live.”¹⁰³⁷

Counts notes that industrialization has enlarged the efforts of “various powerful and competing groups and interests,” the influence of “modern and far-flung organs of news, opinion, and political indoctrination — the press, the radio, and the cinema, and those professed artists and purveyors of propaganda — advertising public relations counsellors,” and the actions of industries who shape public interest to suit their business needs.¹⁰³⁸ Counts also notes how industrialization has forever changed war and enacted a human cost that is undeniable.¹⁰³⁹ All of these aspects of industrial society teach specific, knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions which serve their own intent and purposes and shape the individual to find meaning in the pursuit of material things or in industrialization as the solution to all problems. To ignore these influences is to give permission for their negative affects to continue.

Counts sees a solution in the use of indoctrination in the school. Indoctrination, focused affectively, would serve as a “counterpoise to the most powerful forces of society;” however, that could not be possible without the acknowledgment of American educators and educational leaders of the inescapable fact of adult influence in the educative process.¹⁰⁴⁰ Counts tried to lead American educators to see how they themselves were indoctrinated and that they were engaging in indoctrination even in their efforts to avoid it. With a twinge of irony, Counts states, “Our generation has been so thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea that indoctrination is always an evil thing that we all feel ourselves in the presence of a moral outrage when we see the word

¹⁰³⁷ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 49.

¹⁰³⁸ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 212 & 560; Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 203.

¹⁰³⁹ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 470.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 197

coupled with education.”¹⁰⁴¹ Urging American educators to critique their own hypocrisy, Counts notes, “in the same breath or in a single page an educational leader may oppose the slightest suggestion of indoctrination, advocate the teaching of democracy in schools, and demand the formulation of a highly specific list of objectives.”¹⁰⁴² Addressing educators who vigorously oppose imposition, like those who promote child-centered education, Counts argued that they “unblushingly advocate the ‘cultivation of democratic sentiments’ in children or the promotion of child growth in the direction of ‘a better and richer life’” while at the same time failing to see that the first aim is definitely a form of imposition and the second “if it does not mean the same thing, means nothing.”¹⁰⁴³ Counts concludes that

An education that assumes an agnostic posture on this issue, pursues a policy of *laissez faire*, or leaves all decisions to chance or the child is utterly unrealistic and Utopian. As a matter of fact, it is quite impossible to launch and operate a school or any other educational agency without making a thousand choices positively involving values, from the architecture of a building, to the materials in a textbook, to the personality of a teacher.¹⁰⁴⁴

Counts concludes that “in shaping the environment” to meet the needs of child-centered education child-centered educators “are imposing their adult wills upon him just as surely as though they taught him a particular doctrine about the universe.”¹⁰⁴⁵

These various reflections on the forces at play which are already influencing the child and the futility of trying to avoid this influence reveal that a measure of indoctrination, the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, in education is inevitable. For Counts, the acceptance of this fact was an essential obligation of the educational profession. If the profession could finally break with its fear over the concerns regarding adult

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid., 193.

¹⁰⁴² Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 293.

¹⁰⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Counts, *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*, 74-5. *Italics in the original*

¹⁰⁴⁵ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 187.

imposition on the child, then it could begin to grapple with what type of imposition served to yield the type of society and culture that the United States claimed itself to be. Indoctrination in education is unavoidable, thus the more relevant and essential questions are, what should we impose and who should be responsible for providing that imposition?¹⁰⁴⁶

Indoctrination is Essential for the Growth of Civilization and Democracy

Concluding that indoctrination was unavoidable led Counts to the second challenge of his work. Convincing the American people and American educators specifically that indoctrination is essential for civilizations to survive, and that democracy was not unique, and it required indoctrination just as much as any other form of government, if not more so. Beginning with the conception of the relation of civilizations and education, Counts notes that “as nothing is more certain than the eventual death of each member, the education of the young in the customs of the group — the ways of the folk — is absolutely essential to the stability and perpetuity of society.”¹⁰⁴⁷ Counts states that there are two aspect of culture that are interconnected with education and essential,

On the one hand, culture is instrumental and practical – a body of tools, inventions, practices, folkways, customs, institutions, knowledges, and ideas on which the survival and perpetuation of society is dependent. The transmission from generation to generation has always been and must always be the major responsibility of education. ... On the other hand, culture is the expression and the repository of the hopes, the aspirations, the values, the soul of the people. To this aspect of culture, which is integrative, directive, dynamic, and qualitative, the term tradition is sometimes applied. ...tradition gives meaning not only to the life of a people, but also to the life of the individual and to the educative process.¹⁰⁴⁸

As a result of these two aspects of culture which are integral to the educative process, Counts notes that “education must always be one of the major concerns of any advanced culture,

¹⁰⁴⁶ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 188; Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 197; Counts, *Dare the School*, 27.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Chapman and Counts, *Principles of Education*, 27.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” 3.

it should be recognized as one of the central problems of politics.”¹⁰⁴⁹ The consideration of the essential values of the civilization should serve a basic role in the development of the education system; however in the United States “there has been a tendency to neglect this question.”¹⁰⁵⁰ Counts notes that “traditions are born, grow to maturity, and then decay. As a consequence, traditions once vital may become rigid, formal, and sterile and paralyze the creative energies of a people.”¹⁰⁵¹ Without addressing these two aspects and continually evaluating them in light of the passage of time, civilizations inevitably reach their own point of paralysis and decay. “Every modern society, whether despotic or free, must have a far-flung system of schools and special institutions for developing the young. It must have such a system or perish.”¹⁰⁵²

Counts argues that the difficulty with education in the United States stems “not in the fact that tradition is being imposed upon the coming generation but rather in the fact that the tradition which we impose, whether in the sphere of politics, religion, morals or art, has lost its vitality.”¹⁰⁵³ More specifically, Counts perceives that the teaching of democracy has not advanced since the founding of the country, thus the traditions and the essential body of tools necessary to the survival of the culture and the society have been left to decay. We are living on outmoded conceptions of political liberty and the meaning of democratic ideals resulting in the concepts becoming rigid, formal, and failing to bring meaning and shape to new modes of living.

Counts argues that this “failure is traceable to a widespread assumption that education is a self-determining process, that it is indifferent to social values and systems, that it moves forward in accordance with its own timeless and universal laws, and that when so conceived it

¹⁰⁴⁹ Counts, *American Road to Culture.*, 182.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Counts, “The Moral Foundations,” 188.

¹⁰⁵¹ Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” 4.

¹⁰⁵² Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 44.

¹⁰⁵³ Counts, “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” 4.

inevitably and automatically serves the cause of democracy.”¹⁰⁵⁴ Additionally Counts perceives that “the confusion is due to the fact that the American people as a whole have never achieved a clear and adequate comprehension of the nature of education in relation to democracy or of the nature of democracy in relation to education.”¹⁰⁵⁵

The source of this error seems to reside in the assumption that democracy is the “natural” form of human society, that men have not had to devise and learn the peculiar ways of democracy, that men, if liberated from the arbitrary compulsions imposed by tyrants, turn instinctively to these ways, that men are born with the qualities, dispositions, and loyalties essential to the guarding and fulfillment of the democratic faith.¹⁰⁵⁶

Counts dispels the idea that education is purely democratic and that totalitarian states seek to deny their people education. The power of organized education to support totalitarian aims was proven between the World Wars by totalitarian states. Counts notes, “There is nothing more characteristic and even distinctive of the totalitarian states, of the regimes of Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini, than their great devotion to organized education.”¹⁰⁵⁷ Instead of avoiding education, totalitarian states gave vast sums of money to education and created new agencies and institutions and found that education could be used as a great agency of propaganda.¹⁰⁵⁸ Organized education is not naturally good for democracies and bad for despotisms. Education, an education of a “particular kind of nurture which is appropriate for free men” is an education which can be said to be good for democracies and bad for despotisms.¹⁰⁵⁹ Additionally, “an education which would be appropriate for one society might destroy another.”¹⁰⁶⁰ Because of the false conception about the goodness of education, “at no time in the history of American

¹⁰⁵⁴ Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy.*, 15.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 44.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 47

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁰ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral? 188.

education has a concerted effort been made to rear a generation in the discipline of free men.”¹⁰⁶¹ This would require intentionality and the selection of the specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions which would produce free men.

Counts also attacks the notion that the shaping of organized education along democratic ideas is antithetical to democracy and that the educational experiences of totalitarian states are not relevant to democracies. He presents the argument of the critics who state that the educational power of totalitarian leaders is due to the “unlimited power and authority” of the dictator which allows them “to impose on the educational agencies [a] unity of purpose and singleness of direction.”¹⁰⁶² Counts notes that the critics who seek to separate education in a democracy from education in an authoritarian government argue that education in a democracy “must always be relatively aimless, dispersive, and even marked by contradictions” because of its regard for freedom and differences.¹⁰⁶³ Counts sees this viewpoint as a defeatist attitude and detrimental to the survival of democracy.”¹⁰⁶⁴ “According to this view the citizens of a democracy can have no common interests, purposes, or loyalties beyond the defense of the fatherland against external aggression.”¹⁰⁶⁵ Counts argues that “such a negative attitude must be rejected if free societies are to survive in the industrial age.”¹⁰⁶⁶

Counts concludes that democracy is neither the natural form of human society nor the logical conclusion from being educated. “The purposes of democracy and the methods of achieving them must be profoundly different from those of totalitarianism,” but that does not also mean that education in a democracy should not be directed with the same energy and

¹⁰⁶¹ Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 87.

¹⁰⁶² Counts, *Education and the Promise of America*, 106.

¹⁰⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 297.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Ibid.

effort.¹⁰⁶⁷ Thus, “the educational task is to achieve the degree of devotion [in a democracy] to the general welfare that the totalitarian systems arouse toward the person of the dictator.”¹⁰⁶⁸ The educative needs of democracy and the avoidance of authoritarian methods in a democracy, Counts concludes, is why “democracy must be presented to the young as a way of life and a social faith immeasurably superior to all others.”¹⁰⁶⁹

To understand and fulfill the ideals of democracy means understanding that “education for a democracy is far more difficult than education for a dictatorship.”¹⁰⁷⁰ Democracy does not mean the absence of discipline, rather it means the formation of a particular formation of human nature. The concept of political liberty places specific demands on human nature and “is certainly one of the most extraordinary impositions on the mind and character of man in the entire history of *homo sapiens*.”¹⁰⁷¹ Additionally Counts notes,

To those who would see in the dedication of the school to the teaching of democracy an unfair imposition of the viewpoint of the adult world upon the child, or of the present upon the future, the point can be made that the ideas, values, and outlooks of democracy are quite as much the product of man’s creative genius as language or number, and quite as precious. To live by them is far more difficult than the conquest of the alphabet or the mastery of the multiplication table.¹⁰⁷²

Democracy requires a social discipline and that “social discipline is a form, though a particularly severe form, of individual discipline.”¹⁰⁷³

Counts defines discipline as “the putting of loyalties and knowledge to efficient use, the ordering of life in the light of understanding and toward the attainment of purpose.”¹⁰⁷⁴ The discipline of totalitarian states is “the discipline of slaves,” and the forced surrender of self, while

¹⁰⁶⁷ Counts, *Education and the Promise of America*, 106.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 79.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 187.

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid., 188.

¹⁰⁷² Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 16.

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 76.

on the other side, “the discipline of democracy is the discipline of free men” in the conscious surrender of self.¹⁰⁷⁵ Counts states that, “in a democracy all of the people, in the light of their knowledge and in obedience to their basic loyalties, impose upon themselves, voluntarily and resolutely, the restraints necessary to the guarding and advancing of the common interest.”¹⁰⁷⁶ Counts defines this discipline further as the intangible supports of liberty.

It is the intangible support of the people through character, traditions, loyalties, ideals, and values to the laws themselves that brings liberty and democracy to life. “It is the unwritten code of responsibility, loyalty, self-reliance [sic], and moral courage living in the hearts of individual men and women which seems to make the difference.”¹⁰⁷⁷

Counts supports this argument through the work of Montesquieu who he states defined three forms of government and argued that it is virtue that serves as the distinguishing mark of a republic. “By ‘virtue’ he meant ‘love of the laws of our country,’”¹⁰⁷⁸ Noting that this “love” does not come naturally, Montesquieu argues that the whole power of education is essential to build the support for liberty in the people. Liberty cannot mean that every person lives for him or herself or that loyalty to one political party or group is most important, instead “the maintenance of a regime of individual liberty is a social undertaking.”¹⁰⁷⁹ Democracy “cannot be a regime under which the citizen is relieved of responsibility and freed from all restraints not imposed by law or necessity.”¹⁰⁸⁰ Law on its own does not have the power to make democracy exist. It is the people who must be taught the values behind the laws which give them meaning. Counts states,

The power of law is clearly limited. It can scarcely be expected to make good citizens in a free society or enforce itself, but good citizens are absolutely essential to both the

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid. 78-9.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ibid. 79.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Counts, “Education and the Foundations of Liberty,” 3.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Counts, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty,” 138.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid.

making and the administration of good laws. Love of liberty, and even love of country, cannot be compelled by legislation. And the same may be said of a sense of fairness, a spirit of tolerance of differences, an abhorrence of injustice, an acquiescence in majority rule, devotion to the Bill of Rights, and an experimental and inquiring mind. These great values of a free society can only be incorporated into the character of the individual through the processes of nurture and education.¹⁰⁸¹

The best summation of Counts' ideas on the importance of explicitly teaching democracy comes from his text, *The Education of Free Men in American Society*. He states,

...the American people had to struggle long and hard to establish democracy... There certainly is no evidence in history to support the thesis that democracy is 'natural' in [the way Americans perceive it]. All institutions, all social systems, all conceptions of life and government are the products of human struggle, invention and desire; all are the results of efforts on the part of men to satisfy their longings under the conditions of their environment and in the light of their understandings; all are unstable, changing and subject to decay. Man and man only has created them all, from the most despotic to the most free. To assume that democracy is biologically transmitted from one generation to another is to continue to indulge in that fantastic optimism which already has brought the cause of human freedom to the brink of disaster....

Democracy is a vast and complex cultural achievement in the sphere of human relations and social values. Like all of man's finest achievements, it is extremely delicate and fragile, difficult to maintain at the highest level of excellence and easy to let follow the course of gradual degradation. Democracy exists only in the patterns of behavior, feeling, and thought of a people. Let these patterns be destroyed and democracy itself is destroyed. And they will be destroyed if they are not acquired anew by each generation, acquired by the complicated process of teaching and learning. Much attention is devoted in the school to insure the mastery by the young of reading, writing, and arithmetic, of the technical skills and processes, of the arts and the sciences. ...[T]he mastery of the ways of democracy is a far more difficult task of teaching and learning and certainly quite as important to free men. The doctrine that children will learn these ways, if left to themselves, is as unsound as the thought that they would master geometry without the help of their elders.¹⁰⁸²

Embracing Indoctrination in Education

At the core of Counts' beliefs is the conclusion that education does not exist without a measure of indoctrination; it is inevitable, essential to the survival of civilizations and societies, and should be desired, accepted, and actively controlled. Considering Counts' argument without

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid., 139.

¹⁰⁸² Counts, *The Education of Free Men*, 48-9.

understanding his definition of indoctrination makes it easy to disregard him as a supporter of authoritarian or undemocratic ideas; however, this would not be a valid criticism of Counts' beliefs. Since he never provided a clear definition of indoctrination, any argument against Counts on this point would be an argument against the definition the author chooses for indoctrination, rather than an actual argument against Counts. If the author perceives indoctrination in an authoritative sense and applies that to Counts, they could certainly establish an argument against the promotion of the teaching of anything as fixed and final, but as I have shown Counts argued the same. If the author perceives indoctrination in education as a purely educative process meant to only be the teaching of concepts, they could also establish an argument to challenge the use of indoctrination in education. They would likely conclude by calling for a stronger emphasis on educating for a particular context, but as I have also shown, Counts also did the same. Counts conception of indoctrination is unique and to understand it is to comprehend why it is that he perceived indoctrination and education to be essential and desirable and why he wanted progressive education to take an active role in controlling it and shaping the future.

Although there is a measure of all forms of indoctrination in education, Counts had a unique stance on the way indoctrination in education should be understood. An emphasis on one form of indoctrination would yield a different civilization. For Counts, neither authoritative indoctrination or educative indoctrination, excessive molding or excessive enlightenment, would meet the needs of the time or the needs of the American people, thus indoctrination in education must also be understood within a unique context. I have shown that Countsian indoctrination can be understood as the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, adjusted to a particular time and place to maintain vitality, and integrated within the individual to promote the release and discipline of energies essential to give meaning to the life

they live in the time and society in which they are born. An argument for the acknowledgement of indoctrination in education based on this definition would conclude, as Counts did, that such indoctrination would be essential and desirable and thus a most crucial educational responsibility for teachers to accept.

From his unique understanding of the nature of indoctrination in education, Counts also challenged the fears people had. Counts showed that indoctrination of any type was inescapable and ignoring it did not mean that indoctrination did not exist. Instead, it meant that someone else made the decisions rather than educators. Counts also showed that all civilizations, including and especially those founded on democracy required indoctrination to survive. By addressing the relationship of indoctrination to democracy, Counts showed how the enemies of democracy were being helped by the false perception that teaching for democracy was undemocratic and by the pursuit of a character of neutrality in teaching.

Counts spent his career trying to move progressive education from its place of comfort and from its fear to a place of action and a position of power. Although it has been nearly one-hundred years since Counts put his challenge to progressive education, through this analysis is the means to understand his challenge properly. With this context in mind, it is possible to consider whether Counts' challenge to progressive education was contradictory and to consider the relevance of his work for educators today.

6 IF EDUCATION IS INDOCTRINATION, THEN...

The central aim of this dissertation is determining whether there is a contradiction between Counts' challenge to progressive education and his belief that indoctrination has a role in education. Counts argued,

If Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must emancipate itself from the influence of [the upper-middle class], face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of imposition and indoctrination.¹⁰⁸³

His challenge, properly understood, is as worthy of consideration by American public education policy researchers today as it was when he first made it in the 1930s.

Prior to having a definition of indoctrination according to Counts, this question could not be addressed. In the last chapter, I established that Counts had a unique perspective on indoctrination, one that does not fit either of the current definitions of indoctrination. Countsian indoctrination can be defined as the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, adjusted to a particular time and place to maintain vitality, and integrated within the individual to promote the release and discipline of energies essential to give meaning to the life they live in the time and society in which they are born. In seeking to avoid the most dangerous extremes of indoctrination, that of excessive molding, the entire concept of indoctrination cannot be ignored. For Counts, indoctrination in education cannot be avoided.

Counts argued that the central question should not be whether there is indoctrination in education. His argument and work show that indoctrination exists whether we seek to avoid it or not. Instead, he argued the real work is in defining what should be indoctrinated and from what

¹⁰⁸³ Counts, *Dare the School*, 40.

source the indoctrination will come.¹⁰⁸⁴ In this concluding chapter, I address Counts' answers to these two questions, and in doing so, I show that Counts' challenge to progressive education was not contradictory. As a result, Counts' challenge should be reconsidered in light of this new information, and his relevance to education policy reevaluated.

What Should be Indoctrinated and Who is Responsible?

Counts was clear about what he believed should be the foundation and the source material for the type of indoctrination he was calling for in American education. Although he studied communism through his work on Russia, he was wholeheartedly committed to democracy and to American democracy, specifically. Counts notes, "I believe firmly that democratic sentiments should be cultivated and that a better and richer life should be the outcome of education."¹⁰⁸⁵ From his earlier works such as *American Road to Culture*, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, and *The Schools can Teach Democracy*, through to his later works like *Education and American Civilization* and *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*, Counts does not waiver in his commitment and desire to educate for democracy.

Counts defined educating for democracy as the development of an education in America that gives "to our children a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead and endeavor to enlist their loyalties and enthusiasms in the realization of the vision."¹⁰⁸⁶ When it came to educating for American democracy it was not just any vision, but a vision rooted in "the American dream." Counts defined this vision not as a dream of material possession but as "a vision of society in which the lot of the common man will be made easier and his life enriched and ennobled."¹⁰⁸⁷

¹⁰⁸⁴ Counts, "Education Thru Indoctrination," 197; Counts, "Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?" 188.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Counts, *Dare the School.*, 20.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Counts, "Education Thru Indoctrination," 199.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Ibid.

The application of this vision he sees as the supreme imposition that should be both taught to students and lived out through the school.

In “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” Counts defines his conception further, stating that it should be an education that presents “to the younger generation a vision of the possibility of finally fulfilling the great promise of America expressed in the Declaration of Independence: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.’”¹⁰⁸⁸ Counts argues that if science can provide the successes of the Industrial Revolution then it should also be able to aid in the process of “bringing our practices into harmony with our historic professions.”¹⁰⁸⁹ Counts was firm that educators and the American people must reject social and moral neutrality and “direct the energies of organized education without reservation to the defense and strengthening of the democratic tradition and way of life.”¹⁰⁹⁰

Beginning with his text, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty,” Counts articulates the aspects which he believes must be taught. It was not just the mechanical components of democracy, the laws and processes which needed to be understood, but also a specific character which needed to be imparted. Counts argues,

The power of law is clearly limited. It can scarcely be expected to make good citizens in a free society or enforce itself, but good citizens are absolutely essential to both the making and the administration of good laws. Love of liberty, and even love of country, cannot be compelled by legislation. And the same may be said of a sense of fairness, a spirit of tolerance of differences, an abhorrence of injustice, an acquiescence in majority rule, devotion to the Bill of Rights, and an experimental and inquiring mind. These great values of a free society can only be incorporated into the character of the individual through the processes of nurture and education.¹⁰⁹¹

¹⁰⁸⁸ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 188.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 15-16.

¹⁰⁹¹ Counts, “The Intangible Supports of Liberty,” 139.

For Counts, there is a unique self-discipline, foundational to American history and culture and essential for American democracy to survive. The history of democracy shows that the self-discipline needed to sustain it is fragile and to truly sustain democracy requires a “revolutionary form of imposition.”¹⁰⁹²

Counts also considered the teaching of American democracy in relation to the school and the curriculum. He notes that the school could not be effective until it was a place “for the building, and not merely for the contemplation, of our civilization.”¹⁰⁹³ Additionally he argues that

The great purpose of the public school therefore should be to prepare the coming generation to participate actively and courageously in building a democratic industrial society that will co-operate with other nations in the exchange of goods, in the cultivation of the arts, in the advancement of knowledge and thought, and in maintaining the peace of the world.¹⁰⁹⁴

Counts did not see any major changes to the curriculum which was already in practice in the schools.¹⁰⁹⁵ What would be different would be “the spirit, the approach, the orientation” of the curriculum.¹⁰⁹⁶ He notes that changes would be made to remove “the egoistic and possessive tendencies,” and “social and cooperative and creative impulses” would be emphasized.¹⁰⁹⁷ For Counts, what is said about the content taught is just as important as the content itself and everything taught should be “appraised in terms of democratic values and the necessities of industrial civilization.”¹⁰⁹⁸

¹⁰⁹² Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 188.

¹⁰⁹³ Counts, *Dare the School*, 37.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 544.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Ibid., 545.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Counts, *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*, 28.

Counts was also certain throughout his career about who was responsible for this process. He perceived the school as the place where democracy should be taught, and he sought to empower teachers and the teaching profession to embrace their responsibility in this process. He was fully aware that the school was not the only educational institution. Counts understood that the rapid growth of the school had affected the false belief of its power and prominence, but there were other “non-scholastic educational agencies” like the family, the church, the community organization, and the various forms of media communication which educated just as the school.¹⁰⁹⁹ The school is “but one among many educational agencies” and “although the school is the focal point of the educative process and the only form of education under conscious and reasoned direction of society, its power for influencing social change is strictly limited.”¹¹⁰⁰

The limit of the power of the school did not absolve it of its responsibility. Since the school is dealing with living growing beings it cannot remain neutral and must have growth and direction of its own.¹¹⁰¹ The school must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas.”¹¹⁰² Because of this responsibility, “the school,” he argues, “should know what it is doing, in so far that this is humanly possible, and accept full responsibility for its acts.”¹¹⁰³ “The responsibility of the school is, not to follow the interests of the young, but rather to assist in arousing and building worthy and fruitful interests.”¹¹⁰⁴ The school is not a thinking or acting entity on its own, thus it is those who work within the schools who are ultimately responsible for fulfilling the great aim of the school.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 560.

¹¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁰¹ Ibid., 536.

¹¹⁰² Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 196.

¹¹⁰³ Counts, *Dare the School*, 25.

¹¹⁰⁴ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 31-2.

Just like the school, Counts observed that the teaching profession in the United States existed in a position of relative weakness. The weak position of the teaching profession was partially due to the history of the profession and partially due to the false notion that neutrality should be a characteristic of the profession.¹¹⁰⁵ Just as with the school, Counts firmly believed that “the teacher cannot be neutral.”¹¹⁰⁶ “Neutrality with respect to the great issues that agitate society, while perhaps theoretically possible, is practically tantamount to giving support to the most powerful forces engaged in the contest.”¹¹⁰⁷ Even if a teacher wanted to remain neutral, they could not. The very nature of their profession, just as with the school, involves choices which affect the material taught, the environment the child is in, and the outcome. “Since, being denied the privilege of neutrality, [teachers] must act, no other rational course is open to them. But it should never be forgotten that in acting they, in proportion to the power of organized education, mold the minds of the coming generation and thus share in shaping the future of the nation and even of world society.”¹¹⁰⁸

Counts understood that this effort was a collective endeavor of the entire profession. Teachers should begin picking up the mantle of their responsibility “through [sic] powerful organizations” and in doing so, they “might come to exercise a larger measure of control over the schools than” they had prior.¹¹⁰⁹ Counts argues that “teachers, if they could increase sufficiently their stock of courage, intelligence, and vision, might become a social force of some magnitude” and “might at least reach the public conscience” rather than being driven by the whims of outside forces.¹¹¹⁰ Counts sought for teachers to be “permitted to fashion the curriculum and the

¹¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 454; Counts, *Dare the School*, 30.

¹¹⁰⁶ Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral?” 189.

¹¹⁰⁷ Counts, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” 11.

¹¹⁰⁸ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 4.

¹¹⁰⁹ Counts, “Education Thru Indoctrination,” 197-8.

¹¹¹⁰ Counts, *Dare the School*, 28.

procedures of the school” and “instead of shunning power, the profession should rather seek power and then strive to use that power fully and wisely in the interests of the great masses of the people.”¹¹¹¹

In addition to having influence in the school, Counts argues that the teacher must also live and possess such power in society. They cannot exist separately from the world that they educate for. It is not society that gives this power, but it is within the teacher to acknowledge their power and to act in their everyday lives. “The power that teachers exercise in the school can be no greater than the power they wield in society.”¹¹¹² Counts states,

In order to be effective they must throw off completely the slave psychology that has dominated the mind of the pedagogue more or less since the days of ancient Greece. They must be prepared to stand on their own feet and win for their ideas the support of the masses of the people. Education as a force for social regeneration must march hand in hand with the living and creative forces of the social order. In their own lives teachers must bridge the gap between school and society and play some part in the fashioning of those great common purposes which should bind the two together.¹¹¹³

Counts, Indoctrination, and the Progressive Education Movement: Are they Contradictory?

Counts’ view of indoctrination in education and his suggestion of its wider acceptance in his challenge to progressive education is not contradictory to a progressive approach to education. Counts’ conception of indoctrination, if understood and applied through the school and the teaching profession and for the purposes of educating for democracy, meets with his understanding of the essential requirements of a progressive movement and urges the concept of child-centered progressive theory to be more progressive by placing their work in the proper context. The challenge in seeing Counts as progressive is a matter of perspective.

¹¹¹¹ Ibid., 28, 29-30.

¹¹¹² Ibid., 30.

¹¹¹³ Ibid., 30-1.

The progressive movement that Counts directed his argument towards in *Dare the School* and the speeches that were used to inspire *Dare the School*, was called progressive because of its attention to child-centered or child-interest-centered education. The shifting of the driver of the educative process from the adult to the child, was considered progressive because education prior to that movement had been largely, if not fully, adult driven. Counts understood the central aims of child-centered education as stemming from a fear of adult influence on the child's life and the perception that an approach that maximizes freedom for the individual child is closer to the ideal of democracy than a teacher led approach to learning. Counts states that the central premise of child-centered education is that,

[T]he child achieves maturity through a process of spontaneous generation or unfoldment which the adult world through its educational agencies should merely guard and nourish. ... [T]he child and not the teacher or the school should play the decisive role in shaping both the processes and ends of education. The interests and problems of boys and girls are assumed to constitute a more trustworthy guide than the experience and wisdom of their elders.¹¹¹⁴

Counts agreed with the child-centered theorists that the interests of children had an important part to play in the educative process. He noted that, "the immediate concerns of the young ... should always play a large role in education."¹¹¹⁵ Where Counts and the progressive educators he was addressing begin to separate is on the belief that the interests of the child can serve as an aim of education in the United States and that doing so is more democratic.

Counts was concerned that the interests of the child had been inappropriately elevated to the position of a central aim of education in the United States. While this concept was progressive and new in the understanding of the educative process, it was being misapplied and, for Counts, mislabeled as a progressive movement. The interests of children cannot be a central

¹¹¹⁴ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 31.

¹¹¹⁵ Ibid.

purpose for education because it fails to provide the necessary orientation or direction needed and subsequently ignores the role of education in the maintenance of civilizations and society. Counts argued that setting the focus of education on the child “constitutes too narrow a conception of the meaning of education; it brings into the picture but one half of the landscape.”¹¹¹⁶ This narrow focus on one aspect of the educative process lacked the necessary orientation and direction to make the work of progressive educators truly progressive.

Counts’ promotion of indoctrination in education is also not contradictory to the aims of progressive education because of what it is that he sought as the direction that indoctrination was to point. In addition to arguing that a progressive movement must have orientation and direction, he also argued that the word progressive “implies moving forward; and moving forward can have little meaning in the absence of clearly defined purposes.”¹¹¹⁷ Counts was not seeking to turn progressive education away from its aims, but to get its proponents to fulfill those aims by addressing what he saw as a central weakness of the approach, “that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare, unless it be that of anarchy or extreme individualism.”¹¹¹⁸

In Counts’ view, the concept of child interest in education was being thought of in isolation and not considered in a proper context leading it to disconnect education from its essential roots. The concept of child-interest must be placed in its proper context. That context for Counts is found in the culture and society in which the individual is born. He notes, “there is no good individual apart from some conception of the nature of good society. Man without human society and human culture is not man. And there is also no *good* education apart from some conception of the nature of the good society.”¹¹¹⁹ Without considering these aspects in

¹¹¹⁶ Counts, “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” 2.

¹¹¹⁷ Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, 6.

¹¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2. *Italics in the original*

relation to child interest, the child-centered theorists were promoting a version of freedom, but one that untethered the individual from his fellow man. In practice, the child-centered concept promoted a society that was not the aim the theorists were seeking. By acknowledging indoctrination in education, they could still leave room for the interests of the child to mature and play a central role in education while also working to make society free through a conscious effort to shape the individual and the environment.

Counts observed that theorists felt this tension in their own arguments and had not come to the means of solving the contradictions in their own thinking because of the power that the fear of indoctrination had. He notes, "in the same breath or in a single page an educational leader may oppose the slightest suggestion of indoctrination, advocate the teaching of democracy in schools, and demand the formulation of a highly specific list of objectives."¹¹²⁰ Additionally, he argued that "Progressive Education wishes to build a new world but refuses to be held accountable for the kind of world it builds."¹¹²¹ The hesitance and avoidance in addressing root questions of education stems from the fear of indoctrination and adult influence on the interests of the child. This fear is what, for Counts, was keeping educators during his time from being truly progressive. If they would be willing to acknowledge that adult influence in education is unavoidable, then they could move past this barrier and engage in the task of designing an education that was truly progressive, one that had orientation and direction.

As a result, Counts argument for indoctrination in education was not contradictory to progressive education, but sought to enhance the aims of child-centered theorists by urging them to acknowledge the orientation and direction that their limited focus on the interests of the child would create, and to take more of an active role in shaping the orientation and direction they

¹¹²⁰ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 293.

¹¹²¹ Counts, *Dare the School.*, 25.

desired. If the goal was the creation of the good individual, then the good civilization and good society must also be defined, and adults could not play a neutral role in bringing the good individual in line with the good civilization and the good society.

Counts defined his purposes as wholly committed to fulfilling the dream of the Founding Fathers and establishing an education that presents “to the younger generation a vision of the possibility of finally fulfilling the great promise of American expressed in the Declaration of independence.”¹¹²² Counts notes,

I believe firmly that democratic sentiments should be cultivated and that a better and richer life should be the outcome of education, but in neither case would I place responsibility on either God or the order of nature. I would merely contend that as educators we must make many choices involving the development of attitudes in boys and girls and that we should not be afraid to acknowledge the faith that is in us or mayhap the forces that compel us.¹¹²³

If the aim of the educative process is to result in a fuller and more complete democracy, then what do progressive educators have to fear? The attainment of a fuller and more complete democracy, however, cannot be done without intentionality and a complete rejection of the idea “that there is something essentially profane in any effort to understand, plan, and control the [educative] process.”

Counts was not promoting a contradictory argument to progressive education, but instead was giving them the means and the permission to let go of fallacious thinking and to truly make progress through the work of public education. “The school,” he argues, “should know what it is doing, in so far that this is humanly possible, and accept full responsibility for its acts.”¹¹²⁴ Focusing just on the child’s interests without considering the consequences or rather wishing and hoping that children would find democracy on their journey was not progressive at all. To be

¹¹²² Counts, “Should the Teacher Always Be Neutral? 188.

¹¹²³ Counts, *Dare the School.*, 20.

¹¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

truly progressive there cannot just be some new idea. That new idea comes from a conception of civilization and if it is progressive it leads to a new way of living and being. Neutrality is impossible in education. All education requires indoctrination including in a democracy. Planning the educative process in a democracy is not only good, but also essential and progressive education is only progressive when it fully embraces its responsibility for shaping the future.

Reframing Counts' Educational Theory: Indoctrination is the Cornerstone

The review of the previous literature on Counts shows that there are nearly as many different conclusions about him as there have been investigations into his research. A major hole in that research has been the question about the meaning of indoctrination according to Counts. Previous researchers have either ignored Counts' use of the term, considered it as an outlier concept in his work, or used the modern definition of indoctrination to paint Counts and his work as something it is not. This dissertation provides a definition of Countsiian indoctrination and in doing so, reveal the pivotal role that this concept plays in Counts' thinking.

The concept of indoctrination in education is central to all of Counts' beliefs about education. First, Counts believed that education could not be defined or articulated without a clear understanding of the civilization and the society that the education was to take place in. He defined education as,

...[A] process of inducting the young and immature into the life and culture of the group – into its ways of acting, thinking, feeling, into an appropriation of its material and spiritual possessions – its folkways and mores, its institutions and social arrangements, its skills, knowledges and appreciations, its arts, sciences, and philosophies. Through this process the individual human is formed and a particular society perpetuated.¹¹²⁵

Educational programs are as unique as the many societies which exist on the earth.¹¹²⁶

¹¹²⁵ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 296.

¹¹²⁶ Ibid.

Additionally, education was not and could never be “pure and independent” and removed “from the passions generated by social conflict” or exist with its own “transcendent authority in human affairs.”¹¹²⁷ More specifically, Counts argues that organized education is the deliberate effort “to control the educational process in light of more or less carefully formulated purposes and conceptions – to make of the young and immature members of something which by themselves they would not become.”¹¹²⁸ According to Counts, education was not only inseparable from politics, it was both shaped by it and a driver of the future of politics and that of the foundations of the society.¹¹²⁹

Given that education is inseparable from politics, the next step in the establishment of an education for any society is the choosing of the actual material needed to continue the existence of the culture and the society. Counts concludes then that “partiality is the very essence of education, as it is of life itself,” that “each choice involves rejection as well as selection” and that consequently that selection of material will express some theory of governance.¹¹³⁰ This selection requires a more complete understanding of the essential knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions of the culture and the society. It is in understanding and selecting for specific pieces of information to be taught and then shaping a system of education based on these selected ideas that a society is essentially choosing to indoctrinate the coming generation.

This conclusion serves as a cornerstone for the rest of Counts’ work. Counts cannot be read, understood, or applied in educational analysis or policy without a clear understanding of his view on the nature of indoctrination in education. Accepting this point makes it subsequently easy to understand why Counts wrote numerous texts attempting to articulate the essential

¹¹²⁷ Counts, *American Road to Culture*, 184.

¹¹²⁸ Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, 297.

¹¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 293-306.

¹¹³⁰ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 535-6.

elements of American society, and why he tried to articulate the problem with the passing of the rural economy into industrialization. He was doing the work that he wanted the educational profession to do. In examining American democracy, he was attempting to provide the material needed to form an adequate education fit for American society and for the time that the society was in. It is also easy to understand why he was at such odds with the progressive education movement of his time and why he spent his career striving to bring understanding of this issue to the forefront.

Counts' views of indoctrination also help to give meaning to the relevance of his work for educational policy. His views of educational policy are also inseparable from his beliefs that education is only able to be understood as a reflection of the culture and society in which it exists, and that education requires partiality. "Every educational policy, however casually it may have been constructed, rests upon and reflects some analysis and interpretation of the condition and prospects of the society involved."¹¹³¹ Counts work is vital to the future of educational policy and to the critical analysis of educational policy in American education. Understanding Counts' viewpoint reveals that solving the issues of American education is not initially found in the development of new policies, but in asking of our current policies, what kind of society are they building, or will they build? If it's not a society moving closer and closer to meeting the ideals of American democracy, then the question becomes, what policy will do that? In figuring that out, according to Counts, we cannot accept a posture of neutrality, but must embrace our use of indoctrination in education and to do so with conscious intent. Indoctrination, the teaching of specific, culturally relevant knowledge, habits, attitudes, and dispositions, adjusted to a particular time and place to maintain vitality, and integrated within the individual to promote the release

¹¹³¹ Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*, 532.

and discipline of energies essential to give meaning to the life they live in the time and society in which they are born, must be understood to be a central aim of education.

Suggestions for Further Research

There is much still left to unpack from this analysis of Counts' understanding of the role of indoctrination in education. The first few suggestions for further research relate to strengthening the research of this paper. I also offer some extensions of this work that look at future research that might reevaluate Counts' work in light of the findings in this paper. I firmly believe that there is much more that Counts has to say for American educational policy today. He is worthy of renewed investigation and interpretation.

My research required the selection of specific material. As a result, I chose not to review Counts' writings on Russian education. Further research should investigate whether Counts does provide a definition of indoctrination in any of these texts in his attempt to define Russian education and to compare it to American education. There is a vast amount of material that Counts wrote in this area and further investigation could reveal something that I missed. The identification of new material could also reveal that my conclusions are wrong. Along similar lines, I did not attempt to read every one of Counts' works. I made the selection of writings that I believed were relevant and that discussed education in America. Further research should investigate all of Counts' writings to evaluate if there is an articulation of indoctrination that I missed. A third aspect of this suggestion for future research would be to investigate Counts' correspondence with other researchers at the time. Looking into non-academic writing might reveal additional thoughts not included in his writings regarding his beliefs on the role of indoctrination in education.

Although I made a concerted effort to find as many of my selected texts as I possibly could, there were some that I was unable to find. A suggestion for future research would be to

develop as complete a collection of Counts' writings as possible. Through continued investigation, I might be able to find and evaluate Counts' writings further. Counts supposedly destroyed some of his materials after leaving Teachers College, Columbia.¹¹³² With greater attention to Counts, more writings might be found in other locations, and additional thoughts revealed. A larger sample of Counts writings would allow for a more thorough understanding of his ideas.

There are certainly other avenues of research that could be extensions of this work; however, the final and most important suggestion is that the framing of Counts' whole educational theory must be reconsidered in light of this research. Any future analysis of Counts' work must articulate the role of indoctrination properly understood in the context of Counts' beliefs. A comprehensive presentation of Counts' educational theory is warranted given the central position that his beliefs on indoctrination in education play. A reevaluation of Counts' work would provide a proper understanding of his educational theory and reveal the value and relevance that Counts' beliefs should have for American educational policy today.

¹¹³² Counts, *A Humble Autobiography*, 152.

REFERENCES

- American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition. S.v. "indoctrination." Retrieved January 2022, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/indoctrination>.
- Arnstine, Barbara. "Reconstructing George S. Counts: An Essay Review." *Educational Theory* 24, no. 1 (January 1974): 110–19.
- Artis, John Burl. "A Revisit with George S. Counts: A New Social Order and the American Public Schools." *NASSP Bulletin* 77, no. 556 (November 1993): 112–16.
- Baskin, Alex. "Education and the Great Depression: An Inquiry into the Social Ideas and Activities of Radical American Educators during the Economic Crisis of the 1930's." PhD diss., Wayne State University, 1966.
- Bernays, Edward L., and Nancy Snow. *Edward Bernays Reader: From Propaganda to the Engineering of Consent*. New York, N.Y., IG Publishing, 2021.
- Bowers, C. A. "Social Reconstructionism: Views from the Left and the Right, 1932-1942." *History of Education Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (April 1, 1970): 22–52.
- Chapman, J. Crosby, and George S. Counts. *Principles of Education*. Boston, M.A. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.
- Collins, William J. "Education, Democracy, and Social Discourse: A Contemporary Response to George S. Counts and Boyd H. Bode." *Schools: Studies in Education* 10, no. 2 (September 1, 2013): 298–303.
- Cook, James F. "Cocking Affair - New Georgia Encyclopedia." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, 12 Aug. 2002, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/government-politics/cocking-affair/>.
- Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, Middle Atlantic Region and George S. Counts, *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration*, New York: Published for the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, Middle Atlantic Region, by the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, (1954).
- Counts, George. "A Humble Autobiography." In *Leaders in American Education*, edited by Robert J. Havighurst 151-174. Chicago: NSSE, 1971.
- . "A Rational Faith in Education." *Teachers College Record*, vol. 59, no. 5, (1958), pp. 1–8.
- . *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969.

- . “Dare the School Build the Great Society?” *Phi Delta Kappan* vol. 47. (September 1965): 27-30.
- . “Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?” *Progressive Education* no. 9 (April 1932): 257-63. <https://talkcurriculum.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/counts-g-1932-dare-progressive-education-be-progressive.pdf>.
- . “Education and Catastrophe,” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 3, folder 4.
- . “Education and Post War America.” *American Teacher* 28. (May 1944): 9-12, 9.
- . “Education and the Fate of the Republic.” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 3, folder 6.
- . *Education and the Foundations of Human Freedom*. Horace Mann Lecture: 1962. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963.
- . “Education and the Foundations of Liberty.” *Education Digest* 24, (September 1958): 1-5.
- . “Education and the Great Transition.” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 3, folder 6.
- . *Education and the Promise of America*. New York: Macmillan, 1945.
- . “Education for Tomorrow’s World.” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 3, folder 6.
- . “Education – For What? II: Indoctrination and a Workable Democracy.” *New Republic* 71 (May 1932):38-41.
- . “Education in an Age of Decision.” *Curriculum Journal* 13 (November 1942): 303–7.
- . “Education Thru Indoctrination,” *Official Report, Department of Superintendence of the NEA*, Washington D.C. 1932: 193-99. National Education Association Archive, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
- . “Freedom, Culture, Social Planning, and Leadership,” *National Council of Education*, Washington, D. C. 1932. 3-7. National Education Association Archive, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
- . “International, Intercultural, and Interracial Education.” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 3, folder 7.

- . “Moral Foundations of American Civilization.” *Pennsylvania University. Schoolmen’s Week. Proceedings* 1953 (January 1953): 188–94.
- . “Presidential Address,” (*District Teacher* 12, October, 1941), 5-8.
- . “Should the Teacher Always be Neutral?” *Phi Delta Kappan*, no. 51 (December, 1969):186-89.
- . *The American Road to Culture*. New York: The John Day Company, 1930.
- . “The Challenge of These Times to the University.” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL., box 3, folder 5.
- . *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy*. National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D. C., 1941.
- . “The Intangible Supports of Liberty.” *The Educational Forum*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1956, pp. 133–140.
- . “The Promise of American Democracy.” in *Democracy and the Curriculum; the Life and Program of the American School*. Ed. Harold Rugg. New York, London, D. Appleton-Century company, incorporated. 1939.
- . *The Prospects of American Democracy*. New York: John Day Company, 1938.
- . “The Redirection of Public Education: A Frontier of the Sixties.” in *Redirection of Public Education*, ed. Francis T. Villemain, Toledo: College of Education, University of Toledo, 1962, 24-5.
- . *The Schools Can Teach Democracy*. New York: The John Day Company, 1939.
- . *The Social Foundations of Education*. Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, American Historical Association. Pt. IX. New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1934.
- . “The Spirit of American Education.” *Teachers College Record*, vol. 59, no. 8, 1958, 1–8.
- . “What are the Enduring Values Inherent in Our Society?” George S. Counts Papers. Special Collections Research Center: Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. box 4, folder 8.
- Counts, George S. and Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation. *Education and American Civilization*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.

- Counts, George, Lawrence J. Dennis, and William Edward Eaton. *George S. Counts, Educator for a New Age*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1980.
- Dotts, Brian W. "Social Foundations in Exile: How Dare the School Build a New Social Order." *Educational Foundations* 28, no. 1–4 (January 1, 2015): 51–72.
- Fawcett, Eliza, and Anemona Hartocollis. "Florida Gives Reasons for Rejecting A.P. African American Studies Class." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, January 22, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/21/us/florida-ap-african-american-studies.html>.
- Friedman, Jonathan, and Nadine Farid Johnson. "Banned in the USA: Rising School Book Bans Threaten Free Expression and Students' First Amendment Rights (April 2022)." PEN America, December 20, 2022. <https://pen.org/banned-in-the-usa/#trends>.
- . "Banned in the USA: The Growing Movement to Ban Books." PEN America, January 3, 2023. <https://pen.org/report/banned-usa-growing-movement-to-censor-books-in-schools/>.
- Gatchel, Richard. "The Evolution of the Concept." in *Concepts of Indoctrination: Philosophical Essays*, edited by Ivan Snook, 7-13. International Library of the Philosophy of Education. Routledge & K. Paul, 1972.
- Guttek, Gerald. "An Analysis of the Social and Educational Theory of George S. Counts During the Depression of the 1930s." PhD diss., University of Illinois, 1964.
- . *George S. Counts and American Civilization: The Educator as Social Theorist*. Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984.
- . *Philosophical and Ideological Perspectives on Education*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988.
- . *The Educational Theory of George S. Counts*. Studies in Educational Theory of the John Dewey Society: no. 8. Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971.
- Harris, Elizabeth A., and Alexandra Alter. "A Fast-Growing Network of Conservative Groups Is Fueling a Surge in Book Bans." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, December 12, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/12/books/book-bans-libraries.html>.
- Heyward, Giulia, and Juma Sei. "College Board's Revised AP African American Studies Course Draws New Criticism." NPR. NPR, February 2, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/01/1153434464/college-boards-revised-ap-african-american-studies-course-draws-new-criticism>.

- Hendricks, Jennifer S., and Dawn Marie Howerton. "Teaching Values, Teaching Stereotypes: Sex Education and Indoctrination in Public Schools." *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law* 13, no. 3 (March 1, 2011): 587–642.
- Hlebowitsh, Peter, and William Wraga. "Social Class Analysis in the Early Progressive Tradition." *Curriculum Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (April 1, 1995): 7–21.
- "indoctrination," Dictionary.Com Unabridged, accessed January 2022, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/indoctrination>.
- "indoctrination," Lexico.com, accessed January 2022, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/indoctrination>.
- Jackson, Jon. "DeSantis Admin Defends Banning African American Studies Class." *Newsweek*. Newsweek, January 20, 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/ron-desantis-administration-defends-banning-african-american-studies-class-florida-1775151>.
- Joseph Jeyaraj, Joanna, and Tony Harland. "Teaching with Critical Pedagogy in ELT: The Problems of Indoctrination and Risk." *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 24, no. 4 (December 2016): 587–98.
- Keenan, Claudia. "The Education of an Intellectual." *Kansas History* 25, no. 4 (Winter- 2002): 258.
- Keeves, John, and D. Adams. "Comparative Methodology in Education," in *Educational Research, Methodology, and Measurement: An International Handbook. Advances in Education*. Edited by John Keeves, 31-41. Pergamon Press, 1988.
- Kenny, Jack. "Brainwashing 101." *New American*, 29, no. 15 (August 5, 2013): 23–27.
- Kilpatrick, William Heard. *The Project Method, the Use of the Purposeful Act in the Educative Process*, by William Heard Kilpatrick. New York City: Teachers college, Columbia university, 1926.
- Knight, George Raymond. "An Analysis of the Educational Theory of George S. Counts." PhD diss., University of Houston. 1976. 2.
- Knox, Emily J. M. "Indoctrination and Common Sense Interpretation of Texts: The Tucson Unified School District Book Banning." *Journal of Intellectual Freedom & Privacy* 2, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 11–23.
- Kohl, Herbert. "Can the Schools Build a New Social Order?" *Journal of Education* 162, no. 3 (July 1980): 57–66.

- Kridel, Craig. "Instruction, Indoctrination, Imposition: Conceptions of Propaganda in the Field of Education" in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, ed. Jonathan Auerbach, and Russ Castronovo, Oxford Handbooks, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Lagemann, Ellen Condliffe. "Prophecy or Profession? George S. Counts and the Social Study of Education." *American Journal of Education* 100, no. 2 (February 1, 1992): 137–65.
- Lugg, Catherine, and Alan R. Shoho. "Dare Public School Administrators Build a New Social Order?: Social Justice and the Possibly Perilous Politics of Educational Leadership." *Journal of Educational Administration* 44, no. 3 (January 1, 2006): 196–208.
- Madon, Eunice. "An Historical Analysis of George S. Counts's Concept of the American Public Secondary School with Special Reference to Equality and Selectivity." PhD diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1993.
- Mahoney, Kevin. "Latin Definition for: Doctrina, Doctrinae." Latin Definition for: doctrina, doctrinae (ID: 18345) - Latin Dictionary and Grammar Resources - Latdict. Accessed October 3, 2021. <https://latin-dictionary.net/definition/18345/doctrina-doctrinae>.
- Marcus, Kenneth L. "Academic Freedom and Political Indoctrination." *Journal of College and University Law* 39, no. 3 (January 1, 2013): 725–48.
- Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. "indoctrinate," accessed January 9, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/indoctrinate>.
- Murphy, James Bernard. "Against Civic Schooling." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 21, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 221–65.
- Nagai, Michio. "The Problem of Indoctrination: As Viewed from Sociological and Philosophical Bases." PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1952.
- Nelson, Murry. and H. Wells Singleton, "Governmental Surveillance of Three Progressive Educators," American Educational Research Association paper presentation (March 1, 1978), 19.
- Niece, Richard, and Karen J. Viechnicki, "Recounting Counts: A Review of George S. Counts' Challenge and the Reactions to "Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?"" *Journal of Educational Thought* 21, no. 3 (December 1987): 149-54.
- PEN America. "PEN America Index of Educational Gag Orders." Google Sheets. Google. Accessed February 4, 2023. https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Tj5WQVBmB6SQg-zP_M8uZsQQGH09TxmBY73v23zpyr0/edit#gid=267763711.

- Qablan, Ahmad, Sherry A. Southerland, and Yavuz Saka. “‘My Job Isn’t to Tell Them What to Think’: The Fear of Indoctrination and How It Shapes Education for Sustainable Development.” *Electronic Journal of Science Education* 15, no. 2 (September 2011): 1–28.
- Rabkin, Sasha. “The Historical and Pedagogical Antecedents of the Role of the Teacher in Democracy Education.” PhD diss., Fielding Graduate University, 2014.
- Ray, Brian. “Is Indoctrination a Factor in So Much Homeschooling Growth?” *Old Schoolhouse*, Winter 2021, 20–22.
- Raywid, Mary Anne. “The Discovery and Rejection of Indoctrination.” *Educational Theory* 30, no. 1 (Jan, 1980): 1-10.
- Robinson, Paul H., and Lindsay Holcomb. “Indoctrination and Social Influence as a Defense to Crime: Are We Responsible for Who We Are?” *Missouri Law Review* 85, no. 3 (June 15, 2020): 739–802.
- Romanish, Bruce. “An Historical Analysis of the Educational Ideas and Career of George S. Counts.” PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1980.
- . “George S. Counts: Leading Social Reconstructionist.” *Vitae Scholasticae* 29, no. 1 (January 2012): 38–54.
- Sewell, William. “Affecting Social Change: The Struggle for Educators to Transform Society.” *Educational Foundations* 19, no. 3–4 (January 1, 2005): 5–14.
- Singh, Chanan. “An Evaluation of the Democratic Conception of Education as found in the Writings of George S. Counts.” Masters thesis, The University of Southern California, 1941.
- Snook, I. A. *Indoctrination and Education*. Routledge and K. Paul, 1975.
- Sobel, Harold. “Social Reconstructionism and its Curricular Implications,” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1970).
- Sowell, Thomas. “Parents Must Get Backbones, Stand up to Classroom Indoctrination.” *Enterprise/Salt Lake City* 33, no. 36 (March 2004): 26.
- Staff, “Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Legislation to Protect Floridians from Discrimination and Woke Indoctrination,” Office of the Governor of Florida News Release, April 22, 2022, accessed, June 8, 2022, <https://www.flgov.com/2022/04/22/governor-ron-desantis-signs-legislation-to-protect-floridians-from-discrimination-and-woke-indoctrination/>.
- Stanley, William. “The Radical Reconstructionist Rationale for Social Education.” *Theory & Research in Social Education* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 55–79.

- . “Toward a Reconstruction of Social Education.” *Theory & Research in Social Education* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 67–89.
- Sutinen, Ari. “Social Reconstructionist Philosophy of Education and George S. Counts - Observations on the Ideology of Indoctrination in Socio-Critical Educational Thinking.” *International Journal of Progressive Education* 10, no. 1 (February 2014): 18–31.
- Schwartz, Sarah. “Map: Where Critical Race Theory Is under Attack.” *Education Week*. Education Week, February 3, 2023. <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/map-where-critical-race-theory-is-under-attack/2021/06>.
- Thompson, Richard. “The Educational Theory of Reconstructionism as Viewed by George S. Counts and Theodore Brameld: A History of Ideas.” PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1985.
- Vivirito, Jessica. “Dare the Teachers Learn to Dare? An Inquiry into the Civic Consequences of Teacher Neutrality.” Masters thesis, Northern Illinois University, 2008.
- Villemain, Francis T. *Redirection of Public Education*. Toledo: College of Education, University of Toledo, 1962.
- Vogel, Albert. “A Critical Study of the Major Writings of George S. Counts.” PhD diss., American University, 1960.
- Webster, Alexander F. C. “More Classroom Indoctrination.” *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 34, no. 5 (September 2021): 40.
- Woyshner, Christine, Joseph Watras, and Margaret Crocco. *Social Education in the Twentieth Century: Curriculum and Context for Citizenship*. History of Schools & Schooling: no. 32. P. Lang, 2004.