



Confessions of a Dyslexic Internationalist

With America now experiencing high rates of functional illiteracy, it is obvious that there are many individuals in our society in positions of responsibility who are functionally illiterate. The late, lamented Nelson Rockefeller, former Governor of New York and Vice President of the United States, was “dyslexic.” Movie personalities Tom Cruise and Cher are “dyslexic.” There is no doubt that these three intelligent individuals were the unwary victims of the look-say reading instruction they got in primary school. Nelson often joked about the fact that he couldn’t read because he had attended a “progressive” school.



The story is true. Nelson and three of his brothers — David, Lawrence and Winthrop — all attended the Lincoln School at Teacher’s College, Columbia University. Their father donated \$3-million to this experimental school where the progressive followers of John Dewey tried out all of their flaky socialist ideas on their students. The look-say reading program was one of them, and as a result, all four of the Rockefeller boys emerged as “dyslexics.”

Jules Abel, in his 1965 book about the Rockefellers, wrote:

The influence of the Lincoln School, which, as a progressive school, encouraged students to explore their own interests and taught them to live in society has been a dominant one in their lives....Yet Lawrence gives startling confirmation as to “Why Johnnie Can’t Read.” He says that the Lincoln School did not teach him to read and write as he wishes he now could. Nelson, today, admits that reading for him is a “slow and tortuous process” that he does not enjoy doing but compels himself to do it. This is significant evidence in the debate that has raged about modern educational techniques.

David Rockefeller writes of his experience at the Lincoln School in his *Memoirs*, published in 2002:

It was Lincoln’s experimental curriculum and method of instruction that distinguished it from all other New York schools of the time. Father was an ardent and generous supporter of John Dewey’s educational methods and school reform efforts. . . . Teacher’s College of Columbia University operated Lincoln, with considerable financial assistance in the early years from the General Education Board, as an experimental school designed to put Dewey’s philosophy into practice.

Apparently, Dewey’s program to change American children from becoming individualists to becoming little collectivists did not faze John D. Rockefeller Jr. At that time, Socialism seemed like such a good idea. But the fact that the Lincoln School turned all four Rockefeller boys into dyslexics didn’t seem to bother their father. David Rockefeller writes further:

Lincoln stressed freedom for children to learn and to play an active role in their own education. . . . But there were some drawbacks. In my case, I had trouble with reading and spelling, which my



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teachers, drawing upon “progressive” educational theory, did not consider significant. They believed I was simply a slow reader and that I would develop at my own pace. In reality I have dyslexia, which was never diagnosed, and I never received remedial attention. As a result my reading ability, as well as my proficiency in spelling, improved only marginally as I grew older. All my siblings, except Babs and John, had dyslexia to a degree.

Of course, what David Rockefeller doesn’t know is that dyslexia is quite curable. He was not born dyslexic. He acquired his dyslexia at his progressive school. But since he has apparently never read any of the books I’ve written on the subject, he still believes that he was born that way.

Today, all of America’s public schools are constructed on the Lincoln School model, and the result is that functional illiteracy and dyslexia are booming among American students. Nelson Rockefeller was able to hire Henry Kissinger to do his reading for him, and apparently David Rockefeller has learned different ways of overcoming his handicap. But most Americans afflicted with school-induced dyslexia will go through life severely handicapped by this needless condition. They generally keep their reading problem to themselves. It’s simply too embarrassing for an intelligent, ambitious, motivated person in America to admit that he or she can’t read.

Besides being dyslexic, David Rockefeller, as head of the Chase bank, has been a fervent internationalist. Since the Rockefeller oil interests have always been international in scope, it is understandable why he would be an internationalist. He used his *Memoirs* to explain his position:

For more than a century ideological extremists at either end of the political spectrum have seized upon well-publicized incidents such as my encounter with Castro to attack the Rockefeller family for the inordinate influence they claim we wield over American political and economic institutions. Some even believe we are part of a secret cabal working against the best interests of the United States, characterizing my family and me as ‘internationalists’ and conspiring with others around the world to build a more integrated global political and economic structure—one world, if you will. If that’s the charge, I stand guilty, and I am proud of it.

He explains further:

It was my parents who first impressed on me the importance of the world beyond the United States. Father was a staunch supporter of the League of Nations, an active participant in the worldwide Protestant ecumenical movement.... Mother, of course, was deeply engaged by art from all parts of the world.

Like many in my generation I returned from World War II believing a new international architecture had to be erected and that the United States had a moral obligation to provide leadership to the effort. I was determined to play a role in that process and I found the Council on Foreign Relations in New York the best place to pursue my interest in global affairs.

He calls those of us who suspect a world-government conspiracy behind all of this benign internationalism as being afflicted with a form of “populist paranoia.” But apparently he knows nothing of the plan by Cecil Rhodes to found a secret society to create a world government ruled by an Anglo-American elite. Indeed, the Council on Foreign Relations was one of the instruments created by Rhodes’s followers to lead the way toward a world government.

In the book, Rockefeller adds this interesting footnote:

My daughter Peggy has visited Cuba a number of times since 1985 and developed a good rapport



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with President Castro. This may partially explain Castro's exuberant behavior. I did meet privately with Castro the following day at the Council on Foreign Relations building on Park Avenue.

It is sad that four members of one of the most powerful families in America became dyslexic because of their father's misguided efforts to support Progressive education. Thus, Nelson, Lawrence, Winthrop, and David Rockefeller were all robbed of the great pleasure of being great readers and enjoying the many books they could have read. One might ask whether or not their reading skills would have made a difference in their politics. One thing we do know is that conservatives become that way because they read lots of books written by great conservative thinkers.

Rockefeller also writes about the Bilderberg meetings (the last of which was held last week at the Suvretta House in St. Moritz, Switzerland):

If the Council on Foreign Relations raises the hackles of conspiracy theorists, the Bilderberg meetings must induce apocalyptic visions of omnipotent international bankers plotting with unscrupulous government officials to impose cunning schemes on an ignorant and unsuspecting world. At the risk of disappointing these conspiracy mongers, the truth is that Bilderberg is really an intensely interesting annual discussion group that debates issues of significance to both Europeans and North Americans — without reaching consensus.

So why are its proceedings kept so secret? Why keep feeding our "populist paranoia?" Meanwhile, we wonder how many of our top leaders are also dyslexic.



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