

“How Children Outgrow Socialism”

[This is a letter I sent to friends on May 30, 2010, together with a report from the “Science NOW” news site. –S.H.]

Hi everybody,

One of the main ruling-class arguments against socialism or communism is that it “goes against human nature”. We Marxists have always ridiculed that argument, since obviously in this society people differ tremendously in this regard, and sharing, cooperation, the desire for more equality, and even outright socialism or communism definitely do not go against the “nature” of *some of us!*

Since sharing, cooperation, equality, etc., do not go against the “nature” of some of us, the fact that they do (in this society) go against the “nature” of others cannot possibly be a result of any inherent biological or psychological imperative in all human beings. In other words, human differences in this regard are quite obviously mostly cultural and ideological; that is, they are (mostly at least) due to the way that people are brought up and educated.

Nevertheless, the bourgeois ideologists stick to their guns, and never stop talking about how “human nature” precludes sharing, equality, socialism and communism. They don’t let little things like facts and logic get in the way of their opinions!

The new issue of *Science* magazine (published by the National Academy of Sciences—a bourgeois establishment institution in science if ever there was one!—has an interesting article in this regard. The report below, from its online science information site, is entitled “How Children Outgrow Socialism”. Oddly enough, the bourgeoisie is too stupid to realize that the study reported on here actually proves the opposite of what they think it does!

What their own study shows, and what they admit here, is that younger children are much more likely to share, cooperate and favor equality among themselves than older children. Now obviously that means that if anything is innate in people it is the tendencies toward sharing, cooperation and equality, *rather than* the selfishness that the bourgeoisie always claims is innate!

And the study also further demonstrates (what has been pretty obvious all along), that culture and education can transform and overpower what is innate in us (whatever that is) to a considerable degree.

What this study really shows is that those fine human cooperative and sharing characteristics which most children still have to some degree even as late as the age of 10 or so are gradually beaten out of them later on! In other words, as kids become more and more acculturated in this society, they become less and less cooperative and sharing, and more and more selfish individualists! It seems to me that this is a very strong damnation of the nature of this society, of its form of economy and culture, and its educational system!

I love it when the ruling class promotes yet another “proof” of the “necessity” of selfishness and of huge and ever-growing inequalities in society, which actually proves the precise opposite of that!

Scott

From: <http://news.sciencemag.org/sciencenow/2010/05/how-children-outgrow-socialism.html?etoc>

Science **NOW** UP TO THE MINUTE NEWS FROM SCIENCE

How Children Outgrow Socialism

by Dan Ferber on May 27, 2010 4:13 PM



Fair is fair. Norwegian school children in this study worked hard to earn their money before deciding on a fair way to share it. Credit: Image courtesy of Knut Egil Wang

Children start off like Karl Marx, but they eventually become more like a member of the International Olympic Committee. That’s the conclusion of a new study, which finds that children’s views on fairness change from egalitarian to merit-based as they grow older. The results help explain why society rewards high achievers with high pay, and they could help educators better motivate children.

The find comes thanks to an economic experiment known as the dictator game. Researchers led by experimental economist Alexander Cappelen of the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration in Bergen recruited youths aged 10 through 18 from schools near Bergen. Each child was paired with another student he or she didn’t know and then given a chance to earn real money by repeatedly noting the appearance of a particular three-figure number on a computer screen filled with large tables of numbers. Some students performed better at the task and thus earned more money. At the end of the game, the money earned by the

pair was pooled, and one of the two students—the dictator—was asked to divvy up the cash with his or her partner in a way that he or she deemed fair.

Age determined how evenly the children divided up the earnings. About two-thirds of the youngest children, aged 10 to 11, split the pot evenly regardless of their own or their partner's achievements. Older teenagers, however, split the pot based on achievement. Among 18-year-olds, for example, only 22% split the pot evenly with their partner, whereas 43% kept more for themselves because they felt like they'd earned it, the researchers [report](#) in tomorrow's issue of *Science*.

The results suggest that concepts of fairness become more merit-based as children grow up and as they participate in activities like sports and school that reward achievement, Cappelen says. "Adolescence is a very important period for shaping children's fairness views." The results could also help educators set up reward systems that the students themselves consider fair, he adds, which could lead to more harmonious classrooms and better student performance.

"I think it's an interesting and important study," says behavioral economist James Konow of Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California. But he is not as convinced as the authors that concepts of fairness are shaped by experience.

[End]