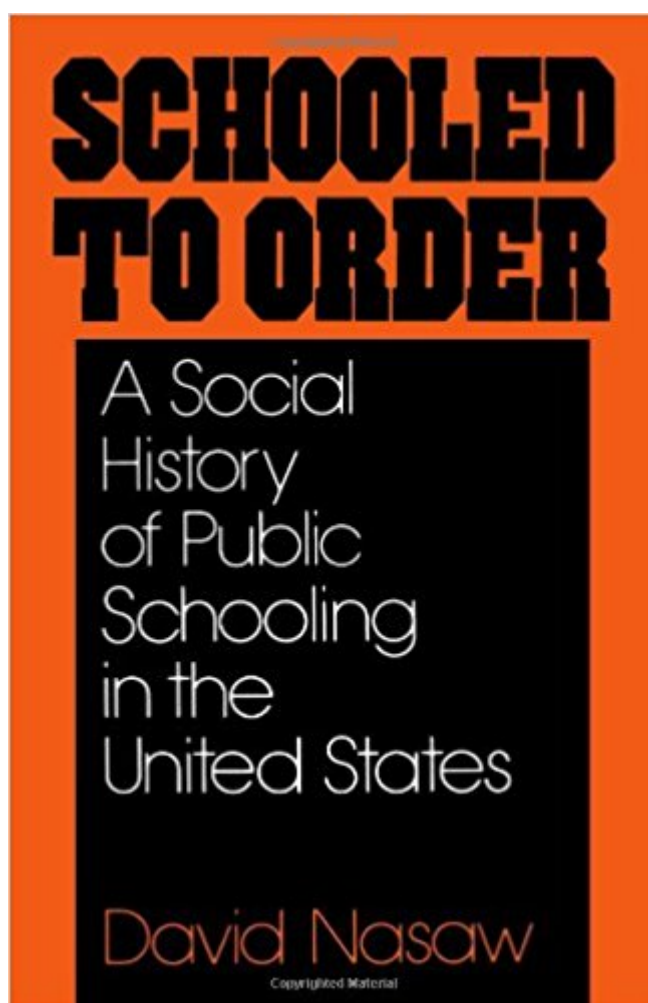


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# Schooled To Order: A Social History Of Public Schooling In The United States



## Synopsis

'This is history of education in its finest tradition, i.e., education's social history rather than as mere schooling... Carefully researched, well written, and even-handed, Nasaw's book is an important addition to the debate over the evolution of public education in the United States.'

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A significant new addition to the field of educational and social history. The broad perspective and effective blending of varying historical assessments reveal Nasaw's strength as a writer and historian."--*Journal of Southern History*"An important and provocative first book."--*History: Reviews of New Books*

'This is history of education in its finest tradition, i.e., education's social history rather than as mere schooling... Carefully researched, well written, and even-handed, Nasaw's book is an important addition to the debate over the evolution of public education in the United States.'

I read the book for a college class that I took for a reading program. I recommend this book for anyone who wants to gain a better understanding of the social history of public schooling in the United States, especially if you are an educator or aspiring educator. Nasaw did an excellent job of exposing the real purpose of education. According to Nasaw and my professor for the class, there are three purposes: 1) political (to maintain political stability, 2) social (to reduce the tensions

resulting from economic inequality, and 3) economic (to sort by social class for a future occupation. Nasaw did an excellent job of using footnotes and citing original documents to support his arguments. The book is divided into three historical periods elementary, high school, and higher education, which are easy to read and comprehend with a minimum amount of effort and time.

Great writing but a bit repetitive.

I would like to return this purchase, due to missing page numbers. My professor constantly refers to page numbers, and I can not follow along without getting caught up finding his place. I wish I had never purchased the Kindle edition of this book.

This is one of a fairly large number of critically evaluative histories of public education in the U.S. that was published during the late '60's, '70's, and early '80's. As with the others, Nasaw departs from the traditional celebrationist view of the philosophy, purpose, and outcome of public education. As such, he takes issue with commonplace claims that public schooling was aimed at promoting upward social mobility, severing ties between background factors and subsequent outcomes, and creation of a rich national repository of what today is called human capital. The same dismissive stance applies to using education as an equalizing force, preventing the accumulation of institutional and financial advantages for some without benefiting others. As with Benjamin Rush, often referred to as the father of American psychiatry, Nasaw focuses on the use of public education to create a conforming, tractable, and behaviorally uniform citizenry. We often fail to recognize that at least as early as the 1830's, American's with substantial property and an abundance of wealth in other forms, were concerned that increasing religious, political, national, and linguistic diversity would render precarious their holdings and privileges. This is an important reason why the early American aristocracy was hostile to creation of a parallel Catholic educational system in the nation's cities. The American aristocracy's hope, as with Rush, was that the public schools would imbue students with a sort of internal policeman, an internalized set of norms that would make rebellious departure from the status quo virtually unthinkable. Their educational objectives were much more straightforward than persuading young people that we were all in the same boat, just occupying different positions, with the processes whereby one's location was determined operating in a fair and even-handed way, eventually providing at least a modicum of opportunity for all. The American aristocracy's expectations for public education were not nearly this circumspect, nor were they based on a notion of a shared responsibility and fundamental fairness. Instead, they wanted inculcation of rigidly

controlling norms such that being socially or politically unconventional or criminal would be literally unthinkable. Nasaw provides a clear and compelling account of the use of schooling to produce an orderly citizenry. This is not the best of the critically evaluative histories of education, but it makes a significant contribution and, all tolled, is a good read.

Good description, good history. A couple of negatives: the history ends in the late 70s so 40 years of history at this point. Another negative is that the author seems to think it is an organized conspiracy. He also uses words like the students are "barred" from the universities as though the university picks winners and loser personally in the game of admittance. If people meet the requirements then they are admitted over the others. Do you think that maybe high performers give birth to high performers and so the children of high performers will succeed at a higher rate. Also, here in the US we are free to go to whatever school we want and qualify to attend. If some people choose community college or blue collar career tracks it might be because that is where their talent and interest is taking them.

A very dry yet interesting account about how schools began in America and what the original purpose was when opening the schools.

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