

Dumbing Down of America
Posted On:December 31, 1969

It is obvious that America has been "dumbed down." When one quarter of us do not have the smarts to believe the reliable information sources trusted by the other three-quarters of us, we are in trouble. Are they too dumb to wonder why the Conspiracy Networks (Fox and QAnon) told them that former President Trump would be inaugurated on March 4, followed by executions of all the "traitors" who did not support him?

All election officials and all law courts (including the Supreme Court) dismissed Trump-inspired law suits demanding nullifying all elections except those that elected Republicans. It takes real dummies to believe the lies by Trump and Giuliani that the voting machines were rigged, machines they claimed were sold by a South American dictator dead these past ten years. It took the voting machine company to sue Fox, its entertainer broadcasters, and Giuliani himself for libel, which finally made the liars back off.

March 4 came and went, and the gullible dolts can see for themselves that Trump is not the president. Not only is Joe Biden president, but 75 percent of us support his actions, including 60 percent of Republicans, mayors, governors, and election officials. The ignorant believe the lies but Trump's enablers, who should know better, keep lying and blustering. They still fear Trump. They know that Biden is their president and that the election was fair and reports of fraud were lies, yet they lie to their followers.

Today's ignorant fellow citizens are not a new phenomenon. They have been among us since the country's founding. In the 1730s and 40s, there was a revolt against the secular nationalism among the country's educated elites who were contemplating separation from England and creating a new country.

These educated men (Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Monroe, Ben Franklin, among them) believed in God, were all Christians, but were able to think beyond religion, which provided morality but not the facts of science and history. Religion did not provide the smallpox vaccinations for the revolutionary army George Washington led.

Throughout the 19th century, populist movements resentful of the educated, banks, and government periodically rose and then fell. There were "Mugwumps" and "Know-Nothings," proud of their ignorance and contemptuous of the educated. Fortunately, none of their candidates ever managed to win an election.

Violent ignoramus are not new. The Ku Klux Klan was the first of these dolts with guns and lynch ropes. As late as the 1920s, gigantic parades of Klans marched down Fifth Avenue, robed in sheets, faces covered, and wearing the conical hats of the Spanish Inquisition (dunce caps).

Despite our periodic outbreaks of idiocy, Americans managed to educate a growing number of children, from coast to coast. Children learned to read, write, cypher; and learned how democracy works (Civics and voting); the history of their towns, states, and nation; learned English (if immigrants) and absorbed the shared culture of the country. The more advanced children learned Latin and Greek, modern European languages, and science, preparing them for university admission and professional careers.

Although counties and states controlled education, we had national values: promoting honest, diligent, and informed citizens. Until the 1950s, the system worked amazingly well. After World War II, the GI bill enabled competent veterans to go to college, elevating them from working class to middle class and more.

The little recognized downside of this excellent program was that children were no longer essential to the survival of the family. They became an indulged luxury with no duties other than to go to school, get good grades, and go to college. Many lacked purpose, ethical training, and empathy.

The American education system that had done so well deteriorated under the flood of students. Those from solid middle-class households still learned in a watered-down curriculum, but too many lacked even that. The urban ignorant succumbed to the plague of popular culture that promoted rebellion, drug use, and disdain for school. In rural America, White Supremacy enjoyed a renaissance, creating the underclass we see today: armed-to-kill ignoramus who know nothing and are proud of it.

We must and can fix this.

682 words

Dr. Laina Farhat-Holzman is a historian, lecturer, and author of "How Do You Know That? Contact her at Lfarhat102@aol.com or www.globalthink.net.