

School Inc.

A Personal Journey
with Andrew Coulson



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Production Biographies

Andrew Coulson
Creator/Writer/Director

Trained in mathematics and computer science at Canada's McGill University, Coulson began his first career as a Microsoft software engineer in 1989. He left the computer industry in January of 1994 to pursue his love of education, troubled by the fact that teaching and learning were being left behind by the relentless progress in other fields. His book, Market Education: The Unknown History, received endorsements from *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry, Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman, Harvard political scientist Paul Peterson, and University of Chicago education psychologist Herbert Walberg.

His 2009 paper for the peer-reviewed *Journal of School Choice* was the most comprehensive review of the worldwide scientific literature comparing alternative education systems. In 2011 he conducted a statistical study titled "The Other Lottery: Are Philanthropists Backing the Best Charter Schools?" Coulson has appeared on national radio and television, lectured on three continents, and has been published in top daily newspapers around the world.

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He has testified before the United States House and Senate on the state of American education and co-authored amicus briefs for the United States Supreme Court. He was senior fellow in education policy at the Washington, D.C.-based Cato Institute, and contributed chapters to books by the Hoover Institution and Canada's Fraser Institute. Prior to his death in February 2016, Coulson made arrangements to ensure ***School Inc.*** would be completed for broadcast television.

Thomas Skinner
Executive Producer

Free To Choose Media Senior Executive Producer Thomas Skinner is an award-winning television and film program executive with more than 50 years of experience in public and commercial broadcasting. He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including four national Emmy Awards, three George Foster Peabody Awards, a Columbia/DuPont Award and was director of the Academy Award-winning film *Journey into Self*.

From 1970 through 1993 Skinner served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of QED Communications in Pittsburgh, PA. During his 23 years at QED Communications, Skinner served as executive producer of more than 150 programs and series broadcasts nationally on PBS, among them the 10 highest rated programs in the history of PBS. In addition, he served as co-executive producer of 16 seasons of National Geographic Specials, the Emmy-Award-winning *Planet Earth* and *The Infinite Voyage* (both with the National Academy of Sciences).

Beginning in 1993, he joined Resolution Productions in Burlington, VT, as vice president for programming, creating, writing and executive producing several series for TBS, A&E and Discovery. Skinner also served as assistant manager at WITF-TV in Hershey, PA and associate professor of radio and television and executive producer at San Diego State University. Skinner holds a Bachelor of Arts in speech and education from State University of New York (SUNY), Fredonia, and a MA and Ph.D. in Communications and Theatre from the University of Michigan.

Bob Chitester

Executive Producer

Bob Chitester is chairman, president and CEO of Free To Choose Network, a 501-c-3 public foundation housing Free To Choose Media, an award-winning, global entertainment company which produces and distributes thought-provoking public television programs and series.

In 1977, Chitester and economist Milton Friedman and his wife, Rose, undertook a film project which became *Free To Choose*, an award-winning PBS TV series and an international best-selling book based on the series. Subsequently, Chitester founded the production company with the same moniker. He also founded The Idea Channel, a video library of more than 200 recorded intellectual discussions between the world's leading scholars, including 31 Nobel Prize recipients.

Chitester has more than 50 years of experience in television management and program development. More than 500 projects have been launched through Free To Choose Media under Chitester's orchestration, ranging from documentaries, cable series and home video programs. In 1966, he became the founding general manager of the Erie, Pennsylvania PBS and NPR stations (WQLN and WQLN-FM), which he headed until 1982. Chitester earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Michigan, and received an honorary Doctor of Literature degree from Allegheny College.

Leigh Anne Sides

Producer/Supervising Editor

Leigh Anne Sides is a film and television producer and editor who has been working in the entertainment industry for more than 15 years. She served on the post production team for Academy Award Winner for Best Documentary Feature 2007, *Taxi to the Dark Side* and edited the feature documentary, *Kennewick Man: An Epic Drama of the West*, about a significant archaeological find in Washington State.

In addition to editing long form documentaries for National Geographic and PBS, Sides has edited episodes for two seasons of *Exposé: America's Investigative Reports, Now* with David Brancaccio and she was the series editor in 2008 on *Wide Angle* for PBS. Sides has also edited shows

for A&E, The Food Network, The History Channel, Discovery and many other major broadcast and cable networks.

In 2003, she was invited to take part in the Filmmakers' Workshop at the Sundance Institute. She has received various awards and honorable mentions for her work, including six Emmy nominations and a Ciné Golden Eagle for her work on the *Exposé* episode "In a Small Town". Sides is interested in the arts, politics, environmental issues, human rights, science and nature and strives to reflect those interests in the projects she undertakes.

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