

Schooling Objects to Safety

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Training is not learning, neither is a change in ideas learning.

When a person begins teacher education they start by exploring a few essentials: the philosophy of education, the nature of learning, the psychology of child and adolescent development, the sociology of education and the ethics/practice of schooling. What they discover in their studies and early practice is that there is no such thing as a grand theory of learning. Indeed, they learn pretty quickly that [learning is a 'wicked problem'](#) .



In teacher education and in criticism of schooling, we learn that schooling is not often about learning either, but much more about '[social reproduction](#)' . In reading Education scholars like Apple (*Education and Power*), McLaren (*Schooling as a Ritual Performance*), Robinson (*Creative Schools, The Grassroots Revolution That's Transforming Schools*) and Claxton (*Hare Brain Tortoise Mind, Why Intelligence Increases When you Think Less*) we see that:

- The repetition of data is not learning
- Artificial Intelligence cannot 'learn'
- There is no learning without personhood
- Learning involves a change/movement in unconsciousness
- Ethics is central to learning
- Understanding power is key to learning
- Movement and change in the unconscious is foundational to learning
- Wisdom is central to learning

Schooling Objects to Safety

- Schooling is not learning
- 'Machine learning' is nonsense

Most educators know that the word 'schooling' is used as a pejorative term to express the conditioning of young people to conformance 'hidden' in the system. This is known as the 'hidden curriculum'. The hidden curriculum is often what is 'learned', not the overt expressed designs of the curriculum itself. The declared outcomes of the system are seldom learned. The discourse (power within) of 'the system' becomes what is learned, not the overt curriculum. So, children 'learn' to accept: teacher power, inequity, institutionalization, compliance, meritocracy, dog-eat-dog etc.

Freire (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*) labelled the typical process of schooling as 'banking', a process of inputs and outputs, deposits and withdrawals. This is the behaviourist view of training that thinks one can get out what one puts in. Of course, this discourse common to Safety, that doesn't understand education and learning, despite the fact that the industry uses the language of learning.

What is missing in the 'schooling' process is the privileging of: curiosity, discovery, innovation, imagination, inspiration, wisdom and creativity. One of the most popular TED Talks of all time is that by Ken Robinson 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY>). In his talk he explains how schooling is not education and learning.

What we often hear in the risk and safety world is the yearning for compliance to systems yet, in education and learning we know that compliance kills creativity. This is why risk is the flip side of learning, there can be no learning without risk. The rejection of risk is the rejection of learning. This is why risk, fallibility and learning are a wicked problem.

So, when the words 'learning' and 'education' are used in the safety industry they most often mean 'schooling objects for compliance to systems'. This is similar to what Freire called 'banking'.

The language of: curiosity, discovery, innovation, imagination, inspiration, wisdom and creativity are not used in context when Safety talks about learning. Yes, it seeks 'improvement in development' and 'behaviour change' but it doesn't desire learning, it really wants 'schooling'. Schooling is about indoctrination, the opposite of education and learning.

The language of 'hazards', 'objects' and 'controls' is the opposite of learning. When Safety talks about learning it most often really means 'compliance to systems'. If you

Schooling Objects to Safety

want to learn about learning, you don't turn to science and engineering for a theory of learning. If you want to learn about learning you need to embrace a Transdisciplinary approach. This requires Safety to step out of its comfort zone of 'compliance to systems' and embrace curiosity, discovery, innovation, imagination, inspiration, wisdom and creativity. Much of this language is conjured up in Safety as being the enemy of compliance to systems.

So, when you see the word 'learning' used in the safety industry, or 'learning teams' what is intended? Listen to the language and look underneath for the discourse (power in language) and investigate its ethic and politic. What is the hidden curriculum in the discourse? What are the declared expected outcomes and what are the hidden (unconscious) outcomes? If the discourse is about 'compliance to systems' then the process doesn't include learning.

You can read more about risk and learning here:

Tackling Risk, A Field Guide to Risk and Learning <https://www.humandimensions.com/product/tackling-risk/>

<https://tofasakademi.com/what-is-learning-theory/>

<https://drewforrest.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/a-forrest-final-cmap2.jpg>

Source: <https://safetyrisk.net/schooling-objects-to-safety/#comment-3685>

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