

The Problem of Schooling: Training and Not Education

Dr Neville Buch

a crazy sociological-philosophic historian

I add my acknowledgement to the original owners of the land, and elders past and present

Allow me for the first introduction minute by making a stream of consciousness statement.

Contrary to popular imagination, sub-fields in the university disciplines are mostly not comprehensive. Academic fashion, following the trends in the public marketplace, dominate production – topics written and research, and publication outputs.

Sociology of Education and Urban Sociology



Moments from Wikimedia+Education Conference 2019



Rendering of a modern large-scale urban development in Kazan, Russia

Academics in the field of Sociology of Education, as well as Urban Sociology, have noticed this pattern, and these academics are usually the ones at the global cutting edge in thinking these matters through. Meta-reflections on higher education have emerge as a cottage industry through diverse groupings of the scholarly literature.



Historical Sociology

Émile Durkheim 1858-1917

Historians talk about “historical delay,” – that understanding often comes too late for a society in an historical moment, and it is challenging to get this message through that our social understanding in fields, like Sociology of Education and Urban Sociology, are outdated and very misleading from misinformed models of education.

Sociology of Higher Education

Purchased Image: Higher Education is the key. Higher Education key tag with graduation cap. ID 68375614 | Higher Education © Zimmytws | Dreamstime.com



The key message is that Australian higher education is mostly doing training as a matter of policy, and not education in its full semantics. This is the centre of the problem of schooling, which is the subject of my talk. The talk is wide-ranging for the very reason that education only works when it is sufficiently wide and deep.

The Australian Sociological Association (TASA)



There is a full paper which will be presented in Perth, in late November, with the title of “The Socio-Political Landscapes of the New Sociology of Culture and Cognition: A Tour through the History of Education field (1970-2030).” Now, I am only providing a brief history of the last 75 years, where I will only speak to the research heading for less than ten minutes. The research come from a survey of over 1200 articles in the *Journal of Sociology* since 1965.

Socialisation and the Problem of Schooling



Wilhelm Dilthey. Source: Wilhelm Dilthey zur Zeit seiner Verlobung (Vgl. Wilhelm Dilthey: Texte zur Kritik der historischen Vernunft. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1983, Titelbild). unbekannt, unknown - <http://www.zeno.org/Philosophie/M/Dilthey,+Wilhelm/Biographie>



F.C.S. Schiller

F.C.S. Schiller. Source (book in public domain): Slosson, Edwin E. Six Major Prophets. Boston, 1917.



John Dewey. Source: John Dewey, bust portrait. Underwood & Underwood - This image is available from the United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division under the digital ID cph.3a51565.



Ivan Illich. Source: English: Portrait of Ivan Illich. Español: Fotografía de Ivan Illich.

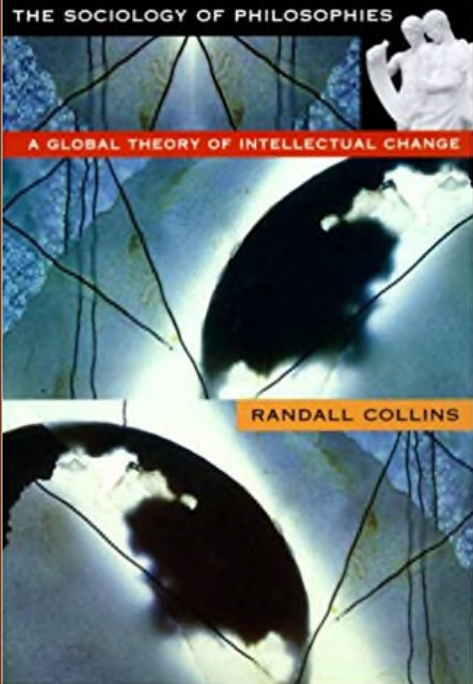
Socialisation is the starting point in the research. That is the common theme across sociologies. Sociology has undergone major changes as an Australian discipline of learning. Its recent history has shown discipline where there a great gaps, missing fields of the discipline; university courses once offered to undergraduate studies and missing research programs for postgraduate studies. Foremost is the field of historical sociology which points out to the academic community the historical forgetfulness in current practices. This lies at the heart in the problem of schooling.



Ivan Illich. Source:
English: Portrait of
Ivan Illich. Español:
Fotografía de Ivan


Illich's critique of modern schooling

Most educators are only vaguely aware of Ivan Illich's critique of modern schooling as the misdirected and bureaucratic way of thinking. The teaching class, that is those of us who teach rather than those narrowly engaged in weak political rhetoric, are aware of the misdirection. Better teachers see the capacity to be socialised to defend educational practices against government and bureaucratic intrusion as very important for our time in history; and in the same way, the political class is socialised to attack "education", ironically due to the problem of schooling.




THE SOCIOLOGY OF PHILOSOPHIES
A GLOBAL THEORY OF INTELLECTUAL CHANGE
RANDALL COLLINS

Collin's mapping of schooling



Randall Collins. Source: Dr. Randall Collins



Henry Giroux. Source: A Critical Interview with Henry Giroux : Global Education Magazine

But still forgotten is Randall Collin's mapping of schooling, for millennia, produced 20 years ago, and that forgetfulness is strange, since it is one of the great 20th century sociological insights: the balancing out between macro and micro theorisation. None of that has been reasonably translated to sociology courses in Australia.

Australian Policy

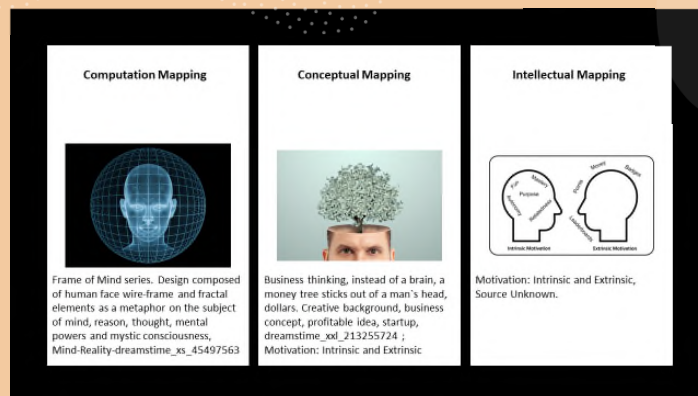


Current government policy prevents a holistic and comprehensive approach to education. Governments are strangely beholden to the business's world's demands that education is **only** for job training. Without comprehensive education, there is no social Level Playing Field. There are, yes, glimpses of innovation, but until Australian policy changes, overall, curriculum development will continue to decline.



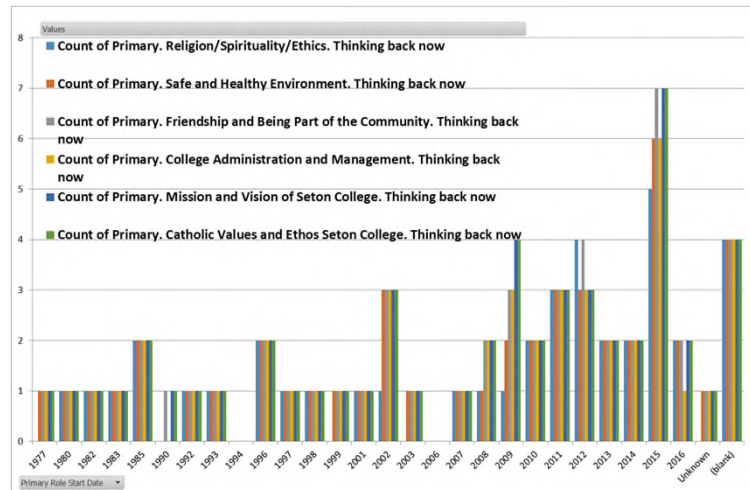
A distraction to putting in policy solution is the culture-history warfare, which dishonestly targets the New Sociology of the 1960s and 1970s, and through to the postmodern 1980s and 1990s. A key concept in the warfare rhetoric, and which is rarely self-reflected admitted, is Social Control. The prime social mechanism for social control is the Economy. Today the weight of responsibility for the economy is placed on State Systems, and a social warfare has been placed on arguments about State and Private Systems, as well as Public and Private Systems. The sociological thinking is misunderstood, narrowed to a particular system of thought, without much more comprehensive understanding

Cognition Histories and Sociology



My argument is to understand what is happening in Cognition. Apart from the problem of schooling, governments are obsessed with the Concepts of Development and Training. The Outcomes are misguided thinking on Teaching Methods and the Curriculum; misguided through the confused semantics of Professionalisation. The Outcomes are false starts in Equality programs, and thus Inequality, Disadvantage, and the continuing requirement for a Level Playing Field is still on the political table.

Participation



Participation – Community, thinking back, History of Seton College, Brisbane, Queensland. Seton College Survey Project

One key concept in this process that is overlooked is Participation. Who is going to put up their hand to actually do the work?

Cognition has to be active and not the passive form of political rhetoric. Often the warriors attack “education” for its unfulfilled idealism; but this is to misunderstand what is The Ideal. It becomes the Politics of allegedly Pragmatic Education. Alleged because it is, at some cognitive layer, unworkable.

Outcome Failures

1. Academic Achievement as very limited in society;
2. Meritocracy leaving individual persons behind in the competition race;
3. Level Playing Field resisted through Deprivation at the bottom and Privilege at the top;
4. Confused Pluralism, whether on Global Migration, Gender, Religion, or Welfare, due to the blindsightedness of the culture-history warfare; and finally,
5. The Struggle of the individual person to find decent Employment and Work.

By critically examining the Outcomes from Australian Policy we can see the failures:

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Cognition Challenge: through Social Control, through Categorisation and a great lack of Comprehension

- Reading Persons and People;
- Belonging;
- Drama and the Mundane;
- Ethics;
- History;
- Understanding Knowledge; and
- Dilemma, Legitimation, and Decisions.

To sum up, the Cognition fails through Social Control, through Categorisation and a great lack of Comprehension. That comprehension has to centre on *Lebensphilosophie*, the philosophical tradition of thinking of life first, and it includes:

- Reading Persons and People;
- Belonging;
- Drama and the Mundane ;
- Ethics;
- History;
- Understanding Knowledge; and
- Dilemma, Legitimation, and Decisions

How to Think Sociologically: Breaking the Bubble

- Micro Theory;
- Phenomenology;
- Problem Thinking;
- Utopian Thinking;
- Participatory Thinking and less Thinking for Entertainment; and
- Discriminatory and Holistic Thinking; ...

Where we conclude to resolve the problem of schooling is to be comprehensive across the different forms of thinking for the right context and right fit for the big picture:

- Micro Theory;
- Phenomenology;
- Problem Thinking;
- Utopian Thinking;
- Participatory Thinking and less Thinking for Entertainment; and
- Discriminatory and Holistic Thinking;

How to Think Sociologically: Breaking the Bubble

- Thinking to Know;
- Systems Thinking;
- Techné Thinking;
- Thinking for Scoping;
- Ideological Thinking;
- Thinking for Standards;
- Thinking for Understanding for Past and Present;
- Thinking for Clarity of Decision-Making
- Global Thinking
- Hierarchical and Level Playing Field Thinking; and finally,
- Public Discourses and *Lebensphilosophie*.

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The answer to the problem of schooling is to break the bubble thinking