

## Re: death of the mind.

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2004-07/0247.html>

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**Date:** 07/15/04

Date: Thu, 15 Jul 2004 19:25:09 -0400

----- Original Message -----

From: "David Longley" <[David@longley.demon.co.uk](mailto:David@longley.demon.co.uk)>

Newsgroups:

comp.ai.philosophy,bionet.neuroscience,sci.cognitive,sci.philosophy.meta,com  
p.ai.neural-nets

Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2004 2:04 PM

Subject: Re: death of the mind.

> *In article <8d8494cf.0407121009.43f30a03@posting.google.com>, dan*

> *michaels <feedbackroids@yahoo.com> writes*

> > *"John Hasenkam" <johnh@faraway.> wrote in message*

> > *news:<40f25d70@dnews.tpgi.com.au>...*

> >

> > > > *Anyone who thinks education doesn't entail a good degree of*

> > > *indoctrination*

> > > > *must be un-conscious.*

> > >

> > >

> > > *Of course, the only real question is .... to what extent?*

> > >

> > > *Yes, that is important. We can always indoctrinate others to make them think*

> > > *well. The student can transcend the teacher, it's just bloody hard work.*

> > >

> >

> >

> > *Best that you had not used the word indoctrination here in the first*

> > *place. That shows a somewhat callous perspective towards education.*

> > *Like you, life has dealt me a few blows – eg, auto transmission went*

> > *out this past week, on and on – but like Socrates, I choose not to be*

> > *entrapped by raw materialism.*

> >

> > *And of course, to the enlightened teacher, as opposed to the*

> > *egotistical self-same teacher, transcension is the entire point of*

> > *education. Only a very poor teacher would say ... "... now students,*

> > *I'm going to tell you the truth, and you must never waver from the*

- > *>path, or else you will become as idiots ...". Now, that IS*
- > *>indoctrination.*
- >
- > *Medical students, engineering students, and others pursuing training*
- > *programmes which ultimately take them into professions which hold them*
- > *accountable for their actions, would, I suggest, disagree.*

I doubt it. You make the mistake in all of your posts in assuming that to understand something simply means to give the right answers to questions. And certainly someone who understands something will give the right answers to all of the questions. But it's not because they've been "indoctrinated" or "conditioned" to give the right answers to those questions, but because they have the basis that allows them to derive the answers based on the fact that they actually understand the principles. And you don't get that understanding by attempting to drive it into their mind by "this is the right answer, and if you don't accept it, you are an idiot". What you have to do is show them WHY it's the right answer, and why it works and is the right answer in that case.

Let's look at the engineer. The engineer does have a lot of formulas and things that they are required to use and follow, but simply forcing those formulas into their minds is not going to make a good engineer. At some point, they may or are likely to come across a problem that they may not be able to solve if they stick to the complete specifications or formulas, but if they understand WHY the formulas specify what they should do in those cases, they may be able to say "Well, according to the formula I have to use metal of this weight, but that only applies to cases where there isn't this cross-bracing, and we can do that, so I can solve my problem by not following the 'rules' because the rule isn't required in this case." And that's a great thing.

You can only indoctrinate "rules". You cannot indoctrinate "understanding".

- > *Note that I tell you that you're an idiot. What you do in response to*
- > *that, is why enlightened others will usually just say "polite" or "nice"*
- > *things to you (or ignore you altogether).*

Of course, your definition of "enlightened" is "people who completely agree with me". All truly enlightened people would prefer thoughtful people who are in error than unthoughtful people who are correct