

Unschooling at the Institution

Nobody asked but ...

I never took public education very seriously, until I became an overt voluntaryist and a habitué of EVC. Now, I had to consider how I had lasted through my 12 years of servitude and continual higher ed since then. The secret is that I never took it seriously. I was so busy educating myself that I had too little time to question my enjoyment of my environment. Never in my scholastic career did I see myself as not being self-owned, not being self-directed. I was lucky enough to be on my own plane, above the fray of stateism. John Taylor Gatto holds that teachers are anyone, anywhere, anytime, anything that a self-learner chooses as a resource. I chose to push my teachers regardless of whether they were in the school or not. Now that I am a teacher, I choose to push my students into learning whether they are in school or not. They are free to push back.

My sacred expectation, however, is to see to the logical, if not physical, unschooling of my 8 grandchildren. I am an unschooling granddad. It is possible to go to school physically while being an unschooler logically. Cherry-pick the institution. Daydream. Look out the window. Be like Muhammad Ali — float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. No one is dependent on their environment unless they wish to be. Some may not see the choice, but it is there. You are either underwater, or you are an aquatic bird, skimming along, picking and choosing. One is free to push back.

I try, on every occasion with my grandchildren, to show them how I do not take public education too seriously. I encourage them in everything they wish to do, scholastically and otherwise. Public school is there to be dominated and exploited, not to be surrendered to.

— Kilgore Forelle