

they should  
report on the  
underlying  
causes of the  
input

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/ 2019

[for two players, or perhaps more]

*they should report on the underlying causes of the input* requires the players to sort a large collection of objects into distinct categories. The categories are not determined in advance, but are emergent and dependent on the decisions made by the players without discussion. Some objects may be able to be placed in more than one category, requiring negotiated agreement.

*they should report on the underlying causes of the input* was first performed by Parkinson Saunders at Post-Paradise, Birmingham on 28 May 2019. The title comes from the entry on *unsupervised learning* by Peter Dayan in The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences.

## SETUP

The players need a large collection of objects, randomly placed on a long table (or a set of smaller tables in a line).

The objects must all be capable of making a sound, either as their primary function or incidentally.

There should be as much variety as possible within the collection of objects.

Ideally all, or at least some, of the objects should be provided for the players by others.

If there are a lot of players, then it is fine for each player to contribute objects to the collection.

As a guide, there should be at least 10 objects per player, but more is preferable.

## PERFORMANCE

The aim of the piece is for the players to sort the objects into categories.

The categories are not predetermined but decided upon and adapted by the players as a group during the performance.

The sorting process should not involve any discussion or physical suggestions by the players.

Categories may be of any type (e.g. sound, function, colour, size, weight, value, etc.)

Categories need not be consistent (e.g. a group of blue objects next to a group of whistles)

Objects may belong to more than one of the emergent categories.

Players independently work through the collection of objects in any order, moving the objects into categorised groups.

Objects may be moved more than once to create new categorisations as required.

At some point between picking up an object and placing it in a new group, the object should be sounded (where possible as a short, discrete sound).

The piece finishes when the objects have been sorted into categories that all the players accept.