

Space for personal development: an exploration of student experience involving one professional doctorate programme

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Context

- The multi-professional and trans-disciplinary structure of professional doctorate programme incorporating three degrees:
 - A doctor of education (Ed D),
 - A doctor of legal practice (D Legal Prac),
 - A doctor of social practice (D Soc Prac)
- Programme is expanding to include a further three degrees
- Work with a common framework of research and underlying philosophy
- This provides a context for the production of knowledge within the professional doctorate

Conference Themes:

- **General issues:**
- **Opportunities for personal development through professional doctoral training**



Approach

- In deconstructing the multiplicities of the self located in multi-professional environments what questions are raised regarding personal development?
- One of our students commented...
- *"In the hurly burly of work I'd lost sight of actually being interested in the area I want to research!"*

Space for Research

- What exactly does the term 'space' signify for the self and precisely how does the self relate itself in the context of time for research and more broadly such language of research?
- To what extent is it meaningful to speak of *the production of space* for personal development through social research structured by the professional doctorate programme?

Space for self development

- The notion of *The Production of Space* is drawn from the title of Henri Lefebvre's (1991) seminal account.
- His thesis moves us towards an understanding of space for personal development of the self as constituted through, productive of, and permeated by social relations mediating research, Higher Education and the professions represented by the body of students.

Education for, and psychology of, personal development planning (PDP)

- PDP and employability agenda

- Dominant identity of the 'enlightened student' is being replaced by autonomous /self-directed/ flexible lifelong learners'

- Individualisation; self directed lifelong learners

- What can I do?
- Individualisation in PDP - human identity changed from a 'given' into a 'task': actors given responsibility for performing that task and for the consequences (also the side-effects) of their performance'
- new technologies of performance, reflecting a shift towards the self-generational capacities of students

- 'emotional intelligence' along with 'managerial intelligence' and 'intellectual intelligence' ... personal competencies ... analytical approach - self-auditing used in PDP

The self in space

- Contingent implications for the coded space reproduced as institutional language has already been felt by the self
- One student spoke of: *“being given one day per week”* in which to complete her studies for the Ed D, only to find that her practice had been expanded by the “powers that be” and she has also been given more work to complete in the remaining four days than she had been doing the previous year working full-time”

Technologies of the self, and, of PDP

- 'Heterogeneous range of techniques of subjectification through which human beings are urged to become more ethical beings'
- Foucault's writings suggest ... professional doctorate students... such techniques create grounds for defining their identities ... regulating themselves in accordance with the moral codes inscribed within the space produced by the institutional apparatus of Higher Education and the professions
- One such technique we suggest is that of *personal development planning*

Reflexive self-development

- Reflexive orientation ... *research about the process of PDP* opens the very process of PDP to a multiplicity of questions concerning the language in which the self is situated
- Let's appeal to the rhizome: 'the two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us were several, there was already quite a crowd'
- Opens the possibility of a multiplicity of forms of research invited by the readings of Foucault, Heidegger, Lefebvre, Deleuze and Guattari and others and continued reflexivity concerning PDP

Stage set for “training” the self in its relationship with PDP...

...new research to uncover, to disentangle and unlock the possibilities of the self becoming alert to, and conscious of, the technologies that are shaping its very existence.