

Theorising postgraduate pedagogy

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Introduction

In all the clamour of recent and growing concern about postgraduate studies in higher education, there has been a persistent and perhaps surprising lacuna: the question of pedagogy. Much has been made of the importance of 'research' in the burgeoning political economy of the university and the nation—moreover, of research *and* training, as a new unholy alliance, or even research *as* training—, and new emphases are evident everywhere on matters of accountability, performativity, and instrumental rationality. More and more, there is debate about completion rates, supervisor-student relationships, financial assistance and other forms of support, infrastructural provision, ethics, examination protocols and procedures, and the like. Arguably, however, this remains firmly within a familiar frame and is entirely consistent with a pervasive and longstanding institutional and metaphysical logic, in accordance with which 'research' and 'knowledge' continue to be privileged over 'teaching' and 'learning', and within which 'education' as such is devalued, or realised rather as an (un)necessary supplement to the real work of the Academy.

That, to reiterate, is emphatically 'research' rather than 'teaching'. As in other educational and schooling sectors, teaching as such is curiously positioned in a subordinate, service role—the superordinate figures vis-a-vis the 'teacher' being the 'administrator' and/or the 'researcher'. Moreover, this is always a highly gendered set of relations and positions: males statistically outnumber females with regard to this division of labour and privilege—the more so, higher up the institutional hierarchy; and it can be argued, further, that the structure of knowledge and disciplinarity is characteristically *masculinist*. But at the same time, 'teaching' is necessary not just to the continued viability of universities in increasingly difficult economic times but also to postgraduate work, at least in the sense that regulations throughout the university system require formal supervision. 'Supervision', however, would appear to be something other than 'teaching'; or rather, it is to be understood more in terms of 'research' than as 'teaching'. More broadly, a pervasive binary logic (re-)emerges, with 'pedagogy' hereby set against 'disciplinarity' and systematically subordinate to it, as we argue in this paper. This is, of course, to enter into the (un)familiar territory of feminist and poststructuralist critiques of Reason and the Academy (Hekman, 1990; Luke and Gore, 1992).

Over a decade ago now, Connell (1985a: 38) argued that "[s]upervising a research higher degree is the most advanced level of teaching in our education system". Moreover, as he indicated, "it is certainly one of the most complex and problematic" forms of teaching, and yet, curiously, "[t]his complexity is not often enough acknowledged". As he further suggested, many academics simply "don't see supervision as *teaching*", or perhaps at least as teaching in the usual sense. Connell was adamant, however, that this constituted a major problem vis-a-vis the quality and effectiveness of postgraduate education:

[Supervision] has to be seen as a form of teaching. Like other forms, it raises questions about curriculum, method, teacher/student interaction, and educational environment.

Connell's call to action in this regard was a timely and useful intervention. Ten years on, however, we are left with the suspicion that nothing much has changed. This is notwithstanding an increasing emphasis on supervision and related issues, within a general upsurge of interest in and concern about postgraduate studies, and widespread recognition that "[p]ostgraduate education is right at the forefront of

the changes to higher education in Australia" (Marginson, 1995, p. 33).

Like much else in this respect, these changes and heightened forms of attention seem more often than not driven by policy interests and imperatives. In that sense, the burgeoning research activity on questions of postgraduate modes of educational activity and delivery, practice and provision, is more policy-oriented and informed than influenced by, let alone generative of, theory. By and large, the available work in this area is inadequately theorised, or rather, it tends to be radically undertheorised. One of the first requirements then would appear to be bringing into the debate a more explicit, specifically theoretical stance—a matter, that is, of drawing theory as such into postgraduate education, as a key site of both praxis and inquiry. On the face of it, of course, such an ambition seems audacious, at the very least. It presupposes and indeed privileges a particular understanding of theory, and perhaps does less than justice to the work currently available and underway. That may be so. Nonetheless, in what follows, we explore some issues and arguments in this regard, specifically concerned with relations among pedagogy and disciplinarity, research and teaching. Our aim in doing so is to begin to provide some different perspectives on what is certainly a matter of some growing moment in the university sector today.

From 'teaching' to 'pedagogy'

One of the problems with Connell's account is, perhaps paradoxically, its very homeliness, its comfortable familiarity. He persistently refers to 'teaching' and stays right away from any high-falutin' reference to 'pedagogy'. This makes his article both accessible and disarming: a matter of experienced plain speaking about the commonsense of educational practice, with specific regard to PhD supervision. Yet it is clear that more is at issue here than commonsense, or a commonly recognisable practice. Recent accounts from Lusted (1986) and Simon (1992) provide helpful elaborations on this point. For Lusted, 'pedagogy' as a specific concept is "desperately undertheorised":

Within education and even among teachers, where the term should have more purchase, pedagogy is under-defined, often referring to no more than a teaching style, a matter of personality and temperament, the mechanics of securing classroom control to encourage learning, a cosmetic bandage on the hard body of classroom contact (Lusted, 1986, p. 2).

The situation is exacerbated in the university sector ("among elite realms of thought", as he puts it), where 'pedagogy' if it is attended to at all is simply "taken as coterminous with teaching, merely describing a central activity in an education system" (Lusted, 1986, p. 2). As with 'administration' (ideally, that is, perhaps), 'teaching' is understood largely as instrumental and certainly as subordinate to the work of knowledge production. Simon (1992: 55) similarly describes pedagogy as a term fraught with difficulty: "One can hardly use the term in conversation in schools and living rooms without sounding like a pretentious academic". Yet, as he argues, it has a definite use-value, as at once a 'provocation' and "an attempt to rupture everyday talk about classroom practice and introduce suppressed or forgotten issues back into the conversation" (Simon, 1992, p. 55).

What such accounts do is throw the conceptual-institutional field wherein these complexly intricately notions of 'teaching' and 'pedagogy' circulate and resonate into sharper relief. What is 'teaching' in higher research degree contexts? What does it look like? What does it

consist of? What is 'good' and what is 'bad' teaching? When and where does teaching happen, under what conditions? More abstractly perhaps, how and why might 'teaching' in this instance be best located within a more comprehensive understanding of 'pedagogy'? Lusted argues for the significance and importance of the concept of pedagogy thus:

Why is pedagogy important? It is important since, as a concept, it draws attention to the process through which knowledge is produced. Pedagogy addresses the 'how' questions involved not only in the transmission of knowledge but also in its production. Indeed, it enables us to question the validity of separating these activities so easily by asking under what conditions and through what means we 'come to know' (Lusted, 1986, pp. 2-3).

This is not simply a matter of 'com[ing] to know', however, since it is also a matter of 'coming to be', that is, of becoming and being a certain authorised form of research(er) identity. Furthermore, to speak of 'process' in this regard cannot be mistakenly associated simply with psychology, which is perhaps an unfortunate implication of Lusted's account here, but of institutional practice; or rather, the intricacy of psychological and institutional processes—the interrelation and interaction of subjectivity and circumstances. Further, as he writes:

to bring pedagogy in from the cold and onto the central stage of cultural production is to open up for questioning areas of enquiry generally repressed by conventional assumptions, as prevalent in critical as in dominant practices, about theory production and teaching, and about the nature of knowledge and learning (Lusted, 1986, p. 3).

What is particularly striking about the account that Lusted offers is his refusal of the simple manufacturing, transmission model of theory production and pedagogic practice alike, and his emphasis on the importance of the practices and relations that necessarily shape and inform them both, within what is more often than not a common institutional context. A particular form of integration and identification is thus implied among 'research', 'teaching' and 'study' as academic-institutional activities (Clark, 1994). Simon similarly expands and clarifies the concept of pedagogy: "... talk about pedagogy is simultaneously talk about the details of what students and teachers might do together *and* the cultural politics such practices support". Hence, as he indicates, "to propose a pedagogy is to propose a political vision" (Simon, 1992, p. 57).

In Connell's case, there is little explicit recognition given to supervision being either theoretical or political. That does not mean that it is not for him in this instance, or generally; rather, that it is not acknowledged or treated as such here, the most likely reason being that this is a limited practical exercise in pedagogical advice. But it seems also likely that it is related to his rhetorical preference for 'teaching' over 'pedagogy' as an organising term of reference. As for the elements of teaching he mentions in the passage cited above: 'curriculum', 'method', 'teacher/student interaction' and 'educational environment', he is most illuminating in accounting for "the 'supervising' relationship", as he calls it, although he does touch on various aspects of these others. For instance, he notes that can be "no fixed formula for PhD supervision, no fixed course of events", and accordingly, "[t]he 'curriculum' cannot be planned in the way it is for undergraduate courses" (Connell, 1985a, p. 39). This is of course partly a feature characteristic of the kind of postgraduate education institutionalised in Australia, modelled on the UK system¹: a largely one-to-one, intense, highly privatised relationship between a student and a supervisor.

Of course, even under these circumstances it is *not* the case that there is no curriculum per se, but rather that it is tacit and informal, and as Connell (1985a, p. 38) notes himself, characteristically caught up in a certain mystique of 'research' such that "the student is supposed to absorb the necessary know-how by a sort of intellectual osmosis between great minds". Where and how this 'osmosis' occurs is another point worth considering. For example, Connell indicates the importance of regular meetings, with diligent and careful record-keeping on the part of the supervisor (and presumably the student), suggesting that

'keeping in touch' is a key obligation in supervisory work—hence the implication and effect of the term 'super-vision' itself, with its intimations of a perhaps impossibly idealised panoptic power. In the usual scheme of things, this may well be not just the principal form of official contact but also the only form.

That does not mean that 'supervision', understood as a distinctive pedagogic relationship, is exhausted in such meetings. On the contrary, in on-campus situations (historically by far the most common realisation of postgraduate study) other opportunities arise in the normal course of institutionalised academic work for exchanges and demonstrations that are significant in this regard. Simon's account of his work in the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto provides a useful picture of what this means for him (and presumably for North American postgraduate education generally):

in my institution the work of doing education is accomplished in settings such as a course and its manifestation as a series of weekly classroom meetings, individual discussions with students in faculty offices, thesis committee meetings, computer conferencing programs (within which students and faculty discuss various topics), and informal discussions among students (and sometimes faculty) in hallways, the cafeteria, and the local pub (Simon, 1992, p. 88).

What Simon omits from this account but certainly is an important feature of the culture of prestigious and successful institutions like OISE is the *seminar*, whether that be built into the internal schedule and work requirements of faculty and students—presented either as an opportunity to share research in progress, or to display one's wares—or whether it be formed out of and around presentations and performances by visiting academics and intellectuals. The seminar is a powerful means whereby what counts as academic-intellectual work is represented and authorised. This does not just involve the presentation itself, whether a virtuoso performance or simply the spectacle of intellection, thought thinking itself, but crucially also the exchange afterwards, in the manner in which individuals of varying authority and expertise engage with the presenter or with each other and the manner in which the presenter responds to and transacts with others in the session. It is for students a matter often of watching and learning how to be, how to interact and intervene, how to introduce and develop a commentary however attenuated it might need to be in the circumstances, how to work with difference and disputation, how to speak and when, even how to hold one's body or deploy certain mannerisms and gestures ('impatience', for instance). Such occasions are always highly regulated, even when they are supposed to be open to everyone and ostensibly non-authoritarian. According to Simon, all such encounters

contain 'compulsions to behave' that are revealed either when they are refused or challenged or when someone is deemed unworthy to participate because she or he is unable to elicit practices consistent with the required form (Simon, 1992, p. 88).

Much necessarily remains unspoken, more or less invisible in its normativity. Yet the penalty for transgression is severe—for some at least, and perhaps even for the majority of acolytes and disciples. For others, a more subtle process is at work, of identification and assessment, whereby the student body is made subject to distinction and an élite effectively if often silently isolated and constructed as such in the midst of everyone. This is surely the implication of Bernstein's (1975, p. 97) now classic observation that "the ultimate mystery of a subject is revealed very late in the educational life", in doctoral and post-doctoral contexts, especially when it is further noted that for him that "ultimate mystery" involves 'chaos' and 'disorder', and radical difference rather than a reassuring identity, at the very heart of the discipline in question and indeed of disciplinarity itself. How such discriminations are made, and the nature of the interplay between sanction and penalty, remains a fascinating matter for further research.

It is here, though, that something of the 'cultural politics' that Simon refers to, as a indispensable part of pedagogic practice, becomes apparent. What is at issue however is not simply the implication of postgraduate education in what might be called the 'force field' of the

social, structured as it is by race, class and gender at the very least, but also, crucially, the power-knowledge formations and institutional practices of disciplinarity more generally, both *locally* in the restricted disciplinary field at hand and more *globally* in academic-intellectual culture at large. Recognising that the pedagogic relation in postgraduate studies is an exemplary power relation, in this expanded sense, enables analysis and commentary to move beyond the more instrumental, pragmatic implications of 'teaching' as a term of reference, and to draw into account the politics of disciplinarity itself, within larger formations of culture and economy. This is arguably all the more imperative when the efficiency of the university system is increasingly a matter of explicit governmental concern.

Disciplinarity and the university

What is the relationship between pedagogy and disciplinarity vis-à-vis postgraduate studies? How organic is this relationship to the idea of the university but also its fate and fortunes in what are arguably postmodern times? What these questions imply in part is that once the centrality of pedagogy is granted, even if this is in the ironical form of an 'absent presence', account needs to be made of the role and significance of education in and for the discourse of disciplinarity itself. Questions such as these emerge as of particular significance once a historical perspective is taken and a new form of educational history is mobilised. That is the basis of striking recent work by Hoskin (1993), addressed specifically to what he describes as an "unexpected reversal", that is, that "education, far from being subordinate, is superordinate" within modern disciplinary economies and hence the project of the university, and further, that

an understanding of education and its power is the only way to understand the genesis of disciplinarity and the subsequent apparently inexorable growth of disciplinarity's power (Hoskin, 1993, p. 272).

Whereas traditionally education has been little regarded and indeed more often than not marginalised within the mainstream university, partly because its disciplinary status has always been at the very least problematical, what Hoskin suggests is that attending to the means whereby the disciplinary complex of the university is maintained and renewed is profoundly illuminating, to say nothing of being a matter of some disturbance to the conventional scheme of things in the university sector. In a brilliant, audacious analysis, he seeks to bring an exemplary set of 'little practices'—writing, grading, examining—together with three emergent pedagogical ('teaching') sites: the seminar, the laboratory and the classroom. Hoskin demonstrates that the genesis of contemporary disciplinarity lies in the emergence of this set of practices in these sites and that their uneven but structurally significant integration is realised in the period stretching from the latter part of the eighteenth century to its consolidation in the nineteenth century, the great age of the modern university.

Central to this process is the complex institutionalisation of a new form of 'learning how to learn', whereby, in place of older practices of emulation of masters, subjects characteristically become actively involved in their own learning. This coincided with but also, importantly, was instrumental in the emergence of a new formation of power and subjectivity, "the modern power of discipline, particularly of disciplinary knowledge" (Hoskin, 1993, p. 273). This new subject, the subject of *research*, "the newly disciplined but also self-disciplining human subject" (Hoskin, 1993, p. 275) is installed as the subject par excellence of the university. It is thus the research-oriented university—for whom the seminar, the laboratory and the classroom are crucial curriculum and cultural technologies—that is best able to exploit and direct the new order of disciplinary power, as much from the bottom up and contingently as a matter of specific forms of calculation and policy. Hence it becomes critically responsible for the social valorisation of a distinctive formation of knowledge and identity. As such, universities become central to the self-determining project of modern society.

Clark (1994) draws attention to what he sees as a distinctive "research-teaching-study nexus in national systems of higher educa-

tion", as central to the modern idea of the university. The modern university, following Humboldt, was organised around the centrality of research, and the positive subordination of teaching and 'study', or learning, to research:

While Humboldtian doctrine overall was multi-sided and lent itself to a variety of interpretations that related to broad issues of enlightenment and character, the particular idea of education by means of research ... became an ideology with an elective affinity for the emerging interests of new disciplinarians deeply committed to research activity as a mode of teaching and a means of learning (Clark, 1994, p. 11).

The formation of disciplines was thus thoroughly intricately with an increasing complexification and elaboration of the forms and relations of 'research', 'teaching' and 'study'. Originally characterised by the "binding together of teaching and learning by means of research", this meant that there was an increasing articulation between the emergent structure of disciplinarity and the modern idea of the university. With the post-Enlightenment knowledge explosion and the movement across two centuries towards mass (higher) education, however, the nexus itself has come under strain and indeed has been radically challenged as an organising principle. Where once it was indeed arguably the case that the purposes of the university were best served by organising teaching and learning around research, increasingly that has become at best a partial solution to the problems of transformations within the institution more broadly. Partly that is resolved by a new consolidation of what Clark describes as "the historic nexus" in the specialisation world-wide of research in a relatively small cluster of élite, specifically research-oriented universities. This goes hand-in-hand, of course, with a similarly motivated specialisation of teaching in other institutions. In essence, it is a case of 'business as usual', certainly for élite institutions, and the restoration in and for new times of a system whereby power, knowledge and social identity are complexly conjoined, in accordance with new principles of integration and efficiency.

But what is most relevant here is that a certain relation between 'research' and 'teaching' and between 'research' and 'learning', along the classical lines of Clark's previously referred-to formulation, is renewed, albeit in now specialised places and situations. In short, the 'élite' university is the 'real' university. This has particular implications for postgraduate studies. Traditionally research was seen as both an exemplary mode of teaching and a powerful means of learning. The research group became the site of teaching and learning par excellence, in a close and intensely productive relationship. Clark describes this thus:

Within the research group, instruction took place. This was not the instruction of the lecture hall nor of the didactic classroom but the instruction of actual research activity. What better way to instruct the process of inquiry and discovery than to carry out research before the students' very eyes? What better way to learn research than by doing it? (Clark, 1994, p. 11).

Following Hoskin, this might be realised as well and as much in the seminar as the laboratory, and for the Humanities especially, in particular classroom realisations of postgraduate education, such as the advanced-level tutorial. In the rarefied spaces of higher research degree supervision and study, teaching and learning alike are organised around and entirely deferent to a certain metaphysics of 'research'. What this relies on, though, is relatively small numbers of students, or a student body restricted enough in size to be in more or less immediate contact with actively researching faculty.

This mystique or myth increasingly becomes strained, however, as new demands are placed upon the (post)modern university. On the one hand there is the inevitable tendency towards specialisation and diversity. On the other, and over-riding this, is an increasing tendency towards hierarchy among universities and, in Australia, arguably a move more or less by default to a renewed binary system of higher education. With increased numbers and indeed the shift towards massification, what emerges is what has been called a representation

problem: how to maintain and renew productive research relations, practices and identities in a now typically abstracted, mediated disciplinary and curriculum space? How to represent what previously was immediately at hand, visible and concrete? What (con)texts are needed? What selections need to be made, and not just of (con)texts but of students as well?

Under these circumstances, academics have to grapple in new ways with relations—tensions and contradictions—between ‘research’ and ‘teaching’, particularly undergraduate teaching. In postgraduate study, the role of supervision as teaching remains profoundly ambiguous, to the extent that supervision is often not even calculated into official workloads and is hence afforded the status either of apprenticeship research training or ‘personal’ scholarly interest. Thus, although ‘teaching’ and ‘research’ may rhetorically be seen as integrated, in actuality this can only be the case in specialised postgraduate contexts, and moreover, these increasingly of a certain kind—that is, avowedly élite in composition. Here, moreover, ‘teaching’ is entirely subordinate to ‘research’. The assumption is therefore that those on the record as capable and authorised researchers are necessarily best suited to teach, and that, further, teaching is effectively immanent to research.

Moreover, although there is clearly a certain degree of technical teaching skill or acumen involved here, it is more particularly a certain quality or ‘aura’ attached to or associated with the person of the academic, the figure of the researcher, that becomes the determining marker of distinction. By implication, the researcher is cast in the universal image of the general intellectual: (s)he is invested with a magical trans-technical, generic competence, even though (s)he may well be equipped with only a relatively limited and restricted area of experience and expertise. By definition (s)he becomes identified with and as the Subject of Knowledge, or the One-Who-Is-Supposed-To-Know.

Several possibilities open themselves at this point. One is for the researcher (as supervisor) to insist on working within the restricted ambit of his or her own research interests and concerns. Another is to enter into other projects with perhaps more or less only a family resemblance to one’s own area, yet within a common disciplinary space. A third is to see academic culture more broadly as the field of reference, which is usually to work with and from an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary focus. In each case it is both the supervisor’s general intellect, appropriately licensed, that authorises him or her to enter into the tutelary relationship in question here, and his or her specific assemblage of knowledge and expertise. It is rare for a supervisor to be sufficiently free-floating simply to be able to play a representative role in this regard, although it is perhaps unfortunately not all that uncommon for this to happen, especially when the academic in question is senior and/or particularly experienced. Within many new universities, this situation becomes exacerbated due to their (often) small size and geographical isolation, the small numbers of appropriately qualified academics, the relatively junior status of many of them—as well as the tendency for these universities to be at the forefront of new and interdisciplinary programs of study and research.

However all such activity is necessarily disciplined and disciplining in one way or another, both generally and specifically, and all exchanges between supervisor and student, marked and unmarked, are significant and formative in this regard. Crucially, this must also necessarily be seen within a positive *reproduction* perspective—the need to secure intergenerational continuity amid a more general discontinuity, whereby identity is maintained and renewed not simply over time but across bodies (literal, symbolic), notwithstanding the play of *différance*, or difference-deferral. Furthermore, the transmission process is fraught with hazard and uncertainty, and must therefore be carefully policed. And it is here that a crucial contradiction and tension at the heart of postgraduate pedagogy emerges: the injunction to be ‘creative’ and ‘original’, and to contribute decisively and distinctively to the current stock of knowledge, and yet the impossibility of doing so without proper authorisation and enunciative authority. This latter, paradoxically, can only be realised *after* the event, as it were—when the degree is formally awarded and the dissertation accepted

into the Archive. This is a dialectical tension of being and becoming, and of the lived experience of duration and temporality. The supervisor’s role in this regard is largely symbolic, although it is nonetheless crucial and critical: (s)he must be attentive to the time of pedagogy, and be self-consciously at once *inside* and *outside* what Lusted (1986) describes as its radically transformative process. At issue is the formation of identity: at once different and yet the self-same—truly an impossible subjectivity, formed in the very nexus of power, knowledge and desire.

Debating pedagogies

As we noted at the beginning of this paper, pedagogy has been an obvious missing category in considerations of postgraduate supervision. We have signalled something of the complexity of this category, and of its necessary articulation with issues of disciplinarity and subject formation. In a further exploration of issues of subjectivity, such as we have begun at the end of the previous section, we would further argue that Hoskin’s (1994) work demonstrating the conditions of emergence of contemporary disciplinarity needs to be supplemented with a richer consideration of the formation of subjectivity through pedagogical practices. On the one hand, this involves drawing explicitly on *theory*—or rather, those forms of textual/interpretive theory available through poststructuralism, feminism and psychoanalysis that will enable exploration of power, knowledge and desire, of the body, gender and sexuality and textuality. On the other, we have referred to postgraduate education as a key site of *praxis*. As writers of this text, our own specific and joint histories are pertinent here. In our own training, as postgraduate students, and as ourselves at one time related as ‘supervisor’ and ‘supervisee’ within the context of a Humanities program in a ‘seventies’ university, we have clearly participated in what might be termed the moment of ‘theory’, in the sense referred to above. Yet our current institutional positioning within Education, administratively one of the social sciences, pragmatically involved in professional training, persistently requires us to attend to questions of the empirical, to the embodied and politicised practices of ‘teaching’ and of ‘learning’ in their institutional specificity. In concluding, then, we signal some beginnings that might productively lead to further inquiry.

Perhaps one of the most important recent accounts of postgraduate pedagogy in this regard is that of Frow (1988). Drawing upon Foucault and Lacan to consider graduate work and, more or less explicitly, supervision in literary studies, his concern as he indicates is with those “mediating processes” (“institutions”, “authorized persons”) “by which knowledges are both reproduced and transformed” (Frow, 1988, p. 307). Working explicitly within a (post)structuralist and reproductionist framework, he provides a striking account of “the training of graduate students” and “[t]he ritual of the PhD”, as “[i]n its usual form ... a passage from an undergraduate community to postgraduate loneliness; a breaking down of ego; and the acquisition of a specialized lore through a difficult and intense relation to a supervisor” (Frow, 1988, pp 318-319). As he puts it:

The ordeal of candidature is a mad process in its assignment of a structural role to insecurity. It challenges the candidate’s sense of worth, provoking a trauma of loss as one of its central knowledge-producing mechanisms, one which is often cruelly prolonged or repeated.

Further, typically: “this process is individualized: the absence of any theorization of its institutional dimensions works to isolate the candidate by denying him or a her a procedural rationale for the trauma” (Frow, 1988, p. 319). *Why is it so? Must it be like this?* Questions such as these we can certainly identify with ourselves, as former postgraduate students, as well as more abstractly, from our current positioning on the other side of this educational life. What is more, we believe that both for many students now undergoing candidature and for many former students as well, there are particular resonances in this passage, and indeed in Frow’s account more generally.

There is no opportunity here to do justice to the richness of this account, nor to indicate the full extent of its problematic productivity.

What we want to do, rather, is suggest a certain reading of it, with specific regard to its (con)textual complexity. What needs to be noted, then, is that Frow's account is intensely *theoretical*, as well as being a significant contribution towards an adequate *theorisation* of postgraduate pedagogy. His principal texts of reference are drawn from psychoanalysis and literature, and what he presents is a certain textualisation of 'teaching', 'interpretation' and 'discipleship' within the context of what he calls "specialized postgraduate study". As he stresses, his interest is above all else in a *structural* understanding of academic practice in this regard, that is, as a concern with "the effect of particular disciplinary conditions of possibility" for the production of knowledge and, implicitly, the formation of identity, especially as realised in and through the training of 'disciples'.

In this regard, an account by Giblett (1992), directly and specifically in 'dialogue' with Frow's, is significant. Giblett, as he notes, was a former graduate student under Frow's supervision. In seeking to dispute what he reads as a monologic narrative of postgraduate studies, Giblett's paper takes up this notion of a (missed) dialogue: "Perhaps a non-Socratic dialogue between a supervisor and a graduate student would have been preferable in a collaborative and joint-authored paper. *In a sense, this article aims to provide the other side of the dialogue left out of Frow's paper*" (Giblett, 1992, p. 148; our emphasis).

It is, however, a strange and at best a strained 'dialogue', and clearly the two 'interlocutors' in this instance speak past each other, each missing the other and presumably re-enacting previous missed opportunities in this regard. For us, the papers together form a particularly symptomatic text, and the repetition here is, as it were, a 'structural' one, built into the very discourse of the dominant, received model of postgraduate studies. Our concern therefore is here simply to draw attention to the impossibility of such a 'dialogue' in postgraduate pedagogy generally, and yet the necessity to work towards overcoming that impossibility—an interminable process, admittedly, but a matter of ethical and procedural obligation all the same. What emerges, furthermore, is the ineluctability of difference, and the necessary inequality of powers: power and difference are necessary principles of the pedagogic relation.

And yet, at the same time, there is a significant pathos here, because what a text such as Frow's effectively denies and glosses over—notwithstanding its undeniable (literal and symbolic) value—is the relevance of the lived, experiential relations of postgraduate research and training not simply in such accounts but in the larger project of understanding and theorising postgraduate pedagogy. Similarly, Giblett's account arguably remains within a 'theoretician' framework, notwithstanding that it is itself ostensibly a 'story from the field', so to speak. One way of putting this is to say that it needs to be considered within an explicit 'theory/practice' problematic, although that should not be seen naively, in the terms of an all too familiar, thoroughly naturalised binary logic. Rather, it is to raise the difficult question of the status and significance of the *empirical* in matters such as this. Clearly that is something needing careful consideration here, and indeed it might well form a useful basis for the systematic elaboration of a research programme. For our purposes here, what matters is what might be described as, firstly, the repressed status of the empirical in Frow's text, and second, in Giblett's the seemingly irrepressible return of the repressed!

That hypothesis can be further usefully engaged by way of a necessarily brief reference to another text which is explicitly addressed to the question of supervision: Salmon's (1992) account of her own experience in this regard and that of ten of her graduate students. On the face of it, this would appear to meet all the requirements of an empirical investigation into postgraduate pedagogy. It has also the apparent virtue of being a text *for* pedagogy, with the added feature that it is specifically oriented in this regard towards the 'learner' (cf Clark's 'study' principle): "This book is written for those contemplating doctoral work, or have already embarked on doctoral projects" (Salmon, 1992, p. 1). As she notes, further, thus echoing other such interventions: "Becoming a PhD student means entering a peculiarly

complex and private situation: it is a world about which few people have spoken". Once again, we cannot hope to do justice to what is, indeed, a useful and even timely, if not unproblematical, contribution to the literature. Perhaps perversely, then, what we shall do is, in fact, read it *as* 'literature'—that is, as if it were (simply) a 'text', an attempt to represent and therefore construct a certain 'fictional' account of advanced-level teaching-learning experience. What might such a move yield in this context?

Two things, initially: one is the return of the figure of the Teacher, and moreover of teaching itself—as set against the figure of the Researcher—and the other is the acknowledgement that this figure is here explicitly feminised, both literally and symbolically. At issue what Connell in another context has described as the joint 'disciplinary' and 'developmental' dimensions of teachers' work (Connell, 1985b). In that case, he was referring to school teaching, but his argument can readily be extended to take in academic teachers' work vis-a-vis supervision (Evans and Green, 1995). This figure of the feminised teacher in turn throws into relief the masculinism of the Frow-Giblett dialogue, to the extent that it stands as a particular normative representation of the supervisor-student relation as that of 'master-disciple' (Frow, 1988, p. 321).

This becomes all the more significant set against the way in which a distinctive discursive economy is constructed in Salmon's account, polarising 'discipline' and 'creativity', 'structure' and 'freedom', 'apprenticeship' and 'authorship', and 'training' and 'education'. What emerges from this account is, in fact, a highly partial view of postgraduate pedagogy and higher educational practice, one which privileges 'learning' and 'becoming' over 'teaching' and 'being, and which puts the emphasis firmly on notions of 'process', 'discovery' and 'personal knowledge' (in the various senses of this latter formulation). It is not at all incidental, moreover, that this account is contextualised in Education and Psychology, and within a particular orientation in social scientific research; nor that the preferred pedagogic stance or 'style' here coincides in various ways and is congruent with a certain construction of 'the feminine'. The result is a powerful but incomplete and ultimately flawed representation of postgraduate pedagogy—yet one which, at the very least, offers an alternative vision of supervisory practice and academic-disciplinary work. Organised as it is around the primacy of pedagogy and the need to address and be appropriately sensitive and responsive to the 'otherness' of the Candidate, the student-researcher, the Subject of Study, an account such as this offers insight into the complex dynamics of postgraduate studies. Read alongside and against other accounts, real possibilities emerge for the (re)generation of theory *and* practice in higher education.

In conclusion, then: How is pedagogy to be best understood, in all its complexity and necessity, within the symbolic-disciplinary economy of the Academy? What stories (and counter-stories) need to be told? What spaces are there for different practices and voices in postgraduate contexts, including research in and for postgraduate studies and pedagogy? What new imaginings are necessary for teaching *and* research in and for the emerging postmodern university? These are questions clearly needing urgent and rigorous attention now, in this last fraught, crisis-ridden decade of the twentieth century, in Australia as elsewhere.

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Footnote

1. Brian Simon (1985) provides an illuminating account of why there has traditionally been, as he puts it, "no pedagogy in England", an argument which is likely to be useful in assessing the historical situation of advanced-level graduate studies in Australia, especially PhD work.