



**The Professional and Personal Values and their Revelation
through Professional Doctorates**

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The Professional and Personal Values and their Revelation through Professional Doctorates

This paper discusses the relationship between individual practitioners' personal values and their developing professional agentic values. It considers how the former might be in tension with the prescribed forms of practice held to be 'professional' by professional bodies, warranting membership and, indeed, any licence to practice. These practices and their underpinning values have a functionality that may be at odds with the personal values of new professionals as their careers develop and they learn more, both propositionally and tacitly, within the profession. Becoming a professional within the cocoon of the profession is a career-long engagement and commitment. The cocoon and its values may be challenged by practice at the periphery of the professional domain—for instance multi-disciplinary lawyers' and accountants' practice—or by critical reflection on individuals' own practice and the hidden values that sustain it. Through the lens of an 'I' and 'we' framework introduced in the paper and the use of a professional doctorate we discuss how a practitioner's and profession's values may be in tension. An example might be found by turning to the field of law, where justice and human rights may be lost beneath weighty procedure and expensive entry costs. The paper seeks an understanding of the different personal and collective ontological stances and tensions that practitioners may experience as they progress through their careers, attempting to align their own values with those of the collective values within their profession. We explore this through a Heideggerian reading of transdisciplinarity.

Professional and personal values at odds?

The phenomenology of the Profession¹ practice is distinct from practices undertaken in a professional way of being; the first is about following rules and engaging in practices with the intent of sharing the collective agency of the Profession and might be typified by the novice practitioner's progression within the structures of the Profession to fully accredited member; the second concerns the practitioner conducting herself with due care to the quality of the practice undertaken with due diligence, relevant to the presenting circumstances but with or without reference to a set of processes which would define the activity as Profession. In the former, the forms of activity are conducted within a range of possibilities which are identified as part of the Profession while the latter practices are not so necessarily constrained. In the former, practices of the Profession are constituted by the architecture and the collective rules and values of the social group of which one becomes a Professional member. In this way one becomes a member of the 'we' collective, responding to the beliefs of Profession in an appropriate way. This rule-governed membership is sufficient for competency but insufficient to establish expertise (Winch, 2011). Someone with expertise is able to act both imaginatively and creatively on what a presenting situation demands from personal

¹ We will use capital P when indicating action with the Profession

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3 commitment to the circumstances, and to apply rather than to follow rules. Luntley (2011) offers a
4 version of this, claiming that when experts break rules they are in the process of creating new rules for
5 unimagined or realised situations or, as he puts it, 'it might turn out that expert practice brings to light
6 rules and discriminations hitherto missed' (2011: 37).
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9 This leads to practices that Luntley (2013) considers are constituted as activity-dependent
10 propositions based on the Profession's collective 'know-how'. Indeed, this is somewhat captured by
11 Kemmis and Smith (2008), who use the term *praxis* for the practice of professional practice. What is
12 important to this argument is that these activities are not open but are rule-bound and lead to
13 competency and can inhibit practice done professionally. We will argue constraints of the Profession,
14 based on the disciplinary knowledge which forms the justification of the status of a Profession, inhibit
15 creative and innovative solutions to certain problems and that professional practice requires openness
16 to possibilities, based on existing and emergent experience; that is, to follow what
17 phenomenologically presents itself and feels right in a specific circumstance. We suggest here that a
18 professional doctorate opens up the opportunity to undertake inter/multi/disciplinary epistemological
19 spaces in the Profession but also creates ontological tensions. **By professional doctorates we are**
20 **referring to doctorates, common in the USA, UK, Australia, covering a range of professional sectors**
21 **including Education, Arts, Engineering, Nursing, Law and Business. The aims of these doctorates**
22 **include the development of professional practice and practitioners as critical thinkers and change**
23 **agents. It is expected that they will make a contribution to theory, practice and professional**
24 **knowledge. According to Lunt (2005) they demonstrate a shift in the production of knowledge. In**
25 **Europe, a number of these features are to be found in the Industrial PhD.**
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36 Within the Profession, professional practices have an ontological intelligibility. They matter
37 to the manner which a practitioner adopts being a professional and being among others, whether
38 professional or lay. Such practices, among other legitimising characteristics such as a shared
39 knowledge base and moral code of conduct, call forth a way of being that regards clients not as
40 objects, for use through calculative expedient thinking, but as real and genuine entities in their own
41 right. Professional practices and values matter: they are the legitimising characteristics of the
42 Profession, acting as 'social processes both for its existence and for its communication' (Gherardi,
43 2007: 15). They are dependent on sanctioned, shared knowledge and normative rules of conduct and
44 demand that clients and professionals are seen as distinct entities. Indeed, one of the functions of
45 professional practice is both to distinguish client and professional as a collaboration and to hold them
46 apart in engagement. Moreover, how we recognise a Profession is through the detailed knowledge and
47 skills of the professional practice and its understanding through expected public performance, which
48 seems essential to the development of public trust. This can be done symbolically: through uniforms,
49 sites of engagement, the confessional or exclusive access to certain processes such as the tourist
50 operators' SABRE (Semi-automated Business Research Environment) booking system. Yet,
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3 unattended to, these tacit values can lose their meaning and worth. They become explicit rituals that
4 have lost the meaning of their creation. For this reason what is implicit in practice deserves attention.
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6 It is the uncovering of the tacit values that, when revealed and contested, may lead to dissonance
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8 between the values held by the individual as a person and those held by the same individual as a
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10 professional.

11 We propose professional practice is an activity apart from everyday activities such as
12 shopping or catching a train (Hager, 2011). Schatzki (1996) suggests that it is 'a temporally unfolding
13 and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings' (1996: 89). This meaning differs from 'do-ing'
14 things that the 'Western philosophical tradition has opposed to theory: theory versus practice,
15 contemplation and reflection versus doing' (1996: 90). At its core is practical knowledge, grasped
16 through our capacity for judgement yet not fully articulated (Wiggins, 2012). Schatzki describes the
17 structure of practice as 'an array of end, projects, uses (of things), and even emotions that are
18 acceptable or prescribed for participants in the practice' (2005: 471–472). We develop the argument
19 further here on the premise that any practice is shaped not only by an external corpus of knowledge
20 and skills but by the capabilities, potentiality and, specifically for this argument, values. These
21 provide the ends toward which actors (individual or collective) direct their action. The premise's
22 assumption is that value is tied to practice. As Malinski and Bournes (2002) disclose in their review of
23 the practice methodology used as a guide to practice within nursing, a greater respect for clients'
24 (patients') world views and self-determination of treatment leads to greater satisfaction with the
25 provision. Dall'Alba (2004), among others (Webster-Wright, 2010, or Edwards, 2010), challenges the
26 focus on detailed knowledge and skills as the base for professional practice and its understanding
27 through performance, asking whether this is essential to the ontological development of a professional
28 practitioner.

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30 It also assumes that professional practice is grounded in a moral good. This seems to be the
31 intention of MacIntyre's famous, specific and often contested definition of professional practice as:

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33 a coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through
34 which goods internal to that form of activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve
35 those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form
36 of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions
37 of the end and good involved, are systematically extended. (1985: 187)

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39 The internal good implied by MacIntyre is captured by Oakley and Cocking (2006), who support this
40 contention by offering an answer to the question, 'what is the prototype good professional?' For them,
41 a good professional would act out of concern for their clients' well-being not from any desire to be
42 liked, admired or thanked by them but to help achieve their goals. . However, as in the case of
43 teaching and law, one should always remain sceptical of professional bodies whose practical
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principles may disrupt our personal value judgement

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3 new profession, the principle of corporate agency may be established and applied equally well to
4 other forms of organisational workplaces and occupations.
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6 In summary, the group or Profession has control over its practices and will sanction what is
7 powerful knowledge and its epistemological categories. As gatekeepers of standards, it requires a
8 binding agreement among its members on the values they hold as to the truth that underpin their
9 practice and the way they undertake their practice. These are core values and disciplinary roots (and
10 their epistemological notions of truth, evidence and methodologies). The Professions have a vested
11 interest in maintaining these as part of the being of a certain Professional and a member ought to
12 abide by them if they are to remain in harmony with their Profession throughout their career. When
13 they do not match, one takes priority and the conflict can lead positively to changes in professional
14 practice, for instance new ways of landing an aeroplane on the Hudson, or negatively as in the disaster
15 reviewed in the Francis Report (2013) on hospital control, where values of care are lost to the
16 expediency of profit. The Profession of nursing offers frequent examples of the tension between
17 internal good (Hudacek 2008) and the prototype professional and what can emerge if attention is
18 paid to the liminal space in between. In their research into compassionate practice, Curtis *et al* (2012)
19 found that student nurses feel vulnerable to dissonance between professional ideals and practice
20 reality which inhibits the felt value of compassionate practice and therefore compassionate practice is
21 compromised.
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31 Students manage their vulnerability and uncertainty by balancing between an intention to
32 uphold professional ideals and challenge constraints, and a realisation they might need to
33 adapt their ideals and conform to constraints. (2012:792)
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35 Balancing these competing expectations, therefore, becomes energy consuming and distracting from
36 what is felt to be right and what is required to be seen as right by the Profession. Through theorising
37 this liminal space they are drawing the attention of the Profession to ways of more collaborative
38 working between practice realism and professional idealism.
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41 More generally, liminality is the space of ambiguity and dissonance that occurs ritually
42 during periods of transition, marked by the tension between individual being and collective being
43 when vulnerability is at its height. Professionals who become researcher/practitioners in the liminal
44 space between research practice and Professional traditions have the opportunity to positively harness
45 the dissonance. We suggest that to unshackle the researcher/practitioners in the flux of creative
46 research and innovative tension with discipline based Professions, and indeed to encourage
47 engagement with others, a new epistemological approach is needed. We turn to the anthropologist
48 Turner's fourth stage of liminality (1967) when the liminar in the 'dead' space of the in between has
49 the opportunity to reflect about their society and their place in it in order to return to it 'in a new
50 identity, with new responsibilities and new powers' (Beech 2011:287). This new identity is intended
51 to be meaningful to self as well as to the community. In the context of the professional, we caution
52 that this should not be seen as a final identity destination but one which continues to be shaped and
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3 should be encouraged to be shaped by the circumstances of and learning from practice. Without on-
4 going reflection on the individual/collective relationship, the gap between values of professional
5 idealism and values of practitioner realities of everyday practice becomes a 'dead' space of
6 dissonance, a nadir. Professional doctorates encourage the practitioner to see dissonance as an
7 opportunity for creative thinking and reconceptualization of formerly held notions of truth which may
8 pose a difference reality for those embedded in Professional disciplinarity. One such
9 reconceptualization is transdisciplinarity.
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12 **Heideggerian Implications for epistemologies**

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14 We share Heidegger's view that representational epistemologies (including correspondence theories
15 of truth) are inadequate. This therefore requires a move to epistemologies that do not look in any way
16 as though they are representational. Thus the whole concept of epistemology becomes redundant.
17 Heidegger points to the 'fore-structure' of interpretation, and he means by this that an interpretation is
18 never 'a pre-suppositionless apprehending of something presented to us', but always involves a 'fore-
19 having', 'fore-sight' and 'fore-conception'. Furthermore, each text has a sub-text, which operates
20 beneath the text, but which gives it its meaning; those epistemologies and traditions of knowledge
21 which are historical and which permit a particular reading. This therefore requires a disclosure. The
22 second move that Heidegger makes is even more crucial and this involves a repudiation of the
23 disengaged self. We are beings always in the world, as agents engaged in realising a particular form of
24 life. The third move is to locate all of this within a fundamental ontology.
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27 In respect of our discussion Heidegger of course identifies one dominant form of thinking, calculative
28 thinking, which is wholly injurious in its totalisation and machination of the world and contradictory to
29 his notion of being in Being. Its hegemony is used through the codification of the knowledge of the
30 powerful through the structures of discipline and manifest in the Profession which reify these
31 disciplines through Profession practices. The relationship between calculative thinking and knowledge
32 produced in the disciplines is thus restricted by the nature of the authorities ground in eternal forms of
33 logic. This is the first stage of epistemological categorisation, the reliance upon the powerful to
34 sanction knowledge. The next stage, and the threat to professional disciplines and the powers that
35 control thought, is interdisciplinarity. However, this move has a substantial problem with the notion
36 of combining qualia from different disciplines in a harmonious way. This is not the synthesis but
37 rather a combination of existing professional disciplines and creates nothing new, rather a hierarchy of
38 the archaeology of discipline knowledges based on the power the disciplines gathered². This is why
39 interdisciplinary work usually reverts to the hegemony of the most powerful, the subordinating of one
40 Profession by another or at least a struggle which inevitably leads to nothing new but a stand-off of
41 Professions. This notion brings the third and most complex notion, that of transdisciplinarity, which
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57 ² This takes the form discussed by Foucault (1981). Also see Costley C and Gibbs, P. (2006)
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3 has to be framed in foundational terms and not in some sense as an extension, completion or
4 perfection of framings at lower levels, though one may have to go through the lower levels to get to
5 the higher levels.
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9 Heidegger argued that it is not through calculative, scientific and discipline bound thinking we can
10 truly understand our being but through an ontological understanding, revealed through mood, that the
11 totality of Being is unconcealed. In the first instance then there is a need to develop a theory of
12 interdisciplinarity, with the understanding that it is inevitably incomplete. This requires a move from
13 manifest phenomena to underlying generative mechanisms and structures. The argument from
14 disciplinarity to interdisciplinarity and thence to transdisciplinarity involves a series of ratchets or
15 steps. The following is attributed to Professor David Scott in a personal correspondence (2015)
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21 “The ontological case for interdisciplinarity begins with the consideration that, outside a few
22 experimentally (and even fewer naturally occurring) closed contexts, a *multiplicity* of causes,
23 mechanisms and potentially theories is always involved in the explanation of any event or concrete
24 phenomenon. This is an index of the *complexity* of the subject matter.
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29 However to get from multi-mechanisms to interdisciplinarity and thence to transdisciplinarity, we
30 have to add considerations of *emergence* to those of complexity. Briefly an *emergent* level of reality is:
31 i) unilaterally dependent on a more basic one; ii) taxonomically irreducible to the more basic one; and
32 additionally, iii) causally irreducible in the domain in which the basic one operates. If such emergence
33 is involved, then the characteristic multi-mechanisms of open systems will have to be studied in a
34 multi-disciplinary way, i.e. by (or from the perspectives of) a multiplicity of disciplines. If in addition
35 to an emergent *level*, a qualitatively new or emergent *outcome* is involved in the causal nexus at work,
36 then the knowledge required can no longer be generated by the additive pooling of the knowledges of
37 the various disciplines concerned, but requires a *synthetic integration, or genuine transdisciplinarity*.
38 This last then is not reducible to disciplinarity or interdisciplinarity, though it is emergent from them.
39 “There is a radical incommensurability between disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, and
40 interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity” (Scott, 2015)
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47 We suggest that transdisciplinarity discourses offer a way to explore the dissonance
48 manifested in I-we disruptions and unproductive liminality found in Professional practice and that
49 they can provide ways of conceptualising problems that are inclusive and collaborative. Montuori
50 (2013) highlights the value of transdisciplinarity in complex systems of relationships, interactions and
51 interdependencies characteristic of the environments of modern realities and the need therefore for us
52 to *think* complexity.
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56 Transdisciplinarity draws on systems and complexity theories to propose a way of thinking
57 that is different from reductive /disjunctive disciplinary thought. It requires a kind of thinking
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3 that contextualises, starting with the assumption that any system needs to be understood in
4 terms of its larger environment and relationships and connects, showing how to bring the
5 *information* from separate disciplines together so that it can be useful *knowledge* that allows
6 us to act wisely (Flyvbjerg, 2001). (2013:47)
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10 We see it as useful to extend this notion of complexity to not only relationships and interactions
11 between disciplines but in the world of work between sectors, bodies and the different realms of
12 experience of the personal and the professional.
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15 **Putting it to Practice**

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17 Practitioners work in contexts in which they navigate the constant movement between
18 competing personal, social, professional and political imperatives, values and goals which they may
19 experience as tense spaces due to increasing dissonance in values. Conditions such as time, methods
20 and opportunities, are not in place to support a recognition of the emergent, therefore new thinking
21 that could resonate with both the individual and the group remains dormant in the space between. A
22 process of recovery of personal practice values by the dominant Profession has to take place, as in the
23 case of compassionate practice cited previously, if dissatisfaction of members of the Profession which
24 disrupts the stated goals of the Profession (client care) is to be avoided. In other words the I-we of the
25 professional practitioner has to be constantly reviewed and refreshed
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Career development through professional doctorates can reveal changes in 'I' and 'we' values. The development of professional identity through gaining a joint 'we' intent has become central to many professions (Webster-Wright, 2010), conceptualised as professional development. Within these practices the professional doctorate is growing in importance (e.g. Morris and Brightman, 2006; Cameron et al., 2008; Fenge, 2009). Much of this growth continues to be based on the corporate or professional body's inchoate agentic identity (Lester); it is not intended to confront the agent, but is contingent upon a static relationship between the two entities. This relationship, however, is potentially disrupted by a critical reflective approach to the context of the inquiry within and through transforming the boundaries, accountabilities and governance of professional practice (Doornbos, van Eekelen and Koopmans, 2006). These inquiries confront the history and tradition of the Professions, testing the values of giving or demanding an obligation to act in a certain ways, guided by values of others' present and past. These degrees, as Maxwell proposes, bring 'the realities of the workplace, the knowledge and the improvement of the profession and the rigour of the university are being brought together in new relationships' (2003: 291).³

To this extent, the literature on professional doctorates is detailed and growing. The many forms and structures of professional doctorates have been explored mainly from a development of individual professional and curriculum perspectives and the enhancement of the profession's underlying discipline. There has not, however, been much discussion on the impact on the values of the Profession by its members or the disciplinary based epistemological stance into their taken-for-granted practices and values. Siebert and Costley (2013) have commented on the tensions arising from reflection on the learners' practice, and possible conflicts of values that reflection exposes between themselves as professionals, the organisations for whom they work and their professional body. Further, they argue that the university has a responsibility not only to reveal this tension through a critical approach but to seek resolution of dissonance. Yam claims that professional doctorates in nursing that contain taught elements address 'the career needs of experienced practitioners, who are best able to appreciate the essence of their profession when their educational programmes include not only studying, but generating, challenging, and testing the knowledge and practice in their discipline' (Yam, 2005: 566). However, Yam has nothing to say about the nature of this challenge when it is a

³ The practice-based, or professional, doctorate is an alternative approach to doctoral study that better meets the requirements of practitioners in practice as part of their lifelong learning (Lester, 2004). Early research on the professional doctorate (e.g. Brennan, 1998; Doncaster, 2000; Bourner, Bowden, and Laing, 2001, 2000; Doncaster and Lester (2002), Maxwell, 2003; Lester, 2004; Taylor, 2008) discussed the balance between the workplace and professional and the university (Wellington and Sikes, 2006; Costley and Stephenson, 2008; Taylor, 2008; Servage, 2009; Costley and Lester, 2012). Also, the literature has developed on two fronts; a growing disciplinary and professional-based literature giving accounts of the place these doctorate hold in the professions (Fenge, 2009; Bennett, 2009; Scourfield, 2010; Baines, 2011; Fulton et al., 2012), and in respect of the research practice of the professional as researcher (Gibbs and Costley, 2006; Gibbs, 2009; Gibbs and Maguire, 2012). Finally, there is niche, yet important, literature on the nature of being in professional work (e.g. Dall'Alba, 2004 and 2009).

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3 matter of values over professional principles, although it may enhance an understanding of different
4 positions and help explain why professional doctorate researchers may find their ideas considered as
5 disruptive, excessive or difficult. Bennett (2009) has commented that professional doctorates may be
6 subversive, suggesting that students find 'their research is raising questions about appropriateness,
7 values and efficacy with the organisation for which they work' (2009: 34). However, this kind of
8 reflective practice is not unproblematic, as it requires a search for meaning and constant questioning
9 of the values that underpin practice (Jeffrey and McCrea, 2004).

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11 Investigation into the potential tensions of personal 'I' and professional body 'we' values is
12 also an absent feature in the otherwise comprehensive text by Scott, Brown, Lunt, and Thorne (2004),
13 where 'value' predominantly refers to worth in terms of career progression. An important contribution
14 to the transformative nature of professional education is offered by Dall'Alba through Heideggerian
15 phenomenological insights. She writes:

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23 (B)ecoming a teacher, physiotherapist or lawyer, then, involves 'turning around' or
24 transforming the self. Through interrogating and re-shaping assumptions about what it means
25 to teach, provide physiotherapy or apply the rule of law, new ways of being are opened to
26 aspiring professionals and can begin to take shape. It is not only a question of epistemology
27 but, more particularly, of ontology. (2009: 37)

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32 Her focus on becoming rather than being foregrounds the notion of change that, as indicated earlier,
33 argues at least in theory that the 'I' value relationship with the 'we' might change over time.

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35 The professional doctorate cannot be a value-free investigation. It is one where the
36 researcher's relationship to the Profession or organisational membership influences the discourse of
37 research in the choice of epistemological stance, the methods used and the values evident in the
38 conclusions drawn. The Profession presents a reality in which discipline based knowledge is dominant
39 not only in producing a truth but in retaining the established authority of the Profession.

40 41 42 43 44 *Concluding remarks*

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46 This conceptual paper has raised the issue of different values being held by the collective professional
47 body and the individual professional. It has suggested that values are embodied in practices, and as
48 these practices become more tacit the values underpinning them become less explicit. When these
49 values are then made manifest, whether through actions at the edge of the Profession or where
50 circumstances require a questioning of collective values, professionals may discover a personal clash.
51 The use of a professional doctorate as a professional development vehicle has the potential to reveal
52 these clashes and the 'we' framework provides a framework for such an analysis. Ultimately,
53 realisation of a clash in values needs an existential resolution, where the common intent is broken. We
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do not discuss the social and cultural causes of such weltanschauungs. However, we accept the value of such an investigation and the revelation this might offer in purpose of the issue raised here.

Transdisciplinarity recognises knowledge as that which is embodied and embedded. 'The integration of the inquirer into the inquiry ... is about the *engagement* of knowledge... understanding ourselves as knowers means seeing ourselves as nodes in a network, part of a larger ecology of ideas, as well as a socio-political and cultural context.' (Montuori 2013:51) Professional doctorates need to intentionally facilitate the practitioner in making their knowledge explicit, positioning it in the wider ecology network and by doing so attend to the dissonance in the liminality of 'I' and 'we' as a source of rich motivational learning and flexible integration.

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