Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the third volume of *Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences*.

Cris Shore opens this issue with an analysis of the impact of three decades of neoliberal reform on New Zealand's higher education system. In the early 1980s, the government adopted policies of cutting expenditure on public services, privatising state assets and deregulating the labour market. Government funding for universities was reduced and student fees increased. Explicit marketisation of higher education came towards the end of the 1980s, along with expansion of student numbers, reduced representation of students and staff on the governing bodies of universities and the introduction of performance indicators. Funding systems based on student numbers not only encouraged institutions to compete with each other for students but generated internal competition between departments in the same institution. From the mid-1990s onwards, New Zealand governments stressed the role of universities in promoting national economic competitiveness through teaching and research and contributing to national economic growth through the sale of educational services to international students.

Obliging universities to adopt free-market principles and practices has curtailed the freedom of academics, who are now controlled by management hierarchies modelled on those of private corporations and through a variety of auditing techniques based on financial auditing models. The author points out that these new government demands for institutions and academics to become more entrepreneurial have not replaced earlier conceptions of the role of the university in building national identity and social cohesion but have been added on to them. In these circumstances, academics face new and additional responsibilities at the same time as their professional power is being substantially reduced.

Ethan Lowenstein's article on academic service-learning was originally intended for the Winter 2009 issue on *Perspectives on Citizenship Education*. However, when that issue became longer than the 38,000 words allocated to it, Ethan very kindly volunteered for his article to appear in this issue instead. His article identifies the tensions that arise for teachers between vulnerability and authority and between disclosure and neutrality in their approach to the students, between authenticity and distance in the course content, between safety and challenge in class discussion and between social transformation and individual agency as educational outcomes. How these tensions might be navigated is analysed in the context of an undergraduate course on social studies methods for pre-service primary school teachers. One of the author's aims in this course was to integrate consideration of social injustice and multicultural education into class discussion. However, the first time he taught the class, the majority of the White students were resistant to discussion of inequality and difference and the single African-American student rarely participated.

In his search for a better balance between the principles outlined above, he established an academic service-learning partnership with a primary school in a low-income area of Detroit, a predominantly African-American city an hour's drive from the university. The school and university students worked on the same curriculum topics and wrote letters to each other describing themselves and the communities in which they lived. They also prepared boxes containing objects that represented how their culture had shaped their identity and shared these with each other when the students visited the school. This partnership provided students with direct experience of social and cultural differences as an integral part of the course. The introduction of this form of civic learning created a more meaningful context for class discussions of social inequality and students became more confident about contributing to the debates.

In the third article, Jakob Krause-Jensen shows how the design of assessment methods on a programme in educational anthropology can encourage students to participate actively in all aspects of the course. Most of the students who take 'Anthropological Analysis' during the

first year of the full time Master's course have considerable experience as professional educators. They have previously undertaken professional undergraduate courses which do not demand a great deal of academic writing. They also combine their education with paid employment and many have family responsibilities too. After the first five weeks of classes, students practice the application of anthropological concepts by writing five short papers. Tutors provide electronic feedback and papers that are not up to standard must be resubmitted. A second set of five papers at the end of the course constitute the summative assessment.

In the first year of this assessment regime, the pass rate on the second set of papers was considerably higher than on the first set. While the demands on tutor time and attention are quite heavy, this assessment pattern is highly congruent with the educational aims of the course in that it encourages slow and close reading of texts to explore concepts in depth and then use them to critique and treat as strange the professional world they know so well. The assessment method also promotes systematic study habits, regular practice of academic writing, engagement with class discussion and responsiveness to tutor feedback. The author concludes that the judgement by one student that the course is 'taxing and rewarding' sums up the experience of both students and staff.

The needs of postgraduate students is also the main theme of the article by Bob Simpson and Robin Humphrey. They discovered that doctoral students in the social sciences received much more training in the use of qualitative research methods than in expressing their research findings in written form. A successful bid to the Economic and Social Research Council's Researcher Development Initiative allowed them to organise three residential workshops for Ph.D. students in 2007, 2008 and 2009. The purpose of the workshops was to offer opportunities for in-depth reflection on the processes and challenges of writing. Each session was led by an experienced academic and each workshop included a panel discussion with students who had recently received their doctorates. The whole project was supported by a web site with commentaries from well-known social scientists about their writing practices.

Workshop participants explored the boundaries that needed to be crossed for them to write more freely. The crossing of disciplinary boundaries was facilitated by the topics of the workshops and the exchanges between students and academics from different disciplines. Consideration of writing for a variety of audiences, including those beyond the academy, widened the perspectives of the Ph.D. students. Technological limitations discussed included the restrictions experienced when writing directly on to a computer and the difficulty of making text as vivid as, for example, visual material. Students raised the nature of the personal boundaries that needed to be overcome more extensively than the organisers had anticipated, sharing their feelings of inadequacy and fears of failure. Post-event feedback from the students and their supervisors indicated that these workshops had enabled many of the doctoral researchers to make the transition from feeling controlled by their research to having control over it.

George Martinez, Maresi Nerad and Elizabeth Rudd report on the third in a series of international workshops on doctoral education organised by the Forces and Forms Network that Maresi Nerad founded. The first workshop was held in the U.S.A. in 2005, the second in Australia in 2007 and the third in Germany in 2009. The themes of the third workshop were internationalisation and inequality, diversity and intellectual risk taking and the over-arching aim was to influence policy. Papers produced by three multi-national task forces were debated with early career researchers, representatives from a U.S. regional higher education accrediting agency and a U.S. funding body and experts on turning recommendations into action. The workshop proceedings will be published in book form and will seek to persuade international and national policy makers and providers of doctoral education to address the unequal distribution of intellectual capital, the under-representation of certain groups in doctoral education and the barriers to intellectual risk-taking in doctoral programmes.

This issue concludes with reviews by Rowena Murray, Sheila Trahar and Nicholas Walliman of books that deal with academics reflecting on their own writing, the experiences of international students at a U.K. university and undergraduate dissertation writing.

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Penny Welch and Susan Wright