

Submissions Abstract Book - All Papers (All Submissions)

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N9 | Caerphilly

Thu 12 Dec 2019

16:00 - 16:30

Higher education and temporal violence

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Research Domain: Student experiences (SE)

Abstract: This paper extends theoretical thinking about structural violence (Galtung, 1969), symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977), and time-as-capital by using the concept of temporal violence to explore students' experiences of studying in higher education. Temporal violence is, here, conceptualised as symbolic violence enacted through the management of students' time and sanctioned by 'pedagogic authority' (Jenkins, 2002). Using mature students as an exemplar the paper offers a new way of thinking theoretically about the experiences of students who are marginalised within higher education, with implications for pedagogic practice and both extra-curricular and curriculum design.

References:

Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J.C. (1977). *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Galtung, Johan (1969), *Violence, Peace and Peace Research, Journal of Peace Research*, 6, pp. 167–191.

Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu*. London: Routledge

Paper: Research has indicated how the field of higher education continues to recognise only certain forms of capital as well as how institutional practices privilege those in dominant field positions (Bathmaker, 2015). Whilst the focus of much research has been on social and cultural capital (Bathmaker et al, 2013; Reay et al, 2010), time can operate as a form of capital, bestowing certain forms of privilege on those who are time rich (Burke et al, 2017). In addition, those students with time capital are not only more likely to be successful within the field but because different types of capital can, over time, be acquired, exchanged or converted into other forms (Bourdieu, 1986), they can use their time to accumulate further capital so securing their place within the field (Clegg et al., 2010).

Symbolic capital exists in Bourdieu's work alongside other forms of capital, and can be accumulated through the investment of time or wealth. However symbolic capital can also be regarded as a legitimated, recognized form of the other capitals. When a holder of symbolic capital uses the power this confers against those who holds less they exercise symbolic violence which, in turn, reinforces and legitimises inequalities (Wacquant 1998). The subordination of individuals through acts of symbolic violence relating to, for example, the privileging of certain forms of qualifications (Watson and Widin, 2015) is well known. The link between time-as-capital and symbolic violence has, however, been under-researched.

This paper extends theoretical thinking about both structural violence (Galtung, 1969), symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977), and time-as-capital (Burke et al, 2017; Clegg et al., 2010) by using the concept of 'temporal violence' to explore experiences of studying in higher education. Temporal violence is, here, conceptualised as symbolic violence enacted through the management of students' time and sanctioned by 'pedagogic authority' (Jenkins, 2002). Drawing on exemplar narrative interviews with mature students, including those who are working while studying, or involved in caring for children or parents, the paper shows how temporal violence is reproduced in both structural and symbolic ways in the everyday interactions, practices, policies and processes of higher education.

In the first part of the paper I explore how temporal violence is enacted at three levels: at the macro level through educational policies which operate in ways that are blind to temporal inequalities, or that assume all students have equitable access to time. Examples here include timetabling, availability of student support services, and access to academic staff. At the meso level it includes curriculum delivery or extra-curricular provision which fails to recognise or acknowledge temporal diversity, and which further constrains choice and opportunity through pedagogic authority. And at the micro level, how both separately and together macro and meso level decisions produce power relations which misrecognise mature students and further privilege those who are already time rich. Through these institutional practices, temporal violence subjugates those who are time poor, whose temporal orientation is towards the past or the present, whose thinking in to the future is unclear, or those who lack coherent strategies to link action in the present to the attainment of a desired future self. The affective consequences of the enactment of temporal violence can also have profound consequences for self-esteem and sense of self-worth as well as for students' in/equitable academic outcomes.

Moreover, as Jenkins notes (2002, p. 106), pedagogic authority becomes legitimated 'when the sanctions which it has at its disposal are confirmed, for any given collectively, by the market in which the value of the products of the pedagogic action concerned is determined'. Within a marketised, neo-liberal higher education system, which assumes that all students are orientated towards the future, that progression into higher education is linear, and that students are the rational consumers of higher education, the market both determines and values free-time, future-time and the acquisition of time as capital. As a result the system of higher education also enacts temporal violence on certain groups of students, despite the rhetoric of widening participation, diversity and equality. In the second part of the paper, therefore, I take this theoretical thinking about temporal violence and apply it more broadly. In doing so I argue that recognition of the importance of temporal

violence has the potential to reconfigure studies that seek to address the experiences of *all* students who through time poverty, or for reasons of temporal orientation, are marginalised within higher education. This includes students who commute on to campus, or who are working while studying, refugees or other students with non-linear or non-traditional routes in to higher education, or religious students who do not follow a Christian calendar. I end the paper by arguing that adopting the concept of temporal violence could, therefore, be a helpful heuristic through which to recast debates about retention and success, shape thinking about pedagogic practice and both extra-curricular and curriculum design, and ensure greater equity for all students including those who have inequitable access to time capital.

References

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