

Symposia Abstract Book - Main Abstract Book with Submissions and Programme (All Symposia)

Doctoral borderlands: A guided tour (0317)

Contributors: Susan Carter, Rafi Rashid, Harry Rolf, Karen Gravett, Anesa Hosein, Rebekah Smith McGloin, Stephanie Masta

Chair: , , [Karen Smith](#)³

Discussant: Neil Harrison¹ , Susan Carter² ,

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Rationale Text: The April 2021 (26:3), Teaching in Higher Education Special Issue on doctoral education was underpinned by the premise that borderlands theory, trail-blazed by Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), could provide a frame for considering doctoral pedagogy. The resulting contributions, comprising an editorial, thirteen full papers and two points of departure, took the borderlands' metaphor on different journeys, speaking from six continents and twelve different countries. The papers were loosely bound into three themes: doctoral students' multiple identities; the contestations of doctoral pedagogy; and the dual roles of student/teachers, teacher/student and student/author (Carter, Smith & Harrison, 2021). This joint two-part symposium brings together virtually some of the contributing authors to re-examine the future of doctoral education. . Part 1 opens with Susan Carter's overview of how the borderlands' metaphor was usefully applied to doctoral education, what directions it offered, and what tensions and ambiguities it unearthed. Rafi Rashid argues the current urgent need for doctoral students to be competent disciplinary boundary crossers; drawing on his work in Singapore, he proposes instructional strategies for cultivating interdisciplinarity as an independent skill at the doctoral level. Harry G. Rolf offers a data feminism approach (D'Ignazio & Klein, 2020) to research publication expectations of doctoral candidates. Data from 1216 research students' publication is used to reveal, critique and challenge power brokerage within academic publication. In Part 2, Karen Gravett challenges the notion that doctoral journeys are linear, arguing that doctoral students experience multiple and messy becomings, within rhizomes of learning (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Aided by the new mobilities' paradigm, Rebekah Smith McGloin explores the doctoral interplay of fixed institutional structures with individual agency and creativity. Namrata Rao, Anesa Hosein and Rille Raaper focus in on the temporary and liminal state of doctoral students who teach. They demonstrate the differential support offered to doctoral students between institutions within the UK and the impact this has on teacher identity development. Stephanie Masta, focusing specifically on US higher education, positions the classroom as a counterspace where experiences of Black and Brown doctoral students are considered valid and critical knowledge. She calls for a reconsideration of doctoral possibilities. Within each part of the symposium, contributors will share short overviews of their Papers that pose questions as starting points for discussion between symposium contributors and attendees regarding the borderlands of doctoral education, its complexities, challenges, and possibilities. This discussion seeks possible

future directions for doctoral pedagogy, research and development.

Linked Submissions:

Doctoral students navigating the borderlands of academic teaching in an era of precarity (0354)

[Namrata Rao](#)¹, [Anesa Hosein](#)², [Rille Raaper](#)³

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Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: Neoliberalisation of academia has led to an increasing recruitment of doctoral students in teaching roles. Whilst there is evidence of doctoral students being engaged in university teaching and the reasons for doing so, there is a pressing need to understand their experiences to develop effective support practices for their emerging roles as teachers. Using borderlands theory as a lens, the thematic analysis of case study data from doctoral students in two English universities indicates that although they were navigating similar borderlands, the structural inequalities posed by their institutions led to differential support for their teaching roles and teacher identity development. The paper highlights the need for aligning doctoral roles to academic roles. It concludes by challenging the precarious support available for doctoral students and proposes recommendations for the holistic development of doctoral students as competent and successful teachers (and researchers) in an increasingly precarious academia.

Classroom Counterspaces: Centering Brown and Black Students in Doctoral Education (0364)

[Stephanie Masta](#)¹

¹*Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, The United States of America*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: Campus counterspaces exist as spaces where Brown and Black students can promote their own learning, and where their experiences as Brown and Black people are considered valid and critical knowledge. Drawing from Anzaldúa's borderlands theory, this paper reveals that classroom counterspaces recognize the complexity of Brown and Black identity, push back against whiteness, and support Brown and Black students' vulnerable and honest perspectives on the academy. These findings highlight areas where instructors can rethink their pedagogical approaches to create classroom counterspaces, and suggest that classroom counterspaces also push against the hegemony found in current U.S. higher education.

Re-imagining doctoral pedagogies and temporal practices in higher education (0380)

Karen Gravett¹

¹*University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: <p style="text-align:justify">What it is to be a PhD student and what it means to do a PhD is changing. Student numbers have increased and diversified, and there has been a flourishing of new routes of doctoral study. In this paper I discuss this changing context in order to rethink what we mean by doctoral education, what it might involve, what doctoral texts might look like, as well as thinking differently about researcher and supervisor identities. I employ two of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts: rhizome and becoming, to consider the value of attending to the messy becomings that researchers experience. Theory is put to work through drawing upon my own recent experiences as a doctoral researcher studying for a PhD by published works. However, I suggest that conceptualising doctoral study (and learning) as rhizomatic, with tentacular twists and turns, dead ends and red herrings, can offer value to all forms of doctorate.

Borderland theory: How would you apply this to doctoral education? (0421)

Susan Carter¹

¹*University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: Borderland theory is premised on a metaphor, a vivid metaphor that resonates with both high aspiration and awareness of considerable risk (Andzaldūa, 1987). Metaphor is great for teaching and learning—‘apt to seem peculiarly satisfying, intriguing, beautiful, or simply to have a kind of ‘‘pull’’ to it (Schön, 1963, 67). This paper is a provocation for further discussion of the borderlands of doctoral teaching and learning (Carter, Smith and Harrison, 2021). At the end of this seminar, you’ll be invited to talk about the metaphor of borderlands as it can apply to doctoral education. We’ll critically apply the metaphor of borderlands to doctoral pedagogy.</p><p>References</p><p>Andzaldūa, G. (1987). Borderlands/la frontera: The new Mestiza. Spinsters/Aunt Lute.</p><p>Carter, S., Smith, K. & Harrison, N. (2021). Working in the borderlands: Critical perspectives on doctoral education. Teaching in Higher Education, 26(3): 283-292.

Navigating power in doctoral education (0432)

Harry G. Rolf¹

¹*Australian National University (ANU), Canberra, Australia*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: The prevalence of publication pedagogy in doctoral education and its emphasis on knowledge production is increasingly making doctoral students the subject of research performance and productivity measures, creating a borderland which they must cross in order to achieve academic success. Navigating this contradictory and conflicting space requires them to overcome invisible power structures and taken-for-granted pedagogical practices. To aid in this crossing the paper demonstrates the use of network diagrams for mapping the borderland, using 1216 publications by research masters and doctoral students at the University of Tasmania from 2007 to 2015. A data feminist approach is followed to examine and challenge power made visible by borderland maps, and conscientiously engage with issues of quality, practice, and culture in knowledge production.

Reforming a STEM Doctoral Curriculum to Promote Interdisciplinary Border-Crossing (0458)

Rafi Rashid¹

¹*National University of Singapore, Singapore, Singapore*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: To confront the major challenges of the 21st century, doctoral students need to be able to think and work across disciplinary boundaries. I have been inspired by metaphors for interdisciplinarity to develop new strategies to cultivate an interdisciplinary mindset amongst my students in Singapore. In particular, the border-crossing metaphor likens disciplines to countries with well-defined borders, and suggests that border-crossing necessitates the presence of guides to help students and travellers alike to complete their arduous journey. Since the publication of my Point-of Departure article, I have contributed to major curricular reforms at my institution to align our programme with evolving national educational and research policies. Thus, in my presentation, I will present the above strategies and outline the additional changes we are making to our curriculum, namely condensing our 2-year taught component into a single 13-week semester while prioritizing interdisciplinarity, the norms of good scientific practice, and effective communication.

A new mobilities approach to re-examining the doctoral journey: mobility and fixity in the borderlands space (0536)

Rebekah Smith McGloin¹

¹*Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom*

Research Domain: Postgraduate Scholarship and Practice (PGSP)

Paper Abstract: This paper explores doctoral candidates' experiences of progression-monitoring and making progress through the doctoral space at a UK university. I engage concepts associated with the 'new mobilities' paradigm (Urry, 2007) to provide insight into the candidate experience of the doctoral journey; exploring specifically the interplay between the fixed structure provided by institutional-level progression frameworks that are commonly implemented by UK universities to measure 'timely progress' across disciplines and the borderlands space that enables and facilitates intellectual freedom, creativity, becoming and adventure. Drawing on notions of 'moorings', 'home on the move', 'connectivity and transit spaces' and 'rhizomic thinking', I analyse narrative data generated through the reflective diaries of doctoral candidates at a modern university in the English Midlands to offer new insight into how universities can provide better doctoral education, that supports: candidates to make a contribution to knowledge; protects well-being; and facilitates timely completion.
