

Tangled up: mixing professional and personal identities in academic writing for publication.

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'I've done my 4 pieces for the REF so I don't have to write any more.' (colleague)

'Writing is like life, you could go under' (Toni Morrison)

Academics are subject to confusing sets of values in a marketised HE which sees students as both co-producers of knowledge and consumers, customers and products. In the turmoil of competing drives to re-orientate, academic identities are also in turmoil. This paper focusses on tensions between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which drives writing for academic publication, and the tangled personal and professional academic identities which relate to these tensions.

Established and current research into academic identities often concerns balancing acts of managing the personal, professional and a range of academic demands (Clegg, 2008; Henkel, 2005; Fanghanel, 2007) while research into writing for academic publication often focuses on doctoral students, and writing development (Aitchison, et al.) Work reported here notes the tangles and tensions of personal and professional identities in academic writing for publication and builds on experiences of running writing for academic publication masters modules, short courses and retreats in the UK, South Africa and Ireland. It builds on re-scrutiny of earlier projects: 'Doctoral Learning Journeys' and the parallel international project, (Wisker, Morris et al, 2007-2010); writing projects (Wisker and Savin Baden 2009); (Wisker, NAIRTL 2012/13); (Wisker, 2013) and *Getting Published* (Wisker, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) and new work undertaken for this paper.

The focus on tensions and synergies between personal and professional academic identities in writing for academic publication emerged from re-scrutinising earlier work, then from recent research. All research reported here is based on qualitative data gathered during face to face and email interviews from the rescrutinised projects and the new research.

Participants see writing for academic publication as a complex issue with regard to their academic identities, an intertwined mix of the personal and professional. Publication is now expected of academics as part of their careers, it is part of career planning, staff development reviews and appraisal, recognition and reward. But completing and publishing a piece of your work engages personal as well as professional time, energy, and often makes personal processes, fears and strategies very public. Research writing is a 'complex struggle for identity in intertwined and often contradictory discourses', (Kamler and Thomson (2006); Aitchison and Lee (2006). One participant notes that publication can have positive spin-offs. 'I have seen academic staff 'grow' as they proudly announce a first publication during a staff meeting. Often the first publication serves as a catalyst to further work – I know I can! Similarly with doctoral candidates ...Their identity shifts to one of 'now I am a researcher'. There is no doubt in my mind that publication is central to being an academic. '(S) Stories participants tell in the academic writing context can be understood using a lens informed by academic identities theories, since being in the world, personal and professional identities intersect in writing – a managed form of expression of the research and theory-based reflection on experience, on enquiry, topical, established and new contested issues, in the academic context.

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