

Professions: Knowledge, organisation and power

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Why bother with 'professions'?

Huge literature 3 years leading mgt mainstream:

- Brunetto, 2001; Burrell, 2002; Cohen, Finn, Wilkinson and Arnold, 2002, 2003; Dent, 2002; Evetts, 2002; Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings, 2002; Hallam, 2002; Harris, 2002; Hodgson, 2002; Käreman, Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2002; Kitchener, Kirkpatrick and Whipp, 2000; Leicht and Fennel, 2001; McLaughlin, 2001; Squires, 2001; Sullivan, 2000; Watson, 2002; Wilkinson, Cohen and Arnold, 2002.
- Social closure, exclusion and mobility; discourse and identity; cultural capital; patriarchy; power; the continuing relevance of class; the role of the state, and of the aristocracy; roles; regimes etc.
- Where to start in designing a healthcare system?

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- How can we learn from this huge literature?
- How can we define 'profession(al)'
- Use the Anfield approach

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Professions & Knowledge

- type of knowledge (abstract, codified, expert)
- the way professionals apply that knowledge (i.e. to solve particular problems)
- knowledge can be a 'rhetorical resource'; codified language can be a protective barrier e.g. from Moliere & opium (over)
- **Critique**
 1. involves reconstruction of the account of professional as expert via re-valuation of other forms of expertise, e.g. provision of care
 2. call attention to the limits of expert 'knowledge'

Moliere satirising the professions

THE EXAMINATION: *Le Malade Imaginaire* (1673) by Molière Act III
Finale:

A spoof ceremony of the conferment of a doctor's degree (PhD). Participants include eight men bearing syringes, six apothecaries, twenty-two doctors, and the candidate with eight surgeons dancing and two singing. All placed according to rank.

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The Viva

1ST DOCTOR:

Most learned bachelor, Whom I esteem and honor, I would like to ask you the cause and reason why Opium makes one sleep.

ARGAN:

The reason is that in opium resides, A dormitive virtue, Of which it is the nature To stupefy the senses.

CHORUS:

Well, well, well, well has he answered! Worthy, worthy is he to enter Into our learned body. Well, well has he answered!

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Over to you... c10 minutes

'all professions are a conspiracy against the laity'

- Working in pairs or small groups

Think of a scenario where 'professional' authority reinforces power asymmetry between professionals and lay people.
What role does language play in this scenario?

e.g. Consultation in a doctor's surgery, Sentencing in a court of law, Provision of sacrament in a church

Think about formulaic elements, the role of ritual / tradition, the source of knowledge.

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Professions & Organisation

- Professionalized bureaucracies (Minzberg 1990)
- Lipsky's (1980) 'street level bureaucrat'
- Thompson's (1967) idea of domain consensus

- **Critique**

1. Attention to Organisation undermines accounts of identity that are based on work content.
2. Individuals also construct and negotiate their identity in the process of interacting with others.'

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Over to you... c10 minutes

'Every revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy.'

- Working in pairs or small groups
Think of a 'case' – a specific example where an individual or group comes into contact with a number of different professionals / bureaucrats.

e.g. Taking someone into care, getting a child's hearing tested.

Describe the number of stages in the process, who is in charge, which agencies are involved, which lay people?

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Professions & Power

- Classic account by Durkheim (over)
- Neo-marxist critiques - Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser)
- E.g. Doctors state-owned forms of control predicated on dominant ideologies: a) constructions of disease; b) doctor is expert.
- Friedson (1988), division of labour in the health service is stratified > prestige > status difference seemingly occasioned by the label professional are an input not an outcome. (cf Bourdieu and cultural capital)
- **Critique**

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Durkheim 1

- Since... society as a whole feels no concern in professional ethics, it is imperative that there be special groups in the society, within which these morals may be evolved, and whose business it is to see they are observed. Such groups are and can only be formed by bringing together individuals of the same profession, or professional groups... Each branch of professional ethics being the product of the professional group, its nature will be that of the group... the greater the strength of the group structure, the more numerous are the moral rules appropriate to it and the greater the authority they have over their members.

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Durkheim 2

1: From work specialism to professional ethic

- Specialised work > Need for specialist monitoring
- Need for specialist monitoring > Grouping of specialists
- Grouping of specialists > Ethical consensus

2: From professional ethic to civic order

- Ethical consensus > Stability and better organization
- Widespread Stability and better organization > Civic order

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Are professions a 'good thing'?

Johnson (1972: 14) relates a common allegory of the 'pro' camp, where professionals are:

centres of resistance to crude forces which threaten steady and peaceful evolution... the great professions, stand like rocks against which the waves raised by forces beat in vain.

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Over to you... c10 minutes

'Every revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy.'

- Working in pairs or small groups

What are the strengths of this metaphor? What are the limitations of this metaphor? Can you think of any more appropriate metaphors?

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Are professions a 'bad thing'?

We are incapable of imagining what free men can do when equipped with modern tools respectfully constrained. The Post-Professional Ethos will hopefully result in a social panorama more colourful and diverse than all the cultures of past and present taken together (Illich, 1977: 14).

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