

Paper#: K265

Professions and identity during austerity: an archaeological, discursive practice

Kevin Morrell

University of Warwick, UK
kevin.morrell@wbs.ac.uk

Penelope Tuck

University of Warwick, UK,
penelope.tuck@wbs.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

Identity and discourse are of considerable recent interest in the literature on professions. Contemporary contributions have enhanced our understanding of professions by examining micropractices - such as discourse, and the production of professional selves. It is rare for questions of macrostructure to feature. The nature and consequences of the Global Financial Crisis suggest the need to complement some of this recent work on identity and discourse by developing linkages between micropractices and the macrostructure. An immediate challenge to any such project is that of ontological/methodological coherence. How can local, situated accounts of professional self sensibly be tied to questions of macrostructure? We answer this by combining two Foucauldian concepts: discursive practice (which is widely used in organization studies) and archaeological description (which is far less frequently used). The empirical basis for this theoretical contribution is interviews with 48 senior civil servants in the UK. All interviews took place since 2010.

Keywords: Identity, Professions, discursive practices, austerity