

Professor Angela Thody of Lincoln University runs a series of day classes for post graduate supervisors on the Supervisory relationship and on examining doctoral Theses. The lecture following is about how to manage post graduate students. She also lectures to post graduate students on how to manage your supervisor.

For more information about the author or to book her lecture

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Lincoln University Graduate School
PROFESSOR EMERITA ANGELA THODY
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Doctoral supervision has been my most fun relationship in teaching. It's great being able to adjust so accurately to student needs and see an individual change before your very eyes. I've had the joy of working in my specialist areas (or at least closer to it than in most lectures or marking). I've felt that I'm helping to develop new ideas or seeing my own research project come to life. Supervision sessions give me the buzz of operating as an academic with an academic. It's intense learning. And it ends with a recognisable and permanent product – one thesis (Thody, 2007, unpublished musings).

What did you learn about starting supervision sessions from the opening examples?

Provoking

Welcoming

Understanding what's going to happen

Furniture dynamics

Making them feel secure

RESEARCH SUPERVISION: Today's topics

Your role options

**Co-creating the supervisory
role with your student**

Co-creating the thesis

Co-creating publications

Records of today's session...?

What YOU want to learn: make your own notes

Power point slides: WILL BE ON THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS

Summary and references: hand out at the end of the day

School of Graduate Studies

PROFESSOR EMERITA ANGELA THODY

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

YOUR ROLE OPTIONS

Try the quiz...

Research Supervision

ANGELA THODY SUPERVISION MODELS

TECHNICAL RATIONALITY – STRUCTURALIST MODERNIST

Traditional liberal/humanist

The relationship is

- rational and transparent practice between autonomous individuals; assumed by both supervisor and student.
- not personal
- master-apprentice
- institutionalised – see University Code of Practice
- based on your authority as the university recognises your expertise

The aims are to

- develop student's potential
- facilitate student independence
- train student in research practices
- socialise the student into the discipline
- guide student to resources

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SUPERVISION MODELS

EMOTIONAL - post modernist, individualistic

The relationship is

- **unstated/unconscious/not anticipated**
by the student
- **personal friendship**
- **some form of partnership/equality**
- **referred to in Codes of Practice as something to be avoided/controlled**
- **based on your friendliness**
and extent of social contact

The aims are

- ✓ **joint development**
- ✓ **interdependence**
- ✓ **walk with the student on a journey**
- ✓ **varying according to the emotion:**
desire to please, to challenge, to demonstrate independence, to resist independence, to be respected as clever, to be liked, to be authoritative, to be powerful

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SUPERVISION MODELS

EROTIC – pre-modernist

The relationship is

- unstated, unconscious/conscious, not anticipated by student or supervisor
- very personal, close friendship
- close, possibly inequitable partnership
- not in Codes of Practice
- based on your intellectual attractiveness

The aims are

- ❖ an intense 1-1 relationship with someone who can discuss your intellectual interests
- ❖ to be admired and admiring
- ❖ mutual grooming and recognition
- ❖ to arouse desire
- ❖ to create a clone of the supervisor

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SUPERVISION MODELS

POLITICAL - modernist,
functional authoritarian

The relationship is

- **unstated but expected**
- **based on your power and the student's lack of power (due to social and economic position, status in the university, status in the discipline community, qualifications, gender, ethnicity, age, size, physical characteristics)**
- **changing over the course of the supervision period as the student acquires knowledge**
- **leader and follower**

The aims are

**to induct the student into the
mysteries of the craft
to develop the student's power
to bask in each other's glory
to create an independent
but client student**

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SUPERVISION MODELS

AUDITING – modernist (bureaucratic)
post modernism (accountability)

The relationship is

- accountable practice between nominated supervisor and student
- not personal
- auditor to documents
- institutionalised – see whole University Code of Practice
- based on your authority as the university's appointed supervisor

The aims are to ensure that :

the student completes successfully and on time

all designated processes have been followed and recorded (see Code of Practice)

all students are treated equally with uniform standards and processes

the university and you are protected and indemnified

the university's RAE rating improves

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SUPERVISION MODELS

INTELLECTUAL Pre-modernist

The relationship is

- **Socratic – teacher/pupil, age/youth**
- **assumed basis of all types of supervisory relationships**
- **based on your subject and teaching expertise**

The aims are to:

provoke students to think

develop contributions to the supervisor's discipline

enhance supervisor's and student's learning

impress the supervisor's intellectual community

probe subject in depth

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SUPERVISION MODELS

INDENDENT LEARNING ORIENTED modernist in
expected outcome; post modernist in
individuality

The relationship is

- **mentor/mentee; parent/child**
- **assumed by supervisor, not so by student**
- **based on your teacher power**
- **intended to mature over time**

The aims are to ensure
freedom for both supervisor and
student
student can write and present
effectively
student can operate without you
student is prepared for a career

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SUPERVISION MODELS

ORIGINAL/PRAGMATIC

The relationship is

- rarely the same at each meeting
- variable
- based on your personality power
- not sanctioned in university codes of practice
- confusing and exciting

The aims are to

to surprise intellectually
let the student find her/his
own way
acquaint the student with the
vagaries of life
help the student to stun the
world

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SUPERVISION MODELS

OVERVIEW; MODELS ARE

- EXTREME PROTOTYPES
- UNCONSCIOUSLY SELECTED – SHOULD THEY BE OPENLY DISCUSSED?
- INTENSE
- VARY ACCORDING TO YOUR CHOICE (DOMINANT MODE)
- VARY ACCORDING TO TYPE OF STUDENT – SEE TABLE

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1. Role options : from authority to emotion, it's up to you to set the tone of the relationship – or is it?

The supervisory relationship is characterised by 'uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict'

- (Acker et al, 1994: 484)

2. Co-creating the supervisory role –

you and your student

'Unless the parameters of both the roles and aims of both supervisor and student are objectively established and genuinely accepted by both, the relationship...will remain fragile, emotional and unbalanced' (Baker, 1999:152)

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Co-creation:

‘supervision is an intersubjective space in which, when interacting, student and supervisor try to infer mental states and intentions...the space is co-created’ (Grant, 1997:7)

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Reasons for non-completion of theses: discussion outcomes

Student's personality: lack of confidence, lack of stamina, lack of determination, lack of ability, lack of motivation (the supervisor can help improve some of these)

Students feeling: that doctorate is not necessary for their careers; that they are not achieving sufficiently quickly; that they are easily distracted. (supervisor can help with altering these attitudes somewhat)

Students needing intellectual support and management of their studies (the major area for supervisor intervention): lack of data, bad subject choice, writing skills, time management skills, getting started

Students other lives: (supervisors can only offer sympathy - if there is a serious problem, seek expert help – re finance, family, work commitments, health,

YOUR DISCUSSION TRIGGERS

**To what
extent**

is it ethical to degrade questionnaire data?

How

can you avoid bias as a participant observer?

Who

should be included as the subjects for this research?

What

can this article can add to your ideas for the research methodology?

Where

have you made searches for your literature?

When

can focus groups be effectively used?

Why

have you found it difficult to prepare the chapter I asked for?

CO-CREATING THE THESIS: WHAT SHOULD THE SUPERVISOR ENCOURAGE?

1. Writing is understood as a process in itself:

‘In our experience, it is often through the act of writing that researchers find their way out of the conceptual morass’

(Piantanida, M. and Garman, N.B. 1999, *The Qualitative Dissertation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press p. 172)

Writing improves thinking processes; writing creates ideas; you and the student can see gaps; the student has to start explaining links early on; the students can ‘lodge’ ‘great ideas’; you have something concrete to discuss each tutorial

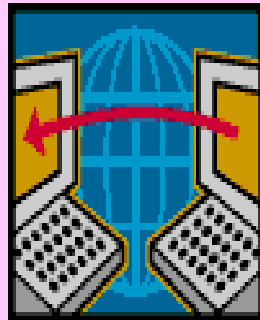
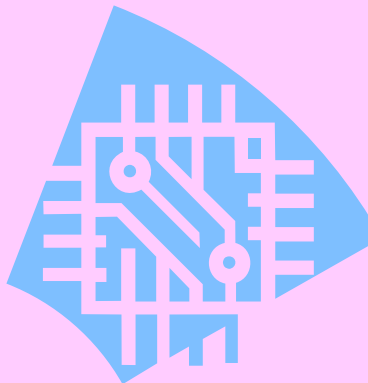
Writing thus becomes dynamic creativity, a means of discovery and a research method itself, proceeding concurrently with other forms of data collection

**Lincoln University Graduate School Emeritus Professor Angela Thody
Co-creating the thesis**

2. The PC enables non-linear, constant process of producing and revising 'iterative or cyclical activity' (Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M. , 2001, 2nd edn, *How to research*. Buckingham, Philadelphia:Open University Press. P. 228).

dialogue with your 'working interpretive document' (Denzin, N.K.,1998, 'The Art and Politics of Interpretation', in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) 2000, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage. p.317)

And offers endless possibilities for manipulating data presentation, analysis, storage, inserts...



Co-creating the thesis

WHAT DOES DOCTORATENESS NEED?

IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS IDEAS

Conventions Conventions Conventions

perfection perfection perfection perfection

Ideas: contributions to theory, practice and debate

Doctorateness = applying others' work creatively, creating new understandings, designing/applying new field instruments; generating knowledge; identifying new ideas to investigate; using existing methods in new fields

Trafford, V. and Leshem, S. (2002) 'Starting at the end to undertake doctoral research: predictable questions as stepping stones', *Higher Education Review*, 34 (1): 31-49.

How best to encourage ideas in a meeting with your student?

CO-CREATING THE THESIS

Ideas CONVENTIONS perfection

- ☞ on time and meeting university regulations for format
- ☞ lengthy and comprehensive literature review that includes accurate citations
- ☞ absolutely correct in vocabulary, punctuation and grammar with no typing errors
- ☞ Data collected ethically and rigorously that proves your conclusions
- ☞ extensive methodology
- ☞ Follows conventional format in layout

**ALTERNATIVES: YES IF YOU AND THE SECOND SUPERVISOR AGREE
AND YOU ARE SURE YOU CAN FIND A SYMPATHETIC EXTERNAL**

CO-CREATING THE THESIS

IDEAS, CONVENTIONS, PERFECTION:

PERFECTION = including academic language, correct English, no colloquialisms etc

**SO HOW TO ENCOURAGE CONVENTIONAL PERFECTION
(AND STILL ENCOURAGE CREATIVE IDEAS?)**

Research Supervision

A co-created relationship

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What you need to be able to tell your students...

Who	will help me with interlibrary loans, computer and lab time, health concerns, coping strategies, electronic resource searches.?
What	is a good thesis?
Why	is a a good idea to start writing my thesis from day one?
Where	will my viva be held?
When	am I expected to complete my proposal (annual progress report, expenses claims); defend my proposal; attend faculty seminars, research methods courses and conferences; finish my thesis and have a viva.
How	do I know when to stop reading for my literature review?
To what extent	Is my research affected by ethical issues?

**ASK YOUR STUDENT
TO**

Set up a file for secondary formats – indirect outputs

e.g. articles, conference papers, posters, books, newspaper items

Ideas go in this file for items that might make smaller outputs with appropriate plans.

List possible journals, collaborators, conferences – go through the data bases together to discuss the best journals for both finding data and for publishing in your field