

DPR9: Trust

30 March – 1 April, 2010

University of Greenwich

Call for Papers

First call for papers: 18 December 2009

We encourage presentations in a range of formats: papers (single or joint author), posters, symposia and workshops, together with work for exhibition and presentations in the visual and performing arts. Proposals should be in the form of abstracts of between 150 – 250 words, making clear the intended format of the presentation. Abstracts should be submitted as a Word attachment via email to jnsatterthwaite@gmail.com

If you would like to discuss a presentation please contact Jerome Satterthwaite either by email or on +44 (0)1752 823091.

The conference is divided into 6 streams:

- Trust and Leadership in the Academy
- Trust and Panic in Education
- Research Ethics
- Trust in the Community: Critical Race Theory
- Faith, Belief and Truth
- The individual in a mistrustful world

Trust and Leadership in the Academy

At every previous DPR conference there have been presentations on the issue of trust and leadership in the academy, looking at the breakdown of trust over the last several decades between academic managers and teaching staff and researchers. The conference in 2010 will make this a major theme, looking at a breakdown in trust that has curdled the relationships between professionals in the whole Education system – from pre-school on, including primary, secondary, higher and further education. But mistrust is even more widespread, souring relations between institutions and their funding bodies, so that there is a pervasive atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, along with cumbersome and often ineffective mechanisms of surveillance established for monitoring and control. Ipsos MORI reported in September 2009 that only 13% of the general UK population trust politicians to tell the truth, the lowest score in the 26 year history of the 'Trust in Professions' poll conducted for the Royal College of Physicians. According to the survey, doctors (92%) teachers (88%, up from 87% in 2008) and professors (80% up from 78%) are the professional groups most trusted by ordinary people. Yet, despite relatively high levels of public confidence in these professional groups, professionals themselves feel they are not trusted enough to fulfil their roles effectively without ongoing scrutiny from funding bodies and quality agencies. Why has this come about? How can it be changed? What is 'trust' and how does 'leadership' relate to this concept? Where, ultimately, is the power in the world of education, and can it be (should it be) resisted?

Trust and Panic in Education

Can teachers and other professionals be trusted with children? What safeguards are needed to protect children from abuse in nurseries, at school, and when joining in social activities? What is the proper, sensible, ethical way to behave in an educational milieu where accusations of improper behaviour can suddenly end a career? How should such accusations be dealt with? What rights should children, parents, teachers and other child care professionals have, and how should those rights be respected in practice?

Research Ethics

Research is never value-free. Issues of right and wrong are always present in the subject-matter of research and in the methodology adopted. Who should decide on these matters? What is the significance of trust in research, between researchers and their ethics committees and funding bodies, between researchers and their participants – the men, women and children whose responses provide the data, and between researchers and the readers of their research accounts?

Trust in the community – Critical Race Theory

What is a 'community' and what happens when trust breaks down within a community or between communities? And why does trust break down? What is the significance of race for issues of trust in the community and between competing communities? How does Critical Race Theory help us to understand issues of trust in the community and to intervene effectively?

Faith, Belief and Truth

Faith and Belief involve trust – we trust a person, a tradition or an intuition to show us a Truth which will give a foundation for our lives, values and understanding. What do we do when the sources in which we trust are discredited or brought into collision: where should we turn, who should we trust, and why? These questions have troubled thoughtful people for many centuries; they also have an immediate bearing on the issues raised in multicultural societies today.

This stream will include presentations on the relevance of trust in religion; but also on the relevance of trust in philosophy, where questions of epistemology are normally examined from the perspective of post-structuralist, post-modernist intellectual discomfort, where trust is always withheld.

The Individual in a mistrustful world

Issues of identity will be brought together in this stream: if I can't trust others, can I trust myself? And what can that 'self' be, in a culture where identities multiply and fragment, or where – as in the proliferation of on-line social networks – I make myself up as I go along (and am more or less explicitly expected to do so), until the real self (whatever that could possibly mean) is dissolved in a myriad self-images? These questions are not new; but in the prevailing culture of mistrust and suspicion they are acutely urgent.