

Students, citizens and seekers: An exploration of justifications for university chaplaincy and the consequent subjectification.

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Abstract

The role and value of chaplaincy is a controversial topic within Australia, with the discussion being led by consideration of secondary school chaplaincy. This paper presents a theoretical exploration of how chaplaincy, regardless of its professional setting, might be justified using an '*Economies of Worth*' framework (Boltanski & Thévenot 1999/2006). Application of this theory suggests that the person with whom the chaplain works will be defined and subjectified consistently with the principles whereby chaplaincy is valued. This paper considers the different *Worlds of Valuing* described within the framework and comments on the unique contribution that chaplaincy makes within the professional environment of the modern, secular university. The conclusion reached as a result of this reflection is that chaplaincy provides a unique and valuable contribution to the life of the tertiary education campus because, by its nature, it uniquely permits the actualisation of aspects of an individual's identity relating to spirituality. The individual therefore has the freedom to operate within a wider range of roles than might be possible if chaplaincy was not included within the repertoire of supports and services provided by the university.

Key words

Chaplaincy in higher education, university, Economies of Worth, students, subjectification, values.

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