

Disciplines of Education: Their Role in the Future of Education Research



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Are the disciplines of education ghosts of a productive past or creative and useful forms of inquiry? Are they in a demographic and organisational crisis today?

The contribution of the 'foundation disciplines' of sociology, psychology, philosophy, history and economics to the study of education has always been contested in the UK and in much of the English-speaking world. But such debates are now being brought to a head in education by the demographic crisis. Recent research has shown that with the an ageing population of education academics, in ten years' time, there could be very few disciplinary specialists left working within faculties of education in UK universities. But does that matter and is the UK no more than a special case? How does this 'crisis' look from Europe where the disciplines of education are more embedded, and from the USA with its more diverse higher education system?

In this book, leading scholars – including A.H. Halsey, David Bridges, John Furlong, Hugh Lauder, Martin Lawn and Sheldon Rothblatt – consider the changing fortunes of each discipline as education moved away from the dominance of psychology in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s as a result of the growing importance of the other disciplines and new social questions, and how the changing epistemological and political debates of the last twenty years haves resulted in their progressive demise. Finally, the book confronts the question as to whether the disciplines have a place in education in the twenty-first century.

The book brings the coming crisis into the public view and explores the issue of the past, current and future relevance of the disciplines to the study of education. It will be of interest to all international academics and researchers in the field of education and the contributory disciplines as well as to students on educational research methods courses.

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