Sozialwissenschaftlicher Fachinformatio nsdienst soFid

Founder or Joiner? The Role of Preferences and Context in Shaping Different Entrepreneurial Interests.

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Teaching With Integrity,the Ethics of Higher Education Practice by Bruce Macfarlane. London: Routledge Falmer, 2003. ISBN 0-415-33509-4. 192 pp. £22.50 Do not be put off by the thought of ethics being abstract, ethereal or deeply intel- lectual. This is a practical, useful book which I expect to inform many courses for new teaching staff. The issues it raises are, however, equally pertinent to experi- enced academics, and I am sure that many colleagues will enjoy engaging with the ethical dilemmas posed. The book is built around a number of fictional case studies in which a variety of academics run into a series of realistic, everyday troubles. The author does not attempt to solve these dilemmas himself, but reports back on the collected wisdom of 24 experienced HE practitioners who were asked for their thoughts and solutions. The book then goes on to try and identify the key desirable character- istics or 'virtues' of an ethically- sound practising academic. The author is able to demonstrate a genuine understanding and empathy for'front-line' academics. It is noticeable that the case studies all reflect work situations in which staff are hard- pressed, overly-busy and harassed. They certainly could not be used to attract people into the profession! Part one of the book (The Professional and Ethical Context) is masterly. The author provides a well-written, clear and terse overview of the state of UK higher education today, drawing upon his experience to explain why things are the way they are. He then goes on to describe what he calls the 'pedagogical gap' between the professional competency approach to academic development and the ethical complexities of teaching and managing students. It is this issue which is really the thrust of the book; how we really do not do enough (anything?) to equip academics to make good choices in relation to their ethical responsibilities. The case studies themselves form part two and are split into four sections, each relating to an area of the professional practice of an academic; teaching, assessing, evaluating and managing. In each case, a scenario unfolds in which a member of staff is faced with a number of dilemmas. The reader is invited to consider what the member of staff should do, and then the view of the experienced HE prac- titioner panel is recounted. If anything, this section is overly brief. Since this is the heart of the book I would have liked to see a few more scenarios, perhaps starting with some basic situations (ethics for beginners) and build to some more chal- lenging ones. Having said that, the brevity of this section makes it easier to navigate and will contribute to making the book more useable as a development manual. I commend this book to anyone with an interest in the professional develop- ment of academic staff and/or the ethics of the HE workplace. It is an interesting topic, made very accessible and I challenge anyone not to be drawn into the case studies. M I K E C O O K University of Lincoln A C T I V E L E A R N I N G I N H I G H E R E D U C AT I O N 6(1) 88 08 ALH 051355 (to/d) 3/2/05 2:07 pm Page 88