**Boyer’s scholarships: which one sounds most like you?**

Boyer’s ‘four scholarships’ (Boyer, 1990) offer a perspective, based on a report of work in the US in the eighties on the professoriate, focusing on a ‘single concern around which all others pivot’ was based on considering how academics (termed by him *faculty*) spend their time, and which of their activities are most prized and rewarded. He argues for recognition that different activities represent different kinds of scholarship, which should all be valued, working towards a situation:

‘In which the full range of human talent is celebrated and recorded. In such a system, the discovery of knowledge, the integration of knowledge, the application of knowledge and great teaching would be fully honoured, powerfully reinforcing one another’. (Boyer, p.80)

**Scholarship of Discovery:** Boyer (1990) proposes that:

‘The *scholarship of discovery*, at its best, contributes not only to the stock of human discovery but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university. Not just the outcomes, but the process, and especially the passion, give meaning to the effort.’ (Boyer, p.17).

**The scholarship of** **integration:** Boyer describes this kind of scholarship as follows:

‘In proposing the *scholarship of integration*, we underscore the need for scholars who give meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspective. By integration we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in [a] larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists too. In calling for a scholarship of integration, we do not suggest returning to the ‘gentleman scholar’ of an earlier time, nor do we have in mind the dilettante. Rather, what we mean is serious disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together and bring new insight to bear on original research.’ (Boyer, p.19).

He further proposes:

‘The *scholarship of integration,* is, of course, closely related to discovery. It involves, first, doing research at the boundaries where fields converge and it reveals itself in what philosopher-physicist Michael Polyani (1967) calls ‘overlapping [academic] neighbourhoods’. Such work is, in fact, increasingly important as traditional disciplinary categories prove confining, forcing new topologies of knowledge.’

Many educational developers (including me) see this as our key Boyerian locus.

**The scholarship of *application,*** Boyer argues,

 ‘moves towards engagement, as the scholar asks, “How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions?” And further, “Can social problems *themselves* define an agenda for scholarly investigation?”’ (Boyer, p.21).

Many educational developers regard themselves as primarily using scholarship of application in our work.

**The *scholarship of teaching*** Boyer argues, is based on the premise that ‘The work of the professor becomes consequential only as it is understood by others’ but ‘when defined as *scholarship,* however, teaching both educates and entices future scholars.’ (Boyer, p.23). He further argues: ‘Teaching is also a dynamic endeavour involving all the analogies, metaphors and images that build bridges between the teacher’s understanding and the student’s learning’ (pp.23-24).

In his work on informal scholarship he suggests:

‘Writing for non-specialists – often called ‘popular writing’ – also should be recognised as a legitimate scholarly endeavour. In the past, such work has been dismissed as ‘mere journalism,’ but this misses we believe, a larger point. To make complex ideas understandable to a large audience can be a difficult, demanding task, one that requires not only a deep and thorough knowledge of one’s field but keen literary skills as well.’ (Boyer, 1990, p.35).

Mick Healey is one of the prime UK proponents of scholarship in teaching and its relevance for Educational Developers.

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