

Knowledge and Power in Higher Education

Tuesday 8th May 2018

14.00 to 15.30

The Edge Management Suite University of Bath



Michael Young



Melz Owusu

What should be taught in the university and school curriculum? Should we focus on a western enlightenment paradigm? Are we ignoring other epistemologies and views of the world? Two distinguished speakers tackle this from divergent viewpoints.

Michael Young is a renowned educational sociologist of knowledge and Professor Emeritus (UCL Institute of Education). His seminal research on knowledge and social realism has influenced generations of researchers and policy makers. As well as directing the Post 16 Research Centre, he was appointed Research Advisor to the City and Guilds of London Institute and the OECD. **Melz Owusu** is undertaking a PhD in Social Theory (University of Leeds) and is a grime MC/ rapper presenting academic and poetic responses to social crises on TEDx, the Huffington Post and at the University of Oxford. Contributing to transformation at the University of Leeds, she was featured as a modern day Black political activist in the Tate Modern.

In ***Powerful Knowledge, the Curriculum and the Future of Education***, Michael argues that there is an assault on expert knowledge by right wing populism, utilitarianism and identity based politics. He traces the intellectual and sociological origins of the concept 'powerful knowledge' and indicates both why it has been criticized and why it has the potential to give access to power not just for an elite but for all students as their democratic right. In ***Decolonising the Academy***, Melz argues that the academy is steeped in colonial Eurocentric beliefs and an all-encompassing Eurocentric epistemology. Melz explores how the academy values different forms of knowledge and questions who benefits from a Eurocentric academy, ending with how this can be challenged.

Fishbowl conversations involving the audience will be opened by Dr David Packham (University of Bath) who has been involved with Materials Science and the development of Natural Science courses for 35 years. In 'Whose knowledge, Whose Power? David draws on Kuhn to interrogate Science as a Grand Narrative. He analyses disciplines in terms of tacit assumptions, rival viewpoints, the relationship to values and the world in which we live. He applies this understanding to a practical example of teaching.