

AN INSIGHT INTO THE DAILY EXPERIENCE OF SCIENCE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

What does the world of science students look like? How do they build meanings and perceptions of their experience? This presentation will provide a preliminary report on a study aiming to explore the experience of science students at Monash. Ten students were recruited to use video cameras to record elements of their lives and to provide a commentary on those elements throughout a semester. The students represented first year and commencing students, the various disciplines, gender and age groups. The students acted as "participant-researchers", identifying and exploring the phenomena they experienced and the meaning and sense making they constructed in terms of science, their science studies, the value of their degree and how these issues impact on their lives. This approach not only provides valuable information to science teaching staff and decision makers; it also enhances the skill base of the student researchers as they receive training in video recording, phenomenological research, the processes of planning and reflecting on their experience, in ethics involving human subjects, and in the process of qualitative data collection and analysis. In addition to presenting the research methodology, this presentation will give a preliminary analysis of the recordings students made and the follow up interviews.

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