



Transcript: Susan - the meaning of the PhD

How do you think the PhD has equipped you? What has it given you?

Oh a massive inferiority complex! I think it has made me really confident in my own ability to you know, look at a situation and say 'right well this is what needs to be done.' I suppose it's my ability to generate models of thinking I suppose, because with research being a researcher always gives the impression that you are drawing material from somewhere else, which to some extent is true. But something that I took from research was the ability to basically generate something purely out of my head. With all of this material I am going to have to think of a way to make it work all together and that is purely coming from me that is not sort of innate to the material. And so it makes you very confident in your ability to do that I guess and also the fact that I finished at all makes me think if I can do that I can probably do anything, any kind of sustained body of work that just has to be gone on and on and on and on. That sense of just being able to just keep going. And to some extent yeah I mean I suppose a really strong confidence in my own opinion on things. If I think that something is so then I can always make the argument for why it is so and that is never going to leave me now because I've got a rubber stamp saying yes your opinions count, your opinions matter. And when you are starting out you always feel like 'oh these are just like my opinions how can they possibly mean anything' but actually no, fair enough that is a contribution to knowledge. In terms of being equipped to pay the electricity bill and you know, to put in a full day's work and all that kind of thing, I don't think it would equip me at all. Yeah confidence in my intellectual abilities definitely.