‘HOW DO I MARGINALISE THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS’: FRIENDSHIP AS A DISCOURSE OF MARGINALISATION IN POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION

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The theory and practice of postgraduate supervision constructs academic supervisors as the custodians of ‘friendship’ in the supervisory relationship. This construction also demands compatibility between students and supervisors as an essential to a successful candidature. This paper does not dispute that a co-operative relationship between student and supervisor can be a bonus in the supervisory relationship. However, we argue that ‘friendship’ as a discourse has the potential to marginalize both the supervisor and the student as it constructs and is constructed by each to disempower the other. This paper examines the discourses and the technologies of friendship in the supervisory relationship, and argues that a more collegial and professional discourse opens new possibilities for different practices in postgraduate pedagogies.