Curriculum Theorizing and Teacher Education

Complicating conjunctions

Anne Phelan

Routledge

Curriculum Theorizing and Teacher Education

If teacher education, as a field of study, is to contribute to the revitalization, remoralization, and repoliticization of education, this book argues that it needs to be alert to questions of teachers' intellectual and political freedom and to concerns about the legitimacy of what we do in teacher education, in the name of education.

Anne Phelan demonstrates how curriculum theorizing can serve such an educational project by engaging concerns about subjectivity (human agency and action), society, and historical moment, thereby widening the field of insight in teacher education and informing debates about new trajectories for policy and practice. Exploring teacher education through ethical, political, and aesthetic vocabularies drawn from the humanities, is vital at a time when the dehumanizing influences of performativity, standardization, and accountability are evident in education systems across the world and when we are in danger of losing the things that we most value and are the least measurable – relationships, independent thought, and ethical judgment.

Curriculum Theorizing and Teacher Education will be of interest to teacher educators who are practicing, researching, or (re)designing teacher education, as well as policymakers who are curious about new possibilities for framing the "problem" of teacher education at provincial, state, and federal levels.

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This book is full of voices, stories, and lives. I am deeply appreciative of those aspiring teachers, teacher mentors, and teacher educators who have been willing to share their experiences of learning to teach and teaching with me. I have been fortunate also in having such thoughtful collaborators and colleagues whose insights live between the lines and on the pages that follow.

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Series editors' preface

In this fourth volume in the *Theorizing Education* series, Anne Phelan's *Curriculum Theorizing and Teacher Education* provides a timely set of reflections on teachers, teaching, and teacher education. It comes at a point when teacher education is increasingly "under siege," with curricula continuously controlled and scripted and geared toward teaching as technical support for raising test scores (Sleeter 2008: 1947). This has rendered teachers and teacher educators inarticulate, or at least favoring, in Bernstein's (1999) terms, horizontal discourses involving tacit, commonsense understandings, over vertical – scientific "know why" – discourses (Beach 2011). The absence of vertical discourses remove teachers' and teacher educators' capacity for criticality (Sleeter 2008; Apple 2001) as well as their ability to make equitable judgments (Alexandersson 2011).

Phelan uses theory to great effect – to raise questions about the judgment, objectification, and often violence visited upon teachers; to offer a playful critique of the autonomous teacher of contemporary policy; and to help recognize some of the lies and deception that may be practiced within professional contexts, albeit innocently (Nietzsche 1979). Amid the playfulness of Phelan's theoretical analysis, there is a recognition of the damage that is done, and she highlights some devastating cases in which individuals have been unable to endure the pressures associated with being a teacher in public.

Phelan's text is enriched by empirical examples, including some drawn from a case study of conflict. These are given provocation through her engagement with a wealth of theory; through this engagement, she offers some new and challenging ways of thinking about power and place, about the nature of practical experience, and about difference.

This book is highly relevant to the series in taking as central contemporary questions that are *educational*; Phelan does this in a highly reflective and reflexive manner, writing "obtusely" (Barthes 1977) to question common-sense understandings. She illustrates, in her analysis, the complex ways in which the "classic romance narrative" Thomson (2013: 173) of teachers and teaching interpellates (Althusser, 1971) teachers and their educators in ways that individualizes and isolates them whilst also making departure and dissent difficult.

The *Theorizing Education* series is intended, through the use of theory, to be agenda setting, and *Curriculum Theorizing and Teacher Education* certainly fulfils this promise. Phelan's purpose, in engaging with theory, is not to seek to overturn the laws and obligations of performativity that have come to govern teachers' work and lives but to, in her words, "refurbish" how we might imagine teachers, teaching, and teacher education; rescue some of the potentiality of teachers; and recover some of the educational, historical and political purpose of teaching. She also advocates a kind of pedagogy which is "edgy" (Harwood and Allan 2014) and which, invoking the poet Seamus Heaney (1984: 52), calls for some of the "elements of accident" about it. Ultimately, she aspires to help us to think about we might encourage teachers to live well within regimes of performativity and surveillance and how we might read the teacher back into the dialogue about education and society. Her book is, thus, an extremely optimistic one, grounded in sound scholarship and containing some new and rich theoretical resources.

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Julie Allan
Gert Biesta
Richard Edwards

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Introduction

## Teacher education for the sake of the subject

Speaking *educationally* about teacher education

> For education belongs among the most elementary and necessary activities of human society, which never remains as it is but continuously renews itself through birth through the arrival of new human beings. These newcomers, moreover, are not finished but in a state of becoming.
>
> (Arendt 2006: 185)

To speak educationally about teacher education means "to express an interest in freedom . . . the freedom of the other" who is the newcomer, the teacher, and to preserve her capacity to renew the educational conversation (Biesta and Säfström 2011: 540). While the teacher's freedom is foregrounded in terms of individuality, that is, originality, creativity, and the capacity for dissent, it is always relational – at once socially structured and historically primed. As such, the newcomer is always belated, heir to a particular history and yet new to it (Levinson 2001). Aspiring teachers are charged with becoming recognizably professional by demonstrating the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. However, if teacher education is to be more than normalization – a repetition and reaffirmation of what already is – each new teacher must have the opportunity to question, to define what matters to her, and what she rejects. If teacher education is to be *educational*, it must confront and engage the difference that each new teacher introduces; its capacity to do so is the central concern of this book.

It was the late 1970s when I arrived by bus at a teachers' college run by a religious order of nuns. Against the backdrop of the grand stone house, high ceilings, and a large, winding, granite staircase, I was both elevated and burdened by a sense of history and tradition. Implicitly, I embraced responsibility for the continuity of Irish culture, language, and religion that depended on national schoolteachers (Kindergarten – Grade 6). Yet as a working-class youth fresh from convent school, I felt the same diffidence I did as a child "in the clerical presence, the relative grandeur of the milieu, leather desk, carpeted hush, book-lined walls" (Heaney 2009: 33). The lecture halls named for Celtic and monastic settlements – *Éanna, Cairbre, Iona* – were filled with the silence of inhospitable
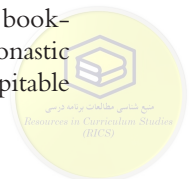
lectures on subjects ranging from Irish language and Catholic theology to mathematics pedagogy; there were no questions or conversations. My classmates and I learned a great deal in those rooms, but very little of it was rooted in our own sense of inquiry. While our professors may have appreciated the significance of the teacher's role for the Irish state, most did not recognize the significance of the teacher *subjectively* – in terms of prior knowledge, particular circumstances, or values – and the importance of each one of us achieving "singularity and social commitment" through our studies (Pinar 2011: xi). In fact, not unlike many contemporary teacher education programs, the curriculum of daily lectures from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. seemed to operate as a defense against any hint of singularity that might erupt and interrupt the rush toward predetermined outcomes. Of course, that is not the whole story.

The beauty of the stained-glass doors of the teachers' college library beckoned literal and figurative worlds beyond nationalist fervor, religious indoctrination, and technical rationalism – education, philosophy, history – waiting to be explored and holding the promise of something yet unimagined by myself or my peers. There, on the recommendation of one professor, I sought out Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Others have spoken eloquently about the resonance Freire's (1972) work has for Irish students: the fact that for many of us, examination-driven, second-level schooling is oppressive and that the impact on Irish thought-patterns of a long legacy of political, economic, and cultural colonization persists (Dunne 2010). My encounter with Freire's banking concept of education offered rich resources with which to understand my experience of schooling – what it was up to and what it had made of me – within the larger social, political, and historical landscape of Ireland. During impassioned discussion about Freire's book with friends outside the college classroom, my world and my self were put into question for the first time.

The contradictions that pervaded my experience during teachers' college constituted, in part, an ordinary but unnamed crisis that besets all education, according to Arendt (2006): the crisis between continuity (authority of tradition) and change (freedom of the newcomer to rethink tradition and her relation to it). Teacher education has long been a modernist project devoted to producing and sustaining predictable, stable, and normative identities (Sumara, Davis and Iftody 2008). The very term "teacher" (and concomitantly, teacher education) seems to suggest a recognizable identity, a presumed body of knowledge and skill and a set of vocational responsibilities. The inclination is to think about teacher education in terms of either *what is* – as a process of teacher socialization to the norms of present day schooling and society – or *what is not* – as a process of teacher preparation for a different future for schooling and/ or society. By basing freedom on a future promise (e.g. teacher as transformative intellectual [Giroux and McLaren 1986]), teacher education becomes tied to the idea of progress, loses its grounding in the present moment, and is placed "beyond reach" (Biesta and Säfström 2011: 540). However, by basing teacher education in the present, it becomes little more than a process of adaptation

to what society and its institutions are and/or what we perceive the teacher to be in the here and now (e.g. teacher as producer of high test scores). Veering toward either one or the other, teacher education is in danger of focusing so much attention on teacher identity – what a teacher is or ought to be – that it forfeits interest in an "excess" that announces something new and unexpected – something singular (Biesta and Säfström 2011).

Importantly, however, the teacher's singularity as a human being (as a new-comer to the profession) is less a function of her individuality than her distinc-tiveness in relation to other people.

> In acting and speaking, men [sic] show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world, while their physical identities appear without any activity of their own in the unique shape of the body and the sound of the voice.
>
> (Arendt 1998: 179)

For Hannah Arendt, public space (such as what I experienced is discussion about Freire) was not just the space where ideas or approaches were debated and perspectives exchanged but also "a space of appearance in which individuals and groups appear to one another, in the process creating their subjectivities" (Benhabib 2008: 102). To be a person is to be present to others, to be seen by them, and to be in communication with them. Being present to one another is not a matter of recognition of each other's qualities, qualifications, talents, and shortcomings, which we may display or hide; it is a matter of revelation of a "who" which is implicit in everything one says or does in that moment (Arendt 1998: 179). As such, common space holds out the opportunity for surprising ourselves and others; when we speak, we can appear different than others may have expected or anticipated.

Subjectivity, therefore, is an event rather than a project of completion; the teaching subject is always in "a state of becoming" and never fully realized (Arendt 2006: 185). Teachers become subjects when others witness their speech and action in such a way that the opportunity for the witness's own speech and action are not obstructed. This means that subjectivity is only possible in a world of plurality and difference (Biesta 2010a). As such, newness is never guaranteed because each newcomer comes into presence in relation to others and the ways others take up her beginnings are radically beyond her control.

Thinking about teacher subjectivity, in Arendtian terms, posits a particular responsibility for teacher educators: to preserve, and enable others to preserve, a space of freedom where the newcomer can reveal her singularity through speech and action, be witnessed by others, and thus make her appearance in the world. None of this is to disregard the significance of professional socialization or qualification. It is, however, to express a deep concern about anti-educational forces – standardization, performativity, and accountability – that erase the plu-rality necessary for the teacher to come into the world in the Arendtian sense.
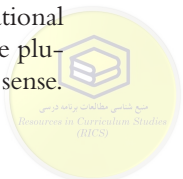
The imposition of a single language wherein education and teacher education are epiphenomenal to the economy endangers that which is valuable and most difficult to measure like agency, relationships, ethical and social responsibility, solidarity, and autonomy (Smith 2010). Trapped in the economic tower of Babel, teachers feel "walled in" by the vociferations of neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideologies and, as Beckett (1965) would have it, we seem to have "no words but theirs" (p. 319).

The premise of this book is that to be educational, teacher education must be primarily concerned with the teacher's subjectivity, that is, with the teacher's freedom of expression, thought, and action. I am not arguing, however, that subjectivity can or ought to be produced through teacher education. My concern lies in the manner in which the event of subjectivity is effortlessly impeded by teacher education practices and policies. In the chapters that follow, I illustrate the manner in which, at individual and institutional levels, conditions exist in which teacher candidates are discouraged from questioning or denied opportunities to put themselves in question; where teacher educators or mentors are immunized to the call of the newcomer; and where easy idealizations about pedagogy refuse the complications of curriculum as lived. My intent is to identify and critique those circumstances under which teacher education becomes anti-educational even as I also try to capture and complicate moments, and their associated tensions, when subjectivity is achieved in all its singularity – when teacher candidates persist in questioning the given, steal time for solitary study, or act upon well-defined commitments.

In an effort to understand and remain alert to the event of subjectivity in teacher education – the possibility and impossibility of teachers' intellectual and political freedom – I have needed to find new ways of talking. I have found that questions concerning the entanglements of human agency and responsibility, society, and historical moment are best addressed from within the field of curriculum theory (Carson *et al.* 2008).

Curriculum theorizing

Curriculum theorizing is "a form of practical-theoretical reason" (Pinar 2004: 25) that draws on and reconfigures conceptual schema from the Humanities and the Arts in the hope that new and potentially more fruitful ways of talking about curriculum – lived, official, hidden, null – will be forthcoming (Macdonald 1975). As such, curriculum is variously understood by curriculum theorists as (a) "a cultural object with a social history, anchored in ideology, and nested in layers of meaning that call for clarification and interpretation" (Grumet, Anderson and Osmond 2008: 137); (b) an event that occurs in universities, colleges, and schools every day – a transaction that takes place among program coordinators, teacher educators, school teacher-mentors, teacher candidates, and students within institutional contexts; and (c) a study in the perspective of the author including/requiring a recapitulation of the

author's history of experience and associations with teacher education (Grumet, Anderson and Osmond 2008).

Strewn throughout this book are traces of curriculum as texts, events, encounters, and experiences shared by teachers, teacher candidates, and teacher educators, including accounts of my own practice. None of these are meant as nods to some empirical or evidentiary reality; rather, they enact "an aesthetic of the fact, which is a discipline of perception as well as a practice of representation" (Nelson 2006: 92). What makes something a fact is "less its informational content than its capacity to alter the observer" (p. 94). I have selected to write about these particular experiences and encounters because they gave me pause and encouraged me to have "second thoughts" (Britzman 2003: 4). The idea of second thoughts conjures images of returning, as if for the first time, to review and rearticulate meanings long taken for granted. Second thoughts are about freeing ourselves from memories that entangle us so that they can be reconsidered. Second thoughts can be escape routes from the dead ends of education and teacher education; they demand "the hard look and not looking away" (Nelson 2006: 100). Second thoughts speak to unlearning and "escaping ensnaring prejudices and coming into possession of one's own language for what has been seen, heard or done" (Knott 2014: x). I hope I have managed to do at least some of this in my effort to contemplate the weave of relation, reciprocity, outcomes, misunderstanding, conflict, and difficulty that characterizes the coming into presence of the teaching subject.

In keeping with the interdisciplinary quality of curriculum theorizing, I have drawn on a plurality of conceptual schema from the Humanities – ethical, political, and aesthetic vocabularies. The ethical invites a focus on transient moments of encounter with others in which subjectivity is performed or achieved (Biesta 2010a; Phelan 2011). The political provokes a concern with the power dynamics of such encounters. The aesthetic summons a consideration of how the new (bodies, ideas, and theories) can rupture well-worn lines of thought, disrupting familiar trajectories and opening up pathways "to new knowledge, new insights, new modes of being" (Davies 2004: 1). In calling on interlocutors as diverse as Aristotle, Agamben, Schütz, Herbart, Nussbaum, Arendt, Lyotard, Nietzsche, Kristeva, and Foucault, I have found languages provocative and informative to my project. I do not wish to imply any mastery of the vital and rich traditions of their respective scholarship. Nor do I wish to suggest any essential kinship among them, although there are certainly affinities. Rather, I imagine myself in a complicated conversation about a matter of mutual concern – the entanglements of teacher subjectivity with historical circumstances, contemporary policy, and educational practices – creating public spaces for engagement. If writing is an activity rather than a display of knowledge, it requires that the writer engage with others, both present and absent, in the act of perception, sharing the world in a way that amends and corrects subjective insight (Nelson 2006). I recognize the risk in my approach but hope that the range, if not the depth, of my reading signals

a "radically undogmatic" sensitivity to the complexity of the event that is subjectivity (Gadamer 1995: 355).

An invitation to a conversation in three parts

In Part I, *Complicating Conjunctions*, I attend to three conjunctive relations that frame teacher education instrumentally – theory and practice, curriculum and pedagogy, novice and expert – illustrating the ease with which each can induce teacher candidates to relinquish intellectual autonomy.

In Chapter 1, "The Subject of Judgment," I illustrate how, in a culture of objectification and heightened rationality, teacher candidates learn to outsource their judgment of children's work to externalized and generalized curriculum standards; to do so, in their view, is a reflection of professional expertise. I describe my attempt, as a teacher educator, to disrupt my students' preoccupation with objectivity and to cultivate an appreciation of the ethical demand that the presence of children evokes. While I conclude that Aristotelian *phronesis* or practical judgment can be an important ally in undermining a culture of objectification, in rehumanizing assessment, and in reclaiming the agency of the teacher, the challenges for teacher education remain significant.

Chapter 2, "Lessons in Study," begins with the contention that current formulations of teachers' professional learning have less to do with expanding teacher subjectivity and more to do with delimiting it. The proliferation of professional development opportunities attest to the construal of teachers' potential in terms of a stylized identity keen on endlessly developing itself in the image of what society deems necessary. Drawing on Giorgio Agamben, I make a case for solitary study as providing a site of open potentiality in which teachers can appear – reconstructing their experience, thereby transforming themselves and potentially their social worlds – or not. Study can only occur in teacher education, however, if teacher educators are willing to forego the instrumental relation between curriculum and pedagogy.

Accompanied by Lyotard and haunted by Arendt's concept of natality, Chapter 3, "Violence and Subjectivity in Teacher Education," explores the relation between novice and expert teachers and the impact of mentoring on the intellectual freedom of teacher candidates. Interpreted initially as puzzling, then as anomalous, and finally dangerous, I demonstrate how the new (teacher candidate) can be vilified and violently subjected to the will of tradition and the professional order of things. In the face of normalization, I examine the idea of the teaching profession as a minimal community, one that is hospitable to the newcomer, willing to be called into question, and placing itself at risk with each new arrival.

Part II, *Disturbing Relations*, underscores and investigates "the inseparability of the social and the subjective" in teacher education in three societies – Northern

Ireland, Austria, and Canada (Pinar 2011: xiv). Each context illustrates the play of the sociopolitical, the sociohistorical and the sociocultural, respectively, in the formation of the teaching subject.

Chapter 4, "Power and Place in Teaching and Teacher Education," examines the not-so-hidden curriculum of teacher education in Northern Ireland. I show how academic disciplines (subjects) are intertwined with the history and politics of place and are used to shape, both implicitly and explicitly, the sociopolitical commitments of teacher candidates. Asserting the need to rethink the relationship between teacher education and place, I contend that teacher educators must begin to identify and examine the discourses that we propagate in our institutions and the political sensibilities cemented therein. In doing so, the term "teacher" might be freed from the religious, disciplinary, and political ontologies to which it has been restricted and given play as a site where unanticipated meanings might come to bear.

In Chapter 5, "Teacher as Stranger at Home," I invoke Alfred Schütz's writings about the experience of estrangement to explore one Austrian teacher's transformative encounter "outside subjectivity" – with culture and history – during his first year of teaching in Vienna (Pinar 2009: 26). The teacher's upbringing as an Austrian Catholic comes face-to-face with the inherited injuries of his Jewish students; the question of whether he can become attuned to what is at stake in their shared present is considered. Georg's story illustrates the teacher's capacity for self-formation and self-knowledge, ever influenced by history and present circumstances, and lived intensely through body, relation, space, and time.

Chapter 6, "At the Edge of Language," delves into the complexities of becoming a teacher in the sociocultural (some would say "multicultural") context of Canada. The focus in this chapter is on conflict as a dynamic and unpredictable scene of teacher becoming. An appreciation of and openness to the ambiguity and risk associated with all communication is dulled by assumptions about the knowability of others that pervade teacher education. The upshot is the erasure of alterity and any possibility of responsibility for the other, in all its singularity. If teacher candidates are to be educated or to educate, I argue, then they will need to appreciate the distinction between "what" we might deem ourselves and others to be and "who" we are, which only unfolds in the context of the encounter.

Acknowledging that the event of subjectivity is only possible under the condition of plurality, Chapter 7, "Portfolios as Public Spaces in Teacher Education," describes an effort at creating and sustaining social democratic spaces in which teacher candidates could come into the world in the Arendtian sense. My coauthor, Vetta Vratulis, and I reject identity- and standard-driven presentation portfolios as an appropriate form of assessment in teacher education, stating that they present "teacher" as a private project of completion, but we are in favor of a collective e-portfolio that enacts "teacher" as an ongoing public performance of becoming. We uncover the complexities – negotiation of ideas, power relations, and private/public "selves" – associated with creating public spaces of appearance

in teacher education and efforts to promote a culture of democratic engagement in educational matters. What is new appears old and thwarts all our expectations!

Part III, *Figuring the Teacher,* calls for a consideration of how the teaching subject lives in the educational world *after* teacher education. I consider the inheritance of teacher education – idealizations about pedagogy, community, and responsibility – that new teachers bring to their early years of teaching.

Chapter 8, "The Teacher as Idealist," examines the need to believe in a perfect pedagogy that characterizes the teacher's existence. The problem with idealizations is that they refute the plurality of the world even as they arise from the interference of others. I illustrate and examine the way in which performativity, as a policy technology, regulates teaching and teachers by fostering idealizations and exploiting new teachers' anxieties about themselves and their teaching. The imperative to achieve high test scores trumps teachers' agency and recasts responsibility. Seduced to abandon their independence of thought, teachers' subjective existence – their relations to themselves, their colleagues, and their practice – is substantially altered. I conclude by exploring belief as a less corrosive and more liberating capacity that can be deployed to help teachers live well beyond idealizations.

In Chapter 9, "Virtues of a Heartless Teacher," I examine conceptions of community that structure relations among teachers, initially as teacher candidates and later as colleagues in schools. Idealizations about professional togetherness can be a challenge to teachers' political and intellectual freedom, especially when togetherness is privatized, that is, confined to a love of those like one self and characterized by an unwillingness to question or to be called into question. Drawing inspiration from the intellectual friendship of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, as well as the thought of Alexandra Kollontai, a Bolshevik feminist, I advance a modified *caritas,* or friendship, as a basis for professional relations among teachers.

As a counter to the excessively tight grip on teacher identity evident in contemporary policy, Chapter 10, "Desacralizing 'Teacher,'" draws the book to a close by turning to the lightness of Agamben's thought, to profane "teacher" for the sake of a coming community. For Agamben, the ethical task is to profane any identity considered sacred within the law by playing with it but without trying to resolve the matter once and for all (Kishik 2012). Playfulness can help combat cynicism even as it points toward the contingency, fragility, and indeterminacy that characterize living and teaching. It is with this spirit that I attempt a playful critique of the so-called autonomous and responsible teacher of contemporary policy as I draw the book to a close.

Conclusion

The essays in this volume constitute a series of second thoughts about teaching, teacher education, and the event of teacher subjectivity. The concern throughout is solely to move in the tension-filled gap between what is and what is not,
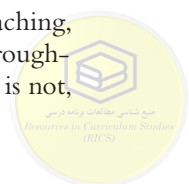
to offer spaces of conflict, confrontation, and complication that can provoke new questions and imaginings. Like my many interlocutors, I have not felt duty-bound to resolve the difficulties many of these chapters present for teacher education. I have tried, however, to remain alert to questions of teachers' intellectual and political freedom and the legitimacy of what we think and do in teacher education, in the name of education.

When considering the potential contribution of curriculum theorizing, David Smith, renowned Canadian thinker, suggested that a conversation of this kind will not "'get us' anywhere" (in Pinar *et al.* 1995: 420). It may, however, return us to what is quintessentially educational – a concern with the freedom associated with self-formation (imbricated in the social and historical) through knowledge and experience. Education so understood provokes profound questions including: What knowledge is of most worth, to what purposes, and in whose interests? To engage in this conversation about what matters requires teachers and teacher educators to be fully responsible to and courageous in the present and not succumb to mandates or idealizations, all the while realizing that a profession supposes "beyond and in addition to knowledge, know-how, and competence, a testimonial commitment," a freedom that obligates each one of us to give an account of ourselves "to some tribunal yet to be defined" (Derrida 2002: 222).

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Part I

Complicating conjunctions

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The subject of judgment

A culture of objectification, emphasizing calculation and comparison in student assessment, has resulted in a reliance on external standards, a mistrust of experience, and an erosion of teachers' practical judgment. In teacher education, the situation is reinforced by a theory–into–practice paradigm that cultivates teacher candidates' dependence on detached reason. I offer Aristotelian phronesis as a way to reframe the theory-practice relation, reconstitute the role of experience in teaching, and re-establish the teacher-student relationship as pivotal to teachers' capacity to respond ethically to students' work.

A culture of objectification

"You probably don't think of yourself as a walking, talking set of scores. You probably think, 'I am a complex human creature who cannot be reduced to simple numbers!' But that romantic idea of yourself is becoming so very last year," writes Anand Giridharadas (2013: 2) in the September issue of the *International Herald Tribune*. Giridharadas describes the ever-increasing experience of being rated or scored: your quality and disposition as a taxi passenger, the number of steps you take each day, the level of interest provoked by your ideas on social media, or how much body fat lurks beneath your skin. Corporations assert, he writes, that "a rated society makes it easier to lose weight, to find a suitable mate, to steer taxi drivers away from the vomit-prone, to figure out who belongs in airport lounges, to rent someone's spare room with reasonable certainty that he won't kill you" (p. 2). And there are other advantages: Klout can rate your influence on social media – what you say as well as the extent of reaction – and a matchmaking service called Tawkify can use those scores to link you to others with similar levels "of sophistication, wit, cultural savvy, and appeal" (p. 2). Perhaps, Giridharadas concludes, what we really need is a rating system that "could measure, on a scale from 1 to 10, a person's power to see beyond scores" (p. 2).

Seeing beyond scores is challenging in contemporary postindustrial nations where "to be is to be assessed" (Harvey 2010: 195); from birth to death, the self is constituted as a social object within networks of power and value. By the time children enter Kindergarten, they will have been measured, weighed, tested (sight, language development, hearing), placed on a continuum, and

positioned by percentiles; even the healthiness of their preschool snacks will have been appraised. By the time students enter high school, they will have been objectified – physically, intellectually, and emotionally – in the language of letter grades, bell-shaped curves, and psychological inventories. Such assessments constitute traces and recordings that make one's existence socially recognizable and (de)legitimated.

The range, extent, and depth of unending assessment of the human being is part of a culture of objectification and has significant effects on the kinds of people that we can become. Harvey (2010) cautions that it is not only that we are assessed but that we internalize the process of self-assessment; we learn to objectify ourselves. He itemizes several sources of self-objectification in everyday life, including those involved in seeking insurance or legal advice. Underscoring the way in which numbers are invoked, spatiality mapped, time accounted, and energies "measured, harnessed, calculated, and projected" (p. 194), Harvey describes his own experience of self-objectification as an academic who must make an annual report of his activities – numbers of classes taught, numbers of students, numbers of new books read, numbers of lectures given, number of conferences attended, number of published papers, numbers of committees served – as another significant example of self-objectification.

Charles Taylor (1985) argues that "liberation through objectification" (p. 5) becomes the somewhat paradoxical mantra of the modern autonomous, self-conscious subject, who sees the world and her experience as detached from herself and within her control. Educational institutions play a significant role in promoting and sustaining practices of objectification. The embrace of self-regulation is one of the more recent manifestations of self-objectification in schools. Articulated in terms of self-efficacy and self-concept, self-regulation involves organized sets of metacognitive assessments, perceptions formed by the self about itself (Friesen 2014). The intention is to help children control and optimize their information-processing operations in order to complete academic tasks. Drawing on Taylor (1992), Friesen argues that objectification of the self in this manner involves,

> [T]aking a stance to ourselves which takes us out of the normal way of experiencing the world and ourselves. . . . What [it] calls on us to do is to stop living "in" or "through" the experience, to treat it itself as an object, or what is the same thing, as an experience which could just as well have been someone else's.
>
> (Taylor 1992: 161–162)

Something tremendously important is lost in the process of objectification, and it relates to the kind of person that is produced. As both the source and target of processes of disengaged reasoning, evaluation, and control, the self that emerges in a culture of objectification is tightly circumscribed, one whose reason and control is detached from its own thoughts, experiences, relations, or interest (Friesen 2014).

Detached reason is the hallmark of the scholastic fallacy (Bourdieu 2000). The fallacy consists of injecting "meta–" into discourses and practices. Descriptions of complex human practices are rendered so abstract and analytic that those who enact them would never imagine their own behaviors in terms of such cognitive complexity (Harvey 2010). The key here is that the body is divorced from the mind, the former positioned as inferior to the latter. There is a great danger that in naming processes too definitively, the practice becomes confined to what is named. As Seamus Heaney (1984) cautions, in relation to poetry writing, there is always a danger in becoming too self-conscious about our processes as writers. The creation of a poem always has:

> [E]lements of accident about it, which can be made the subject of inquest afterwards, but there is always a risk in conducting your own inquest: you might begin to believe the coroner in yourself rather than put your trust in the man [sic] who is capable of the accident.
>
> (Heaney 1984: 52)

Taylor (1992, 1985), Friesen (2014), Harvey (2010), and Heaney (1984) share one concern: that in learning to distrust our experience and neglect the wisdom of bodily knowledge – the nondiscursive know-how of the *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990) – we endanger our capacity to perceive and "to respond rightly" to complex human situations (Harvey 2010: 199). Human judgment is disembedded from the particulars of experience and is outsourced, as it were, to externalized and generalized criteria; we have *phronesis*-in-reverse – "brittle and slow-witted rule-following behavior" (Harvey 2010: 200).

Practice and theory: the gift of *phronesis*

In teacher education, the scholastic fallacy gives rise to what Russell (2013) identify as the fundamental conceptual framework for teacher education programs: theory-into-practice. "Simultaneously pervasive and invisible, learned by osmosis rather than deliberate effort" (p. 1), the essential characteristic of theory-into-practice is the role assigned to experience.

> Theory-into-practice frames personal experience as the place to become comfortable with the actions associated with ideas one is assumed to have learned by listening. Theory, or propositional knowledge, is viewed as the essence of learning and it seems to be assumed that one set of propositions (new theory) easily replaces another set (previous beliefs) without particular reference to experience.
>
> (p. 1)

As the practice of teaching is reduced to descriptions of what teachers should know and be able to do, teacher knowledge is disembedded from the immediacy

and idiosyncrasy of particular teaching situations and from the experience of teachers (Dunne and Pendlebury 2002). Practice is perceived as "merely an expression of embarrassment at the deplorable but soon overcome condition of incomplete theory" (Bubner 1981: 204). There is nothing in the particular that cannot be anticipated by general theories and principles. As such, judgment is disembedded from the particulars of experience and is outsourced, as it were, to externalized and generalized criteria.

At best, the theory-into-practice model is inadequate for teacher education. At worst, it contributes to the refashioning of teachers' craft knowledge as professional expertise in diagnosis, classification, and treatment decisions informed by the so-called learning sciences (McWilliam 2008; Taubman 2009). Tragically, teachers learn to distrust their own experience and to neglect their practical wisdom. Instead, immersed in a culture in which they too are increasingly positioned as objects of policy, they develop a heightened self-consciousness and spend a great deal of time second-guessing themselves, looking over their shoulders before they act because they feel the need to determine as best they can how their actions may appear in the light of future evaluations which are, of course, reifications of someone's view of appropriate achievement (Harvey 2010). Webb (2007), for example, identifies "pedagogical-simulation-reasoning" (p. 279) whereby teachers fabricate pedagogies that can be externally evaluated according to predetermined performance standards and indicators. Before the deed comes the thought of it being rated rather than its ethical consequences.

Russell (2013) propose that teacher education shift its ground from a "theory-into-practice" to "practice-and-theory" perspective. The latter prioritizes experience "as a major and essential element of coming to know" the practice of teaching (p. 1). While in agreement with Russell and his colleagues, I believe that their practice-and-theory proposal requires an addendum – the moral dimension of teaching that *phronesis* offers.

Entering the world of (teaching) practice means entering a realm of legitimate uncertainty, ambiguity, and disagreement (Phelan 2000). Rooted in the particular, the practical realm invites a wisdom and ethic of its own, what Aristotle (1962) called *phronesis*, or practical wisdom (Phelan 2009a). *Phronesis* is a kind of moral discernment[1] that enables teachers "to grasp mutable, indeterminate, and vague situations in which rules and clear criteria for their application are difficult to determine" (Garrison 1997: 170). It allows teachers to see not just who their students are here and now, but to imagine their best possibilities. A teacher's consideration of what might be good or bad, right or wrong, for a particular student at a particular time is informed by a concern about the consequences of her actions in relation to that student.

Teachers, therefore, are inevitably caught up in "the pursuit of the worthwhile" on behalf of their students (Greene 1973: 220). While they can refer to mandated programs of study, theories of learning, curriculum standards, or teaching strategies, teachers *cannot* take recourse to some authority to tell them

how they must act at any given moment in the classroom. That is, teachers cannot abandon their responsibility to make judgments, and they must locate that responsibility in specific actions and concrete decisions. The particular is prior and the priority is the particular. Discerning teachers are sensitive to the particulars of students' lives and stories, to all the inconvenient complications and the competing demands of practice (Pendlebury 1993). They are able to bring those particulars "into illuminating connection" with the generals of disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge (Dunne and Pendlebury 2002: 198) and their own values and commitments (and the conditions working on them). "This requires perceptiveness in one's reading of particular situations as much as flexibility in one's mode of 'possessing' and 'applying' the general knowledge" (p. 198). When teachers can do this, they are able to respond to what is there before them "with full sensitivity and imaginative vigour" (Nussbaum 1990: 84).

Experience is a key condition for the cultivation of *phronesis* as discernment. Jope (2014) explains that, "practical wisdom *arises from* prior experience, but it also *returns into* experience through its very exercise" (p. 48, emphasis in text). More than simply "learning by doing," he argues that the insights gained from experience are returned to experience and used to reconstruct understanding of future experiences. In this way, experience contributes to the deepening of insight and wisdom. In other words, "people do not become wise by simply 'learning' about *phronesis* so much as 'grasping' it through the exercise of virtuous acts and the familiarity with ethical particulars this gives us over the course of a lifetime" (Jope 2014: 48).

Phronesis suggests that there is a constant interplay between theory and practice, between the generals of propositional knowledge (including images, feelings, and values) and particulars of experience. As such, phronetic teacher education needs to avail itself of "concrete situations to be perceived, experiences to be had, persons to be met, plans to be exerted, and their consequences to be reflected upon. They are the sine qua non of *phronesis*" (Kessels and Korthagen 1996: 21). Keeping these phronetic conditions in mind, and in the context of an introductory course entitled *Principles of Teaching*, I invited teacher candidates to engage in an assessment exercise to explore *phronesis* as a form of practical judgment. My hope was that we would engage questions such as: What do we do when we judge children's work? What makes our judgment "judgment" and not mere decision making? What makes our judgment educational?

A pedagogical provocation

The exercise involved teacher candidates' (a) responding to a child's poem, (b) responding to the same poem in relation to a curriculum standard, and (c) responding to the poem, in relation to a curriculum standard, and in light of the profiles of three children who might have written the poem.

Responding to a child's poem

I began by distributing and reading aloud a print copy of the following poem written by a Grade 5 student:

> A book is a passageway to a new world.
> Make a box.
> Sit inside of it and make it anything you want.
> Draw a picture full of imagination of art.
>
> (Coulter *et al.* 2007)

Many of the teacher candidates were moved by the poem; they seemed in awe of the child's use of imagery and metaphor. They readily engaged in a conversation about what the child might mean and what would have led her/him to express such sentiments. Many related the poem to their own experience of transitions and new beginnings; others expressed their appreciation of the child's desire to imagine beyond twenty-first century reality-show materialism; still others recalled the hours of play made possible by a big cardboard box; one or two became nostalgic for the endless hours spent reading or being read to as children. The conversation was rich and pulsated with what one might characterize as a human response to the child-poet's attempt to represent a particular human experience with words. They were provoked and delighted.

Responding to the same poem in relation to a curriculum standard

Following the initial, animated discussion, I then progressed to the second phase of the exercise. I asked the teacher candidates how they might respond to the student who wrote the poem in light of the following curriculum standard for writing poetry: "The poet uses clear, figurative language in conventional ways to develop some original ideas in poetic form" (Coulter *et al.* 2007). Conscientiously, they gathered in small groups to discuss the poem once more, but the tone and tenor of the conversation had changed: the mood was heavy, serious even. Each group carefully dissected the standard into descriptive criteria – clear, metaphorical, conventional, original – and proceeded to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the poem with regard to those criteria: the use of metaphor was outstanding; the poem was not rated high on originality; use of convention was at an acceptable level. Two groups decided to assign a rating out of ten to the poem while remaining groups asked if a rubric could be made available to facilitate a more thorough assessment; I explained that a rubric was not available but that they could generate one if they saw fit.

What was intriguing about the teacher candidates' responses was their readiness to discard their heartfelt reactions to a child's poem in favor of what they considered a more appropriately objective view of a teacher. The source of their

fear can be found, perhaps, in the assumption that in letting go of the standard, they would be left to their own individual, subjective insights. Whatever the reason, the poem became an item for detached analysis; feelings expressed in or evoked by the poem fell to the wayside, as did any prior interest in the identity or background of the particular child who might have written the poem. I didn't provide students with such information nor did they request it from me.

Having recorded a summary of teacher candidates' responses from both phases of the assessment exercise on the white board, I then invited students to consider their standard-based responses in juxtaposition to their initial reactions to the poem. At that point, some teacher candidates became quite indignant, sensing perhaps that they had "gotten it wrong" and had not completed the task as I would have wished. Asserting that as teachers it would be their responsibility to apply the standard and assess accordingly, they insisted that they would have to complete report cards indicating if children's work met, did not meet, or exceeded expectations as defined by curriculum standards. One of the teacher candidates accused me of tricking them into their initial reaction to the poem by not presenting them with the standard up front. Another felt that my oral reading of the poem had given the impression of real poetry rather than a child's written assignment. Why did I not clarify that they were *to assess* the poem not merely *respond* to it? In fact, I had asked them to respond to the student who wrote the poem, but this had gone unnoticed and remained unremarked.

Responding to the poem in relation to a curriculum standard and a child's profile

The third and final phase of the pedagogical provocation involved the introduction of the profiles of three children – Sharyn, Gavin, and Dean – each a potential writer of the poem:

- Sharyn is a gifted writer who finds herself in literature. She reads voraciously (over 80 books so far this year) and excels in all her schoolwork. Her parents provide both encouragement and support; she is a good athlete, popular with her peers. The most significant problem she poses for her teachers is finding activities that challenge her. Lately, she has discovered e.e. cummings's poetry and is starting to play with form in her writing.
- Gavin is a new student this year (this is his fourth school). Gavin is angry much of the time (especially on Monday mornings) and often creates problems on the playground. He gets into fights and seems to lose any sense of personal safety either for others or himself; he intimidates older, larger children with his temper. It has taken most of the year to get Gavin to look above any adult's feet. He has a two-inch-thick file in the office and his own group of specialists who check with him regularly. Generally unengaged with his schoolwork, Gavin is a gifted artist and this poem is his first attempt to connect visual and language arts.

- Dean is a student with special needs who does not meet grade expectations in any curriculum area – except writing poetry. He struggles to read the same books his peers read, but (with help) finds and reads other material. Dean finds the surface language requirements of prose puzzling, but freed of grammatical and spelling considerations, generates powerful, original work. The poem is his third draft; most revisions have focused on spelling and sentence structure.

(Coulter *et al.* 2007)

I invited the teacher candidates to provide a response to each one of the children in light of their understandings of the children. They could maintain their earlier, standard-based response or change it as they saw fit.

In considering the poem alongside the children, my hope was that students would begin to appreciate that it is not the rule – "the poet uses clear, figurative language in conventional ways to develop some original ideas in poetic form" (Coulter *et al.* 2007) – that determines the educator's response, at least not exclusively. Rather, the educator's response has more to do with a commitment to a particular kind of relationship with the child that prepares them to read the poem and respond in the best interests of the child. Without doing so explicitly, I was trying to convey the idea that the intrinsic goods of teaching are relational – "the feeling of safety in a thoughtful teacher's classroom, a growing intellectual enthusiasm in both teacher and student, the challenge and satisfaction shared by both in engaging in new material, the awakening sense (for both) that teaching and life are never-ending moral quests" (Noddings 2003: 247). Achievement of those goods relies in large part on teachers' discernment.

Still a little miffed at my perceived trickery, the teacher candidates set about the task of considering and articulating specific responses to each child about the poem. Their deliberation seemed somewhat tentative at first: some persisted in the application of the curriculum standard without reference to particular children while others lingered over the details of each student-profile; still others tried to consider the poem in light of both standard and particular students.

Throughout the discussion, the majority of teacher candidates displayed deep concern for the children's well-being. Interestingly, their concerns were borne of their own histories (stories of a teacher's careless response to one of their childhood creations) and attachments (witnessing the hurt of their own children; their love or hate of poetry; a sense of religious obligation; a particular understanding of the educational role of the arts). Holding the curriculum standard in abeyance, for a moment, it was their positions as parents, women, artists, friends that seemed to focus their deliberations and responses to Sharyn, Dean, and Gavin; they were reminded of what might be worth caring about and why. This is not to say that their conversations were not full of tension and indecision about how to respond to each child, however. There was a palpable desire on some students' parts to contain the uncertainties and indeterminacies introduced by the particulars of children's lives and their own inexperience – how

could a teacher allow a child to write without consideration of grammar and spelling rules; in the interest of equality, how could one use a different yardstick to assess the work of different students – as well as a beginning acknowledgement of the dangers in trying to do so.

Understanding judgment: experience, emotion, and ethics

The pedagogical provocation surfaced a series of insights about how teacher candidates understand judgment and how those understandings undermine and/or promote a phronetic orientation to practice:

1. *Teacher candidates understood that reading poetry is about experience but responding to a child's poem is a question of expertise.* The students' initial reading of the poem represented an unrestrained, experience-based response to the human experience articulated in the poem. Experience had free play, as it were. Understanding was not simply a subjective process over and against the object (the poem) but a way of being that was characterized by openness (Palmer 1969). Through "a questioning responsiveness" (p. 165) to the poem, teacher candidates tried to discern its meaning. Recalling their own experiences growing up, they were provoked by the poem, and it seemed as if the latter acquired an ever-renewed reality when it stood in relation to each new reader. Each encounter between a particular teacher candidate and the poem mattered. As teacher candidates shared their thoughts, feelings, and curiosities in respect to the poem, a multiplicity of perspectives and interpretations were expressed and accepted. The dialectic of understanding that is at issue here is characterized by "inbetweenness":

> [I]t is a dialectic between one's own horizon and that of "tradition" – that which comes down to us, encounters us, and creates that moment of negativity which is the life of dialectic and the life of questioning.
>
> (p. 166)

In literary study and, I would suggest, in our classroom conversation, the life of the dialectic is revealed in conversation with the text (poem) so that the latter can disclose itself in its being. This is possible because of "the linguisticality of human understanding and ultimately of being itself" (Palmer 1969: 166). There was no effort to analyze the piece of poetry but not unlike the "box" it presented, teacher candidates and I began to "see it as a world . . . [and to] see a world *through* it" (p. 167). The horizons of our own world and self-understanding were broadened so that we began to see the world "in a new light" – as if for the first time (pp. 167–168). For some, assumptions about children's artistic capabilities were changed; others remained preoccupied with the content of the poem and the memories it evoked. Whether a more encompassing understanding of life or learning emerged, I cannot say. However, the spirit of the

conversation reflected an integrity or wholeness of which the child's poem and we as readers were a part.

The introduction of the curriculum standard for the students' consideration transformed the encounter with the poem. Responses to the poem became evaluative rather than exploratory. There was a shift in concern: what mattered was not the meaning of the poem for those present but its value for some anonymous outsider. The standard seemed to not only represent an outsider, but it also provided "an 'outside,' a safe haven" from which they could oversee and judge the child's poem (Biesta 2002: 389). As a "neutral yardstick" (p. 389) the curriculum standard allowed them to measure and evaluate the poem but also allowed them to escape from their own judgment about what constitutes poetic practice. The two English majors in the course, whom I expected to complicate the standard and add dimension to it, went right along with it. Teacher candidates had no sense of the kind of threat standards pose to poetic practices (recall Heaney's caution). The acceptance of multiple perspectives borne of context, so evident in their initial responses to the poem, had vanished in favor of the standard view.

The standard seemed to evoke a teacher-as-expert persona. Armed with technical (e.g. curriculum standards) and/or disciplinary (e.g. language arts) knowledge, the would-be teacher proceeds to engage in determinative judgment, based on external criteria. Experts or expert knowledge, however, cannot answer the question of what is a good response in relation to a particular child. *Phronesis* demands that the teacher cannot discharge responsibility to the knowledge of others or her own extant knowledge; only she can judge, and she cannot do so without an appreciation of a particular child's needs, desires, and circumstances and the likely consequences of particular teacher responses. Having mused about the capability of the child-poet in the first phase of the activity, interest in the particular child who might have written the poem fell away once the standard was introduced.

I had perhaps done the teacher candidates a violence they did not yet recognize: by introducing the very idea of curriculum standards, I had, in collusion with the Ministry of Education, made it unlikely that they would ever read a child's poem with the same unadulterated fervor. I had inducted my students into the scholastic fallacy on two counts: first, poetry had been reduced to some cognitively constructed description and analysis of poets' behavior to explain what poets do (e.g. poets use metaphor). This reification of what poets do was then used to judge a child's poem; and, presumably they had also learned that one could reverse the process in order to teach children how to write good poetry that could be judged according to those same criteria. Consequents made antecedents and, as a result, rich human endeavors such as poetry, history, literature, and teaching are reduced (Harvey 2010).

2. Teacher candidates did not associate judgment with the capacity to be moved, excited, or surprised by children's work. In an educational system immunized by reason against the human condition, teacher candidates learn that teaching involves confronting learners, curriculum, and themselves as worlds which are theirs to objectify and control rather than as a process in which they participate but do

not control (Dunne 1997). The teacher candidates in my course, as I have noted, were understandably preoccupied with acquiring and displaying a "teacher" persona; significantly, they did not seem to associate this persona with the capacity to be moved by children's work. If emotions are suffused with discernment and contain in themselves an awareness of value or consequence, as Nussbaum (2001) argues, then the absence of emotion in teachers' assessment is problematic.

For Martha Nussbaum (2001), emotions are immensely significant in acts of judgment. For Nussbaum, "emotions are always about something: they have an object" (p. 27) and their "aboutness" embodies a way of seeing (p. 27). "Different emotions will perceive an object in different ways" (Jope 2014: 70). Student teachers' love or hate of poetry will constitute their seeing of a particular child's poem as valuable or not. Students' anger about their own experiences of being evaluated will likely constitute a perception of evaluation as threatening. Emotions discern, as it were. However, emotions see more than objects; they also see ourselves; not only do they embody one's commitment to the object as part of one's understanding of ends, they also embody what is important for the individual's conception of what it means to live well (Nussbaum 2001).

Phronesis therefore requires, but can be thwarted by, emotion. Seeing what is right in a given situation is supported by emotions as judgments of value. The opposite of seeing what is right is "blindness," evident in a person who is "overwhelmed by . . . passions [and] suddenly no longer sees what is right to do in a given situation" (Gadamer 1995: 321). In losing "self-mastery," one loses one's "own rightness" (p. 321). However, only in risk and relation to particular children do teachers begin to understand themselves, and "being available to ourselves helps make us available to others" (Kerdeman 1998: 263).

"To respond vigorously with senses and emotions before the new" may involve feeling lost, bewildered, or overwhelmed (Nussbaum 1990: 184). To experience emotions is to undergo something, to have an experience of something. To experience emotion requires incubation and time-out from conscious reflection on experience (Phelan 2002). While teachers have to act in the moment, their actions take the form of an active passivity: *phronesis* demands that we "wait and float" (p. 184) while yielding responsively to the situation before us. "Incubation goes on until what is conceived is brought forth and is rendered perceptible as part of the common world" (Dewey 1934: 56). Perception, then, is the endowment of meaning with personal significance rather than the application of some predetermined, intellectual meaning. The significance of experience has to be felt and worked out over time, moments, or months, often unconsciously (Phelan 2002).

3. Teacher candidates intuitively appreciated the ethical demand that children evoke. Not surprisingly, perhaps, once the child profiles were introduced, discussion took a relational turn. It was in response to each child that teacher candidates began to realize their educational values – that intellectual engagement is vital; that all children bring gifts that deserve unconditional welcome; that it is the child's meaning that must be the matter of concern – cannot be directly applied to the situation

at hand. More significantly, however, a play ensued between these general under-
standings and particular children: between engaging with Sharon about e.e. cum-
mings and thoughts on giftedness; between supporting Gavin's self-expression and
a reflection on a thoughtful and safe learning environment for all; and between
a desire to facilitate Dean's creative self-expression and worrying about the fair-
ness of diverse curriculum expectations. The ethical appropriateness of a teacher's
response is inseparable from its concreteness. Yet the experience of the particular
seemed to remind and reinforce teacher candidates' understandings of what mat-
ters educationally, what was ethically salient. As a result, they had the opportunity
to revise their general conceptions. In some cases, it was their thinking about the
performance standards that changed: the latter became more complicated, more
difficult to apply, in the presence of concrete particulars of children's learning and
becoming. In others, teacher candidates' thinking about children shifted; once
certain in the knowledge that they would always know more than their students,
they were beginning to realize that knowledge could never be the complete story
of their practice. Overall, a sense of sobriety seemed to set in.

What impressed me during the final phase of the assessment exercise was that
most of the teacher candidates were willing to take pause and not rush to deci-
sion making about how to respond/assess the poem. Perhaps this is what the
university allows – a space of rehearsal before encountering the "real world" of
the classroom. There is always a danger that practical judgment (*phronesis*) will
be conflated or confused with decisionism. Caputo (1993) is clear that judg-
ing is not decisionism; it is not something the subject – "I" – does and it is not
reducible to an individual "I will," but it "constitutes a response that is made to
what is happening to me, to what overtakes me. Judging always has to do with
the other's coming as the singularity that is always other" (p. 106). This is not the
caprice of subjectivity but a gift of responsiveness to the demands of the event
and the demands placed upon us by events.

Educational judgment takes place in an atmosphere of undecidability; and it
is undecidability that assures that judging will be judging, and not merely an
automated operation (Caputo 1993).

> The "ghost" of undecidability hovers over the decision, before, during and
> after the decision. It haunts it, lingering like a spectre, even after the deci-
> sion. We do not dispel the ghost by deciding. We do the best we can to be
> just, here and now, under the law, but we must live with the consequences.
> (p. 104)

The consequences of judging are always uncertain, and we are never assured
of the goodness of decisions made; but they must be made nonetheless – they
are "owed to the other, before any contract" (p. 105). Judgments are urgently
needed here and now. Decisions must often be made in classrooms before there
is time to think and deliberate; however, even if there was unlimited time, the
decision, once it comes, is urgent and occurs in a moment of madness. Teachers'

judgments rarely enjoy the comfort of calculation but are wrought with and exposed to the anxiety of uncertainty. Teachers will find deciding an ordeal of undecidability. The pedagogical provocation gave teacher candidates a glimpse inside that experience of undecidability.

In summary, the teacher candidates in the *Principles of Teaching* course seemed to intuitively appreciate the significance of the ethical relation with the child, but their appreciation was threatened by a perception of teachers as expert knowers and doers in a system where educational judgment has nothing to do with being open to experience and emotion and everything to do with detached reason and control. What might this mean for the subject of judgment in teacher education?

Cultivating *phronesis*: on the virtue of openness

In "a world where we're all rated," it is easy to forget that we are "complex human creatures" (Giridharadas 2013: 2) whose self-understanding and communal attunement depend largely on the virtue of openness.

The goal is to be open to experience in the ways I have described above, but it is a goal that cannot be achieved through discussion or inquiry or planning as in the assessment exercise. Openness to experience can only be realized by exposure to experience itself. It is not simply the quantity of experience that matters, however, but its quality: "Every experience worthy of the name thwarts an expectation" (Gadamer 1995: 356). This means that "real" or "proper" experience is always "a radically negative encounter with limits, like suffering or living through disappointment" (Kerdeman 2001: 102). Insight is therefore more than knowledge of this or that situation; it involves an escape from something that has misled us or "held us captive" (Gadamer 1995: 356). Therefore, insight always involves some self-knowledge; it is something we come to as human beings – i.e. to be fully human is to be "discerning and insightful" (p. 356). In this view, understanding is not completely subject to our will or desire. According to Gadamer (1995), understanding is an event that "happens to us over and beyond our wanting and doing" (p. xxxviii). This means that while we may interpret the text of experience, we are also interpreted by it. Experience calls to us and compels a response. We are both subject of and subject to experience; defining and defined by its meanings. The experienced person, for Gadamer, was one who is "radically undogmatic" (p. 355) and who, because of her experiences and the insights drawn from them, is well disposed to have new experiences and to learn from them.

The difficulty, according to Kerdeman (2001), is that humans prefer to be in control of what happens to us. Because the alternative to being in control is too discomforting and even threatening, she writes, "our desire for control is repeated over and over" (p. 102). This is also why, she argues, we are prone to repeat assumptions that include sociohistorical prejudice, our own individual past, and conventional habits – such as the application of curriculum standards. Perhaps the task of teacher education is to cultivate self-discipline, that is, "a life

orientation" that enables one to make "a willed decision to be open" to one's self and to others (Kerdeman 1998: 263). Control is, in this interesting Gadamerian twist (1995), the capacity to remain open even when tradition, passion, or knowledge may dictate otherwise. Openness to limits and challenges does not obliterate the self or deny the self's efficacy; rather it offers a middle way, a requiring and sustaining agency, "realized in persons who intend, enjoin, judge, direct, and take responsibility for their actions," that is, "how to be a fully present human being" (Kerdeman 1998: 263).

As a middle way, *phronesis*, for all its gifts, is moderate (Caputo 1993). The wise teacher, the *phronimos*, keeps her bearing, her responsibility always within the bounds of regulation and the law: the curriculum standard was retained in the assessment exercise but bent to accommodate the individual child. Flexibility may not be sufficient, however, and this is where obligation arrives on the pedagogical scene. While both *phronesis* and obligation share a concern for the individual, the different and the singular, the former is concerned with a play between the law (general) and the particular event; the latter suspends the law, and the kind of responsibility it defines, in favor of the "one who falls beneath the law, one who has become inaudible or invisible to the law, one of whom the law is oblivious" (p. 117). These are the children who never make an appearance in our classrooms, whose poetry is left unwritten or goes unnoticed. These are the children who fall through the cracks between the rock and the hard place, the ones of whom we have lost sight like a set of keys that someone has misplaced – the emotionally troubled boy, frequently violent and uncontrollable; the quiet little girl whose muteness is the result of an abusive parent. It is here that the teacher's obligation is not a matter of discernment but "of a certain succumbing to the claims of the Other, a giving in, a melting, a surrender, a loss of self; not *nous* but *kardia*" (Caputo 1993: 117).

Efforts to undermine the culture of objectification in schools and universities may find an ally in *phronesis*. Cultivating ethical judgment in teacher education, if it is even possible, involves nurturing teacher candidates' "concern with or care for [the child's] coming into being . . . not exhausted in its objectivity but . . . disclosed in relationships" (Løvlie 2002: 484). It demands that their experience of our judgment of them as teacher candidates be likewise. For teaching and teacher education, it poses an interminable project, suspended and exposed to a precarious in-between of subject and object, practice and theory, a child called Dean and his poem.

Note

1   Understanding *phronesis* entails an appreciation of several aspects of the Aristotelian concept including a concern with rationality and deliberation (Fenstermacher and Richardson 1993), situational perception (Nussbaum 1986; Dunne 1997), and moral character (Sherman 1989; Noel 1999). My interest lies specifically in *phronesis* as situational perception, that is, the capacity to discern particulars and make judgments about how to act in different situations and contexts.

Chapter 2

Lessons in study

In his essay, "The Problem with Curriculum and Pedagogy," Pinar (2006) decries the generalized instrumentalism that reduces education to an anthropocentric project of calculation, strategy, and human mastery. In the United States, he argues, both philosophical pragmatism and political conservatism have contributed to the stripping of education of any intrinsic value, relegating it to the service of recovering particular ends (Pinar 2006). While William James' construal of the significance of thought as its "effects" on situations constitutes pragmatism's more progressive formulation of social engineering, political conservatism's sidestepping of culture and history has enabled an exclusive focus on learning. The combined result, writes Pinar, is that educators educate *in order to* produce social justice, achievement scores, or psychosocial outcomes. He recalls the 1938 inauguration of the first academic Department of Curriculum *and* Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University, as the "historic mistake" – the conjunction of curriculum with teaching – that institutionalized social engineering as the responsibility of the teacher (p. 110). In so doing, the field paved the way for "the eclipse of curriculum development and the politics of scapegoating" (p. 110) that characterizes education today. Teaching is now viewed as instrumental to learning. Learning, tied tightly to assessment and instruction, has become the consequence of teaching. Even "curriculum" – presumably the content of learning – mutates into a means to the end that is assessment (Pinar 2006).

In a culture of "learnification" (Biesta 2009: 36), where learning is limited to that which is taught, the idea of education as a pursuit of "one's truths" – "academic knowledge grounded in lived, that is, subjective and social experience" – is abandoned (Pinar 2004a: 120). There is nothing to be learned that cannot be prespecified in advance of the teacher-student encounter, and it is the teacher upon whom the student depends in order to learn (Pinar 2006). The result is that students, teachers, parents, and politicians are deluded into thinking that the locus of responsibility for education is the teacher and not the student.

The inflation of claims about teacher liability for learning has become increasingly evident in the last two decades of (teacher) education policy in many parts of North America as well as Australia and the United Kingdom.

The accepted view is that teaching is the single most important condition for a child's achievement in school (Alberta Education 1995; Carnegie Corporation of New York 2006; OECD 2005). Asserting that everything – from high achievement on provincial, national, or international tests (e.g. Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) in British Columbia, Canada; Leaving Certificate Examination in Ireland; Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)) to economic happiness – depends on the teacher, efforts to standardize teaching and to monitor teacher education and development have proliferated. As a result, professional learning has become justifiable as a highly positive disposition for all teachers.

Strewn across the teacher's lifespan, otherwise known as "the teacher development continuum" (The Teaching Council 2011; The General Teaching Council for Scotland 2006), "quality" teachers are to achieve their "full potential through relentless and never-ending self-development, out of which [they] can self-regulate in the interests of students" (McWilliam 2008: 33). Potential takes the form of a stylized identity ever keen on improving itself as an excellent classroom manager, team builder, literacy instructor, emotionally intelligent mentor, or technologically savvy leader. The proliferation of webinars, workshops, seminars, and graduate programs attest to this preoccupation, as lifelong learning becomes a life sentence for teachers (Falk 1999).

Professional learning, as "the capacity to continue developing" (OECD 2005: 7), is less about expanding the subjectivity of the teacher, however, and more about delimiting it (Falk 1999). As a resource for the economy, "the teacher's choices become nothing more than reflexes of the need of the world to replicate itself" (Lewis 2013: 7). What is lost in this climate of increasing normalization and instrumentalization of teachers' potentiality is "the open potentiality" from which the teacher as a speaking subject emerges (Colebrook 2008: 111). How to understand and remedy the loss of open potentiality in teachers' professional learning (both preservice and in-service) is my preoccupation in this chapter. I first turn to Giorgio Agamben's theorization of potentiality in order to understand what is at stake in contemporary policy. Following both Agamben and Pinar, and in conversation with a teacher candidate named Aran, I examine study as a model of professional learning and a site of open potentiality for teachers.

The instrumentalization of potentiality

Giorgio Agamben's theorization of "potentiality" and "impotentiality" allows us to understand that what is at issue in the politics of contemporary policy is the relationship between potentiality and actuality (Agamben 1999: 179). To explain this relationship, Agamben (2005) draws on an Aristotelian understanding of "generic" and "effective" potentiality.

Generic potentiality refers to the changes that occur as a result of learning: the child not yet an adult must become one, thereby exhausting her "latent

potentiality for adulthood" (Lewis 2013: 6). The "not yet" is transformed into the necessity of the "must be" of the employable adult. In contemporary policy, teachers' professional learning is firmly anchored in a logic of generic potentiality as the transformation of the "not yet" that "must be" standardized according to prespecified teacher profiles (OECD 2005).

Effective potentiality, on the other hand, conserves rather than sacrifices itself, "something like the giving of potentiality to itself" (Agamben 2005: 136). By conserving itself, potential remains (as impotential) while complete actualization of potentiality means destroying potentiality (Lewis 2013). The experience of "impotentiality" (Agamben 1999: 183) can be compared to "the experience of not-writing that enables the poet to develop proficiency through sustained reflection, planning, speculation, [and] imagination" (Lewis 2011: 4). Potential (to write poetry) is maintained in a close relationship with impotential (to prefer not to write yet). To become potential, humans must be in relation to their own incapacity; they must be capable of their own impotentiality (Agamben 1999).

Contemporary policy severs the relation between teachers' potentiality and impotentiality. It does so by its efforts to determine, define, and represent the actuality of "teacher" and "teaching" via standardization. Australia is a case in point:

> The National Professional Standards for Teachers are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. The Standards do this by providing a framework which makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. They present a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public.
> (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2011: 2)

A definitive language of clarity, commonality, and consensus indicates the degree to which a teacher's freedom to deviate from the script of "teacher quality" (p. 2) is curtailed. In addition, teachers' potentiality is instrumentalized as a means to a predetermined end to be measured in terms of the so-called learning gains of students.

The instrumentalization of potentiality is dehumanizing because, unlike other living beings that are capable of their specific potentiality, it is only human beings who are capable of their own impotentiality, that is, the capacity to not be (Agamben 1999). This is to say that "human beings are the living beings that, existing in a mode of potentiality, are capable just as much of one thing as its opposite, to do just as to not do" (Agamben 2011: 44). This allows humans "to accumulate and freely master their own capacities, to transform them into 'faculties'" (p. 44). Keeping alive the possibility to not do, that is being capable of one's own impotentiality, is what renders humans free to be, to think, or to live otherwise. There is nothing, Agamben (2011) argues, that makes humans
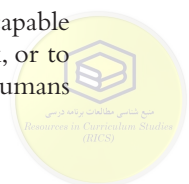
more impoverished and less free than those who are alienated from their impotentiality because they have lost "the capacity to resist" (p. 45). For him, "[t]o be free is . . . *to be capable of one's own impotentiality*" (Agamben 1999: 183, emphasis in text).

By pointing toward impotentiality, Agamben helps us to recognize how the predominance of a teleological notion of human nature arranged in terms of desires, intentions, and purposes conceals the more fragile, contingent, and precious capacity that is also an incapacity: our impotentiality (Lewis 2013). Freedom is not so much found in the teacher's realization of his or her capabilities as a "quality" or "excellent" teacher but in the realization of impotentiality as "I can, I cannot," "being able to not do," being able to not exercise one's own potentiality to actualize (Agamben 2011: 43); it is the teacher's choice that opens history to contingency, to an "it depends," and to the potential to act or to be otherwise. This is not the freedom of "I will" but it signifies "an ontological openness to new possibilities" (Lewis 2013: 9).

The zone of impotentiality is a zone of indistinction, of thought, wherein the teacher is neither constrained by political powers nor resistant to them; rather, she lives consciously suspended between what policy wants her to be and what she might yet become. Agamben has faith in the power of study to open the path to thought. Studying is for him "a kind of im-potential state of educational being" (Lewis 2013: 12).

Both Agamben and Pinar appreciate, after Heidegger, the importance in education of opening up and letting go of hardened subjectivities "to welcome possibilities new for meaning and being" (Riley 2011: 813). Both authors see life (and subjectivity) as something to be pondered, and both identify study as the site of such thoughtful engagement. Study is not, however, a zone in which one is reduced "to the futility of an inner and solitary thinking-thing" (Kishik 2012: 38). Neither writers see study as an individualistic quest for knowledge but as a way of living that can be a shared enterprise, as in sharing sensibility or following the same reasoning or partaking in the same experience of thought. What brings humans together is "our common endeavor to understand" (p. 38). For Pinar (2006), the professional calling of teachers is the intellectual facilitation of that collective endeavor in classrooms that are at once "civic squares and rooms of one's own" (p. x). As such, for both Pinar and Agamben, studying, and its associated faculties of thinking, reasoning, and understanding, offers a mode of being that is ethico–political and not merely epistemological.

The question is whether such faith in study, as a space of thought and becoming, is warranted as a model of professional learning for (school) teachers.

The struggle for study in teacher education

In many languages, Jan Masschelein (2011) informs us the idea of "school" (*escuela, école, skola*) derives from the Greek *scholè*, which means "free time," but also includes other meanings including rest, delay, and study. Free time, he writes, is "the time

of study, thought and exercise" (p. 530) and signifies the gap between what is actual and what is possible; education is about making free time happen. While institutions such as schools and universities consume themselves with time that is "destined" (p. 530) or has predefined aims, the time of study (free time) is without destination or end. So while institutions can provide the context for study (and of course study can and does occur outside institutions), they can also impede it due to an untoward fixation with destined time, that is, learning outcomes. The time of study is separated from productive life; it is time where labor or work as economic activities are put at a distance.

> It is time of knowledge/matter for the sake of knowledge/matter (related to study), of capability for the sake of capability (connected to exercising) and of the voice/touch of an event in excess of the subject and its projects (which is at stake in thought).
>
> (Masschelein 2011: 531)

Study, in this formulation, names those "unprofessional activities" of thought and experimentation that "leave one intoxicated, those moments of encounter in a text or conversation that blow one's mind, driven by curiosities that are closer to pleasure, to play, to wandering, to leaving work" (Arsenjuk and Koerner 2009: 8). It is the "ongoing-ness, the roughness, the drafted- or draftiness" of study – as a site of impotentiality – that renders the studier "unfit" (Masschelein 2011: 173) and seemingly unprofessional.

The concept of study has a relation to thought that is not reducible to the accumulation of information or to the logic of professionalization that governs so many activities in the university (Arsenjuk and Koerner 2009). So while the university ought to be "a refuge for study," it can exert "a quite vicious and brutal – however much it is comfortable and gentle – control over study" (Bousquet, Harney and Moten 2009: 166). So much so that higher education tends to render study less possible than it ought to be. An important quality of study, therefore, is the temporary suspension of those forces – economic, social, cultural, religious, or political pervading institutions – that would influence, cajole, or direct students. This is not to say, however, that the spirit of study (or of education for that matter) is denial or destruction of those influences; it is, however, about rupture, interruption, and disorientation of the familiar and the taken-for-granted.

In professional schools, the necessities and obligations of professions, the imperatives of knowledge, and the demands of the social order are ever present. In teacher education, concerns about teachers' competence and conduct have long evacuated sustained study from the curriculum in favor of instructor-led courses (focussed on the acquisition of information from educational foundations and curriculum studies), a myriad assignments, and school-based field experiences – almost all grounded in the familiar conjunction of curriculum *and* pedagogy. More progressive formulations of teacher education emphasize

the importance of inquiry, where the latter is generally construed as a questioning stance that promotes interpretive engagement with educational ideas, practices, and experiences (Cochran-Smith *et al*. 2012). The intent, after Dewey (1977), is to produce students of teaching who carefully engage in a continual search and re-search for the significance of their experience (of practice) in light of prior experience, reading, and conversations with others. The process of reconstruction is a cyclical one because it has no beginning and no final end. "New understandings impinge on old practices and become, to varying degrees, part of the language that constitutes the new practice" (McEwan 1995: 179). While there is room for study in this conception of inquiry, when applied to teacher education, the consequentialist orientation of Dewey's theory of knowing as doing overwhelms. This is particularly evident in Lee Shulman's (2004) pedagogical imperative that teachers must influence, even produce, and reflect on their effects. Teacher educators display, and teacher candidates adopt, an immense faith in the teacher's role in removing obstacles, providing appropriate conditions, and/or empowering students to want to realize their potential. An exclusive focus on the effects of teaching practice embodies a means-ends orientation and overshadows the possibilities of teacher inquiry as a form of study, as pure means.

In the urgency to render teachers professionally fit, either in terms of technical competence or as inquiring professionals, there is little acknowledgement of the teacher as "an amateur, a lover of the world who can 'make' (free) time" and thereafter incite passion in their pupils to do likewise (Masschelein 2011: 534). As Kwak (2011) notes: opportunities for sustained reflection on "questions that might touch a person's soul – questions about his sensibility, her fate, wholly conflicting world views, the vanity of human existence, and so on – have rarely been the object of ethical or educational reflection with teachers" (p. 1735). The banalization of the teacher was brought forcibly to mind recently when hearing that a teacher was denied professional development funds to support her study of metaphysics on the grounds that it was not a teachable subject in the high school.

The fear that sustained study, without overt applicability to practice, may leave aspiring teachers feeling ill-prepared for the world of that other school that beckons them is ever present; yet, an unreadiness to be governed by the world's concerns (for now) may be the unlikely gift of study for teachers. In free time, both aspiring and experienced teachers may well unearth the seeds of intellectual freedom and dissent, without which "there is no freedom or teaching at all" (Pinar 2012: xvii). It is not only the substance of study that is at issue here but the mode of being that the experience of study induces and that precedes any perdetermination of identity or practice for teachers. To study does not mean to be merely affected by this or that content but "to be affected by one's own receptiveness and experience in each and every thing that is thought, by a pure potentiality of being" (Agamben 1996: 17 in Kishik 2012: 39).

Despite the bleak outlook on teacher education as a site of study, I have witnessed students stealing free time in the context of otherwise time-bounded

inquiry projects. I draw on the experience of one of those students, Aran, in order to illustrate a little of his experience of study. To do so, I use two rhetorical devices – the lesson and the story – the first offers aphoristic and ironic neatness while the second, rendered from the interview transcript and Aran's written report of his inquiry, conveys nuance and complication.

Lessons in study from teacher education

Lesson 1: study has a beginning but no ending

Imagine a teacher candidate, Aran, beginning to write a report about multiculturalism in the measured prose of reference books and journal articles. There are definitions, considerations, and best practices. As he reads, he starts making notes as he has done a thousand times before. Suddenly, his writing is interrupted by a memory of the encounter that had led him to this project in the first place. He recalls asking two immigrant students in his practicum classroom about their place of birth. The children rolled their eyes in disinterest at this familiar question. However, they seemed very engaged when asked specific questions about their respective histories as Taiwanese and Chinese immigrants. The boys, he now thought in hindsight, were likely sick of being "typecast" and being asked typical surface-level questions; really, he thinks, teachers need to understand the rich particularity of children's experiences. Returning to the text in front of him, he reads about the impact of history on culture and identity. This gives him pause. . . . He begins to wonder how adequately current concepts of multiculturalism represent the complex diversities of students, especially those who belong to immigrant families.

Aran[1] traces the beginning of his study to an encounter with children in his practicum classroom and his developing consciousness of the entanglements of identity, culture, and history. A question, albeit unarticulated, hovers and Aran enters into the space between what he knows and doesn't know, "between the thought and the unthought, the said and the unsaid . . . a space in which there is an indefinite number of possible answers for [him] to choose" (Martuswicz 1997: 99). Aran finds himself at the limit of his thinking (what has been understood or said in general) and facing an empty space (what has yet to be understood in light of the particularities of children's lives). For the teacher candidate, however, the space between general ideas and the particulars of experience is a fragile space wrought with the desire to know and to do. While he has begun to read and reflect about multiculturalism in its various conceptualizations, he is anxious to press on, to bring his reading into the actualization of practice.

As he reads, he begins to imagine a unit of study in which his students might begin to consider their own identities. He envisions them making something akin to a Boy or Girl Scout sash, which they could cover with their own identity badges. He wants them to take ownership of their identities by reflecting upon them and expressing them as emblems. He writes in his notebook: "My sash would have a Canadian badge, a Japan and a Japanese language badge (given my many years of living there), a gardening badge, a teacher badge,

and a student badge to name a few. We could use different size badges and move them to areas of more or less prominence to denote their significance, and we can even remove badges all together. In this way, I hope to reify the concept of fluid and multiple identities. I hope students will start to see deeper into themselves and also recognize the depth of identity in their peers as well. The first step in understanding each other is to examine the diversity within each of us." But his tutor's[2] voice rings in his ears: "It's not about knowing where you are going!" A moment of panic renders him belligerent: "I have got this great idea and I just want to get there!"

Aran wishes to bring identity, as a thing common to all, into the purview of his students. His hope is that in reifying the concept of fluid and multiple identities that students will see themselves and one another in new ways. The link to practice is never far from Aran's studies; he is besotted with intentionality and purpose. Anxious to get on, to reach his potential, and to act the teacher, Aran's initial reading ushers in a plan of action. Unyielding to study, his impulse is to tame free time, converting it to recognizable action. However, his tutor pulls him up short, cautioning him to be patient and reminding him that having just departed, his arrival may be premature. Despite his protestations, she undoes his "appropriation and destination of time" (Masschelein 2011: 530).

Lesson 2: study stupefies

Experiencing a little bit of disequilibrium, and feeling a little pushed by his tutor, Aran decides to continue to follow whatever path his studies of identity take him on; determined to let his ideas develop, he puts his unit plan on hold for the moment. Keyword searches expose him to identity politics, critical race theory, critical pedagogy, and other really deep and broad topics. He becomes fascinated by the idea of a revolutionary critical pedagogy for democratic multiculturalism (Ryoo and McLaren 2010). He is moved by the call to question media and popular culture in sociohistorical context.

He sits opposite his tutor in her office. "I'm wondering if there are other writers you might consider," she probes. He stares back, thinking to himself that he will hardly find anyone as helpful as McLaren! She senses his silent hesitation and offers, "I'm just wondering if there are more generous approaches than neo-Marxism. What about cosmopolitanism?" Just as things were starting to settle!

Later that week, he draws a diagram showing McLaren on one side and Appiah (2005) on the other, listing their differences. He understands Appiah's cosmopolitanism as grounded in the personal-lived experience, both individually and collectively. He shifts back and forth, embracing one idea before abandoning it to the outskirts of his thoughts. Still compelled by critical pedagogy, he wonders about its implications for teachers: How might educators go about implementing critical approaches to issues of identity in our classrooms? What complications and/or repercussions could these "dangerous discourses" have? How will I deal with pressure from parents? Will I have support from the administration? How will the students respond? He looks down at his notebook where he has inscribed in large and ornate letters a quotation from one of his readings: "Admitting the reality of white racism would force a river of centuries of pain, denial, and guilt that many

people cannot assuage" (Leonardo 2002: 125). Will these critical approaches really bring us together or will they serve to further divide us, he ponders. It still feels like looking in a small corner of a Monet painting and it's blurry, or looking at a big chunk of the Monet painting and it's blurry!

The implications of his studies for teaching continue to haunt Aran. However, a shift occurs: his concerns about practice have become practical (vs. technical), that is, they are now focused on unsettling questions about how to live ethically in schools and in society. Something once thought understood – how to approach identity as a curriculum topic – now escapes Aran's grasp; he is bewildered, lost without a clear direction, rendered unsettled by the questions with which he is confronted. After a long history with time-bounded assignments, Aran expects that his studies shall soon pass into completion but finds that this is not the case. "Can you just tell me when I'm done?" His plea to the tutor meets with encouragement: keep going! He does. One book leads to another, each new reference list begins a trail to another unexpected text; as Aran pursues meanings associated with other meanings, the end seems far in the distance. However, even if he has put aside his desire to plan units of study for his practicum students, course instructors seduce and distract him with their desires that students be ready for the upcoming practicum. Unit preparation and lesson planning – the comforts of competence – impose themselves on the time and rhythm of Aran's studying, but he persists in his pursuit of new clues about identity, without destination. Aran has entered the space of study, and it is stupefying.

Studying and stupefying are akin to one another: "[T]hose who study are in the situation of people who have received a shock and are stupefied by what has struck them, unable to grasp it and at the same time powerless to leave hold" (Agamben 1995: 64). Study stupefies and preserves the state of stupidity without end. Study makes one unable to think clearly. Feelings of inefficacy arise because of defamiliarization and desocialization: preparing to teach has become something other than expected; something has been set free (Masschelein 2011). "Stupidity," writes Lewis (2011), "is the gift that thought gives itself in order to remain (im)potential. [I]t is the guarantee that thought can actualize itself without extinguishing itself" (p. 8). Yet studying is burdensome; Aran is at once open to infinite possibilities yet troubled by the infinite postponement of any of them.

Lesson 3: feeling lost is mandatory

He isn't feeling particularly comfortable. Sometimes he feels like he is really questioning all of these things; he wonders if he is really even getting anywhere or is he just asking questions in some void? Just when he thinks he's taking one of those questions and zooming in on it, he finds himself zooming out and seeing even more – like entering a three-dimensional Mobius model where you go deep into that narrow closure and it brings you back out to the outside. Just as he is immersed in really unpacking something,

he finds he is actually opening up so much more; instead of going deeper, he feels like he has opened up this little box and has found the whole world.

Aran's description of his experience in terms of the Mobius model is reminiscent of the Mandelbrot set wherein the narrow closure (blob) represents the points where connections and interconnections meet and appear dark, rich, and more ambiguous (Doll 1993). Not only are there authors but multiple interpretations of those authors' works; there are perspectives acquired by zooming in and out. The Mobius spirals play on the outer fringes and are sites of disequilibrium – fragile, generative, and potentially transformative openings (Doll 1993). What better image for Aran to use to describe his experience of studying; "darkness" was, for Agamben, "the color of potentiality" (Agamben 1999: 180).

None of this is particularly easy; Aran worries where his studying is leading him, if anywhere. Lewis likens Agamben's theory of study to "brown study," an old English term originally associated with "deep melancholic brooding" and perpetual wondering (Lewis 2013: 62). Aran feels caught between an "infinite undergoing" and an "unstoppable drive to undertake" (Agamben 1995: 65). He has lost any stubborn attachment to particular lines of inquiry and to comforting ideas such as "critical pedagogy," and he finds himself caught between unlivable passion and ungrievable loss (Butler 1997). While melancholia suggests the limit to Aran's sense of *pouvoir,* his sense of what he can accomplish, and in that sense his power (Butler 1997), it is not a form of passivity but a kind of desubjectification or existential death (Lewis 2013) where all possibilities are laid out before him without necessarily privileging or eliminating any particular one.

Paradoxically, it is by the suspension of his intentionality that Aran is rendered melancholic, and yet free. Freedom is the rhythm of study experienced as a ferrying "between bewilderment and lucidity, discovery and loss, between agent and patient" (Agamben 1995: 64) – a rhythmic activity that loses a sense of its own end and "does not even desire one" (p. 64).

Impotentiality is, for Agamben (1999), "the hardest and bitterest experience possible" (p. 178) because it involves recognition and suspension of one's capacity. Suspension is not impotence, however, but an active capacity for not-doing or not-being. Sadness haunts those who study because of the seemingly endless pain that accompanies it for, as Agamben (1995) notes, "nothing is bitterer than a long dwelling in potential" (p. 65).

Educational questions are temporally freed from their usual imperative of action, and Aran remains open to different possibilities for being and for teaching; his intentionality is suspended for now and he seems to have forgotten his initial goal!

Lesson 4: new truths may be revealed

He recalls sitting in front of his television on the day of 9/11 and the subsequent rhetoric of "us" and "them" and the implied connection between terrorism and Islam in contemporary discourse. When a bomb was detonated on July 22, 2011, in Oslo, he recalls the initial reactions were to blame militant Islamic fundamentalists. Later, when it became evident

that this was the work of a white Christian, the discourse changed to discussion of how he was an extremist and the incident was a "one-off." Adam begins to realize that the convergence of rhetoric and media is a salient force in the lives of his students. He is struck by just how many issues now speak to him and make him think in different ways. He catches himself remembering his years in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program and conversations with its left-leaning professors. He makes a note to himself: What is the true impact that media has on students' lives and on multicultural discourses across the nation of Canada? A contemporary perspective offered in one of his readings is that "if we are unaware of past imperialistic acts of our own government, and come to think that, for example, Islam is anathema to democracy, then the way we feel about and interact with Muslims in our community will be tainted" (Hoosain and Salili 2010: 7). The current economic and political environment places our various identities at odds with one another and inhibits us from identifying with "other" groups. He pencils in the margin of his notebook: What are some of the factors that contribute to this confusing and complicated situation?

For Aran, study is the time and space where "identity" can be and can become present and where he is in its presence ("attentive and attending it, not only knowing but also concerned"), so that it can touch him and he can be in its company and can begin to live with it (Masschelein 2011: 533). Study is not about "the mere management of already accumulated knowledge" (Arsenjuk and Koerner 2009: 11) or other people's certainties (Phelan 2005). On the contrary, study can confound the subjective or habitual grasp at meaning, the conflation of one's perspective with "reality," and it can remind one of one's being-in-the-world, one's situatedness, as historical, existential, and circumstantial. Precisely what Pinar (2006) hopes for: that study can create the conditions in which the studier can witness himself or herself in the making. In so doing, "thought bends back upon itself and thus recovers its volition" (Grumet 2006 [1976]: 130–131). This is *currere*.

Aran writes a note at the end of his final report: "This study has definitely ignited a passion for me to really try to connect my students' experience with a greater human experience. I realize now that it is not just about teaching the material; it's about teaching people about also how to live, how to cooperate, and how to be citizens. And yet, even as I write, I am beginning to see that, maybe, it is not even about citizenship, it's about humanity."

Aran's experience of study has sensitized him to the predicament of being human in the face of the conflicts of modern life (Kwak 2011). The question of educational purpose is liberated from an imperative to act, for now; along with the question of identity and multiculturalism, educational purpose itself has become worldly, that is, available for common engagement among his peers and his teachers. Studying has restored the world to him as a shared experience.

Lesson 5: the tutor is a feeble friend

Aran's relationship with his tutor, Carrie, has a quality of friendship: "I can really connect with Carrie on a kind of an intellectual level . . . a philosophical level." Friendship, in this instance, is not about intimacy or privacy. "It is

a worldly experience; for friends the world becomes something of a concern, something to think about, something that provokes . . ." (Masschelein 2011: 535). It is, however, a fragile friendship. At times Carrie provokes his thinking, and significant pathways for further study open up. There are occasions when she overmanages, and Aran's studying is folded back into the logic of an instructor-driven assignment. There are moments of passionate conversation when both lose themselves to the topic at hand. Afterward, there is some uncertainty as to where they've arrived or how he should proceed. For the most part, however, Carrie waits and watches.

The posture of the one who studies may not be unlike that of the one who stands by, watchfully letting something "essentially unfold in its provenance, that is, let it be" (Riley 2011: 813). Testimony and witness, rather than evaluation, constitute the role of the tutor in the face of study. Perhaps this is why Lewis (2011) suggests the designation of "impotent assistant" for the tutor (p. 598). He describes her as a messenger who does not know the content of the letters that she must deliver but whose smile, whose very posture seems like a message. He recalls a story of Plato to illustrate. Plato was asked to give a talk on mathematics, and, having rambled on in good fashion for an extended period of time, he completes his lecture with the assertion that "One is Good!" The student Aristotle, somewhat ashamed of his teacher, leaves the auditorium; Plato had become an embarrassment! By not succumbing to authoritative instruction, Plato's work appeared incomplete, itself suspended between potentiality and actualization; between "no longer" and "not yet," and as such, he embodied a reminder of restless study (Lewis 2011). The tutor embodies the eternal student who cannot finish anything, whose non-act is the gift of impotentiality. As such, as Masschelein (2011) suggests, study presents a condition of profane time in which teaching practices are divorced from their typical or institutional meaning, that is, as the singular, accountable force in student learning.

But the feeble or impotent friend is also an "attentive observer" (Lewis 2011: 596). She discerns the studier's moods and tries to support the shift from hesitation to inspiration when passion for study ebbs and melancholy threatens to overwhelm. She learns to walk a fine line between being helpful and being authoritative; she must decide when to step in and when to withdraw. Denied the conventional role of authorship, the teacher educator as tutor has "a co-responding position" (Riley 2011: 811), resigning her (of sorts) to an open demeanor as that of the studier. It is in reclaiming this open relation that the tutor becomes "more teachable than the apprentices," more obligated than they (Heidegger 1968: 15).

Conclusion: a final lesson in study

[T]he lesson of study is to become nothing at all but rather to remain within a pure capacity to be or not to be.

(Lewis 2011: 3)

In teacher education, studying may offer some temporary reprieve from the instrumentalist thinking of curriculum *and* pedagogy. As a site of pure means (rather than a means to an end), study allows and celebrates periods of inoperativity and thwarts the desire to get on with things once and for all. The suspension of intentionality and the escape from imperatives to act delay actualization, leaving open other possibilities for being both the studier and the teacher educator as friendly tutor. Studying holds in abeyance any realization of latent potentialities.

Agamben and Pinar's teacher is constantly stupefied and comes bearing the gift of inconclusiveness. The teacher educator who provides opportunities for study invites students to wander in the paradoxical zone of (im)potential; to allow them the opportunity to get lost, to lose their bearings, to experience the play between perplexity and clarity, endurance and action, discovery and loss. In the midst of study, teacher candidates can become conscious of their own fragility and vulnerability, as what they thought mattered is deferred. This experience of study may be particularly difficult for aspiring teachers, but it is crucial in a time when the precariousness of life is overshadowed by dogmatism and a penchant to focus on the popular or the trivial.[3] Study becomes an important antidote to the subject of new liberal democracies wherein, as Agamben writes:

> [M]an believes himself capable of everything, and so he represents his jovial "no problem," and his irresponsible "I can do it," precisely when he should instead realize that he has been consigned in unheard of measures to forces and processes over which he has lost all control. He has become blind not to his capacities but to his incapacities, not to what he can do but to what he cannot, or can not, do.
>
> (Agamben 2011: 44)

Rather than dismiss "reality," the time of study (free time) exists in tension with economic and institutional time. The obligations of the profession persist, as do the demands of the society; lesson and unit plans are eventually created and executed; "everything is there or can be there, but in a condition of floating" (Masschelein 2011: 531). All are a little less sacred, a little more profane when separated from their usual use and importance.

The very idea of "pure means" that underlies both Pinar's and Agamben's return to study is, I would argue, a compelling one for teacher education. It is suggestive of a different kind of responsibility for teacher educators: helping ourselves and our teacher candidates transform the burden of sadness that accompanies study into a type of intellectual engagement that has happily forgotten its goal to become this or be able to do that. We need not be afraid that teacher candidates will be less oriented to the practical as in ethical action; as Aran's studies illustrate and Pinar, after Alan Block, reminds us: "[S]tudy, like a prayer, is a way of being – it is an ethics" (Block 2004: 2).

Notes

1 Aran was a teacher candidate in a program that devoted one course each term to inquiry. As part of that course, teacher candidates identified an area of interest and a key question for investigation. While they were encouraged to relate their personal (as children and youth) and professional (as participant-observers in schools) experience in schools to the area of study, teacher candidates did not engage in empirical forms of research such as action research. During Aran's time in the program, there was no explicit requirement that teacher candidates link their studies to direct classroom application; this has since changed, unfortunately. I interviewed Aran about his experience of "inquiry" as part of a larger investigation into how teacher candidates experience and understand inquiry in teacher education (Phelan, Clarke and Leuty 2013). I constructed Aran's experience of inquiry (as study) by drawing on his own words, images, and metaphors. For example, he used the metaphor of "spiral" to depict the feeling of being drawn down into and swirled about by his studies. He references Monet's impressionist art to capture the lack of clarity that he experiences at various points during study.

2 I am using the term "tutor" here to connote the particular role of the teacher educator as she or he works with the teacher candidate who studies. I discuss this role later in the chapter with the help of Tyson Lewis (2013).

3 Dewey was aware of the need to protect thought, in what I would term the spirit of study, to keep it from "becoming blasé from overexcitement, wooden from routine, fossilized through dogmatic instruction, or dissipated by random exercise upon trivial things" (Dewey 1991: 34).

Chapter 3

Violence and subjectivity in teacher education

with Russell Sawa, Constance Barlow, Deborah Hurlock, Katherine Irvine, Gayla Rogers, and Florence Myrick

Natality and belatedness in teacher education

It's not culturally her nature to raise her voice.
She's not very animated.
You have to have some sort of presence.
You have no skills that I can see that really appeal to this line of work.
He has a global naiveté about him.
A Year 2 student needs to take more initiative, know what to do, and carry it out in a well-prepared manner.
He is immature.
Are you really serious about being a teacher?

The foregoing statements are uttered frequently during professional preparation. For many educators, such statements are not only commonplace but immensely reasonable; it seems strange to question the need for teachers "to have some sort of presence" in their classrooms. The statements reflect in part established and taken-for-granted understandings of what constitutes "good teaching" and the "good teacher." Such understandings are rarely evident in official program documents, statements of provincial or state standards, or program accreditation guidelines, but they often constitute the lived curriculum of teacher education and evaluation.

We hear little from the teacher candidates who are deemed to be "animated," "skillful," "mature," and carry out their lessons in "a well-prepared manner." But what of teacher candidates who resist these established meanings? Caught between the demands of the normative (what they believe they ought to be and value) and normalization (what professional others tell them that they should be and value), such individuals draw our attention to the paradox of natality in teacher education (Levinson 2001). On entry to a preparation program, teacher candidates enter a world that preceded them but also constitutes them as particular kinds of subjects.

This puts [them] in the difficult position of being simultaneously heirs to a particular history and new to it, with the peculiar result that [they] experience [them]selves as "belated" even though [they] are newcomers.

(Levinson 2001: 14)
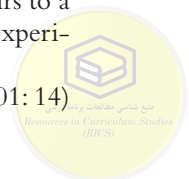
It is impossible and ethically undesirable for teacher candidates to put the past behind them. However, their sense of belatedness can be potentially paralyzing if there is no possibility for newness. This suggests that mentors must not only educate teacher candidates to what has been/is but do so in such a way that preserves their capacity to act in ways that might renew the profession (Arendt 1998). This underscores the role of the educator in fostering natality. The notion of natality as renewal sits well with a poststructuralist understanding of the "new" – "as something that is already implicated in the old" (Butler 1995: 39). The past is always present, and the present intrudes itself on the past (Bhabha 1994). Such intrusions, as it were, can appear in the guise of ordinary, everyday events that "unsettle, interrupt, or deflect social [or educational] processes that seem inevitable and inescapable" (Levinson 2001: 17). Interruptions are rarely straightforward in dynamic or consequence, however. The attempt to introduce newness always occurs within a condition of plurality (Arendt 1998), that is, in the midst of multiple understandings of what is good or desirable. The resulting antagonism between new and old cannot be perceived or dismissed as an external relation but has to be seen as an internal, constitutive difference of professional relations and identities. It is such antagonism that we wished to explore in the context of our inquiry into conflict in professional education.[1]

Inquiry context

The purpose of the larger study, from which this case study is extracted, was to examine the phenomenon of conflict within the professional education of teachers, doctors, social workers, and nurses. Specifically, we were interested in the ways that students, field mentors, and university faculty advisors make sense of conflict that they experience in field education. Field education is a formal learning situation in which students are afforded opportunities to develop professional competence under the tutelage of both a practicing professional and a university faculty member. For education, medicine, nursing, and social work, accreditation and professional guidelines encourage early and ongoing learning and teaching experiences in field settings. Poised at the interstices of university and field, and immersed in the complexities of practice, students are exposed to numerous, competing understandings about what it means to think and act as professionals. Consequently, field education is frequently characterized by conflict.

We conducted the research study in the context of four professional programs at a large research university in Canada, and we focused on the major field experience – practicum – in the final year of each program. The "collective case study" (Berg 2001: 229) included three triad relationships (student, field mentor, and faculty advisor) in each of the four professional faculties – education, medicine, nursing, and social work.

Data generation: teacher education

While there were three interactive and mutually supportive stages of data generation in this study, we drew on data from Stage 1. During Stage 1, we collected stories about conflict from triad members involved in the practicum. Typically, in an attempt to make the familiar strange, we conducted the interviews with participants from a profession other than our own. For example, it was usual for a researcher in education to interview participants from social work. All members of the research team engaged in analysis of all the transcripts, however. In this manner, we hoped to ensure that the study is not only about four different professions; it also contains perspectives from four different professions: interpretations from medicine, nursing, social work, and education of themselves and of each other.

We announced the research study at the beginning of the practicum semester by giving brief presentations in a series of seminars and orientation sessions attended by practicum students. During those presentations, we emphasized that while we were interested in conflict, we did not necessarily view conflict as problematic. We were primarily interested in how and what differences emerged during the practicum and how these differences, be they cultural, philosophical, or personal, were worked/ negotiated/played out. It was approximately one month or so into the practicum experience that students began to contact the researchers to participate. In education, three student teachers came forward; all were visible minorities, two males and one female.

Once students expressed interest, we asked for contact information for their faculty advisors and field mentors. While some students suggested that they contact their advisors and mentors regarding the study, others asked if we would do so.

The case study upon which we draw in this article includes a series of three separate conversations with a student and two conversations with the student's faculty advisor during and shortly after the thirteen-week practicum. The student's field mentor declined an invitation to talk with us.

During our conversations with the mentor teachers and faculty advisors, we asked about previous experiences in field experience, reasons for their involvement, and their views on the teacher education program as well as on teacher education more generally. Teacher candidates spoke of their program experience overall (campus and field), their reasons for choosing teaching, and their ongoing experience of student teaching. We asked all participants to describe their current practicum experience and any notable incidents. We asked each of the participants to provide their understanding of conflict and asked if and why they considered their relationship within the field experience to be conflictual. During the second and third interviews, we invited participants to return to experiences previously recounted with a view to reconsideration in light of current experiences. All conversations were audiotaped and transcribed.

Ethical concerns

A major concern throughout this study has been the support and protection of research participants. We have withheld this work from publication until all student participants have graduated successfully from the program and are currently employed in a range of contexts. To protect the anonymity of participants, we have omitted particular identifying details, and we have used pseudonyms throughout. It should be pointed out, however, that our intent is not to point to good/bad mentors, faculty advisors, or students but to illustrate our collective and often unconscious entanglement in a web of social, cultural, and educational discourses. Such discourses, we will argue, are problematic and in need of identification and reflection.

Interpretation and representation

Critical discourse analysis of the data allowed us to identify and describe discourses of conflict but also to explain how and why particular discourses were produced in the context of field education (Teo 2000). We not only hoped to affirm participants' experiences and understandings of conflict, we also wished to interrogate and explain how and why they came to understand conflict in the way they did. Critical discourse analysis focuses on language as the primary instrument through which dominant understandings are transmitted, enacted, and reproduced (Foucault 1972; Pêcheux 1982). In the process of telling stories about field experience, mentor teachers, faculty advisors, and student teachers drew on a discrete set of linguistic resources. The stories they told us told on them as well, as it were. During analysis, we attended to participants' narratives in terms of their central themes; rhetorical devices such as metaphors, contrasts, hyperboles, and euphemisms; coherence; presuppositions; disclaimers; word choice; and style (van Dijk 1997).

The questions that framed our interpretation were: How do teacher candidates and their mentors/advisors experience, understand, and negotiate conflict? What do their understandings tell us about what does or does not count in professional education and the profession itself? As we proceeded, we became increasingly interested in exploring the responsibility of field mentors and faculty advisors to the newness that some teacher candidates introduce. Simply put, how do teacher educators do justice to that which may mark uncommon competence in the profession of teaching?

Theoretical frame: difference as *différend*

Teacher education has been largely conceived and practiced as an apprenticeship to widely accepted bodies of knowledge and skills that comply with state or professional regulations. The presumption is that an original presence exists in the form of the mentor teacher and that the latter's skills are transferable

to the teacher candidate. The focus is on avoiding conflict between the two, harmonizing any differences, and ensuring sameness of outcome (Carson and Johnson 2000). Ironically, the very presence of the teacher candidate points to the impossibility of an original presence. She is only ever a partial presence, "almost the same but not quite" the same as the mentor teacher, an identity articulated between the lines and as such "both against the rules and uttered within them" (Bhabha 1994: 89). In the context of field experience, for example, the teacher candidate engages in mimicry in an effort to emerge as authentic. Mimicry conceals no presence or identity behind its mask; in fact, it points to the impossibility of such an original presence. "The menace of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of [professional] discourse also disrupts its authority" (Bhabha 1994: 89). The authority of the experienced professional (mentoring teacher) is mimed but also called into question by a difference that it is not.

The absence of an original or a foundation is concealed by the articulation of provincial and state teaching standards and practicum skill checklists. By their very presence, teacher candidates introduce the nonstandard – a difference that is a potential source of newness to the profession. However, what is "new" may appear enigmatic, anomalous, absurd, or even dangerous. Teacher candidates who introduce alternative ideas about the meaning of teaching not only make the familiar strange, but they also point to a strangeness at the core of the profession; in doing so, they may displace and unleash danger for someone. In their turn, teacher candidates may be subjected to "mundane violence" as the boundaries of the profession are carefully policed according to established professional norms (Butler 1999: xx). As Arendt expresses it, "the chances that tomorrow will be like yesterday are always overwhelming" (in Levinson 2001: 14).

Teacher candidates seem caught between the past and present, the old and new, suspended, as it were, in an "agitated passage" (Carroll 1984: 75) between attraction and repulsion, between the familiar and the strange. Concerned with cases of antagonism between the familiar and the strange, we draw upon Lyotard's (1988) notion of the *différend*. I would like to call the *différend* the case where the plaintiff is divested of the means to argue and becomes, for that reason, a victim. If the addressor, the addressee, and the sense of testimony are neutralized, everything "takes place where the 'regulation' of the conflict that opposes them is done in the idiom of one of the parties while the wrong suffered by the other is not signified in that idiom" (Lyotard 1988: 9).

In the context of our larger inquiry into conflict in professional education, we have been struck repeatedly by the difficulty experienced by practicing professionals to bear witness to the alternative views introduced by their students – the gynecologist's resistance to a resident's suggestion or a teacher's refusal to entertain alternative curriculum content. We wonder what is at stake in such moments when students describe themselves feeling divested of any means to argue their cases for fear of appearing outlandish, unprofessional, or insane.

Refusals on the part of experienced professionals to recognize and consider nonstandard practices signify interdictory moments where tension is evident between what is known and permissible within the profession and what is known but must be kept concealed (Bhabha 1994). To illustrate the dynamics and consequences of such tension, we draw upon the case of one teacher candidate in our study – Robert. We describe the three interdictory moments from Robert's field experience – the question, the sharing, and the retort – and ask: What is concealed and permitted in each moment? How are the moments interconnected and to what end? How does the relationship between violence and subjectivity play itself out within and across these moments?

The dynamics and consequences of the *différend*

Robert was born and raised in a large urban center in Canada. He came to teacher education in 2001, having completed a fine arts degree. Primarily his dream was to be a practicing artist, but a teaching certificate, he thought, would ensure a more predictable source of income for now. Robert expressed his interest in participating in the research study just a month into his major, thirteen-week field experience in a junior high school; in his estimation, things were not going well for him.

The question: difference as anomaly

> It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created. . . . The initial recognition of anomaly leads to anxiety and from there to suppression or avoidance.
>
> (Douglas 1966: 4)

Officially, the reflective journal was intended to foster a conversation between teacher candidates and their mentor teachers. Robert wrote in his field journal: "Why do we need art history in the junior high school curriculum?" He went on to express the belief that art was about the expression of an "I" and that the curriculum at this stage should be "therapeutic rather than about academics, grades, and history." The response of his mentoring teacher, Sue, read, "If these are the thoughts you're having, you shouldn't be a teacher." She later questioned him, he told us, about "why [he] wanted to be an art teacher if [he] didn't believe in the history of it." Sue passed the journal to the principal for review. Robert deeply resented "saying what [he] believed and getting slammed for it." After all, he asserted in our first interview, the inquiry-based teacher education program had oriented him toward "questioning, not being a drone, [and] thinking for one's self."

Robert's question was to some degree half-answered; while he appreciated art history as an important part of the discipline, he did not see a place for it in the

junior high curriculum. In posing the question, he invited his mentor teacher into the space of the unthought. Martuswicz (1997) explains:

> To ask is always a repetition, a repetition of the "why" or the "how", for example, as the play between what we know and don't know, between the thought and the unthought, and always between the said and the unsaid. As such, a question is an invitation to the play of multiplicity that operates between the given and the virtual. I mean that when we ask why, when we repeat that linguistic function, we are opening a space in which there is an indefinite number of possible answers for us to choose.
>
> (p. 99)

If Martuswicz is correct, the space of the question and its response(s) marks the boundary between the world and attempts to comment on it. "It is at once a limit and an empty space, forming the condition for both what has been said and what is to come" (Martuswicz 1997: 100). It is a relational space that generates the wonder and awe at all those possibilities for Robert to understand himself and his chosen profession, and for Sue to reconsider some settled assumptions.

The space of the question is the space of difference between "new" and "old," however. By asking his question, Robert transgressed the external boundary of a school subject, and the familiar integrity of the junior high art curriculum was endangered. He was promptly reminded of the cost of such thinking: "If these are the thoughts you're having, you shouldn't be a teacher." The question could not be entertained within official curriculum boundaries, and Sue's response could be read as a form of boundary policing. What remained concealed are the differences (e.g. perspectives) that already exist within the school discipline regarding what constitutes art and art education.

Robert was positioned as an enigma at best – "How did you get this far in the program?" – or an anomaly at worst – "unlike other Year 2 teacher candidates." Sue, the mentor teacher, asked to see his practicum reports from the previous year. Robert explained:

> I brought them in and let her read them. "How come you were so success-ful at the high school level and you're not here?" [she asked]. I said, "How do you judge success?" I'm doing exactly the same thing as I did there.
>
> (Robert, teacher candidate)

As the practicum proceeded, Sue continued to question Robert's suitability for teaching, and Robert continued to question Sue's practice. On one occasion, she asked Robert to model her practice of making errors while drawing in front of the students. According to Robert, Sue had explained that this was an effective method of encouraging students to take risks in the art room. Robert, however, saw it as a deeply problematic practice. His role, he believed, was to model good practice, not to "pretend" that he couldn't draw. He claimed

repeatedly during interviews that "the students were excited about art" and that "they were proud of their work" in his classes.

A totalizing narrative about "Year 2 students" framed reports of Robert's performance. In an initial interview, Joe, the faculty advisor explained, "There is an expectation by mentor teachers that Year 2 students will take initiative, know what to do, and carry it out in a well-prepared manner." One month later, in a second interview, he re-emphasized that Year 2 students should not be "waiting for people to tell them what to do and how to do it." During one of his site visits, Joe remarked that Robert appeared well prepared and engaging to his students. His impression was, however, that Sue perceived Robert's performance as simply the result of her persuasion. Joe explained:

> The reason that his teacher feels he was so well prepared is because she made him well prepared. It's like Joe is coming tomorrow, what do you have? What are you starting with? How are you going to get the kids engaged right off the bat? And instead he should have been saying to her "I know Joe is coming tomorrow . . . here's how I'm going to start the kids . . . here's what the center section is going to look like . . . here's how I'm going to close it out, right?"
>
> (Joe, faculty advisor)

Whether the perception of Robert's performance as poor resulted from his suspect status or was simply compounded by it (his question, his lack of preparation), it is difficult to say. However, what is evident is the need to make Robert recognizable within taken-for-granted expectations of teacher education.

Robert's question suggested the possibility of renewal and opened up a space of difference, but this promise is not guaranteed. The capacity for response must be nurtured (Levinson, 2001). This is not an easy task for mentor teachers who are asked to introduce teacher candidates to the world of teaching and learning as it is and not as we might wish it to be. However, it is the conception of "as it is" that is significant. If the world of art teaching was introduced to Robert in all its potential and with all its shortcomings, then the conversation between him and Sue, in light of his question, might allow them both to come to an understanding of what might remain the same as well as what might be transformed. But the challenge of mentoring student teachers while not endorsing a particular view of teaching persists. The difficulty of coming to appreciate that there is more to the world of teaching than may appear evident in our particular experience remains. Is the aspect of belatedness so strong as to resist new meanings?

The sharing: difference as absurdity?

> Anything specific, not taken from pre-existent patterns, appears inconsiderate, a symptom of eccentricity, almost of confusion.
>
> (Adorno 1978: 101)

During one school visit, Joe learned that Robert had hung some model fish created by students upside down. Whether Robert had intended to do so was unclear. One way or another, the act was seen by Joe as continued evidence of Robert's "lack of maturity" and his refusal to "be . . . serious." After all, Joe insisted, "This [practicum] is serious." In her turn, Sue continued to question how serious Robert really was about teaching. Robert explained his reaction to their questions in the following terms:

> They always ask me about how serious I am about this program and I think that's kind of a funny statement, because if I wasn't serious about doing what I do, I wouldn't be paying 10 grand for two years, wasting my money. . . . I know what I want. I know how to get there, and I'm finding people questioning me why I'm there all the time.
>
> (Robert, teacher candidate)

In an interview with the researchers, Joe described Robert as having "a global naiveté in him" due to "a sheltered existence culturally." Joe learned that Robert had confided in his Grade 8 students, telling them that his mentors didn't think that he was "teaching material." In a follow-up discussion, Joe asked Robert, "Are you a man or adult?" Later Joe explained to the researchers:

> I know that there was a measure of professional code of conduct that Robert transgressed. That the fact that he said things to students that should not have been said to them in terms of well, my teacher and my supervisor think I'm just not teacher material, right? Upsetting the kids. . . . You don't tell Grade 7s that kind of stuff. You don't tell Grade 8s that kind of stuff. You talk with your administrator. You go to your principal and say, "Hey, here's how I'm feeling" . . . not knowing who his circle of contact needs to be, right?
>
> (Joe, faculty advisor)

According to his faculty advisor, Robert inappropriately positioned his students as confidantes rather than children in need of his advocacy and care. Robert was perceived as transgressing typical social and institutional relationships with his junior high students when he told them of his plight as a teacher candidate. In doing so, Robert risked "upsetting the kids." Moreover, to disclose his situation to students was absurd in the sense that it was incongruous with normal professional behavior; Robert had breached an ethical code of conduct. Robert's actions appeared unreasonable; obviously confused, he should have known better, and he should have contacted his school principal.

Considered a breach of professional conduct, Robert could be read as a "*parvenus*" – someone who refused his social positioning as teacher. Levinson (2001) writes that "The trouble with *parvenus* is that they have no sense of history; they feel too new" (p. 25). Robert could be described as abandoning

his responsibility as a teacher, claiming in some fashion an alternative bond between him and his students. A teacher candidate's own youth may contribute to this; it is not difficult to imagine that Robert felt a stronger alignment with his own students than with his mentors. The notion of *parvenus* may suggest a desire to transcend the obligation that comes with the positioning of "teacher." In an effort to escape his positioning as "teacher," he uttered, "It's not my dream anyway. I couldn't care less." He goes on to describe himself as feeling "misplaced."

On the other hand, it may have been that Robert's mentors were simply overwhelmed by their own belatedness, "so fixed by the world that preceded them that there is no possibility of unsettling this world and of bringing something new into it" (Levinson 2001: 25). Arendt would call such mentors "social pariahs" who "embrace . . . what-ness as given and unalterable" (Orlie 1994: 345). In Robert's case, one wonders if the mentors had ever thought to question the meanings attached to their own social positioning. There was some indication of this when Joe admitted to grilling Robert, "right or wrong." Additionally, there was a sense in which Joe's forgetfulness of Robert's newness was at play here: Why would Robert know where to go? Why would he go to an authority figure, such as the principal, at a moment when he felt undermined by similar authority figures?

An alternative reading of Robert's sharing with students is that it invited his mentors and his students to conceive of the student–teacher relationship differently, to reconsider the internal lines of the system, the rules of social relations. What may be at issue here is the way in which institutions insist that their members behave according to the types of relations they have (Todd 2001). We may be witnessing in the reaction to Robert's behavior what Todd (2001) calls "an overly exercised attention to what teachers, seemingly by virtue of their institutional roles and positions, should and should not do" (p. 72). This focus suggests a concern with defining types of communication rather than the quality of the communication. Robert's gesture toward the students, while appearing self-interested, could also be viewed as an instance of yielding and openness that could enhance his students' sense of themselves as compassionate. There is a distinct possibility that a student teacher's fragility could be a generative space for learning for all concerned. The assumption, however, was that Robert's communication with the students is unambiguously problematic. The obligation between teachers and students was converted quickly into a norm. In so doing, the wonder and anxiety of relations between teachers and students was foreclosed, and the quality of relations moved out of the ethical realm and into the political (read: monitored).

> By prefixing the prescriptive with *It is a norm decreed by y that x ought to carry out such and such an action*, the normative wrenches x from the anxiety of idiolect which is also the marvel of the encounter with the other.
>
> (Lyotard 1988: 143)

The retort: difference as dangerous?

> They are narrations of the unreal. . . . A multiplicity of possible, probable, and improbable stories are told heedless of their verisimilitude, in anticipation of what could be the case.
>
> (Lyotard 1988: 148)

Sue's oral reports of Robert's progress to the faculty advisor continued to be problematic during the months of October and November. As a result, Joe decided to confront Robert.

> And so I . . . right, wrong, or otherwise . . . made the executive decision to just grill Robert about it. To say, you know, here's what I have heard. . . . How do you respond? [Robert responded] "I feel like I'm being grilled." "Well, you are and here's why" . . . right, and to the point where he ended up leaving the building for the day upset.
>
> (Joe, faculty advisor)

Robert resented "having to be perfect for Hetherington" (he never referred to the faculty advisor by his first name), describing Joe's observations and assessments in imperial terms: "He came, he saw, he commented!"

While Robert's mentors questioned his competence, Robert saw himself as experimenting.

> Anything that I tried that was not recommended or was not offered as advice, and usually I failed. The support I got for venturing out on my own and trying and experimenting was met with: "[T]his is how I told you you should have done it and that's what you should have done." And I said, "Well, I wanted to try it my way. I wanted to see how it worked and if it worked, great. If it didn't, then hey I'll just go back to the drawing board and do something else. Or I'll try it your way next time."
>
> (Robert, teacher candidate)

Robert perceived his mentors' response as "disheartening" and "frustrating." From his vantage point, there was "no room to try out in my own way" and the field experience became "a dark and ugly time."

On Robert's return to the school building the day following the "grill[ing]," Joe recounted the following interaction as told to him by Sue, the mentor teacher: "The teacher asked him about it . . . said, 'I understand you're upset . . .' 'No,' [Robert replied] 'I'm not upset, I'm hateful. I'm going to fight fire with fire.'"

Joe explained that he and the teacher perceived Robert's response as "sufficiently threatening" and "heinous enough" that the school principal prohibited Robert from returning to the school. Joe contacted campus security to alert them to Robert's behavior. It was mid-October 2001, in the aftermath of 9/11. Joe explained that at that time he thought his "personal safety was in jeopardy"

and that he had wondered, "In these crazy social times, what can you trust?" "Not knowing that student other than within the two visits that I've had with him," he went on to explain how he and Sue had felt "their safety compromised." He continued:

> I've learned in the short time I've been alive really to listen to my gut, and I listened to that in the woodshop when I'm ripping a two by four and it says when this thing kicks back, where are you standing. This student's behavior really looks like they're going to launch. What are you going to do? Where do you need to be? I'd better be on alert.
>
> (Joe, faculty advisor)

Sue refused to deal further with Robert and declined an invitation to speak to the researchers about the case.

Later, oral reports to the faculty advisor, in the absence of the teacher candidate, became customary. The persistent interrogation as to how serious Robert was about teaching could be construed as "mundane violence" suffered by the teacher candidate in an effort to control or reduce his ambiguity (Butler 1999: xx).

> I don't want to argue . . . at all because I don't think I have . . . I'm not able to verbalize the way I feel. And even if I did I . . . they'd still find something to . . . slam me on anyway so . . . right now . . . I don't want to say anything.
>
> (Robert, teacher candidate)

The utterance, "I'll meet fire with fire," was sufficient, in light of the cumulative narrative (anomalous, absurd) about Robert, to position him as dangerous and to marshal the disapproval of the principal, mentor teacher, and faculty advisor. Robert's angry retort set a citational chain in play as 9/11, dangerous strangers (Joe claimed that he had only met Robert twice at this point), Columbine High School, and "heinous comments" ensured Robert's dismissal from the school. There is a strong sense in Joe's comments that he feared the invisible thought or desire as much as the visible act (Douglas 1966: 136). It was more a question of what Robert might do but always in light of what had occurred thus far and in light of unreal narratives of what might be the case (Lyotard 1988). Danger lurked everywhere as Robert was seen to threaten not only the boundaries of the profession, its curriculum, and the logic of its social relations but literally the professional body itself.

Robert was assigned to a different school to complete the final four weeks of his practicum. He met with the program coordinator and his faculty advisor to create a performance contract that itemized necessary areas of improvement; Robert's success in his new placement was contingent on his completion of the contract.

> I sat down and it was funny because they were trying to let me have some input into it. It's like your contract. So, [I said], I don't think we need that.
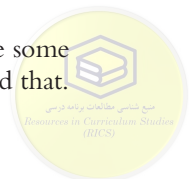
No, you need that. Put that in. So I put it in. So basically it wasn't just my contract, it was their contract.

(Robert, teacher candidate)

Joe asked Robert to follow a template for his future journal reflections, to focus on planning, and to demonstrate hard work and initiative from then on. The apparent staging of the contract as a dialogic event between three parties failed to acknowledge the disciplining power of the event (Foucault 1977). Not unlike Robert, the attempt to transcend rather than struggle with the difficulty of the relations set in play by the creation of the contract speaks to the institutional denial of its own belatedness and its assumption that the other is knowable. The problem with performance contracts is their rigidity, certitude, and normalizing power. We wonder how teacher educators could focus our accounts on the discontinuities, ruptures, and the unexpected that characterized Robert's field experience.

Robert was transferred to a different high school to complete his practicum. He described his final four weeks of practicum in the following terms: "I didn't do anything that I was proud of. I felt dirty actually. Every day after I got home, I just wanted to cry, scream, and shout. I was so mad."

The difference proposed and embodied by Robert was effectively erased within the terms of the final performance contract. Within the dominant idiom, Robert's competence was at stake and he witnessed the marginalization of his reality and speech as he was removed from the school, disallowed further contact with his students, and subjected to a performance contract. Somewhat ironically, Robert's testimony was neutralized within the terms of the dominant discourse of "the good teacher candidate" who shows initiative; he was left to argue that:

She said I didn't show any initiative and I tried to explain that to her. I just wanted to see how you ran the class first, so I didn't like come in and I guess she was expecting me to come in and do whatever.

(Robert, teacher candidate)

In Robert's view, silence ensued. When he asked another of his faculty instructors if he could discuss his experience in seminar, the instructor deemed it inappropriate. When he told his story in the corridors of the university, his peers were sympathetic but typically fell silent; he concluded in one of our interviews at that time that "student teachers don't care what is right or wrong. . . . They just want to get out of here." He had already learned, of course, that speaking to Grade 7 or 8 students was taboo. It was the prevailing silence that led to long interviews with the researchers wherein we were positioned as sympathetic listeners. In order for the dominant idiom to win, it had to obtain the silence of witnesses (his peers, the researchers), the deafness of the judges (mentors immersed in the dominant idiom who cannot hear his protestations), and the insanity of his testimony ("meet fire with fire") (Lyotard 1988). The disappointment that pervaded the imposed silence was weighty. It seemed in

Robert's case to "shut down thinking and the play of questions, leading to a kind of terrorism of the soul" (Martuswicz 1997: 102). Robert concluded: "OK, forget it. I give up. I'm just going to shut up and be a robot. And be a drone. Do what I have to do and get out."

To explore the psychic dimension of the *différend* is to provide an account of the way in which regulatory power maintains subjects in subordination by producing and exploiting the demand for continuity and visibility (Butler 1999). The desire to survive, to be "a teacher," is exploitable. The one (mentor teacher) who holds out the promise of continued existence plays to the desire to survive. The desire to be intelligible and recognizable persists even as the teacher candidate denies the dependency on and even transgresses dominant discourses of what it means to be a teacher. However, despite his desire to survive, Robert also assumes power. His resistance is both a recuperation of power even as it retains that initial subordination, and as such his power is ambivalent. This in turn forms the subject.

Institutional procedures such as the removal, the contract, and student reassignment served to erase the conflict and, concomitantly, the difference that underlay it by creating salient differences of its own. As a result, Robert was made to look dangerous, and teacher educators were allowed to participate in old habits of cultural and educational bias (Williams 1991).

> And being Chinese . . . that's what I was brought up to believe in . . . to be honest, to be honorable. They took away my integrity. They destroyed my character.
>
> (Robert, teacher candidate)

The wrong suffered by Robert was not signified/signifiable within the dominant idiom. As such, Robert was divested of the means (discourse) to argue his innocence or to obtain a remedy for an injury to his rights; for that reason he became a victim (Lyotard 1988). Ironically, the assumption that Robert was an unconstrained, sovereign subject, whose injurious speech and potential conduct could be conflated, led to a form of professional censorship (as he was deemed dangerous) and opened up the possibility of racial discrimination (Butler 1997). Given the manner in which Robert's exclusion is situated in the context of 9/11 and the acknowledgement that all three student teacher participants in the study were visible minorities, we are led to wonder about the ways in which the appearance of the racialized Other is discursively deployed in teacher education as the site upon which danger – to corporeal safety, to epistemological and ontological security, to institutional structures of power – is inscribed. How might things be otherwise?

Assuming responsibility in teacher education

Teacher education must assume responsibility for acknowledging and responding to the limits of discourse signaled by the *différend* (Plonowska Ziarek 2001). The *différend* marks the limit of the sayable in the profession; this focus on the
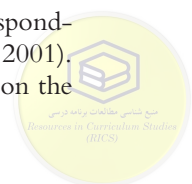
limits of articulation enables us to supplement professional hegemony with a concern for justice. Based on our obligation to bear witness to the *différend*, to the damage, such justice cannot be limited to the identification with democratic values, such as rights, but has to be based on indeterminate judgment proceeding without criteria.

Since any articulation of conflict can be implicated in injustice, the *différend* reveals the endless necessity of judging while at the same time problematizing the "good faith" of critical judgment (Plonowska Ziarek 2001: 92). Robert's question is well taken: "How do you judge success?" At stake here is:

> [T]he pursuit of an Idea (in the Kantian sense) of justice that . . . does not put an end to disputes and differences, that is continually in search of its rules and laws rather than presupposing and simply applying them to each case.
>
> (Carroll 1984: 85)

Despite shifts to inquiry-oriented teacher education programs and alternative forms of evaluation such as narrative assessment and portfolios, teacher educators continue to exercise judgment based on methodological doubt. Our hospitality to those who wish to enter the profession is governed by standards, contracts, duties, and pacts. Such hospitality allows us to engage in the violence of exclusion, as we saw in Robert's case through the erasure of his difference. Basing our judgment of new professionals on existential doubt or discernment may allow us to move beyond moralistic extremes toward a judgment informed by an unavoidable conflict of interpretations. Here we find existential doubt that is rooted in reflective action or praxis and a logic of undecidability that keeps us tolerant.

By way of illustration, let us return to the question about the inclusion of art history in the junior high school curriculum. To whom is the mentor teacher obligated in this moment? Is she obligated to the discipline or to the profession or to Robert's future students or to Robert himself? And what might it mean to be obligated? To be obligated to the profession is, in a sense, to be obligated to an idea that cannot be concretized but rather as something that can be used reflectively, as opposed to obeying it as though it held all the answers for combating teacher incompetence (Todd 2007). We cannot move from descriptive statements (e.g. "Art teachers believe in and teach art history.") to prescriptive ones (e.g. "If you want to be an art teacher, then you better believe in art history."). The mentor teacher must decide case by case, without definitive criteria. There is no avoiding prudence guided by the imaginative judge who seeks to bring the discipline and the individual circumstances into play with one another. This would require that Sue return to the question of the curriculum again and again, within every relationship with a prospective teacher about to enter the profession.

> That is, each time I come into contact with a situation, where individuals speak to me, they not only speak to me through different language games,

but command from me an obligation by virtue of the fact they address me. They require a response. And that response can only live up to its name of response when I refuse to impose upon them a set of criteria or hear their words only through a filter of laws, regulations and such. Instead, the response that is commanded is a listening to the other knowing that my judgment must come through a reflexivity in which I continually ask myself – is this a just decision?

(Todd 2007: 596–597)

This approach would require that the value of teacher education lies not in how well student teachers meet requirements of being "well-prepared" or "demonstrating initiative" but rather on "how individuals are responded to, which requires not treating those laws as though the contents of them were transparent" (Todd 2007: 597). There is no teacher competence in the abstract but only in the particular, but this does not mean that we take recourse to relativism. Rather, it is a justice of plurality that is at stake whereby teacher mentors in schools and universities respond to the new against the possibility of multiplicity.

The question emerges, therefore, how might we begin to hear Robert's plea? Lyotard (1988) points us toward Kant's sign of history and the role of affect. Through the silence and the feeling of pain that accompanies it, the *différend* confronts the teacher educator with an obligation not only to testify and redress the wrong but also to institute a new sense of addressee, addressor, and testimony. In being moved by the wrong, our obligation is reinstated and the possibility of difference and justice along with it.

Yet it is clear that the profession can ill afford an undaunted hospitality (Derrida 1997). As advocates for the young and their newness, we have a duty to try to distinguish between benign and malign strangers (Kearney 2003). Our intent, in this chapter, has not been to answer the question of how we encounter the new as something other than a containable call from beyond (Kearney 2003) but rather to invite teacher educators to live alongside the very difficulty that this question invokes.

The difficulty of natality in the teaching profession

When Cezanne picks up his paintbrush, what is at stake in painting is put into question; when Schonberg [sic] sits down at his piano, what is at stake in music; when Joyce grabs hold of his pen, what is at stake in literature. Not only are new strategies for "gaining" tried out, but the nature of the success is questioned.

(Lyotard 1988: 139)

Are other disciplines open to the new? What is it about the professions and professional practices that close them? Is it the sense of obligation that they bring forth in us that necessitates compliance to standard, principle, or law? And yet,

as Lyotard (1988) goes on to point out, "obligation in and of itself does not need the authorization of a norm in order to take place, quite to the contrary" (p. 143).

The teaching profession is constituted as a resemblance, a culture of sameness in which practitioners are thought to share the common task of teaching according to a common standard. The operation of power, the inculcation of the same, by experienced professionals on the beginner is thus legitimated within. Could we begin to conceive of the teaching profession as a "minimal community" without a definite shape or a definite identity but one that is in "continuous re-enactment" (Plonowska Ziarek 2001: 76)? Such a community would be characterized by "the constitutive contradiction between diversity and equivalence, particularity and universality, equality and difference, antagonism and consensus" (Plonowska Ziarek 2001: 76). Drawing on Levinas, we could begin to theorize a pluralist community on the basis of an asymmetrical reciprocity, the acknowledgement of differences as irreversible.

> The asymmetrical reciprocity mandates not only the inclusion of diverse perspectives into a decision-making process but as Patricia Williams argues, requires "listening at a very deep level, to the uncensored voices of others" (ARR 150) rather than imagining their point of view.
>
> (Plonowska Ziarek 2001: 77)

While in the end we may need to judge one another in the profession according to some understanding of just competence, prior to such comparison there must be a moment of respect for the particular embodied sensitivity of the person (Plonowska Ziarek 2001).

As mentors of new professionals, we are presented with a choice: will we judge them, supply them with a motivation, find a language by which to know and capture them, or "whether we will affirm what is enigmatic here, what cannot be easily or ever said, what marks the limits of the sayable" (Butler 2003: 208). If we cease judging in a way that assumes we already know in advance what there is to be known, perhaps we move closer to a different understanding of ethics, "one that honors what cannot be fully known or captured about the Other" (Butler 2003: 208). Robert's actions, his nonaction, his utterances are not easily translated, and this means that he marks the limits of the familiar, the clear, the common.

> To honor this moment in which the familiar must become strange or, rather, where it admits the strangeness at its core, this may well be the moment when we come up against the limits of translation, when we undergo what is previously unknown, when we learn something about the limits of our ways of knowing; and in this way we experience as well the anxiety and the promise of what is different, what is possible, what is waiting for us if we do not foreclose it in advance.
>
> (Butler 2003: 209)

Note

1 This chapter first appeared as a journal article of the same title in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education,* Volume 34, No. 2, pp. 161–179. The article was written as part of a research study entitled, *Discourses of Conflict: A Multidisciplinary Study of Professional Education.* The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada funded the study from 2001–2004. The original grant writers included myself, as principal investigator, and four colleagues – Constance Barlow and Gayla Rogers from the Faculty of Social Work; Florence Myrick, Faculty of Nursing; and Russell Sawa from the Faculty of Medicine; at the time of the study, we were employed by the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Part II

Disturbing relations

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Chapter 4

Power and place in teaching and teacher education

During a recent get-together of some former teaching colleagues, the conversation shifted to education. We five had graduated from three different colleges of education in Southern Ireland in 1980, and all but myself continued to be employed as primary school teachers by the Irish Department of Education. Each of us in turn decried the high level of illiteracy in Ireland (somewhere around 17%) despite a booming economy (euphemistically known as "The Celtic Tiger") and the obvious prosperity of those around us. One friend lay the responsibility for rampant illiteracy at the door of play schools and preschools where, as she put it, many unqualified caregivers did not know how to foster language development in young children. Another pointed to the homes from whence these children came: clearly parents were not engaging their children in stories, poetry, and conversation. Moreover, she added, teachers cannot be expected to work effectively with thirty-five children in the classroom. Poised uncomfortably on the edge of my chair, I was aware of the complexity of my positioning. I knew exactly what they meant. I had been one of those teachers with thirty-eight Grade 6 children in my classroom, struggling to meet the needs of the illiterate in that group. And yet as a teacher educator, the refrain was too familiar: it is the home . . . it is the daycare . . . it is pupil-teacher ratio. Each "reason" lodged in my throat as an "excuse," as a form of conservative ideology that finds it easier to locate blame rather than offer critique and suggest fruitful action.

The reasons that reached across the table that evening echoed those expressed when we, as eighteen-year-old student teachers, searched for the reasons why "our lessons didn't go as well as we had hoped." None of our professors or cooperating teachers insisted that we question those easy rationales, except perhaps to suggest some technique that might work more effectively next time; in their eyes, our inexperience was the problem. Foundational studies in sociology and philosophy seemed largely distant if not totally irrelevant to us in the face of teaching practice. When we found ourselves with our first jobs, the cultures of teaching in our respective schools had already been woven around similar ideologies, and so we found few to question us there.

I do not intend to be hard on my former colleagues but rather to ask how and why we came to talk and think about teaching in such ways. And, what might

be the relationship between those ways of thinking and the sociopolitical context in which we found ourselves as "teachers–in–training"? My thesis is that teacher education prepares teachers to fit into existing patterns and structures of teaching, schooling, and society. It plays an integrating rather than a radicalizing role.

> Teacher education is embedded in each nation within the cultures of teaching, just as teaching is contained within schooling, while schooling is located as one part (but by no means the only one) of education, which itself reflects, transmits and modifies the values of the whole society.
>
> (Judge 1988: 156)

Put simply, teacher education maintains existing educational and social structures by teaching prospective teachers to assimilate and accommodate to existing ways of thinking and acting – dominant discourses – that are prevalent within a given context during a particular period in time. Battersby and Retallick (1988) describe the "maintenance orientation" (p. 10) that was the *raison d'être* of teacher education in Australia in the 1980s.

> That is, the role of teacher education is "to equip people to cope . . ." (National Inquiry into Teacher Education (NITE) 1980), to make people feel "confident in teaching students," (Commonwealth Schools Commission (CSC) 1979) and ultimately to provide society with "an adequate supply of . . . teachers" (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CSC) 1986).
>
> (Battersby and Retallick 1988: 10)

While there are aspects of most teacher education programs in Australia that encourage alternative thinking, the pervasive effect of such a maintenance orientation has been to produce teachers who fit into existing patterns and structures of schooling. Teacher education becomes largely a process of assimilation rather than inquiry about how schools work and for whom (Battersby and Retallick 1988). However, it is not simply that teacher education reflects larger social values but that teacher education also infuses the social with particular values, thus shaping the societies in which we live. Consequently, teacher educators must begin to identify and examine the discourses that we propagate in our institutions and the political sensibilities, cultural codes, and habitual patterns of inference cemented within those discourses.

Thinking about teacher education discursively

Discourses are patterns of thought and action related to key ideas in social spheres such as teaching and education. Examples of educational discourses are "high needs," "at risk," "developmentally appropriate practice," "whole language," "phonics," or "classroom management." These discourses set the conditions for
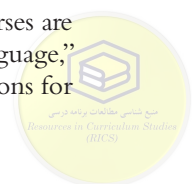
teaching practice and shape the normative categories that organize and restrict teachers'' thinking about practice. Prospective teachers bring discourses with them, and they find them in faculties of education. Perspectives are constructed and reconstructed through discourse, through the ongoing interactions one has with others and with oneself, whether talking or reading or writing or thinking to oneself while acting. The idea of discourse is collective, active, and historical (Phelan and McLaughlin 1995).

Each educational discourse promotes consideration of particular aspects of teaching, learning, and the student and neglects others. Teachers' perspectives are a part of educational discourses.

> Perspectives are like currents in the stream, words and acts that are *distinguishable* in a certain place and at a certain time, perhaps with patterns that can be traced, but not *separable* from a historical discourse that is embodied in culturally established ways of thinking, speaking, and acting on educational issues.
>
> (Phelan and McLaughlin 1995: 165)

Wider discourses do not force us to act in any manner; in fact, understanding the nature of our discourse as representative of other discourses may gain us space to alter thought and practice.

Gee (1992) expands our sense of the concept as collective and embodied in others:

> "Discourses are composed of people, of objects (like books), and of characteristic ways of talking, acting, interacting, thinking, believing, and valuing, and sometimes characteristic ways of writing, reading, and interpreting" (p. 20). Discourse reflects the multiple spoken voices of social interaction – of conversation – even as it reflects the voice within a book's pages or within one's thoughts.
>
> (Phelan and McLaughlin 1995: 166)

The problem central to teacher education is the discourses that prospective teachers take up in faculties of education and how those discourses shape particular kinds of teaching identities, school practices, and ultimately social values. What is at issue here is "how the social production of meaning takes place" (Popkewitz 1993: 6). Social production takes place within the realm of discourses with which one is engaged or which have shaped one's thoughts and actions.

Discourses and documents

To examine my thesis, that teacher education plays an integrating rather than a radicalizing role in society, I embarked on a series of studies in international teacher education. Because the relationship between teacher education and
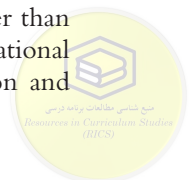
sociopolitical context was pivotal in my mind, I decided to focus on areas of heightened social and political tension. I explore the first of those studies in this paper: teacher education in Northern Ireland. Although I write this paper as an "outsider" to the Northern Ireland context, my interest in that context is animated by my own upbringing in Southern Ireland. Educated in Irish National Schools and later educated to teach in those same schools, I have always had a deep-seated interest in how the Irish create and recreate ourselves and our place.

In Northern Ireland, I focused on two colleges of education which educate both primary (elementary) and secondary level teachers. Greenwood College is a secular college, educating teachers primarily for nondenominational schools, while City College educates teachers for Catholic schools (see Caul 1990 for an extensive description of the Northern Ireland school system). Both colleges conduct their work under the auspices of a major university and against the background of the "Troubles," severe levels of poverty and a selective school system (Caul 1993). Children are streamed into grammar or comprehensive secondary schools on the basis of an examination at eleven years of age. There is a striking contrast between the physical landscapes of the two colleges of education. While Greenwood College is located in a pastoral setting on the edge of a middle-class suburb of a major urban area, City College is situated in the inner city. Both colleges attest to a predominantly female student body drawn largely from the manual worker and farmer classes. Few daughters of the professional classes are attracted to teaching in Northern Ireland.

During my visits, I talked with two heads of education and one college president and gathered an array of program documents. My conversations focused on program structure and components (e.g. field experiences, professional studies), institutional structure and organization (e.g. student admissions); contextual factors such as government policies influencing program design; and finally, faculty and student program experiences.

Documents included program handbooks, written descriptions of programs by individual faculty members, articles and book chapters written about education and teacher education by faculty, and government policy documents influencing teacher education. Interviews with faculty were recorded in the form of field notes and retrospective memos at the end of each encounter.

My analysis of discourses in this paper is based largely on the program documents that I gathered and the planned or official curriculum, supplemented by faculty interviews. My attention to the discursive construction of these documents is undergirded by a number of key assumptions:

> First, people actively create these [program] accounts on the basis of previously existing linguistic resources. Secondly, they are continually and actively involved in selecting some of the infinite number of words and meaning constructions available, and in rejecting others. Thirdly, the chosen
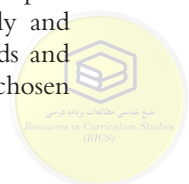
> constructions do have consequences: the mode of expression has an effect, it influences ideas, generates responses and so on.
>
> (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000: 205)

The neglect of the lived curriculum is an obvious limitation of the study. However, I believe that official documents can be instructive as they represent the official, public face of an institution and what it stands for. Moreover, documents such as a program handbook and a college prospectus constitute a binding contract with students.

Finally, such documents often represent the voices/perceptions of those administering programs, department heads and the like, thereby allowing the researcher to "study up" as it were.

The questions which framed the document analysis were: (a) What are some of the ways of thinking about teaching and teacher education that have emerged as privileged and normative, as others have been eclipsed or silenced? and (b) What do these processes reveal about power and place in teacher education?

The not-so-hidden curriculum: the case of Northern Ireland

One particular discourse predominated in each college of education. In Greenwood College, disciplinary knowledge emerged as the organizing center of teacher education. In City College, despite similar state regulations surrounding the disciplinary knowledge of teachers, religion emerged as the primary discourse. Both discourses seemed to operate as conservative ontologies: one positioning teachers as instruments of the state apparatus of differential curriculum, examinations, and job allocation; the other providing a type of moral regulation whereby prospective teachers learned to maintain not only a Catholic but also an Irish, nationalist ideology. However, although the two discourses appeared dissimilar to me at first glance, their similarities became increasingly obvious upon closer inspection.

Subject disciplines: a discourse of accommodation at Greenwood College

Secondary education in Northern Ireland is organized around two major discipline-based examinations: A-levels and O-levels. At the primary level, an examination in English, mathematics, and reasoning is used to select children at eleven years of age for grammar schools. The unselected students attend secondary comprehensives. In addition, primary schools must now comply with the core curriculum, which is itself discipline-based. Colleges of education reinforce the disciplinary framework of schools by emphasizing main subjects. Of course, this emphasis is due in large part to universities, which will only accredit colleges providing degrees in a single subject area.

As a result, B.Ed. primary degree students in Northern Ireland study one "main subject" for the four years of the degree. In Greenwood College, for example, students may choose from subjects such as art and design, science, information technology, dramatic art with English, geography, history, mathematics, music, physical education, and religious studies.

There are both consecutive and concurrent patterns of study from which students may choose.

> The consecutive pattern [discipline followed by Education] devotes much more time to the study of a subject or subjects than to professional preparation. A consequence is that teachers produced by this route are more acceptable for work with academically able, highly motivated and older pupils than as teachers of other groups. Because the concurrent pattern [discipline alongside Education] devotes more time to professional preparation, its products are widely acceptable at nursery, primary and secondary levels.
>
> (Greenwood College, *Prospectus for Entry* 1997)[1]

The alignment of extended disciplinary study with "academically able, highly motivated" students echoes the selective nature of Northern Ireland's school system, and in particular the existence of grammar schools.

The study of a main subject is coupled with study of the areas of Curriculum Studies, Education Studies (philosophy, history, and sociology), and School-Based Work. The area of Curriculum Studies is organized around the National Curriculum and courses take the content and form of the prespecified core. The general aim of Curriculum Studies is described as:

> [E]nsuring that students enter the teaching profession with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values appropriate to professional teachers. . . . Students will therefore gain knowledge of the subjects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at the level which will support effective classroom teaching. . . . Furthermore students will develop an appreciation of the place of assessment, testing, recording and the reporting of pupils' progress in each subject within the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
>
> (Greenwood College, *Prospectus for Entry* 1997: 27)

There is explicit acknowledgment that teachers must be prepared to fit into the extant educational system. The foreword to Greenwood College's handbook (1997: 1) reads:

> There could scarcely be a more interesting time to be entering the teaching profession. A new curriculum for Northern Ireland has been given statutory authority in all grant-aided schools. You could derive real satisfaction in helping to implement that curriculum and so determining what our

schools will be like in the twenty-first century. Here at Greenwood we would be glad to assist you to prepare for that challenge.

Teaching subjects, shaping subjectivities

The emphasis on the "new curriculum" and on disciplinary specialties shapes prospective teachers' identities in particularly interesting ways. Having spent two years in preparation for the A-level examination, followed by four years of discipline-based study in a college of education, a prospective teacher's orientation and allegiance is to the discipline. The dissertation written in the final year of college is subject-based, again reinforcing a singular identification as teacher. In the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) courses for students preparing to teach at the primary-school level, sixteen modules out of a total of twenty-four are devoted to the study of a main subject (eight modules) and curriculum studies (eight modules of subject-based Northern Ireland Curriculum). Teaching is understood in terms of conveying disciplinary knowledge to the exclusion of other forms of identification or more persuasive discourses: student-oriented, class-based, gendered identifications, theoretical, political. In this way, the focus in teacher education becomes skewed. For students preparing to teach at the secondary level, fourteen modules out of a total of twenty-four are devoted to the study of a main subject (ten modules) and a subsidiary subject (four modules).

According to one department head at Greenwood College, the emphasis on disciplinary knowledge in the college curriculum results in and reinforces particular social relations in the college and subsequently in schools. Departmentalism is rife and insularity from one's colleagues in other fields common. Prospective teachers may learn to see their respective disciplines as homes where sameness rather than difference tends to predominate. The group or departmental ideology sets out parameters for individual teachers' attitudes toward members of other departments. A sense of collective perception is often based on extreme views: business studies can be seen as practical while art may be viewed as fluff. Departments at the college level become enclaves with a modicum of communication or accountability between them. In such an environment, change is difficult. It is much more likely that schools and universities remain as they are. In this sense, disciplinary structures perpetuate their own continued existence.

This state of affairs is particularly problematic in the sociopolitical context of Northern Ireland where different cultural and political identities are transmitted outwardly through different subjects such as history, Irish, music, and sport. Cathcart (1984) notes that it was not until the mid-80s that the history of the development of Irish republicanism in the nineteenth century existed for most Protestant children attending Protestant schools. They were taught British history in much the same way that pupils in London were. Such an omission from the curriculum was based on the hidden assumption that the history of Irish nationalism was not only irrelevant to British pupils in Northern Ireland but also potentially subversive (Cathcart 1984).

This pattern is repeated and reinforced by colleges of education. City College offers Celtic Studies while Greenwood College does not. Moreover, certain specialties are associated with certain classes.

> The fact that maths and science subjects are studied to a greater extent by Protestants (McEwen and Curry 1986) provides some evidence that these economically important subjects have been claimed by the Protestant community as part of its intellectual and economic "property" (Bernstein 1971). This has been reflected in the absence of any significant degree of access by Catholics to the main employers of skilled technical, scientific and manufacturing labour.
>
> (McEwen 1990: 141)

So, the disciplinary tunnel vision of teachers becomes ideological and political tunnel vision used to create and sustain Catholic and Protestant identities with specific Irish and British reference points (Cathcart 1984; McEwen 1990).

As far as schools are concerned, the underlying differences between the two main communities are brought to the surface in the treatment and teaching of school subjects such as history, Irish, sport, and – to a lesser extent – music. In state schools, for example, which are nondenominational but in practice are almost wholly Protestant in ethos, the Irish language is not part of the curriculum. On the other hand, Irish is part of the curriculum of almost all Catholic postprimary schools. "The inclusion of Irish in the curriculum is as much a statement about the ethos and cultural orientation of a school – its Irishness – as it is about the need for an additional language, either French or Spanish, in the school's timetable" (McEwen 1990: 141).

Disciplines as ways of knowing

By honoring disciplinary knowledge, particular ways of knowing are established. The legitimating rules for knowing tend to be denotative – a statement's truth is the criterion determining its acceptability (Lyotard 1984). Is it true? What is the evidence used to establish truth? Denotative knowing gives rise to an expert class, a professional class whose knowledge and way of knowing is specific to them and offered to others (students) in exchange for goods such as salaries or increased status. The specialism that results from such disciplinary organization removes knowledge from its human origins. Expert knowledge is differentiated from local/common knowledge and appears remote from time, place, and circumstance. (In this respect, the Greenwood College *Prospectus* is a case in point: nowhere is there a reference to the particular context of Northern Ireland beyond reference to the mandated school curriculum for the region.) Knowledge appears aperspectival, separate from any individual or group interests, value-free. The difficulty with this is that the conception of knowledge that is perpetuated in schools is that of an extant body of facts and theories rather

than that which is evolving and connected to the knower. Such knowledge is not part of any social bond; competence, in this instance, refers only to the sender, not the addressee/receiver of the knowledge; in fact, ignorance or lack of competence is one of the ground rules for knowledge transfer. Teaching one's subject becomes a matter of conveyance, the authority and communicative competence lying only with the teacher who is positioned as a knowledge broker of sorts. This is reflected in the following description of business studies in the Greenwood College *Prospectus*:

> An essential part of the College's preparation of effective teachers who will be able to offer the main business subjects in secondary/grammar schools and colleges of further education. . . . The subject is concerned with the real world . . . the skills and competencies acquired by students on this course are also extremely marketable outside education and some of our graduates have taken up positions in business and management.
>
> (Greenwood College, *Prospectus for Entry* 1997: 29)

One issue to be explored in this regard is how prospective teachers develop particular knowledge constructs as a result of their exposure to particular disciplines and how those constructs inform their beliefs about teaching and learning. In particular, they may end up confusing both acts (Lindfors 1984 in Lester 1990). Rather than focusing on the learner's processes of coming to know, the likelihood is that prospective teachers with a (objectivist) disciplinary orientation will focus on teaching.

> The confusion between teaching and learning expresses itself in two crucial ways. . . . Where and in whom they believe purposes and intentions for learning are generated is one way they express their beliefs.
>
> (Lester 1990: 86–87)

The discipline, as translated in the National Curriculum, requires teachers to focus on curriculum requirements rather than the learners' understanding. A department head expressed it as follows: "Students define themselves in relation to their main subject; they don't understand pedagogical principles." The emphasis is on fitting students into the disciplinary frame and exhibiting competence within that frame at the time of examination, be it the Eleven Plus, O-Levels, or A-Levels. Testing tends to be the tail that wags the dog of schooling, so inter- or cross-disciplinarity will be rare when rewards lie elsewhere in the mandated curriculum.

There is a particular notion of knowledge implied in this structure. The emphasis on performance within the various subject areas perpetuates the understanding of the disciplines as discrete bodies of knowledge to be mastered rather than interdependent frameworks for understanding the world. Given the examination structure in late primary and throughout secondary school, it is

likely that prospective teachers engage their own students in a similar mastery learning model.

A narrow attention?

There is an interesting question that emerges from this examination of the dominant disciplinary emphasis in Greenwood College: When we pack and pommel the world into disciplines, how do we shape the thinking of teachers and students? Bateson (1994) cautions that specialists develop their own special patterns of attention and "insist that their preoccupation is always urgent, always more important than any other; very much like small children, but an effective leader must be a generalist who knows what to ignore . . . The balance is not easy to achieve" (p. 101). The view from the discipline, though useful, is limited by definition. Each discipline provides a particular view of the world that needs to be interrogated and examined in light of other equally valid frameworks. Moreover, disciplines may become too familiar as frameworks for interpretation. The search for organization seems to be the normal state of the human mind; however, "the same capacity that is used to make sense of ambiguous cues can become rigid to exclude them as meaningless and unacceptable . . ." (Bateson 1994: 57). To avoid such rigidity, a move toward cross-, multi- and interdisciplinarity seems reasonable and desirable.

One wonders, then, about the impact of narrow attention on an educators' ability to engender a broader view in students toward a kind of imaginative thinking that is required in a context like Northern Ireland. Bateson cautions us that living in narrow channels can be dangerous, and she reminds us that "there are many reasons why less narrow attention, more peripheral vision, offers richer and more responsible living" (p. 100).

Religion: a discourse of maintenance in City College

> [I]n the Catholic teacher, an awareness and appreciation of Christian values and standards and a desire to direct one's own conduct by them and to share them with others. Catholics seeking admission to our College will, therefore, accept a commitment which involves not only the teaching of religion but responsibilities in conduct and attitudes befitting someone who will later be a Catholic teacher.
>
> (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997)

Languages of learning have a regulatory power; they provide ways in which prospective teachers think and feel. Program documents suggest that prospective teachers take up both the values and practices of Catholicism. The authority of Catholicism as a pre-established epistemological and ontological framework presents prospective teachers with a universal Truth to convey in turn to their

pupils. Prospective teachers, originating from farming and working classes, are already educated to receive knowledge and to accept it uncritically. Moreover, students hail from "convent and diocesan colleges and come strong in terms of their religious and cultural traditions," according to one administrator. It seems, then, that teacher education at City College serves to reinforce the dominant discourse of home and school.

There seems to be a strong relationship between teacher education at City College and the teacher's role in establishing and maintaining "a clear Catholic identity" (McEwen 1990) in students, schools, and their communities.

The 1997 *Prospectus for Entry* to City College reads:

> Let teachers realize that to the greatest possible extent they determine whether the Catholic school can bring its goals and undertakings to fruition . . . let them give witness to Christ, the unique Teacher, by their lives as well as by their teachings.
>
> ("Vatican II Declaration on Christian Education"
> cited in City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997)

And again:

> At City College, we believe that our vocation in the family of Catholic education is ultimately to assist Catholic parents in their work of hand-ing on the faith. We therefore see the role of the Catholic teacher as very important and we take the preparation of Catholic teachers very seriously.
>
> (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997)

The emphasis on teachers as central to the Catholic mission and the impor-tance of teachers giving witness "by their lives" is further reflected/reinforced by the language of "call" and "serve" used in the *Prospectus*.

> The continuing idealism of young people who feel called to be teachers and to serve others in that way is attested by the very large number of appli-cations we receive each year.
>
> (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997)

The framing of teaching in terms of "call" and "serve" hearkens back to an historical association with calls to the priesthood and religious life; serving signifies the avenue to redemption and salvation. There seems to be a social and work ethic that one might associate with a religious community. One depart-ment head referred to the "strong welfare system" that exists at City College. For example, if a student does not turn up for an examination, an instructor will go and find them.

Resisting a Protestant/British hegemony

However, the extent to which City College succeeds in regulating the morals of prospective teachers is open to question. Dominant Roman Catholic discourses available to students through daily mass and ongoing study in Religious Education must compete with popular discourses provided by the media. Additionally, increasing numbers of prospective teachers are being exposed to foreign countries in the context of study abroad programs. Experiences of this nature can also serve to interrupt the moral regulation and provide prospective teachers with a broader vision of how education can function.

Quotations scattered throughout the College Prospectus attest to the authority of the Church hierarchy in determining the priorities of City College. However, within the specific context of Northern Ireland, the Catholic mandate is coupled with Irish nationalist politics in some interesting ways. Catholic education seems to exist within a Protestant (read: British) hegemony (McEwen 1990). Bishop W. Philbin stated as much in his Pastoral Letter, Easter 1975:

> [T]he Catholic Church has argued that interference with the rights of the Church in respect of the "character and identity of Catholic schools" would be the next worst thing to "banning religion altogether."
>
> (Philbin 1975 in McEwen 1990: 135)

As such, teacher education is viewed by some college faculty as a site of resistance to British rule in general. College administrators tend to regard central educational authorities as an imposition and interpret their directives, circulars, and so on with greater circumspection (McEwen 1990). This tone was evident in my conversations with administrators in City College when they retold the story of the 1982 Chilver Committee that recommended the integration of teacher education. Integration would have entailed the amalgamation of City College, Eastern (both Catholic) and Greenwood College (almost totally Protestant with respect to student intake) Colleges of Education and the University Department of Education. The amalgamation was recommended in light of the Government's decision, in response to falling school enrollments, to reduce the supply of teachers and, therefore, the number of students in colleges of education. The Catholic colleges objected strongly, and the end result was the amalgamation of the two Catholic colleges now known as City College. Part of the folklore of the proposed amalgamation is a story told by faculty interviewed in both colleges. It appears that the proposed amalgamation of the colleges perished once it was realized that there was not enough space on Greenwood College campus to accommodate a Catholic church.

Some faculty members at City College framed their work in terms of resistance to a British Protestant hegemony and expressed some frustration with students' and faculty members' lack of political consciousness. During interviews, administrators decried what they perceived as the insulation of students

and some middle class academics from the political struggle. While discussing the existence of two separate colleges of education, a Catholic academic at Greenwood College suggested that students were "all people underneath," thus drawing on a liberal humanist perspective to downplay religious and political differences. Another faculty member suggested that if the colleges join the university system, the ethos of Irish Catholicism will inevitably weaken. Students who underplay the significance of the "Troubles" may be representative of their rural communities where there is less polarization of Catholic and Protestant identities. In the urban areas, meanwhile, there is a lack of consensus about a shared identity (Darby 1986). Darby argues that there is a distinction between urban and rural communities with respect to their lack of consensus about a shared identity. Urban groups tend to be more polarized in this respect than Catholics and Protestants living in rural areas.

The subject(s) of nationalism

Roman Catholic discourses commingle with those representing Irish Nationalism. Certain subjects that are not available to students attending Greenwood College are offered in City College. This is important as City College does prepare prospective teachers to teach the discipline-based National Curriculum, as does Greenwood College. However, the inclusion of subjects such as Religious Education and Celtic (Irish Language) serves to orient students to Catholicism and what is described as "our cultural heritage" (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997: 20).

Religious Education is differentiated from Religious Studies and is specifically designed to "develop . . . personal understanding of religion and to familiarize [students] with approaches to religious education in Catholic schools" (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997: 42). Study of subjects include biblical studies, sacramental theology, moral theology, church history, catechetics, and liturgy. The description of the course leading to certification is followed by a lengthy extract from Bishop Walsh's Pastoral Letter of Lent 1995, "The Catholic School: A Caring Community of Learning."

> What makes a Catholic school distinctive is its religious dimension. Religious Education permeates the whole curriculum and includes both instruction and formation. . . . Education is a preparation of life, and, indeed, a preparation for eternal life. The main focus of the Catholic school must be to bring each young person closer to God.
>
> (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997)

Regarding the teaching of Irish, the *Prospectus* reads:

> The Irish Department in the College continues to prepare students for this important cultural work, an area of the curriculum which is an important

part of our cultural heritage. The courses are designed to afford the student the opportunity to acquire full fluency in spoken Irish and accuracy in written Irish, develop an appreciation of the Irish language, its literature and our cultural heritage and learn to teach Irish effectively at both primary and secondary levels, and in Irish medium education.

<div align="right">(City College, Entry Prospectus 1997)</div>

"Irish medium education" refers to the growing desire of parents to have their children educated completely through the medium of the Irish language. The official curriculum of Irish language at City College is supplemented by a *Cumann Gaelach* (Irish Club) which organizes cultural and social activities for students such as trips to the *Gaeltacht* (areas where Irish is the first language), *ceilis* (Irish dancing), and an annual "*seachtain na nGaelige*" (Irish week).

Despite a renewed emphasis of late on the Northern Ireland Curriculum on Education for Mutual Understanding, an administrator at City College emphasized the importance of prospective teachers knowing their own tradition and history first and then getting to know others through community-relations projects.

Possibilities and openings

Teacher education in City College appears to be openly ideological, but it is unclear as to whether it is politicized in the sense that "forms of knowledge, culture, curriculum, pedagogy, administration and evaluation are continually being contested, confronted, resisted and, at least to some degree, re-constructed" (Smyth 1992: 187). One wonders about the level of meta-analysis in which prospective teachers engage. Are they led to question the commingling of discourses such as Catholicism and Irish Nationalism that frames their education and that of their pupils in Catholic schools? Are they enabled to pursue questions about whose interests (in the long term) are served or denied through a Catholic orientation? Is there room for questioning assumptions, beliefs, and practices as well as the opportunity to change some of those assumptions and the manner in which they shape social relationships in Northern Ireland? Is there room to challenge conventional practices, ideas, and ideals? If the administrators see teacher education as a form of political struggle, do they unmask the hidden messages in their curriculum and administrative practices? One interviewee described the students as "fairly conservative" and "most obliging," but he decried their reluctance to question despite various efforts on the part of faculty to encourage them to do so.

Something that suggests the possibility of engaging prospective teachers in City College in critical questions is the juxtaposing of the Northern Ireland Curriculum with the Irish Catholic ethos of the college itself. Caught in the tension between church and state, where does a prospective teacher lend her allegiance? How does the teacher-in-training make sense of the discourses available to her and thereby negotiate an identity that moves beyond either? Such

space is enhanced by the discourse of "mutual understanding." Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) is one of the six cross-curricular themes identified in 1989 as constituting a valuable aspect of children's school experience. It is defined as being "about self respect, and respect for others and the improvement of relationships between people of differing cultural traditions" (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997: 50). Teacher education has to take EMU into consideration; this is reflected throughout program documents with comments such as the following in the Religious Education section of the *Prospectus*:

> The Religious Education Department actively supports and contributes to college ecumenical initiatives and is committed to the furtherance of the aims of Education for Mutual Understanding.
>
> (City College, *Entry Prospectus* 1997: 36, 42)

However, on a more cynical note, keeping teachers uneducated in the deep discourses about religion and culture may be important in a political context like Northern Ireland. In a sense it may be important to policymakers and church leaders that prospective teachers not understand too well the foundations of their practices, otherwise their service function may be undermined (Smyth 1992: 3).

Power and place in teacher education

> A program of study that does not sense its consequences in particular places is impoverished.
>
> (Pinar 1991: 174)

The poverty of place in teacher education

This project began with the questions: (a) How have some ways of thinking about teacher education emerged as privileged and normative, as others have been eclipsed or silenced? and (b) What do these processes reveal about power and place and how they operate in teacher education?

In answering the first question, we have seen how these colleges of education reflect two dominant discourses: one privileged by and privileging a discipline-based (read: disciplined) and state-mandated curriculum for Northern Ireland; the other dominated by the discourse of Roman Catholicism. In both cases, teachers are framed as instruments either of state or church. In both instances, the "teacher" is formulated as an object of control, rather than a knowing subject. "Instead of a complex self that continually creates itself in social action (Kondo 1990), it is much more useful to have a fixed object, a 'teacher,' that fits easily into church or state policy directives" (Nespor and Barber 1994: 22). Teaching, in this sense, is seen as a role, a composite of functions that teachers
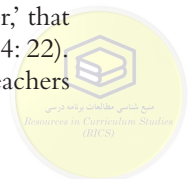
fulfill on behalf of others rather than an identity that speaks to the teachers' own investments, commitments, and desires.

When an instrumental view of teaching is sanctioned by institutions, then teacher education becomes a question of maintenance of and accommodation to the status quo. It simply reinforces the type of knowing (epistemology) and being (ontology) already in place.

In an attempt to answer my second question, I suggest that the place under consideration in this study is significant because while one could argue that both discourses are responsive to "place," the notion of place at play is problematic. In both colleges, "place" has been decided upon in advance of any encounter with prospective teachers. True to the technical rationality underlying teacher education, "place" remains "in place" no matter what; it is a prespecified outcome, the end in view. In the case of Greenwood College, place is institutionalized in terms of the Northern Ireland Curriculum as British or Irish (Irish history; English literature); in City College, place is viewed strictly in terms of religious boundaries. When place is fixed, then the identities that emerge are also fixed categorically – Catholic/Irish, Protestant/ British. There is no place to move; one can only be one or the Other. Both versions of place speak to the power of central authorities – Church and State – to standardize and impose a particular reality. Both versions, to my mind, are colonial in orientation, seeking to shape prospective teachers in a particular image. In this view, teacher education is reminiscent of Columbus in his encounter with aboriginal people (read: teacher educators for Columbus):

> Either he conceives the Indians (though without using these words) as human beings altogether, having the same rights as himself; but then he sees them not only as equals but also as identical, and this behavior leads to assimilationism, the projection of his own values on the others. Or else he starts from the difference, but the latter is immediately translated into terms of superiority and inferiority (and in his case obviously, it is the Indians who are inferior). What is denied is the existence of a human substance truly other, something capable of being not merely an imperfect state of one self. These two elementary figures of the experience of alterity are both grounded in egocentrism, in the identification of our own values with values in general, of our I with the universe – in the conviction that the world is one.
>
> (Todorov 1984: 42–43)

It is interesting that while women continue to be marginalized from nation-state politics and the Catholic church hierarchy, as teachers they continue to be used as instruments of both.

It seems clear, then, that we must reconstitute the relationship between teacher education and place, thereby opening up other possibilities for learning to teach. Guided by Butler (1993), the question that I now ask is: How might

we emancipate the term "teacher" from religious, disciplinary, and other ontologies to which it has been restricted and give it play as a site where unanticipated meanings might come to bear?

Working discourse, working difference

If teacher education is to be one of the means by which educators learn new ways of seeing within a deep sense of tradition, then teacher education needs to become a discursive project. There is no escaping discourse. There is no escaping that language/discourse constitutes experience generally and our experience of place specifically. Teacher educators may need to consider how we can help prospective teachers to recognize the multiple discourses that shape and often restrict their thinking about experience and place.

Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) write that: "Place is a product of human history – fashioned out of words, tropes, codes, conventions and rituals" (p. 6). If place is constructed through language/discourse, then place is a form of text that cannot be pinned down to a singular interpretation. Our understandings of place are multiple and contested and may be replaced when different discourses become available to us. Throughout their teacher education programs, students need to learn to identify and analyze the discourses of place which have shaped their thinking and actions and those that they continue to encounter throughout their course work.

There is obviously a relationship between place and identity. Pedagogical approaches such as "Mapping the Self" (Phelan 1996) serve to frame teacher education as a dialogic process during which prospective teachers begin to consciously construct themselves as dialogic subjects, configured at the intersection of multiple discourses. Prospective teachers learn that the place in which they teach and the possibilities for selfhood that such a place presents to them and their pupils is an invention, a constant social negotiation among discourses that are made available to them at various times in history. Questions at the forefront of such an approach are: Which discourses do you find authoritative and difficult to reject? Why so? What are the discourses which are internally persuasive to you (Bakhtin 1986)? Why?

Part of the purpose of discourse analysis in teacher education is to establish the origins and consequence of difference. The point, of course, is not to eliminate difference but to begin to "work difference" (Ellsworth and Miller 1997). Understanding that identity is a matter of discourse and that the latter is often contested and contradictory allows us to move away from a sense of our difference from others as polarized and fixed. When we manage to move beyond pure identity categories such as British, Irish, Catholic, or Protestant and see that our respective positions are always provisional, then difference can become a work-in-progress (Ellsworth and Miller 1997). The boundaries between self and other and the meanings of our differences seem to be constantly reconfiguring over time and within particular contexts. It is in the performance of one's

differences that prospective teachers have the opportunity to rework the meanings of who they are as educators in Northern Ireland.

The opportunity for prospective teachers to come together across differences of religion, politics, and disciplines and around meaningful educational tasks is important here. It is in the context of working closely with others on, through, and against discourse that prospective teachers can begin to unearth place, recognizing self and other as woven into a fabric of history, of human experience in this particular place: death, initiation, hate, violence, renewal, transformation, resilience. The intention is not that we live together happily ever after but that we begin to see the possibility that "communities need not only be constituted by good friends but by strangers who acknowledge their contiguity in living and the contribution each makes to others" (Young 1990: 314).

The question remains as to whether teacher education can widen its base with respect to social class, religion, and political affiliation to the extent that it can make a significant impact on the problem of teacher identity.

A border pedagogy: unearthing place and reworking identity

More specifically, what might it mean to "unearth place" and "rework meaning" in teacher education? I posit three mutually supportive and interactive strategies of a border pedagogy: "making words visible," "naming forms of containment and restriction," and "movement into new linkages and alignments" (Davies 2000: 195).

Make words visible

Understanding Northern Ireland as a discursive event, rather than a fixed reality, may be the first task for prospective teachers in that political context. The task involves directing students' attention to language in the public and private spheres and inviting them to ask: What is it up to? What does it make of us? (Willinsky 1991) How is the phenomenon of "Northern Ireland" constructed through personal (home), official (institutions of church and state), expert (academic), and popular (media) discourses? What are the ways in which we began to think of ourselves as Catholic or Protestant, Irish or British? Analysis of official texts such as program handbooks, course syllabi, or government policies may reveal the relationship between subject disciplines and political affiliations, as in this project. Analysis of interviews with parents and grandparents may lead to an understanding of how commonplace utterances such as "King Billy" (with reference to King William of Orange) or "foreign government" (referring to the government of Southern Ireland) conjure up and invent particular identifications. Media terms such as "Bloody Sunday" or "terrorist" may position us as victims or perpetrators, enacting yet again the binary logic through which identities of difference are often constructed (Bhabha 1994). Tracing the use

of particular terms and phrases through official government documents and the popular press may also be enlightening: When and why did the term "civil rights" enter the lexicon? How did the term reframe public opinion and subsequent discussion about "The Irish Problem?" How did vocabularies change in the 1970s as both Ireland and Great Britain joined the European Union? What does the term "mutual understanding" mean? What might be the problems associated with a generalized tolerance of one another? Noting the discursive shifts that occur historically is important if students are to understand the constructed nature of meaning and the temporal, shifting nature of identity.

A study of words should help prospective teachers understand not only how all of us make sense of our experiences "based on our previously existing linguistic resources" (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000: 205) but also how those resources are furnished by larger discourses. Prospective teachers at both teacher education colleges, engaged in discourse analysis of conversations they have with one another about educational aims and practice in Northern Ireland, can begin to recognize their own choice of constructions and explore the consequences of the same for their pupils. The intent is to help prospective teachers become "conceptual artists" who are able to recognize discourses at play and to select from those discourses in a spirit of critical, artful, and restorative participation (Willinsky 1991).

Naming forms of containment and restriction

One hopes that by making words visible to students, they begin to see how often the dominant form of identification, Religion in the Northern Irish context, is only partial in nature and that other identifications do exist. Dominant discourses of identity in Northern Ireland may elude such categories as class, gender, race, and sexual orientation. This is where narratives, drawn from life histories of men and women in both communities, may prove immensely helpful. Such stories might include how working-class Catholics, north and south of the border, came to the aid of English coal miners during the 1980s; other stories of how women organized themselves across class and religion to assert their rights; and stories of the Jewish Irish educated in Northern Irish schools. Narratives such as these begin to underscore "the politics of polarity" (Bhabha 1994: 37) and invite students to explore the economic, political, and moral consequences of simply thinking of oneself as either Catholic/Protestant or Irish/ British: What type of difference is "allowed?" What kind of difference is contained and silenced? In whose interests does the containment operate?

Movement into new linkages and alignments

Seeking out and sharing stories in this manner not only interrupts the dualism of Catholic/Protestant, and its associated Irish/British identification, but also destabilizes a sense of a coherent self. I can be Catholic and not an Irish
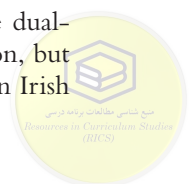
nationalist; I can be Protestant and at the same time ambivalent about British rule in Northern Ireland; I can be Northern Irish and not be Catholic or Protestant. However, the intent is not to posit any of these categories as immutable forms. If, for example, I can be a feminist and a Catholic, then I am neither one nor the other but something else besides; I exist in "a third space" (Bhabha 1994: 36). A third space is where we can begin to rearticulate or translate elements of identity "that are *neither the One* [Catholic, Irish Nationalist] *nor the Other* [Protestant, British] *but something else besides*, which contests the terms and territories of both" (Bhabha 1994: 28).

Elizabeth Bowen (2000) explores the ambivalence that characterizes a third space in her novel *The Last September*. Set in Ireland in the early 1920s, the novel tells of an Anglo-Irish family as they face the end of British rule in southern Ireland. Family members born and raised in Ireland, as were their ancestors for hundreds of years previously, find themselves caught within a dominant discourse of "them" (the Irish – read: poor, servants, rebels) and "us" (the Anglo – read: wealthy, titled, colonists). Yet family members consider themselves Irish and find themselves ambivalent when forced to take one political side over the other. This is a story of a hybrid culture, neither Anglo nor Irish, but somewhere in-between, a precarious place and yet one full with possibility for a different kind of identification. Through novels like Bowen's, students may begin to open up to the idea of self as a border territory, embracing difference and even contradiction within. It is in this ambivalent space that new linkages and alignments for self and place may be born.

Bowen's novel shows that art and literature may be the places wherein we find the ambivalence and ambiguity of identity enacted and performed. Prospective teachers might be invited to enter the unhomely world of literature where they can begin to reappropriate dominant discourses of identity, read them a-new, and reimagine a different sense of self. Davies (2000) suggests Janette Turner Hospital's *Oyster* in this regard. Bhabha (1994) sees possibility in William James' *Portrait of a Lady* or Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

Teacher education that incorporates the study of discourse, history, and literature may do more than "merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent" but may begin to renew the past, "refiguring it as a contingent in-between space, that innovates and interprets the performance of the present" (Bhabha 1994: 7).

Some closing thoughts

If, as the analysis in this chapter suggests, teacher education plays an integrating rather than a radicalizing role in society, then there is much work to be done. We need to begin educating prospective teachers to become conceptual artists, "ready to call what has been taken as given to account in their own lives" (Jardine, LaGrange and Everest 1998: 122). It is time to read the teacher back into the dialogue about education and society. This is easier said than done.

On the night of my reunion with former colleagues, we did not enter into the fray of critical or political discussion. Instead, we entered the territory of technique, and our conversation revolved around how one might best teach reading. Though not unimportant, nor apolitical, our concerns seemed too technical with our "what to do on a Monday morning" questions. Phonics and spelling took the place of the relationship between poverty and education or performance and values. The opportunity for critical, intellectual work was missed and the technique – value distinction was upheld. "Knowing how" took precedence over "knowing why," myself unwilling to upset friends whom I would leave shortly anyhow.

The irony, of course, is that all five of us came from working-class homes and used teaching to increase our social status. Having been successful, we then perpetuate the meritocratic ideal that everyone can make it . . . if they work hard enough, are parented well enough, or are bright enough. Meanwhile, we fail to recognize and critique the discourses that gave birth to our teaching and our ways of thinking about the educational enterprise. Must the old patterns continue?

Note

1 In an effort to maintain the anonymity of the institutions described in this chapter, I have created pseudonyms for both institutions; hence, the title of each college prospectus is also fictionalized.

Chapter 5

Teacher as stranger at home

with Neda Forghani-Arani

Teacher education for intercultural competence is often identified as the most appropriate response to challenges posed by teaching in pluralistic societies. We argue, however, that the lived experience of estrangement presents a significant educational opportunity for teachers' self-knowledge and self-formation.

A critique of intercultural competence

Transnational migration has created spaces of tension and possibility in global cities and in urban classrooms. Both arenas have become indicative of what Mary Louise Pratt (1992) terms contact zones "where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (p. 4). These arenas are "multi-layered and multi-sited," including not just the home and host countries but other sites around the globe that connect migrants, expatriates, and minority populations to those with whom they share same national, ethnic, linguistic, or religious memberships (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007: 131). As one social space, the urban classroom is constantly reworked through simultaneous cultural embeddedness of the minority students in interaction with their nonminority teachers and classmates (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Pries 2005; Smith 2005; Forghani-Arani and Phelan 2012). As such, it is a space of "collision of many layers, relations, perspectives and cosmologies" (Khagram and Levitt 2008: 12).

There is much interest in these spaces of incongruence in the educational literature. A spectrum of conceptual, theoretical, and programmatic "solutions" have emerged in response to these alleged "problematic" zones, often embedded in multicultural or intercultural discourses, and more recently in the context of transnational or transcultural studies.[1] Whereas the term "multicultural education" and its predecessor "multiethnic education" (Banks 1981), connoting a close link to the original objectives of the multiculturalist movements (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997), are more prevalent in the Anglo-American literature and discourse, the term "intercultural education" is preferred and more common in continental Europe (Gogolin 2003; Krüger-Potratz 2005). The debate in both traditions tends to be restricted to formal education settings, generating successive

discourses developed by educators for educators, frequently disconnected from the societal context (Radtke 19936). The proclaimed task is often to analyze the processes and problems related to cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, or national diversity at school to deliver programmatic, prescriptive, or preemptive treatment – frequently in connection with desired teacher qualities and competencies (Dietz 2007). Literature on the intercultural competence of teachers almost always assumes the case of the culturally mainstream teacher at home confronted with the culturally other minority or immigrant students and is therefore based on the premise that teaching efficacy in diverse classrooms depends on the teachers' consciousness of their own enculturation, cultural identities, assumptions, perspectives, and biases, as well as of the cultural identities of others (Billings 1995; Gay 2000; Ladson-Guyton and Wesche 2005). The literature suggests that teachers tend to introduce their own cultural beliefs into the curriculum and ignore the cultural heterogeneity of their students (Reed 1996; Gay 2000; Sleeter 2008). When teachers become conscious of their own cultural identities, it is argued, they become culturally efficacious individuals who can move between two or more cultures and also become advocates for those from cultures other than the dominant one (Guyton and Wesche 2005; Bennett 2007).

There has been growing criticism of the discourse of cultural and intercultural competence evident in the foregoing literature. Training programs for intercultural competence are criticized for being limited to imparting culture-specific knowledge in an attempt to decipher the "foreign" and, therefore, for their "culturizing" and "ethnicizing" tendency (Auernheimer 2002; Mecheril 2004; Binder 2005). It is argued that there is little acknowledgement of the complications of intersectionality – the weave of race/ethnicity, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, and ability within individual lives (Bhopal and Preston 2012) – and translocationality – the defining and redefining of identity across different spatial and cultural locations at different historical moments (Anthias 2008).[2]

While we are in agreement with much of this critique, our disapproval stems from another source. We do not wish to approach teachers' encounters with cultural diversity in terms of a catalogue of required competencies (objectified as measurable outcomes) nor as deficiencies to be addressed so teachers can be made fit for life in heterogeneous classrooms. In clear contrast to a discourse on intercultural competence that tends to reproduce culturalist fallacies and fortify boundaries between "us" and "them," we focus on interaction as a constant oscillation – not between two or more cultures, but between familiarity and strangeness. We attempt to investigate intercultural pedagogical praxis as a field of encounter and interaction among diverse, routinized, and habitualized *Lebenswelten* or lifeworlds (Dietz 2007). By lifeworld we mean the everyday world that is lived by all of us prior to theoretical interpretation or explanation (Giorgi 1975). In taking this approach, we hope to understand inconsistency and contradiction in day-to-day discourse practices, not only as incongruities, but also as a range of possibilities, as a display of formative and transformative processes of being and becoming (a teacher) under transitional circumstances (Gogolin 1994). Specifically, we are

interested in the experiences of a culturally mainstream teacher teaching in a non-mainstream school. The teacher's temporary repositioning as a culturally other minority within the school accentuates what may be at stake in becoming a "culturally competent" educator. Inspired by Honygu Wang (2004) we ask: What may estrangement bring to one's life . . . as an educator?

Educability and estrangement

It is not surprising that Alfred Schütz, a Jewish refugee of the Nazi *Anschluss* in Austria, first in Paris and then in New York, found himself intrigued by the experience of estrangement, which he characterized as "a field of adventure . . . a problematic situation itself and one hard to master" (1944: 506). The "stranger," for Schütz, is "an adult individual of our times . . . who tries to be permanently accepted or at least tolerated by the group which he [sic] approaches" (p. 499). The encounter with something previously unknown which "stands out of the ordinary order of our knowledge" leads to a continuous process of inquiry into the cultural pattern of the approached group. The stranger throws everything that seems unquestionable to the approached group into question. This, according to Schütz (1944), is because the stranger is the "newcomer" and has no history with the group (p. 502). At best, the stranger "may be willing and able to share the present and the future with the approached group in vivid and immediate experience," but under all circumstances, Schütz writes, the stranger "remains excluded from such experience of its past" (p. 502). While this history is accessible to the stranger, it can never become an integral part of his biography, as did the history of his home group. Seen from the vantage point of the approached group, the stranger is "without a history" (p. 502).

According to Schütz (1944), there is always for the stranger "a vivid feeling for the incoherence and inconsistency" of the approached group's cultural pattern (p. 506). This, he argued, had less to do with the stranger's tendency to judge from the vantage point of home than the realization that one can lose one's status, one's rules of guidance, and even one's history and that "the normal way of life is always far less guaranteed than it seems" (p. 507). The feelings of loss, intimidation, and uncertainty that result give impetus to the desire for "sufficient . . . clarity" (p. 501) that allows the stranger to understand and to be understood while remaining within her "thinking as usual" (p. 502). The stranger seeks out places where the rules, rituals, and narrative of the "homeworld" can be repeated (appropriation) and continues to encounter the "alienworld" from within the limits of his/her own system of relevancies (transgression) (Steinbock 1995: 180). Normalization is a liminal zone in which cultural patterns of both homeworld and alienworld are constructed rather than natural, in flux rather than permanent; identities are formed and reformed. Familiarity and strangeness are co-generative, co-constitutive, and co-determining (Steinbock 1995). As such, there is no original sphere since both are in a continual historical becoming, delimited from one another.

In leaving home, therefore, the stranger is faced with the possibility of trans-figuring the familiar and bringing forth something new even though one may not seek out the challenge of the unfamiliar intentionally (Wang 2004). As such, estrangement is that which enables education – that task of continuously invent-ing ourselves anew (Greene 1973). Education, in this sense, is not as a closed process proceeding at a predetermined pace toward an anticipated outcome (Wang 2004) but a relationship to oneself "of differentiation, creation and inno-vation" (Foucault 1997: 166). If Greene and Wang are correct, then education not only acknowledges the experience of estrangement but is constituted by it. It is through encounters with that which is "outside subjectivity" – humanity, culture, the world – through reading, relationships, and events that education is rendered possible (Pinar 2009: 26). The rigidities of one's thought can break down, necessitating the transformation and reinvention of the subject (Saito 2003). Potentially, the "pain of invention" may result in a mutually influential subjective and social reconstruction (Wang 2004: 135).

Thinking about education in terms of the subject's encounters with that which is outside itself has strong links[3] to the Germanic (humanist) tradition and the work of Johann Friedrich Herbart. Herbart (1835) opens his *Outlines of Educa-tional Doctrine* (*Umriss pädagogischer Vorlesungen*) with the idea of *Bildsamkeit*, which can be translated as educability of the individual, as the founding principle of education (*Grundbegriff der Pädagogik*). The underlying assumption of educability is that human beings have the capacity to learn and that learning comes about in the individual's interaction with the world outside and around him, an idea that can be clearly traced back to Humboldt's concept of *Bildung*. In his *Theory of Bildung* (1793), von Humboldt explicates the idea of education as *Bildung* as an interplay of *ich und Welt*, of me and the world; innate human potentials need inter-action with the world outside (or other than) the individual himself in order to unfold, develop, mature, and flourish. "In encounters with the world, the human being meets difference and learns through the active *and* receptive interplay with that world" (English 2013: 13, original emphasis). Interactions with the other or with otherness deliver the ground for learning about the world and about one-self. This experience constitutes transformative learning in that it is mediated by "self-alienation," that is, alienation from our taken-for-granted knowledge and understandings (English 2013: 13). This alienation arises out of the recognition of the incongruity or insufficiency of such understandings. *Bildung* opens out as we integrate new understandings into our previous stock of knowledge and are formed by this expansion, which is not necessarily an additive or accumulative expansion but rather formative growth. Etymologically, the verb *bilden* means to form, and *Bildung* is often translated as formation; education as *Bildung* is (trans) formative. The courage to leave home (to break with one self and one's familiar habits of being) and openmindedness to other (unfamiliar perspectives) were val-ued by Herbart in the struggle to do what was right (English 2011).

The link between estrangement and educability reframes intercultural com-petence as a professional habitus that paradoxically presupposes no particular

professional monopoly as possession of a priori knowledge but rather as *educability*: "competence as a lack of competence" (Mecheril 2004: 25). The turn toward oneself, questioning one's habitual ways of being, involves an imaginative sensitivity to the plurality of choices one could make in a situation and the capacity to think critically (reflectively about the situation at hand and not normatively) about the choices one should make (English 2011). In this view, it is the teacher's unending challenge: to be a stranger at home.

Encounters "outside subjectivity" – culture and history

Austrian and Roman Catholic, Georg[4] was a graduate of the University of Vienna, Austria.[5] As a beginning teacher, Georg took a position as a teacher of German language (and physical education) at a private, Jewish Orthodox school in Vienna. Founded in the mid-1800s, reading, translating, and lecturing the Thora was the foremost instructional aim of the school. Students studied religion, Jewish customs, and traditions and, in addition to the languages used in the Thora – Old Hebrew and Aramaic – they also learned Yiddish, German, English, and French. Character education was also emphasized.

Encountering culture "like a mouse"

"Right from the beginning," Georg felt himself as "a stranger" to the school community. Feeling "different than the others," he experienced the school as "a unity, a community," drawn together by language, dress, and religion, none of which he shared. Georg's inability to speak or understand Yiddish, the everyday language of students and teachers, was "a separating element": "I felt it, the children felt it, the other teachers felt it." Georg's day-to-day experience of cultural practices further underscored his feeling of difference. Observation of the Jewish holidays disrupted his assumptions about the rhythm of the school year and celebration of Christian festivals. Gendered greeting practices and a curriculum that reflected religious mores reinforced Georg's view that there was an unquestioned scheme of reference in the school – "a Jewish teacher went through the books with me and crossed out all that must be excluded. These were often themes that had to do with Christian or Catholic values. He said: leave them out."

As a result of these experiences, Jewish Orthodox culture appeared heavily rule-bound to Georg, and he became increasingly anxious not "to press in" on a community in which he isn't a "member."

> I felt very, very tiny, yeah I tried to be inconspicuous, never tried to rumble. . . . [V]ery inconspicuous, I was afraid of making mistakes. Only out of this fear. Maybe I shouldn't call it fear but just being very cautious. Also with the female teachers and students. . . . I avoided contact with the girls

as much as possible, not even look[ing] around much. I went straight to the staff room, then straight to my class, did my work and back to the staff room. [V]ery cautious . . . I was like a mouse, running quickly to the class, out of the class, quickly to the staff room.

Georg's fear of making mistakes and of "getting into trouble" rendered him mouse-like, scurrying hither and thither, always remaining out of sight. To ensure an inconspicuous presence, he began to wear "very unobtrusive clothing, dark colors, no flashy colors," like the Jewish teachers did; while "nobody gave [him] instruction on the dress code," he "adapted to the rules," as he interpreted them.

Increasingly conscious that his own cultural patterns had little applicability in the school culture, Georg looked elsewhere to find his bearings and some relief, perhaps, from his feelings of estrangement. The non-Jewish school personnel – Georg and the "Turkish janitors" (all of whom were female) – seemed to engage in an act of "self-cocooning" or "self-enclosure" (Hansen 2011: 49):

We felt at ease with one another, they greeted me. . . . I knew the rules don't apply to them. I was a stranger, they were strangers – although different kind of strangers – both strangers in this world. . . . I felt kind of secure because they were different too.

The differences (e.g. social class, residence status, ethnic origin, and gender) among this group of strangers were rendered minor in the face of the dominant culture of the school. Their togetherness at lunch time or brief encounters in the school's hallways provided a sense of stability, sensibility, and security to Georg in what appeared to him an unfathomable world. Georg may have looked to the non-Jewish personnel to help him reorient to mainstream culture and its associated privilege for a male, Catholic, middle-class Austrian.[6]

Encountering history "gave a feeling of reverence"

While Georg continued to live cautiously within the school and to find solace in the company of other strangers, he felt most relief on "stepping back into [his] own world" each evening. However, his daily passage between home and school gave him pause.

The school door was a threshold to another world. It was always this moment of stepping into the school. For one thing there is always a policeman standing, guarding in front of the school. The school building has its own history. When you enter the building there is this tablet hanging on the wall which tells of the time of the Nazis in Vienna, and that is omnipresent. Every time I entered the school I felt the past, the difficult past of this school and this community. That was always very present for me and

gave a feeling of reverence. I thought to myself: "we are somehow guilty of what has happened."

History and its echoes (security guard; the commemorative plaque) brought another dimension to Georg's experience of estrangement, conjuring and confronting him with the "difficult past" of this particular school and its community. In 1938, the school was closed down by the National Socialist regime and turned into a hospital for the duration of the war. After WWII, the building was used as a residence for war refugees. In 1952, the school was reopened as one of the first Jewish schools opened in Austria after the holocaust. He was awed by his experience of the past – "a bygone world" as he called it – and the trace of its associated horrors in the present, his own community's complicity in the suffering that ensued, and of the unalterable nature of past events. Turning toward the other in recognition and respect for their suffering, he judged himself and other Austrians "somehow" responsible, culpable – he felt guilty.[7] "[R]everence," to use Georg's term, involves comprehension of human limitation, imperfection, and humility that arise from feelings of awe before something we are powerless to fully understand or alter be that justice, truth, or the preciousness and frailty of human life (Garrison and Rud 2009); it may have constituted a moment of rupture for Georg.

Unlike Schütz's (1944) stranger without history, Georg's history intersected with that of the school, and that intersection stirred something within him. The cultural patterns of the school community began to represent more than material practices that differed from his own; they also bore witness, as did the school building itself, to a violent past and the culpability of Georg's own cultural group. History, however, was no longer an abstraction learned from history books but encountered in vivid experiences and social situations.

> Sometimes we went out to the park and that was a very funny feeling for me: to go out of this world, out of this separated world, together with my students, who were actually a part of this separated world, and to go with them into the city park. That was strange. The students, who were usually the ones at home, were now all of a sudden in a foreign world, because the people in the park were like me and not like them. And . . . that was really a funny thing, because I wasn't a Jewish teacher with the Jewish kids. People who passed by looked strangely at us and couldn't figure out what was happening there.

"[O]ne can picture the whole world in a sparkling human action – a spatial image – and the whole of time in a meaningful moment," writes Hansen (2011: 50). Georg's experience in the park may have been one such moment replete with the entanglement of history with his present purposes as a teacher. He had the opportunity to view himself and the children through other eyes. As he witnessed the "strange[ness]" of the "noticeably Jewish children" register on

the faces of onlookers, his own initial perception of them as from a "separate world" came into view. In addition, he beheld himself as object of the gaze, his strangeness in the eyes of passers-by. Outside in the park, in his homeworld, not only his students but he, too, had become strange. This experiencing of himself and his students in temporarily "shared" otherness was no benign moment of spectacle, however. The initial "funny feeling" and his mild sense of amusement in the moment quickly transforms into a "feeling that I had to be careful." Displaying an acute attentiveness to the situation at hand, Georg as teacher became concerned for the safety of the children in his care.

> They saw that I talk to the kids, that they listen to me and follow my instructions, and that they somehow belong to me. I had the feeling that I had to be careful. The children were noticeably Jewish and I didn't want them to be offended maybe by people who wouldn't tolerate them. I was kind of on guard against people around us. I had the feeling I must protect my students from potential offense or insult. I was simply on guard and extremely careful, although nothing ever happened.

Assessing the situation at hand, Georg decided what was in the best interests of his students. Pedagogical tact, a way of acting which is first of all dependent on *Gefühl* (feeling or sensitivity), was in this instance informed by history. History seemed to interrupt Georg's taken-for-granted mode of thinking and acting in a way that began to crack open his fixed perception of Orthodox Jewish culture as an "alienworld"; moreover, he began to be self-conscious about his own cultural ways of being and seeing. Seeing his students and their school through the eyes of history provided an alternative view, one that involved a moral link between himself and the school community. Georg's formerly insulated knowledge, formed out of relation to members of the school cultural group, had become disturbed by present – his increasingly "close relationship with the kids" – and past encounters – their shared history (Schütz 1944).

Returning home: the formation of new insights

Georg withdrew from the Jewish school at the end of the academic year to take up a teaching post in "a more normal school," as he termed it. While he felt that he had succeeded in connecting with his students, he continued to feel "a line" which he could "never surpass, that would bring [him] closer to these people." Even his playful banter with the children served to remind him of their separateness, urging him to be "very careful in responding."

> [T]hey asked me why I don't wear a beard. They asked me if I don't have enough facial hair. For them a man must wear a bushy beard. They were insisting that I should grow a beard. I had to tell them my wife doesn't like a beard (he laughs).

Home and alien worlds were in constant construction and reinforcement as well as being constantly undermined. This very dynamic thwarted Georg's longing for proximity; that which was outside his reach took graduated shades of distance, otherness, strangeness, or the absolute inaccessibility of alienness. Estrangement proved too great a burden.

Georg's decision to leave the Jewish school revealed both the promise and limitation of his previous experience. He realized that the experience of "the role of the foreigner, the outsider" had been "so valuable" to him and had "shaped [him] very, very strongly." "[N]ow," he explained, "I catch myself when I take sides in our school . . . when I fight for the outsiders." In his view, he had become sensitive to students with a "migration background."

> We often have children with dramatic life stories. For example last year we had two girls, refugees from Chechnya, and I saw they were total outsiders. They arrived in the middle of the school year, they fled with their family, they didn't speak German and only a few words of English and they were confronted with such hostility from the students and the teachers. They felt so isolated and they were seeking support: "We have nobody, and there is no one who would bring us into this world." . . . I fought against windmills. I talked to the other teachers. We didn't even have a Chechnyan dictionary at our school. I bought an expensive Russian dictionary. We translated from German to Russian to Chechnyan. And I managed to build a bridge to these girls and we were looking for words in the dictionary . . . that was a hard fight against windmills. . . . Now I have the perspective, I am the one who sees that others are outside.

No longer the "mouse," he could now assume some authority in relation to his students and his unsympathetic colleagues for whom building "connection to these kids . . . is not important." In a culturally mainstream school, infused with a minority of non-German speaking migrants, he was able to build "wonderful relations with" and "fight for the outsiders." This positioning, he explained, had become "a part of [his] self-conception." No longer the mouse, it had become important to him, however, "not to be too much the giant."

Estrangement and the intercultural education of a teacher

What may estrangement bring to one's life as an educator? It is an experience in which one's relation with self and with the other is intensified and lived complexly through body, relation, space, and time.

Educators are cultural beings; they grow up and take on the habitualized practices of their respective communities. While the associated identities and histories become deeply ingrained, each one has a potential and generic capacity to become self-aware and engage in gradual and graduated processes of reflexivity

and translatability between different habitualized practices, identities, and histories (Gogolin 2003; Dietz 2007). As we have seen, however, becoming conscious of one's habitual ways of being is neither straightforward nor guaranteed. Habits shape desires, rule thoughts, and contour capacities; they govern teachers' perceptions of what is significant and worth noticing (Rice 1996). Habit, in this view, signifies an established or impaired capacity to attend to and think about certain things, and it is about "desire, intent, choice, disposition" (p. 13).

The ease with which one can carry on each day unconsciously without thinking, taking one's history for granted, and presenting a recognizable face (identity) to those who share one's habitus is the gift of the homeworld. Habitual ways of being can be interrupted in the event of new encounters. While habitualized practices reduce confusion, the feeling that one's body is "out of place" (Ahmed 2004: 2) induces self-consciousness and a heightened sense of anxiety. Georg's efforts to be mouse-like, his pursuit of invisibility, and his creation of a social world of pseudoanonymity through choice of clothing and avoidance of encounters are illustrative in this regard.

While self-consciousness and self-doubt can be productive, too much doubt can obscure and mystify. The stranger's anxiety to acquire culture-specific knowledge (e.g. gendered patterns of greeting) in an attempt to decipher the "foreign" can place culture "on a pedestal" (Nieto 20098), solid and immutable. The religious status of the school may have reinforced Georg's essentialized understandings of culture. Endowed with power, obtained by descent and transmission, many religious schools are dedicated to continuity (Phelan 2012). Culture, in this sense, becomes heroic and, in turn, endows a particular significance to teaching. School and curriculum practices are imbued with tradition and give the semblance of permanence and durability – the way we've always done it – or reprimand – the way things should be done (Phelan 2012). The majority teacher for whom this tradition is home is authorized in terms of a responsibility to continue the tradition. Such institutionally endowed authority is not available to the minority teacher, like Georg, who does not share the culture of the school itself. What then authorizes the minority teacher? Can one guide in a context where one feels lost and estranged? Georg's attempt to create a social world of "pseudo-typicality" and "pseudo-intimacy" with the school janitors may have reflected an anxiety about his taken-for-granted authority and social positioning (Schütz 1945).

Feelings of anxiety induced by the experience of estrangement need not leave one melancholic, so attached to the homeworld that one is unwilling to mourn aspects of it and form new attachments. Educability (*Bildsamkeit*) conveys the idea of the human being as a changeable being, one who can transform while still maintaining something of herself in a new situation (English 2013). Herbart defined two limits to the individual's capacity for change: "the circumstances of the situation and the 'individuality' (*Individualität*) or uniqueness of the human being expressed in one's capacity to make choices based on one's own unique history" (English 2013: 14). The historical circumstances in which Georg found

himself proved crucial in helping him link the particulars of his students to the general insights about Austrian society and its collective memory of National Socialism. His newly heightened historical consciousness intensified his relation with himself and with his students, inducing a strong sense of past complicity and present obligation. He had come face-to-face with the entanglement of diverse lives lived, and conflicting perspectives held, across time and space in a single city like Vienna. His increasingly "vivid and organic relation to the past" (Hansen 2011: 114) expanded Georg's orientation as a teacher. Georg was "becoming historical," both in the sense of cultivating an understanding that cultures are located in particular historical moments that form in particular places, but as well in the sense of acknowledging teachers and students as historical subjects, "embodying those issues and injuries inherited from the past," giving impetus to that which is at stake in the present (Pinar 2011: xiv).

The temporal dimension of Georg's experience was closely related to the spatial. While back and forth movement between home and school marked the repetitive oscillation between familiarity and strangeness, heightening his sensitivity to history and difference, the public park became the site where, as it were, time stood still. It was there, that he began to attune himself to what was at stake in the present. Exposed to the surveillance of onlookers, Georg begins to understand his students in a different way; for the first time, he seemed to experience the world as they did, as the object of the dominant group's gaze. Seeing with their eyes, hearing with their ears, the aims, interests, and desires of the other had become his also (Saito 2003). Georg was learning a way of being attentive to a different other, not simply seeing the other from his own perspective or seeing the other as an object of knowledge or as a means to his ends. Here, perhaps we witness the way in which the demands of pedagogy – fostering children's growth, ensuring children's safety and well-being – give rise to certain habits such as attentive care, compassion, and intellectual wisdom – that form the character of the teacher (Ruddick 1989). While not all teachers embody these habits (as virtues), they can arise from the actual work of educating children.

One could argue otherwise, of course, that pedagogical care is a form of othering that allowed Georg to persist in his essentializing of school culture and the attribution of feelings to those others that are his students (Ahmed 2004). Witness Georg's anxiety about marginalized immigrant children in his new school: when colleagues try to dissuade him from talking to particular students – "You can't talk to him, he is a Turk, he doesn't listen to me" – he chooses to befriend that student. Georg's self-report suggests a capacity to make judgments about what is good in light of his recognition of the other; the other is not a means to an end but an end in itself. However, the image of the immigrant minority other persists: a victim to be redeemed by the heroic, culturally mainstream teacher.

The temporal-spatial dimension of Georg's experience of estrangement invites a consideration of translocation not only in terms of relocation but also of the multiplicity of locations involved in time and space and in terms of connections

between the past, the present, and the future. The dynamic interplay of inner time, external time, and pedagogical time is key to initiating and sustaining transformation (Wang 2010). Transformation may occur like "a gestalt switch," "an organic spontaneous moment of transformation" triggered by experience and leading to the formation of new insights (Doll 1993 in Wang 2010: 281). Or, transformation may take the form of accumulative change (Doll 1993) over a long period of time as each individual engages an uneven and always incomplete "process of unlearning, learning and education" (Wang 2010: 281).

Nonetheless, the power of belonging, as in the construction of "we-ness" cannot be underestimated in its capacity to maintain the status quo individually or socially. Belonging, as Floya Anthias (2008) reminds us, is not just about membership or forms of identification but also about the social places built by such identifications and memberships. Social places have significance for the stability of the self because they provide the feeling of being part of a larger whole.

Conclusion

Estrangement is a terrain fertile with the play of chance, anonymity, and intimacy. It is an experience without guarantees. It is burdensome. It invites a focus on one's self-formation and questions about our being in the world that cannot be reduced to cultural competence. It beckons the teacher to feel, think, and judge in educational situations, and it entails learning to understand and make meaning of interruptions, ruptures, and discontinuities that arise in the encounter with the unfamiliar and the unknown (English 2013). On this understanding, estrangement can only lead to learning, in some cases to transformative learning. Estrangement, be it inter- or intracultural – or not even cultural – is not something to avert, to prevent, to counteract, or to curb. Rather, estrangement is to be valued; it reminds us that we cannot know everything, or anything, for certain; it keeps us in a humble posture of learning, which in turn opens the way for experimentation, trial and error, inspiration, and innovation. The experience of estrangement is inevitably interwoven with who teachers are (becoming) as persons (Noel 1999).

Notes

1 Adick (2010) reviews the terminological boom of the inter-, multi-, and transcultural studies in the field of education, primarily in the German language educational discourse, in reference to students with migration background in the school system of host countries. In the academic discourse, she finds the term "intercultural" usually used in a programmatic sense, the "multicultural" as more descriptive (Gogolin and Krüger-Potratz 2006: 110). In educational policy and public debates, both terms are often used interchangeably. The multicultural describes and analyses a state of affairs, for example the multicultural society or the multicultural setup of a classroom. The intercultural is a normative stance in response to multiculturality. It has to do with the requisites of adequate pedagogical handling of multicultural setups. Transcultural approaches in education are often based on a conceptualization of culture as empirically and normatively "transcultural"; mutually

delimiting, ethnically founded, and socially homogenous cultures are in reality internally plural and externally transboundary (Adick 2010: 107).

2 A group may be defined, at different times, in terms of culture, place of origin, or religion. For example, Jews may be seen as a cultural group, as a diaspora with a reclaimed homeland (Israel), or as a religious community.

3 Pinar (2009) argues, however, that there are significant differences between the idea of *Bildung* as represented in North American curriculum theorizing (represented in this chapter by Pinar (2009), Greene (1973), and Wang (2004)) and that of the Germanic tradition of *Bildung*. Most noticeable is the politically forceful character of curriculum conceived as *currere* as distinct from the politically conservative conceptions of *Bildung*, historically, in the German tradition.

4 Georg is a pseudonym. This narrative is part of a larger study, conducted at the University of Vienna, on teachers' lived experience of foreignness. Data was collected from teachers by obtaining descriptions of lived experience in the form of anecdotal narratives in conversational interviews. Anecdotes are understood here as narrative accounts of incidents, situations, occurrences, and episodes experienced by the interviewed teachers as they relate to the guiding question of the research, namely their pedagogical interactions with diverse student populations. Having identified and isolated a number of thematic aspects of the phenomenon on the basis of the transcribed lived-experience descriptions related in the initial interview, data interpretation was continued in a second round of interviews with the interview partners engaging and including their interpretation of data in an attempt to examine and expand interpreted meanings. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

5 Approximately 1.6 million people with a migration background live in Austria (some 19% of the total population). The majority (around 1.15 million) was born abroad (also termed "first generation"), and some 450,000 people were born in Austria as children of parents with a place of birth abroad ("second generation") (Eurypedia 2013). To identify pupils with a migration background, however, Austrian School Statistics do not use the country of birth but language use. In this connection, pupils of non-German mother tongue are those who predominantly use a language other than German in their everyday lives. Almost 28% of students at primary schools and prevocational schools speak a first language other than German. There are large regional disparities, for example more than 43% of pupils in Vienna – in some Viennese districts up to 90% – have a first language other than German; this is only 9.2% in the province of Carinthia (BMUKK 2011).

6 In the Austrian context, this is an intriguing case of self-cocooning of a male, Catholic (majority denomination), middle-class Austrian with female, Muslim, migrant worker, Turkish janitors. The Turkish immigrant community in Austria is the prototype of a nonintegrating group along the axes of ethnicity, nationality, language, and religion. On the alien ground of the Orthodox Jewish school, the strangers' gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, and class moved to the background as the experience of foreignness and estrangement forged into the foreground. In a mainstream Austrian school, on the common ground of his homeworld, their difference would be the overriding relational parameter and not their commonality; there the mainstream Austrian male teacher would fleetingly greet the female Turkish janitor.

7 The societal process of negotiating Austria's "master narrative" about National Socialism is replete with tension and contradiction. How and in what relation the two contradictory founding myths of victimization and co-responsibility are addressed and positioned in public discourse is part of an ongoing process of negotiation. An analysis of recent Austrian history textbooks, for example, provides insight into strategies by which notions of Austria as both "victim" and "perpetrator" of the National Socialist regime are held in balance (Markova 2011).

At the edge of language

Truth, falsity, and responsibility in teacher education

with Constance Barlow, Deborah Hurlock, Gayla Rogers, Russell Sawa, and Florence Myrick

Wrought with the ambiguity of communicative encounters and the unknowability of the Other, conflict is a dynamic and unstable site of teacher becoming. In the face of conflict , efforts to reassert communicative convention, eliminate difference, and stabilize meaning predominate. As such, an examination of conflict in teacher education provides insight into the teaching profession in the process of composing itself, its truths, and the lies it is willing to tolerate.

An encounter with conflict

Imagine yourself in a school gymnasium . . .

> I got into some problems with the administration. I tried to split up one group because they were unevenly matched. The previous day they were just killed so I tried to split them up and I didn't explain my rationale beforehand or while I was doing it . . . So I tried to move them over and somehow the students collaborated that they wanted to stay on the same team . . . I found out this after . . . the fact that they actually switched . . . and went back to their own teams . . . like they were before. . . . So I expressed my frustrations, you know, silently say[ing] I just don't like it. [Laughing] So they saw me do this and I chewed out a student beforehand. . . . And so she obviously got really upset about it and the students who actually collaborated to form their own group again . . . talked her into . . . going to the administration and filing an incident report that I had driven a student to tears and swore at them. . . . So I'm in the lunchroom interacting with the staff . . . and the principal comes up and says, "What happened in class today?" I didn't mention what I expressed in frustration and I said nothing like this happened . . . because I knew what it was going to look like.
>
> (Reza, student teacher)

We have been unsettled by Reza's narrative for some time now. In part we were stunned that a prospective teacher would act so aggressively toward a student and then lie in his own self-interest. In part we were disturbed because we had grown up believing that lying or "bearing false witness" or intentionally deceiving another was just not morally responsible. However, we also felt some
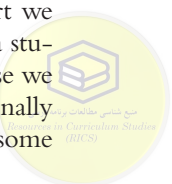
uneasiness with our unease. The incident raised a series of questions concerning the relationship between subjectivity, language, and responsibility in the case of this student teacher: Why would Reza lie? What would it mean to tell the truth on this occasion? How is Reza's subjectivity constituted in this moment of so-called deception?

The case study reported here is part of a larger, multidisciplinary study of conflict in the professional education of teachers, physicians, nurses, and social workers (Phelan *et al.* 2002). How is conflict experienced, understood, negotiated, and contested? What do these understandings tell us about what counts in professional education and the profession itself? These are the questions that preoccupy this team of researchers, representing the four helping professions of education, medicine, nursing, and social work. These are some of the questions that are poorly understood, as evidenced by the absence of a substantial literature on the topic.

The first difficulty posed by the absence of inquiry into conflict in professional education is that we lack knowledge and experience in educating for difference, whether that difference is cultural, philosophical, personal, or other. The curriculum in professional schools tends to focus on widely accepted bodies of knowledge and skills that comply with provincial or professional regulations and are presumed to be transferable from one individual to another. The focus is on avoiding conflict, harmonizing differences, and ensuring sameness of outcome (Carson and Johnston 2000). The second difficulty emerges when we try to address issues of conflict or difference in coursework. The absence of secure knowledge about how conflict manifests itself and is understood awakens ambivalence among students in a context that is already fraught with the uncertainties of forming professional identities (Carson and Johnston 2000). So, conflict often becomes one other thing that prospective professionals must endure as part of professional preparation's rite of passage.

We hope to address both these difficulties by theorizing about how prospective and practicing professionals "work difference" in field education (Ellsworth and Miller 1997: 245). By working difference, we do not mean "working through difference." Rather, "working difference" suggests a constant kneading of categories and separations. We do not view conflict as necessarily problematic in professional education; rather, it is a crucial site for the production and legitimization of particular kinds of professional identities; particular "truths" about what constitutes knowledge; and "best" practice in schools, hospitals, and community and social agencies.

On language and lying: a poststructuralist framework

Our unease with Reza's experience and our interpretation of it might be traced to our poststructuralist understanding of truth and its relationship to language. Raised within a Platonist tradition to believe that "truth is found, eternal, and
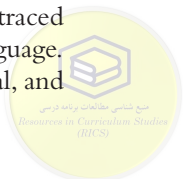
universal" (Diprose 2001: 153), writers like Foucault and Nietzsche have led us to think otherwise. Their model of language rejects a metaphysics of presence, that is, that there is "a world 'out there' that is simply 'present' and to which all our understandings (meanings) are in relation" (Osberg and Biesta 2003: 87). Language mediates experience, subjectivity, and truth.

Discourse is "a particular way of talking (and writing and thinking)" that involves certain shared assumptions (Belsey 1980: 5). Discourses organize meanings and practices and allow certain ways of thinking and acting to be considered correct or acceptable, while others are viewed as incorrect or unimaginable (Britzman 2000). Discourse, as a domain of language use, ensures that knowing must always fall short of a correspondence ideal of descriptive adequacy (Breazeale 1979).

Innocent lies: producing truth

If language is not a transparent, objective medium for the communication of eternal truths or a reflection of things in themselves, then we must ask, what is truth? Foucault answers,

> Truth is of the world; it is produced there by virtue of multiple constraints. . . . Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is the types of discourses it harbours and causes to function as true: the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorized for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.
>
> (Foucault 1979: 46)

Truth, then, is something society or groups within a society (e.g. a profession) have to work to produce, rather than something which appears in a transcendental way. Different discourses represent different interests that are constantly vying for "truth" status or power. "The site of this battle for power is the subjectivity/identity of the individual" (Weedon 1997: 40). For example, cognitive theories of learning have achieved such status in education and have succeeded, despite the earlier dominance of behaviorism, in disciplining teachers to see, act, and think in particular ways in relation to their students (Popkewitz and Brennan 1998). The difficulty is that educators forget that our construction of learning as a cognitive act is simply that: a construction and not a truth.

> Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.
>
> (Nietzsche 1979: 84)

Forgetting our own constructions and endowing them with the status of "truth" is for Nietzsche a form of lying or falsity. This is unconscious, innocent lying according to conventions that one has inherited and involves lying in several ways:

> Linguistic convention informs experience by universalizing different perceptions under a single concept; giving the expressed perception the status of truth involves forgetting that truth is constructed; and imposing one's own cultural perspective on others involves denying the possibility of other perspectives.
>
> (Diprose 2001: 153)

We no longer see the coins, to use Nietzsche's example, but only the metal. If preservation of social/professional life is the consequence of truth, then one would have a social/professional duty to lie unconsciously in this way (Diprose 2001).

Uncommon lies: misusing conventions

The second kind of lying, for Nietzsche, is also innocent and involves "misus[ing] fixed conventions by means of arbitrary substitutions or reversals of names" (Nietzsche 1979: 81). This type of lying is simply a matter of "seeing things differently to the majority because one's experience is informed by different conventions" (Diprose 2001: 153). Such lies, however, threaten the stability of the status quo and are typically silenced. A subject who decides to act outside established discourses, for example, must establish the right for him/herself to speak or act otherwise. The difficulty associated with doing so is substantial as we risk ourselves and our actions being named "insane/not rational," "taboo/immoral," or "false/dishonest" within sanctioned discourses. One's legitimacy is always in question when one defers from the norm.

During Apartheid in South Africa, for example, taking responsibility for one's self involved "moral risk" for some (Babbit 2001: 1). "When one's prospects for self-realization are undermined by existing social expectations, one has to pursue and impose alternative conceptions of meaningfulness" (p. 1).

The situation of moral risk is one characterized by "explanatory burden":

> When we explain an action or event, we give reasons for it; we identify the cause. In situations of moral risk, in which adequate meaningfulness is being pursued, the identification of appropriate causal relations requires more work, more storytelling, and telling oneself the right sorts of stories requires direction.
>
> (Babbit 2001: 5)

Stories are important means of struggling to identify what is salient in one's understanding of what is good or true and what constitutes one's obligation or duty in a given situation (Clark and Swensen 1998: xxvi).
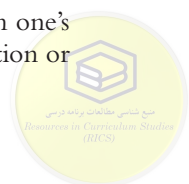
Willful lies: preserving truth

A third kind of lying is "willful lying in order to preserve truth" (Diprose 2001: 154). Willful lying sanctioned by law was necessary to support policies of forcible removal of indigenous children in Australia and elsewhere: "We are going to see your mother," rather than "We are going to fly you out of here;" "Your parents are dead," rather than "I'm not going to tell you where they are" (p. 154). Such willful lying was designed to sever indigenous children from what were considered to be foreign and harmful ways of life and transfer them to what was perceived to be the common good. Of course, because good is not common and truth not universal, willful lying is harmful to its targets in that it denies their truths and their cultures within its regime of truth. It is in this sense that truth can become "more life-denying the more it forgets it is convention and hence the more inflexible it becomes" (p. 155).

How, we wonder, are truth and lying implicated in teacher education? Our question is a limit question, always both urgent and unanswerable in any context-free way (Lather 1996). As such, our intent is to intertwine two readings of Reza's case in a helical fashion. The first reading provides a realist tale that stems from our interviews with the triad of participants during the field experience. This conventional reading resonates with the "official" story of Reza as a student teacher, living as it does within the accepted institutional structures, practices, and relationships of the practicum. Our second (mis)reading is informed by Nietzsche and is an attempt to deconstruct the discourses that structure and provide meaning to the realist tale. It is perhaps the other side of truth, the lying involved, that is of interest to us in this second reading. We ask: Does lying characterize professionalization, that is, the education and entry into the profession, of prospective teachers? Does lying attest to the alterity that professionalization offends? Does professionalization support the destruction of difference within the profession of teaching?

To view professional identity as unfinished does not imply the deconstruction of the profession; rather, "it establishes as political the very terms through which [professional] identity is articulated" (Butler 1999: 148). By studying the narratives of student teachers, mentor teachers, and faculty advisors, we begin to catch a glimpse at a profession in the process of being made, caught, as it were, uncertainly in the act of composing its image and its truths (Bhabha 1990).

Research design

In this three-year, multidisciplinary study (2002–2005) of conflict in professional education, we made use of the notion of "collective case studies" (Berg 2001: 229). The collective case study included three triad relationships (student, field instructor, and faculty member) in each of four professional faculties – education, medicine, nursing, and social work. Each profession provided one instrumental case (Stake 1994) that, when combined with the other three,
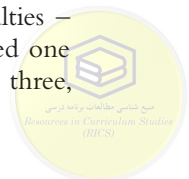
served a supportive role in studying conflict in professional education in all four fields. We focused the study in the context of four professional programs at a large research university in Canada and on the major field experience – practicum – in the final year of each program. In Chapter 3, the reader will find a more complete discussion of data generation, interpretation, and representation, as well as related ethical concerns. The case study upon which we drew in this chapter included a series of three separate conversations with each member of a triad in teacher education: a student teacher, Reza; his partner teacher, Carol; and the faculty advisor, George, during practicum. Reza was the first teacher candidate to volunteer for the study; he did so during the first month of his thirteen-week practicum.

Interpretation of participants' narratives focused on central themes; rhetorical devices such as metaphors, contrasts, hyperboles, and euphemisms; coherence; presuppositions; disclaimers; word choice; and style (van Dijk 1997). For the case study discussed in this chapter, we also attended to the grammar implicit in participants' narratives. Student teaching is a relational category: a student teacher relates to the students, the mentor teacher, and the faculty advisor. These relationships are not rigid but fluid and shifting. They could be described in terms of a network with various nodes and clusters shifting over time and space. For example, while a student teacher may be positioned as powerful in relation to students within the confines of a classroom, s/he may be repositioned in the expansive space of a gymnasium. The idea of a network of relationships within which the practicum is set is close to the linguistic notion of transitivity.

> Transitivity concerns the linguistic manifestations of the roles of participants and the ways in which they relate to each other. It focuses on agency – who does what to whom? In a sense, the linguistic nexus subject-verb-object is the establishment of a worldview, of a view of the ways in which relationships are drawn.
>
> (Footitt 2002: 88)

An examination of grammars – who does what to whom – implicit in the narratives participants told about various events provided some insight into the workings of power in institutions. Reza's utterance, "I tried to move them over . . ." is one example. Implicit in this short phrase is a worldview of teaching with teacher as subject – center of control – and students as an objective, physical body that can be moved from one space to another. Power relations produce forms of subjectivity and behavior rather than repress them (Mills 1997). Transitivity analysis invites a consideration of power, control, and agency (Footitt 2002). At its root is the belief that participants could have spoken otherwise, that "a range of choices is open to a writer/speaker and that any 'text' could conceivably have been produced in a different way" (Footitt 2002: 89).

Choices are not predetermined but are conditioned by the discourses that are available to us at that time.

The discursive meanings have been articulated in stories already told, stories of good and bad student teachers/mentor teachers. The circulation of story and its constituent metaphors and grammars, then, is a key mechanism in the perpetuation of a discourse.

> We may suspect that there is in all societies, with great consistency, a kind of gradation among discourses: those which are said in the ordinary course of days and exchanges, and those which give rise to a certain number of new speech acts which take them up, transform or speak them, in short, those discourses which, over and above their formulation, are said indefinitely, remain said, and are to be said again.
>
> (Foucault 1980, in Mills 1997: 67)

Yet, while the traces of certain discourses may persist, there is always the possibility of potential meanings yet to be unfolded within future narratives (Schrag 1997). In the context of conflict, for example, participants may find themselves having to seek out alternatives as old metaphors break down.

> The horizon of narrativity thus suffers a temporal imprinting, emerging from a past and advancing into a future, recollective of stories that have become part of a tradition and anticipative of accounts, both fictive and factual, yet to be rendered. Narrative comprises the continuing context, the expanding horizon of retentional background and a protentional fore-ground, in which and against which our figures of discourse are called into being, play themselves out, and conspire in the making of sense.
>
> (Schrag 1997: 19–20)

The hope that guides this inquiry is that we identify the sources of thinking and acting that may otherwise exist in the discontinuities and the breakdowns of teacher education. Such are the imaginings.

Lying according to convention: stories of misunderstanding

> I tried to split up one group because they were unevenly matched. . . . So I tried to move them.
>
> (Reza)

Having previously rejected mixed skill groups as "one of her [Carol's] silly rules," Reza decided to change his team-forming practice and incorporate his mentor teacher's idea. Although he recognized that same-skill groups had "just

killed" the students the day before, he also felt "under pressure" to adapt Carol's practice to his own, "just to placate" her:

> [I]t was more a matter of letting go of my beliefs . . . to kind of make things go smoothly and integrating her philosophy into my practice and . . . it didn't feel right to be doing that but I had to do it given the circumstances.
>
> (Reza)

The circumstances to which Reza refers were rather difficult ones from his perspective.

> She [teacher] was pushing me to get into full-time teaching when I felt I wasn't ready. And so, she dragged me kicking and screaming into this period. . . . Like she was in the position of power . . . her letter of recommendation or her evaluation at the end meant everything. . . . I couldn't confront her with it because I knew what kind of roles we were playing there. . . . I just went with the flow. You know, whatever she asked, she got kind of thing.
>
> (Reza)

Carol perceived Reza as not being "well-prepared" and as having insufficient "practical knowledge" with which to engage students in competitive team sports, a central element of the prescribed junior high curriculum. George, the faculty advisor, accepted the terms of Carol's evaluation and agreed that Reza tended "to rely a lot more on personality . . . as opposed to his subject knowledge." However, George wondered if Reza's reluctance to become involved in team sports was cultural: "Now, why is it? Because he hasn't been included . . . or he hasn't really had a genuine desire to be included in those things? I'm not sure if it's a cultural thing that he's moved away or if it's a genuine disinterest."

Initially, Reza accepted the terms of his ascribed incompetence and described himself as "unfamiliar with the subject matter"; he explained that he was "staying ahead of the game by researching" each evening at the school. However, this was not enough. Reza's "whole attitude" continued to be a problem for Carol, and she wondered about his "professional fit." She contrasted his experience to her own. As a student teacher, she had been "worried," "up late," "tak[en] the teacher's suggestions," and "really work[ed] hard to make a good impression." He, on the other hand, arrived at school minutes before the students. He was "arrogant." Moreover, he needed to make a greater effort to fit in with the other teachers in the physical education department; instead he took his newspaper to read during lunch.

Carol and Reza became increasingly frustrated with one another. He perceived himself as working hard to fit in (he had joined the staff sports league) and to master the curriculum. She continued to perceive him as problematic and "different" from her previous student teachers. While Carol continued to

emphasize punctuality, Reza dismissed her concerns as a guise for other issues. He perceived her as an incompetent mentor teacher. He described himself as being prematurely "dragged kicking and screaming" by Carol into full-time, solo teaching because "the teacher had her own idea of what [he] should be doing there" and that she didn't understand the philosophy of the program because she hadn't read the handbook.

> I guess the fault lies with . . . different people's expectations and knowledge of the program. . . . A better articulation of the University's vision of what I should be as a student teacher because obviously she wasn't prepared . . . then maybe he [George] should have told her, you know, "This is what is going to happen with the student teacher and this is what we expect from them and this is what you should expect from them" and so on, and it was just kind of left up in the air. . . . I guess that's the real world. You know, you never really know what the expectations are going to be. I guess the fault lies with . . . different people's expectations and knowledge of the program.
>
> (Reza)

While Reza was troubled by Carol's expectations, Carol continued to be troubled by Reza's lack of responsiveness to her suggestions.

> That's part of the test too . . . what is this person going to do with the information you've given them . . . the experience they've had here? What are you going to do with that information? What are you doing to meet these goals?
>
> (Carol)

Finding the code

Field experience is one example of how we try to bring so-called "real life experiences" of teaching and learning into teacher education. However, the two problems that exist with such a presentational approach are that it results in one-dimensional ways of learning and that it relies upon the assumption that the world contains some original presence that is separate from our knowledge of it and which can, therefore, be simply and immediately presented (Osberg and Biesta 2003).

> [P]resentational forms of learning end up in socialization and adaptation and make it difficult to create critical distance and therefore result in one dimensional ways of learning.
>
> (Osberg and Biesta 2003: 87)

The task of socialization is to find the code or classification of reality ready-made and to accommodate to it (Barthes 1977). The code in this case is the

achievement of understanding/avoidance of misunderstanding, and, as a result, success is akin to attaining sameness and continuity between teacher and student teacher. The task of the student teacher is to understand and to take the class-room teacher's practical advice. Reza learned that his practice must reflect that of his partner teacher. The specification of a collectivity such as "my other stu-dent teachers" allows Carol to identify a norm against which particular student teachers like Reza are isolated and assessed. Learning to teach, then, becomes an exercise of smooth adaptation to that norm.

On one level, Reza has found the code; he is conscious of the "game," as he calls it elsewhere, that is afoot. Recall his statements, "I said nothing like this happened because I knew what it was going to look like" or "I knew what kinds of roles we were playing here." He complies in order to placate. On another level, however, he appears unconscious that he is engaging in a similar "game" with his own students. Reza's conception of the teaching-learning rela-tionship as a mapping of what he knows/desires/plans for and what the students can learn is telling. The task of good students is to follow the instructions of the physical education teacher and to demonstrate their compliance through their actions. "Tough days" are those when students don't get this.

> On tough days it's a feeling that I have of running against a wall. I'm saying something but it's not going over to the students or to whoever I'm trying. To communicate . . . and them not getting the message, either because of my inability to impart the message effectively or just because they're not in the mood to be listening to me that day. And I try different strategies to try to correct that on the spot, but often it ends up being a class that I don't really accomplish much. And that's how I kind of measure my success is how much I accomplish, and bad days are the ones where I feel that all the objectives that I laid out haven't been accomplished and stuff, so that's how I define it.
>
> (Reza)

The frustration and incredulity expressed above are also evident when the students either seem not to understand his request to change teams or simply refuse to comply with his wish.

> I go, like, "You're a really good student . . . why is this not working? Like, I asked you to move over this and why . . . why are you not doing this?"
>
> (Reza)

"For a curriculum or pedagogy to 'work,' some classroom moments – and ideally all of them – have to result in a fit between what's being taught and the student's understanding" (Ellsworth 1997: 45). Ironically, Reza has learned exactly the script of his partner teacher, although she may see it otherwise: "I don't understand . . . I'm trying to help you here. Why has he not taken

my advice?" Carol echoes Reza's incredulity at the noncompliance of his own students.

Eliminating difference

"Getting it" is akin to achieving "a good fit" between what has been planned and achieved outcomes. The notion of getting what the partner teacher intended and demonstrating it in one's lessons is part of a broader script for teaching itself: "Not being prepared is not a good thing because things often go wrong in that class where you're not prepared" (Carol). We spend a great deal of time with student teachers helping them plan such excesses as misunderstanding and noncompliant behavior *out* of their day. By promoting and sustaining a culture of understanding and smooth functioning, teacher education prescribes a particular set of relations of self-to-self and between self and others.

Thus, the space of difference is effectively wiped out of pedagogical relations. Difference is a problem to be avoided, and it represents something that can "go wrong" in a lesson. Difference must be explained away in some fashion by reference to culture ("not interested in team sports"), intellect (uses personality rather than knowledge), or character flaw (arrogance). Difference has to be overcome in some way (threat of evaluation, working harder, knowing more content, changing attitude). There is always an excess that cannot be eliminated or explained away. References to Reza's "culture" punctuate the transcripts as the classroom teacher and faculty advisor struggle to understand why Reza doesn't achieve professional "fitness" despite their best efforts.

The problem of "getting it" is a problem with the project of understanding itself and its binarized opposite – misunderstanding. We do much to avoid this acknowledgement, however, when we insist that student teachers would get it "if only they had the right cultural competencies, intellectual skills, or moral virtues" (Ellsworth 1997: 47). This, of course, allows understanding itself to escape scrutiny. It preserves understanding and its expression in field experience as the proper, desired, and ultimately attainable relationship that defines success for student teachers. This narrow interest in understanding makes it possible to act as if a student teacher's relationship to the teacher education program and those associated with it is *not* "a messy and unpredictable event that constantly exceeds both understanding and misunderstanding" (Ellsworth 1997: 46). By presenting ourselves as only desirous of student teachers' understanding, we address them from a place that is supposedly neutral and universal. We constantly, in our choice of texts, structure of program, or curriculum experience, place student teachers within relations of knowledge, desire, and power. Student teachers in turn enact modes of address that place us within competing relations (Ellsworth 1997).

The situation is confounded in part by the movement to professionalize teaching and to improve the accountability of teachers and teacher educators (See Alberta Education 1995). As a result, the curriculum in schools of education tends to focus

on widely accepted competencies that comply with provincial or professional regulations and are assumed to be transferable from one individual teacher candidate to another. Anything other than this approach (e.g. inquiry-based teacher education) awakens ambivalence among policy makers, teacher educators, student teachers, and school personnel about the value and rigor of teacher education.

In this study, a student teacher's question regarding why we teach art history in the junior high school was recently met with the responses from classroom teacher: "If you think like that, you shouldn't be an art teacher." Within days, the student teacher was asked to leave the placement school. Later, he reflected on his experience, saying, "I learned that it's probably best to lie to everyone just to save my own skin." The narrative of understanding/misunderstanding breeds fault (you didn't get it) or guilt (how could you not get it?) and, as Trinh Minh-ha would have it, this is a discourse of arrogance (Minh-ha 1989). The repressive operations of this metalanguage of understanding/misunderstanding see to it that the moment student teachers open their mouths, they are immediately asked to account for themselves, to salute and show their identity papers (Cixous 1981).

Telling the truth involves working "according to fixed convention" (Nietzsche 1979: 84), demonstrating punctuality, accepting the partner teacher's advice, being knowledgeable in a practical sense, being humble, and fraternizing with other teachers but – even more importantly perhaps – buying into the project of understanding or "getting it" as the ground of pedagogy. Not doing so involves an unacceptable deception because of the potentially harmful effects that not lying can have on the stability and preservation of the dominant discourse of the teaching profession. Will they lie? Will they tell the "truth"? Will they lie in order to tell the truth?

Lying as misusing fixed conventions: grammars of reporting

> If this continues to happen, then we'll be talking to your advisor. If it continues to happen after that, then you're at risk of not passing this practicum. . . . They know in the end they're getting a reference letter, right? They know that.
>
> (Carol)

> The narrative [evaluation] that the partner teacher will write at the end of the day . . . is going to be the most important thing in their career probably.
>
> (George)

> I would rather exist in subordination than not exist.
>
> (Butler 1997: 7)

Local school boards in Alberta insist that "a final narrative from the . . . teacher accompany the employment application," and in George's words, "the

narrative . . . is the most important thing . . . the stepping stone to their career." Typically, letters of reference are cut and paste from the narrative evaluations. Reza began to fear that even the conferences he had with George, during which he "spoke out" about his conflict with Carol, "would come back to haunt him." His anxiety level was heightened because he understood that Carol's end of term evaluation "meant everything." Two weeks prior to the end of the semester and the writing of the narrative, tension mounted. George explained that with just two weeks to go, student teachers think that, "Well, if I do anything wrong now, it's going to be written on the narrative and that's . . . so important. . . . They feel as though they're being watched which they are." Then the incident described at the outset of this paper occurred. Reza "chewed out" the noncompliant student in the gym.

> So I expressed my frustrations, you know, silently say I just don't like it.
> [Laughing] So they saw me do this and I chewed out a student beforehand.
> (Reza)

The female student, who, interestingly, goes unnamed throughout the transcripts and who will be known here as Chloe, asserts herself as subject of the action. If Reza constructs the practicum as a "game," Chloe seems unaware that such a game is in play. She takes the incident in the gymnasium seriously and files an official "incident report." In doing so, she transgresses "normal" relations of power. Reza refuses to accept her agency, suggesting that it was her "group" who "talked her into . . . filing a report." Positioned as the object of yet another official document – the incident report – he cannot afford to accept its ascriptions; the more he does so, the more his competencies shrink (Minh-ha 1989).

Cautioned by the principal to phone Chloe's parents before they received the incident report, Reza was further supported by Carol, who acknowledged that while he "may have done some things wrong, junior high school girls can blow things out of proportion." Chloe was, in Carol's terms, "being a pain."

Stabilizing meaning

Communication, now in its written form as incident report and narrative evaluation, continues to be viewed not only as an unambiguous, transparent, and singular act of meaning but one that allows for voice and fair representation and truth. Carol observes Reza and provides empirical evidence of her judgment of his competence as a student teacher. Chloe, again based on her experience with Reza, is urged by peers to report the event in the gym. Reza counters the facts/truth from his experience. The school principal summons the facts/truth with his question: "What happened in class today?" Each speaker is positioned as a source of knowledge; each can represent their experience using words as signs of a real substance, "the incident" that occurred elsewhere (Weedon 1997). However, our capacity to make language work for us is problematic and overrated

(Butler 2004). Meaning is historically contingent, contextually bound, socially constructed, and always shifting (Britzman 1997). Incident reports and narrative evaluations are the results of our desire to stabilize meaning, to render it unitary, coherent, and conventional.

The predominance of a representational view of language allows teacher education to keep order, to keep the web of interactions structured. It does so ontologically through repetition – the monotony and probability of what will happen and how it will work out – of teachers' comments on the evaluation narrative wherein "good" student teachers begin to look interchangeable, their differences indecipherable. Not unlike the acts of evaluation themselves, "good" student teachers become "islands of regulation in a sea of randomness" (Bauman 1993: 123), objects of relationships that are monitored, standardized, and codified. The narrative evaluation operates as a visible institutional morality. It establishes repeatedly, over and over for each student, what counts as the good student teacher. It further establishes what does not count. In doing so, it addresses the student teacher in terms of who the program or the profession wants them to be. Through the final narrative evaluation, the mentor teacher who holds out the promise/threat of continued existence plays to the student teacher's desire to survive, to be intelligible within accepted norms.

While attempting to ensure uniformity of and conformity to conventional "standards," we may end up with more difficulty that we managed to eliminate (Bauman 1993: 5). The constraint of affect and emotion is striking in our interviews with Reza and his teacher. He does not name the student. Neither does he call his teacher by name in a series of three hour-long interviews. There is a sense of dissociation, a refusal to connect with the experience, or suffering, of the student and, perhaps, even to his own suffering. He justifies both his "chewing out" the student and later his "lying on the incident report" in terms of the "pressure" he felt. Is a diminished affective reactivity his only recourse if he is to survive in the profession? When power relations are asymmetrical, triad members are allowed an extremely limited margin of freedom. In order to outwit or resist the supervisory system, Reza may have resorted to stratagems such as denial in order to remain intelligible within the script of the good student teacher.

Effacing the other

We begin to see how representational practices can efface the face of the other.

Cautioned by the principal to phone Chloe's parents before they received the incident report, Reza is further supported by Carol, who acknowledged that he "may have done some things wrong" but that "junior high school girls can blow things out of proportion" and who described Chloe as "as being a pain." We are struck by the phrase "low things out of proportion," which seems akin to Nietzsche's second kind of lying as "misusing fixed conventions by means of arbitrary substitutions or reversals of names" (Nietzsche 1979: 81). Being "in

proportion" would seem to suggest that Chloe was being reasonable within the terms of dominant discourses. To be "out of proportion" suggests being off-kilter or being unreasonable. Interestingly, Chloe engages in reverse discourse, wherein she utilizes an accepted institutional practice (incident report) and its implicit mimetic function to report the truth of the incident, to question institutional norms such as a teacher's authority. In her misuse of convention, she is seen to be lying. Nietzsche (1979) suggests that "the group [w]ill exclude the liar . . . not so much because of the 'deception' itself but because of the harmful effects that such lying has on the stability of the dominant culture" (p. 81). The principal, Carol, and Reza become allies in the face of the other that is the student or the parent. By seeing things differently than the majority (principal, classroom teacher, student teacher), Chloe puts herself at risk. Her legitimacy is in question, and she is denied the capacity of a responsible subject. The profession protects itself. Through the teacher's categorization of "junior high school girls" and the principal's suggestion of a preemptive phone call, Chloe is disallowed from mounting a challenge against the effects of Reza's actions.

However, complications and contradictions persist. Chloe becomes an object of the action (Carol had a talk with the principal but wouldn't discuss it further with the researchers) but so too does Reza, as Carol struggles to understand the incident. As a teacher, Reza is forgiven. As an other (Reza is a Muslim Iranian-Canadian), he remains suspect.

> I don't know if it was a cult [pause] a gender issue was part of it there or not. I mean he certainly didn't ask a guy to move. The relationship with the girl didn't deteriorate and I didn't see it continue to happen so I thought well, maybe it's a cultural thing. . . . He's a male student from a culture where women are not highly regarded. . . . I certainly wouldn't ask him.
>
> (Carol)

Not unlike Chloe, Reza's capacity for responsible/responsive action is thrown into question. Carol's speech dissembles him into a series of traits: "male," "from a culture where women are not highly regarded," "arrogant," and the totality of the moral subject is reduced to a collection of attributes to which no one can conceivably ascribe moral subjectivity. As Nietzchean "over men," teacher and principal are allowed the capacity to accuse, to judge, to choose. Groups – student teachers, junior high school girls, multicultural others – "are incapable of following the voice of reason consistently since [they are] constantly in danger of being diverted and led astray by emotions" (Bauman 1993: 121). "It's a culture thing" (Carol). Reza and Chloe are both positioned as other. Their varied forms of resistance operate as both a recuperation of power but also a retention of that subordination (Butler 1999). Their respective resistance has a tinge of the carnivalesque – a temporary transgression (recall Reza's laughing as he retells the story of the incident to the researchers) – but in the end, the potential disruptive or deregulating impact of responses is neutralized. Chloe

apologizes, fearful that she is "in trouble." Reza pronounces the incident as "a misunderstanding."

And yet, Reza appears ambivalent. Consider his description of the meeting in the principal's office. Chloe, Reza, and the principal are present.

> The principal brought us in ["so the student got pulled from class"] and said, "Talk about what happened". . . . [T]he principal spoke to her with me in the room as well. So, he's asking her questions . . . stared her down . . . like a witness or something like that. . . . Or I'd look away and try and give her a chance to express what's going on. [S]he explained what was going on, . . . that she . . . took it in the wrong context and didn't understand what was going on, but she thought she was in trouble . . . because of all this that had happened . . . so the principal reassured me that she's not in trouble and I reassured her . . . I said, "Look, this was just a misunderstanding."
>
> (Reza)

While on the one hand he maintains his position of denial and uses the narrative of understanding/misunderstanding to sustain that position, he also seems to be concerned for Chloe's well-being. He tries, for example, to avert his gaze from her as she speaks. He seems disturbed by the principal "star[ing] her down" and the fact that Chloe thinks that she is in trouble. The tension between the fear for his own survival and his anxiety about hurting Chloe becomes more evident as our conversation with him ensues. Although he never regrets "lying on the incident report" (although his admission to the researchers is ambivalent in this regard), he does express regret at losing his temper. "I learned to keep my temper in check . . . to get a perspective on things . . . just a class . . . one class. It's not do or die. But then the pressure's on when the partner teacher is watching you."

A show of pity, "a sympathetic emotion directed toward another's pain and suffering" (Diprose 2001: 150), is not, however, an expression of responsibility for mistakes made. In the end, he remembers his own situation and forgets that of Chloe. Pity is of little benefit to the sufferer, Chloe; it may well be a vehicle of domination and appropriation of the other (Nietzsche 1974).

> Pity is egotistical, because it interprets the other's suffering in terms of one's own experience and so "strips away from the suffering of others whatever is distinctly personal."
>
> (Diprose 2001: 160)

What is personal about suffering is the other's attempt at self-expression, to reinterpret her experience. To pity is to risk subsuming the other's truth and accompanying self-formation within the truth of the dominant discourse; pity, so understood, is a form of assimilation (Diprose 2001). Might we also interpret Carol's response to Reza as a form of pity without responsibility? Carol explains,

> I don't like thinking I'm responsible for somebody not getting hired. So I
> would maybe write it so it's not all there in black and white.
>
> (Carol)

Reza graduates and the accepted terms of teaching and teacher education are preserved.

Truth as life-preserving fiction: imaginings of otherness

> Because in-between grounds always exist, and cracks and interstices are like
> gaps of fresh air that keep on being suppressed because they tend to render
> more visible the failures operating in every system.
>
> (Minh-ha 1989: 41)

In our readings of Reza's case to this point, the teaching profession and teacher education appear to be somewhat self-interested. Both appear as projects of fulfillment rather than projects of responsibility or even surprise (Todd 2003). Student teachers, mentor teachers, faculty members, and administration seem to provide little more than "embodied performances of a sterile script" (Todd 2003: 42). There seems to be little opportunity for student teachers or mentor teachers to consider the relations set into play by the rational proceduralism of official documents such as narrative evaluations and incident reports or phone calls to parents. As such, communication between and among actors seems predetermined, decided upon in advance of the encounter, set within the terms of the larger narrative of "the good student/student-teacher" and the "diligent administrator." It is evident that both presentational and representational practices rely on "a metaphysics of presence" – "the idea that there is a world 'out there' that is 'present' and to which all our understandings (meanings) are in relation" (Osberg and Biesta 2003: 87). Simply put, participants believe their own stories. The decidability and stability of teaching and teacher education prevails. And yet, as Trinh Minh-ha (1989) writes, "cracks" exist.

Finding cracks

Interestingly, it is during the phone call to Chloe's mother that the conventional narrative of understanding/misunderstanding begins to break down. As such, the incident offers some insight as to where the condition of responsibility in teaching and teacher education might lie.

> He asked me to call the parents ahead of time and explain your [sic] point
> of view before they get the letter from the student. . . . This particular
> student's parents were ESL as well so I can speak their language but I
> tried to explain over the phone. But the woman took it really, really like

seriously. I'm trying to explain the situation. . . . She doesn't understand what I'm saying.

(Reza)

Reza initiates the phone call at the principal's request, confident that explanation would not be difficult. It is at this juncture that we hear that Chloe's mother's is a second-language speaker. So, too, is Reza. Both spoke Farsi as their first language. Language is on his side, he assumes. He anticipates the communicative act. However, language fails him. The mother (whom we shall call Anjum, but whose name does not appear in the transcripts) responds with feeling, taking the incident seriously. Reza recounts his surprise and frustration. It is in the mother's refusal to understand clearly, that is her refusal to locate herself within conventional truth, that we move beyond teaching as a project of self-interested fulfillment toward teaching as a project of possibility and surprise (Todd 2003).

By phoning the mother, Reza enters the nonsocial, the so-called arational private world that fails to follow procedural norms or serve procedural discipline in the form of incident reports. Anjum is upset about her daughter's well-being; her responsibility cannot be neutralized. Her concern for her daughter is disruptive, refusing regulation or closure. As Kristeva (1980) has shown us, maternity is an experience within the symbolic that allows a manifestation of the borders that divide the Symbolic from the semiotic. The maternal exists on the edge of language. To refuse understanding is to attend to the alterity of the person. She does not interpret her daughter's plight as that of a kind of, say, "junior high school girls," as purely symptomatic of themes she can pull from her arsenal of knowledge, as though the meaning she imposes is all there is to the story (Todd 2003). Unlike the institutional response that sought to know Chloe in order to know its duty, there was no need for the mother to possess or know the daughter in order to feel her responsibility. So how do we, with Reza, begin to appreciate that it may not be so much a matter of misunderstanding what is being said as it is a matter of the impossibility of ever knowing the other through these significations (Todd 2003)?

> Communication is inherently ambiguous because it gestures beyond any stable meaning toward the very otherness of the other that marks her as radically distinct from myself. And it is this relation to the other as one of unknowability where the ethical promise – and risk – of ambiguity lies.
>
> (Todd 2003: 33)

In closing

A profession, not unlike a nation, is a manufactured product, a cultural artifact, a matter of shared imaginings (Anderson 1991). A large part of our imagining teaching, as we have seen here, is its realist narratives of understanding/

misunderstanding, getting it/not getting it, fitting/not fitting. Teacher education plays a crucial role in perpetuating "understanding/misunderstanding" as a habitual pattern of inference in the profession. By promoting and sustaining a culture of "understanding," teacher education prescribes a particular set of relations of self-to-self and between self and others. What seems to panic us most in the profession is difference. Language fails us constantly. Communication is ambiguous. Yet, we persist in trying to wipe out, through understanding (and mechanisms such as narrative evaluations and incident reports), the space of difference between a teacher and a student; in doing so, we erase and deny the very possibility of responsibility (Ellsworth 1997).

Our explorations of Reza's case suggest that lying may well characterize professionalization and that, in doing so, it attests to alterity, the different ways of being, knowing, and acting that professionalization offends. The possibility of rejecting a representational view of language and communication would invite an acceptance of the unknowability of the other, that is, the otherness of the other. Difference, conceived as a relation between self and other rather than a quality of either, can then be lived as the site of responsibility.

> What makes it a responsible response is its openness to an unanticipated future, where its signifyingness remains open-ended to the other's predicament, as both a student and a person. Thus, when I show love, generosity and affection, I do so to ensure that further openness and communication are possible, and that the other is given the space and time to become themselves responsive/responsible subjects.
>
> (Todd 2003: 41)

Even Nietzsche, it should be noted, was keen to make some sense of the ordinary distinction between "truth" and "lies" and suggested that truths might also be judged by their utility for human life. In other words, we make distinctions between truth and falsity so we can live well together as social beings. These distinctions are perhaps necessary lies/illusions or "life preserving fictions" (Breazeale 1979: p. xxxvii).

A reflexive endnote

Throughout this chapter, we have argued that teacher education, and more specifically the narrative accounts of teaching and student teaching performance, rely largely on a mimetic view of representation. Our position as researchers is ironic, at best, given our own assumption that we as narrators can access and represent the reality of the practicum experience for Reza and his colleagues. We recognize that the mimetic view is evident in a series of textual moves in our own account.

First, we established authority by speaking with the authoritative "we" as in "we were there." Of course, only one of us was present to the participants and for

the brief time of the interviews. The rest of us had a series of interview transcripts with words divested from their embodiment in persons. Our authority is further established by our claim of an appropriate research design and theoretical framework.

Second, by creating interpretive clarity around the narratives provided us, we present this research narrative to the reader assuming that the object (or performance or manuscript) to be presented will be viewed as an unproblematic and discernible shift from the readers' initial ignorance (absence of knowledge and experience of this case) to knowledge. As researchers, we could be accused of facilitating a kind of "imaginative merging" of two cognitions, thereby shutting down the very question of difference (Britzman 1997: 33). We come dangerously close to assuming that we know what the participants mean and what motivates them as they speak. It is difficult to disentangle factors of propositional truth and social relations in a participant's motivation (Fairclough in Mills 1997: 152). Ambivalence is important here as we acknowledge the possibility of alternative interpretations or readings. Moreover, the intertextuality implicit in our use of direct speech from participants juxtaposed with their descriptions of official documents, such as incident reports, suggests that there is a fundamental ambivalence in who is speaking. We have constructed Chloe, for example, through what others have said about her. Our interest is not in simply describing what we think is going on in this particular network of relationships but rather in illustrating the complexity of the workings of power relations within professional education as a whole.

While we have tried to create the vestiges of dialogue by relativizing the official story of a student teacher's experience with a deconstructive tale, we have opted for clarity rather than try to represent the research team's ongoing conversations about the ethics of studying and representing difference. What was our responsibility in Reza's case? Ought we have stepped in, and to do what exactly? Was it right of us to stand by and watch Chloe be silenced? Ought we have sought out Chloe for an interview? To what end? In whose interests? What role did our respective positioning as Catholic, Jew, and Secular Humanist play in our interpretations of events involving participants who were likely Muslim? The dialogical and situational nature of the experience of researching is banished from the text. We embrace clarity and abandon ambivalence. The relationship of teaching/learning/researching is separated from the final product it generates – this chapter.

We use a range of contrastive or antithetical relational structures and expressions such as X instead of Y, X is different from Y (Fairclough 1995). There is a strong sense that participants have fallen short of some standard of better/more responsible practice.

While participants presented narratives of their experience, none laid out the narrative as we do here. We have created a narrative by drawing on a range of comments, impressions, and utterances shared by participants.

One event in a gym is used to organize that narrative and is recalled repeatedly to support the generalization that a representational view of language supports teaching, learning, and teacher education.

Do our accounts suffer from rigidity, certitude, and normalizing power? Or is there some space for newness or difference? The key to producing narrative accounts differently may lie in our rejection of a representational view of language and an acceptance of the unknowability of the other, that is, the otherness of the other. This would entail becoming incompetent writers, writing against our selves, writing for difference rather than sameness, allowing ourselves to be unsettled by otherness and not simply fit it within our cognitive frames. Rather than succumb to narrative smoothing, we have tried to focus our account on discontinuities, ruptures, and the unexpected (Lather 1998). We have tried to attend not just to the stories we tell but also to how research narratives are told and staged. In Barthes's (1977) terms, this means writing obtusely, challenging the universality of symbolic meaning (the already said) and questioning common sense as seamless, inviolate truth.

Chapter 7

Portfolios as public spaces in teacher education

with Vetta Vratulis

Education is a contested terrain. A democratic culture within the teaching profession suggests a space wherein teachers, coming from a plurality of standpoints, can engage one another in discussion about educational matters and what matters in education. Such engagement enables educators to acknowledge their differences and commit themselves to the ongoing effort of producing a strongly articulated sense of shared professional purpose. In this chapter, we consider the role of e-portfolios (in preservice teacher education) in cultivating teachers' capacity to participate in and sustain spaces of dialogue within the profession.

We begin with the premise that presentation portfolios (Acosta and Liu 2006; Hauge 2006; Jafari and Kaufman 2006), comprised for the expressed purpose of giving others a portrait of an individual teacher's professional competence, are inadequate to the task of preparing teachers for democratic engagement in the profession. Presentation portfolios are often justified in teacher education by theories of quality teaching that posit teaching in terms of individualistic competence rather than collaborative practice (Heath 2002). Teacher candidates' qualities, competences, gifts, and talents are presented as the active and conscious choice of the individual and as evidence of a growing, robust professionalism (Klenowski, Askew and Carnell 2006; McNair and Galanouli 2002; Wetzel and Strudler 2005). As such, presentation portfolios tend to promote an understanding of teaching as an autonomous act of an individual wherein teachers' speech and actions are seen as a fulfillment of a static identity – as a private project of completion – rather than a public performance of becoming.

In this chapter, we explore an alternative model to presentation portfolios through the development of a collective e-portfolio. A collective portfolio is a community web or online environment developed collaboratively by a cohort of teacher candidates. We describe and examine our use of a collective e-portfolio in response to British Columbia's introduction of teaching standards; we examine the complexities associated with our efforts to promote a culture of democratic engagement in educational matters in a cohort-based teacher education program.

History of a problem

In 2004, the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT) launched a statement of "standards for the education, professional responsibility and competence of its members" (BCCT 2004). The standards were an attempt to delineate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of "professional educators" (BCCT 2004) and to address three inter-related, yet potentially very different, contexts in which judgments are made about educators. First is the *Educational* context of preparing new teachers for the profession. Second is the context related to addressing the ongoing *Competence* of existing teachers to ensure that they continue to function as professional educators. Third is the context in which the college must respond to complaints brought forward about the *Professional and Ethical Conduct* of its members (Phelan *et al.* 2007).

The standards document (see BCCT 2004) consisted of thirteen general or "foundation statements" of standards, including:

> Professional educators value and care for children, acting in all times in the best interests of children . . . demonstrate an understanding of the role of and the home in the life of students . . . have a broad knowledge base, as well as an in-depth understanding of the subject areas they teach.

At first glance, the words appeared as common sense, a relatively benign and acceptable response to the implicit question: What is good teaching? Various institutions responsible for teacher preparation in the province of British Columbia began exploring what these "standards" meant for teacher education practices and how they might be assessed in their particular program contexts. Institutional responses typically included explicit statements on course syllabi linking course content with particular standards and the adoption of individualized, electronic portfolios as evidence to be used during audits by the College of Teachers (Phelan *et al.* 2007).

At the University of British Columbia, a group of teacher educators in the Community and Inquiry in Teacher Education (CITE) cohort began to wonder about how we might draw upon the standards in our work with teacher candidates. Following Eisner (2001), many of us shared a concern that the language of standards tends, by and large, to be limiting rather than liberating. We were committed to engaging our teacher candidates in a critical conversation about the teaching standards while acknowledging the "reality" of compliance as a condition for their certification as teachers. So while we initially fell into step with the rest of the B.Ed. program and utilized the individualized portfolio, we continued to engage in our own conversations about the standards, what they were about, and what they were making of our students and ourselves (Phelan *et al.* 2007).

By the end of the first year working with the teaching standards, and having reviewed the students' work, a sufficient number of CITE instructors shared

the concern that the individual e-portfolio was problematic for several related reasons. First, the similarity between and among portfolios was astounding. It was as if "an iron band" (Arendt 1994: 342) held the body of teacher candidates so tightly together that their difference (their plurality) had disappeared. Their socialization into the status quo of standardized competence appeared complete. Second, the portfolios seemed self-interested in the extreme. Teacher candidates were keen, understandably, to present themselves as "fitting" with the standards, either by declaring themselves in support of various standards and their underlying values and/or showing how they had achieved the standard through their work on practicum or in course work. It was as if they had become entirely private, that is, "they had been deprived of seeing and hearing others, of being seen and being heard by them" (Arendt 1998: 58); they were only concerned that they appeared competent as defined by the British Columbia College of Teachers. There was little room for any reality other than the one established by the standards. One interest and one opinion reigned. There was little evidence of engagement with different perspectives on educational issues and values – no sense that education would always be a contested affair in a democratic society, a conversation in which they as citizen teachers (Grumet 2010) could play a vital role. What was especially problematic was their interpretation of how to demonstrate competence: an exhausted effort to develop e-portfolios inundated with "technological bells and whistles" with minimal attention to demonstrating an understanding of the complexity of teaching or educational issues. As one teacher candidate expressed it: "I saw students spending endless hours making their portfolios look cool, focused on colour. Then you opened it up, and there was nothing really there." Finally, rather than pay tribute to the complexity of teaching as a practice that the CITE cohort tried to promote, the portfolios generally reflected a type of sovereign endeavor "to control or determine the world in the face of radical and absolute contingency" (Martel 2008: 295). There were a handful of students who seemed to appreciate the tensions wrought by standards and standardization – mostly those who had worked in fields like forestry where government standards had been implemented to erase the possibility of foresters' individual judgments. Overall, however, it appeared that efforts to critically engage teacher candidates with professional standards had fallen on very rough ground.

Even more seriously perhaps, the individualized e-portfolio reinforced, in our view, "the ontology of individualism . . . the Latin word 'individual' means indivisble and whole, and the central tenet of individualism is the epistemological priority accorded to the separate, essentially nonsocial, individual" (Shweder *et al.* 1998: 898). The self as presented in the individual e-portfolio could be characterized as an entity that was "separate, bounded, stable, and consistent . . . clear, confident . . . in control . . . particularly sensitive to positive regard, self-enhancing . . . success-oriented; and expressive and enthusiastic" (Ritter *et al.* 2011: 901). The self so presented was free from encounters with others, hardly the ground upon which one might cultivate a sense of shared professional purpose.

This outcome was in direct contradiction with our desire to problematize the standards and to cultivate the political as a form of culture – animated by contestation and argument – among teacher candidates, which is a requisite process for democratic engagement. After all, politics involves the exchange of ideas, opinions, and arguments, where the latter can be received and potentially have an impact, in the sense of opening up for consideration the world of education as professionals encounter it through language, criteria, or concepts (Zerilli 2005). What we realized was that, following Parker (2008), if we wanted to promote: (1) *political enlightenment*, meaning an appreciation of what it means to live democratically within a profession, the capacity to differentiate between just and unjust rulings by government and professional bodies, the ability to deliberate about policy and practice in the company of disagreeable others; and (2) *political engagement*, meaning the willingness the speak and act in relation to one's insights and ideals – we needed to think of the university classroom in terms of a laboratory for democracy within the profession where students could actually experience what they were supposed to be learning. The idea of a community web, as a form of collective e-portfolio, was born.[1]

A laboratory for democracy: the community web

The online wiki[2] environment, known among teacher candidates as "the community web," was a collective e-portfolio developed collaboratively by all class members. We hoped to de-emphasize the notion of individual learning outcomes in relation to the teaching standards and to emphasize plurality and dissensus in the public space of the wiki. The idea was not merely to create isolated websites belonging to individual members of the class, as is often the case with individual e-portfolios, but rather to encourage teacher candidates to think together, to comment on and reference each other's work, to explore the merits of hypermedia as a space in which a political culture could be created and experienced by teacher candidates. The community web was akin to what Joyce & Weil (1996) have called a "constructive hypertext" that users construct and modify as they go (Wang *et al.* 2003).

Borrowing from John Dewey (1938), we explained to teacher candidates that as with other educational ends, teaching standards may best be viewed as hypotheses that "have to be formed, developed and tested 'in strict correlation with existential conditions as means,'" that is, with human purposes and consequences (Beista 2005: 13). Treated as hypotheses, teaching standards can invite inquiry into whether what educators desire is achievable but also whether achieving it is desirable (Beista 2005; Phelan *et al.* 2007). We asked students to form themselves into small collaborative groups and to respond to two of the teaching standards in light of their meaning and significance in the contemporary moment, in the face of historical (including autobiographical), philosophical, and sociological perspectives. Having posted their initial interpretations, we then invited them to share stories that revealed the tensions and

complexities that might surround the standards in practice and to post representations of those conversations. We also welcomed individual posting of artifacts (e.g. unit plans, essays, lesson outlines) that would demonstrate teacher candidates' appreciation of what might be at stake in the standard, as well as making completed work available to all members of the cohort. Finally, we asked that groups respond to one another's contributions, identifying points of agreement and areas of contestation and offering new insights. This process unfolded in four stages over the course of a year of teacher preparation.

Following Hannah Arendt (1998), we believed that the public space of the community web could be a space where ideas or approaches got tested and perspectives exchanged, a space in which individuals and groups appeared to one another, in the process creating their subjectivities (Benhabib 1996). Being present to one another is not a matter of recognition of each other's qualities, qualifications, talents, and shortcomings which we may decide to display or hide; it is a matter of revelation of a "who" which is implicit in everything one says or does (Arendt 1958/1998: 179). We are subjects when our speech and action are witnessed by others in such a way that the opportunity for the witness's own speech and action is not obstructed. This means that subjectivity is only possible in a world of plurality and difference where we each have the opportunity to take the standpoint of others into account, to reverse perspectives and see the world through different eyes (Biesta 2010a). As such, subjectivity is no longer seen as an attribute of individuals (their identity) but as a quality of human interaction.

Speaking and acting in the public requires courage, of course. For teacher candidates, it involved leaving the privacy of their own thoughts, exposing themselves to others, and being open to their influence. This is the first step in revealing a self, showing who one is rather than what one is. Understanding the community web in terms of self-revelation (rather than self-presentation) is crucial to an Arendtian conception of a political culture, a culture of freedom. Unlike individualized e-portfolios where the student's conscious self-presentation is privileged (and open to a degree of hypocrisy and pretense in its performance of a competent self), the community web, we hoped, would reveal a self implicit in speech and action.

We believed that teacher candidates would not only cultivate the courage to appear to one another, but also that they would begin to learn what it might mean to help others appear. Following Habermas (1992), we understood the private and public as different conditions of communication differentiated by *degrees of accessibility,* or how open the dialogues are to other people (e.g. including more teacher candidates would, we believed, make dialogues more public, so we orchestrated small group engagements to start and by the *capacity to influence* dialogues (e.g. we thought that a conversation among many anonymous teacher candidates in the online wiki seemed more private and allowed each an improved chance of influence than in face-to-face classroom dialogues with peers [Coulter 2002; Phelan *et al.* 2011]). Conceiving of the collective portfolio

or community web as a public space of plurality and engagement was compelling theoretically; living it with teacher candidates even more so!

A glimpse inside the community web

Making an appearance: small groups'
face-to-face negotiations

In response to the teaching standard – "Professional educators value and care for all children, acting at all times in the best interest of the children" – teacher candidates in Group #1 (Adam, Kerri, Heather, and Dai) wrote on the community web[3]:

> We have taken the standard to mean that teachers are responsible for their students' physical, emotional and social well-being. For teachers to be responsible for the social wellbeing can mean many things, including teaching your students how to be good members of the greater society, but also how to be good members of the classroom community. Every child has the right to be educated in a nonjudgmental and lawful environment. Teachers must ensure that students feel safe and comfortable in all settings, both inside and outside the classroom. Although it may not be possible to ensure that every child FEELS safe, it is our duty to make sure they ARE safe. This is the only thing we can control, but we can try to help and talk to the child if they do not FEEL safe. We have to do our best to make sure our students are safe in and out of our classrooms. However, as a group we have some criticisms that will be addressed in further detail later in the document.

One of the challenges Group #1 identified at this stage was trying to ensure consensus amongst members. For instance, there were questions and disagreements about how to ensure emotional security for *all* children. Adam felt strongly that practicing and prospective teachers should be permitted to keep information about student learning and behavior from parents. He worried that parents might punish the child inappropriately on hearing "negative" news. If the child no longer trusted the teacher, he wondered, how could a teacher take care of the child's well-being? Dai disagreed: "If they know we are going to tell their parents, and that is not safe for them, well, they are not going to feel very secure sharing anything in the class." Heather then suggested that it was the responsibility of the teacher to ensure students felt safe both within the classroom and at home. She suggested that the only way this goal could be achieved was by building relationships with parents and then finding a way to share information with parents while still protecting the child. Teachers have to "get parents on their side at the start," she asserted. Finally, Kerri suggested that if there was even the slightest concern that the parents would "overreact" or punish the child "inappropriately" (a contested term within the group), then the

information should remain private. "It is not always in the best interests of the child to tell parents," Kerri explained; "It just isn't. We don't know what their home life is." Adam suggested that each of their opinions should be included in the group response to Teaching Standard 1, even if contradictory. The group discussed and debated this issue for two hours in class,[4] and then for nearly one hour after class, deciding in the end to include the following statement:

> Teachers must ensure that students feel safe and comfortable in all settings, both inside and outside the classroom. Although it may not be possible to ensure that every child FEELS safe, it is our duty to make sure they ARE safe.

Concerned about being contradictory, Adam asked: "How can we ensure that students feel safe if we cannot ensure that they are safe?" Content in the understanding that the statement reflected their attempt to "problematize" the standards, the statement was posted as presented above. Dai explained: "Problematizing is all about negotiating ideas." Heather further added: "You don't really get an issue unless you can see all sides." Students struggled because they were not accustomed to "negotiating" so many ideas in a way that would still allow for a coherent text to be generated for the wiki. Dai explained further:

> Now that I think about it, it wasn't that it was that hard. It was just all the figuring out. . . . I couldn't just disagree with my group members. I had to prove to them I was right . . . that is hard.

As their engagement with Teaching Standard 1 proceeded, Heather, Dai, Adam, and Kerri (Group #1) became quite focused on language, specifically the use of the word "value." The discussion about the word "value" started when Kerri reminded the group about a case study explored earlier in the teacher preparation program. The case had to do with parents who, for religious reasons, disallowed their child from participating in Halloween festivities. The disagreement within the group rested in two different opinions about what "valuing" the child looks like within the case scenario. One group member was advocating for the child's democratic right to participate in all classroom activities despite parental opinion. "Public schools have the right to engage students in ideas, ways of thinking, and being in the classroom that are different than what they experience at home," stated Kerri. Heather agreed:

> We can't always do what parents want. What if you have someone who really believes in something like bullying, to build character or something like that, or . . . they don't believe in the Holocaust. . . . Are we seriously not allowed to force them to stay and listen to what is right . . .? What is the point, then? If we value them [the students], then we have to teach them what they don't know.

Adam asserted that, "if we value our kids then we should not force them to participate in something they aren't allowed to do." The issue then became if valuing the student meant deferring to parental beliefs about appropriate educational experiences or if public schooling was more about providing students experiences that were unfamiliar at home. In the end, the group decided that valuing the student meant taking action even if there was a concern that parents were not going to approve. Heather confided that this decision was only reached after group members "talked about all sorts of different scenarios . . . that whole week and had a lot of trouble moving on." However, group members also stated that when they were ready to move on, they were in full agreement. Having debated the use and application of a single word – "value" – for days, exploring scenarios and perspectives, group members described the eventual posting as a "perfect representation of what we meant." This glimpse of one group's process reveals that the teaching standards became a vehicle for teacher candidates to become more attuned to the complexity of teaching and how to problematize teaching standards in light of that complexity.

Making the other disappear: group-to-group online responses

As each group opened itself up to another group – when it became more public, as it were – the experience seemed to change for all involved.

Group #2's (Tara, Keith, Guopeng, and Marie) response to Group #1's postings was completely unexpected. Group #1 felt that all of their work was carelessly deleted and edited with minimal attention to what they were trying to achieve. Heather explained:

> They were trying to make what we were saying clear, but then they just muddled it all up. We practically ended up in a feud. We were just so mad because they didn't get it. I really think it is [be]cause they hadn't thought about it as much as we had, you know?

Members of Group #2 responded by stating that they spent hours after class trying to craft a respectful response. Tara explained that they had had extensive conversations about how to interpret what was written and the degree to which it reflected an "in-depth" understanding of the standard.

> We genuinely thought we made it better, or that we were trying to make it better. In the end, though, even if it was clearer, if it wasn't what they meant . . . well, that's a problem. I get it even if others in my group don't.

Group #2 spent over a week discussing, debating, and then trying to determine a coherent plan for how to edit and respond to what Group #1 had written. In the end, Group #2 "decided that the term 'value,' as it was used in the
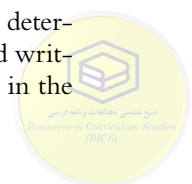
response by Group #1, did not adequately reflect an understanding of Teaching Standard 1." Keith went on: "So it is not like we just took it out. We talked about it forever. We all had different ideas, but at the end of the day we decided that 'value' was not what the standard meant."

Having swapped standards between groups, teacher candidates engaged in complicating the description and critical interpretation of their peers. Some had erased words and replaced them with others; others had entered critical comments to further discussion; others had added stories (e.g. a recent lawsuit in which a teacher was charged with bullying a child whom she had perceived as a bully) to complicate the issues further. As groups continued to respond to each other's work, an acute understanding of the wiki as a public space emerged. As a result, they felt increasingly vulnerable; for many of them, it was the first time they had to publically represent, defend, and negotiate their ideas. Feelings of hurt, indignation, and anger simmered but remained unaddressed directly in the context of the community web. Despite the many conversations, e-mails, and correspondence beyond the scope of the community wiki, many teacher candidates continued to harbor anxiety and anger at edits made to their work (or the work of their group) by their peers. Eventually, teacher candidates' concerns exploded into the university classroom.

A complicated public: whole class face-to-face dialogue

One month or so into the community web process, instructors decided to devote a class session to a discussion about the community web and to unpack any questions, comments, and/or concerns about the process as well as to determine collectively how the process would unfold in subsequent stages. On the blackboard one of us wrote:

> The intent of today is to problematize our process as it currently stands. What is working? What do we need to reconsider? What comments/questions do we have? Most importantly, how do we move forward? How do we envision this unfolding as the next stage of our process?

Initially the room was very quiet and still, despite being packed with thirty-five teacher candidates and three instructors. Not a murmur. It was as if each of us was waiting for another to speak. Suddenly, somebody began.[5]

Sarah: It's not really a community wiki if people keep erasing what I write!
Jonathan: You can edit right back! Just go to the history page and repost what was erased.
Sarah: That is not the point! I don't want my words erased, so I am going to say what I have to say now. Before I do anymore work on this, I want to know what will happen to all the materials my peer group and I continue to post.
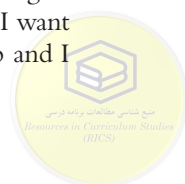
Amy: First, some of the postings were edited because they were just poorly written. This is a public document after all. The British Columbia College of Teachers is going to review this as our collective portfolio. We should be professional in our approach to it.

Tom: I agree with Sarah. The wiki is not supposed to be some polished product; that's the whole point of a wiki, isn't it? I thought it was all about deliberation about the ideas.

Amy: The second point I want to make is that we are also editing one another's opinions. I thought the point was to complicate statements made by adding counter arguments. I didn't realize that we were aiming for a consensus! Are we erasing particular perspectives that we don't like?

Sarah: But surely that's the point: adding but not taking away! Just because I have a minority view doesn't mean that it doesn't get represented.

Marion: Yes, but let's face it, some of us don't write well and that reflects poorly on the rest of us. I feel the need to edit that work . . . whether it's grammatical construction or poor choice of words . . . or badly framed argument!

Sarah: But you're not just proofreading; every time something of mine is edited, I feel as if the meaning of what I've written has been lost or changed.

Tom: Right now the postings are anonymous. Nobody knows who they're responding to. There's no exposure! We've no need to feel vulnerable.

Julie: That raises another question for me; should the whole thing be anonymous? I think we should name ourselves and stand by our perspectives openly.

Lynn: I couldn't agree more. Otherwise, how do we know that everyone is contributing or what they are contributing?

Carrie: Until now, I felt I could voice my opinion on the wiki in ways not possible in class, just because it was anonymous and in writing, so I could think about it more. Now I'm becoming fearful that my efforts will be judged.

Jung: That's so traditional, Lynn. Like we're evaluating one another. You're missing the point . . . It's not about grades!

Lynn: No, you're missing the point! This is not the time to hide; show yourself; you're going to be a teacher soon!

The issues and questions articulated by students on that day related to the question of how they could live well with one another in the context of the community web, which was becoming increasingly open to the gaze of others – their peers, instructors, and professional others (e.g. certifying organizations). A number of tensions became evident in the attempt at creating a public space for professional dialogue: (1) self-presentation vs. self-revelation; (2) expert knowledge vs. pride among equals; (3) private work vs. public engagement; and (4) communicative transparency vs. blind trust.

Self-presentation vs. self-revelation

Despite efforts to downplay self-presentation in favor of self-revelation, many teacher candidates continued to be plagued by concerns about self-presentation or professional recognition. Questions were ongoing about how the representation of their process would fit within BCCT expectations. This is understandable given that the BCCT was the professional body certifying them to teach. Perhaps their preoccupation with traditional texts revealed an underlying mistrust of the BCCT to accept a "demonstrated lack of compliance" to what is typically and traditionally privileged in schools: conventional representations of print.

Teacher candidates' tendency to equate "professionalism" with the ability (or choice) to construct traditional texts (e.g. essays) was intriguing. "This should look like a five-part essay if we want them to take us seriously," Laurence insisted. Preoccupation with traditional texts typically corresponded with statements about how their work would be viewed and evaluated by BCCT. "We are going to come across as more professional if we write it like an essay," Lisa explained. Less attention was given to the degree to which traditional texts could represent ideas and concepts: "Why not use a visual, or bullet form?" (Jacob). Such views perpetuated a focus on the aesthetic by framing the process of constructing the wiki with an "end product" in mind that replicates, in many respects, traditional representations already privileged in school. The affordance of the wiki is the possibility to liberate and disrupt participants from such traditional notions; yet clearly this takes time. This focus on the "aesthetic" as a product-oriented endeavor is a criticism of e-portfolios highlighted at the beginning of this chapter.

Beyond just privileging traditional texts, there were also concerns about the "uniformity" of the eventual document as represented on the wiki. Their audience (including BCCT) had to be able to determine how they were demonstrating their knowledge of the standards. While some students felt a template, with common headings, subheadings, and writing styles (bullets, colloquial vs. formal writing) and modes of representation (print vs. visual representations or sound bytes) should be used, others felt strongly that the process should be organic. The latter believed that all parts of the process, from brainstorming to the reconceptualization of an innovative, multimodal final product should be represented. Until the end, tensions remained between those who preferred to develop a coherent, traditional, uniform product vs. an organic process where there was no predictable, end product in mind.

Expert knowledge vs. pride among equals

Concerns with self-presentation led to another challenge to the public space: the emergence of the expert (Dewey 1954). One of the key conditions of public sphere is accessibility. However, open access relies on the assumption of pride among equals that Arendt finds exemplified in the political realm, the public

space (Kirsch 2009). Two forms of expertise were asserted: the first was in the realm of language arts (refer above), and the second was related to technological (wiki) competence. The perception of expertise in both areas created social hierarchies amongst peers and, as a result, privileged some and silenced others (Dobson and Vratulis 2009; Vratulis and Dobson 2008).

Teacher candidates who claimed authority over print representation tended to silence students exploring and negotiating what Bolter (2001) refers to as the "fragmented" possibility of digitized text. Requiring students to negotiate and represent their understandings in a wiki environment in many ways disrupted how students were taught to value writing through traditional schooling. What we observed in these moments when students were trying to negotiate their learning is a manifestation of the struggle between traditional values of privileging conventional notions or authorship and the "fractured" possibility of representing meaning within a digitized space (Dobson and Vratulis 2009). As a result, students who attempted to include less "conventional and structured" representations of work on the wiki were more often dismissed or, to use the words of a student, "edited out."

Contributing to the challenge was that the wiki required teacher candidates to (re)conceptualize processes of negotiation and representation. For instance, students were required to negotiate their process of developing and representing knowledge (individually and in groups) in a wiki environment. This was a "radical" shift from negotiating and representing their understanding of the standards in a face-to-face environment (oral and/or written). When students responded in class (face-to-face), students could react to social cues, behaviors, tone, and expression from their peers as they expressed their ideas. The process of responding and negotiating ideas in class within smaller groups and as a whole class was familiar to them. Most students had experience with how to negotiate their voice and opinions within a face-to-face environment. They could look for reactions and respond accordingly. As Tara expressed it, "It is like if you say something and then you see them twinge . . . well it gives you a chance to explain. To make sure you aren't offending anyone."

Those who often controlled the face-to-face discourse during weekly classroom meetings found their capacity to influence others affected. It is intriguing to note that students who were perceived by peers as the leaders of the class (perceived as holding power and authority in face-to-face encounters) were unable to maintain that power within the space of the wiki. For at least two dominant members of the class, the wiki was silencing. Their capacity to express ideas clearly and to direct their peers' attention through oral discussion was in some respects lost once the process shifted to using the print-based wiki. One male student described in the following terms:

> It was strange . . . just not the same on the wiki . . . I kind of lost my voice. . . . When I wanted [to say something] I went and talked to them in person. I didn't think anyone would really listen to me on the wiki.

Private work vs. public engagement

Many teacher candidates continued to be preoccupied by their individual accomplishments and saw the public sharing of their ideas possibly undermining their individual achievements. After many thousands of hours in school and university classrooms, they understood the usual exchange relationship: the individual student creates the artifact, the professor rewards (or punishes) the individual student for that artifact. There is rarely any ambivalence about who has completed the work in question. Ambivalence arose in the case of the wiki for two reasons: first, small groups, not individuals, made the initial postings; second, when individual artifacts (e.g. lesson units) were posted, some students insisted that they too should remain anonymous. This meant that the individual students could not publicly claim their own work, at least in the context of the wiki. However, they had already submitted their work to the course instructors and had received their grades. So why such anxiety? The possibility that others might not only use, for example, curriculum unit plans created by a peer and possibly be congratulated for implementing them was very difficult for teacher candidates to stand. Some insisted that all names be posted alongside work shared because if this was truly to encourage a democratic, egalitarian practice, then all voices should be heard. As one teacher candidate states, "How do we know that everyone is contributing or what they are contributing?"

Clearly, working on the wiki as a community led students to raise questions about individual accountability. Perhaps this was because teacher candidates were struggling to shift from their educational experience as autonomous agents; they were defaulting to the practice of self-governing and struggling to view (and compare) their contributions or voice within the community as a whole. Several students also stated that they felt the CITE community was "as strong as our weakest link" (Faerah). This meant that each student had to fully contribute and invest or the process would fall on the shoulders of the more conscientious students, and yet the "success" of the project would be attributed to the CITE community as a whole. This was a clear example of how students struggled to negotiate their process as a private project to complete rather than a public performance of becoming, a notion explored at the start of this chapter.

Communicative transparency vs. blind trust

Respect speaks to a necessary distance or separation that creates the "inter-space" for public engagement, what Jonathan Lear (2007) refers to as the space of necessary misunderstanding. Anything that threatens the in-between space is dangerous. What preserves the distance is in part the pride of equals discussed above. Trust is also key in maintaining a culture of political freedom. Some students railed against the lack of communicative transparency – who is editing my words – but the workings of the wiki tended to rely not upon transparency but upon the formation of passages of visibility through which feelings of trust

and mistrust circulate (Giddens 1990). Trust involved a balancing act between understanding the general decision-making processes associated with a community web and investing a degree of faith in the capacity of others to make good judgements about what should remain and what should stay. Trust, in this sense, is related to absence in time and space. "There would be no need to trust anyone whose activities were continually visible. . . . All trust is in a sense blind trust" (Giddens 1990: 33). What complicated the possibility of blind trust was perhaps the daily encounter with classmates in classes, while never knowing for sure who it was that restated or responded so vehemently to one's position.

The principle of anonymity established and adopted by teacher candidates was both a positive and negative aspect of the community web; it allowed some to speak in ways that they never had the courage to do in class, but it meant that all had to bear the burden of blind trust. Words could be carefully considered before posting; there was time for thinking and rethinking before taking the plunge into the public. Sarah's fearless speech was indicative of the kind of renegotiation of position within the class and wiki power relations, respectively. For others, however, anonymity reflected a lack of courage to stand by one's words and actions and to answer publicly for both.

Conclusion

We began this chapter with a consideration of the role of portfolios in cultivating teachers' capacity to participate in public spaces in the profession. Clearly, this was a new phenomenon for our participants. While the affordance of the wiki allows for the collective, collaborative representation of ideas within a public forum, there were other, unexpected issues to consider. For instance, in order to benefit from the advantages of such a space, considerable attention is required to teach and learn how to negotiate ideas, power relations, and the private and public self in order to ensure "common and transparent rules of engagement" (Vratulis 2010). This is a requisite condition for preparing our teacher candidates to participate in public spaces in the profession in ways that empower, not silence.

The process became about learning how to "encounter others" in new and unexpected ways, a significant move forward toward ensuring that not only do teacher candidates have a space where their voices can be heard, but where their processes of expression and representation are not interfering with another teacher candidate's ability to express and represent ideas. As stated at the start of this chapter, it is necessary for speech and action to be witnessed by others in such a way that the opportunity for the witness's own speech and action is not obstructed. Finally, participants require enough freedom to argue, debate, and negate ideas without feeling "edited" or, even more significantly, without feeling that their voices can be "deleted" from the wiki. The difficulty, of course, is that the achievement of a shared professional purpose is both a prerequisite AND an ongoing accomplishment of democratic engagement within the profession.

Teacher candidates spent hours outside of class considering the standards and related issues. The expectation was to debate, rationalize, justify, and represent ideas in relation to the fluid, iterative, changing opinions of their peers. Over the course of the year, we witnessed an increasing sensitivity to the complexity of education and teaching. Unable to assume shared values within the group itself, they could not be immediately pragmatic (what to do and with what consequences?) but were forced to consider and adjudicate a range of positions. The dialogues turned teacher candidates back on themselves to query what they believed and what kind of teacher they wanted to become. Moreover, engagement with stories allowed teacher candidates to consider the moral goodness of a range of life worlds – those of families, teachers, and children. However, given the particular positioning of teacher candidates in a university program and their obligation to produce an e-portfolio for BCCT audit purposes, they were ultimately caught between *poesis* (as activity of production) and *praxis* (as activity of action). *Poesis*, as reflected in labor (preoccupation with the necessities of life such as procuring certification, appearing professional, and finding work as a teacher) and work (focused on the creation of cultural objects such as well written unit plans, essays, and other course assignments), begins with an end in mind. While at times this created anxiety, most students commented on how "it was an experience I would never forget" (Lisa).

In previous years, teacher candidates demonstrated their "fit" with teaching standards *in order to* achieve certification (*poesis*); during the year described herein, we encouraged teacher candidates to engage critically and collaboratively with the standards for *the sake of* the profession and the moral integrity of teaching[6] (*praxis*). The degree to which we succeeded only others can judge.

Notes

1 A team of instructors from the University of British Columbia including Drs. Gaalen Erickson, Teresa Dobson, Heather Kelleher, and myself collaboratively conceived and initiated the community web in a course entitled Principles of Teaching, taught by Drs. Kelleher and Phelan. While Erickson and Dobson brought knowledge of educational technology, Phelan and Kelleher, as course instructors, structured engagement with the teaching standards both in the context of face-to-face and online dialogues.
2 Dr. Teresa Dobson was the administrator of the wiki. She set up the initial wiki project by creating a digital space for exchange for teacher candidates within the Community and Inquiry in Teacher Education cohort. Dr. Dobson also facilitated one of the workshops modeling wiki use.
3 The wiki project described in this chapter was part of a larger twelve-month doctoral research study. For those interested in the research methodology, please see chapters 1–2 of this doctoral dissertation study titled "Exploring Literacy Pedagogy with Digital Technologies in Teacher Education" (Vratulis 2010). This query was not answered. Should it be Dobson and Vratulis 2009? I don't find it in the text anywhere.
4 Class time was devoted to the community web process; more often than not, groups worked independently of instructors.
5 This vignette is drawn from Vetta Vratulis' research field notes from the class session.
6 The intention was to submit the community web to the British Columbia College of Teachers as a collective portfolio and that all teacher candidates would be certified as a result. This is precisely what happened.
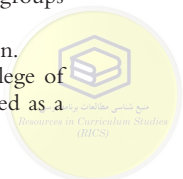
Part III

Figuring the teacher

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Chapter 8

The teacher as idealist

Fantasies about perfect pedagogy pervade teacher education, denying the complexity of teachers' work in the face of the overwhelming diversity of interests, abilities, and biographies in any classroom. Performativity regimes exploit such idealizations and the anxieties they incur, rendering early career teachers subject to external control and curbing their capacity for independent thought and action.

A rush to paradise: the phantasy of perfection

> On the morning of 14 November 1928 an official of the Cowichan Lake Logging Company came upon a grisly scene in the teacher's residence at Nixon Creek, an isolated logging camp on the southwest shore of Cowichan Lake on Vancouver Island. Upon entering the three-room dwelling, they were horrified to find the body of the teacher, twenty-year-old Mabel Jones, stretched out on her back on the floor in the sitting room with a .22 rifle beside her. The post-mortem report coldly described "a bullet wound of entrance on the front of the chest just to the left of the mid-line with about it a powder-burn." A note was found . . . Miss Jones wrote: *"There are a few people who would like to see me out of the way, so I am trying to please them. . . . I know this is a coward's way of doing things, but what they said about me almost broke my heart. They are not true. Forgive me, please. Say it was an accident."*
>
> (Wilson 1991: 202)

The complaints registered against Mabel Jones by a small minority of parents included: the flag left continually flying, children entering the schoolhouse in a disorderly manner, lack of schoolroom discipline, and pupils' wanton use of their scribblers (Wilson 1991). The coroner's report issued a clear-cut verdict: "Mabel Estelle Jones came to her death whilst temporarily insane" (p. 201). The jury was of the opinion, however, that the teacher's mental state was "the result of unjustifiable, unfeeling and underhanded criticisms of her work on the part of two members of the school board," and recommended finding ways to liberate teachers in such small, isolated school districts "from the gossip of irresponsible and petty citizens" (Wilson 1991: 202–3).

Idealizations of perfect love, perfect pedagogy, and perfect authority pervade both the parents' demands and the teacher's tragic response. The need to believe in perfection, in an ideal object that is completely satisfying and that therefore must be "true and unchanging" (Britzman 2009: 17), is inevitably disturbed by tragedy: "a fall into suffering when ideality is disillusioned" (p. 17–18). Those involved invariably are destroyed or destroy themselves. Mabel Jones is demonized for failing to live up to her own and others' fantasies. She could neither bear the burden of her perceived imperfection nor the inevitable disillusionment it wrought. While irresponsible and petty, perhaps, such idealizations were sufficiently powerful to lead one teacher to abandon independence of thought (however modest for women in the early twentieth century) and to take her own life because "it had become intolerable to her in that lonely settlement in the deep woods of Vancouver Island" (*The Vancouver Province* in Wilson 1991: 203).

The tragic death of Mabel Jones illustrates the conditions affecting the lives of teachers in rural schools in early-twentieth-century British Columbia, Canada, when loneliness, isolation, and difficult and inhospitable communities were the order of the day.[1] The experience of teaching has undoubtedly changed in the last century, but questions about what teaching does to teachers still resonate (Grumet 1981; Lortie 1975; Munro 1998; Prentice and Theobald 1991). Teachers then and now want to make a contribution but in light of their inheritance (in the form of policy and practice), they worry about the quality of that contribution. Teachers' intrasubjective experiences of self-doubt, loneliness, helplessness, and efforts at overachievement (fueled by desire for and need to believe in perfection) signal intimate problems of becoming a human subject, specifically, the human susceptibility to forms of control and regulation (Pitt and Phelan 2005).

Historically in Canada, powerful community members played a significant but informal role in regulating teacher identities and practices in remote areas; this was buttressed by a formal state inspectorate system (Wilson 1991). The inspectorate system was eventually replaced by bureaucratic forms of regulation at the provincial level, including a hierarchy of superintendents, principals, and parent advisory councils. The end of the twentieth century witnessed a new form of teacher regulation when professionalism, in the form of teaching councils, became the policy technology of choice in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario (see Grimmett and Young 2012). In the contemporary educational climate of advanced (neo)liberalism, older policy technologies of professionalism and bureaucracy persist across Canadian provinces[2] but are under increasing threat from performativity regimes (Lyotard 1984), which seek to supplant them as a mode of regulation of teachers, teaching, and teacher education.

Performativity is a mode of regulation that uses judgments, comparisons, and displays as means of incentive, control, and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic) (Ball 2003). The performances of individual teachers or schools serve as measures of output or displays of quality; as such, they represent the value (not the *values*) of the teacher or her organization within a particular field of judgment. "The issue of who controls the field of

judgment is crucial" (Ball 2003: 216). In light of manufactured, social anxieties about uncertain educational and economic futures, renewed efforts to idealize teaching commingle with the "profession's unconscious wish for absolute knowledge" (Britzman 2011: 81); both serve as a defense against uncertainty, giving at least "the illusion of certainty towards a safe tomorrow" (Gunder and Hillier 2009: 59). While the absence of authority in the form of a conclusive foundation for teaching practice produces one form of teacher anxiety, another emerges from the ubiquitous authority emanating from both formal (state) and informal (school culture) policies emphasizing performativity (Levin 1998; McGowan 2013).

In what follows, I illustrate and examine the way in which performativity, as a policy technology, regulates teaching and teachers by fostering idealizations and exploiting new teachers' anxieties about themselves, their teaching, and the organizations to which they belong. Seduced to abandon their independence of thought and practice, teachers' subjective existence – their relations to themselves, their colleagues, and their practice – is substantially transformed. I conclude by exploring the role of teacher educators in addressing the question of belief as we prepare new teachers to live well within regimes of performativity.

A wishful retreat: belief as illusion

In Freud's (2004) "The Future of an Illusion," he offers a critique of religion and argues that belief is rooted in illusion and not knowledge. Belief becomes illusion, Freud argues, when a wish fulfillment is a dominant factor in its motivation. Wishfulness includes a denial of reality, allowing a kind of blissful but false sense perception, even as we recognize its dangers and try to divest ourselves of the fear (Taubman 2012). However, the passionate attachment accrued to the illusion is ambivalent: "[M]oving as quickly from the realm of pleasure to the inevitable frustrations that accompany the prohibition against desire" (Farley 2010: 11). In such moments, we learn of our human vulnerability – that we cannot have all that we wish for and that our satisfactions depend on (often unreliable) others. The fact of dependency produces a paradox: we attribute to others the power to protect us from the anxiety that comes with feelings of vulnerability; however, those are the same relations that create our sense of powerlessness and which we hope to address. In effect, yearning for the illusion – God, certainty, love, or knowledge – is "identical with the need for protection against the consequences of human powerlessness" (Freud 1927/2004: 130). Farley (2010) explains further:

> Freud notes a complex of fear and protection that he understands to underlie the belief in God: the ego resolves the problem of vulnerability by giving power away: "creating for himself gods of whom he is afraid . . . and to whom he nevertheless assigns his protection (Freud 1927/2004: 130)."
>
> (Farley 2010: 11)
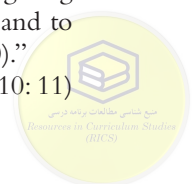
What is of particular concern is the tendency to relinquish the capacity for thought and judgment in exchange for the mistaken certainty of belief. Freud's chief objection to religious belief, writes Farley (2010), points to its regressive features: religion allowed/invited "a wishful retreat" (p. 12) from facing the sheer magnitude of uncertainty and unpredictability that constitutes human reality.

Julia Kristeva (2009) sees belief as neither illusion nor neurosis but a condition of continued but finite existence. She writes:

> Whether I belong to a religion, whether I be agnostic or atheist, when I say "I believe," I mean "I hold as true.". . . It is a matter of truth . . . that I hold for vital, absolute, indisputable, a truth that keeps me, makes me exist.
>
> (Kristeva 2009: 3)

While this insight holds true for all human beings, Kristeva (2009) posits the figure of the adolescent as vivid illustration. Adolescence involves a process of maturation and as such is a time of inner turmoil that includes internal battles between instincts and the superego, refusal or revival of previous identifications and the search for new ones, self-engrossment, and self-belittlement (Deutsch 1967). While adolescence is a test of maturity, "its answers are vulnerable and subject to the defense of ideality, where knowledge is either good or bad, where friends are either loyal or pretenders, and where the line between convictions and absolutism blurs" (Britzman 2009: 16). The adolescent is the quintessential believer who "seeks belonging through idealization of the object of its desire: person, idea or idol" (Kristeva 2009: 14). The search for "a jubilant belonging to the world" (p. 10) – which does not exist per se but is needed to feel as if it does exist – is a search for meaningfulness and the hope that what we do matters and will matter after we've gone. The terrible beauty of the belief in perfection, evident for Kristeva (2009) in the passionate attachment of Romeo and Juliet, lies in the inevitably coupling of ideality with disillusionment (Britzman 2009).

Idealities of adolescence repeat in the professional imaginary "through the ways in which the passion to know becomes confused with the need to believe" (Britzman 2009: 9). Britzman argues that adolescence's internal conflicts, fantasies, and defenses return in professional knowledge as demands for certainty. Drawing on Deutsch's (1967) insight that the adolescent lives her life between two worlds, one that has thus far complied with her demands and one that now demands her compliance, Britzman (2009) links this tension of authority and psychical history to Kristeva's (2009) interpretation of the "adolescent syndrome of ideality" (p. 716) as a defense against the loss of the object (Britzman 2009: 5). In learning to become a teacher, she explains, student teachers trade uncertainty about encountering their own students and thoughts about their own development for an idealization of the role of teacher. "As phantasy," she writes, "it also carries a defense in the form of an idealization of curriculum that is then symbolically equated with the teacher's authority" (p. 6–7). Student teachers want strategies and techniques that will guarantee successful pedagogy,

and any discussion of "the messy lives" of teachers and students or "the murky underworld of subjectivity" (p. 3) is seen as undermining that possibility. Lesson plans with orienting objectives become love objects. Educational relations, however, tend not to comply, and the question of teacher authority emerges. The problem is that not all students are "good students" who just learn and then move on; there are those "bad students" who don't comply and who pose an impossible question for the student teacher: "Should one be pedagogical friend or foe?" (p. 7). In the face of such students, indeed perhaps any students, student teachers want to just teach (or teach their subject) and, according to Britzman (2009), believe in what they know about how to control their students.

> Defenses against the wild side of learning expose the situation of adolescence – the one my students thought they left behind and the one that returns in their idealization of knowledge, the teacher's authority, and the splitting into good and bad.
>
> (Britzman 2009: 7)

The problem with confusing the passion to know with the need to believe is that ambivalence is traded for an inflexible absolutism. We are all adolescents, Kristeva (2009) reminds us, when we are enthralled by the absolute. Recently, one of my own students, Nadia, nearing the end of her teacher education program, insisted that there is indeed a direct link between teachers' knowledge of Mathematics and student achievement in the discipline, "even though research doesn't show it . . . I see it in classrooms that I've volunteered in." While Nadia's need to believe in the power of her knowledge of Mathematics may avert any feeling of vulnerability as a beginning teacher, it does point to how powerful myths lend themselves to idealization in these testing times.

Belief in measured time: a case study[3]

Within a regime of performativity, power lies in the repressive function of the state, the market, and in the capacity of the school (and, within schools, individual teachers) to accumulate value (attractive to prospective parents who scan the league tables in search of the best school) in the form of high achievement scores (Barrett 2006). In British Columbia, Canada, the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is administered each year to students in grades 4 and 7 in all schools, private and public, to measure achievement in mathematics, reading, and writing. Over the past decade, FSA results have received increased attention in the province because of annual school rankings produced by the right-wing, business-funded think tank, The Fraser Institute, and published annually as the *B.C. Education Report Card* in the two of the largest newspapers in the province (Poole 2007). The ten top-ranked schools are independent (private), fee-paying institutions whose continued existence depends in large part on their capacity to achieve and communicate their value in the form of achievement scores.

Newport is a top-ranking Kindergarten–Grade 12 independent school in British Columbia, where Clare has worked for three years. From Clare's point of view, the "overarching, guiding theme . . . is that . . . we are preparing [the students] for these tests." While she expresses some regret about the stress that both children and teachers endure, she sees no option other than deference to "the school's mentality":

> If you're there, you're buying into the system that the school has and the school does have ultimate control over kind of the way that they work, and certain things are more rigid . . . there are certain things I never have control over.

The logic of the system of influence is that of production accountability – school and provincial targets and indicators. Clare acknowledges that her input (transmitting knowledge and skills to students and motivating them to learn) must produce an output (a measurable amount of student achievement) in the form of FSA scores (Madrone and Placier 2000).

Being an independent school, Newport's success on the FSAs is closely related to parental satisfaction and the desirability of the school to new clients. Clare explains that parents "really recognize that they pay a lot of money for this education and they want to make sure that they are getting what they want." As such, "the parents truly feel that they have a right to have a say in how things happen." Parent-teacher meetings are booked solid. Some parents are constantly in the building asking questions. Clare believes that excessive parental involvement constitutes "an infringement on [teachers'] autonomy." There are direct criticisms issued from parents who have a constant presence in the school, she discloses, but even in the case of those parents who do not frequent the building, there are the "feelings of criticisms."

Caught in "a web of visibilities . . . and private embarrassments" (Rose 1999: 73), parental scrutiny, real and imagined, is heightened by surveillance by the school administrators who, in Clare's perception, are "always there . . . always around!" The vice-principal approaches her directly when her judgment is seen to fall short of school rules or her behavior is deemed unprofessional. During such moments, Clare describes herself as feeling "horrified," "awful," "humiliated," "angry," and "not very professional." Being "questioned by authority" leads her to believe she "must have made the wrong decision," thereby learning to "second guess" her judgments and actions. The ensuing anxiety is linked to the injunction to reshape herself in the interest of the school.

There is no uncertainty about what constitutes the interest of Newport school and nothing is left to chance. School leaders not only monitor Clare's students' test performance, they take a very active role in producing her pedagogy. The vice-principal mentors her closely in a particular ideological and pedagogical direction – the hailing of "standardized tests as opportunities to showcase good teaching and amazing students." "Good teaching" is, in this instance, a

technology (best practice) that delivers, can be measured, and can be imparted to teachers. Instructionally, there is a striking resemblance to nineteenth-century Australia, when teachers were seen as having "little academic knowledge and only trained to teach in the one 'right' way" (Musgrave 1984: 7). When pedagogy is reduced to one right way, to "best practice," there are few judgments for teachers to make; "irresponsibly, and in good conscience, one simply applies or implements a program" and teaching becomes the simple application of a pre-specified method (Derrida 1992: 41). Idealization of best practice may defend against new teachers' uncertainties about the adequacy of their own pedagogical approaches or curriculum knowledge; it may also defend against feelings of aggression toward students (Taubman 2009).

Clare is offered a kind of individualized, competitive form of agency in which collective action or resistance seems unthinkable; there are many rewards for the teacher who complies. When her students outperform her colleague's and her colleague is removed from test-taking grade levels (a public shaming), "it created a shift in [their] relationship" but "it made [Clare] feel good in some ways." As her students' test scores show steady improvement over a three-year period, Clare witnesses the material effects of best practice – that perfect pedagogy – on her reputation and on the school's standing provincially; before long, she assumes the role of credentialed marker of the Foundation Skills Assessments on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

> [W]hen I marked in the summer . . . at one point, all of the bundles of essays were mixed up and we were in a room with 30 or 40 markers and the guy at the front of the room, one of the leaders, said "I've got to read you this story out loud," and read it to the markers, and it was one of the kids . . . that I had team-taught but it was amazing, and the kid had written an amazing story and that was really rewarding . . . making a very specific difference in one area that we put a lot of emphasis on but . . . that is working. So that was very rewarding. An empowering feeling!
>
> (Clare)

In a moment of triumphant heroism, Clare is rewarded with an increasing sense of efficacy as a teacher and a growing faith in the power of best practice. However, the illusion of perfection is ambivalent: while her success is a tremendous source of pleasure, it is also a source of frustration as she recognizes how little autonomy she can assert in spite of it. However, any realization that she cannot have all that she wishes for as a teacher – creativity, intellectual dissent – is offset by a "wishful retreat" from uncertainty and performance anxiety (Farley 2010: 12); her position at the school is secure, for now.

The wishful retreat from the reality of Newport – teacher shaming, constant surveillance, undue pressure on students, and fearful anticipation of results – through idealizations of student achievement and best practices is inadequate without the phantasy of community that lends meaning to Clare's school life.
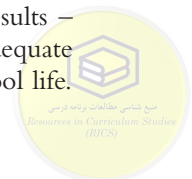
It is the sense of belonging, Kristeva (2009) argues, that allows us to tolerate what we might recognize as problematic and to recover some meaning nonetheless. Despite acknowledging the stress induced by the system of conditional regard and the extent of teacher surveillance at Newport, Clare extols the virtues of the school community. She speaks proudly of competent colleagues and able students; she admires the accomplishments of her principal in bringing the school this far; she admits to a shared "pride and a lot of prestige associated with the school tied to *our* ranking and *our* continually improving *our* status [emphasis added]." The bond created through "shared" success is a powerful one, sutured into place by rewards – conference funding, smart boards – endowed by her principal, "always [with] the understanding that . . . it allowed [her] to help prepare for the Foundation Skills Assessment."

In effect, Clare attributes to the school leadership the power to protect her from the very anxiety and sense of vulnerability their leadership induces. She describes the school community in terms of family: the principal as benevolent father who endows rewards to successful teachers, the vice-principal as the mother who manages relations among school personnel and promotes the value of the school, and the teachers who are often addressed as children by the principal. Families are notoriously thought of as non- or apolitical because it is here that humans become entirely private; at Newport teachers are deprived of the opportunity to debate the ideology of the school with one another. In the Newport school family, there seems to be no room for any reality other than the established one. And yet, contrary to such imposition of "one interest and one opinion" (Arendt 1958/1998: 46), is the social bond to which Clare testifies. A sense of belonging to something greater than one's self – school success – is a powerfully seductive idealization in an era of performativity, despite its conditionality or univocal quality. Behind the mythical harmony of shared interest stands the fiction that all is well here; there is nothing to question, deliberate, or decide.

The crux of the matter is that in the context of performativity regimes, the school faculty must be considered a single subject. The attempt is to limit the sphere of difference among teachers, to marshal power in ways that attempt to impose particular desired outcomes, irrespective of who the people are who are shunted aside or shamed in the process (Madrone and Placier 2000). The human bond is eradicated, leaving only the syndrome of ideality that comes with the acting out of the challenge of "buying in" or opting out altogether.

There is much more to Clare than the foregoing narrative can ever capture – her dreams, moods, instincts, and desires – but perhaps what is clear is that in joining Newport school, she has become enveloped by a paradisiac pedagogy and a singular ideology of "success." Such idealizations or fantasies sustain Clare's understanding of reality and the possibility that her reality means something. Fantasies reinforce her sense that she is recognized by what Lacan (1970/2006) referred to as "the big Other, that is society or God or some agency"; in Clare's

case, the school administration or clientele that she presupposes can guarantee her worth (Taubman 2012: 147). The fantasies of best practice, educational achievement, or school success "defend against the lack within our selves and the fallibility of the big Other, against a sense of meaninglessness, against the possibility of our own freedom, and against the knowledge of our complicity in our own suffering" (p. 147).

Seen in this light, beginning teaching in a time of performativity takes on a different complexion. Teacher induction becomes less a matter of belonging to a profession in which ideas about what constitutes education are contested and more a matter of joining schools as organizations where the need to believe is marshaled in the service of performativity. And, as Arendt (2006) taught us: joining and idealizing are a toxic mixture.

A lethal combination: joining and idealizing

The recent release of the movie *Hannah Arendt* (2012) unleashed emotional commentary that parallels the debate Arendt herself stirred over fifty years ago when she reported on the trial of notorious war criminal Adolf Eichmann. Eichmann defended genocide and the extermination of the Jews by appealing to a fatherland morality. He spoke of the "necessity of a total war" and depended on his oath to Hitler and the Nazi flag, a bond he called "the highest duty" (Berkowitz 2013). At that time, Arendt (2006) famously allowed that Eichmann had no motives and that "it was nothing more than misfortune that made [him] a willing instrument in the organization" (p. 279) of mass murder, but she did not mean that he was unaware of the Holocaust. Rather, he acted dutifully and thoughtlessly as part of a movement, believing that he was part of something great, grandiose, and historic. Evil, Arendt concluded, is done not by evil monsters but by ordinary joiners. That evil, Arendt argued, originates in the neediness of lonely, alienated, bourgeois people who live lives so devoid of higher meaning that they give themselves fully to movements (Berkowitz 2013; Arendt 2006). It is the meaning Eichmann finds as part of the Nazi movement that leads him to do anything and sacrifice everything. Joiners are not unintelligent but, given the circumstances, they do abandon their capacity to think for themselves in exchange for security and belonging.

Wendy Brown (2010) argues that it is precisely the insecurity and alienation of late moderns that neo-liberalism, and its associated regime of performativity, evokes and repairs. Rather than produce despair about meaninglessness, neo-liberalization actually seizes upon the extent to which human beings in late modernity experience a kind of directionlessness. It tells them what they should do, Brown explains, how to understand oneself as a tiny fragment of human capital which needs to understand its own value by making appropriate choices and investing in suitable things. Without providing meaning, neo-liberalism, she argues, is an ideology that provides direction.

The danger for the teaching profession is that neo-liberal idealizations prey upon newcomers. In the absence of thoughtful induction into the profession, new teachers, like Clare, are systematically "deprofessionalized" and "reprofessionalized" in the image of the desirable subject of performativity in their respective school districts or schools (Seddon 1997). Successful teaching, determined solely by student learning (regardless of what is taught or how), usurps *good* teaching – shaped by moral engagement with particular children, the context of the learning, and the methods employed (Fenstermacher and Richardson 2005). Thoughtfulness about one's own sense of purpose as an educator becomes largely irrelevant as teachers find themselves having to set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live a life of calculation (Ball 2003) and illusion (Freud 2004). Individual or professional *values* are replaced with a concern with individual teacher *value*: teachers are concerned that what they do will not be captured or represented by systems of accountability and measurement. Teachers' sense of why they do what they do – because they believe in what they are doing – is replaced with questions of self-worth and confidence rather than engagement in collegial or public debate about educational significance: Am I doing the right thing? Am I doing enough? What will happen if my students' scores don't meet expectations? Individual performance anxiety is reflected in the collective anxiety of a profession. In Ontario, Canada, a striking 18% of new teachers are at risk of leaving the profession (Clark and Antonelli 2009), while a recent survey of Saskatchewan teachers found that over 50% would leave teaching if they had another viable career option (Martin, Dolmage and Sharpe 2012).

A key aspect of this state of affairs is that teacher identity becomes less a matter of what Bernstein (2000) terms "mechanisms of introjection" – whereby "the identity finds its core in its place in an organization of knowledge and practice"– rather than a matter of "projection" – whereby professional identity is "a reflection of external contingencies" within a discourse of performativity and market (p. 70). Professional knowledge is restricted to strategy. The return on a particular pedagogy is enough to secure its exclusive implementation. I witnessed this complex of anxiety and protection recently when observing teachers eagerly flood into a room where a teaching colleague shared her "successful" early literacy strategies: another perfect pedagogy, with no need for further professional discussion; the excitement was palpable. By committing themselves to idealist fictions, distortions of uncertain and unpredictable practice, new teachers can abandon their capacity to think for themselves and to embrace the encounter with moral particularity and judgment that education demands of them. Teachers become susceptible to forms of control and willingly relinquish judgment in exchange for the mistaken certainty of belief. The upshot is an "obedience that is not coerced but is willingly accepted" (Stern and Yarbrough 1978: 373).

The question becomes how educators might hold onto the idea of belief, and this astonishing need that human beings have to believe, while not letting those beliefs fall into idealization and fundamentalism.

Teacher education: belief as condition for questioning

Teacher candidates come to teacher education with many idealizations about the teacher they wish to become. Teacher educators, in our turn, offer many others: reflective practice, critical pedagogy, communities of practice, developmentally appropriate practices, and other idealities to hopeful recipients, all in good faith. Idealizations can be dangerous because they refute the plurality of the world even as they issue from the interference of others. Idealizations reject the vulnerability of teachers, students, and parents as daily each intrudes upon the other; and they refuse the human capacity to think, act, and suffer alongside that very vulnerability. Simply put, idealizations, though very human in themselves, can invite the disappearance of humanity from the world of schooling.

However, the incredible need to believe that gives birth to idealization also enables teachers to find meaning and to stave off momentarily the disillusionment that accompanies the loss of idealization that comes with the realization that absolute knowledge, perfect love, or seamless authority are fantasies (Farley 2010). The necessity for beginning teachers to confront the defenses of idealization may mark an important role for teacher educators. Kristeva (2009) tells us that the analyst's job is to hear, acknowledge, and authenticate the adolescent's need to believe. Recognizing "the pleasure-seeking, idealizing path" taken by aspiring teachers, as well as sharing our own idealizations, allows the teacher educator sufficient credibility to be able "to metabolize the need to believe . . . into the pleasure of thinking, questioning and analyzing" (p. 20).

For Kristeva (2009), therefore, belief is not a matter of giving ourselves over completely to idealization; she contradicts Freud's concerns about the loss of thought and judgment and the human susceptibility to control. Instead, she reminds us that belief is necessary at a very basic level for us to speak. Farley (2010) explains:

> And it is here where belief comes to matter in a very particular way, for while speech is a substitute for lack, it depends first on the belief that what one says can matter; and is possible at all, even in the anxious awareness that these linguistic efforts are always already subject to slippage, ambiguity and disarray.
>
> (p. 16)

Belief is a condition for speech, to continue to make meaning in the context of living and teaching. As such, belief becomes a reprieve from the "oceanic feeling" that can overwhelm so that teachers, like Mabel Jones, do "not fall out of this world" (Freud 2005: 388).

Notes

1 Compared to domestic service and other occupations open to women at the time, teaching offered many attractions – economic independence, a modest social status, and a sense of accomplishment. Despite oppressive structures that maintained a patriarchal order,
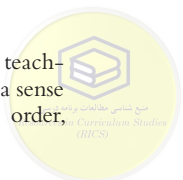
women were not entirely passive victims of that oppression (Prentice and Theobald 1991). For example, in the mid-nineteenth century, some teachers (lady-principals in fashionable academies) began to carve out for themselves an area of autonomy while at the same time colluding in their own and their students' oppression as women (Prentice and Theobald 1991).

2 Grimmett and Young (2012) argue that the signing of the Agreement on Internal Trade (Canada's labor mobility agreement) by all the nation's provincial and territorial premiers in 2008 is a strong indication of the degree to which governments view education as an economic commodity.

3 The research study (Pitt and Phelan 2008) from which I draw this case study is entitled "Paradoxes of Autonomy in Professional Life." The study was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The purpose of the study was to investigate the qualities, conditions, and difficulties of autonomy in professional life. Guided by discussions of autonomy in the humanities, the social sciences, and the human service literature, the inquiry involved in-depth phenomenological interviews with thirty-six practicing teachers at different junctures in their teaching careers – early career, mid-course, and nearing retirement. Teacher participants are drawn from Ontario and British Columbia, Canada.

Chapter 9

Virtues of a heartless teacher

Speaking our truths as educators

On May 21, 2013, the Court of Appeal for British Columbia, Canada, ruled that school districts must not unduly restrict teachers' right to express their concerns about educational issues in schools. The ruling came in the wake of a grievance filed by the teachers of Cranbrook who had participated in the British Columbia Teachers' Federation's 2008 campaign entitled "When Will They Learn?" contesting cuts to students with special needs, school closures, and overcrowded classrooms. Teachers had received a directive from the school district that, in the interest of students, political posters and information could not be exhibited in school hallways, classrooms, or on school grounds. Madame Justice Levine ruled that there was no evidence of any harm to students. "On the contrary," she wrote:

> Canadian jurisprudence . . . stands for the principle that open communication and debate about public, political issues is a hallmark of the free and democratic society the Charter is designed to protect. Children live in this diverse and multi-cultural society, and exposing them to diverse societal views and opinions is an important part of their educational experience.
>
> (Levine 2013 in Lambert 2013: 1)

The impact of this ruling has yet to be seen in similar cases, such as that in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, where teachers were prevented, by their school district, from wearing tee shirts reciting the ironic words of Dr. Seuss' feisty little turtle who dared to question the demands of the despotic King Yertle[1]: "I know up on the top you are seeing great sights, but down here on the bottom, we too should have rights" (Dr. Seuss 1958).

Moments of teachers' self-expression and responses to them provoke many questions, not the least of which is whether teachers may assume an attitude of questioning and speak their truths. A recent report, entitled "The Road to Health: A Final Report on School Safety" (School Safety Community Advisory Panel 2007), commissioned by the largest school board in Ontario,

Canada, questioned teachers and students about school violence. An astoundingly large number of teachers and students attested to the fact that violent events, sexual assaults, and harassment occur in schools but cannot be reported. While the young people justified their reticence in terms of fear of the police, their parents, and each other, the teachers explained theirs in terms of fear of retaliation on the part of school board administration and damaging effects on their careers (Pitt and Phelan 2008). If the report is to be believed, a significant proportion of teachers work in a culture of fear and silence, and there is little evidence of teachers' engagement with one another, with school leadership, or with the communities they serve about shared educational concerns. Some would argue that this state of affairs makes teaching itself untenable because the very capacity to pursue and speak one's truths is what makes a life in teaching livable in an era of globalization when teaching is reduced to job training (Smith 2000). Whether such truths are moral, political, or intellectual, they must be struggled over through the course of a life in teaching in moments of activity and contemplative pause, judgment and hesitation, solitude and solidarity. Here, Smith (2000) is signaling the importance of political existence for teachers.

Political existence (Arendt 1958) indicates a space wherein teachers, coming from a plurality of standpoints, can engage one another, educational leaders, and community members in animated discussion about educational (nonmaterialistic, noneconomic) concerns and find "joy in argument" (Villa 2008: 101). Through the exchange of arguments, where the latter can be received and have an impact, teachers begin to feel a shared world that makes a meaningful life together possible. Freedom needs the company of those others who are equal enough in terms of power to allow communication but sufficiently distinct to make conversation worthwhile, that is, capable of interrupting preformed assumptions and prejudices. Such engagement will eventually result in insight, Arendt (1994) promises, "a glimpse . . . of the frightening light of truth" (p. 322). Frightening because truth always reveals something unexpected and sometimes unwanted (Phelan 2011).

To exist politically involves a particular quality of association, one that is not based on a common identity, a shared morality, or mutual recognition of qualifications or talents (Biesta 2010a). Arendt rejects as antipolitical any form of social relationship "that corrode[s] and undermine[s] the primary characteristics of politics, that is, rationality, pluralism, and freedom" (Hardt 2009: 1). This raises challenges for a profession that has been characterized by forms of relation that are largely social and interpersonal, focused on collegial sharing and assisting (Little 1990), and that have the effect of fusing individual teachers' perspectives in vision or mission statements rather than underscoring them. What I illustrate and examine in this chapter is the quality of relation that needs to be cultivated among teachers if they are to exist politically. What type of relation allows teachers to appear in the world and
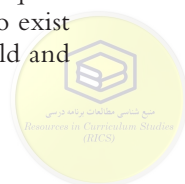
to enable others to appear? What might the idea of teachers existing politi-
cally mean for teacher education?

Existing politically: an argument for heartlessness

Mary McCarthy, writer, and Hannah Arendt, political philosopher, shared a long
and vital intellectual friendship. Their relationship is emblematic of the kind
of detached relation that both believed vital to political existence. Their par-
ticular mode of relation was characterized by their preference for solitude over
solidarity, so while they shared perspectives on many public issues of their day
and "always ended up on the same side" in many debates, they were "usually
alone" (Nelson 2006: 86). Unlike other progressive thinkers of the latter half of
the twentieth century who embraced the imagined healing power of empathy
as the glue of solidarity and as relief from pain,[2] Arendt and McCarthy sought
to segregate love from politics and isolate its dangerous powers (Hardt 2009).
Their rejection of "bonds of intimacy and group identification" (p. 87) as the
path to social justice marked them as pariahs or outcasts (Nelson 2006).

Both McCarthy and Arendt feared that consolations such as intimacy, empa-
thy, and solidarity – love – acted as a kind of anaesthetic to reality, allowing
one to avoid suffering and its transformative power. To turn away from real-
ity and the suffering it provokes is to find escape in self-delusion and to avoid
self-alteration, which for them was a precondition of social change. The task of
facing reality is painful. One cannot ever know how facing the facts will change
one, which means that in addition to the potential pain of self-transformation,
there is also the discomfort of uncertainty and the anxiety of unpredictability
(Nelson 2006). Maximum exposure to cold, hard facts could be best achieved
by "remaining alone while sharing the world with others," and it was this expo-
sure that they sought to preserve (Nelson 2006: 89). What made something a
fact for McCarthy, be it an event or person or text, was less its informational
content than its capacity to resist manipulation, support thought, and alter the
observer (Nelson 2006).

Caught between two extremes, neither wanted to elevate pain or to remain
indifferent to it. Nelson (2006) explains that both women were drawn to suf-
fering "as a problem to be explored and yet remained deeply suspicious of its
attractions" (p. 88). They were wary of the manner in which identity politics,
therapy and confessional culture, and trauma studies reflected a North American
preoccupation with pain and supplied an overabundance of meaning in North
American culture. In discourses where pain is a serious ethical and political
question, as it was for them, "the explanatory authority of trauma has rendered
unintelligible both ordinary suffering and the *ordinariness* of suffering" (p. 88).

"It is easy," writes Nelson (2006) "to confuse their toughness with indiffer-
ence or callousness, but that would be to misconstrue their project. They sought
not relief from pain but heightened sensitivity to what they called reality"

(p. 88). Their toleration for pain – indeed, their insistence on its ordinariness – is a part of their eccentricity.

The ethics of the Arendt-McCarthy friendship offer a counter tradition to the prevailing conception of ethics as coming face-to face with the other; for them the ethical encounter entails coming face-to-face with reality in the presence of others (Nelson 2006). The assumption is that one cannot come face-to-face with the other and reality at the same time. This brings to mind a story related by Audre Lorde about a mother who, in an effort to protect her child from the pain of racism, tells her daughter that the woman who spits is spitting into the wind and is not spitting at her, a black child. Lorde insists that while the desire for protection is understandable, it fails to protect. She argues throughout her work that we should not be protected from what hurts. In keeping with the Arendtian-McCarthian view, she believed that one has "to work and struggle not so much to feel hurt but to notice what causes hurt, which means unlearning what we have learned not to notice" (Ahmed 2009: 216). For Arendt and McCarthy, facing reality meant looking directly at the unpleasant aspects of experience and avoiding self-delusion. Facing reality begins a process of transformation and self-transformation that, for them, is a precondition of larger social change.

The rule of heartlessness is not to be construed as insensitivity. The aloneness that Arendt and McCarthy cultivated entailed resensitizing, "becoming more open and more responsive to the world, including the most difficult realities of a tragic century" (Nelson 2006: 100). The price they were willing to pay, according to Nelson, was psychic discomfort and their reputations.

The rejection of empathy on the grounds of political relationship may seem unthinkable. It may appear even more so when we think about relations among and between teachers. One may find in this rejection, however, the seeds of a conception of relations that might constitute political existence for teachers. Do the norms of collegiality in schools support this "detached quality of relation" (Nelson 2006: 86) that Arendt felt necessary for political existence? Should they?

Detachment refused?

At first glance, the "persistence of privacy" among teachers suggests fertile ground for detached relations, providing escape from bonds of intimacy and group identification that constrain political existence (Little 1990: 530). Little argues that school teaching has endured largely "as an assemblage of entrepreneurial individuals whose autonomy is grounded in norms of privacy and non-interference and is sustained by the very organization of teaching work" (p. 530). However, while privacy and solitude allowed Arendt and McCarthy to nurture independent thought in preparation for a lifetime of public action, Little argues there is little motivation for teachers to come into the public because engaging other colleagues exposes one to possible criticism and conflict and also serves to underscore the uncertainties of classroom practice (Little 1990; Pitt and Phelan 2008). Little (1990) expresses a distinct lack of confidence that

advocated forms of teacher collaboration are sufficiently substantive to "force teachers" collective confrontation with the school's fundamental purposes or with the implications of the pattern of practices that have accumulated over time' (p. 531), in other words, to exist politically.

But why, one may ask, would criticism and conflict be so problematic in a contested field such as Education? The problem is that teaching is seen as serving the public but not in the service of creating publics (Smith 2000), an insight reflected in the dominant forms of teacher collegiality including social and interpersonal interaction, provision of aid and assistance, and joint work (Little 1990). While each of these differs from one another in terms of the degree of mutual obligation they induce, the level of exposure of teachers' work to scrutiny, and the ways in which they support teacher initiative, my interest here is in the degree to which these forms of collegiality support or undermine political existence in the Arendtian sense.

Social and interpersonal relations

Social and interpersonal relations among teachers are characterized by storytelling and scanning for ideas, often occurring during coffee breaks in the staffroom or in the hallways, "on the run in short intervals . . . just a little bit here or there"[3] (Pitt and Phelan 2006). School staffs that exchange stories may be close, offering camaraderie, sympathy, and moral support, but rarely engaging one another in close examinations of practice and policy (Little 1990). In such circumstances, teaching remains private; the upside is that teachers may be able to maintain a sense of independent thought and practice. Moreover, teachers often express job satisfaction as such schools can make for comfortable workplaces. However, if teachers form what one teacher described as a "tight-knit" group, school culture can become "very parochial . . . townish," and "people who might say or do things that . . . rock the boat . . . are viewed as pariahs" (Pitt and Phelan 2006). "Getting along" can become paramount so controversial issues are circumvented rather than tackled forthrightly. In a recent study of teachers' workplace relationships in Alberta, Canada, Kairen Cullen (2002) found that the "constantly reiterated official line" in schools was that "conflict, negative emotion and tensions between teachers, although present, are relatively rare, inherently unproblematic and of minor import" (p. 54). If political existence requires "active antagonism which threatens the sense in consensus or in sensibility" then teachers working in schools where social and personal relations predominate may find existing politically challenging (Berlant 2008: 11). The political sphere may be viewed more as a field of threat, chaos, or degradation rather than a condition of possibility (Berlant 2008).

The tensions inherent in teachers' social and interpersonal relations are echoed in teacher education, where in recent years, the cohort structure has become a very popular way of organizing teacher candidates (Bullough *et al.* 2001). Cohorts are intact groups of individuals who are engaged in a common

program experience and schedule. Cohorts are an attempt to address the challenges of fragmentation of coursework and the solitary character of the program as experienced by teacher candidates (Clarke *et al.* 2005). Farr Darling (2001) describes the predominant affective emphasis given by students to their cohort:

> Overwhelmingly, students emphasized the personal, affective qualities of a cohort community. Their sentiments came across in descriptions such as: the community is "close knit and caring" and "warm, collegial." There is a "strong and supportive network" and opportunity for "more personal and rewarding interaction." Even when commenting on low spots in the life of the community, students acknowledged, "it's not perfect, but it is our community."
>
> (Farr Darling 2001: 7)

Echoing Farr Darling's concerns, Delgado Ventimilla (2012) critiques teacher candidates' commitment to a "mythic harmony" wrought from an "inclusive diversity" wherein "values are shared, a shelter is erected, and people gather under a unifying vision of what it means to live well with others" (p. 71), serving to minimize thought and agonistic engagement, in Delgado Ventimilla's view (p. 73). Seifert and Mandzuk (2006) concur that an emphasis on getting along with everyone and providing emotional support among peers had a dampening effect on intellectual discussion among teacher candidates during class discussion. Cohort organization seemed to foster cooperation and connection among students but did little to cultivate individuality or dialogue about controversial issues. Elsewhere, Mandzuk, Hasinoff, and Seifert (2006) identify the "hazards and costs of too much togetherness": the "undue influence of dominant personalities" (p. 180), the pragmatic focus on coming together to get the task done (rather than collaborating at a deep level), and the formation of bonds exclusively within the cohort rather than building bridges beyond it to those who may be different (see Hasinoff and Mandzuk 2005).

Aid and assistance

A second conception of teachers' relations equates collegiality with the provision of aid or assistance (Little 1990). Assistance can range from formalized teacher induction/mentoring programs to more informal encounters initiated by the invitation ("just ask") of one teacher to another. Requests for, or offers of, assistance can complicate relations among teachers. In a recent study (Pitt and Phelan 2006), one teacher described how her initial hope of working closely with the teacher next door was soon transformed into a major source of anxiety. Bella, the newcomer to the school, explained:

> She's probably taught for twenty years or so. . . . She brought these boxes into my classroom . . . I took them, thank you very much; I've never used

them. And I know that she has an expectation that I'll use those things, and then has made a big deal about telling people how she's shared all her resources with me so I should provide her with something. So this has been a new experience for me and I've had to take the box, thank you very much, and give the boxes back and really make myself a separate entity from her, and re-establish my autonomy over my program.

Bella's anxiety about the conditionality of attachment relates to its mutual reciprocity ("I should provide her with something"), its impositional influence ("she tries to influence me and I try to stay away from her. I want autonomy from her"), and implied intimacy ("she wanted to know what was wrong . . . thinking I was mad at her"). The offer of assistance by one colleague to another can present challenges to building a detached form of relation when the offer is conditional.

Assistance can also take the form of sympathetic aid. Stories about wounded teachers in retreat from criticism and in need of collegial sympathy are common – the school drama is too risqué for some members of the parent advisory council; classroom management is under par according to the teacher next door; selection of the team captain is judged unfair by a parent; test scores are too low for the school administration (Phelan 2009a). In those moments, the empathic comrade is friend, always good for candid self-disclosure or cathartic laughter and tears. When a culture of sympathy takes hold in schools, teachers may feel as though it expresses what is common among them, a subjective likeness that seems to emanate from their institution, professional history, or ongoing attachments and actions; and there is some truth in this. In such moments, however, teachers face one another and not necessarily the larger realities that confront them – the undermining of teacher autonomy, the pervasiveness of performativity, or managerial relations between teachers and students. It is as if the world of education collapses between them; responsibility for critique is lost, and one's own implication in the status quo remains unquestioned. Where critique exists, it is cast within a discourse of complaint shared among close associates.

Relationships characterized by sympathetic aid may suggest the influence of "women's culture" as a flourishing "intimate public" in schools (Berlant 2008: 5). "A public is intimate when it foregrounds affective and emotional attachments located in fantasies of the common" writes Berlant (p. 5). The sense that there is a common emotional world (and the experience of collectivity) among teachers provides relief from the often harsh and challenging realities of school life. While intimate publics elaborate themselves through a commodity culture – magazines, film, TV, shopping malls – Berlant (2008) argues that they have "an osmotic relation to many modes of life" (p. 8); new teachers' commentary on the nature of staffroom conversations focused on family, fashion, TV shows, or vacation destinations may confirm Berlant's assertion (Phelan 2009a). Intimate spheres may feel like ethical places based on the sense of "capacious emotional continuity" (p. 6) and belonging they circulate, but the cost may be

their ongoing potential for enabling teachers to look away from harsh structural realities – inequality, poverty, systemic racism – that underlie their everyday traumas (Nelson 2006).

Joint work

Increasingly, school systems are providing, and teachers are claiming, a range of spaces, with varying degrees of openness and opportunity for influence, in which teachers can engage in joint work and begin to enter the public sphere. Mutual dependence among teachers can take the form of routine sharing and exchange of ideas or a "felt interdependence" that results from more formal interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, or school-wide curriculum reform (Little 1990: 520). Teachers come to rely on one another's thinking when involved in collaborative ventures such as action research and teacher inquiry (British Columbia Teachers' Federation, Teacher Inquiry Work Group 2008) or program or policy initiatives (Alberta Education 2000; UBC Rural Schools Innovation Initiative 2011). In the context of such collaboration, teachers' practices and educational policies are rendered public and open to examination and discussion. While this carries with it the exposure to and potential strain of collegial judgment, it also credits teachers for the knowledge, skill, and judgment they bring to their work (Little 1990). Teachers have the opportunity to influence one another and to create a sense of shared professional purpose.

Trying out one's ideas with a few trusted colleagues at a grade level meeting may be necessary before presentation at a school board meeting or in discussion with the parent council. Teachers need different degrees of publicity, as it were, to test claims to legitimacy (Phelan and Coulter 2012). However, the danger is that the bonds of group identification can become too strong, and those who wish to disagree are silenced or marginalized. Teachers learn to withhold suggestions for fear of being dismissed and becoming alienated from colleagues (Phelan 2009a). When groups become too self-enclosed, bound by sameness rather than difference, they begin to use their "solidarity as a shield" against anything that might erode consensus, however unfounded (Nelson 2006: 95). Communities of practice that have grown up around teachers' enthusiastic adoption of instructional technology may not stop to consider the darker uses of technology in the Weimar Republic in the 1930s (see Pinar 2012). Being open and responsive to such difficulties and contradictions comes at the price of emotional and intellectual discomfort.

"Too much togetherness" (Seifert and Mandzuk 2006: 180) in teaching and teacher education can be a challenge to political existence, especially when togetherness is privatized, that is, confined to love of the same, an attachment to those like ourselves and an unwillingness to question the take-for-granted; the plurality necessary for political existence is lost. Yet, what the literature implies is that political existence involves a potent paradox: that teachers need attachment to others to support the intellectual, emotional, and social effort that teaching

requires and that they also need sufficient detachment that allows them to remain open to reality and responsive to a plurality of perspectives. What, then, might be a political conception of attachment – located between heartlessness and solidarity – that acknowledges and is responsive to the particular circumstances in which teachers work? Alexandra Kollontai may be helpful here.

Political attachment or "red love"

A Bolshevik feminist in the early 1900s in Russia, Alexandra Kollontai (1977) was singular in her critique of the family as a social structure inhospitable to communism and women's welfare. Her goals included "the withering away of the family" and the "abolition of domestic labour and the gendered division of labour" (Hardt 2009: 16); in her view, it was the family that ensured the economic dependence of women on men and secured property as the central prop of capitalism. In a capitalist society, property maintains and guarantees social order from the level of the family to the constitution. In a society not based on property relations, Kollontai believed that love would have to provide the means to create and sustain lasting bonds throughout society (Hardt 2009). Unlike Arendt and McCarthy, who wished to prevent intimacy from being antipolitical by insuring that it is merely apolitical and relegated to the private sphere, Kollontai (1977) advocated for the development of a political concept of love. Although she provides only a bare outline of such a concept, at least three qualities of political love are evident in her work: (gender) equality in relationships, mutual recognition, and comradely sensitivity.

Equality in relationships whereby individuals are engaged in joint activity and creativity was key. She was critical of a perception of love as private, cloistered in the personal realm of the married couple where, in her view, it contributed to the subordination of women. For Kollontai, the private realm of family claimed a wholeness and reinforced an idea of love as harmonious and unitary. She countered this by claiming that love was "a profoundly social emotion" (Holt 1977: 278) and "a uniting element which is valuable to the collective" (p. 279). For Kollontai, love is "a power that extends equally across the intimate and social domains" (Hardt 2009: 16–17), breaking down barriers between public and private and generating social bonds in a field of multiplicity (Hardt 2011).

A second dimension was mutual recognition "of the rights of the other, of the fact that one does not own the heart and soul of the other (the sense of property, encouraged by bourgeois culture)" (Kollontai 1977: 291). A third aspect of Kollontai's political concept of love was solidarity, based on the intellectual and emotional ties linking the members of the collective and including "warm emotions" – sensitivity, compassion, sympathy, and responsiveness (p. 285). Each had "to be capable of a sensitive understanding of others" and able "to respond to the distress and needs of other members of the collective" (p. 285).

"Love-comradeship" involves "the recognition of the rights and integrity of the other's personality" (p. 291) whatever their gender and "a steadfast mutual support and sensitive sympathy, and responsiveness to the other's needs" (p. 290). Kollontai, however, cautions against obligation that binds one to another in such a way that might hinder one's work by sapping the will or taking up too much emotional and intellectual energy. Individuals should be able to come together and part easily, in her view. This position is summed up in Kollontai's use of the term "wingless *eros*" as distinct from the "all embracing winged *eros*" (p. 227).

As we have seen, Arendt feared that consolations such as intimacy acted as a kind of anaesthetic to reality, allowing one to indulge in self-delusion and avoid the transformative power of suffering; put simply, attachment threatens political existence (Arendt 1998; Nelson 2006). Kollontai, on the other hand, saw intimacy as a powerful natural force but also as a social factor. Intimate relationships are always "incomplete" in Kollontai's view and thus in need of contact with society, that is, a plural space of encounter, hence their political potential (Hardt 2009).

Both Arendt and Kollontai are faced with the challenge of separating bad love (intimacy that binds and fuses) from good love (openness to reality and transformation). Both are trying to imagine a social and effectual world organized by processes of being-with and not profiting-from or being unduly influenced by the other, being alone yet not succumbing to self-referential thinking and neglecting plurality (Berlant 2011).

While Arendt assigned love to its own narrowly circumscribed private sphere, she did identify *caritas*, or respect, as a preservative of political existence.

> Respect (*caritas*), not unlike the Aristotelian *philia politike*, is a kind of "friendship" without intimacy and without closeness; it is a regard for the person from the distance which the space of the world puts between us, and this regard is independent of qualities which we may admire or of achievements which we may highly esteem.
>
> (Arendt 1998: 243)

Arendt persisted in her view that particular forms of sensitivity (e.g. empathy) threaten the necessary distance that must exist between "friends" if the world is to be their shared concern.

Arendtian respect shares some attributes with Kollontai's political concept of love. Both are adamant about the necessity of equality. Both appreciated that recognition was directed at the integrity of the person rather than their gifts, talents, or shortcomings. Both understood that there was something larger than the individual at stake in human affairs; for Arendt, it is our responsibility for the world that is the primary relation, while for Kollontai is it one's duty to the collective that supersedes all other concerns. Unlike Arendt, however, Kollontai recognizes the importance of solidarity as a replacement for competition and individualist self-sufficiency of capitalist bourgeois society and the "cold of

inner loneliness" (p. 290). Her "love solidarity" (p. 291) may point to the main advantage of making love a properly political concept. Intimacy may be one of the few situations where we have patience for what isn't working; Berlant (2011) muses that it is "the affective binding that allows us to iron things out, or to be elastic, or to try a new incoherence" (p. 685–6). Love, as a political concept, she writes, is a "form of affective solidarity that admits the irrationality of the principled attachment" (p. 685–6).

Kollontai's form of solidarity relates well to the circumstances of teachers: they find themselves part of a collective (the profession, a school community) and work collaboratively in the service of more vulnerable others (children and youth). Perhaps what this suggests for teachers is a type of ambivalent relation: belonging but not belonging too much. The ambivalence at the center of attachment is the need for space that accompanies the desire for intimacy (Benjamin 1995). For teachers to exist politically requires that they must refuse attachment on principle and yet yield to the support and challenge of colleagues (whose views serve to amend subjective insight) as they face the realities of children's lives and learning together.

On not belonging too much: balancing ambivalence

Canadian educators are now witnessing a generation of education reform that calls for seemingly more progressive approaches to teaching and learning (e.g. Ontario's full-day Kindergarten (FDK) and Open Minds, Healthy Minds (OMHM) policies and British Columbia's Education Plan) yet retains previous commitments to accountability and high student achievement. Whether progressive or otherwise, new educational policies aim to shape what teachers prioritize (e.g. students' mental health), with whom they work (e.g. medical personnel), and how they teach (e.g. student-directed studies) (Winton, Pitt and Phelan 2012). If teachers are not to be simply objects of policy but advocates of education beyond economic or institutional concerns, they will have to engage in debate not only with one another (at grade, school, and district levels) but also with a range of professional others. Existing politically in this way will demand that teachers are able to stand alone, together.

The absence of teachers from public debate and of debate from teachers' lives has been noted. No doubt ideologies of gender, of childhood, and of production saturate society's and the profession's expectations of teachers and contribute to such silence. Teacher education does little to harness the thought, idealism, and enthusiasm of teacher candidates toward participation in the public sphere (Grumet 2010). Coining the term "teacher citizen" (p. 71), Grumet advocates for a form of teacher education that would recognize teacher candidates as capable and legitimate participants in public discussion about education and policymaking in their local communities.

If teacher education is to educate teacher citizens, then it will need to cultivate the virtue of heartlessness and its associated ambivalence. Nothing exemplifies

the ambivalence at the center of worldly friendship built on a respect for privacy and connection than a story told by McCarthy as part of her eulogy for Hannah Arendt on her unexpected death of heart attack in 1975. The eulogy moves from a sharing of McCarthy's appreciation of her friend, her physicality and concreteness in the world of family and friends, to a cautionary note to those who would presume to know another (Nelson 2006). McCarthy (1985) tells the story of an intrusion she made on their separateness as friends. In preparation for a forthcoming visit from Arendt, McCarthy bought a tube of anchovy paste, apparently a favorite of Hannah's, as part of breakfast supplies. On seeing the paste, Arendt said nothing but appeared displeased. McCarthy explains:

> I knew I had done something wrong in my efforts to please. She did not wish to be *known*, in that curiously finite and, as it were, reductive way. And I had done it to show her I knew her – a sign of love, though not always – thereby proving that in the last analysis I did not know her at all.
>
> (McCarthy 1985: 42)

The eulogy, according to Nelson (2006), "enacts the twin impulses of being alone together" (p. 99) that characterizes political relation for Arendt. The disconnected quality of relation to which it speaks gestures toward teacher education as a space where reality can be confronted and suffered; where individual thought and judgment is considered but not overly influenced by others; where respect enables deep listening; and where each one can appear and be witnessed yet remain unknown intimately.

Encouraging teacher candidates to claim their responsibility to seek and speak their truths about education, side by side yet alone, is part of the ongoing complexity of teacher education in a democracy; the intent of speaking may not always be to reach a particular decision but to generate unseen or unmarked possibilities (Rogoff 2008).

Notes

1　Published in 1958, the story tells of a feisty little turtle who dares to question the demands of the despotic King Yertle, who wants to see far away from the pond and thereby expand his empire, even beyond the moon. He commands more and more turtles to stack themselves beneath him. Mack, the bottom turtle suffering under the weight of his fellow subjects, asks for mercy but is rudely rebuffed by the arrogant king. Ultimately a burp from Mack topples the whole tower and sends Yertle tumbling into the muddy pond. Dr. Seuss has stated that the story is an allegory in which Yertle's ambition represents Adolph Hitler and his zeal to take over Europe.

2　This brings to mind the death of a wounded man on the streets of New York, ignored by the twenty-six bystanders before someone took action. This also brings to mind many youth, bullied to the point of suicide or manslaughter, in crowded Canadian schools.

3　The source of this and subsequent quotes from early career teachers is a research study titled "Paradoxes of Autonomy in Professional Life" (Pitt and Phelan 2008). See Chapter 7, Endnote 3 for further details.

Chapter 10
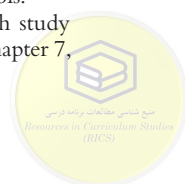
Desacralizing "teacher"

The 1990s and the first decade of the new millennium witnessed unprecedented appraisal, analysis, and educational policy formulation related to teaching and teacher education across the western world. This has involved a reconsideration of the social and operational meaning of both professional practice and teacher identity. It has meant, among other things, the emergence of what can be called "bureaucratic professionalism," an attempt by governments and bureaucracies to regulate the very idea of what it means to be professional (Green 2009: 4). Through "discourses of derision," teachers' status has been lowered and the scope of their decision making restricted (Ball 1990). The introduction of licensed teacher schemes, the creation of prescriptive, outcome-based curricula and systems of accountability through standardized testing are key strategies in the deprofessionalization of teachers. In some jurisdictions, such as England, teacher education has been shifted from higher education (and its associated opportunities for critical thinking) to the already overburdened world of schools (Hargreaves 2000).

In this postprofessional era (Hargreaves 2000), the teacher is positioned as both object of policy and "profession-wide standards" (OECD 2005: 132) and as subject (agent) – idealized as "vanguard of innovation," "networked team participant," working actively "with colleagues . . . parents and the community," and "engaged both in teaching and in research" (p. 132). The British Columbia College of Teachers' (BCCT) policy entitled *Standards for the Education, Competence, and Professional Conduct of Teachers*, for example, offers teachers "a level of autonomy and self-regulation in return for an agreement that the profession will place the interests of the public above individual interests" (BCCT 2004: 4). Teacher autonomy surfaces as a commodity that can be granted or withdrawn; teachers risk losing autonomy should they display a "fatal flaw" (BCCT 2004: 5) of noncompliance (Phelan and Vintimilla, forthcoming).

As a commodity, autonomy has been fabricated from the cultural mythology that pervades teaching (and teacher education) and that entraps teachers: everything depends on the teacher, teachers are experts, and teachers are self-made (Britzman 1991). The first myth positions the teacher as exclusively responsible for the presentation of curriculum, student learning, and social

control (as in classroom management). The second asserts that the teacher is an expert – knowing enough material to teach and knowing how to teach – thereby positioning teaching methods as sacrosanct and undermining "the problem of knowing as an intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic challenge" (p. 229). The third myth underscores the importance of experience in learning to teach and as such promotes the teacher as subjectivist whose "talent, intuition, and common sense" (p. 230) is sufficient, thereby diminishing reflection on the historical forces and institutional structures that naturalize this "particular brand of subjectivity" (p. 230). Britzman illustrates how formulations of teacher as autonomous individual and its associated heroic narrative banish from consideration the isolation of teachers, the dependency and vulnerability that attend teaching, the constructed quality of knowledge, and the ambivalence associated with teacher authority. Cultural myths, and the policies that embrace them, therefore proffer "a static solution of authority, control, mastery, and certainty as the *proper* position" (Britzman 2003: 7, emphasis added); they position teachers as the direct cause of learning and thereby singularly accountable; they deny history and the workings of power in educational institutions. Teachers' professional competence and conduct is thus explained "as the absence of conflict" (p. 7).

There is no escaping policy (the law) nor the responsibility and guilt its terms induce. Every form of life, and teaching and teacher education are no different, involves ritualization and repetition of the law (what is deemed proper) and limits what can be said or done (Agamben 1993). This is not the full story, however. Teachers live between ethos and the law. Ethos is an ethical way of living; it recognizes neither guilt nor responsibility. To do so would involve stepping outside ethics and into the realm of the law. Ethos refers to the manner in which we oscillate between proper (what is deemed lawful, dominant) and common (that which has not been captured by the law) in the attempt to live ethically. As the law tries to take an excessively firm grip on teacher identity and an unwarranted investment in having teachers' actions reflect and express particular political agendas "in the public interest" (BCCT 2004: 4), the ethical task is to profane any identity considered sacred within the law by playing with it but without trying to resolve the matter once and for all (Kishik 2012). It is with this spirit that I attempt a playful critique of the autonomous teacher of contemporary policy, as I draw this book to a close.

Play as profanation

Play liquefies that which has become solid and taken-for-granted. Play, as an act of profanation, refuses what has been designated sacred (set apart; a separated object); it frees things up from their proper use (Masschelein and Simons 2010), that is, from what has become designated as lawful or appropriate. The point is not to eradicate the sacred but to live with the paradox that results

when opposing forces – rule and exception or rite and play – can occupy our thoughts and demand no resolution. Agamben (2007) reminds us of the double, contradictory meaning of the verb *profanare* (Latin): to render profane *and* to sacrifice. Sacred or *sacer* means both "consecrated to the gods" and "cursed, excluded from the community" (p. 77). So a thing is neither completely sacred nor profane, but each carries the remnant or residue of the other. The "teacher" is both cursed (object of policy) and sacred (subject to enact policy) within the law.

The spheres of play and the sacred are closely linked. Many games are derived from religious practices and rituals: the *girotondo* was originally a marriage rite; playing with a ball reproduces the struggle of the gods for possession of the sun; the spinning top and the chessboard were implements of divination (Agamben 2007). Drawing on Emile Benveniste, Agamben argues that play is not only derivative from the sacred, but it also represents its overturning. The power of the sacred act, he writes, lies in the conjunction of the myth that tells the story and the rite that reproduces and stages it. Play breaks up this unity: as *ludus*, or physical play, it drops the myth and preserves the rite; as *iocus*, or wordplay, it effaces the rite (as public ritual) and allows the myth to survive. Agamben (2007) writes:

> If the sacred can be defined through the consubstantial unity of myth and rite, we can say that one has play when only half of the sacred operation is completed, translating only the myth into words or only the rite into actions.
>
> (Agamben 2007: 76)

A teacher who refuses to administer standardized tests to her students could be described as dropping the rite (act of invigilating the tests) while maintaining the myth of teacher responsibility. So too the teacher who suspends classroom rules drops the rite (disciplining) while maintaining the myth of teacher authority (suspension is the teacher's idea). Play liberates but it doesn't overthrow. It distracts us from sacred givens (e.g. achievement testing, social control) but without eliminating the latter. Not unlike a child's use of adult objects such as cars as toys points to a new dimension of use, so too even a temporary or tentative interruption of taken-for-granted practices opens the gate to a different "use" of "teacher" so that the powers of professionalism and professionalization, deactivated in play, can become openings to new ways of being for teachers, "to a new happiness" (p. 76). Play "deactivates the apparatuses of power and returns to common use the spaces that power had seized" (p. 77). The thing that is returned to common use of all of us is pure, profane, and free of any connotation of the sacred; it exists, as it were, in a zone of indistinction.

Agamben encourages us to identify zones of indistinction where questions of ethics and politics (the ethico-political) are heightened, where play maintains a generative tension between the law and ethos. In what follows, I identify and

explore the substitute teacher or teacher teaching-on-call as a possible zone of indistinction that renders the sacred figure of the "teacher" profane and points toward a different "use" of "teacher."

"Just there for the day": the teacher teaching-on-call

Each year, some graduates of the teacher education program in which I teach return to speak with teacher candidates about teaching-on-call or substitute teaching. In British Columbia, Canada, teachers teaching-on-call are "certificated and qualified individuals who replace a regular classroom teacher for the purpose of continuing the instructional program, maintaining discipline, and generally promoting the educational welfare of students" (British Columbia Teachers' Federation 2010: 10). The period of replacement can range from an afternoon to several weeks. The workshop focuses on school district protocols for recruiting and assigning teachers teaching-on-call, provides guidelines for "surviving" short-term teaching assignments, and offers insight into the possibilities and limitations of contractual work. The message that "you're just there for the day" echoes throughout the workshop, provoking both relief (an escape from responsibility?) and disappointment (dashing hopes of full professional employment?) in teacher candidates.

I have always been of two minds about these workshops, delighted by the assistance they offer beginning teachers but also dismayed by the absence of political or cultural critique. Politically, cuts to public school budgets have made it more difficult for teachers to secure full employment with benefits. Casualization and contractualism are "insulting public policy measures" that have been imposed on teachers (Smyth 2012: 14). Like standards, performance appraisal, high-stakes testing, and marketization (e.g. school choice), both are designed to push teaching out of the realm of "relational and capacity-building work" (Smyth 2012: 14) and into the realm of being more like business. Yet it is an intriguing fact that 20% of teachers in British Columbia, Canada, are *choosing* to teach-on-call and finding it very satisfying (British Columbia Teachers' Federation 2010). Culturally, however, there has always been ambivalence about teachers teaching-on–call, variously described as "baby-sitter . . . cannon fodder . . . stand–ins . . . spare tires . . . outsiders . . . chameleons" (British Columbia Teachers' Federation 2010: 10). Weems (2003) argues that characterizations of substitute teachers "reflect a cultural imaginary in which the public and profession project and try out images of what teachers ought to be or never become" (p. 263). On the one hand, there is the substitute as an incompetent, unqualified teacher with no experience who must constantly prove themselves "as real teachers" to their colleagues; classroom management skills become the key factor in negotiating belonging or "fitting in" (p. 261). The guerrilla superhero of popular media, on the other hand, is the figure of the substitute teacher who displays "the willingness, spirit, and passion to radically alter the everyday ritual of classrooms and schools" (p. 263).

I was reminded of the teachers' teaching-on-call workshops when, in the context of a research study about teacher autonomy (Pitt and Phelan 2008), I interviewed an early career teacher, Jill, who enthusiastically explained why she enjoyed substitute teaching:

> [C]ause you're just there for the day, and they know that, and they treat you like they know you're not going to be there tomorrow. It's nice that there's no responsibility, no work after work. You just leave. I love the freedom.

Jill seemed to embrace a negative freedom or freedom from constraint (Greene 1988). Hardly emblematic of the weight of responsibility, intentionality, and membership that enjoins lifelong learning, reflective practice, or caring collegiality – promoted by initial teacher education practice and policy – the "lightness" of the wandering life of the teacher teaching-on-call suggests a resistance to constraint of any kind. Freedom from encounters with other educators is hardly the ground upon which one might construct a strongly articulated and convincing sense of shared professional purpose (Pitt and Phelan 2008). Yet there was something provocative about Jill's account of her particular brand of autonomy in light of more general standards.

Teaching-on-call may gesture toward a way of being in teaching that I had not heretofore considered desirable. Teachers teaching-on-call do not necessarily embody Milan Kundera's "unbearable lightness of being" – "where nothing is consequential and everything is permitted because life is lighter than air" – but rather a "thoughtful lightness" – where both the world and life are heavy, requiring playfulness that keeps them both aloft (Kishik 2012: 56). As a form of play, such thoughtful lightness profanes that which policy holds sacred, offering, perhaps, an understanding of professional responsibility, intentionality, and membership that is just a little different from standard renditions.

Desacralizing teacher: teachers teaching-on-call

As a zone of indistinction, the teacher teaching-on-call invites a playful denaturalization of "teacher" as autonomous: responsible (within reason), intentional (purposeful), and integrated (identity over difference as a mark of belonging to the profession) (Young 1990). Legally, teachers teaching-on-call assume the same responsibility for students' learning as those teachers they replace, but they may not have responsibility given the short-term nature of their appointments. The myth of responsibility is preserved, but the rite (e.g. student assessment and evaluation) is dropped. Teachers teaching-on-call preserve the trappings of intentionality, but the myth is abandoned as they become a medium for other teachers' purposes. Although teachers teaching-on-call are certified members of the profession (e.g. fee-paying members of colleges of teachers or teachers' unions), they may as well not be, given their rather ghostly presence in schools. The myth of membership is preserved, but rites of membership vanish.

Unassumable responsibility

"I don't really feel responsible for what they're learning."

Jill, Teacher Teaching-on-Call

In an era when professional responsibility is increasingly scripted within institutional and contractual discourses that attempt to define and control the terms of responsibility, the small difference introduced by teachers teaching-on-call is significant. Teachers are caught between two forms of responsibility – the extremes of moral codification (professional codes of ethics) on the one hand and an indifferent legality (policy statements) on the other (Mills 2004). Responsibility, in both senses, exists within the law; it is juridical in that it is concerned with the judgment of teachers but not necessarily with justice or truth. It cannot be presumed that the law exhausts the question of responsibility. Agamben (2000) reminds us that the etymology of responsibility is the Latin legal term of *spondeo*, or sponsor, meaning someone who offers legal guarantee for a course of action and therefore always returns ethics to the problems of the law (Mills 2008: 97).

The figure of the teacher teaching-on-call suggests an understanding of responsibility that is of a different order than that assumed for teachers. She has nothing to do with curriculum decisions or evaluative judgments because these have been made either prior to her arrival on the scene or long after she has departed.

In the case of the teacher teaching-on-call, the application of standards and regulations surrounding professional development, and their attendant violence, cannot be "staged in non-negotiable terms, with absolute certainty" (Mummery and Devadas 2008: 3). The brevity of the teacher-on-call's stay means that she cannot reasonably be held accountable for student learning outcomes. As such, she escapes both the intellectual (student learning depends on her) and political (she alone is accountable) traps set for the teacher in performativity regimes (Pinar 2004a). As Jill explains

> There's not really anyone there, questioning what you're doing . . . you're there for the day and they're just having to trust that you're doing it well.

Where a teacher teaching-on-call finds herself in different classrooms and schools on a daily basis, she has no knowledge of classroom management and discipline regimes; if they do exist, they pre-exist her. Because there is no program that she can simply apply, her response to students is in the moment; it is of the order of experimentation and experience, like that of practical reason. Typically, professionally ethical decisions are those that teachers are expected to justify and explain in order to absolve them from responsibility; such modern ethics, Julian Edgoose (2001) argues, is the product of institutional life and aims

to hide the act behind the rule. As a result, "the significance that it is *I* who is speaking, *I* who is teaching, *I* who is guiding my students" lives' is obliterated (p. 125). The teacher teaching-on-call draws attention to the "affect-generated responsibility" that characterizes practices of living or of teaching which cannot be captured by rules or regulations. Teachers can only be responsible for "the tangible, what strikes us in the present," and this kind of responsibility is not legislatable because it "derives from affectivities, immanent to the sociability of the community body but are not its defining identity" (Mills 2004: 1).

The teacher teaching-on-call calls attention to responsibility beyond or before reason. This may be akin to Caputo's (1993) understanding of obligation as a feeling that binds us to a sense of responsibility and the necessity of judgment. However, as Caputo (1993) likewise cautions, obligation cannot be legislated by codes of ethics or professional standards of practice; it is unlike a contract that can be reviewed and agreed upon. As a feeling that "comes over me and binds me" (p. 7), obligation enables us to respond to "real lives and events," but it points to the difficulties of defining responsibility in advance of encountering others (Smits *et al.* 1997: 193). "Obligations are strictly local events, sublunary affairs, between people . . . [t]hey happen" (Caputo 1993: 227). Here one finds the errant potential in life (and in teaching) itself to evade and undermine the force of law.

The teacher teaching on call draws our attention to the zone of nonresponsibility not as no responsibility but rather a reminder that responsibility is so great, so momentous, that it is always unassumable (Mills 2004). At best, teachers can only be faithful to it; they can only imagine it; their relationship to responsibility is apostrophic – an imagined character who is absent. Teachers bear witness to responsibility.

It could be argued that an unassumable responsibility undermines teaching as a moral activity. Finding oneself among strangers and being a stranger to them every day or every couple of days renders one's relations with colleagues and children fragmentary and discontinuous. Zygmunt Bauman's (1996) critique of the stroller is apt:

> [F]inding oneself among strangers and being a stranger to them (in the crowd but not of the crowd), taking in those strangers as "surfaces" – so that "what one sees" exhausts "what they are" – and . . . knowing of episodically . . . strolling means rehearsing human reality as a series of episodes, that is as events without past and with no consequences . . . [T]he fleeting fragments of other persons' lives the stroller spun off into stories at will.
>
> (Bauman 1996: 26)

Bauman goes on to argue that strolling as a postmodern life strategy tends to render human relations fragmentary and discontinuous – no strings attached – and refuses lasting relations of mutual obligation and moral responsibility. Teachers teaching-on-call, in this view, suffer from "commitment–avoidance" and a

"suppression of the moral impulse" (p. 33). However, what we may see in the stroller is a greater receptivity to the present: "I am reminded of Jill's claim that "I feel like I'm really responsible for their [the children's] safety."

Intentionality suspended

"You're just there for the day. . . . You just leave. I love the freedom."

Jill, Teacher Teaching-on-Call

Not unlike Benjamin's *flâneur*, that casual and often aimless urban stroller, the teacher-on-call wanders through the school scape and from school to school. Unlike the hurried teacher, she has a different stance – an attitude of indifference and involvement – at once disengaged and yet engaged at a distance, gazing and taking note (Bacal 2011). Such a positioning "in the crowd but not of the crowd" (Bauman 1996: 26) offers a heightened form of receptivity that has the power to shake one loose from habitual ways of experiencing school, teachers, students, and learning. Jill "takes photos of things . . . seen" on classroom walls and has "gathered tons of great ideas" from teachers' plan books – fragments or detritus – designating a close and potentially more complex perception. The teacher teaching-on-call sees both the continuities and discontinuities across schools and teachers; she perceives the range of perspectives and practices in operation simultaneously; she learns to appreciate how various institutional, social and historical conditions result in different experiences of teaching. She realizes that there is nothing essential about teaching and teachers.

As she moves from one site to another, the teacher teaching-on-call disappears as a self-possessed subject. She is no longer intentionally in control over the meaning of the things to which she relates while teaching (as with the *flâneur* while strolling). Suspension of intentionality must be understood here not as erasure but alteration. Jill is ever aware that she is "in someone else's class" and she "always follow[s] the teacher's day plan and would never change anything." In her position, however, there is less of a sense of "*I* can teach" but rather that "things can be taught and learned," emphasizing the verb rather than the subject. Jill relies on the students to orient her as she becomes a medium for their learning rather than a subject of the practice of teaching: "I ask the kids for help all the time and they love it. . . . You're relying on those kids all day to tell you where things are." The relation with adults is minimized, and dependence on the children is maximized.

Jill experiences the suspension of her own intentionality, recognizing that she is a "guest" and that the teachers she's replacing are "running their program for whatever reason they have." The willing suspension of her own particular purposes and Jill's radical openness to each teacher's "style," as interpreted by the students and represented in the teachers' lesson plans, are noteworthy. It is the opportunity to observe many different teaching styles that attracts her in part to teaching-on-call, she says. Each substitute experience opens up the possibility of

living differently in classrooms. As such, these experiences create conditions in which teaching can become strange as teachers-on-call witness other teachers and themselves in the making.

Moving from one school to another, bearing witness to the difference that teaching is, underscores the contingent quality of teaching. The changing circumstances of students, school culture, the larger community, make for changed teachers. The arrival of the teacher teaching-on-call constitutes new conditions for the students, who are quick to note that this is not the "real" teacher, so they put her to the test! Their playfulness opens up the contingency of classroom regulations as they plead with Jill to contravene the classroom teacher's ruling that one boy be denied access to the computer lab due to prior offense. Jill complies!

Indifferent identity

> "[A]nd they treat you like they know you're not going to be there tomorrow . . . you're still in the school . . . but you're not really part of it."
>
> Jill, Teacher Teaching-on-Call

Although a certified teacher, the teacher teaching-on-call is largely invisible to other school personnel and is not integrated within the school community. Teachers teaching-on-call do not design curricula or collaboratively generate school mission statements, and so they are, in Jill's words, "removed from the school philosophies and politics." The upside of the situation, however, is that by virtue of their short-term employment, teachers teaching-on-call need not be swayed by tradition (what has been) or vision (what might be). While it is expected that she will imitate the teacher she's replacing to some degree, there is no one to check if this is the case. As Jill explains:

> You don't have anyone coming and checking up on what you're doing . . . you're really just on your own.

Put simply, there is no one that the teacher teaching-on-call has to be. Their mode of being could be characterized as bland and inconspicuous. Jill's recollection of entering a school to do an afternoon of substitute teaching attests to a spectral form of life that embraces its own absent presence:

> I went in at lunch, there was no secretary, and . . . she'd left . . . the key. I did not see anyone . . . and no one even came to check . . . I did my afternoon with the kids, dropped the key back, and left. I never once saw another teacher or an administrative person at all . . . you leave your note for the teacher and that's it.

While the educational system cannot do without substitute teachers (e.g. reform agendas rely on them to support teacher development, (Weems 2003)), they consistently remain at the periphery of school communities of practice, endure poor treatment and low status, and experience alienation (Duggleby and Badali 2007). Yet, Jill seems unconcerned about the lack of integration into the school community. In not being witnessed by others, she lacks a shared identity but appears indifferent. The elusiveness of identity signifies her capacity to evade scrutiny of the powers that be.

Belonging as a teacher teaching-on-call is not based on shared identity, common grade level, or collective goals. It exemplifies a mode of belonging without representable conditions. As such, it preserves the teacher's existence as possibility or potentiality rather than an essence that she must realize or accept as determined by others (Agamben 1993). If belonging does not depend on a shared identity, collective goals, or prior history, it can be defined only in terms of sharing belonging itself (Plonowska Ziarek 2010). Belonging is synonymous with being-in-language or "being called" (p. 7). What matters in belonging is not what one is called but that one is called. Being called is "the property that establishes all possible belongings (being called Italian,–dog,–Communist,–teacher); it implies a multiple singularity and scattered community" (Plonowska Ziarek 2010: 7). Each teacher is a sample (from Latin *exemplum* "a sample," literally "that which is taken out;" from *eximere* "take out, remove") that is removed from the collective and as such can remain singular, irreplaceable, an exemplar of all the other singularities/teachers with whom it shares not particular qualities but precisely the fact that it is called at all. Agamben (1993) advocates a community of a being-together of existences rather than a community based on essences (Whyte 2010).

In a minimal formulation of belonging as "being called," each singularity is an exemplar of Agamben's (1993) coming community. Yet, the linguistic and ontological status of such an exemplar is neither a particular nor the universal; the exemplar, Agamben (1993) argues, is always "a singular object that presents itself as such, that shows its singularity" (p. 10). The exemplar is always beside itself, "in the empty space in which its undefinable and unforgettable life unfolds" (p. 10). Each singularity cannot be captured but has to be there so that meaning is not lost.

The teacher teaching-on-call testifies to the idea that though the prototype is a strong representative, it still leaves something out. Jill can take over the space of the classroom teacher, adopt her lesson plans, and instruct her students; she is almost the same, but not quite. Here we see the literal and figural coalesce: being called and being beside oneself, the teacher teaching-on-call expropriates herself into an empty space of exemplarity and substitution. "As the exemplar of the coming community, a singular being is at once in relation to the common and beside itself" (Plonowska Ziarek 2010: 7). As a teacher teaching-on-call, Jill is both in relation to the generic "teacher" and something else besides. This is the tension-filled, limbo-like space of the "whatever" being (Agamben 1993). Tension-filled

because it exists between the substantiality of the "teacher" represented in policy and the inessential quality of the teacher teaching-on-call. Jill's photographs of each classroom bear witness to her own existence prior to representation; her presence is presignification – the teacher who she might as yet become.

The space of indistinction that strolling opens up is one wherein the legal or dominant identity of "teacher" is put to a new use. The issue here is not the establishment of a new identity to replace the old one but rather to take up the old identity "as not," thus transposing it to a zone that is subtracted from the law and its regulatory mythologies and remains as "a place of pure praxis" (Whyte 2010: 4). Teachers teaching-on-call neither originally dwell in the proper (as defined by law, regulation, or statute) nor inhabit the improper. Rather, they fall in love with the improper and learn not to treat teaching as a property (i.e. fixed identity, subject to sovereign power); they remain open to the possibilities that flow from having nothing they have to be. There is always a way out, outside; for the teacher teaching-on-call, there is always another day and another classroom.

A twist on a tale

Nigel Studdart, a science teacher, was suspended (and later fired) from his position at Pompallier Catholic College in New Zealand. Studdart supported students' silent protest (wearing rainbow ribbons or armbands at school) against principal Richard Stanton's comments opposing *The Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Bill*, which had passed its initial reading in Parliament, in a school newsletter (Dinsdale 2012). The New Zealand Catholic Education chief executive weighed in on Studdart's case by underscoring the expectation that teachers employed in religious schools demonstrate commitment to "the religious and moral preachings" of the institution. The Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) president suggested similarly that the "special character" of the school complicated the case. Others outside the school community congratulated Mr. Studdart on his leadership and support for students, and queer youth in particular who are so often featured in statistics of youth suicide or self-harm (Garret-Walker and Backhouse 2012).

One of the intriguing aspects of this case is the teacher's decision to offer free tutorials in science for his students, outside of the school grounds. He explains: "I'm getting paid to teach, even though I'm suspended, so I thought I'd still get on and teach the students as best I can." (Dinsdale 2012). Given the imminent national examinations, Mr. Stuttart felt that: "My students will be the ones that suffer most [through the suspension], with a relieving teacher in" (Dinsdale 2012).

While Stuttart reinforces the dominant framing of teachers teaching-on-call as incompetent and unqualified to prepare his students for national examinations, it is he who has been labelled "deviant outsider" by school authorities despite his qualifications and accomplishments as an educator (Dinsdale 2012). A local real estate company offers him a building in which he can tutor his science students free of charge; with the support of some parents and a group

of twelve students, he continues to teach but is no longer a *Catholic school teacher*, which is almost the same but not quite. Mr. Stuttart assumes a kind of embodied sovereignty: he is the school and wherever he is, school is. While the physicality (rites) of teaching in an actual school with a large number of students is lost, the myths of responsibility, intentionality, and professional identity/belonging persist.

For some, teachers who teach in Catholic schools or schools of a particular character have already been pointed in a particular direction in terms of expectations and priorities; why then bite the finger that points the necessary direction of one's commitments and practice? For Agamben (1999), writes Kishik (2012), it is our prerogative to bite the finger that feeds us, as it were (see p. 56). If someone is trying to save us, he argues, we had better tell them that "there is nothing to save" (Agamben 1999: 6). Stuttart joins the Pompallier Catholic College, but his joining is in a sense incomplete; there is more to him than the direction or law of the schools. Any attempt to ground the teacher in some universal truth or some defined essence or by fitting him into some fixed narrative or by directing him back to his original decision is to reduce him and his humanity to a user manual of who he can be as an educator. He is irremediable and unredeemable because his mending is never complete: as a human being and as an educator, he is immersed in political and ethical questions of how to live. In stepping away from the school and its law as the foundation for his practice, Stuttart bears witness to how life breaks down and divides (i.e. goes in different directions) itself.

> Humans tend to repress this fact by seeing themselves as in-dividuals (that is to say, indivisible) or by thinking about themselves as parts of some unified whole. To be a remnant is to resist this totalizing tendency by always bearing witness to the differences that separate us from each other and by never letting go the divisions that split each one of us from within.
>
> (Kishik 2012: 71)

Stuttart, like all of us, is a walking contradiction, a community of fragments with little use of a coherent universal to ground his living and teaching. He testifies to that which is left over even when one commits to such universals: the contingency, fragility, and indeterminacy that characterize living and teaching.

A small difference

> The Hassidim tell a story about the world to come that says everything there will be just as it is here. Just as our room is now, so it will be in the world to come; where our baby sleeps now, there too it will sleep in the other world. And the clothes we wear in this world, those too we will wear there. Everything will be as it is now, just a little different.
>
> (Agamben 1993: 53)

There is something disappointing about the vision of redemption in this tale told by Walter Benjamin to Ernst Bloch and recounted by Giorgio Agamben, especially when compared to the Christian promises of "a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1)," in which "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying (Rev 21:4)" (Whyte 2010: 1). Yet, Whyte reminds us, that foreshadowing even a *little* difference does not mean that it would be easy to accomplish. For Ernst Bloch, the difference, though slight (for example, in the displacement of a stone or a bush), would still require the Messiah to come (Agamben 1993). What would it mean for us to imagine a redeemed world in which everything "will be as it is now, just a little different?" Whyte asks (2010: 1). In what would this difference consist? How would it be possible to achieve it?

These questions represent the spirit of my explorations in this book, as they relate to the singularity of the teaching subject. In each chapter, I have tried to renovate discourse practices so as to identify and counter those forces that seek to undermine teaching and teacher education as historical and educational projects. To renovate is not to erase what is but to reconstitute it, that is, to render it a little different (Bartolini 2008: 54). Architects often despise renovation, preferring instead the creativity invited by grand new designs, free from the constraints of previously existing structures. My proposal throughout this book has been more modest and at times, under the guidance of Agamben, quite restrained: that efforts to think what we are doing will likely not overturn the law (given to instrumentalism or performativity), but it might refurbish the ways in which we have come to imagine teachers, teaching, and teacher education.

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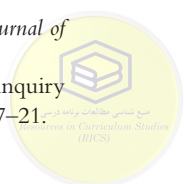
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