

Di Bloomfield

University of New England
Armidale, NSW
Australia

A New Discourse for Teacher Professionalism: Ramsey, Standards and Accountability

The release of the policy document *Quality Matters – Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices* (Ramsey, 2000) served in retrospect to signal an escalating agenda fashioning new versions of the teacher and teacher education through a new discourse of professionalism. This discourse serves to link teacher professionalism with quality teaching and learning within a necessary framework of structures and processes of explicit accountability and standardisation. The establishment of the NSW Institute of Teachers and the development of its Framework of Professional Teaching Standards are serving to demand new versions of student teacher and teacher subjectivities as well as new pedagogical orientations and responses within teacher education. Drawing on a policy-as-discourse approach, a critical reading of the Ramsey Report provides a foundation for discerning the disciplinary effects of such changes in policy and practice. In constructing a binary between what is termed ‘a quality profession’ and ‘a mass profession’, a version of the (student) teacher as strongly individualistic yet standardised, entrepreneurial yet accountable and self-accounting has been created. Whilst teacher educators need to productively respond to this standards agenda, it can be argued that an imperative exists to establish and maintain counter discursive and pedagogical spaces within teacher education.

Introduction

In Australia, the late 90's leading into the first decade of the millennium, will be seen as a time in which the policies and practices of teaching and teacher education emerged in relation to a paradoxical dilemma confronting post/modern education systems globally. The paradox concerns the concurrent need to provide a supply of passionate, innovative, flexible, context responsive teachers capable of functioning as creative, knowledge producers and at the same time to satisfy the demands of a political and policy climate that favours consistency, coherence, standards, measurable outcomes and control, to meet the goals of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. Associated with this dilemma, a preoccupation with professional standards and accountability created tension and contestation in terms of prioritising particular versions of 'quality' with respect to teaching, teachers and student learning outcomes. Additionally through a series of review and policy responses particular forms of teacher professionalism were seen to be constituted and legitimated.

Such developments within the Australian context have not arisen in isolation. John Furlong et al. (2000:3), claim that the vast majority of policy initiatives on initial teacher education emerging through New Right and neo-liberalist politics within the UK in the 1980s and 1990's were 'framed with the explicit aspiration of changing the nature of teacher professionalism'. Here the policy focus was further linked to concerns for teacher supply and the aspiration on the part of the state to establish greater accountability for the content and quality of initial teacher education. Thus the UK experience is indicative of the discourse of professionalism being positioned as a site of both political significance and contestation in teaching and teacher education. It is a similar politics that underpins the strengthening of the standards and accountability agendas in Australia in recent times. Developments such as the establishment of the NSW Institute of Teachers with its Framework of Professional Teaching Standards, and the national accreditation and standards agenda of Teaching Australia are obvious and significant expressions of a shifting climate within education. For teacher educators these developments raise questions as to the extent to which our professional practice needs to be disciplined and directed by this agenda. What other spaces of learning and teacher development can be established and nurtured within a climate of accreditation and accountability if teachers with creativity and passion are to emerge as professionals? What particular pedagogical responses within teacher education are called forth in these times?

Various readings of what can be termed the dilemma of professionalism have been given. Stronach et al. (2002:109) place the professional teacher as caught between what they term an 'economy of performance' seen broadly as manifestations of the 'audit culture', and various 'ecologies of practice', encompassing the professional dispositions and commitments individually and collectively engendered and accumulated in learning and performing the 'teacher'. They cite Shore and Wright (2000:70) who locate the professional within the struggle between the 'audit culture' and 'collective values and lateral solidarities'. On a similar theme, Murphy and Gale (2004:1) place professionalism within the tensions between discourses of human capital and discourses of social and cultural capital. The former characterise 'quality teaching' for example within a language of efficiency and effectiveness, associated with the marketisation of education where 'the primary concern is with notions that focus on developing the ability of competitive individuals...and the procurement of what is called the "private good"'. This view assumes a direct relation between quality teacher preparation and practice, student achievement and labour market outcomes. As alternatives, discourses of social and cultural capital 'are characterised by issues of difference, equity and social justice' expressed within language that conveys notions of inclusiveness and cooperation, with a focus towards the 'public good' (ibid.). A relationship between quality teaching, student learning outcomes and the labour market is assumed but seen as more complex and less direct.

Such views lead to the claim that within education the site of professionalism is contested, unstable

and contradictory, rather than productive of a stable type of the 'professional'. Consequently professional identities and the work of constituting and being constituted into professionalism need to be seen as arising within complex discursive dynamics. Within this climate Stronach et al. see the professional paradoxically as subject to reduction or universalising to a single form (the 'quality' or 'good' teacher) and at the same time inflated to 'improbable symbolic importance' (2002:111). One expression of this inflation is the largely unchallenged belief that the 'professional' teacher will deliver 'quality' teaching and thus student learning outcomes, with the 'professionalism' of the teacher increasingly seen as assured through measurement and documentation of practice with respect to frameworks of professional standards. However, cultures of accountability yield much more than technical responses – more broadly they function as 'public policy instruments' (Luke and Luke 2001:5). Viewed as expressions of governmentality (Foucault 1983), they can be seen as inducing cultures of performativity through the use of 'simplified assessment data ("performance indicators") with adjudication performed through discourses of "quality assurance"' (Luke and Luke 2001:7). Such data-driven surveillance, within what could be termed a culture of coercive accountability, allows centralised control over the local through the largely self-monitoring responses performed by teachers. Such a view would see education and teaching as being fashioned in such a way that governments or their instrumentalities can claim they have measures of 'quality' to present to the 'market' to guide consumer choices. It is of interest that the recently released Consultation Paper from the national body *Teaching Australia*, regarding developing systems of teacher education program accreditation, proposes a system that incorporates not only standards for accreditation purposes but significantly levels of accreditation in order to 'recognise the quality of programs':

The main purpose of profession-led national accreditation is the assurance of consistently high teaching quality and continuous improvement. *Teaching Australia* is proposing the development of levels of accreditation, based on criteria yet to be established, that indicate the extent to which a program meets the accreditation standards (Teaching Australia 2006:6).

Here differential accreditation measures align with an agenda of prioritising public data-driven measures of 'quality' linked to the primacy of market choice. Amongst other responses to this ranking agenda, the 'market' here could include students selecting teacher education institutions and programs, schools allocating professional experience placements preferentially to certain universities and academics ordering their employment preferences. The question to be raised here is the extent to which such competitive, quantitatively driven agendas do in fact serve to deliver quality to the market, and at what cost?

However, it would be simplistic to frame recent developments regarding teacher professionalism, the establishment of professional bodies, such as the NSW Institute of Teachers, and the development and implementation of their associated standards of accreditation as counterproductive to the acknowledged importance of seeking quality outcomes in education. Such a position would be too strongly informed by suspicion and scepticism as to political agendas. Yet, given the insistence on the accountability agenda across schools and teacher education institutions in the past few years in Australia, it is important to gain an understanding of how the arguments and justifications for policy shifts concerning teacher education have been and are being constructed and presented. Policy and policy texts can be productively analysed in terms of the ways they speak within discursive frames, from and to subjectivities constituted within those frames, and in so doing redistribute and legitimate certain voices. Thus policy as discursive practice is conceptualised as seeking to mobilise particular 'regimes of truth', and to institutionalise disciplinary structures of normalisation and legitimation. Policy-as-discourse (Ball 1993) takes a particular interest in the context of policy development, what counts as problems to be addressed, how the 'problem' is framed, and the discursive fields drawn on to propose 'solutions' (Bacchi 2000). There is also an

interest in how authorial and reader positions are constituted and sustained. In short, it is important in considering particular policy initiatives to keep mind Ball's warning that "Policy changes the possibilities for thinking otherwise" (1993:15).

The Ramsey Review and Professionalism

With a particular interest in teacher education within the NSW context, it is instructive to look closely at the last major review in to teacher education in NSW, *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching, Critical Times, Critical Choices: Report of the Review of Teacher Education and Training, New South Wales* (Ramsey 2000). It was the Ramsey Review that heralded the establishment of the NSW Institute of Teachers with its associated Professional Teaching Standards, which has been mirrored in many ways at a national level by the establishment of *Teaching Australia* and with its own evolving accreditation agenda within the last five years. Such state and national bodies and their associated policies and practices can be claimed not only to be normatively refashioning teacher education curriculum, principles and practices but also the subjectivities of the student teacher, teacher and teacher educator. For as Luke and Luke (2001:9) state: 'To assess and calculate the teacher is not just to know the teacher, to weigh her/his "quality" and "performance" – it is to normatively shape and construct the teacher in ways that have profound material consequences for institutions and communities'.

The introductory section of the Ramsey Report contextualised its review process with respect to a climate of change within society and more specifically within education, in terms of a sense of urgency and critique. It cited low quality and morale of teachers, expectations of greater accountability, disconnection of schools from universities around teacher education and with respect to Professional Experience programs and finally, the lack of an established professional status for teachers. The central problem presented in the Ramsey Report is that of a perceived deficiency in the quality of teachers and teaching. The title of the Report puts this claim 'up front', namely: *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching*. Further, quality teaching is unequivocally linked within it to the quality of student learning outcomes:

There is one issue that now seems to have been put to rest [...] the teacher really does make a difference in student learning [...]. In terms of enhanced student learning, the research shows clearly that improving teaching is one of the most effective methods we have (Ramsey 2000:12).

Whilst it is hard to dispute this basic linkage, it is posed as foundational to another claim: that it is teaching and more specifically teacher education that needs revitalising. Thus the 'problem' is related to a lack of vitality in teaching and teachers. Here 'quality' and the capacity to engender quality in student learning are placed firmly within the domain of the teacher and their teaching practice with teachers presented in deficit terms. It is of interest how 'quality' is further teased out within this Report. A key point is made, that for teaching to be focused on quality, 'it is imperative for teaching to be constructed as a profession' (ibid.:33) and, further, that 'professional systems' are needed to support quality teaching (ibid.:12). Thus a strong link here is made between quality and issues of professionalism. In discursive terms, the document presents an insistent mantra around a preferred version of professionalism that explicitly associates professional status and practice with quality in teaching and quality in outcomes.

A crucial consideration concerns the way in which this unquestioned link between quality and professionalism is constructed. A key binary is set up between teaching as 'a quality profession' and teaching as 'a mass profession' (ibid.). Ramsey draws this distinction following the statement that 'education is a service industry', one now firmly governed by the forces of economics and the market place. Thus an association is constructed between versions of 'quality' and the 'profession' and the imperative for client focused accountability:

In spite of attempts to avoid hard-nosed economic terms like *market forces, quality assurance, accountability, performance, bench marking, client, fee-for-service, efficiency effectiveness*, it must be recognized these are the lenses through which increasingly teachers and teacher educators are being forced to view the world. They are not going to disappear just because we do not like them (Ramsey 2000:12, author's emphasis).

In a tone of exhortation, these 'lenses', that is those aligned with the market place, are those that the report claims a 'quality profession' will be able to more effectively address within 'a proper professional framework' (ibid.). Alluded to here is the third element, attached to those of quality and professionalism in this new alignment for teaching, that of standards. This is language associated with what Gee et al. (1996:49) term the 'new capitalism'. They claim that: 'There is a growing alignment between the business world in new capitalism and various non-business spheres of interest, including schools and academic disciplines promoting school-reform efforts'. New capitalism focuses on change, flexibility, speed and innovation, and here 'quality' is taken as process rather than product, involving the development of a form of 'expertise' associated with the capacity for 'progressive problem solving' (ibid.: 56-57). So in this second 'take' on quality within education, the contrast is further built between a 'quality profession' and a 'mass profession'. 'Quality' is presented as linked to the individualised innovative capacity of the new professional teacher who is presented as responsive to the client and the market. This is set in juxtaposition to an outmoded version of the teacher, functioning from within an industrialised 'mass', teaching to the 'mass', and seen to be engaged in the repetitive production tasks characteristic of an industrialised economy'.

Associated with this convergence between education and the marketplace is language of flexibility, differentiation and individuality, at the same time as that of collaboration, devolution, and empowerment (Gee et al. 1996:viii). Thus there is an assumption here that individuality and autonomy can exist within a collaborative environment that is facilitated by commitment of workers to core organisational goals. As Fazal Rizvi and Bob Lingard point out in their 'Forward' to Gee et al. (1996:ix) 'the language of the new work order is inherently contradictory because, while it preaches organisational democracy and empowerment, it does not really permit workers to question some of the fundamental assumptions underlying the new business capitalism'. This is the dilemma presented within this paper concerning the potential conflict with a teaching workforce required to practice with creativity, problem solving, critical capacity and individualised context-specific responses, and yet with allegiance and conformity to key organisational goals (articulated within standards frameworks). It is these goals and values that Gee et al. see as:

seeded into social practices, activity systems, technologies [...not necessarily] visibly connected to or associated with any central controlling authority [...nor] even directly negotiated over in any very overt fashion [...]. What we are talking about here, in the end, is the way in which immersion into a "community of practice" can allow individuals or units to internalise values and goals – often without a great deal of negotiation or conscious reflection and without the exercise of very much top-down authority (Gee et al. 1996: 64-65).

They cite as the core dilemma of the new capitalism 'the control of empowered units without a central authority' (ibid.:64), or as cited above without visible authority. However standards, incorporating the understandings, skills and the values of the new 'knowledge economy', and linked to a system of accreditation and acknowledgement, could be seen to undertake much of the work of low visibility 'centralised control'. The language employed within the Ramsey Report with respect to standards carries this same slippage between 'standards' as frameworks of professional guidance

and statements of expertise but also ‘standards’ as potential technologies of control employed in the service of accountability. Thus standards are linked insistently with professionalism but also to a form of accountability constructed in terms of self-regulation:

It is difficult to sustain the view that teaching is a profession. There are no standards to describe teacher practice in New South Wales, and teachers have no accountability other than to meet minimum competency requirements set by employers. There does not exist a governing structure through which teachers can set, maintain and assure their standards of practice. Self-regulation, so prominent in many other professions, is not a feature of the teaching profession in New South Wales (Ramsey 2000:32).

Problematism and the Ramsey Report

A policy-as-discourse approach takes interest in how and why problems and solutions are constituted. ‘What is the problem?’ The Ramsey Report presents a ‘problem’ that is in fact constructed through several steps, which together lead towards a (pre)-defined solution. The ‘problem’ is the quality of teachers and teaching at this time. This issue of quality is linked to a second ‘problem’, namely the lack of clearly established professional status for teachers. To this is linked the third ‘problem’, that of a lack of a set of standards defining professional practice. In building the ‘problem’, Ramsey has encapsulated the solution within that problem. Building professionalism and improving quality within education, he claims, will follow the development and implementation of standards of practice. The apparent coherence of the ‘problem’ and its solution mitigates against questions being asked concerning the logic and coherence of this argument.

A closer analysis of the Ramsey document is instructive in terms of the ways a particular discourse of professionalism is developed and centralised through the language of the text. The terms *profession*, *professional* and *professionalism* are repeatedly used throughout, and in association with a wide range of terms. Thus for example within the text of the Report, *professional* is linked to the following: *practice*, *interests*, *systems*, *responsibilities*, *creativity*, *development*, *standards*, *experience*, *practitioners*, *principles*, *identity*, *organisation*, *initiative*, *accountability*, *status* and *autonomy*, and probably more! This repetition creates not only a lexical cohesion across the text around the concept of professionalism, but also with respect to meaning, a sense of the universal credibility of the concept of the *professional*. So pervasive is the use of this terminology that the text does not invite questions such as, for example: What is added to the understanding of teaching responsibilities by terming them ‘professional’, and what would non-professional teaching responsibilities look like? Thus repetition feeds an agenda of persuasion, serving to cement the concept and validate its associations.

Of particular interest is the juxtapositioning of the terms *quality profession* and *mass profession* as in:

The sooner teaching is constituted as a quality, rather than a mass, profession the sooner it will be possible to put these issues in a proper professional framework (Ramsey 2000:12).

The Report further raises a concern that in New South Wales, ‘the industrial and professional identities of teachers are not separate [...] too often professional matters are turned into contentious industrial issues’ (ibid.: 33). What these linked binaries – quality/mass profession, professional/industrial identity – imply is that it is only through replacing the collective, industrial character of the teaching profession, that a profession associated with *quality* practice, as articulated within a *professional framework*, can be established. Thus the construction of the *quality teacher*, and the *quality profession* is discursively constituted at the expense of what is termed an ‘industrial

identity’. ‘Quality’ in this sense then is linked to an individual(ist) rather than a collectivist enterprise.

This juxtapositioning and privileging of the ‘professional teacher’ is cemented through a layering of linked binary associations from the Report text, as evidenced in the following table:

The Ramsey Report: Binary Formulations Associated with Teaching as a Quality/Mass Profession

Quality profession	Mass Profession	p.12
Professional Identity	Industrial identity	p.33
Professional capacity and responsibility	Compliance through systems of constraint	p.24
Teacher professionalism	Imposed priorities and bureaucratic regulation	p.25
Professional principles and initiative	Arbitrary rules determined by employers or negotiated with unions	p.118
The profession looking after professional interests of individuals	Unions looking after industrial interests in negotiation with employers	p.118
The profession as involving individual action for the good of clients	Unions as involved in collective action for the good of the group	p.118

Here a clear prioritising of what is termed a *professional identity* is established at the expense of an *industrial identity*, and through a linked binary formulation, *quality profession* is set in juxtaposition to *mass profession*. As shown above, clustered around the term ‘profession’ are the signifiers: *quality; capacity; responsibility; principles; initiative; interests; individuals* and *good of clients*. Opposed to these and linked to *industrial identity* are a cluster of more pejorative terms: *mass; compliance; constraint; imposed; bureaucratic; regulation; arbitrary rules; determined by; union negotiation; interests; collective* and *good of group*. There is a clear hierarchy being established here, with the values seen to be associated with this version of the ‘quality profession’ being clearly privileged. Insistently, throughout this Report, the argument that links teaching quality to professionalism and then to standards is built at the expense of what is constructed as a constraining, anti-individualistic, industrial/mass version of teaching and the teacher.

Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive approach to textual analysis advocates confronting binary oppositions, ‘to open up the complications that have been smoothed over by the [violent hierarchies ...] that such oppositions establish, in which one term gets the [upper hand.....] by dismissing its opposite as secondary, improper, marginal, false or frivolous’ (Stronach and MacLure 1997:5 quoting Derrida 1976:41). Deconstruction, as MacLure (2003) reminds us, ‘is not just a game of words’:

It carries an ethical and a political charge, since [...] deconstruction has the power to show how every social order rests on a *forgetting* of the exclusion practices through which one set of meanings has been institutionalised and various other possibilities [...] have been marginalized (MacLure 2003:179, quoting Shapiro 2001:321).

What is being silenced in the ‘exclusion practices’ at work across the binary associations from the

Ramsey Report tabled above? Traditionally a union presence within education has provided a watchdog function around equity of conditions of employment and practice. It has engendered a collective and at times a collaborative culture that has contributed not just to action around industrial issues, but also to organisations and practices such as the National Schools Network and the Innovative Links programs. Unions would claim they have pursued agendas that in fact aim to support and consolidate the needs of the 'profession' in the pursuit of quality of professional practice and thus as not acting in ways antithetical to notions of professionalism.

It would seem that here there is a devaluing of the concept of the professional unionised collective. The self-monitoring individual, performing against centrally determined standards of practice, is replacing the teacher whose professional needs have been buffered and perhaps nurtured within an industrial relations structure. This is a shift that befits a market economy approach whereby the good of the 'market' and the 'client' can become prioritised at the expense of the needs of the practitioner. Here the teacher is framed as the individualised 'professional', collected within a professional group that is defined largely through standards frameworks responsive to the imperatives of the market. There is a risk that teachers will suspect that, rather than having their autonomy enhanced, they are in fact entering a system of constraint that has become covert. Further, they might suspect that structures with an agenda to protect their industrial rights and conditions are concurrently being eroded. Additionally, it could be suggested that in the rush to measure and compare student teachers and teachers within this climate of accountability, that spaces to explore and critique, to work with uncertainty and other ways of thinking, and to acknowledge and engage with the strong emotional charge of teaching will be closed down.

Foucault (1979) would suggest that here the overt control of the union with its expectations of solidarity has been replaced by the covert surveillance inherent in notions of professional organisation and standards. With respect to issues of governmentality, whilst the Report advocates 'the profession looking after professional interests of individuals' (Ramsey 2000:118), how and by whom 'the profession' is defined and formulated take on heightened interest. As a way forward Stronach and MacLure (1997:4) suggest, with respect to binaries, '*not* to choose between them, nor to work to transcend them, nor, importantly, to ignore them, but instead to work to complicate the relations *between* them'. Hopefully taking a critical look at documents such as the Ramsey Review contributes to this work of 'complicating relations'.

With the press to legitimate a preferred version of professional identity, linked to a 'quality' profession as opposed to a 'mass' profession, a particular formulation of the 'good' teacher is also being fashioned. Such a teacher needs individually to perform within a climate of surveillance, continuously self-monitoring in terms of centralised standards frameworks and accountable to the Institute and to the market. This is increasingly the institutional climate within which student teachers are negotiating teacher identity. However, versions of the professional self are forged not just in response to institutionally sanctioned discourses but also within complex intersections of what could be termed the realms of the biographical and the emotional (Britzman 2003:30).

Versions of Professionalism

Stronach et al. (2001:125) 'criticise reductive typologies and characterisations of current professionalism' and pose that the 'professional self' is beset by a series of contradictions and dilemmas. Supported by a body of empirical data, gathered from recording the narratives of teachers and nurses with respect to their lived experience of the professional self, they pose an 'uncertain theory of professionalism'. From their data emerges 'broken stories' of the professional commonly plural, split, in tension, juggled, ambiguous and inconsistent. This view aligns with that of Deborah Britzman (1991:8) in which teaching and learning to teach is presented as 'a struggle for voice and discursive practices amid a cacophony of past and present voices, lived experiences and available practices'. Britzman poses, whilst 'voice' may be 'intimately felt as the inside out', that is

in gaining the capacity to give forth, perhaps more accurately it arises from the 'outside in' (Britzman 2003:21), that is from speaking from within the available discourses. In linking constitution of identity to the metaphor of 'struggle for voice' Britzman foregrounds the conflictive and complex nature of this process and associates the process of identity formation with the demand both to take on something already there that has been institutionally legitimated, and to fashion something that feels both individual and new. The narrower the boundaries mandated around professionalism, that is the stronger the discursive/disciplinary practices experienced as 'outside in', the more teachers and student teachers will feel compelled to perform and present a coherent (fabricated?) version of their professional self, one perhaps experienced as at odds with their more complex and conflictive lived experiences of teaching.

Rather than advocating static alternate versions to what might be termed the standards-sanctioned 'quality professional', for example versions such as the democratic professional (Furlong et al. 2000) and the activist professional (Sachs 2000), Stronach et al. advocate for an 'uncertain' theory of professionalism, not only to accommodate professional diversity, but also to allow spaces to critique its 'alleged stasis' and any unitary notions of "the professional" (2001:114). This is a very different discourse than that developed and advocated within the Ramsey Report and subsequent institutional accreditation developments in Australia, in particular since 2000.

Teacher Education and the Dilemmas of Professionalism

It is of interest that Stronach et al. identify issues of trust and risk as key challenges within current formulations of professionalism :

Perhaps the most decisive aspect of current 'economies of performance' is their threatened elimination of a moral landscape featuring notions of autonomy and trust...particularly perhaps in the removal of just those elements of risk in professional performance on which opportunities for trust need to be built (Stronach et al. 2001:130).

In addressing the fundamental question as to whether professionalism can thrive on performance indicators, Stronach et al. claim: 'excellence can only be motivated, it cannot be coerced'. In so doing they question the extent to which within a climate of accountability and accounting, teachers can 'trust' to 'risk' practising in ways other than that prescribed within the mandated frameworks of standards. In teacher education the question that arises concerns the ways spaces of trust and risk-taking for student teachers can be incorporated, spaces perhaps 'other' to those sanctioned within a climate of accreditation.

Perhaps one indication of the extent to which teachers operate within a climate of trust and thus display a willingness to risk lies in ways in which their professional practice succumbs to fabrication and more conforming, less creative approaches to teaching. Britzman claims that the increasing pressure towards performativity and accountability within the present educational climate induces what she terms 'getting by' responses and the strategies to support 'getting by', that is the development of 'the arts of getting by'. If professional standards frameworks can be seen as constituting an arena of surveillance, a panoptical space (Foucault 1977, 1982), in which the student teacher is observed, positioned and regulated they will also however produce niches for resistance. It is these niches that are exploited by student teachers driven by the imperative to 'get by' and which induce responses that constitute 'the arts of getting by' including accommodation and compromise as well as resistance. Part of our work as teacher educators needs to support the development in student teachers of a capacity to 'read' the field of teaching and their practices within it, with heightened awareness of what may arise from its complex intersections of discourse, power and subjectivity. Such understandings may serve to diminish a tendency towards 'getting by'. Additionally, however, we need to direct students to exercise a degree of reflexivity around

their practice, so that they have an awareness of, and a capacity to interrogate and learn from their own 'getting by' responses.

Thus Britzman's interest is not so much with what might be seen as the predictable responses of accommodation and at times resistance to the expectations elicited within forms of professionalism in which professional practice and identity is prescribed by mandated standards frameworks. Rather she is indicating that within teacher education it is the 'arts of getting by' that provide a valuable and even necessary pedagogical resource.

We must pause to question why the daily worry over 'getting by' – rather than the study of the 'arts of getting by' – has overwhelmed educational discourse (Britzman 1998:24).

My understanding of Britzman's quote above, is that she is exhorting us as educators to turn our attention towards the pedagogical potential inherent in the 'fragile place' in which reside the learner's strategies, namely the 'arts of getting by' (ibid.:24). Her interest in the 'arts of getting by' is contingent on a view of learning and identity formation that is far from one of transmission or the unproblematic development of knowledge and self. She assumes learning and its attendant identity work to be a 'dynamic psychological event' involving 'a re-learning of one's history of learning' and thus with 'an unconscious force that renders the work of learning so difficult in intimacy and in public' (Britzman 1998:5). Such a view takes as its point of interest what can be termed the 'otherness of learning', that is, the sites in which arise difficulties and resistances to the demands of educators and the demands of learning. Thus the focus turns to what is often uncomfortable, ambiguous, confusing and inconclusive within learning and becoming, elements that do not fit comfortably into the descriptions of professional practice and identity encapsulated in standards frameworks. Learning here is assumed to occur in a space characterised by paradox and discomfort, infused with a complexity of emotions - emotions commonly closed down within educational contexts. Such a view of learning and professional identity formation is at odds with humanist assumptions of individualised subjectivity, of the coherent, self-actualising self, who can develop and be developed through experience and practice. A view counter to humanist assumptions invites different pedagogical responses, arising from different points of interest and different priorities. Such a view will assume that for student teachers, the work of professional identity formation will be enriched by attending not only to institutionally sanctioned requirements and practices and to competency development, but also to the ambiguities, confusions, inconsistencies, resistances as well as accommodations that arise through their learning, and across all, the emotional flavour of these responses. It is this arena that Britzman is exhorting us to turn towards in this present climate of prescription and accountability.

A final thought in returning to Britzman's quote relates to the 'why' of her question; that is why 'the daily worry of getting by' rather than 'the study of the arts of getting by' has overwhelmed educational discourse. One answer to this question relates to the claim that our practice as educators – teacher educators, teachers and student teachers, is occurring within an increasingly regulated system, informed by standards and accountability measures, and that this in itself exacerbates 'the daily worry of getting by'. It could be claimed that the increasing demands to be publicly 'calculated' will induce on a daily basis in teachers' lives responses that align more closely to 'getting by' than to the revitalising of a profession that the Ramsey Report claims is needed. If this is a justifiable claim, it requires responses from teacher educators. Policy shifts such as those heralded by the Ramsey Review in 2000, and the subsequent unrolling of standards agendas in Australia, serve to create a climate of increased surveillance and conformity. Not only does this climate induce a focus on performance, the pressure to 'get by' according to the mandated standards, but also in its second sense, fabricated responses such as 'slipping by', avoiding the gaze are also potentially evoked. And through this, spaces diminish in which questions can be asked such

as how should the ‘good’ teacher be defined and measured, and what meaning can be made of the thoughts, responses and emotions elicited when one is accountable to such disciplinary measures, as well as what insights lie in one’s own ‘arts of getting by’?

Counter Pedagogical Spaces

What pedagogical responses are called for if the ‘otherness’ of learning needs to be attended to? ‘Otherness’ admits to inconclusiveness, to uncertainty, to the learning inherent in critically watching oneself within the learning process. It is about interrogating the constructions that are claimed as experience, questioning what one has taken as counting as experience, and the emotional flavour accompanying much of the learning experience. It is about acknowledging the slippery interventions of the unconscious within learning as evidenced by the surprises, the missed connections in communication and the unexpected routes taken. These are spaces that call for a playfulness with experiences and meaning and a resistance to the push for coherence, conformity and conclusion.

If teacher educators envisage approaches that aim to support student teachers in productively interrogating their experiences, including their emotional responses, then they need to provide spaces for safe and constructive exploration and play. However, any pedagogical approach that aims for genuine self-reflective enquiry within education will need to find its place within a field that is already characterised by formulations of the student and the teacher that in many ways are already too known and too defined. Education is tolerant only to a limited extent of student and teacher capacities NOT to know themselves. It leaves few spaces for genuine exploration of creative possibilities that are genuine in not assuming a pre-determined end point. ‘Too often, the unknown is allowed into pedagogy and celebrated in teaching only as a tease (not a tickling) before finally reaching and achieving the known’ (Ellsworth 1997:172). Ellsworth’s ‘tease’ here refers to pedagogies that have an *appearance* of offering students exploration of open-ended possibilities. The distinction Ellsworth makes between the tease and tickling is drawn from the psychoanalytic theorising of Adam Phillips (1993), who, influenced by the work of Winnicott (1971), uses the metaphor of engagement in a tickling game as an example of a deliberate choice to experience a ‘precarious transitional state’ within safe boundaries. Choosing to enter into tickling games arises from a desire to explore ‘the trauma of chaotic, unpredictable openness and loss of control’ but at the same time to be held within the safety of containment, limits and boundaries (Ellsworth 1997:166). Thus tickling (assuming the rules of the ‘game’ are adhered to) is opposed to the covertly directional nature of the ‘tease’. Tickling does not purport to have a designed end point or goal, yet offers a bounded place for exploration.

One could argue that much about the experience of teacher education presents to student teachers as a ‘tease’ rather than a ‘tickle’! The ‘tease’ of being an ‘almost’ teacher, with one’s own class, and yet still subject to the evaluating gaze of the supervising teacher; the ‘tease’ of engaging in reflective practice that aims to systematically critique and reformulate one’s practice, yet within a context that retains the power to legitimate knowledge and practice; the ‘tease’ of being in a collaborative relationship with one’s supervising teacher and yet being a novice to the expert. As much of the teaching environment that was buffered within the industrial/collective structures that Ramsey denigrated as typifying a ‘mass profession’, is replaced by more individualistic, entrepreneurial, self-accounting forms of the professional teacher, the need for spaces to accommodate that which does not ‘fit’ – intellectually, experientially and emotionally becomes more insistent. The Ramsey Review and its subsequent policy formulations has been significant in creating the arena within education that is bounded by institutes, standards and particular versions of quality in education and forms of professionalism. The insistence of this agenda asks for teacher educators to discern and develop productive spaces that allow for voices other to that of Ramsey.

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