

Teacher professionalism: implications for teachers, teacher
educators

and democratic schooling

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The essence of a profession is the professionalism of
the practitioners, not the constitutional arrangements which
purport to foster and maintain their practice. (Tickell 1992,
page 45)

'Teacher professionalism' has been a central plank in the
movement to improve the quality of student learning in
Australian schools, especially since the May 1988 Commonwealth
Ministerial Statement, Strengthening Australia's Schools
(Dawkins 1988).

The focus of teacher professionalism and the quality of teaching
has occurred during a period of dramatic contraction in the
funding of (government) schools, largely because of the fiscal
difficulties of state and territory governments resulting from
the reductions in Commonwealth general revenue grants to the
states and territories since the early 1980s. Further reductions
in schools funding are likely to occur as state and territory
governments implement severely contractionary fiscal policies
and feel little restraint in cutting resources for schools
because of the impact of the view promoted by New Right think

tanks that a relatively higher level of funding has negligible educational impact, and that such a higher level of funding simply results from the political power of teacher unions, not any desire by governments to realistically improve the quality of schooling (see Institute of Public Affairs 1990 for such a position on schools funding, and for a critique see Preston 1991a and 1991b).

The context of funding restraint has some significant implications for the implementation of reforms related to teacher quality and the quality of teaching, and has played a role in the focus of government policy-makers on matters other than funding ('outcomes' rather than 'inputs', as well as 'quality' rather than 'quantity'). In that respect the teacher-related reforms have been part of 'micro-economic reform', a general approach to improving productivity and reducing the costs of production through changes in work practices, and developing and better utilising the competencies of workers.

The focus of micro-economic reform is on the actual processes of production, rather than leaving such processes to the unknown 'black-box' of the simple production function analysis of neo-classical economics (Alexander and Green 1992). This general approach to work and productivity had theoretical connections with developments in education such as 'school effectiveness' research and learning theory based on cognitive psychology rather than behavioural psychology (opening the 'black boxes' of the complex processes of schooling and the human mind respectively). In each case there is the opening for scrutiny of various 'internal' processes and relationships, and an appreciation of complexity. Thus a broad theoretical framework was possible for an examination of the nature of teaching, the organisation of teachers' work, the nature of the teaching profession, and the development and utilisation of teachers' competencies. This concentration on what is often the minutia of processes sometimes left ignored matters such as the nature of 'inputs' (such as student characteristics, funding), the structures of systems and contexts, and unintended consequences or externalities.

Initially the nature and organisation of teachers' work (the quality of teaching) was given little attention. Rather, the focus was on the nature of the teaching profession (the quality of teachers) in terms of education and training, demographic structure (age and sex), 'quality assurance' matters such as selection and appraisal, and career structures, rewards and conditions in as far as they affect the attractiveness of teaching to ensure adequate recruitment and retention of 'quality' teachers.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development carried out a major project on The Condition of Teaching in the late 1980s which culminated in the publication in 1990 of The Teacher Today (OECD 1990) which covered these 'teacher quality' issues. Recent work in Australia began with a similar focus (Schools Council 1989) before expanding from 'teacher quality' to a more integrated approach incorporating 'the quality of teaching and learning' (Schools Council 1990) which became the broad agenda of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning which was established in February 1991.

'Teacher professionalism' became something to be strived for, advocated by those in public positions in the decision-making process. Yet there remained an uneasiness, especially among teachers. They were concerned with the undermining of industrial rights by appeals to 'professionalism', the undermining of the quality of their work with students and communities by a promotion of the individualistic, elitist, exclusivist and mystifying characteristics of traditional professions, and the fragmentation and restriction of the teaching profession through the application of a distorted version of professional expertise. These issues have not received the close attention in recent Australian debates comparable to the consideration given them in the USA.

In this paper I want to critically examine and draw from some recent contributions to the teacher professionalism debate in the USA. I want to use the contributions of these writers (and others) to develop a better understanding of the issues as they apply to Australia, of historical circumstances and current developments in Australia, and possibilities for the future. My major focus is on an understanding of possibilities for teacher professionalism, and a consideration of teacher education in relation to it. I also consider briefly other matters such as school organisation and governance in relation to teacher professionalism. My hope is to provide a useful analysis for those involved in shaping developments: teachers and their unions, teacher educators, policy-makers in government, parent organisations, among others.

In a paper published in the Harvard Educational Review, David Labaree argues that 'teacher professionalism is an extension of the effort by teacher educators to raise their own professional status', and, because of teacher educators' efforts to develop a 'science of teaching', reforms aimed at developing teacher professionalism 'may promote the rationalisation of classroom instruction by generating momentum toward an authoritative, research-driven, and standardised vision of teaching practice' - doing little for teachers or their students (Labaree 1992, page

123). Many of his concerns and analyses have their parallels in articles by Nicholas Burbules and Kathleen Densmore in Educational Policy (Burbules and Densmore 1991a and 1991b).

These writers provide useful critiques of the common social processes leading to professional status, and of the social role of traditional professions. Thus they point to the dangers of various developments and strategies involving teachers. Their definition of 'profession' is based on social status as a profession. My approach is different. My conceptualisation of 'profession' is based on actual practice, rather than social claims or status, and I conclude that greater professionalisation of teaching can improve the conditions and quality of teaching (including the democratisation of schooling), and improve the work and situation of teacher educators.

Labaree, Burbules and Densmore rightly warn against following the general model of the traditional professions. However, to reject 'professionalism' as a useful notion describing central characteristics of good practice for teachers significantly weakens our ability to understand and improve teaching. While I will argue for the central importance of the notion of 'professionalism', there is a clear danger in the use of the term as a slogan or strategic shorthand because of the powerful connotations associated with unwanted characteristics of the traditional professions. An underlying theme of my paper is that the evaluation of various features, arrangements, situations or proposals needs to be based on the real effects on teaching and the development of schooling, and not against some ideal of 'professionalism'.

The meaning of 'profession'

Definitions chosen for complex concepts such as 'professionalism' can have real consequences. They determine broad understandings upon which a range of actions can be based as well as indicating specific characteristics to be promoted or opposed. 'Profession' and 'professionalism', as commonly understood, are complex, and a great variety of definitions are possible - some more appropriate, valid and useful in some situations than in others. The definition with which I primarily work in this paper is intended to be useful - not only in this particular analysis, but as a valuable conceptualisation of teacher professionalism for informing activities and developments intended to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of teachers' working lives.

The notion of professionalism which I develop is consistent with Gerry Tickell's comment with which I began this paper:

judgements about professionalism derive from the work of practitioners, not the various supporting arrangements or associated features such as formal training, conditions for practice, working conditions and management structures, or public opinion.

What I am centrally concerned with is the practice of professionals, not claims to and public recognition of professional status. It is a central problem with Labaree's attempt to provide 'a genealogy of the current movement to professionalise teaching' that he does not make a conceptual distinction between seeking to 'professionalise' the actual work (which requires a careful analysis of such work and its conditions, and the ways of understanding it) and 'professionalise' teachers by enhancing their public status as professionals. The two are, of course, inter-related; but they are not the same.

It has been 'professionalism' as the public status of a group of practitioners, rather than a focus on the nature of the work they do, which has dominated sociological (and historical) work in the area since the late 1960s (see Metzger 1987 for an analysis of recent research and scholarship in the field). Thus we have the following:

Professionalism is an ideology of the middle class and has been practiced as an occupational strategy; it is a vehicle for upward collective social mobility (Parry and Parry 1974, page 182),

and, more recently,

The critical tradition in the sociology of the professions analyses the attainment of professional status not primarily as the development and acquisition of certain characteristics . . . but as the successful outcome of a political struggle to legitimate various privileges and economic rewards. On this view, 'professional' is not a descriptive term but a symbol which our culture reserves for a few occupations, a construct that promotes positive group identification and serves to emphasise and legitimate differences between elite groups and others. (Burbules and Densmore 1991, emphasis added)

Labaree's work is in this tradition which sees

professionalisation as an open-ended struggle that must operate without the benefit of a single path to success, a secure mechanism for preserving success, or even a stable set of criteria for establishing what constitutes success. (page 126)

This critical tradition has much of value in helping us understand the various social developments investigated, and to appreciate the problems with some of the associated arrangements or conditions of professionalism. It is also a valuable antidote to the previous functionalist paradigm for investigating professions and the 'sociologists who took it upon themselves to compose a list of defining attributes that would distinguish the genuine article from the unworthy, pretentious rest' (Metzger 1987, page 11). Metzger is concerned that the critical tradition of the analysis of professions is tending to see the professions are far more socially powerful than they in fact are - an approach which he calls 'professionism' (not 'professionalism'), describing 'all systematic attempts to attribute historical trends - especially undesirable trends - to the rise of the professions or to the foibles of professionals' (page 13). However, the inappropriateness of the critical tradition for my argument arises from its primary focus on the public status of occupations as professional or not, and related issues of collective organisation and identification. My concern is with a consideration of the nature of the work of an occupation (of individual practitioners and of the occupation as a whole) and from that analysis of the work, to determine whether or not concepts such as 'professional', defined in particular reasonable ways, would be useful in better understanding that work, and, perhaps, improving that work or the conditions of work of practitioners.

Burbules and Densmore critique those who they see as concerned with improving the public status of teaching as a 'professional' activity, and they do this within the critical paradigm, but they do argue that

The acid test of reforming teaching should be that it improves the education of children from all strata and segments of society. Yet no proposal has made a convincing case for teacher professionalism primarily on such grounds. (page 56)

This is a penetrating critique. The complex, informed judgements required for the effective teaching of all students in all situations is, I will argue, an essential ingredient of teacher professionalism.

'Professional judgement' is the central notion in understanding how teachers can best teach all students in all circumstances (and how they can best develop particular schools and schooling systems in particular circumstances). This involves two aspects: appreciating, first, that the complex diversity of students, circumstances and teachers themselves means that there can be no predetermined 'one right answer', and therefore that the rule-based application of knowledge, technique and materials is

insufficient; and, second, that personal qualities such as sensitivity, flexibility, patience and humour combined with 'common sense' are also insufficient without knowledge and understanding in depth and breadth covering areas such as the content to be taught, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values (Shulman 1987, page 8), combined with various high level cognitive and social capabilities such as communicating and working in teams.

In the definition of this paper, professionalism has one essential feature: practice requires the exercise of complex, high level judgements. This implies a number of other features, and, depending on the circumstances, requires a range of conditions and supportive arrangements for the effective exercise of appropriate judgements. Other features may be traditionally associated with professionalism, but may not be necessary - and they may in fact undermine the quality of practice. Professional judgements are not only carried out on an individual basis (for example, by a lone teacher in a classroom), but also on a collective basis (teachers as a collective helping to create the school system as a whole and its role in society).

To develop this further - professional practice involves judgements which require complex combinations of high level competencies. These competencies involve various mixes of specialised knowledge; high level cognitive skills; sensitive and sophisticated personal skills; broad and relevant background and tacit knowledge. It is this professional judgement which distinguishes professional work from 'technical' work which involves the rule-based application of knowledge, however complex and sophisticated that knowledge may be.

The involvement of individual judgement implies a level of work-place autonomy - there must be some freedom to exercise judgement. The complexity of the judgements and/or the competencies necessary to perform them usually require formal knowledge and understanding beyond that held by the general community. Thus the 'key elements' of professionalism claimed by Labaree (formal knowledge and workplace autonomy - page 125) are generally supportive of the necessary feature of the exercise of professional judgement.

Judgements about what to do and how to do it involve ethical dimensions - values are necessary components of the ongoing process of decision-making which is involved in professional practice. In some cases the values will be relatively straight forward and simple, others will involve ethical dilemmas which

might be more problematic to some individual professionals than to others - for example, when a lawyer's client seeks advice on a tax avoidance scheme or other arrangement which might be exploitive of vulnerable people or the community as a whole, some lawyers may have a significant dilemma which they will seek to work through with the client (which might be professionally problematic if no legal difficulties are involved), others will go ahead according to the client's wishes without a second thought, while others will refuse to provide service to the client on the matter. For much, but not all, professional practice, there is constant ethical decision-making - there is a 'micro-ethical dimension', as Paul Komesaroff put it (1993). For teachers interacting with students and for nurses and doctors in much of their clinical practice each gesture, tone of voice, way verbal communications are structured and phrased, not to mention the more obvious issues of choice of curriculum or general regime of care, involve ethical elements concerning how the students or patients are respected and what will be the outcomes sought in terms of the students' and patients' own dispositions, attitudes, self perceptions, aspirations and so on which are as much elements in long term learning and health as any immediate and easily measurable formal learning or change in physical condition. It is the significance of this complex micro-ethical dimension which is often overlooked or undervalued when high level technical expertise is also a component of professional practice (Komesaroff 1993). It is one thing to recognise the ethical dimension; it is another to decide the actual values which are brought into the decision-making process.

Professionals operate in society, and clients (including the general community) need to generally accept the value of their work to financially support that work and otherwise provide the conditions for practice. Thus, there tends to be a 'social contract' where autonomy is exchanged for obligation. Developing the notion of a professional social contract, Gary Sykes claims that 'a profession agrees to develop and enforce standards of good practice in exchange for the right to practice free of bureaucratic supervision and external regulation' (Sykes 1987, page 19). Linda Darling-Hammond put it in similar terms: 'Professional prerogatives to make decisions are accompanied by professional obligations to do so in a responsible manner' (Darling-Hammond 1988, page 12, emphasis in original). (As I discuss later, there can be a significant role for authorities external to the profession without undermining professionalism - thus I consider Sykes' position a little extreme.) In other words, professional practice based on such a social contract has an orientation to meeting the needs of clients (which generally includes the wider community) - there are implicit if not explicit 'professional ethics'.

However, a social contract and positive professional ethics are not essential to professionalism (even though professional judgements necessarily have value components). Rather, they are generally common conditions for professional practice in democratic societies, and may only need to be partial to have effect. In many situations professionals share decision-making with clients and/or employers in ways which do not lessen professionalism. The social contract thesis and the view that autonomy is essential for professionalism tends to be associated with the conditions of practice of the lone, self-employed professional. Teachers are generally employed as part of a very complex, integrated enterprise. However, the nature of their work tends to require a great deal of autonomy - even the most authoritarian and 'teacher proof' system cannot wholly control the nature of teachers' relationships with students, and those relationships are significant factors in student learning. In addition, teachers potentially have great scope for collectively shaping the cultural institutions of schools and schooling systems - something which occurs by default if not intentionally.

It is possible for professionals to practice - using complex professional judgement which have value components - against the interests of clients and wider sections of the community. This can be quite blatant - for example, when those who determine the financial rewards and support of the professionals are antagonistic to the 'clients' who are being treated badly by the professionals who may be prisoners being inhumanely experimented on by medical doctors, or being indoctrinated by teachers. More commonly, the professionals themselves may have sufficient social power (which may include 'professional authority', exclusivity, or the mystique of esoteric knowledge) to distort the social contract to serve their own needs at the expense of their clients and the wider society. This is always a matter of degree, and can be seen, for example, when medical professionals actively promote health systems which support their own income and status but which are less beneficial to the health of the community. Many have argued that this distortion and manipulation of the social contract is a general feature of the operation of the professions in modern society (see 'Metzger's Select Bibliography on Anti-Professionalism', Metzger 1987, page 18). However, such an analysis is flawed if it does not consider the actual situation of particular professions operating in particular circumstances. As a blanket generalisation it falls into the trap of 'public choice theory' (Quiggin 1987) - dismissing any involvement of publicly employed or supported professionals (and other workers) in decisions which affect their practice as improper 'provider capture' (Hearn 1992, page 74). This is discussed further later in the paper. It may be a matter of debate whether or not particular practice is in the interests of clients or the wider community, and practitioners

themselves may not be fully aware of their own reasons for practicing in certain ways. Such issues are very important, but they do not strike at the core of professionalism. (The preceding discussion implies a critique of Amy Gutman's 1987 argument for teachers' professional authority based on a democratic value of 'nonrepression'. See Walker 1991 for a detailed critique of Gutman.)

Professionalism tends to have a number of other features. Some are supportive of effective professional practice, though their importance will vary according to the nature and conditions of practice.

'Control of entry' or formal profession controlled or influenced registration as a condition of practice is often considered a central feature of professionalism. For example, Parry and Parry stated that 'professionalism. . . is a strategy for controlling an occupation in which colleagues. . . set up a system of self-government (which) involves restriction of entry to the occupation through the control of education, training and the process of qualification'; and for teachers (in England and Wales) the registration movement was 'a core element in the strategy for professionalism' (Parry and Parry 1974, page 161). However, their concern is with public status as professionals, rather than the nature of practice. Whether or not professional control of entry facilitates or undermines the professional quality of practice will depend on the circumstances. Control of entry is much less important where practitioners are the employees of authorities who are also committed to high quality professional practice as the best way of meeting client needs and there is an adequate supply of potential practitioners with appropriate initial professional education, than where practitioners are self-employed and clients are not able to be well-informed regarding the competence of potential practitioners. It is quite possible that profession controlled entry, without involvement by other stakeholders, can be inimical to the quality of practice by the profession - where, for example, the profession draws from a restricted social group resulting in less than optimal quality of practice, yet current practitioners cannot perceive this problem because of their cultural perspective. Thus the degree of profession control or influence over entry has no necessary relationship with the degree of professionalism of individuals or the profession as a whole.

What is necessary is ensuring (by whatever means) that those practicing the profession are competent to do so.

Formal professional education in universities involving a particular body of knowledge is similarly a contingent feature,

its relevance and importance depending on circumstances. However, for most professional work today the nature of judgements involved in practice; the on-going changes in the demands on the profession and the nature of practice; the conditions and organisation of work; and the nature of learning outside formal higher education mean that a substantial, university-based initial professional education is generally necessary for effective practice. Even though work-based, apprentice-style initial education may be adequate where work organisation is hierarchical and team-based, the knowledge base not particularly complex, and there is long term stability in the nature and contexts of practice, there is a danger of stagnation and lack of competence.

Collective professional identification and representative professional organisation generally support the quality of professional practice. Collective structures for arriving at positions and having the authority of legitimate representation to act on them is essential for effective practice by the profession as a whole or groups of professionals. However, representative organisations need have no monopoly of the responsibility for and control over various arrangements associated with the profession such as determining the criteria for practice (control of entry), making policy decisions regarding the nature and direction of practice, curriculum development for professional education, and so on. It is quite proper for representatives of clients and the wider community, industry authorities, educators of the profession, associated occupations and others to have a share of the responsibility for such matters where appropriate. It does not necessarily lessen professionalism for the profession to share such responsibilities. The best arrangements will depend on circumstances, and always will be contestable. Organisations and institutional structures develop historically, and what may now be considered an ideal structure may not be feasible because of the nature of existing organisations and institutions and their relationships.

Other contingent features associated with professionalism do not always support professional practice (though they may be in the interests of the professionals concerned). Some features may support good practice in some circumstances and work against it in others. For example, high status can support the exercise of 'professional authority' which can be used for or against the interests of clients and the wider community, and whether use of such authority in a particular case is beneficial or not can be contestable.

Considering the features of professional work discussed above, it is apparent that many workers can have professional aspects

to their work to a greater or lesser degree. A childcare worker with no formal training can have professional aspects to his or her work. So too can an 'unskilled' process worker who is an active member of a semi-autonomous quality-based work team. The more complex judgements involving high level knowledge and capabilities are involved, the more professional the practice is. Thus, an engineer or lawyer whose work does not require them to make complex judgements, but only to apply technical formula (however sophisticated) to a set of data (information about materials or laws, previous plans or cases) are practicing more as technicians than as professionals. Much high level technical work is commonly considered professional, and to practice requires the sustained development of substantial knowledge and understanding at university level. However, when practice can be objectively predetermined - it is thoroughly rule-based and does not involve judgements of any significance - it is not professional.

Teachers' work

There are two inter-related aspects of the understanding of teachers' work which are important to my argument. Both are based on the broad framework of contemporary learning theory which sees students as the 'constructors' of their own knowledge and understanding, drawing from their existing knowledge and understandings, their current perspectives, aspirations and motivations which are influenced by the nature of their peer society and their home and community lives, as well as the instruction, guidance and inspiration of their teachers and the deliberately developed cultural and resource environment of the school. As Kathryn Crawford and Christine Deer point out, there has been a paradigm shift in theories about learning, 'away from behaviourist (and similar) notions of transmission of knowledge from the teacher as the expert to . . . (now seeing) that knowledge is constructed by learners as a result of their experience. The learner is an active participant in the process.' (1991, pages 6 - 7).

The first aspect elaborates the contrast between teaching which is limited to the application of technique and rules, and professional teaching which involves complex, sensitive and informed judgements. It draws from the understanding that to effectively teach, teachers need to appreciate and respond effectively to the complex web of factors involving each and all their students - something which cannot be predetermined. It is this appreciation and response which is unique in every case which is the essence of the professionalism of teachers. While the judgements involved cannot be predetermined, to be effective in the promotion of student learning they often require high levels of technical and other knowledge - about the subject

matter to be taught, about the nature of learning and ways in which it can be facilitated, about the particular curriculum and its context, about the students concerned, about the school and school system and their contexts, and so on.

Of course teachers can work on the basis that students all fall into a limited number of particular categories in terms of their pre-existing knowledge and understanding, their perspectives, culture, and so on; determining which categories students fall into can be done by the application of a predetermined measure (such as standardised tests); and the teacher can 'teach' in a predetermined manner, applying a set syllabus using pre-prepared materials. In such a case a high level of technical expertise may be displayed, and students who do in fact closely fit the various categories may 'achieve' quite well in some areas. Such has been the assumption underlying 'teacher proof' methods and materials. Its failure for most students and in most areas of learning is not surprising.

From this perspective on the nature of professional teaching (as involving complex judgements in reference to each and all their students), we can see that there has been a powerful professionalising of teaching (practice) over the past few decades. The Schools Council has described the situation in the past thus:

Some time ago, when it was assumed that those responsible for schooling should be able to rely on students possessing certain standard skills and competencies and sharing a common stock of ideas and knowledge, it was also assumed that teachers could take a great deal for granted. Students who deviated from the norm were evidently unsuitable for schooling. Hence teachers were, to a significant extent, teaching to the already taught and certainly to the easily teachable. Students who failed or were unable to keep up were encouraged to come to terms with their situation and to leave school. (Schools Council 1990, page 50)

In other words, there has been an 'increasing tendency for the teaching workforce to become teachers of all rather than instructors of the able' (page 29).

The second aspect of teachers' work important to my argument is concerned with the accepted spheres of their professional responsibilities. The discussion of learning outlined above indicates that teachers' work is primarily about facilitating the work of students, that is, student learning. As Terri Seddon has argued,

the responsibility for teaching, that is, for creating a social

milieu and exerting educative forces, lies with teachers. The responsibility of learning and learning outcomes lies with students. The consequences of seeing teachers' responsibility as the creation of the conditions of learning, that is for students' work, is that teachers cannot be seen to bear this responsibility just in classrooms, but also in schools and systems more generally. (Seddon, 1992, page 12)

Thus teachers' professional work encompasses spheres well beyond the classroom to take in the development of the cultural institution of the school and the system of schooling. To see teachers' professional work as confined to the classroom is a significant flaw in much thinking about teachers' professional work, especially in the USA, as I discuss later. (It was most apparent in the 1990 report of the Schools Council, Australia's Teachers: An agenda for the Next Decade - see Preston 1991, especially pages 14 - 15, and Seddon 1992, for critiques of this aspect of the report.)

Seeing that the creation of the conditions of learning extends well beyond the classroom leads us to the matter of collective professional practice and responsibilities - their nature and how they can best be carried out. We will return to these issues later in the paper. This understanding of teachers' work indicates the problematic nature of the sharp theoretical and practical distinction common in the USA between teachers and administrators.

Many traditional views of teachers' work have tended to dichotomise it in patterns of rational versus sensitive, expert versus intuitive, knowledge-based versus personal judgement, and so on. It is such dichotomies where the latter features are seen as not part of the definition of professionalism, nor the province of formal professional education which underlie the approach to teacher professionalisation which Labaree criticises. He argues that

the teacher professionalization movement runs the risk of abandoning the distinctive and desirable characteristics of the female teacher (nurturing, emotionally supportive, person-centred, and context-focused) in order to take on the frequently undesirable characteristics of the dominant male professional (competitive, rationalistic, task-centred, and abstracted from context). The Holmes and Carnegie reports make virtually no reference to the former traits in their description of teaching as a profession; instead they argue that this profession should be grounded in a scientific knowledge base, arranged competitively into a meritocratic hierarchy, and focused on the task of increasing subject-matter learning. Apparently thinking of teaching's femaleness as unprofessional,

the professionalizers seem to be trying to reshape the female school teacher in the image of the male physician. (Labaree 1992, pages 132-133)

Labaree does not (in the paper cited) discuss in any detail the sort of formal professional preparation and continuing education which would enhance and develop the 'characteristics of the female teacher' which he values. Rather he concentrates on a critique of formal education for the 'male professional'. I will look at this critique and its relevance for Australia.

Teacher professionalism and teacher education

Drawing on the work of Stephen Toulmin (1990), Labaree argues that over recent decades the colleges of education in the US have been developing their mission - their conceptualisation of the knowledge base of teaching - according to the principles of a modernist approach 'best characterised as formal rationalism':

it focuses on the development of abstract principles rather than the study of diverse, concrete, individual cases; and it concentrates on constructing timeless theories grounded in the permanent structures of life rather than exploring the shifting and context-bound problems of daily practice (Labaree, 1992, pages 140-141)

This dichotomisation has been reflected in Australia in the ideal model or stereotype of the 'university' compared with the CAE as depicted, for example, in the report of the Australian Education Council Working Party on Teacher Education (AEC, 1990):

With the transfer of teacher education courses and their staff to the university environment (from a CAE environment), there will be increased pressure on the academic staff to establish their academic credentials by way of research and publication. In the college sector, as in the teachers colleges from which a large part of the sector sprang, the lesser emphasis on research and publication enabled close tutorial and personal links to be maintained between staff and students in a teaching environment which reflected a common vocational commitment. . . . The older universities. . . may well have difficulty in accommodating a situation in which excellence in professional achievement is at least as important as, if not more important than, publications in refereed journals. (pages 22-23)

Thus the dichotomy between research and a commitment to students' professional education; between the academic and the personal; between the universal or abstract and the context-based. Related dichotomies were listed earlier, including theory versus practice, knowledge versus action, and

rational versus sensitive. Such divisions are promoted by certain conceptualisations of professional education in higher education and by certain institutional arrangements and practices. They are not necessary divisions.

There have been moves in Australia which seek a synthesis which draws on and transcends the 'best' of the (stereotyped) CAE and university models. There has been work by various collective and representative organisations of teacher educators, in partnership with the teaching profession and school authorities, in developing initial and post-initial teacher education programs which seek to effectively bridge the above divisions; a concern with curriculum and pedagogy in teacher education to develop teachers as researchers (rather than down-play the research role of academics in education, the resolution is to upgrade the research role of practicing teachers); some collaborative work with other faculties in universities in developing and implementing coherent and appropriate initial and post-initial teacher education courses; sustained consideration of education research and its relationship to education practice (Australian Research Council 1992), and so on. There have also been some lost opportunities.

The 1992 report of the Consultancy on Future Directions for the Institute of Education, University of Melbourne (Maling and Taylor, 1992, which I will refer to as the Report) appears to be such a lost opportunity. There is much of value in the Report if carefully and critically interpreted - especially in its arguments for focus on purposes, the better integration and organisation of work of the Institute/Faculty, the importance of research and an effective public profile for the Education staff, and the value of substantial subject/discipline knowledge for teachers. However, the Report appears written under the spell of the 'modernist' ideal of the university as academic institution exalting one side only of the above dichotomies, combined with a powerful dose of that all too common 'academic cringe' of Education.

There are two major and inter-related areas which I want to consider. These involve, first, the approach to the definition of the proper subject matter for teaching and research, and, second, the relationship with the profession, which is influenced by the position on subject matter.

In discussing the determination of subject matter the report displays a strong belief that 'research-based teacher education' loses 'relevance', and that there is opposition between 'relevance' and 'status' for teacher education (pages 26-27). These assumptions are powerfully presented in the diagrammatic presentation of major types of teacher education programs found

internationally along an axis from 'relevance' at one end to 'status' at the other (page 27). There may be some empirical basis to this dichotomy in a number of institutions and cultures, but there is no reason for it to be considered necessary. There is a similar pattern of assumption in the view that the standards and needs of universities, on the one hand, and the professional work of graduates of teacher education courses and/or school systems, on the other, are in competition - thus:

teacher educators have always had to be Janus-faced, looking both to the school system and to the demands and requirements of the university. The stronger integration of teacher education into university faculties has enhanced the importance of the latter (S4.3.4, page 45).

These views reflect a long-standing tension between an academic discipline orientation and a 'hands on', practical orientation to professional education. It is the academic orientation which is consistent with the modernist approach Labaree criticises. It is an approach involving a level of abstraction and an assumption of universality which would see no greater value in a rigorous academic critique by a Melbourne University academic of the primary curriculum of Victorian schools compared with a critique of the curriculum of a school district in Maryland, USA. In fact the USA topic of research might be more highly valued because the conflict between the local and the 'general' has been assumed, with the local specified as inconsistent with the 'needs of the university' (high academic standards) - to put it more crudely, Maryland is closer to that 'horizon' of academic standards, Harvard University (Penington 1992, page 12).

Of course the conflict between the needs of schooling and the university is not necessary. Such a conflict is seldom seen as an issue for medical or law faculties - it would be hard to imagine an administration-sanctioned report on future directions for medical education at Melbourne University to say that 'medical educators have always had to be Janus-faced, looking both to the health system and to the demands and requirements of the university'. In these traditional high status professions the needs of the university and the various specialisms and areas involving high level technical research are seen as congruent (though the voices of those claiming that significant needs for health and justice in the community have been ignored are often not heard). The needs of the university and of the teaching profession (and the education systems in which they work) need not be in conflict, though at times serious critiques of systems, schools or the teaching profession may be discomfiting or not have implications for feasible immediate

action, and there will be different priorities and demands of an administrative nature.

It is possible that the reported low levels of satisfaction which teachers - especially secondary teachers educated in universities - have with their initial professional education (see for example Batten et al 1991, page 16) is indicative of a sense that high status academic work is not relevant to the practice of teaching, that the universities failed to integrate the academic with the practical or to make the challenges of the practical palpable.

The authors of the Report may be aware that

defensive dichotomies such as 'academic' versus 'practical' are still alive and well. The sooner they are dispensed with the better. (section 3.2.7., page 30)

Yet the recommendations of the Report preclude any serious integration of the major academic aspects of an initial teacher education course of study - the first three or four years of 'discipline studies' - and the practical aspects of the specific professional course. Rather than seek to dispense with the damaging dichotomy, it is reinforced and the 'academic' side strengthened in a way which would tend to alienate it from the practical..

The failure of the Report to come to grips with the inter-relationships between the academic and the practical, and the uncritical value given to the 'academic' is apparent in the recommendation that the four year integrated undergraduate initial teacher education program (for secondary teachers in particular) be replaced by a serial double degree of an Education award following a Bachelor degree in Arts, Science or whatever. It should be noted that the recommendations from the major teacher education reform reports in the United States (Carnegie 1986; and Holmes 1986) involve double degrees with both primary and secondary teachers taking out a generalist degree as well as a professional teaching degree.

A double degree program (whether serial or concurrent) has, it is believed, significant implications for the quality and status of discipline and generalist courses and for the academic background of the students recruited into them. In these respects it is not significant whether the double degree program is serial or concurrent, as long as entry into the professional program does not occur before entry into the discipline/generalist program. In the United States, as well as Australia there has been concern with the low level of the academic credentials of students entering teacher education

single award undergraduate programs. This is not just a matter of those programs having a large intake and thus a long 'tail' of increasingly lower tertiary entrance standards, a belief reflected in the statement in the Report that 'the simplest way to raise cut-off scores, so improving the quality of intake into any course. . . is to reduce intake size' (page 36). It may be a truism that cutting off the tail raises cut-off scores, but low cut-off scores is not the real problem. Rather, it is the mix of characteristics among all the students. Undergraduate, single degree education programs include very few students who scored in the top quartile, say, of tertiary entrance scores, with a very large proportion in the lowest quartile. For example, even if the intake into undergraduate education programs in most Australian universities in 1989 had been halved, eliminating almost all of those who scored in the lowest quartile, only about 5 percent of students would have been in the top quartile, and less than one third in the top half (DEET 1990).

The Report does not take up the issue of a serial versus a concurrent double degree program. Rather, it simply recommended a serial program for the reasons of hoped for quality and status noted above, and for administrative convenience.

There are some very interesting and problematic assumptions implicit in such recommendations which will only be touched on here. The major assumption is the view that undergraduate courses in the various disciplines are some how pure and given, unconnected with a particular vocational orientation, or, if they are it is a vocational identity quite proper for a teacher. The Report attempts to address the clearly problematic cases where there is no university course outside the Education faculty which relates to significant subjects in the school curriculum or specialist teaching work (Maling and Taylor 1992, pages 92-96). Yet it is the mainstream subjects (such as English, history, mathematics, music and so on) where the problem is most acute.

The comprehensive and fundamentally critical work on curriculum development which occurs for school subjects tends not to occur in higher education. Universities, especially the high status traditional universities, tend to reify 'disciplines', considering it inappropriate to rigorously scrutinise their structure and content as the basis for the curriculum of undergraduate courses. Yet, as Christopher Jencks and David Riesman have argued, with some hyperbole, 'a discipline is at bottom nothing more than an administrative category' (Jencks and Riesman 1977, page 523). This view opens up questions such as: why is 'content knowledge' (to use the terminology of Shulman 1987) not part of professional studies, unlike 'knowledge of learners'.

There are a number of other issues here, but they all point to the importance of recognising that 'discipline studies' is part of teachers' initial professional education, and thus part of teacher educators' responsibility. Academics in faculties other than Education can be recognised as teacher educators (which they are in fact) and accept that responsibility in collaboration with their colleagues in Education faculties. Once the discipline studies are recognised as part of teacher educators' responsibility they are viewed in a different light. The detail of curriculum is open to scrutiny in terms of its quality and appropriateness, so too is the pedagogy used and other aspects of student learning not covered by the formal curriculum - including the self identity developed by students in the course. Consider music: a university degree in instrumental music usually prepares a person to be a practicing musician, working with other musicians of talent and high levels of training. For three years a strong identification of what it is to be a 'musician' is built up, and even if a music student had always planned to teach. They learn from their peers and their teachers that to teach is a fallback - it is not what a serious student with talent should aspire to. They get a powerful sense that 'those who can do, those who can't teach' - and teaching is not serious 'doing'. The lesson learnt from the hidden curriculum of the serial double degree structure is that school teaching cannot be serious 'doing' if there is no real introduction to it until the important work of one's first degree is over, and there appears to be no point connecting teaching with what one is learning in those three years - all that is necessary to teach content is a set of technical skills unconnected with that content. Students learn a lot from the hidden curriculum of course structure, and the status culture of a university. And, of course, they learn from the formal curriculum. For example, when learning music composition in a standard university instrumental music course, a student has in mind creating musically innovative and sophisticated work for trained musicians - not for a beginning flautist, an advanced trombonist and a motley crew of teenage guitarists and violinists to play in the city square while the trams rumble past, or how to teach a six year old to compose for the percussion band of her class. The latter instances involve serious musical challenges; but they are not the sort of challenges which would be the object of an undergraduate music student's aspirations, and it is not the sort of challenge which a music graduate would be prepared (trained) to meet, unless they are treated as serious challenges when the substantial study of composition is occurring during the undergraduate degree.

The integration of knowledge of content, curriculum knowledge,

pedagogical content knowledge and so on is essential for successful teaching, and is not something which can happen easily if left to chance. In fact, creating the conditions for such integration of learning to occur is a major part of the curriculum development and implementation responsibility of teacher educators. To allow essential components of initial teacher education courses (in fact most of the course) to occur without their oversight, or even any element of consultation, is an abrogation of responsibility by teacher educators (or university administrations).

While the authors of the Report have some awareness of these issues (section 8.3.7, pages 90-91), there is no recommendation that any consultative structure be developed, though there is a recommendation that 'the relocation of disciplinary work in other Faculties of the University should continue and be completed' (recommendation 5, page 18).

The critique of the Report is not an argument for integrated, single degree programs. They have their problems, some of which the authors of the Report clearly recognise. However, the debate is not between such programs (inappropriately but commonly called 'concurrent') and serial ('consecutive') programs. There are other alternatives, such as concurrent double degree programs, which could be developed out of the existing Melbourne University practices, and which would better ensure quality and rigour in discipline studies, flexibility (and status) for students, greater relevance and appropriateness in discipline studies, and explicit attention to that essential element of integration of discipline studies and professional studies (pedagogy, curriculum and so on). Commitment and resources are needed to ensure administrative problems are overcome and genuine collaboration occurs.

The focus on the 'academic' aspects of initial teacher education, and the lack of consideration of the relationships between the 'academic' and the 'practical' in the Report is complemented by the authors' failure to consult at all with the organisation representing most of the professional group most effected by the recommended changes (the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association), and the apparently token consultation with the Federated Teachers Union of Victoria.

Taking the practical and practice seriously requires that the practitioners are also taken seriously. Throughout the report the treatment of the teaching profession is cursory. For example, there is no mention of the teaching profession or its representative organisations under the heading 'Partnerships in Teaching and Training' (S3.3, pages 30-31), the discussion about 'mutually productive interaction' specifies only 'employers and

educators of teachers' (S4.3.6, page 46), and the discussion of the school-based component of the recommended model concludes that

We believe that the employers of teachers would welcome the opportunity to discuss this and other possibilities (S5.4.7, page 62)

There is here no mention of consulting with the teachers who will be centrally involved as the supervisors/mentors and colleagues of 'provisionally-registered students'. This may have resulted in impractical and otherwise inappropriate recommendations.

The failure to of the authors of the Report to consider teachers as either having something of value to offer their deliberations or as having a right to contribute to decisions effecting the future of their profession and aspects of their own work, indicates that the authors have no conception of teachers as professionals in the sense outlined in this paper. Rather, as student teachers they are the passive recipients of technique and information, who will implement what they have learnt according to rules and the directions of their employers. It is thus not surprising that the training of teachers is seen to hold little challenge and is not central to the important and most valued, 'high status' work of the University.

The 'Education cringe', consistent with the low value given the education of teachers, is apparent from the consideration of relationships between Education and other faculties. The current problem of teacher education students having practice teaching commitments which conflict with requirements in the courses which they take in common with Arts or Science students is not to be resolved by any modification on the part of the departments concerned. Rather, the easy solution of a serial degree program is recommended. It is most unfortunate that the report proposes the ending of the current 'challenge to each of the faculties concerned to build work in their disciplines of real relevance to the changing demands of the school and the community' (page 56) - a challenge offered by the current BEd programs involving other faculties, but a challenge which would disappear with the introduction of a serial model of initial teacher education. All that remains is a suggestion that more is expected of intending teacher Arts or Science students than their fellows:

Those students who demonstrate an interest in teaching would be encouraged during their three years of undergraduate study to take a number of short courses in the applications of teaching to their principal subject studies, and to spend short periods

in primary or secondary schools during periods outside university semesters' (S5.4.1, page 60)

There is nothing here that a study of education-related issues could be encouraged within accredited coursework in history, politics or science. And there is no suggestion that all students could benefit from observing or participating in activities outside university in a way which is integrated into their over-all undergraduate education. No is there a suggestion that formal education units (of the BTeach/Ed) could begin in the first or second year, and some BA or BSc units be taught in the fourth year, and that timetabling be negotiated between faculties - the administrative challenge of this should be less than the challenge of organisation of the proposed fifth year in schools.

I have spent some time discussing the Maling/Taylor report because of the opportunity it provided to show a new direction for teacher education. As the authors of the Report note,

The problems and issues facing the Institute are repeated in many departments of Universities throughout the country. They are certainly shared with many of the other Faculties of Education in Australia. (page 15)

It is likely that the analysis and recommended solutions of the Report will be very influential. However its essential (if not necessarily intended) recommendation for a reversion to the old 'modernist' university model which denigrates much of the professional work of teachers and the study of Education, leaves us looking elsewhere.

Characteristics of a model of professional education for teachers and associated research and scholarship have been touched on above. Some of the central issues will now be further elaborated.

The understanding of how both school students and student teachers learn discussed earlier has clear implications for teacher education (Crawford and Deer 1991). The focus on student as active learner and teacher in the less up-front role of facilitator is contrary to the common public perception of what good teaching involves, and contrary to what student teachers (and many teachers) have themselves usually understood as good teaching from their own experience as learners. This means that a task of professional education for teachers is to break the popular paradigm. This is no simple matter, as Crawford and Deer make clear. The most effective pedagogical model is to give students 'experience in being taught and teaching in different ways so that the process of internalising an alternative

professional rationale is facilitated' (page 9, emphasis in original).

The overcoming of the division between the 'academic' or the 'knowledge-based' and the 'practical' means that the complexity of knowledge-in-action, and the challenge of integration of many different domains and forms of knowledge for effective practice can be fruitfully addressed. It is just such complex knowledge-in-action involving higher level and situation-specific judgements which is the essential characteristic of professional practice.

A model of teaching practice which indicates its complexity, how a range of forms and areas of knowledge are involved, and the dynamic nature of knowledge as feedback, reflection and self-management come into play, has been developed by Glen Evans (1992). The use of such a model to understand the application of knowledge can enrich and give meaning and relevance to university studies. It helps form the knowledge base and its development in ways which can be effectively applied. Practicing teachers are less likely to feel that university courses are irrelevant, and they will have benefited more from the course, be more competent and less alienated from academic studies and the university as an institution. They will be more willing to work collaboratively with university staff in research and professional education curriculum, and their contribution will be more valuable, coming as it does from knowledgeable reflective practitioners. The situation-specific judgements of teaching, which draw from both general and specific knowledge, and a range of personal and social capabilities and dispositions, indicates the importance of professional education, research and scholarship having connections with the specificities of actual teaching and learning. This applies to the 'discipline studies' components of teacher education courses as much as to the 'professional' and 'practical' components. That is a challenge for universities.

Professional identification, representation and responsibilities of teacher educators

Labaree's argument includes the proposition that teacher educators are advocating greater professionalism for school teachers as a strategy for enhancing their own professional status.

Improving the status of teaching, teacher education and teacher educators (Education academics in particular) appears to be an important element in improving the quality of teaching in Australian schools. The important question is: status according to what standards?

Labaree's argument is that the teacher educators with which he is concerned see that status based on the 'modernist' standards for university academics - especially involvement in research and scholarship defined self-referentially by the international community of academics in that field, rather than (or additionally) defined against the standard of better understanding and improving the actual field of education, especially the work of teachers. Thus he believes that those teacher educators promoting teacher professionalism see their own ideal professional identification as essentially traditional university academics, rather than teacher educators, practical and effective educationists, or even Education academics. He sees them as wanting to lift themselves well away from the low status identification as simply teacher educators. As indicated above, there are parallels with the assumptions, analysis and implications of the recommendations of the Maling/Taylor Report.

There is no doubt that academic staff involved in teacher education have a confusing array of possibilities for professional identification. In Australia, and in many comparable countries, Education has historically had very low status in universities, most teacher education has occurred outside universities, and many of the academics involved in teacher education have had an 'academic cringe' in the face of their colleagues from other faculties and other institutions, and some have had what I term a 'chalkie cringe' in the face of practicing teachers.

The 'chalkie cringe' is apparent in the claim that teacher educators are members of the (school) teaching profession simply because they are involved in the education of school teachers. This does not stand up to scrutiny - just as an art historian on the teaching staff of an architecture school has no automatic claim to being a member of the profession of architects because he or she teaches future architects. Teacher educators may be members of the teaching profession if they have appropriate qualifications, expertise and experience, though they are currently not practicing their profession (again, there would be a parallel with a qualified architect lecturing full time and not practicing architecture but still considered a member of the profession). This legitimate claim to being a member of the school teaching profession of course gives them no particular status or claim relative to other (non-practicing) members of the school teaching profession - and with less than 3,000 Education academic staff and more than 200,000 school teachers in Australia any concerns which teachers educator members of the profession may have would tend to be swamped. (Teacher educators, even if not strictly members of the school teaching

profession, can claim, along with school teachers, to being 'educationalists' concerned with schooling; and they can claim, along with their other university teaching staff colleagues in all faculties, as well as school and TAFE teachers, to being part of the general teaching profession.)

To assert the primacy of teacher educators' membership of the teaching profession is understandable in the face of the negative attitude to teacher educators held by many teachers, their union officials, and departmental officers who have an influential role in the public arena. It is unfortunate that a division has developed between teachers and academics. Its roots are many. Perhaps most important has been the historical identification of secondary teachers with their subject discipline (such as History or Mathematics) and their contempt for their Education studies - joining in with the general university culture in having a low regard for Education as an academic field, and often seeking a rationalisation for their uncertainty and discomfort when confronted with the more practical demands of their professional and practical studies. Kathryn Crawford and Christine Deer discussed the phenomena of Education students' negative views of effective pedagogical methods in their professional studies (Crawford and Deer 1991). Teachers' alienation from Education academics has other sources, too - for some it may be the demographic profile of teacher educators as older and disproportionately male compared with school teachers. Whatever its sources, the alienation between significant sections of the teaching profession and teacher educators is a factor in current developments which cannot be denied (even if it is not a problem in many specific instances, it underlies attitudes effecting policy and developments at a more general level, including the national level); and it must be overcome if the teaching profession and teacher educators are to work in effective collaboration. It will not be effectively overcome by Education academics claiming to simply be teachers - to merge with the mass of school teachers.

I would argue that teacher educators' role in relationship to the school teaching profession should not depend on whether or not they are members of the profession, but because they are the teachers of future and current members of the profession and because they have knowledge and expertise regarding a wide range of educational and professional matters (as a result of their research and scholarship activities). Teacher educators' claims to involvement in matters of concern to the school teaching profession such as registration or issues related to competency standards exist quite independently of the matter of membership of the profession, and need to be argued through on their own terms. In fact, the particular expertise of teacher educators is very important regarding matters such as registration if

registration criteria specify particular content, length or structure of initial teacher education courses. Similarly, if competency standards are expected to have some relevance to initial or post-initial teacher education, then teacher educators should participate in their determination.

There does need to be a distinction made between teacher educators (in higher education) and Education faculty academic staff. There are teacher educators outside Education faculties - something which should be more widely recognised. There are academic staff members in Education Faculties who are not school teacher educators - they may be TAFE teacher educators, or teachers of education administrators, or teachers of general non-vocational Education courses. Another distinction involves the matter of professional identification - someone may be a teacher educator in the sense of lecturing to future or current school teachers, but their professional identification may be as a psychologist (or academic psychologist) in the same way as a history lecturer in an Arts faculty identifies as a historian. Within the Education faculty the psychologist may be actively involved in the collective endeavour of the faculty to improve the quality (say, the structure and overall curriculum) of initial teacher education. Similarly, it would be a positive development if members of Arts faculties such as our history lecturer, who were involved in the teaching of future school teachers during the BA component of their double BA/Dip Ed or BA/B Teach qualification, were actively involved (with their colleagues in Education) in the collective endeavour of improving the quality of initial teacher education.

Representation and responsibility

In contrast to many other professions in Australia and to teachers in many other countries, Australian school teachers have simple, effective and clear representative structures. The very large majority of school teachers are members of one of the state or territory branches of the Australian Teachers Union (for government school teachers) or the Independent Teachers Federation of Australia (for nongovernment school teachers). These unions have constitutional responsibility for representing their members on industrial and professional matters. They have policy formation, communication, collective action and accountability structures from school to national levels. The state/territory level is the main focus for both professional and industrial attention, which reflects the structure of schooling in Australia.

Throughout the world, the industrial and professional have historically been pitted against each other. Employers, with the support of media and other interests, have appealed to

teachers' sense of professionalism (or their desire to be recognised as professionals) to undermine teachers' conditions of work, their collective organisation through unions, their identification with the broader trade union movement, and their solidarity with the working class (see Bessant and Spaul 1972, page 89).

In some periods teachers have felt a clear choice between professional identification and traditional forms of professional organisation on the one hand, and union identification and organisation on the other. Parry and Parry have argued that the conflict is largely inevitable - writing of England and Wales in the early 1970s they commented that

The stark fact now is that the state has a vested interest in opposing the ideal of the teachers registration movement; that is in blocking the establishment of a self-governing teaching profession. It is difficult to conceive of any way in which this basic situation is likely to change, and it remains the underlying reason why occupational movements of teachers have been organised on the model of unionism. Teachers' unions in Britain still aspire to professionalism but the overwhelming importance of them is, in itself, an indicator of the failure of teachers to achieve the objective of professionalism. (page 183)

There are a number of problems with the generalisability of this statement (whatever its validity in the Britain of the early 1970s or the post-Thatcher era). First, organisations which represent the traditional professions can quite powerfully and militantly represent their members' self interest, even trampling on the interests of others (including clients) more effectively than any 'militant union'. Militant action does not necessarily lessen professionalism. In fact it is often necessary to ensure the conditions for professional practice, as the experience of Australian unions such as the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association (discussed below) makes clear. Second, unions can be involved in the matters which have been seen as central concerns for professional associations - the nature and future of the work of members and the industry in which they work; the quality of members' work; involving members in decision-making about their work and their industry; the education and training of members and the recognition and reward of competencies and qualifications; seeking the improvement of the wider society in terms of social justice and quality of life, and so on. The integrated concern about such matters by unions comes under the broad umbrella of 'strategic unionism', a development which has gained a central place in the Australian trade union movement since the publication of *Australia Reconstructed* (ACTU and Trade Development Council 1987). Third, while the union movement retains a solid base in the traditional

working class, major growth has been occurring in the middle class, especially among public employees and the financial sector, and many jobs and industries associated with the traditional working class are being transformed so that higher level competencies and more autonomous decision-making is required, taking on characteristics more closely associated with the professional middle class. In other words, there is an increasing involvement in the union movement of professionals and workers with significant professional aspects to their work.

There is thus no necessary conflict between unionism and professionalism, and union involvement and identification are not necessarily inimical to professionalism. Unions with professional members and non-union professional associations have similar dilemmas when the interests of members and clients (and the wider community) are in conflict. Unions have always dealt with such dilemmas (as when there are conflicts between members or categories of members, between members and those working in other occupations or unemployed, and so on). On the other hand, apparently purely 'professional' issues, such as curriculum policy for teachers, are riven with conflicts, with some groups (classes of members or students and their communities) benefiting and others losing from one position, others gaining or losing from alternatives.

There is generally little to gain and much to lose in separating the representative structures for the 'industrial' from the 'professional'. Some occupations have historically developed in this way with two (or more) separate representative organisations. However, in times of strategic unionism, workplace restructuring, and the creation of leaner establishments, the separate organisations are either collaborating or they are wasting members' resources on duplication and demarcation disputes while governments and employers are playing off one organisation against the other.

For teaching, perhaps more than many other professions, it is practically impossible to separate the 'industrial' from the 'professional'. Teachers' conditions of work (class sizes, relief from face to face teaching, the organisation of teachers' time and opportunities for collaboration, the physical environment of schools, facilities and resources) and decisions about them are intrinsically both industrial and professional. So too are matters such as hours of work, access to professional development and study leave, deployment and promotion criteria and processes, and dealing with issues such as harassment, stress, victimisation and apparent incompetency or less than satisfactory work. Likewise, decision-making on curriculum and other educational matters from the school to the system and

national levels, the wider social role of schooling and the teaching profession, all have industrial aspects intertwined with the professional. Obviously to seek to separate representative structures for the professional from the industrial is a recipe for chaos - or the disempowerment of teachers.

The historical state-based structure of Australian school systems is reflected in the structure of the unions and their relationships with employing authorities (especially the government sector departments of education). The various states and territories of Australia have differed in their histories of the development of teacher professionalism. Yet, in contrast with the US, there has been a general pattern of strong state departments of education and active teacher unions which have to some extent promoted a professional orientation. The professional orientation of departments of education is perhaps best exemplified by the work of Frank Tate, a teacher, inspector, teachers college principal and Director General of Education in Victoria during the decades around the turn of the century. Tate worked closely with the teacher union, giving major and influential speeches at union conferences (such as in 1895 when he argued that a teacher should not function as a 'superior kind of porter at an intellectual goods station, whose skill is measured by the amount that he can pack into a string of empty trucks in a given time' - Selleck 1982, page 79), working with the unions to set up discussion groups on educational issues (page 87), and lecturing and demonstrating at the union-established Melbourne Educational Centre (page 109). The unions clearly played a major role in developing the professionalism of their members - in terms of actual competency and the nature of their practice, as well as the identification of members as professionals. This was of course a matter of degree, and many employer-specified practices precluded the exercise of professional judgement, or undermined teachers' ability and confidence to effectively exercise such judgement.

The infrastructure for professionalism provided by state level systems of schooling has been very important for the professionalism of teaching in Australia. This is very different from the isolation of teachers employed in single schools or small districts without any commitment to their professionalism by their employers.

The most significant post-war movement for enhancing the professionalism of teachers involved teacher unions asserting authority relative to their employers, the school authorities. The first and most significant was the Professional Action campaign of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association (VSTA), working with the Technical Teachers Association of Victoria (now

part of the Federated Teachers Union of Victoria) during the late 1960s to the mid 1970s. During that time the union took control of entry to the secondary teaching profession, and ended the use of external inspection for any purpose. Similarly, the resolution of industrial disputation involving government and nongovernment teacher unions regarding the employment of unqualified teachers in Queensland in 1968 resulted in the inclusion of a registration function in the responsibilities of the proposed Queensland Board of Teacher Education (now Board of Teacher Registration) with its majority of teachers and other education professionals.

In the Victorian campaigns the grounds were essentially professional - a concern with teacher autonomy because of its relation with the quality of teachers' work and student learning. For control of entry the VSTA argued that

One of the fundamental requirements for professional status is that the profession itself lays down the minimum qualifications for practice in the profession. . . . When it comes to the crunch (the Department) is more interested in putting bodies in front of classes than in respecting the rights of employees and students. . . . Until state secondary teachers through the VSTA took action after April 1, 1969 . . . the effect on the status of teachers of the Department's policies was bad enough. But for the kids in schools it was disastrous. Chaotic classes were the norm not the exception. Teachers were more concerned with survival in crisis conditions than they were with the formulation of suitable curricula for the individual needs of their students. It is noticeable that the freeing of the curriculum has gone hand in hand with the improvement in teachers' qualifications over the past few years. (VSTA, 1974a, page 3)

Similarly, for the elimination of inspection:

Underlying this development of policy is a general opposition to the principle of bureaucratic control on which inspection is founded. Inspection is imposed on schools from outside and, in the final analysis inspectors claim the right to exert a measure of control over teachers and the teaching process. The VSTA believes that decisions about school and classroom practice should be made by highly qualified teaching personnel who are familiar with the immediate school situation and who have the responsibility of putting the decisions into effect. (VSTA, 1974b, page 5)

More recently there has developed a push for enhancing the professionalism of teachers following the developments in the US, and consistent with various aspects of the Australian

'micro-economic reform agenda' (such as improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools, enhancing national consistency and coherence, facilitating inter-state mobility, improving workers' competencies and their participation in decisions regarding their work).

This 'movement' often has an air of unreality. Consider the rationale given for a 'national professional body' for teachers in the lead article of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning's Quality Time (NPQTL, 1992). Under the heading 'A national professional body for teachers?' the article begins

Engineers have one. Doctors have one. Architects have one. Yet teachers - the largest professional group in Australia - don't yet have a national body to represent the full range of their professional interests. (page 1)

Let us put aside for the moment the extraordinary denial of the existence of the Australian Teachers Union (which, with the Independent Teachers Federation of Australia, does provide national representation on the range of national professional interests in Australia's federal school system), and the multiplicity and inadequacy of representative organisations of other professions (the AMA, for example, can claim membership of only half those who are eligible, often has significant differences with the various colleges which represent medical practitioners on professional matters such as training and recognition of qualifications, and of course has profound policy differences with the Doctor's Reform Society).

What is of interest is the primary argument, directed at practicing teachers, that 'other professions have one, therefore we should, too', without any serious attempt at a rationale based on the quality of teaching and learning in schools - or even the adequacy of teachers' working conditions. While such reasons may exist, they are not given prominence. This may lead to formal structures which are inappropriate. In particular there is a danger of not seeing the significance of genuine opportunities for teachers to have a substantial role in the development of positions, policies and strategies. It is not enough for professionals to just vote for representatives every so often.

A national body requires a solid and complex democratic structure from the national level to the school level, substantial resources, and a high level of commitment by members, if it is to legitimately claim to speak for teachers. Otherwise it embodies paternalism or irrelevance.

There are good arguments for strengthening the national identification and recognition of the teaching profession. This would be best done largely by strengthening the professional orientation and public profile of the organisations which have a constitutional duty to represent teachers professionally, to which almost all teachers belong and which have existing representative and accountability structures to which all teachers have access - the teacher unions. There could also usefully be strengthening and better coordination among the range of other organisations which represent teachers professionally (such as subject associations), academic associations in the field of Education (such as the Australian Teacher Education Association and the Australian Association for Research in Education), and organisations which represent significant parties in the schooling endeavour (such as the academic unions, the Australian Council of Deans of Education, and the parent organisations such as the Australian Council of State School Organisations). There have been some substantial moves for better organisation and co-ordination among these bodies in recent years.

There may also be good reasons for the establishment a national body with specific responsibilities in areas such as national teacher registration, related aspects of teacher education, and associated responsibilities. Such a body would rightly draw from a range of interests (school authorities, parents, teacher educators, Aboriginal communities, and so on) as well involve teachers' representatives (who could be the majority in decision-making structures). However, without the structure for genuine teacher participation, representation and responsibility outline above, and without having an exclusively teacher membership (even if 'teacher' is broadly defined, and there is provision for non-teacher associate members), such a body can make no legitimate claim to general professional representation of teachers.

The general point is that representative functions and responsibility for various specific tasks need not (and often should not) be carried out by the same body. This is illustrated by the movement to open up decision-making about the registration of medical doctors, which has involved the membership of registration bodies by people who are not medical practitioners. Those bodies do not seek to represent the medical profession (or sections of it), but they do have a major role in the development and implementation of standards for medical practice. The AMA (and various other bodies) which have no non-medical full members continue to represent doctors.

Implications of the wide sphere of teachers' work:
professionalism, representative democracy, devolution and markets

Discussion about the collective organisation of teachers leads us to consideration of group, collegial or collective professional practice. To the list of areas of knowledge which all teachers need for successful practice developed by Shulman (1987), and mentioned earlier in this paper, should be added something like: 'knowledge of the teaching profession, its patterns of competencies and experiences, values and traditions, its roles and relationships with other stakeholders in the schooling endeavour, and its opportunities and limitations within various ways of organising schooling'. It is this last matter which will be elaborated now.

Four different ways of organising schooling are outlined in Table 1. They are Professional Bureaucracy, Corporate Management, Market, and Democratic Professionalism. As can be seen from the table, each of the major stakeholder groups - students, parents, teachers, principals, and department officers - have particular roles and responsibilities in each alternative model.

-- TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE --

Australian government school systems are generally moving away from the professional bureaucracy model to variations on and combinations of the other three. Mark Considine has provided an excellent analysis of general problems of public services moving from professional bureaucracy to corporate management models (1988), and I will not consider corporate management models in great detail here. Rather, I will focus on comparing the market and democratic professionalism models.

In much of the USA literature promoting teacher professionalism there appears little appreciation of the distinction between the two, and a tendency to implicitly or explicitly support market models. Labaree claims that the 'teacher professionalization movement (in the USA) has explicitly chosen to pursue a market-based strategy' (page 131). This is apparent from writings by Gary Sykes, Linda Darling-Hammond and others who, in many respects, can be considered progressive educationalists. Sykes (1991) compared 'bureaucracy' and 'professionalism', the latter closely fitting the Market Model of Table 1. He favourably cites Chubb and Moe (1990) and their position that

Choice in a voucher scheme (is) the only real hope for reform, (Chubb and Moe) arguing that direct control by the people is best exercised through the market, not via politics. They also link their choice scheme to professionalism, for choice must play out on both the supply and the demand side. Supply-side choice means inviting teachers to create schools with

distinctive missions that will attract students. (pages 142-143)

A market model implies a focus by employees on the enhancement of the enterprise's market position and the sale of its products. Thus a market model of schooling implies a duty of teachers not only to make the school attractive to the target population (though not necessarily of high quality and appropriateness), but also to ensure the exclusion of students who may be disruptive or who may undermine the market position of the school. Thus we see the 'transfer out' of many year ten and eleven students who are judged poor HSC material from schools whose high HSC pass rates are significant public indicators of 'quality' in the market.

I would argue that rather than enhance teacher professionalism, a market model of devolution places teachers in a position in which their professional duty to the education of all students and the service of the wider community implies constant and vigilant individual and collective work to counter the operation and effects of the market in schooling. Here teachers can work collectively, if informally, on a regional, state or national level to create an educative and effective school system, one which provides a major part of society's cultural and social infrastructure.

The problems for teacher professionalism and quality education in market models seem quite apparent, yet do not appear so to influential Americans such as Sykes. Some are apparent to the radical critics of teacher professionalism such as Burbules and Densmore. For example, in response to Sykes they point out that

Policies designed to increase 'choice' can be conceived in two fundamentally different ways. One is driven by a market-oriented strategy: Specialists create a range of products, and consumers select those they prefer. Placed in the context of professionalism, this apparent 'choice' is severely limited by the options specialists make available. Alternatively, however, one can conceive of choice in a radically different way: as being based on involvement, participation and direct responsiveness. In this latter sense, choice is not a process of selecting ready-made products off the shelf but of being involved in the conception, planning, and design of what those very options look like. (1991a, page 155)

There may be some significant theoretical and practical reasons why we should be wary of uncritically accepting the analyses and prescriptions of the influential and apparently progressive American advocates of teacher professionalism.

The methodological and practical individualism which is common

throughout the dominant American culture is manifest in the organisation of teachers' work. Harold W Stevenson has carried out some detailed comparative work on schools in a number of cities in the USA and several Asian countries (1992). His descriptions of teachers' working conditions and of significant pedagogical practices are illuminating. The professional isolation of teachers in the USA is striking. They tended not to have common staffrooms in which to work, but desks in their 'own' classrooms, and they had very little relief from face to face teaching to give them time for work with colleagues. The pedagogy treats students as passive learners, and the content as unquestionable. Australian teachers' conditions, practices and understandings of what is appropriate are closer to supporting collegial, enquiring professional practice. In some respects Australia is therefore further down the 'professionalism' track, having taken up basic matters with which the Americans still have to put on the agenda, let alone successfully grapple with.

Another matter worth considering is that in Australia there is not the degree of demarcation between teachers and school administrators which is found in the USA. This separation has not played the part in the development of Education faculties in Australia which Labaree indicates has occurred in the USA. Most significantly, it is easier to recognise, develop and enhance Australian teachers' work beyond the classroom because there is not the sharp division between classroom teaching and the administrative work of principals, deputies and others.

Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) provide an influential American analysis which assumes a necessary and abiding distinction between teachers and administrators which confines teachers' work to the particularities of 'fine-grained instructional decisions', and excludes them from considering policies from a school-wide perspective, let alone a system-wide perspective (pages 7-8). Both teachers and administrators are distinct from the 'policy-makers' who determine the nature and the direction of the schooling system as a whole. Their understanding of the limits of teachers' work is very similar to that of Linda Darling-Hammond (1988), who, while arguing for professional collegiality and 'overcoming teacher isolation', sees such collegiality involved only in 'collective responsibility for instructional quality' and the determination, development and maintenance of professional standards ('teacher quality', to use the terminology introduced earlier). Matters of 'policy', especially involving system-wide issues of equity, are not within the domain of teachers' individual or collective professional responsibility. Rather they are matters for 'policy-makers'.

There has been a long tradition of the involvement of Australian

teachers, through their professionally representative organisations (mostly unions) and their own participation, in the formulation and implementation of policy, and the development and improvement of institutional practices and social roles from the school to the system and national levels. While this professional activity has not been as strong as it might be, there is some threat to it from the uncritical (and unconscious) application of understandings and proposals from the USA.

This analysis of teachers and school organisation indicates aspects of teachers' professional relationships with parents. Teachers bring professional expertise (parents often have expertise, too). Teachers also bring a more general perspective - their responsibility is to more than the individual child, but to all their students, to other students in their school, to other students in other schools, and to the wider community. Parents also can have that wider perspective, especially when organised in collective bodies which have the wider brief. While teachers can be expected to always bring to the parent-teacher partnership their professional expertise and wider perspective, no particular expertise (beyond that directly related to being a parent) and no particular breadth of perspective can be expected of parents in any one situation. What particular parents and parent organisations can and do bring needs to be appreciated and effectively utilised.

The potential partnership in schooling between teachers and parents is not a formal one of 'Professional to Layperson', rather one of collaboration and openness, which will vary. Some potential models which draw this out have been sketched by the OECD and the ATU.

During the late 1980s the OECD developed the notion of 'open professionalism' which

enshrines the idea that the modern teacher, at the focal point of rapidly changing and highly demanding educational policies, needs to be both open to communal influence and co-operation - with colleagues, the school, on-going research and developments, parents, the community - and to receive respect as an individual professional. Reconciling these two elements in practice may not, however, be straightforward. It would entail an openness to outside influence that enhances, not diminishes, the individual's sense of commitment and responsibility. (OECD, 1990, page 44)

The Australian Teachers Union view of the professionalism of teaching develops the notion of 'democratic professionalism' (this notion of democratic professionalism is distinct from that

developed by Amy Gutmann in 1989):

School teaching is a professional activity, requiring initiative and a degree of autonomy from practitioners which is informed by a substantial and ever-developing base of knowledge, understanding and commitment, and which is directed to the needs of students, their parents and the wider community. The ATU believes that a democratic form of professionalism is appropriate. Democratic professionalism does not seek to mystify professional work, not to unreasonably restrict access to that work; it facilitates the participation in decision-making by students, parents and others, and seeks to develop a broader understanding in the community of education and how it operates. As professionals teachers must be responsible and accountable for that which is under their control, both individually and collectively through their unions. (ATU, 1991, page 21)

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TABLE 1

THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MAJOR PLAYERS (EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS) IN EACH OF FOUR DIFFERENT MODELS OF SCHOOLING (PROFESSIONAL BUREAUCRACY, CORPORATE MANAGEMENT, MARKET, AND DEMOCRATIC PROFESSIONALISM)

1. Department Officers - roles and responsibilities

Professional Bureaucracy Model	Corporate Management Model
Market Model	Democratic Professionalism Model

Department officers have a major role utilising professional expertise, integrating management with education. Responsibility both up the line of management, and to clients and other professionals. Strict accountability only up the line. Major role in determining the nature of the schooling system, school practices, and curriculum. There are known rules and regulations covering procedures. Department officers have a major management role, but little education expertise required - consistent with the doctrine that 'a manager is a manager is a manager'. Responsibility and accountability up the line of management, with a high degree of 'transparency'. High degree of control over many aspects of schooling, significant devolution of others. Consultants employed on contract to carry out developmental work on educational matters which are centrally determined. Department officers have a minor role, mostly the collection and dissemination of information about the performance of schools and ensuring the unimpeded operation of the market. This may include a central testing program which results in de facto central curriculum. Department officers have a medium role of co-ordination and responsive system administration, ensuring the equitable and effective development and allocation of resources. Collaboration with parents, teachers and other stakeholders in planning and implementing the direction of the system. Facilitate professional development of teachers, principals and other system employees, and support training programs to assist participation of parents, students and other community members.

TABLE 1 - continued 2. Principals - roles and responsibilities

Professional Bureaucracy Model Corporate Management Model
Market Model Democratic Professionalism Model

Principals have a medium role of school management and educational leadership. They generally follow guidelines which are centrally determined and which standardise and rationalise the content and processes of schooling. Principals have a clear role in line management between department officials and teachers. May have major devolved educational or administrative responsibilities. Principals' major responsibility is marketing the school, ensuring an attractive image is conveyed to the target population, and that the school has a competitive advantage over other schools. Educational and administrative matters are subservient to marketing. Principals also have roles in efficient utilisation of resources; ensuring teachers and other workers support the positive image of the school; and provision of information to central authorities (though there is a clear incentive to massage data to show school in the best light). Principals have a role similar to department officials, but a high level of facilitative and co-ordinating skills required. Also educational and administrative leadership judiciously exercised. Support professionalism of teachers through facilitating professional development.

TABLE 1 - continued 3. Teachers - roles and responsibilities

Professional Bureaucracy Model Corporate Management Model
Market Model Democratic Professionalism Model

There is a division of responsibility between teachers and other professionals, with teachers largely confined to work within the bounds of the classroom, but some advisory and collaborative work when requested by department officers or principals. Much of their practice may be standardised, and there may not be a great deal of room to meet students' individual needs except in terms of the subtleties of the student-teacher relationship. Focus is on covering the curriculum, rather than actual learning outcomes. Teachers are clearly responsible and accountable to principals and on up the line - not to students and parents except through the relevant Minister. Little role outside the classroom, though they may be called on in a consultancy basis for system or whole school curriculum development, or other policy, administrative guidelines or materials development. Central criteria for judging what teachers are to do or how well it is done is market success with target population. This may mean meeting many students' individual needs very well.

Teachers are expected to ensure that troublesome or resource intensive students are excluded from the school (unless part of market strategy). Teachers may be closely monitored to ensure their work appears to be of a very high standard. Those not maintaining appearances have their employment terminated. Teachers compete with other teachers for status, positions and privileges. Teacher involvement in decision-making, especially at the system level, is seen as 'provider capture', and is to be avoided. Teachers have a central role in the educational process. Collaborative relationships with colleagues, parents, students, other professionals and other workers. Sphere of work includes the school and the system as well as the classroom, and responsibilities include educational and other effects on the wider community and students not directly taught as well as own students. Teachers, individually and collectively, take professional responsibility for their work and its improvement. Focus is on actual learning (and other) outcomes, rather than covering the curriculum and controlling classrooms.

TABLE 1 - continued 4. Parents - roles and responsibilities

Professional Bureaucracy Model	Corporate Management Model
Market Model	Democratic Professionalism Model

Parents are excluded from participation in educational matters because of lack of expertise and administrative 'messiness'. Can make few decisions about children's education other than choice between schooling systems. Parents' roles and responsibilities may vary between those for the professional bureaucracy model and the market model. No participation in educational decision making other than making choices directly affecting own child.

Parents may choose between schools, and, perhaps, between programs within schools, but will not be involved in the development of programs, practices or positions except through the indirect impact of the choices made. Parents will be inundated by information, as disguised or overt advertising from schools, and from systems claiming to provide impartial information about schools with which parents can make 'informed' choices. There is no concern with the choices of some detrimentally affecting the opportunities of others. Parents have significant opportunities for participation in education decision making. Communities of which parents and students are a part will also have opportunities for participation. Participation will be possible at the system, region and local cluster levels, as well as in individual schools. Schools and systems support participation through open and welcoming processes, training and other means. Individual choices may be restrained because of their impact on the opportunities of others.

TABLE 1 - continued 5. Students - roles and opportunities

Professional Bureaucratic Model	Corporate Management Model
Market Model	Democratic Professionalism Model

Students are assumed to be passive learners, accepting a prescribed curriculum, and generally are not involved in decision-making. May have more active learning opportunities, but what is easily measured as 'performance indicators' is given precedence. Not involved in decision-making. Curriculum and pedagogy determined by the market (what the school believes the target population wants). Students, especially younger ones, at the whim of parents - the effect of 'parentocracy' (Brown 1990). Older students may have opportunities to exercise 'choice'. Many students suffer in 'residual' schools which have been rejected by those able to choose other schools. Many other students have been rejected by the schools they would prefer because they might damage the school's image, or simply may not enhance that image as effectively as other students. Students are active participants, including in their own learning and decisions about it.