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Studies in Supervisory Practice:

The Effectiveness of the Practicum in Teacher Education in the Northern Territory

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B.A. (Sheffield), Dip. Youth Work (Manchester), PGCE (London), Dip. Ed. (London), M.Sc (Edinburgh)

Thesis submitted for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree, Faculty of Education, Deakin University.

November 1997

Studies in Supervisory Practice:

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Volume 1

I certify that the thesis entitled

Studies in supervisory practice: the effectiveness of the practicum in Teacher Education in the Northern Territory

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis in whole or in part has not been submitted for an award including a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Wilfred Michael Brice Grenfell

Acknowledgements

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis we descend into the swampy lowlands to meet with student-teachers and their supervisors and observe them working together at different sites across the Top End of Australia. In the process we discover the multiple relationships that comprise the practicum text and the discomforting untidiness and unwieldiness, as well as the awkwardness of complexity, which surrounds research into supervisory practice.

The thesis demonstrates the need to attend to the subjectivities of the participants and highlights the conflicting attitudes, beliefs, interests, and desires which are only partially realised or understood. It moves us beyond language to the sentient world of anger, love, disgust, hope, fear, despair, joy, anguish, and pain and we become immersed in a murky, incoherent, interior world of hints, shadows, and unfamiliar sounds, a world of lost innocence and conflict in which knowledge is truly embodied.

Encompassing a view of supervision as moral praxis, particular attention was given to the care and protection of the self and a romanticist conception of the self was seen to predominate. The thesis demonstrates the part played by positioning and agency in the process of subjectification, the importance of emotional and relational bonding in the emergence of collegiality, the tactics of power employed by supervisors, the struggle for personal autonomy, the presence of anxiety induced by failure to provide feedback, the inculcation of guilt, and the complex interplay of age-related and gender effects.

Attention is also given to the degree to which supervisors adopt reflective and constructivist approaches to their work . The stories reveal that supervision is much more than advising student-teachers on curriculum content, resource availability and lesson presentation. It is a process of interiority in which supervisors may need to provide emotional support in the face of displacement and disorientation, and assume the role of an abiding presence, someone capable of imaginative introjection, someone who 'knows'.

Particular attention is paid to the language of supervision which was marked by indirection, diffidence, imprecision, irony, and understatement. At the same time, the agonistic nature of language associated with the politics of the personal is made apparent.

Whilst in the opinion of Liaison Lecturers, context-of-site did not appear to matter as far as acquiring teaching competence was concerned, the failure to attend to context-of-site affected how student-teachers engaged with difference and diversity. In spite of attempts to contest the myths of Aboriginal education and interrupt the discourse of impoverishment, colonialist attitudes and resistance to liberatory education persisted.

The thesis ends with suggestions for alternatives to the traditional practicum and discusses the introduction of Field-Based Teacher Education into Northern Territory schools.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Name of candidate. Wilfred Michael Brice GRENFELL

Title of thesis. Studies in supervisory practice: the effectiveness of the practicum in teacher education in the Northern Territory.

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Name of supervisor. Dr Maurice Robson.

This thesis examines the supervisory practice of liaison lecturers and field supervisors working with final year Diploma of Teaching (Primary and Early Childhood) students in the Northern Territory, and reveals considerable dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the supervisory process. The practicum is seen as a highly complex and subjective world, marked by conflicting attitudes, beliefs and desires involving issues of power and control; the provision of feedback; anxiety and the inducement of guilt; and collegiality and emotional support. The thesis reveals the way that supervisors assist non-Indigenous student-teachers to contest the myths of Aboriginal education, examine the persistence of colonialist attitudes, unlearn complicity, come to terms with a loss of innocence, and resist the discourse of impoverishment and despair. The commitment of the university to social transformation and reconstruction is called into question and greater support for Aboriginalisation is called for.

INTRODUCTION: THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

In 1989 I embarked on a research journey which involved an investigation into the effectiveness of the practicum in the Diploma of Teaching program of what is now the Northern Territory University. The predominant focus at the commencement of the research was the practicum conference which at that time I called the 'Student Conference', the conference which in clinical supervision is supposed to take place between the student-teacher, the Field Supervisor, sometimes called the Supervising or Cooperating Teacher, and the Liaison Lecturer from the University, either severally or together.

The research as originally conceived fell into that category which Patton (1990) has called 'formative', and was intended to accomplish the following objectives:

> to bring about improvements in the over-all effectiveness of the practicum within the Diploma of Teaching program;
>
> to improve the level of supervisory practice and document particularly successful approaches to supervision;
>
> to feed back into the course review process which was taking place at the time and which culminated in the accreditation of a new three-year Bachelor of Teaching beginning in 1995;
>
> to examine the different perspectives of the practicum process held by the participants;
>
> to allow the voice of student-teachers, both individually and as a group, to be heard, and to enable the researcher to act as an advocate for student-teachers if required;
>
> to investigate the role of the University and its agents in effecting change within the schools;
>
> to obtain authentic materials for use in units in Field Supervision and Supervisory Practice at both the Bachelor of Education and Masters levels, and to involve teachers in the writing of these;

to bring about improvements in professional communications by examining the language of supervision;

to identify the predominant discourse of the student conference; and

to identify alternatives to the traditional practicum.

At the same time the research was designed to answer a number of specific questions related to the following aspects of the practicum conference:

Organisational features. Of interest here was where the conference was held, the degree of formality or informality of the arrangements, the time allowed, and the way the conference was structured.

Interactional and communicative effectiveness. This addressed such questions as who decided the agenda; who led the conference; the degree and suitability of feedback, how advice was given; and communicative failure.

Attitudes, beliefs, motives and intentions. The focus here was on establishing the educational, social and cultural beliefs of the participants; assessing to what degree these beliefs were shared by individual Field Supervisors and their student-teachers; how this affected the conduct and the outcome of the practicum; and seeking some indication of attitudes towards the university and its agents.

Friendship and liking. The focus here was on the degree of emotional and relational bonding between student teacher and Field Supervisors and how personal factors influenced professional development.

Models of supervision. Here I wished to establish how the supervisory process was undertaken, the prevalence of developmental models of supervision, innovative techniques being adopted by Field Supervisors and Liaison Lecturers to meet changing needs and demands, and the degree of congruence that existed between the student-teacher's own perceived need for direction and the amount of help and assistance offered.

Mature-age learners and recent school leavers. Here I was anxious to identify what differences might exist between mature age learners and recent school leavers in their expectations of, and response to, the practicum and whether any age-related or gender effects could be detected.

Context-of-site. Here I was interested in establishing how context-of-site affected the outcome of the practicum. As the research proceeded this came to occupy considerable importance.

Contradictions of practice. Contradictions between the espoused beliefs of supervisors and their actual practice were expected.

These questions were not meant to be exhaustive. However, as the research proceeded, it became obvious that in spite of the refusal of a logico-empiricist approach (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989), these concerns had been framed in a particularly positivist manner. There was an assumption that particular regular, identifiable patterns would emerge, and the proposal spoke of 'how the various features coalesce, or do not coalesce, to form identifiable patterns and relationships'.

This assumption of a regular, ordered world could be detected in other parts of the proposal which was couched in the reductionist language of linear cause and effect. There

was an expectation that analytical reason would prevail and that the participants would, whatever their idiosyncrasies, behave responsibly in a spirit of reasonableness. There was a tacit assumption that contradictions needed to be removed, that complexity and difference should be reduced, and that conflict was threatening and something to be avoided. And what, indeed, were 'authentic' materials?

Whilst recognising the importance of standpoint and perspective, there was an anticipation that by using triangulation different perspectives could somehow be arraigned alongside each other, and that some kind of epiphenomenal accommodation would result in a level of objectivity - agreed, consistent, rigorous. All this was in spite of the recognition of emotionality, affectivity, and subjectivity, but these factors, (note the analogy), remained separate and detached.

A major oversight was to assume that the research focus could remain exclusively within the conference itself and it soon became clear that the conference had to be looked at in conjunction with other practicum events.

Even the need for and the acceptance of supervision remained unchallenged in the very early stages of the work. However as the investigation proceeded, it became clear that this was a highly contested concept. The humanistic notions associated with the Enlightenment - self-autonomy, emancipation, empowerment - had to be problematised. Plans for training packages for the inservicing of teachers on Field Supervision needed a drastic rethink. At the same time notions of the identity and the part played by desire had to be re-examined and re-assessed.

As the research wore on, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the restrictions of conventional, discipline-based approaches to research. Part of the problem appeared to be

the insistence in some quarters on adopting a particular lineage to demonstrate the impeccability of one's family connections: you could either come at it, for example, from Habermasian theory, from the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, from a Foucauldian perspective, go back to Gademar, or employ techniques borrowed from discourse analysis such as Speech Act theory. Researchers appeared to look at their findings through one selected lens to ensure their work was manageable.

As explained in more detail in Chapter 9, the research was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved schools in Darwin and Alice Springs and was carried out in the second half of 1989 with the help of a colleague who assisted with the interviewing. The second phase which took place the following year, involved predominantly Aboriginal schools in rural areas some distance from Darwin. This phase was preceded by a trial run to identify some of the difficulties which might arise while researching diverse contexts.

A preliminary analysis of the material from the first phase (Grenfell and Saunders, 1990) called into question some of the presuppositions and expectancies upon which the research was based. Whilst the existence of routine and ritual could be detected in the practicum process itself, there was little likelihood of regular, predictable, patterns emerging outside of the way that the participants organised their interaction within the conference which to some extent was rule-governed. But, when it came to the process of the giving of advice, the personal, subjective nature of the practicum experience assumed much greater importance, as did issues of power and control which until this point had been very much taken-for-granted and not treated as problematic. The emotional and affective life of the participants, particularly that of the student-teachers, did more than colour the interaction: it actually drove the process. Intentionality assumed considerable importance, and unpredictability and unreason became major destabilising and disconcerting features. Contradiction, incompletion, indirection and lack of congruency

were everywhere apparent. This was a far cry from the image of the practicum suggested by clinical supervision and the literature on teacher appraisal.

The second phase of the research touched more immediately on racial beliefs and attitudes. It was not easy, however, to establish these with any degree of certainty or conviction, but they clearly influenced the interaction that took place between supervisory staff and student-teachers. Sensitive judgements were being made, or in some cases avoided, which affected the nature of the advice given, the way it was given, and the manner in which it was received.

At this point in the journey I needed to pause and in 1991 I took time out for six months to complete a study tour of educational institutions in parts of England, the United States, and Canada as part of a program of Professional Development to look predominantly at alternatives to the (traditional) practicum. This had a considerable effect on my thinking. (Grenfell, 1992A, 1992B, and 1992C).

At Alberta I was able to see the possibilities inherent in storying thanks to the generosity of Jean Clandinin and I began to entertain the possibility of presenting some of the experiences in the form of stories forming part of the practicum text.

In Vancouver I encountered at first hand the work of Alan McKinnon at Simon Fraser and Gaalen Erickson at UBC who were using constructivist approaches. I was able to accompany Faculty Associates into the schools to observe the supervision process at first hand and sit in on the informal discussions of the group in the afternoons. This considerably extended my repertoire of supervisory practice.

My time at Wisconsin-Madison reinforced my belief in the need to tackle change and engage in social action on a broad front. I remain indebted to Ken Zeichner, Bob Tabachnick, Mary Gomez and Carl Grant for the time they were able to give me in a crowded schedule. Here, too, I was able to follow research assistants into Professional Development schools and observe the ways in which they went about promoting reflective practice.

On my return from study leave I discovered that the report on the *Project of National Significance on the preservice preparation of Teachers for Teaching English Literacy* had appeared (Christie et al, 1991) and this once again forced me to engage in the debate over the social construction of knowledge and the exclusive reliance on social and linguistic determinism which characterised parts of that document (Grenfell, 1992D).

At the same time I entered into a dialogue on the meaning of constructivism with Wendy Crebbin at Ballarat University College (Grenfell and Crebbin, 1992), living out in practice the two-tiered dialogic theory of Bakhtin (in Holquist, 1990). The upshot of these developments was that I became particularly concerned with the way that knowledge was being (de/trans)formed during the practicum. Indeed, what was considered to count as knowledge, the nature of subjectivity, and the way that supervisors engaged in the positioning of student-teachers and limited or accorded them agency became problematic. Even the nature of autonomy, which had been so clear to me at the outset had to be re-examined. This forced me to re-engage with the work of Foucault (1988), particularly his later work on the technologies of the self in which he can be seen to have moved away from 'a one-dimensional account of the subject' and no longer conceived of 'individuals as docile bodies in the grip of inexorable disciplinary power' (McNay, 1992:4).

There still remained the question of making sense of all I had been engaged in during this journey. Like Adso after his return to the burnt out Aedificium in *The Name of the Rose* (Eco, 1983: 500-501), I sat with this rump of a 'library made up of fragments, quotations, unfinished sentences, amputated stumps of books' and wondered if they too were 'the result of chance' and contained no message, and just how they could be interpreted and related together.

It was then that I came across quite fortuitously *Speaking with a boneless tongue* by David Jardine (1992) which introduced me for the first time to the concept of an eco-logic which fitted so well with constructivist theory, and the post-formal, post-structuralist turn which I had begun to take.

At the same time the concept of supervisory *practice* came to the fore. Interpretation was now not so much an attempt to discover the hidden meaning behind utterances (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1986: 124) but the interpretation of cultural practices, interpretations in themselves, such as the way our practices promote stasis, extend power and domination, control the body, impose cultural meanings, take account of the subject, employ a caring perspective, or promote a justice ethic.

Encouraged by Maurice Robson of Deakin University, I re-examined my own role in the research, and was forced to recognise the influence of my own subjectivity and perspectivity on the conduct of the research as acknowledged in chapter 9. As a result, I returned once again to the critical pragmatism of Cherryholmes (1988) that had influenced me at the outset, and developed the theory of pragmatic interpretation which is presented in Chapter 7.

This journey, then, has assisted me to achieve what Foucault (1985, cited in McNay, 1992: 81) believed we should be about: 'to alter one's ways of looking at things, to change the boundaries of what one knows'. But I think it has done more than this: I think it has justified the decision made at the outset to refuse any restrictive theoretical underpinning based on a privileged meta-narrative or associated grand theory.

PART 1

APPROACHES TO SUPERVISION

CHAPTER 1

ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

A large number of interconnecting strands have been brought together in this thesis. In addition to research carried out into reflectivity, constructivism, and supervisory practice generally, it was necessary to draw on the following:

anthropology and cultural studies, Northern Territory history, sociological theory including role theory, socialisation, subjectification, and acculturation;

discourse analysis and research into the language of supervision, literary theory including intertextuality, dialogics and 'novelness', and narratology including life history and autobiography;

psychology including adolescent psychology, personality studies, cognition, and research into friendship and emotional development, as well as psychoanalysis and theories of desire, counselling and the technologies of the self; and

philosophical studies, with special reference to Pragmatism, and postmodernist, poststructuralist, postformal, and post-epistemological theories.

This chapter explains how these competing and intersecting strands have been incorporated into the work.

Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is presented in six parts. Part 1 comprises a brief survey of research into the practicum since the 1960s, followed by a review of the work of Donald Schön on the reflective practitioner, an account of constructivist approaches to supervision, and a review of research into the language of supervision,

Part 2 presents the three major approaches adopted in this study: the eco-logical, the pragmatic, and discourse analysis. From this point on, reviews of the literature dealing with other major contributing and formative strands are incorporated into the chapter to which they are most relevant.

Part 3 comprises the research design and contains an account of teacher education in the Northern Territory at the time the research was carried out, looks at the conduct of the research, provides details of the participants and the practicum sites from the first phase, discusses the overall effectiveness of the urban practicum judged from the point of view of student-teachers, and discusses the roles that Liaison Lecturers saw themselves as playing.

Part 4 is devoted to some of the issues which emerged in the stories from the urban phase, including power and control, collegiality, age-related and gender effects, the inculcation of guilt, romanticism in the supervisory process, and the struggle for personal autonomy.

Part 5 examines the influence of context-of-site and incorporates stories from the bush practicum. It focuses on positioning, agency, the construction of the subject, and the social construction of knowledge; contradictions of practice; the ways in which supervisors contested the myths of Aboriginal Education and challenged colonialist

attitudes; and the ways in which the bush practicum provides for the unlearning of complicity and brings about a loss of innocence.

The final part draws together some of the partial conclusions to emerge from the study and suggests what is required of teacher educators in a postmodernist world, introduces ways in which supervisory practice might be reconceptualised using current moves towards Field-Based Teacher Education in the Northern Territory as an example, and indicates some directions for future research.

Definition of terms

Field placement refers to the different sites where practice teaching was undertaken and includes pre-schools and child-care centres as well as primary schools.

The choice of the term **Liaison Lecturer** emphasises the liaison role of the university lecturer. However, as we will see Liaison Lecturers still retained a supervisory function. Interestingly enough the term Liaison Lecturer was rarely used by students and teachers in the interviews, the preference being for 'college lecturer', harkening back to the days when the present university was a community college.

The term **Field Supervisor** refers to what in other programs is called the cooperating teacher. The term was originally chosen to include carers in Child Care Centres.

The term **student conference** or **practicum conference** refers to the meeting which takes place between the student-teacher, Field Supervisor, and Liaison Lecturer either severally, or as a triad, immediately after, relatively soon after, or at some time removed from, the observation of a lesson or teaching episode in which the student-teacher was involved. It is recognised that some conferencing may take place prior to

any actual teaching or during the teaching/learning sequence itself, but the focus of this investigation is on the post-observation conference.

The term **effectiveness** is used in two ways: to determine whether student-teachers believed the conference had assisted them to improve their teaching in any marked way; and to refer to the general level of satisfaction with the conference.

Judgements of effectiveness are clearly highly individual and subjective. Students who think only very shallowly about their teaching performance and who are placed with a Field Supervisor whose main concern is to make the practicum a comfortable and pleasurable experience may express a high degree of satisfaction with the way the conference was conducted and judge the conference as effective. By contrast, students placing high demands on themselves may approach the practicum with a different set of expectancies and judge the conferences as unsatisfactory or ineffective.

The practicum, as used in the Australian context, means both a period of practice teaching that lasts for a continuous period of two or four weeks, and the overall program of teaching practice associated with the Diploma of Teaching. As such it conforms to the definition given by Schön (1987:37):

> A practicum is a setting designed for the task of learning a practice. In a context that approximates a practice world, students learn by doing, although their doing usually falls short of real-world work. They learn by undertaking projects that simulate and simplify practice; or they take on real-world projects under close supervision. The practicum is a virtual world, relatively free of the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real one, to which, nevertheless it refers ... It embodies particular ways of seeing, thinking, and doing that tend over time, as far as the student is concerned, to assert themselves with increasing authority.

One can take issue with a number of features of this definition. For example, as the literature review indicates, the practicum may not be intentionally designed to achieve particular ends and even in cases where it is, local conditions may frustrate the intentions of the planners. Moreover, schools are not insulated from society and the

pressures, distractions, and risks associated with the real world influence teaching practice although student-teachers usually operate with a greater degree of safety.

It is possibly more profitable to define the practicum in terms of opportunity or possibility: an opportunity to engage with, and reflect upon, the practices of others, providing a cumulative set of experiences, spread over a number of years, in different contexts-of-site.

The term **'bush practicum'** meant practice teaching undertaken in rural schools in predominantly Aboriginal communities at some distance from Darwin. The term is no longer used and has been replaced by RASSP (The Rural and Small Schools Practicum).

The term **practice** is elusive and can be taken in three ways, the first two of which are provided by Schön (1983:53-4): (1) as in a lawyer's or doctor's 'practice' when it refers to a body of professional work, the type of clients catered for, and the range and nature of the cases handled, (2) as preparation for a performance as in piano practice, and (3) as composed of **practices** in the plural which refers to an association of habitual ways of behaviour which, as Turner (1994:105) argues, are 'private, opaque, and variegated and not necessarily the product of social forces'. Teaching practice has a doubling effect as student-teachers practise acquiring accepted practices. Schön (1983) points out there is usually an element of repetition in the caseloads of professional practice. Sometimes practice permits of increasing and excessive specialisation, bringing with it a danger of automaticity. By failing to think about what one is doing, one can be drawn into habitual routines or patterns of error. As we will discover practices become 'ersatz principles' (Turner, 1994:6) for some supervisors.

In everyday life, practices are proper to oneself, or 'owned' by the individual, and relate to the proper order of things as regulated, say, by the university (de Certeau,

1988). Practices are textual, signifying and symbolic (Trend, 1995), and are frequently oppositional.

Reading this thesis

This thesis deals with the storied knowledge of those who were brought together into the ambivalent world of the practicum. No attempt is made to group, categorise, or classify this storied knowledge in any systemic way.

As the stories are retold, extracts from the transcripts are introduced into the text, rather than being placed in a separate volume. This is done in order to contextualise utterances, allows the participants to speak for themselves, preserves the grain of the voice, and vivifies or brings alive emotions and feelings. At the same time it conveys the vagueness, indirection, and incoherence of much of the language of supervision, highlights the complexity of the process, and enables the reader to recognise the influence of the interviewer/researcher on the shaping of the story, and to interact more fully with the text.

The joint reconstruction of meaning by researcher and participants, 'the negotiation of minded practices' (Clandinin, 1987:196), contributed to the need to reproduce some lengthy extracts from the transcriptions to demonstrate the emergence and 'filling out' of important concepts. Hodge and Mishra (1990:xvii) in their examination of the postcolonial mind in Australian literature also found the need to quote extensively from literary texts in order to preserve the qualities which would have disappeared in a straightforward summary.

Delicate nuances, subtle modifications, and information on strength of belief which can be lost in computer-driven data analysis are therefore retained. The reader can, however, bracket out these lengthy utterances, or rely on the italicised sections of the

linking commentary which provide for continuity in the midst of disruption. It is acknowledged that commentary alone 'merely adds to the proliferation of discourse without getting at what is really going on' (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1986:123).

The way in which the thesis is written deliberately blurs the boundaries of the established genres of academic writing. Commentary shades into interpretation and interpretations take on the force of explanations. For example, in *Surveying the field*, I engage in provocation, look ahead to some of the disclosures made in the stories, generalise to other instances, and arrive at tentative 'under'-standings. Similarly, I employ several switches of tense which some may find distracting, to create a past-present awareness. These stories are of the immediate past, but they are ever with us, and contribute to a history of the present. They assist with the analysis of the current local situation, how supervisory practices came to be the way they are, and why and how they are changing to meet the demands of the new social technologies.

By choosing not to classify and categorise there is some unavoidable repetition and overlap, and the reader will hear continual echoes of what is happening elsewhere. Such intertextuality is not infrequent. Each of the stories selected is intended to open a particular window into supervisory practice. For instance *The struggle for autonomy* examines the working of the justice and care perspectives as revealed in the practice of one Liaison Lecturer and Field Supervisor but this same issue surfaces elsewhere.

Footnotes have been kept to a minimum and are only used where important extraneous information is required which would have interrupted the flow of the writing. A *dramatis personae* is provided in Part 3 to enable the reader to keep track of the participants in the first phase as they appear and reappear in the text. The same is done at the start of Part 5 for the participants in the second phase.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEYING THE FIELD

It is possible to distinguish three major phases of research into the practicum and supervisory practice. The first phase occupied the 1960s and 1970s and included the landmark work of Mosher and Purpel (1972) on supervision, Jackson's (1968) study of life in schools, and the sociological study by Lortie (1975) on the schoolteacher, but generally little attention was given to the supervision of student-teachers or to the practicum conference. In fact Mosher and Purpel identified only one study by Kyte (1962) which dealt with the conference format, the ordering of topics, and the optimum number of items to be discussed. Interest in the practicum however, gathered pace in the 1970s but what research there was, tended to be highly utilitarian, functionalist and positivist. Various forms of clinical supervision were advocated during this period and these carried over into the second phase.

The second phase which occupied the 1980s, arose out of a widespread concern with public education and a push for greater accountability in the face of unprecedented social, technological, and economic change. It was marked by a growing awareness of the politicisation of education both in Australia, and the United States, as well as in Britain and Europe generally. The growth of the corporate state and an increasing reliance on economic rationalism (Bates, 1987; Pusey, 1991) characterised the end of this period and forced educators to justify the continuation of the practicum. Research carried out during this phase was associated with reflectivity, problem-based learning, and inquiry-orientated approaches, and was accompanied by an increasing number of ethnographic and anthropological studies using teachers' biographies and life histories (Yonemura, 1986; Nias, 1986; 1989; Kidder, 1989; Clandinin, 1989B).

The third phase, to which the present study belongs, is associated with the postmodernist turn and is marked by anti-representationalism, anti-foundationalism and anti-progressivism. Postmodernism challenges the very basis of the distribution of power, knowledge and control and is strongly influenced by critical theory and radical pedagogy (Grant and Sachs, 1995). This has meant that the very concept of supervision based on notions of managerial efficiency and technical rationality which originated in the industrial era is now anachronistic (Smyth, 1991; Glickman, 1992). Indeed, with globalisation, we can be said to have now passed beyond the modernist project of surveillance and normalisation. The interest in reflectivity has intensified but attention now focuses on contructivism and *action* learning (McNiff, 1983).

This breakdown is very loosely conceived and is open to challenge in a number of ways. For instance, Giddens (1991) finds the distinction between modernism and postmodernism unproductive, preferring to talk in terms of a period of 'high modernity'. Nevertheless it is possible to detect paradigmatic and epistemological shifts which correspond roughly to the dates provided.

Major reviews of research into supervision of the practicum

In such a wide ranging study as this, space does not permit an exhaustive survey of all the research which pertains to supervision of the practicum. Extensive reviews have been carried out during the second phase by Boydell (1986), Turney (1987), Ferguson (1989), Calderhead, (1989), Zimpher (1989), Price (1989), and Zeichner (1990), and it is not proposed to repeat their conclusions here but to highlight some of the limitations of that research and indicate some of the significant contributions.

Limitations of the earlier research

Until the third phase, with certain significant exceptions, few studies examined the subjectivities of those involved or entered the life world of the participants. Emotionality, interiority, individuation and subjectification were ignored in favour of role, external controls and socialisation. Issues of power/knowledge were not sufficiently problematised and little attention was paid to discursive practices. Attitudes, beliefs, interests, motives, and intentions were generally disregarded (Feather, 1985; Tischer, 1987) or treated as transparent, and where conflicts and contradictions were identified (Yee, 1968; 1969) they were rarely addressed in terms of psychoanalytic theories of desire (Fuery, 1995). Even where the different perspectives of the participants were obtained, these were rarely used in a constructivist manner. A narrow view of what counted as legitimate knowledge prevailed, and teachers' practical, experiential knowledge was overlooked.

Generally speaking the research embraced the predominant logico-deductive, rationalist, positivist epistemology of modernism and a large number of studies still employed questionnaires, opinionnaires and survey materials such as those by Funk (1978), Samson, Borger, Weinstein and Walberg (1983), and O'Neal (1983), by way of example. By and large researchers hoped to identify regularities, and establish rule-governed behaviour which could be applied to predictable re-occurring situations, with recognised variations and sub-routines.

Many studies were based on developmental models or frameworks (Glassberg and Sprinthall, 1980; Brundage and MacKeracher, 1980; Ferguson, 1989; Cohn and Gellman, 1988) or clinical models such as Glatthorn's Learning Centred Supervision (LCS) Model (1984) and the Supervision Throughput Model (STM) of O'Shea, Hoover and Carroll (1988). Clinical and developmental models of supervision came under challenge on a number of grounds (Blumberg, 1976; Zeichner and Tabachnick,

1982; Grenfell, 1994B). Clinical models of supervision, such as that embraced by the Darwin Institute of Technology in this study (Smyth, 1983), whilst capable of embracing other supervisory approaches, were often found to be unworkable.

Many of these studies proceeded by setting up analytical frameworks or devising classificatory and category systems, such as those by May and Zimpher (1986), Fenstermacher and Soltis (1986) and Zimpher and Howey, (1987) which examined theoretical perspectives of supervision, competency frameworks, and theoretical conceptions of teaching respectively.

Significant work from the second phase

Nevertheless there were some significant studies which dealt with congruency (Zimpher and Howey, 1987; Hoover, O'Shea and Carroll; 1988; Lazarowitz, Dreyfus and Jungwirth, 1986; Pitman and Dobbert, 1986); counselling (Handal and Lauvås, 1987); the development of teaching behaviour of student-teachers over time (Seperson and Joyce, 1983; Hoy and Woolfolk, 1989; Soares, 1989); changes in cognitive belief systems (Hollingsworth, 1989) the importance of prior expectations (Weinstein, 1989); the presence of stasis, defined as 'a strong tendency for those most closely involved to avoid conflict or confrontation' (Menter, 1989:459); institutional constraints and forms of social control (Goodman, 1985; 1988); ways to bring about change and oppositional practice (Ellsworth, 1989: Etheridge, 1989; Cochran-Smith, 1991B) ; and the role of the university (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981; Zimpher, 1987). Little attention was paid to communicative interaction and micro-analytic studies of the practicum conference although Zahorick (1988) looked at the conferencing goals of university supervisors, Zeichner and Liston (1985) identified the discourses used in supervisory practice and Zeichner (1987) drew attention to the ecological and contextual factors of field sites.

Overall, however, the credibility and usefulness of much research was questioned on a number of grounds. Zeichner (1987) concluded that research into the practicum suffered from the fact that it has been both too broad and too narrow. In some cases, studies employed a very restricted developmental approach 'ignoring unanticipated outcomes' (*ibid*:95). Others were so broad and general that 'the complex, dynamic, and multidimensional nature of setting and people, individually and in interaction' were overlooked (*ibid*). Price (1989:14) concurred, and emphasised the need to free research from 'the restrictive parameters of a single orientation', and to consider the broad changes affecting the traditional role of the teacher. Zimpher (1987:120) criticised research into the practicum for giving the appearance of being 'rather disparate and unconnected', whilst McIntyre (1986, cited in Wheeler, 1987:15) maintained that 'the lack of theoretically based research into field experience is a major void'. The present study has been designed to take into account these conflicting reservations as can be seen in Part 3.

The postmodernist turn

The third phase has seen the emergence of studies described variously as postpositivist, poststructuralist, and postformalist, amongst them the work of Pagano (1990), Britzman (1991) and McWilliam (1995). These studies are concerned with that which is 'post', with connection, with that which comes after, with 'voice' (Gitlin and Price, 1992; Schratz, 1992), and the recognition of student-teachers as marginalised and silenced groups. They attempt to frustrate the perpetuation of outworn practices, comfortable mythologies, and Enlightenment views of autonomy, individualism and benevolence.

Much of this work has led to a re-examination of what it means to be agentic. Studies into subjectivity, emotionality and interiority have focused on the redefinition and re-emergence of the self, and ways to promote self-esteem and self-efficacity (Griffiths,

1993A and 1993B; Grenfell, 1996). Increasingly the practicum is seen in terms of teaching as *phronesis* or practical morality involving dilemmatic choice (Arnstine, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992; Burgess and Carter, 1992, Boostrom, 1994) and critical constructivists, social reconstructionists and critical theorists have come to take a much closer interest in the way that knowledge is produced and reproduced in schools and the part supervisors play in this (Nespor, 1991; Nespor and Barber, 1991).

The practicum is being increasingly viewed as a crucible in which appropriate/inappropriate attitudes are formed; appreciative/unappreciative systems created; framing devices acquired; discursive practices learned and interiorised; myths and stories perpetuated; scripts acted out (Hale and Starratt, 1989); resistance and contestation engaged in; conflicts and contradictions worked through; memories raised and reworked; and deferred meanings sought after and applied to new situations. O'Loughlin (1991B:42) sums up these aspects of the research when he speaks graphically of the practicum as a site of struggle.

> Student-teachers struggle with their own histories and autobiographies; they struggle with the ideal conceptions of pedagogy presented in their courses; they struggle either to adapt or resist the powerful socialization pressures intrinsic to their relationships with cooperating teachers; they struggle with transformation in an education system locked into reproduction; and most of all they struggle to reconstruct their own autobiographical and professional identities under all of these competing pressures and expectations.

Dispensing with the clinical model

Not surprisingly therefore, reliance on the clinical model which has dominated supervision for much of the period under review has been severely questioned and I believe that attempts by educators such as Smyth (1991), Glickman (1992), Sergiovanni (1985, 1992), and Gitlin (1981) to adapt this model to provide for more socially critical, collaborative and reflective approaches are misguided, and that the

process of viewing supervision as a series of models is in itself restrictive and unhelpful.

Attempts to adapt the clinical supervision model which was originally designed for professional development and teacher appraisal are open to challenge on the following grounds:

the mis-application of the clinical concept which first emerged in medicine to which it was more suited (Sergiovanni, 1989);

the structured, sequenced, linear nature of the model which is imposed from without upon a loosely structured system; and

the fact that the model actually militates against the development of self-directed and collaborative approaches (Glickman, 1987), providing only for a measure of self-direction within an already prescribed structure.

The clinical model as originally conceived can be made to 'work'. It possesses considerable potential and can incorporate reflective and constructivist approaches, but the versatility of which Clark (1990) speaks remains a hope and a possibility. It has therefore to be asked whether there are insurmountable obstacles within the culture of the schools and institutional systems which prevent its widespread adoption (Cooper, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; Westoby, 1988).

Although one can argue that the associations built up in the popular western mind with the sterile, antiseptic, tiled walls of the clinic do violence to the original meaning of the term, and should be disregarded, these associations are deep-seated. The popular image, writes Smyth (1991:38), 'is one of cold, formal, cut-and-dried procedures, images of formica surfaces, unfriendly receptionists and needles ready to

draw blood'. Cultural knowledge, as revealed by the historical allusions contained in the common expressions of our language, is continually changing. The original term *clinicus*, as Smyth (*ibid*) explains, related in Roman times to 'the priest's administrations at the bedside of the dying' and had more to do with well-being rather than 'curative and therapeutic purposes'. This is no longer part of the cultural knowledge of practising teachers. In the popular mind the idea of the clinic is associated with the treatment model referred to by Schlechty (1991) and conveys feelings of distanciation and separation. Rather than lament the failure of a well-intentioned and promising approach, it would be better to break with the tradition altogether.

The remainder of this survey focuses on three major developments which have significantly affected approaches to supervisory practice: reflectivity, constructivism, and studies into the language of supervision.

CHAPTER 3

REFLECTIVE APPROACHES TO SUPERVISORY PRACTICE: THE WORK OF DONALD SCHÖN

Foremost amongst those educational writers dealing with reflective practice is Donald Schön. This chapter provides an overview of Schön's position, drawing primarily on a paraphrase and extracts from his writings published in Vol 5, No 1 of the *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, (1989). A number of criticisms of his work are identified, and I go on to ask what should we be reflecting about and suggest some supervisory practices which might promote reflectivity.

The crisis of confidence in professional knowledge

Schön (1983) begins *The Reflective Practitioner* with an examination of the crisis of confidence in professional knowledge. The adequacy of professional knowledge based exclusively on technical rationality is being increasingly called into question. Professionals are now being called upon to perform tasks for which they have not been educated. Deprofessionalisation and proletarianisation of teaching have become widespread.

Yinger (1990:74) portrays the situation dramatically:

> The world of practice is a world of crisis. The conversation of practice has degenerated into monologue, self-talk, or silence. Specialization and institutionalization have cut off the practitioner from a sense of place, a sense of participation, and a sense of community. The thoughtless present tense of technology has replaced the thoughtful growth of tradition. As a result persons are searching for meaning in isolation, disconnected from essential relationships of life.

Schön perceives the complexity, uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflicts which surround us as central to the world of professional practice.

Technical rationality and problem solving

Schön (1983) exposes the limitations of technical rationality which sees education as engaging in instrumental problem solving, made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique, and determined by fixed, unambiguous ends. Under this conception, professional knowledge is systematic, firmly bounded, scientific and standardised and assumes a foundational base believed capable of application. Applied science is therefore associated with diagnostic procedures and problem solving techniques. Research is institutionally separate from practice.

For Schön (1983) a problem solving approach to professional practice is associated with technical rationality. He advocates instead a problem-setting approach.

> But with this emphasis on problem solving, we ignore problem setting, the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen. In real-world practice, problems do not present themselves to the practitioners as givens. They must be constructed from the materials of problematic situations which are puzzling, troubling, and uncertain. In order to convert a problematic situation to a problem, a practitioner must do a certain kind of work. He (sic) must make sense of an uncertain situation that initially makes no sense. (*ibid*:40)

Schön (1983:41) points out that when ends are confusing and conflicting there is as yet no 'problem' to solve.

Schön identifies three types of local experiment being undertaken during reframing: *exploratory*, when action is undertaken only to see what follows, without accompanying predictions or expectations; *move-testing* or testing out an action to see if it produces the change predicted or wished for, as in moving a piece in chess; and *hypothesis testing* which, unlike scientific hypothesis testing, has a much more limited function and is more like a game with the situation.

The swampy lowlands and the high, hard ground

It is not surprising, therefore, that given these messy areas of indeterminacy, rigour and relevance come to assume considerable importance. The ensuing debate gives rise to Schön's well known metaphor of the swampy lowlands and the high, hard ground.

> In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing 'messes' incapable of technical solution. (*ibid*:42)

The positivist view of science, Schön tells us, is based on science after the fact. We need to look at science before the fact and not as a body of established propositions derived from research. This will involve us in working divergently with messy situations using artistic and intuitive processes (*ibid*:49).

Reflection-in-action

Central to Schön's conception of reflective thinking is the distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The former is more immediately situated although it may contain elements of the latter, and a problem may in fact be returned to over a period of time. Reflection-in-action, which involves the expression of knowing-in-action is central to the artistic, intuitive process that Schön sees as missing from technicist accounts. Reflection-on-action will not concern us here.

Reflection-in-action hinges on our acceptance and recognition of the existence of tacit knowledge. When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often we cannot say what we know. When we try to describe it we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implied in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowing is in our action.

Schön accepts that it is not always possible to provide accurate or complete descriptions of symptoms which confront us, that we cannot always state adequately the criteria upon which we operate, nor can we always give the rules and procedures for the skills we employ. On the other hand, both ordinary people and professional practitioners often think about what they are doing, sometimes even while they are doing it (*ibid*:50).

For reflection-in-action to take place, there is always something 'puzzling, or troubling, or interesting' about the phenomena with which the individual is trying to deal. In the process of dealing with the phenomena, the practitioner 'reflects on the understanding implicit in his action, understanding which he (sic) surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action' (*ibid*).

Knowing-in-action is bound up with know-how. It has nothing to do with rules and plans which we entertain in the mind prior to action. Schön illustrates tacit knowing which occurs spontaneously without the practitioner always being aware of it, by reference to the recognition of faces, the use of tools, and the recognition of having obtained a bad fit. We are generally unable to describe this kind of knowing which our actions reveal.

Reflecting-in-action is associated with thinking on your feet, keeping your wits about you, learning by doing, finding the groove, possessing a special feel for something, improvisation, and on the spot adjustments. It is the work of the bricoleur (Huberman, 1993; Grundy and Hatton, 1994) and is guided by existing schemata which offer predictable order. Practitioners therefore usually have a sense that something is wrong or out of place.

Schön observes that practitioners build up a repertoire of cases or incidents similar to the repertoire of musical performers. Reflection may not necessarily take place in the medium of words although we are often compelled to invent a language to explain or

theorise what is happening. In this case knowing-in-action becomes knowledge-in-action. An experience of surprise often accompanies intuitive, spontaneous action when the results in some way are unexpected. Otherwise we proceed without taking further notice.

The structure of reflection-in-action

We have already discussed Schön's definition of the meaning of practice which refers to the professions and takes no account of signifying practices in social and cultural life. Schön's examples of professional practice are taken from architecture and psychotherapy. Each of these occupations approaches the practice problem as a unique case, each possesses a repertoire of cases which can be added to, and neither look towards a standard solution. The problem is never given or artificially constructed, as it often is in some forms of Problem Based Learning. Crucial to each is an artistic performance:

> In each case the practitioner gives an artistic performance... His artistry is evident in his selective management of large amounts of information, his ability to spin out long lines of invention and inference, and his capacity to hold several ways of looking at things without disrupting the flow of the inquiry. (Schön, 1983:130)

In the examples provided, the practitioners appear to be moving the students into the middle of a large semantic web. This web comprises the elements of the reframed problem and provides for multiple connections which reveal consequences, implications and appreciations in the way of the rhizome discussed in Chapter 6.

The role of the coach in structuring reflection-in-action

In his discussion of the dialogue between coach and student, Schön, (1987:100) points out that architectural students 'have to try to design even though they do not know what designing means'. 'Some essential features of designing' and we might add, also of teaching, 'escape clearly statable rules'. Very often the cognitive belief

systems of beginning students prevent them from grasping what is being said and 'the world of design appears confusing and mysterious' (*ibid*) and yet as Schön's research suggests 'that convergence of meaning does occur: communication becomes easier and more elliptical, and although utterances may remain incomplete, the meaning is understood' (*ibid*).

The work of the coach involves two aspects which eventually coalesce: telling and listening, and demonstrating and imitating. Telling and listening involves giving specific instructions, criticising the product or process, giving advice on setting priorities, proposing experiments, and delivering reflections. Demonstrating and imitating, far from being the mechanical process one might imagine, is an extraordinary complex process which involves a process of selective construction, leading to a sense of global performance. What Schön appears to have in mind here is something approaching the cognitive apprenticeship suggested by Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989).

Patterns and limits of reflection-in-action

Schön is very well aware of the limits of his view of reflection-in-action in improving practice. A major limitation is found in the patterns of reflection-in-action adopted by the professions. Schön views the familiar distinctions between the professions as expressed in a set of constants: *the media*, including the languages and repertoires used to describe reality and conduct experiments; *the appreciative systems* influencing problem setting, evaluation of inquiry and the reflective conversation; *the overarching theories* adopted; and *the role frames* within which the task is structured and which impose limits on the institutional setting. Assisting practitioners to achieve change is therefore a difficult process. Although the constants are not 'absolutely unchanging' (Schön, 1983:270), we can only proceed slowly. Reflectivity as constituted by Schön is not geared to the necessity for radical change and

empowerment, and Schön accepts that 'across processes of inquiry, differences in evaluation may not be objectively resolvable' (*ibid*: 273).

Schön examines the contention that thinking interferes with doing and sees this as part of the myth which reinforces the tendency to mystify the art of practice. He points out that some prescriptions for action do temporarily interfere with performance but there is 'nothing in reflection ... which leads necessarily to paralysis of action' (*ibid*:281).

The professional-client relationship

Schön's approach to reflectivity has important implications for the professional-client relationship in general and the supervisory process in particular.

> Just as reflective practice takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation, so the reflective practitioner's relation with his (sic) client takes the form of a literally reflective conversation. Here the professional recognizes that his technical expertise is embedded in a context of meanings. He attributes to his clients, as well as to himself, a capacity to mean, know, and plan. He recognizes that his actions may have different meanings for his clients than he intends them to have, and he gives himself the task of discovering what these are. (*ibid*:295)

At all times Schön maintains there is a 'need for a willing suspension of disbelief' (*ibid*:296), and he emphasises the need to give the student reason.

Schön's work has close links with constructivist theory discussed in the next chapter. MacKinnon and Erickson (1989) have worked with Schön's concept of 'the hall of mirrors' and provide this quotation from Schön which is central to their work.

> In the hall of mirrors, student and coach continually shift perspective. They see their interaction at one moment as a re-enactment of some aspect of the student's practice; at another as a dialogue about it; and at still another, as a modelling of its redesign. In this process they must continually take a two-tiered view of their interaction, seeing it in its own terms and as a possible mirror of the interaction the student has brought to the practicum for study. In this process there is a premium on the coach's ability to surface his (sic) own confusions. To the extent that he can do so authentically, he models for his students a new way of seeing error and "failure" as opportunities for learning.

> But a hall of mirrors can be created only on the basis of parallelisms
> between practice and practicum - when coaching resembles interpersonal
> practice to be learned, when students re-create in interaction with coach or
> peers the patterns of their practice world, or when ... the kind of inquiry
> established in the practicum resembles the inquiry that students seek to
> exemplify in their practice. (Schön, 1987:297)

Traditional and alternative forms of supervision compared

According to Schön, what he terms the traditional, Model 1, forms of supervision take

on the character of win/lose games of control in which clients may feign compliance,

play one professional off against another, use 'second opinion' to evade control, or

impugn the professional's expertise to reduce the professional's control (Schön,

1983:303).

> The client may simply refuse to comply with the professional's advice, in
> order to show the professional that he cannot be controlled. (*ibid*:304)

There is ample evidence in this investigation to support this contention.

In the alternative forms of reflective supervision envisaged by Schön, accountability

and evaluation acquire new meanings. Supervision is now more concerned with the

assessment and support of the teacher's reflection-in-action (*ibid*:234). Both teachers

and supervisor are continually pushing against the theory of privileged knowledge

which underlies the school. Under such conditions conflicts and dilemmas surface and

move to centre stage (*ibid*:235).

Criticisms of Schön's work

A number of the early proponents of reflectivity have become disillusioned with the

generally unreflective way in which, as a generic, 'the term [reflectivity] came to be

employed by teacher educators of every ideological perception' (Zeichner and

Tabachnick, 1991:3). In some cases the term was appropriated by the technicists

(Cruickshank and Applegate, 1981). Reflective practice need not be as emancipatory

or empowering as is sometimes claimed but may serve to reinforce the New Right ideology of radical interventionism (Pugach, 1990; Zeichner, 1991).

Bartlett (1989:353) sees a quasi-positivist approach at work which attempts to match contexts with degrees of successful outcomes of reflection. In this process 'the teacher becomes just another aspect of enquiry ... and reflection becomes yet another form of "applied science" in which the practitioner is told rather than lives or resolves contradictions inherent in contexts'.

Besides the concern with the way that reflectivity is being appropriated, there are a number of concerns with Schön's view of reflectivity itself. Chief amongst these are:

> the tendency towards dichotomous thinking as reflected in the distinction between knowing-in-action and technical, scientific knowledge, the related separation of tacit from codified knowledge, and the gulf between the swamp and the high ground (Shulman, 1988; Fenstermacher, 1988);

> confusion over the nature of craft-based knowledge (Buchmann, 1987);

> an over-reliance on reflectivity as an individualistic process concerned with personal meaning and experience to the neglect of the socially critical aspects of reflectivity (Cinnamond and Zimpher, 1988, 1990; MacKinnon and Erickson, 1988);

> the failure to investigate what is meant by the self, and the formation of self-identity (Grenfell, 1996);

> the particularly rationalist, conceptualist view of reflection associated with Dewey and the underlying acceptance of degrees of cognitive capacity (Farra, 1988; Yinger 1988);

an unfounded optimism concerning the way that human beings behave, tinged with idealism, romanticism and utopianism, and a neglect of those factors comprising 'the politics of personal knowledge' (Grumet, 1991); and

difficulties in helping us decide between good and bad reflection, when a practitioner is reflective, and what should we should be reflecting about (Grimett, 1989).

Space does not permit an extended discussion of these criticisms. However they do emphasise the need for supervisors to clarify what they mean by reflectivity. The issue of when is a practitioner reflective and what should we be reflecting about has been addressed in terms of levels (Van Manen, 1977; Martinez, 1989). Level 1 is concerned with 'what works' and relates to routine action in a technicist manner, level 2 involves value commitments to educational principles, whilst at level 3 the student-teacher moves beyond the classroom to engage in constant critique of domination, institutions and repressive authority (Van Manen, 1977:227).

Rather than think in terms of levels of reflective practice which suggests limitations on cognitive capacity or moral development, Grimmett (1989) and Grimmett *et al* (1990) consider that we should view reflectivity as a group of continuously changing perspectives which fits better with a constructivist position. They suggest:

'reflection as instrumental mediation of action' which provides for the application to practice of propositional knowledge obtained through research (Grimmett, 1989:21);

'reflection as deliberating between competing points of view', which provides for the context of the actual teaching situation and treats teachers' knowledge as deliberative, relativistic, and eclectic (*ibid*:21-22); and

'*reflection as reconstructing experience*' (*ibid*:22-23) which involves attending to features of the situation that were previously ignored, assigning new significance to features that were previously identified, and engaging in a process of problem setting, reframing and resolution; reconstructing the self-as-teacher through a process of self-reflection linked to life experience and personal history; and reconstructing taken-for-granted assumptions about teaching and learning.

Searching for reflectivity in supervisory practice

The Deweyan view of reflectivity is based upon the inculcation of essential attitudes and dispositions: openmindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness which continue to provide a basis for supervisory practice. The following definitions of these terms are provided by Pollard and Tann (1987:8) and are taken from Dewey (1933:29-30).

Openmindedness involves an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give heed to facts from whatever source they come, to give full attention to alternative possibilities, to recognise the possibility of error even in beliefs which are dearest to us.

Responsibility is restricted to intellectual responsibility and means to consider the consequences of a projected step, and a willingness to accept those consequences when they follow reasonably. Intellectual responsibility secures integrity.

Wholeheartedness encompasses the dedication, single-mindedness, energy and enthusiasm which characterises reflective teaching.

> There is no greater enemy of effective teaching than divided interest
> ... A genuine enthusiasm is an attitude that operates as an
> intellectual force when a person is absorbed, ... The subject carries
> him (sic) on.

Although the promotion of these attitudes and dispositions is fraught with normative difficulties in that wholeheartedness can become totalising and exclusionary, and responsibility may become the preserve of sectional interest groups, they continue to provide us with a focus for interrogating reflective practice.

Reflectivity cannot be reduced to a set of applied steps organised according to stages or levels. To conceive of reflectivity in pseudo-positivist, input/output terms and to look for measures of the effect of modelled patterns of reflection on teaching/learning (see Broeckmans, 1989, for example), contradicts the philosophical basis on which reflectivity stands. However, any investigation into supervisory practice will need to consider how the following are taken into account:

problem framing and setting as opposed to problem solving;

the role of contradiction, and the recognition of indeterminacy and fallibility and resistance to closure;

artistic, intuitive and improvisatory processes;

metacognitive awareness and explicit discussion about reflectivity;

automaticity, habitual routines and the taken-for-granted;

coaching techniques and the presence of mirroring and modelling;

ways in which a reflective conversation with the situation is encouraged; and

the degree to which the student is given reason, shifting perspectives are taken into account, and trust is built up.

CHAPTER 4

CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACHES

This chapter examines the theory underlying constructivist approaches to Teacher Education and supervisory practice. Although I acknowledge that supervisors need to take account of the cognitive belief systems which student-teachers and novices bring to teaching (Livingstone and Borko, 1989; Hollingsworth, 1989), I shall not address these, rejecting any exclusive reliance on constructivist approaches which are Piagetian in origin, and arguing that if we wish to promote empowerment, emancipation and transformation, we should adopt a socially critical approach.

Constructivism

The view of constructivism adopted here is well summarised by Prawat (1992:357) who writes: 'constructivism involves a dramatic change in the *focus* of teaching, putting the student's own efforts to understand at the centre of the educational enterprise', rather than viewing the student and the content as relatively fixed, separated entities. Beginning with the prior beliefs and understandings of the student, constructivists seek to bring about conceptual change by creating dissatisfaction with existing beliefs, ensuring that the student finds 'the alternatives both intelligible and useful in extending understandings to new situations' (*ibid*), and encouraging the student to find out 'some way to connect the new beliefs with their earlier conceptions' (*ibid*).

Similarly, Erickson (1989) rejects a view of research that provides teachers with a set of diagnostic techniques comprising a catalogue of teaching strategies from which they simply select. He believes that teachers should be expected to construct such techniques and strategies for themselves through collaborative inquiry. Advocates of a

'one size fits all' approach find constructivism difficult to live with. There is no one monolithic, all-embracing answer, no algorithmic route for solving problems, no exclusive, totalising effect.

Constructivism as the term implies involves the instantiation of constructs.

> In constructivism the symbolic status of the world is acknowledged as the construct that evolves from the interacting and mutually constituting reciprocity of subject and object. (Grumet, 1988:15)

Constructs are arrived at intersubjectively, and symbolically represent the 'world', as known, at any specific social/historical time. Constructivism, then, on this analysis, 'celebrates the creativity and responsibility of the knower as well as the context and relations within which knowing takes place and comes from' (*ibid*:16). There is no search for one ultimate, objective truth that is 'out there' waiting to be discovered. All truth, as is argued in Chapter 7, is contingent, provisional and partial. It is only viable and will only survive as long as it serves the purposes to which it is put.

The perspectival, relational and dialogic nature of constructivism

Einstein's theory of relativity assists us in understanding the perspectival, relational and dialogic nature of constructivism. Einstein demonstrated that the observer's ability to see motion depends on one body changing its position vis-a-vis other bodies. One body's motion has meaning only in terms of dialogue with another body. As Holquist (1990) explains

> all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space (*ibid*:20).

We can therefore speak of a 'law of placement' which says everything is perceived from a unique position in existence. 'The meaning of whatever is perceived is shaped by the place from which it is perceived' (*ibid*:21). Cognitive time and space is the arena in which all perception unfolds. Nothing can be perceived except against the perspective of something else. There can be no figure without ground.

Rorty (1989:27) captures the free-floating aspect of constructivism when he tells us that we 'cannot hold all the sides of our life in a single vision, with a single vocabulary'. Speaking of self-knowledge and self-creation he says that 'to create one's mind is to create one's own language, rather than to let the length of one's mind be set by the language other human beings have left behind' and that 'to fail as a human being is to accept somebody else's description of oneself, to execute a previously prepared program, to write, at most, elegant variations on previously written poems' (*ibid*). We require, therefore, new causal stories, and we are best able to arrive at our own contingencies and to infer causes. This is accomplished by seeing language, not as representational or expressive, but as a tool. As we re-tool to meet new contingencies and situations so we encounter new and competing discourses. Language is best thought of as intellectual history viewed as the history of metaphor, and supervisors therefore ought to be concerned with the promotion of 'metaphoric cognition' (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1993) and analogous thinking (Bamberger, 1991).

Discussion and dialogue are central to constructivist practice. The key aspects of dialogue are outlined by Sparkes (1991:105), drawing on Bullough and Gitlin (1989). Firstly, dialogue 'presupposes a tacit sense of relevance in which the participants think the discourse is important and each has a say in determining its course'. Secondly, the purpose of dialogue differs from the purpose of talk in that it is 'intended to develop a shared understanding of a subject in an atmosphere characterized by a respectful relationship amongst equals'. Thirdly, dialogue aims at achieving mutual understanding. Whilst recognising that dialogue cannot remove all prejudgments, the aim is to make all prejudgments apparent and subject them to critical inquiry. The supervisor, then, plays the role of *dialogist* (Reinsmith, 1992).

At the same time, dialogue implies a tolerance for the limitations in other people's ways of thought, and listening to the voices of others in a spirit of understanding that encourages polyvocality without foreclosing. Pluralism implies that there is no single, legitimate way of understanding the world.

Internality, spontaneity and indefiniteness

Constructivist approaches make allowances for internality, spontaneity and indefiniteness (Doll, 1989 cited in Prawat, 1992:385), all of which are largely ignored, or viewed negatively, in a positivist, linear, transmission view of teaching. By *internality* Doll means the process of assisting students to internally restructure and organise their own experience, instead of imposing externally constructed knowledge from outside. *Spontaneity* highlights the non-incremental nature of the process which is subject to periods of equilibrium and disequilibrium. *Indefiniteness* returns us to the idea of knowledge, (or the world), as a matrix to be explored, rather than a race to be run.

Some problems with constructivism

Constructivism is not without its problems. Firstly it has little to say about the actual social interaction process itself and the way language can be used to promote this. Prawat (1992), for instance, limits his comments to the process of negotiation without considering status differences between participants. In spite of frequent references to relational language, little is known about how this is generated or promoted in an organic, authentic, manner such that Lyons (1990), for example, postulates the need for a psychology of relationships.

It appears that there is a need for the individual to undergo an emotional experience, a 'perturbation' (Von Glasersfeld, 1989), if views are to be changed, commitments undertaken, and new dispositions emerge. This can be a lengthy and painful process

for which, as Crebbin (1992) points out, we need make no apology, but we have to acknowledge the risks involved. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993:313) remind us that emotional intensity precedes cognitive transformation. Forms of contestation during the practicum conference may be part of this transformative process.

Secondly, some students may settle for partial or incomplete understandings. There is no guarantee that the interconnections will be discovered or internalised so that they become generative and result in transformation. Any discoveries may still be regarded blankly without a full appreciation of what can be achieved. There is also an even greater danger that students may ignore more substantive socially critical issues and retain neo-conservative and neo-rightists attitudes and beliefs. Such concerns do not invalidate a constructivist approach but they do illustrate that constructivism is not a panacea, and that positive outcomes are not guaranteed.

A third concern involves the handing of difference. Burbules and Rice (1991:402) maintain that the celebration of difference is based on 'an acceptance of the ineradicable plurality of the world' and 'the constitutive quality of existence' by which 'every form of life is permitted on principle'. The celebration of difference appears to be grounded on a transcendental belief in progressivism and an optimistic belief in the altruism of human beings.

On the other hand notions of difference and the 'ineradicable plurality of the world' assist us in extending the insights obtained from constructivism to cross-cultural and multi-ethnic situations. In their discussion of the work of Derrida, Burbules and Rice (1991:400) stress the way in which meaning is dependent on context. They point out that de Saussure saw the difference between two signifiers as arbitrary and meaningless in itself, and stress that 'which differences actually mean something *is determined by the context of the system in which they occur'*. For Derrida, a differentiating factor is not merely an arbitrary and passive element in a sign system,

but also *an active, context-sensitive variable*. It is not simply a question of 'the formal presence or absence of a signifier. The relations that bind and the spaces that distinguish cultural elements are themselves in constant interaction.' (*ibid*)

'Formal analysis is insufficient to describe the practical elements of interpretation and judgement that give language its meaning in use' (*ibid*). This provides merely a 'momentary crystallization and institutionalization of one particular set of rules and norms' (*ibid*) as the High Court found in the Mabo case. The Mabo case, which overturned the earlier acceptance of the concept of *terra nullius*, illustrates very clearly how the relations which bind peoples together, and the spaces that emerge between them, are in fact constantly in interaction. To meet this kind of difference by which meaning is deferred, or can be revisited in time, Derrida coined the term différance.

Derrida's view of difference makes us much more responsive to the complexity of teaching and the supervision process, and renders suspect the search for the simple and the reductive. At the same time, it opens up the whole question of how knowledge and ethical values are implicated in the professional lives of teachers (Lyons, 1990). The belief systems of teachers and the epistemological perspective they adopt towards what counts as knowledge will ultimately involve them in a series of practical conflicts and moral dilemmas. Constructivism, therefore, assists teachers and university supervisors to change their views about knowledge and understand the nature of difference.

Critical Constructivism And Postformal Thinking

Critical constructivism is predicated on the belief that knowledge construction depends on 'interaction between the subjectivity of learners and the implicit and

explicit power relations of the pedagogical situation' (O'Loughlin, 1992:237).

Constructivists seek to promote an *inclusive* pedagogy,

> one which is inclusive of students' voices, (and) one in which teachers are
> willing to lay bare their own biases and work with students to understand the
> obstacles conventional schooling and textbooks present to the personal
> construction of knowledge *(ibid)*.

Through a process of self-reflection, teachers become aware of the dominant

discourses of the society and discover their own ways of talking.

Critical constructivism involves teachers (and supervisors) working together

> to ask themselves critical questions so that they can construct and enact critical
> visions of pedagogy that are appropriate to their own contexts, ... constructing
> and reconstructing visions of teaching (O'Loughlin, 1992:338).

This requires a determined effort by the teacher 'to abdicate the role of authority figure

or expert' with a view to creating 'a safe, nurturing community in which students feel

comfortable in the risk of sharing themselves'. O'Loughlin cautions teachers 'not to

push students into intellectualising the issues or force consensus'. Rather, they 'need to

value authentic life experiences rather than synthesised abstractions' and 'transcend the

narrow boundaries of academic discourse' *(ibid)*.

In their analysis of postformal thinking Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993) attempt to

hold on to the progressive and democratic features which characterise the liberal-

humanism associated with modernism and enlightenment thought, whilst drawing

upon the insights postmodernism provides concerning 'the failure of reason'

(Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1993:296). Starting from the question of how we function

in the midst of uncertainty in a world in which science, like the novel, is 'written' and

constitutes only one version of the truth at any one time, Kincheloe and Steinberg see

reflection as constituting a dialogue between critical theory and postmodernism.

The emphasis is on establishing and acknowledging multiple perspectives aimed at the expansion of self-awareness and consciousness. Their project is based on opposition to the modernist grand narrative of intelligence as represented by the developmental work of Piaget which incorporates an exclusionary system based on essentialism, the essential characteristics (or 'essences') that individuals are said to possess. The developmentalist cognitive psychology of Piaget locks people into rigid categories and levels. The most telling and revealing charge which Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993:298) make is that developmentalists see 'the development of thinking as coming from thinking itself'. This implies an internal, automatic, process by which certain individuals are better endowed than others, simply on the basis of their cognitive capacity.

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1993:302) present us with four major features of postformal thinking:

> *etymology* which involves critical examination and understanding of the historical formation of the self and mind;

> *pattern* which involves a consideration of deep structure, the metaphoric connection between phenomena and the relationship of mind to the ecosystem at large;

> *process* which is bound up with deconstruction and the connections between logic and emotion alluded to above; and

> *contextualisation* which deals with the context in which ideas occur and the influence of setting and place and is central to any understanding of context-of-site.

The process aspects of post-formal thinking centre around deconstruction and non-linear holism. The metaphors of reflection and mirroring are useful here. The mirror provides an infinite regress of images which blur, recede and disappear, whilst in looking into the pool, the continually moving waters of the flux and reflux diffract, distort and disperse the image (Gough, 1995). Deconstruction enables the student-teacher to detect the unintended currents and expose the unnoticed contradictions within texts, beginning with the image reversal which takes place in mirroring.

Deconstruction necessitates seeing the world as a text to be read. It reveals areas of blindness in the text, the strange and unnatural silences, the erasures, the exclusions and the general instability of meaning. It enables students to resist closure and totalising thought. There can be no closed texts with univocal readings. Deconstruction is not a negative or nihilistic process. It suggests the possibility of reconceptualisation, reconstruction and reconnection.

Implications for the current study

In examining supervisory practice for instances of critical constructivism, we will attend to the extent to which individual supervisors place student-teachers' own efforts to understand at the heart of the supervisory process; the way in which the previous experiences student-teachers bring to the practicum are utilised; the way in which supervisors engage student-teachers in collaborative inquiry; the process of deconstruction, emancipatory knowledge construction, and inclusive pedagogy; the ways in which dialogue is promoted and how difference is handled; and evidence of internality, spontaneity and indefiniteness (Doll, 1989).

CHAPTER 5

THE LANGUAGE OF SUPERVISION

This chapter looks at recent research carried out into the language of supervision. I shall not examine ways of improving communicative effectiveness which have been dealt with comprehensively by Caruso and Fawcett (1986) and Glickman (1987), nor will I consider communication barriers (Hennings, 1975). The focus here is on the conference as a human accomplishment as a result of the adoption of certain practices (Waite, 1992). I argue that such work can assist us in addressing intentionality when engaging in the pragmatic interpretation of the Practicum text.

An increasing number of researchers have adopted discourse analysis techniques to examine the language of supervision including Waite (1992), Wajnryb (1993), and Willing (1992). In addition, MacKinnon (1989) and MacKinnon and Erickson (1989) incorporated an analysis of supervisory dialogue into their work in terms of 'intellectual empathy' and coaching, Grundy (1986) identified the discourse features implicit in orientating students towards technical or practical teacher action, Zeichner and Liston (1985) investigated the varieties of discourse within the supervisory conference, and Fairclough (1989) examined language and power in counselling discourse. Mitchell (1994) has been working with semantic scripts to establish semantic invariants or 'universal primitives'.

The language of mitigation

Waite (1992) examined supervisors' talk in an attempt to make sense of conferences from an anthropological linguistic perspective, using conversation analysis and a constructivist research paradigm. Waite (*ibid*) saw conferences as nesting within their socio-cultural and linguistic contexts and he set out to discover what meaning they

had for the participants (*ibid*:349). Rejecting coding schemes and predetermined categories, Waite did not consider the conference a discrete event amenable to scientific analysis, preferring to use the term 'understandings' rather than findings.

Waite (*ibid*) discovered a number of both generic and specific conference processes. Generic processes were examined in terms of *boundedness* which refers to the 'interpretive frames that are *constructed* by the participants in the course of the discourse' (Briggs, 1986:12 in Waite, 1992:356); *conference phases* which were generally programmatic; and *questions*. Attention to boundedness included sensitivity to context whilst the interviews were in process, allowing interruptions and disturbances to be taken into account.

Specific conference approaches exerted moderating influences on the supervisors' degree of control. Chief amongst these was the language of mitigation involving the use of 'I' statements and modals. Waite found that 'I' statements allowed teachers to choose whether what was being said applied to them, and enabled the supervisor to emphasise solidarity with the teacher whilst de-emphasising power differentials. Mitigation appeared to allow teachers more professional autonomy in decision-making. It is also possible however that mitigation was operating as part of indirection, serving to indicate how the supervisor wanted something done. Whereas mitigating language reduced loss of face, Waite also identified specific face threatening acts.

Addressing the content of the conference, Waite examined the role of data and how this was introduced and addressed during supervisory conferences. The importance of the supervisor's prior beliefs about how conferences should be carried out proved to be critically important. As in the current investigation, the supervisor's notes often became the written script. Departures from the script were clearly not welcome as they confused the story line. 'As soon as I mention a change of situation, she starts

what I call "arguing"', complained one supervisor to Waite. Another was disgruntled when he did not receive the 'Oh, thank you' he would have liked. Conference participants were able to force departures from written notes.

In spite of extensive discoveries with regard to how the supervisory conference was accomplished, Waite was forced to concede that 'the influence these phenomena have on teacher reflection and growth is still unresolved' (Waite, 1992: 369).

The conference was revealed as a dynamic, ever-changing process involving strategic, political maneuvering and positioning. It was accompanied by a high degree of textual politics whereby language was used rhetorically for purposes of self-presentation and self-advancement. Whilst supervisors who retained control of the conference severely limited the teacher's potential for participation, Waite concluded that 'teachers have resources to counteract a supervisor's hegemony' and that 'variables other than power also affect the processes and outcomes of supervisory conferences' (Waite, 1992: 370).

In Australia, Wajnryb (1992) is in the process of producing a data-driven typology of the language of mitigation. Her work has already revealed 'the reluctance of many supervisors to be totally frank, up-front, full-on, open and honest,' and that supervisors 'employ devices ... to soften criticism, take the edge off and the sting out of what they are saying or are about to say or have said' (*ibid*:2).

Communication tasks in the professional workplace

An informative study which complements the work of both Waite and Wajnryb was that carried out by Willing (1992). This study examined communication tasks in the professional workplace, with specific reference to the language of requests, assertions, suggestions, and directives in cross-cultural communication.

Willing's work assists in the pragmatic interpretation of the practicum text by highlighting the following:

the presence (or absence) of a *meta-level discourse* which acknowledged changes in informational state, clarification, and repair, and directed the way meaning should be interpreted;

the importance of *minimalist cues* such as those signalling given and new information which assisted the hearer in identifying where the emphasis was to be placed and provided for coherence and unity in the communication task;

the level of *indirection* and the use of *indirect cueing strategies* such as 'understaters' (when a particular criticism or observation is understated), 'downtoners' (when a criticism is toned down), and 'disarmers' (when a particular threat is removed);

the use of *modality* which registers the speaker's degree of commitment to the truth and relevance of what the proposition affirms (*ibid* 110). Modality includes the use of question tags, and 'I think', which Willing glosses as conveying

at least that's my opinion; I can't really be sure though; I'm quite convinced of it; that just happens to be what I think. (*ibid*: 113);

the working of such devices as *nominalisation, pronominalisation and passivisation*; and

the use of *minimisers* to reduce any threat, such as the use of 'just', and self-effacing strategies such as 'I'm sorry' or 'I apologise' which humble the self and minimise threat by drawing attention to the merely personal, subjective, idiosyncratic nature of one's beliefs or preferences.

Although Schön (1987:101) argues that incoherence is evidence of our knowing-in-action, the language of mitigation and indirection may stem from the contested and contradictory nature of pedgogical discourse (Henriques and colleagues, 1984:107).

Of particular importance to the current investigation are indirect cueing strategies which Willing interpreted as deliberate violations of the Gricean maxims of efficient cooperative communication (Willing, 1992: 90-91). Of the strategies cited by Willing, the following can be observed in the practicum text and will be referred to again: irony, deliberate ambiguity, vagueness, incomplete utterances and ellipsis. Some Liaison Lecturers readily admit to forms of indirection and employ a high level of irony, not always with a high degree of awareness, producing considerable anxiety amongst student-teachers. The positive and negative effects of irony are reviewed by Hutcheon (1994).

Student-teachers are quick to detect insincere attempts at deference and very often modality is seen as perfunctory. In requests with hints that are intended to be softening and mitigating, the addressee is often left wondering about how the other must perceive them (Willing, 1992:122). Deference politeness can be distancing.

Turning to directives, Willing (*ibid*) suggests we look for a low-key approach based on comraderie which presupposes the agreed perception of an objective need, accompanied by the cajoling use of 'all right?' and 'you know?' Directives are often accompanied by the giving of a reason to mitigate a command, soliciting cooperation on the basis of good feelings, and minimising difference in status and rank (*ibid*:127).

Very often speakers minimise the size of the imposition by allowing for some degree of agency saying that the addressee should only attempt a suggested change if it fits in with their overall approach.

Implications for the current research

The research reported above suggests ways in which we can determine the intentions of supervisors by examining the systemic language choices they make. The language employed by supervisors plays an important part in determining the effectiveness of the conference and the degree of congruency obtained.

PART 2

RESEARCH APPROACHES

CHAPTER 6

AN ECO-LOGICAL APPROACH TO RESEARCH AND SUPERVISORY PRACTICE

The possibilities inherent in an eco-logical approach to understanding the world have been celebrated by Jardine (1992). Jardine was not the first educationist to take an ecological view of education, but to my knowledge, he was one of the first to associate the concept with a particular mode or condition of thought. Earlier writers such as Zeichner (1987) demonstrated the importance of student-teachers and their supervisors familiarising themselves with the ecology of the classroom in connection with operational effectiveness and improved performance and the classroom was viewed as an identifiable ecological system, Schön's virtual world. This chapter reviews the characteristics of an eco-logic and then goes on to explore the implications for interpreting the practicum text.

The characteristics of an eco-logic

Rejection of a univocal, causal (*mono*)-logic

In *Speaking with a boneless tongue*, Jardine (1992) demonstrates the poverty of a univocal, representational, essentialist and foundational approach to educational thinking in a post-formal world. For Jardine, all knowledge is seen as comprising an ecological web without any fixed centre or foundation. An eco-logical mode of thought, as distinct from a linear, cause-effect, (mono)-logic with its reliance on essence and the unity of one meaning, 'attempts to capture the vast, vibrant, generative, ambiguous, multivocal, interweaving network of living interconnections' (Jardine, 1992:vi). Deleuze and Guatiri (1987) express a similar distinction in their notion of striated and smooth space as discussed in Moulthrop (1994:302-3).

> Striated space is the domain of routine, specification, sequence, and causality. Phenomenologically, it consists of the world of perception as processed by some co-ordinate grid or other geometric structure into a set of specified identities. Socially, striated space manifests itself in hierarchical and rule-intensive cultures like ... the university ... (*ibid*:302-3).

In smooth space, by contrast, 'the points are subordinated to the trajectory' (Deleuze and Guattri, 1987:478). Smooth space is defined dynamically, in terms of transformation instead of essence. Thus one's momentary location is less important than one's continuing movement or line of flight; this space is by definition a structure for what does not exist. Smooth social structures include ad hoc or populist political movements ... and undergrounds (Moulthrop, 1994:303).

Intertextuality and storied knowledge

Elbaz and Elbaz (1988:108) also draw attention to multiple relationships and connection but view them as manifestations of intertextuality, based on a conception of the world and human interaction as text. For them,

> [T]he text is plural, not in the sense that it encloses a plurality of meanings ... but insofar as it exists in ongoing multiple relations to other texts ... The text (the sign, the curriculum) is a permutational, ever-mobile space, and within this text a multiplicity of utterances or discursive events criss-cross and interpenetrate each other.

The practicum *text* is not therefore simply made up of multiple interpretations but constitutes an explosion or dissemination of knowledge through multiple interconnection. This becomes very clear if we juxtapose the stories in the current corpus with similar stories from elsewhere. As Moulthrop (1994:303) points out, the textual model, rather than that of the book, 'sets up a dynamic network of discursive relations of which any material record,' such as the stories comprising the practicum text, 'can represent only a subset'.

'The multiformulative and multiconsequential nature of talk'

Potter and Wetherell (1987:21) have identified a similar relational process operating in the world of conversation and speak of 'the multiformulative and

multiconsequential nature of talk'. 'Talk is not simply about actions, events and situations,' they say, but is 'also a potent and constitutive part of them'. Lecercle (1987:32-33) has likened this kind of 'talk' to a rhizome,

> a structureless root, branching out in all directions, according to lines of flight and desiring cathexes, without beginning or end, without direction.

The rhizome is made up of a 'chaotic ordering' and allows for 'multiple lines of association or causation rather than having to fit assertions into an exclusive, singular, space' (Moulthrop, 1994:301-302).

The 'conversational' theme is also taken up by Shotter (1993:182) who argues that we must give up the attempt to form explanatory, theoretical orders ahead of time and avoid attempts to impose a particular social order.

> Society seems to contain a whole 'ecology' of different interdependent regions and moments, containing different forms of social life sustained by different speech genres, constituting different forms of social and personal relationships.

Shotter (*ibid*) emphasises the conversational character of these personal, intimate relationships in which he claims any sense of position, in the sense of achieving political advantage or defining identity, is lost.

Eco-logic and ana-logic

An eco-*logic* embraces within it the ana-logic. Ana-*logy* represents a move away from univocity, which 'incorporates the belief in human dominion or the belief in a single *Logos*', to multivocity, which emphasises 'proliferating and sustaining relations of kind'. An eco-logic assumes that each 'object' in the world 'is connected, insubstantial, existent-in-relation, and multivocal as in *the telling and retelling of tales*' (Jardine, 1992:21, emphasis added), and, in spite of their overlapping nature, such tales become exquisite and irre*place*able.

Rejection of the Cartesian mind-body dualism

Jardine (1992) traces the origins of the centuries old, linear, mono-lithic logic to

Descartes and the Enlightenment. He demonstrates how, in spite of the process of

methodological doubt, all rational truth claims came to be centred on the *cogito*. The

self-serving notion, *I think therefore I am*, which remained beyond doubt for so long,

was achieved at the cost of severing the connections with the Earth and each other

(*ibid*:28) and led to 'a bifurcation of consciousness' (Smith, 1990:17). It is at this point

that Jardine's concept of an eco-logic extends to ecology in the environmentalist sense

of caring for and protecting the Earth which an unrestricted Enlightenment Science

has brought under threat.

Jardine (1992) associates this severing with the emergence of the decentred subject of

Piaget. Piaget advocated the need for the ego-centric subject to stand aside to co-

ordinate his or her actions and those of others. With co-ordination of activity came the

emphasis on measurement, calculation and deduction, for 'co-ordination is not

connection'. The subject therefore became recentred on Logic and Mathematics and

Jardine comments that it is as if 'we have to put out of play our dependencies'

(*ibid*:24). Subjectivity thus came to be seen as standing between the knower and an

accurate perception of the world.

For Smith (1990), writing from a predominantly feminist perspective, the cancelling

of the subject as an actual person in an actual concrete setting has meant that women,

in particular, have become separated from the knowledge they hold and she laments

the fact that

> entering the governing mode of our society lifts actors out of the immediate,
> local and particular place in which we are in the body (Smith, 1990:17).

This does not mean, however, that subjectivist interpretations of experience are of

value in and of themselves. The situated nature of experience means that what is

learned emerges from the context of the actually developing social relations in which

the affections, tensions, and quarrels are all constitutive of the knowing (*ibid*:23).

Bordo (1987:46-49) also rejects the Piagetian idea of the decentred subject, reminding

us that

> [T]he categories we take for granted as experiential or theoretical "givens" - subjectivity, perspectivity, ..., inwardness, locatedness and objectivity (all "moments" of the subject/object distinction) - may be historical developments, or moments in the history of dominant (Western) norms of consciousness.

Complexity

Salomon (1994) is also suspicious of explanations that focus on the individual learner,

emphasising that we cannot study mental states and processes in isolation. In his view

we are dealing with complex composites rather than contributing components and we

therefore require units of analysis that reflect rather than reduce the complexity of

phenomena (*ibid*:4). Behaviour cannot be stripped of its social and cultural context.

However, although Salomon (1994) accepts the ecological nature of interactive

behaviour, he fails to distinguish between ecology and eco-logical thought processes,

being more concerned with establishing laws of invariance at the next highest level,

and general principles of settings which somehow will account for the remoter aspects

of the ecological environment, views which he obtains from Bronfenbrenner (1979).

Whether such invariant principles are identifiable is open to doubt.

In her study of social time, Adam (1995:150) also reminds us of the need to

'relinquish the comfort and alluring elegance of simplicity and begin to embrace the

discomfiting untidiness, unwieldiness and awkwardness of complexity', and she goes

on to speak of attending to 'complex interrelations, permeations and resonating traces'

(*ibid*:151). This is achieved through a process of implication, 'a way of seeing where a

focus on any one aspect does not include but implicates the rest,' (*ibid*:93), and where,

alternatively, 'the whole is implicated in any single phenomenon or event' (*ibid*:151).

This form of holism

> stresses permeation, interpenetration, simultaneity, and instantaneity, thus emphasising the coexistence and unification of phenomenon traditionally considered contradictory, incompatible and incommensurable (*ibid*:152).

The influence of temporality means that

> [N]o matter how hard we try, our explications are necessarily fragmentary and contingent. ... the whole is not accessible in its entirety ... This has the effect that explication - even explication that implicates the whole - is always contextually situated, always, partial, always selective, therefore always contestable (*ibid*:161).

In view of this complexity, obtaining agreement amongst observers will therefore always be difficult. It should be apparent that in spite of implication and connection, the parts are not *causally* connected to the whole in any fixed and determinate way. Thus, as Ossorio (1985:25) argues, agreement amongst observers is the exception, not the rule.

Heteroglossia, polyvocality and polyphony

Jardine's work is closely related to that of Bakhtin as presented in Holquist (1990) and Pearce (1994), although to my knowledge, Bakhtin did not employ the term 'eco-logic', nor does Jardine (1992) make reference to Bakhtin. Bakhtin's insistence on the fact that the site of knowledge is never unitary, that meaning is in effect dependent, and that the individual self cannot any longer be considered the seat of certainty, prepared the way for the recognition of the multiplicity of meaning inherent in heteroglossia, polyvocality, and polyphony.

> In Bakhtin there is no one meaning being striven for: the world is a vast congeries of contested meanings, a heteroglossia so varied that no single term capable of unifying its diversifying energies is possible. (Holquist, 1990:24)

The concept of an eco-logic embraces the diversifying and competing energies of the life-world in which meaning is constantly shifting and elements are continually being combined and recombined to allow for adventitious and contingent forms of

knowledge. An 'eco-logic' comes close to the all-embracing term that Bakhtin appeared to find so elusive.

Difference and the Other

An eco-logical conception of the world emphasises the multi-faceted nature of knowledge and the continually shifting and altering relationships which in turn create multiple interdependencies, whilst at the same time readying us for difference. Hence Tyler (1991), coming from a postmodernist perspective, speaks of the need for 'dis-ensus' rather than consensus. On this view knowledge is 'fractured into incommensurable, discursive practices whose genres are mixed, dialogical, or polyphonic', and acquiesces to loss and fragmentation. The eco-logist does not wish to speak monologically in other voices but simply 'other-wise' and resists 'the hegemony of ontology and epistemology', concentrating instead on their own 'dissolute contradictions' (Tyler, 1991:83-4).

From an eco-logical viewpoint, no single conception of difference can predominate (Pels and Nencel, 1991:16). An eco-logic allows for the self-conscious production, acknowledgement and celebration of difference. The capacity for consciousness is based on Otherness, 'the differential relation between the centre' (used here by Bakhtin as a relative, rather than an absolute term) 'and all that is not the centre' (in Holquist, 1990). Pagano (1990), writing with the explicit intention of feminizing educational discourse, rejects the 'implicit denial of difference, which denial represses the desire to merge with the Other, to assimilate the Other' (Pagano, 1990:xvii).

Young (1992) also picks up on this understanding of discourse in her consideration of the ideal of community and the logic of identity which 'consists in the desire to think things together as a unity, to formulate a representation of the whole, a totality, seeking the unity of the thinking subject with the object thought', and she

demonstrates how 'the desire to bring into unity generates a logic of hierarchical

opposition' (Young, 1992:303).

The importance of particularity and context-of-site cannot be over-estimated. As

Young (1992) says

> particularity derives from the contextuality of existence ... The metaphysics of
> presence represses or denies difference ... Difference means the irreducible
> particularity of entities, which makes it impossible to reduce them to
> commonness or bring them into unity without remainder (Young, 1992: 304).

All too often, creating difference can be seen as a project for subjugating the Other

which characterises the politics of identity. Seeking to dislodge the violence done to

the Other and ourselves in educational practice, Pagano (1990), like Bakhtin, resists

the hierarchical and oppositional forms of expression as found in the perpetuation of

binary oppositions amongst which she includes presence-absence, intellect-emotion,

public-private, self-other, objective-subjective, male-female, and to which we should

add mind-body, difference-sameness, reason-passion, logic-rhetoric, personal-public,

local-global, natural-cultural, and particular-universal. An eco-logical mode of

thinking takes these binary oppositions and transforms them into 'asymmetric

dualisms' which become the focus of the dialogic self, in which dialogue is seen as 'a

relation which helps us understand how other relationships work' (Holquist, 1990:19),

and both elements are implicated in the other (Adam, 1995). As Jardine (1992:7) puts

it, 'one cannot understand oneself without understanding ones relations'.

The centrality of the *bios*

Jardine achieves what many others have only hinted at. For example, whereas Apple

(1982) talks of teachers as blooded, sexed, raced, lived human beings, Jardine is able

to bring to life this connection. He insinuates the personal and subjective into the

impersonal and the objective, transforming the latter in the process. A powerfully

compelling image is that of 'exhaling breathe outward' in which 'the body is porous,

like skin, emptying out and taking in through connection ... Each particular must be "unnamed" outwards, like exhaled breath, innumerable in its meanings and kin' (Jardine, 1992:xxiii). The connection he makes between 'kin' and 'kind' serves as a constant reminder of kin-ship and kind-ness. Jardine gets at the visceral, viscous nature of human life. He goes beyond the capillaries, beyond bio-power to the *bios* itself, to interiority.

Jardine (1992) returns to subjectivity a bodily expression and re-establishes lust, fear, desire, joy, love and hate as central concerns. Returning to the image of exhaled breathe, he tells how

> [H]ermeneutics bespeaks a 'self' (and an understanding of the world) which
> comes and goes like this breath, and therefore bespeaks the whole of which
> that fleshy self is both part and apart - this *belly* of a paradox (*ibid*:xxviii).

Elsewhere in interpreting a student-teacher's off-hand comments about Piaget, (the actual details need not concern us,) he speaks of how in 'the very moist innards of her autobiography, she speaks as yet unnoticed relations of kind, murmured echoes of the *bios* she is in and the memories her language contains' (*ibid*:10).

It would be wrong to view this kind of writing as merely another attempt to introduce poetics into research which Grumet (1988) has pioneered. Something much more fundamental is taking place. Jardine is demonstrating one way to breach formerly impenetrable boundaries between mind and body, spirit and flesh, reason and passion. These are the missing considerations which many have desired to incorporate into educational writing for some time but have not found a way to do.

Research applications

Research carried out from an eco-logical viewpoint rejects the notion of one univocal, monolithic logic. It recognises the untidiness, unwieldiness and awkwardness

associated with complexity and seeks to identify multiple interconnection and interdependency and promote multiple interpretation. Recognising the multifunctional, multiconsequential and intertextual nature of talk it takes into account the presence of heteroglossia, polyvocality and polyphony. Rejecting binary thinking and Cartesian dualisms, an eco-logic recognises the multifaceted nature of knowledge and the way in which knowledge is continually shifting and altering. An ecological approach means that researchers have to revert to the interiority of the *bios* and consider feelings, emotions, and bodily expression whilst seeking to explore relationships of kin and kind.

Too much research into the Social Sciences has been carried out from a positivist viewpoint and serves only to achieve what Smith (1990:48) describes as the generation of ideology to the detriment or exclusion of the generation of knowledge.

> To begin with the theoretical foundations of the discipline and to construe the actualities of people's activities as expressions of the already given is to generate an ideology, not knowledge.

The theories may work in the sense of predicting the real world, precisely because beyond the text there is an actual co-ordering of the activities that is reflected in them (*ibid*:49).

Smith (*ibid*:43-5) identifies a number of 'tricks' which characterise so much formal research of the modernist period. The first trick as we have already seen is to separate what people say from the actual circumstances in which it is said, from the actual empirical condition of their lives, and from the actual individuals who said it.

Having detached the ideas, the second trick is to arrange them to demonstrate an order amongst them that accounts for what is observed, thus setting up a number of mystical, transcendental connections.

The third trick is then to change the ideas into a 'person', that is, set them up as a distinct entity (for example, a value pattern, norm, belief system, and so forth) to which agency (or possible causal efficacy) may be attributed, and then redistribute them to 'reality' by attributing them to actors who can be treated as 'representing' these ideas. Facts and principles thus become self-confirming in an ideological circle and permit the postulation of 'central tendencies'. Social beliefs, social norms and social values can then treated as *'causing* behaviour'.

The eco-logic mode enables us to penetrate such ideological thinking and to counteract the 'tricks' or socially evolved techniques outlined by Smith (1990). Eco-logical research does not detach *answers* from the original interview situation or the events which give rise to it.

Implications for supervisory practice

An ecologic approach to the supervision of student-teachers relates to the issue of congruence. Part of the supervisor's work is to examine with the student the relation between the explicate and implicate orders: the way in which our thinking often relies on originary myths; the rigidity of established genres; the univocal insistence on algorithms; the subtle ways in which hegemony operates to change and incorporate patterns in order to maintain control, privilege, dominance and influence; the way we find ourselves complicit in this process; and the way we, as the *dramatis personae*, are caught up in grand narrative.

Adopting an eco-logic, the researcher seeks to relate mind and ecosystem, and open up a realm of cognition untouched by cognitive science (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1993). In spite of the very valid concerns of Young (1992:308-310), *empathy*, together with *synchronicity*, which involves 'the relations between the parts in the dance of the living process', comes to assume considerable importance in producing

this form of 'cognitive power'. A cognitive realm which embraces empathy involves our spirituality, 'the relationship that is us', returning us to kin and kind. The shifting nature of the dance of synchronicity captures something of the generative and transformative potential of supervision based on an eco-logic.

There is a danger that an eco-logic approach can be reduced to nothing more than 'an ecology of games' (Cusack, 1990:142). In the intricate complexity which results from multiple, shifting connections, it is easy to be seduced into accepting a fatalistic view that everything depends upon the throw of the dice, that we no longer have any control over our destiny. Luke Rinehart's novel, *The Dice Man*, exemplifies this view. Clearly an eco-logic incorporates the game but it cannot be reduced to it. Our moral responsibility for the Earth is too great to allow us to game with it.

To conclude, this chapter has provided a critique of the socially organised practices of knowing, demonstrating how an ecological view assists us to penetrate ideological thinking and expose the tricks and mystifications of normative content which accompany it. This allows us to envisage a new epistemology of supervisory practice based on a reappraisal of complexity and the nature of holism, bearing in mind that plural contexts prevent facile generalisation. In the next chapter I seek to show how an eco-logical approach with its emphasis on multiplicity and interconnection lends support to a theory of pragmatic interpretation.

CHAPTER 7

A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

This chapter looks at why Pragmatism is an attractive option for the interpretation of the practicum text, considers some of the objections to Pragmatism, and suggests ways in which Pragmatism needs to be stiffened. It is important to distinguish at the outset between Pragmatism (capital P) as a philosophical approach to the investigation and instrumental, or vulgar pragmatism, (small p) as a commonsense way of arriving at decisions and coping with difficulties without extended discussion.

The attraction of Pragmatism

A Pragmatic approach appears well-suited to research into the practicum. Pragmatism has shown itself to be capable of reformulation and adaptation throughout its history (Wheeler, 1993), fits well with the notion of an eco-logic, and is responsive to changes in community. It incorporates notions of the pragmatic self (Wiley, 1994) and views of the self as a fiction (Young, 1992). It promotes tolerance and encompasses difference, remains sceptical in its regard for Truth (Rorty, 1982; Cussack, 1990), acknowledges the presence of rhetoric and irrationality (Bender and Welbery, 1990), and links well with the branch of discourse analysis known as Pragmatics (Willing, 1992) discussed in the following chapter. It resists over-interpretation (Eco, 1990: Collini, 1992), makes no fine distinctions between descriptions, interpretations and explanations, takes into account perspectival views, respects common-sense, and accepts alternative knowledges and vocabularies. It is particularly applicable to research involving storying and textual practices, in that it recognises the invented nature of truth and the presence of fiction in the narrative text.

Pragmatism is particularly tolerant of postmodernist applications in that it provides for localism and the *petit récit*, acknowledges multiplicity and does not seek closure, subverts the links between method and truth, acknowledges fallibilism, and admits the presence of contingency (Rorty, 1982), indirection, indeterminacy and vagueness (Eco, 1990), whilst recognising partiality, irony, intimacy and perversity (Haraway, 1992; Hutcheon, 1994).

Pragmatic interpretation

Deconstructionists and pragmatists reject the idea of any definite, final and authorized meaning. They do not simply challenge the sense of a text, but the metaphysics of presence which involves an interpretation based on the idea of a final meaning which is present in the text.

Pragmatists recognise that human beings can never be fully present to themselves as Derrida (1972) points out in *Structure, Sign and Play*:

> The second approach to interpretation is not directed to the study of origins, centers, structures, laws, or empirical regularities. It holds that human beings are never fully present, to themselves, or to others, except through a process of deferral and delay. It argues that language is only a process and hence never fixed in its representations and meanings. It contends that society, as conceptualised by experience, can never be fully captured because language will not allow this to occur. Hence experience can only be given in texts (interviews, field notes, life stories, films, and the like) that are themselves indirect representations of what they purport to represent. It seeks instead to examine how current textual practices (including theory and research) reify structures, subjects, and social experience. It proposes to deconstruct those practices so as to reveal how they keep in place a politically repressive picture of the social that is out of touch with the world as it is lived and experienced. (*ibid*:23)

Pragmatists have to deal with competing versions of the truth and hold them in one vision, adopting a contingent 'truth'. Pragmatists agree with the deconstructionists that

> language is caught in a play of multiple signifying games; that a text cannot incorporate an absolute univocal meaning; that there is no transcendental signified; that the signifier is never co-present with a signified which is continually deferred and delayed; and that every signifier is related to another

signifier so that there is nothing outside the significant chain, which goes on ad infinitum (Eco, 1990:33).

Pragmatists, however, differ from deconstructionists in that they retain a belief in subjective intention, providing for the 'subjective authority of ones own experience' which in turn acts as an 'interrupter' of the social relations of dominance (Lather, 1989).

In a world 'suffused with signatures', Eco (1990:27) maintains 'there is thus no way to test the reliability of an interpretation and the final content of every expression is a secret'. Employing the distinction between the world as a text and text as a world, incorporated in the notion of the practicum text, Eco puts forward a view of interpretation based on text production. For Eco (*1990*:23) 'to interpret means to react to the text of the world or the world of the text by producing other texts'. The danger is that this process 'ends up devoiding language of any communicative power' and that we engage in a infinite regress of interpretation (*ibid*:27).

In its tolerance of uncertainties and its acknowledgement of the fallibility of knowledge, pragmatism resists moves 'to fragment, dissect and propose fundamental and lasting solutions' (Cherryholmes 1988:178). We therefore need to reconceptualise the whole process of interpretation and look to the way in which 'a multiplicity of possible interpretations has become a sort of aesthetic standard in the arts' and the way that literary criticism itself has come to regard interpretation 'as a creative act of equal value to the work being interpreted' (Craib, 1992:185). In this way we can explore alternative endings along with the participants in the story, tolerate the intrusion of fictional accounts in the pursuit of 'novelness' (Holquist, 1990) and bring our own understandings to bear as researchers without being fettered by any adherence to a particular theory or finding ourselves forcing the stories we obtain into a particular mould. The goal of an objective, neutral, representational telling is abandoned as

unobtainable. *I see this approach as fitting within the pragmatic tradition and it is this that I have in mind when I speak of pragmatic interpretation.*

Pragmatic views of the self

Underlying the account of the rational, agentic self of modernism and radical humanism, is the idea of the individual self as a fixed entity, an independently pre-given object transparent to itself. This self is characterised by regular, consistent, rational behaviour, based on logic, reason and detachment without room for incoherence, contradiction or conflict. Feelings and emotions are placed secondary to cognitive processes which are assumed to guarantee objective understanding. There is no room for contradictory or illogical behaviour, fantasy, or irrational thought. Dependability, reliability, consistency and coherence are the hallmarks of the rational self. Any aberration or disorder is explained in terms of pathological behaviour and deviancy, or attributed to biology. Pragmatists are not simply content to remain with these views, realising they have to recognise the social technologies of the self.

Pragmatists, therefore, accept a processual self, a self in continual process, which can be 'fixed' only momentarily in a two-dimensional way at any reflexive moment (Wiley, 1994:14-15). Moreover,

> because the subject is not a unity it cannot be present to itself and know itself
> ... and is thus necessarily unable to comprehend itself ... Any individual is
> [therefore] a play of differences that cannot be comprehended (Young,
> 1992:310).

Hence, pragmatists adopt a pragmatics of the self which is suspicious of intentions and healthily sceptical of interpretations and causal explanations.

> The notion that each person can understand the other as he or she understands
> himself or herself, moreover, that persons can know other subjects in their
> concrete needs and desires, presupposes that a subject can know himself or
> herself and express that knowledge accurately and unambiguously to others
> (*ibid*).

As this cannot occur,

> [C]onsciousness, meaning, and intention are only possible because the subject-in-process slips and surpasses its intentions and meanings. Any utterance, for example, not only has a literal meaning, but is laden with ambiguities, embodied in gesture, tone of voice, and rhythm that all contribute to the heterogeneity of its meaning without being intended ... What I say and do has a multiplicity of meanings, ambiguities, plays, *and these are not always coherent. (ibid*: emphasis added)

Indeed this may be one of the reasons for the incoherence of much of the practicum text.

Fiction and the narrative text

Fact and fiction are mutually constructive (Gough, 1995:53), and the presence of fiction does not mean that the truth is absent as Foucault (1980: 193) observed.

> I am well aware that I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to say however, that truth is therefore absent. It seems to me that the possibility exists for fiction to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth ... (Cited in Gough, 1995:53).

Pragmatists remain aware of the fictional quality of much that comprises the narrative text. As Hayden White (1976:82) has said

> [T]here has been a reluctance to consider historical narratives as what they most manifestly are: verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those of the sciences.

Any theory of pragmatic interpretation must be able to justify the presence of verbal fictions.

In recognising the presence of fiction in the narrative, pragmatism is not deliberately careless of the truth. It simply recognises that truth is invented as part of the process of self-invention and self-presentation (Eakin, 1985) for, until called upon to do so, we may not know what we believe.

In view of this, Phillips (1994: 14) asks whether any old story will suffice. The answer is self-evident. Any *old* story does not suffice. The story we tell must have purpose, it must be revelatory, it must be vibrant and compelling and have an experiential, lived, quality. Moreover it must be *'constructive'* in the sense that it assists the teller and the hearer to construct new understandings, whilst refusing any restrictive paradigmatic or generic structure. In this sense the story acts as a *novel* mode of knowing, a sharing. The stories which count, those which suffice will be those that assist the de(con)structive process and contribute to subsequent renewal. Novel-ness involves a process of diffraction (Gough, 1995). It shows how truth is bent to new ways and enables us to re-present and to con-found, an objective of the current research. An example can be found in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) which allows us to experience the loss of identity and the destructive nature of slavery.

Similarly, Geertz's preoccupation with distinguishing 'the paranoid's delusion and the swindler's story' which cause Phillips so much concern does not negate the value of story. Both represent a form of truth in action. The perpetrators shape our lives and theirs through inventive rhetoric. Truth proceeds as much through unreason and illogic as it does through reason and logic (Crespi, 1989). We learn as much from deconstructing such stories and revealing their delusionary and deceptive nature and the restrictive nature of our category systems as we do from other stories, but in each case we need to suspend belief and adopt the hermeneutics of suspicion and construct anew. Truth matters, but it is the way in which it matters which should make us alert, and that process will always be textual and political. To talk of subjecting truth to epistemological tests as Phillips (1994) and Harding (1992) suggest, is to perpetuate the nexus between power and authenticated, legitimated knowledge.

Nevertheless, Phillips is correct when he speaks of the need to discover the beliefs that the actor truly holds to discover whether or not those beliefs are actually true or capable of being falsified (Phillips, 1994:19). The researcher cannot accept at face

value the narrative that the actor provides. He must accept it as an invention and some inventions do not work. Nor should we assume that we are dealing with acts of deliberate deception calculated to harm. The narrator, as Phillips points out, 'might not be lying, but simply mistaken' and 'beliefs may not be particularly insightful or causally enlightening' (*ibid*).

Objections to Pragmatism

The major objections to Pragmatism stem from its apparent anti-intellectualism, its relativistic nature, its anti-foundationalism, and its particularism. These objections are rooted in the persistence of modernist thought and transcendental belief.

The anti-intellectual appearance of Pragmatism

To some extent, this objection stems from considerations of vulgar pragmatism. Pragmatism itself is highly theorised (Goodman, 1995) but recognises that for practitioners there is a point at which dialogue, discussion, even conversation are considered unprofitable (Willing, 1992). In such cases truth matters only up to a point and an over-emphasis on the currency of truth militates against conviviality and the building of congenial relationships.

The issue of relativism

No discussion of Pragmatism can avoid the issue of relativism. Wheeler (1993: 79) points out that 'pragmatists are often accused of destroying all objective standards', but goes on to claim that 'experience is a more objective, concrete, standard than rational-intellectual hypotheses'.

Constructivists working out of a socially critical paradigm, such as Sparkes (1991), see relativism as a source of strength and inspiration in that, whilst recognising context, relativism 'occludes the play of power'. Citing Eisner (1990), he maintains

that 'knowledge is always relative to a framework, to a form of representation, to a cultural code and to a personal biography' (Sparkes, 1991:107).

Relativism is a modernist, Enlightenment concept, constructed out of a desire to maintain objectivism in place. If one adopts a postmodernist position which refuses the impositional fixities of grand theory, and abandons a reliance on absolute transcendental truths or standards, then the term relativity has no meaning for there is nothing to be relative to.

Anti-representational elements of Pragmatism

As we have seen, 'Truth is not to be understood as the correct relationship between representations (signs) and the things represented' (Wheeler, 1993:113), but this does not mean that the new Pragmatism is entirely anti-representational. It recognises the need to accept or reject working re-presentations in order to achieve ends derived from those existing representations or oppositional representations as the case may be.

Anti-foundationalism

At issue here is the nature and the construction of the foundations that critics have in mind. Tyler (1991:80) denies that postmodernism is anti-foundational, likening the position to 'the foundations of buildings in Amsterdam which rest on no firm bedrock, but float on pilings sunk into the ancient ooze of ice-age seas'.

Particularism

Pragmatism is also rejected for its acceptance of the contingent and the particular. McNay (1992), for instance, writes:

> if one disallows any kind of generalisation about society, then one is left with an *unworkable* particularism (*ibid*: 125, emphasis added).

One needs to ask workable from whose point of view: that of the academic, or the individual or group whose particular circumstances need to be addressed locally?

Localised, variant, particularistic situations are evidently workable. They may be unjust, discriminatory or immoral but they are workable. They can be contested on the basis of different, improved, conditions in adjoining sites but they are only *unworkable* in terms of the rules of the language game laid down by McNay.

The stiffening of Pragmatism

In order to increase its effectiveness, Pragmatism needs to escape from a number of 'retail constraints' (Rorty, 1982:165) which limit its potential if it is to be genuinely transformative. With their sceptical regard for truth, Pragmatists are limited in their ability to disrupt power relationships. If truth is a category and induces regular effects of power, as Foucault maintained, and sets the limits of the knowable and the possible, a Pragmatic approach by itself offers us no way of contesting or interrupting these effects.

In spite of its inbuilt scepticism, Pragmatism tends to be reactive rather than proactive, too tolerant and receptive rather than radical and aggressive, too uncommitted and bereft of critique. Hence there is a failure to redefine, transgress and permeate boundaries. It is too accepting of events, disputes and conflicts, without seeking to initiate them. When Liaison Lecturers speak of the 'pragmatic nature of supervision', this is what they are alluding to.

It is for these reasons that some writers such as Cherryholmes (1988) have turned to critical theory in an attempt to associate Pragmatism more closely with ameliorative social action. However, in arriving at a critical pragmatism we would be well advised to refuse Habermasian theory which is based on

> the notion of a rational society modelled on communicational processes where so-called validity claims immanent in ordinary conversation can be discursively redeemed at the level of discourse ... Moral and practical claims are said to be resolved rationally and consensually without distortion or coercion (Peters, 1994:9).

Habermas relies on 'the force of pure argumentation in a "transparent" communication society' (Peters, *ibid*) and is not willing to envisage a total break with the Enlightenment. He is looking for a foundational belief, standard, or universal structure common to life-worlds, which will allow us to explain why other 'reasonable' standards are corrupted.

To be genuinely transformative, then, Pragmatism needs considerable stiffening, otherwise, it will contribute to a bourgeois pedagogy (Zavarzadeh, 1992), incapable of producing a pedagogy of praxis.

To sum up, this chapter has argued for the application of a pragmatic approach to the interpretation of the practicum text. A pragmatic approach is considered to be particularly suitable for a number of reasons: (1) it is rooted in the practical, experiential knowledge of the participants and helps us to avoid becoming bogged down in endless philosophical disputes; (2) it is tolerant of a number of different interpretations and sees definitions, explanations and interpretations as implicated in each other; (3) it avoids foreclosure and suspends final judgement; (4) it is particularly suited to *petit récit* and the local concerns of postmodernism; (5) it pays particular attention to context, perspective and subjective truth; (6) and it readies us to deal with relativism and to tolerate contradiction, incommensurability, ambiguity and irony.

Nevertheless Pragmatism comes fettered with a number of constraints, not least the form of its own regard, and needs to be subjected to a process of *misprision* (Lecercle, 1987). Pragmatism is rarely transformative, or generative and needs to be reshaped if it is to amount to anything more than a promissory note. It needs to re-examine its

approach to community and to break with its continuing reliance on Enlightenment reason and rationality. Its resolve needs stiffening if it is to assist with transformation.

CHAPTER 8

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

A variety of techniques associated with Discourse Analysis were employed in this study including speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography, pragmatics , and conversation analysis (Schiffrin, 1994). Different techniques were used on different occasions. For example, where it appeared that an analysis of tonic movement in the tone group would assist in the recovery of intention, beliefs or attitudes, or contributed to instances of mixed messages or misunderstandings, I employed the *intonation codings* found in Coulthard (1977) based on the work of Halliday (1967). However, the whole of the practicum text was not analysed systematically for tonic movement.

Turning to *Speech Act theory*, whilst recognising particular speech acts such as the giving of advice, I did not identify each proposition or clause group in terms of its function or purpose. This was due in part to a lack of conviction as to what such a predominantly linguistic analysis of can afford us (Willing, 1992), and doubts over the view of intentionality which accompanies speech act theory. Intention as used by speech act theorists deals with the explicit intention of the speech act. That is, it is assumed that there is an intention to utter a promise, threat or warning or whatever. But there may be a further intention beyond this immediate intention which relates to will and desire. The unacknowledged intention, or desire, may in fact be to use a combination of speech acts to subvert a particular process. Speech act theory, because it tends to isolate separate acts for close study, fails to come to grips with the holistic, rhetorical dimension of language as it is actually used in spontaneous, unrehearsed free speech in which one utterance can have any number of functions.

However, I found the three-fold distinction made by Austin (1962) between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts as summarised by Lyons (1977:730) to be particularly useful for disentangling and disambiguating the practicum text.

From *interactional sociolinguistics* I took the concept of participation frameworks which helps us to determine, for example, when someone is considered to be chipping in (contributing) or butting in (interrupting). Whilst interactional sociolinguistics helps us understand how conferences are accomplished, it has little to say about emotionality, intention, and belief. It is more concerned with rules and structures and the way these are constructed. It is not interested in *why* individuals behave as they do (Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Schiffrin, 1994).

In the case of *Pragmatics*, I found the original Gricean maxims (Grice, 1975) based on the cooperative principle, which assumes that talk exchanges are seen by the participants as cooperative efforts (Schiffrin, 1994:194-195), to be questionable, inclining more towards Lecercle's (1987:30-31) agonistic approach to language based on the principle of struggle and argument as war. Lecercle (*ibid*) counters the quantity maxim by saying 'he who talks most, loses', believing that there is more often no symmetry but an unequal exchange. He reinterprets the quality maxim as 'you can state anything providing it hurts, that is, providing it gains you status, a place in this verbal battlefield' (*ibid*). As for modality, 'you may be brief or digressive according to the context; but it is always better to be ambiguous' (*ibid*).

Violation of the Gricean maxims allowed student-teachers to protect themselves against judgements imposed by powerful authority figures. A further maxim appeared to operate in such cases: provide information in sufficient quantities to cause the hearer problems of repair and identification.

From *conversation analysis* I took the notion of adjacency pairs and turn-taking in which knowledge and action are 'deeply linked and mutually constitutive' (Schiffrin, 1994:233). Once again, however, the emphasis is on the orderliness, normalcy and reasoning that lie behind common sense knowledge of 'the whatever', the ordinary arrangement of a set of located practices.

One particular application of conversation analysis deals with accounts in court and the examination of witnesses. Although courtroom interaction is ordered very differently from the conduct of ordinary conversation, Potter and Wetherell (1987:88) claim that the general nature of the way talk is managed is very similar. Citing the work of Atkinson and Drewe (1979), they show that in certain situations, the interaction assumes the form of a trial. The current research confirmed this tendency.

Conversation analysis is not preoccupied with propositional content knowledge. 'Analysts avoid positing generalisations about what participants "know": the focus, instead, is on specific events that occur during the conversation' (Schiffrin, 1994:235). Social identity is assumed to be *locally* situated, and 'can no more be assumed to hold across different times and places than can the relevance of one single pause' (*ibid*:235). Relevance of context is grounded in text and 'no order of detail can be dismissed, a priori, as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant' (*ibid*:236). This fits well with the notion of context-of-site as will be seen in Part 5.

The variationist approach which deals more narrowly with linguistic variation within speech communities was found useful as there were times in the conference when conscious and unconscious strategies of language variation were employed which affected interaction.

Discourse as symbolic and material practices

A major weakness of current approaches to Discourse Analysis is the reliance on linguistic predominance and the comparative neglect of intentionality, will and desire. Speech act theory is stripped of emotionality and rhetoricality - anger, passion, resentment, and indignation at suffering, injustice and oppression - which affects the way the narrative is constructed and the way a story is told, and determines what *is* said or passed on.

None of the sociolinguistic approaches considered above look at discourse as symbolic and material practices which seek to discipline the body, nor are power/control dimensions and ideological underpinnings given precedence. Foucault (1974: 49) tells us in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, that discourses are

> practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak ...
> Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute
> them and in the practice of doing so, conceal their own invention.

If this is so, it is important to discover how these material practices take shape in the practicum.

Only recently has Discourse Analysis begun to look critically at 'the relationship between language and social institutions which define the conditions that must be fulfilled in order for an utterance to be effective' (Thompson, 1981:8). The possibilities for meaning and definition, are preempted through the social and institutional position held by those who use them.

Meanings arise not simply from language but from institutional practices, from power relations. Educational sites are centrally involved in the propagation and selective dissemination of discourse. Student-teachers can therefore be seen as potential recruits to apparatuses and organisations which impose disciplined institutional orthodoxy.

The question of how relations of power are actualised in pedagogy is currently being addressed by Gore (1994). Whereas Gore shows us the disciplinary effects of power involving teachers and pupils in the classroom, I am more concerned with how power functions in the actual construction or 'training' of future teachers as they go out into the schools and reproduce themselves.

Gore's approach to discourse analysis employs the use of coding categories based on the work of Foucault such as surveillance, nominalisation, exclusion, distribution, classification, individualisation, totalisation, regulation, space, time, knowledge, and so forth. A number of Gore's categories are reconstituted speech acts and she is faced with the same problems as those faced by the speech act theorists which involve establishing how these acts inter-relate, what the contribution of each individual act is to the whole, and how they contribute to the disciplining of the body.

Gore's analysis provides evidence of the everyday, "ordinariness" of much of the language through which the effects of power are obtained. The significance of many utterances is missed at first reading, confirming the invisibility of power, and Gore is able to demonstrate 'how power "inserts itself" into (the) actions and attitudes, discourses, learning processes and everyday lives of people'.

Student-teachers are often invested with power at the start of the practicum: they learn how to mark the body and train it; learn about proximity, how and where to stand and sit; they torture it and make themselves quite ill with worry, anxiety and over-work; and force it to carry out tasks and ceremonies which they may have rebelled against in the past. The approach adopted by Gore allows power and control techniques to be foregrounded such as 'the look', which, together with 'the bark', are *explicitly* taught on the practicum.

To sum up, no one approach to Discourse Analysis, however rigourously applied, can provide us with a satisfactory account of all that is occurring in the Practicum text. Linguistic predominance detracts from the affective, emotional and sentient aspects of language. Theories of intentionality have also been found wanting. Speech act theory does not take into account sufficiently the agonistic role of language, and the decontextualisation of individual speech acts prevents a holistic understanding of the speech event. Moreover, the reliance on analytic reasoning, normalcy and orderliness is misplaced, and privileges logic over rhetoric (Mailloux, 1995). However, although many of the approaches eschew any consideration of explanatory force, used in conjunction with a pragmatic theory of discourse incorporating symbolic and material practices, each of them can contribute to our understanding of the practicum text.

PART 3

THE DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 9

THE DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF THE RESEARCH

The research design was relatively open-ended and unsophisticated. In its processual, inchoative, and formative aspects, it is best described as 'loosely ethnographic', fitting into the tradition of naturalistic enquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Such a design owes much to the emergence of postmodernist scepticism which, as we have seen, rejects traditional epistemological assumptions, calls into question methodological observations and procedures, resists outworn knowledge claims, challenges the nature of evidence, and obscures all versions of the truth (Rosenau, 1992:3).

As a consequence, I have departed from the rational/ theoretical view of research (Schön, 1983; Patton, 1987; Haggerson, 1990), believing that an over-emphasis on prior planning disregards the countervailing presence of unreason, disruption, and dislocation, and that whilst it might permit of statistical elegance and delicacy, such research is frequently idealised and sanitised.

Traditional research employs analogies with data, treatment, findings, and application which are open to challenge:

> *data* implies something 'out there' which is pre-existent and 'given', something not created but simply awaiting collection, and although there may be some research events which are congruent with this approach, such as the demographics 'collected' for this research, the approach is frequently too narrow and exclusive;

findings suffers from the expectation that there is something waiting to be found, that we know what we are looking for, and that the findings are based on, or should give rise to, some kind of lawlike certainty;

treatment suggests that research has both a curative and a homogenising function, that the 'findings' are deficient in some way, or need to be purified before they can be 'applied' as some kind of prophylactic or curative; and

application often envisages a relatively homogenous, undifferentiated world where similar conditions apply.

For Lather (1989:2) postmodernism is characterised by 'a shift away from the concept of an objective, knowable, factual world' which is out there waiting to be found, to a world in which knowledge is situated and constructed, contested and partial, an effect of power giving rise to a *'politics of interpretation'*.

As a consequence of this view, participants are allowed to speak for themselves, and meaning 'becomes inscribed' rather than simply described or analysed 'according to category systems which themselves conceal' (Lather, 1989:3). Dialogue is used to vivify or bring alive rather than support or prove an interpretation (*ibid*:14-15) suggesting a view of the researcher as 'informed scribe' (Mueke, 1992). The research seeks to locate meaning rather than discover it; to offer readings, rather than observations; to arrive at interpretations or understandings rather than findings (Rosenau, 1992:8). The approach is pragmatic without being eclectic or anti-theoretical.

The conduct of the research

The research was carried out in two phases. The first phase was undertaken during the first semester of 1989 and was restricted to predominantly urban schools in the Darwin area and Alice Springs. Twenty student-teachers were involved together with their Field Supervisors and seven Liaison Lecturers. The second phase was carried out in the second semester of the following year during which time I shadowed two of the three Liaison Lecturers supervising student-teachers on a four-week bush practicum and interviewed the third on her return to the University. None had been involved in the first phase of the investigation.

For the second phase student-teachers were placed at four sites across what, in Australian iconography, is known as 'The Top End', that area of the Northern Territory defined in geographical and meteorological terms as north of the semi-arid regions of central Australia and subject to a tropical, monsoonal climate. Three of these sites comprised coastal or island communities supplied by barge traffic or serviced by light aircraft. The fourth site was some way inland from the coast and is frequently cut off during the wet season.

Prior to the commencement of the second phase a trial run was carried out in April 1990 at one rural school to determine how context-of-site might affect the conduct of the research itself. The Liaison Lecturer involved had participated in the first phase of the project. The two student-teachers were both third year students undertaking the bush practicum, one semester earlier than normal, at their own request. Both later participated in the second phase.

The trial demonstrated the need for the researcher to have a detailed knowledge of both the immediate and long term history of the school and the surrounding area. Disputes involving land claims, racially motivated incidents, industrial conflicts,

ideological struggles, and personal rivalries were found to impact on the effectiveness of the practicum in unexpected ways which, if disregarded, could have put at risk the completion of the research.

All participants in the second phase, with one exception, allowed the conferences and interviews to be tape-recorded. Each Liaison Lecturer was responsible for two or three student-teachers. Permission to visit one community to observe the third Liaison Lecturer was refused by the local council on the grounds that there were too many 'white fellas' coming into the community. As revealed in Chapter 29, this resentment was subsequently expressed at a staff meeting to the consternation, if not traumatisation, of one of the student-teachers. At a later stage, in November, some two months after the practicum, I was able to gain access to the community to supervise an out-of-phase student and was able to talk briefly to the supervisory staff.

Where possible, I went to the schools several days ahead of the Liaison Lecturer to further explain the nature of the research, seek the cooperation of those involved, and talk to members of the local community including members of the School Council and the local community council or progress association. In general, discussions with members of the Aboriginal communities proceeded with difficulty and were certainly not as extensive as had originally been envisaged. The very way researchers gain entry to a community, the social obligations they have to those who provide accommodation, the people they seek out first for advice and information, the attitudes local people hold towards the institution from which the researchers come, the general suspicion of outsiders or 'foreigners' as a result of colonialist oppression, language barriers, and lack of knowledge of locally accepted cultural norms, all affect the consultation process.

The ethnographic nature of the research

<u>The interview procedure</u>

The stories were obtained in a series of semi-structured interviews, from sitting in on

practicum conferences, and from informal everyday contact. In the bush situation I was

sometimes living in close proximity with the students and met with them for breakfast

or dinner and joined in their leisure time activities. After the general shape and

direction of the interview had been explained, respondents were asked a series of open-

ended questions such as 'Tell me about the most recent conference you had with your

Field Supervisor'. As apparently significant issues began to emerge, questions in the

follow-up interview were prefaced, for example, by 'in one of the other interviews

someone was saying that they felt they could never be themselves. Have you ever felt

that in this class?' or something similar. Similar question were asked of the other

participants such as 'How did [the student] react during the conference? Did she appear

to be herself? Did she ever say anything which suggested she might simply be playing

a role or that she was anxious in any way?'

I had originally hoped to sit in on one or two conferences. However, in the first phase,

this was not always possible because of scheduling difficulties and because some

participants believed my presence might influence the content and direction of the

conference. In the second phase, these problems did not arise, due to the nature of the

shadowing process. Where circumstances permitted conferences were audio-taped. In

both phases of the research, attempts were made to discover whether participants

thought the way the research had been carried out had influenced the outcome.

During the first phase, some interviews were carried out by the Coordinator of Practice

Teaching who had worked closely with the students on class-based assignments and on

previous field placements. A semi-structured interview format was devised and regular

discussions were held to discover areas which we might need to revisit to confirm how widely held some views were.

The literary narrative form of reporting

Erickson (1981:21) claims there is always a danger the literary narrative form of reporting adopted in this study 'obscures systematic statement about *emic* relationships'. He also maintains one has to guard against 'the tyranny of the single case' (*ibid*) whereby systematic statements are derived from one single story. In my view, such singular instances serve to illustrate the range of interactions that contribute to our understanding of the supervisory process, and rather than dismiss them as pathological, deviant or atypical, we should see them as both a condition and an effect of practice.

In describing the methodology as 'loosely ethnographic,' I am distancing myself from those critics such as Muecke (1992:42), who identify ethnography with empiricism and realism. The ethnographic approach stands in sharp contrast to the logico-deductive, empiricist tradition of research in that it is essentially inductive, supposedly eschewing any a priori abstract, theoretical and conceptual definitions.

In his review of ethnomethodology, a precursor of ethnography, Bailey (1987:283) states that 'ethnomethodologists take an approach closer to grounded theory'. However, the limitations of grounded theory are well known. As Altrichter and Posch (1989:26) argue, the researcher cannot enter the situation in an unprejudiced state of mind, as required by Glaser and Strauss (1973), because he or she cannot remain uninfluenced by earlier theory which in many cases, as in my own, 'they *already live and work in*' (emphasis as in original).

The practicum text

All human action, the circumstances and events of our everyday lives, can be treated as 'text', as language, possessing symbolic and semiotic power (Gordon, 1988:430). Viewing human action as text and emphasising the semantic function of social activity allows actions to take on consequences their authors never intended, ensures the importance of an action now goes beyond its relevance to the initial situation, and that the judges of an action are no longer necessarily the people who originally witnessed it (*ibid*).

The practicum in general and the student conference in particular can also be seen as theatre in which society is provided with a script or 'readings' as the participants act out or reflect on their experience. This is in line with Geertz's observation that

> the instruments of reasoning are changing and society is less and less represented as an elaborate machine or quasi-organism, than as a serious game, a side-walk drama or behavioural text (Geertz, quoted in Gordon, 1988:426).

Following Muecke (1992:4), texts

> are materials which have been worked upon by people to make them meaningful, and to be regularly treated, as if they were meaningful ... Texts are as material as 'reality' itself, and it is upon the meaning of texts that we act since 'reality' is not in the habit of offering up its meanings already clarified...

These texts contain within them the seeds of historical consciousness and it is the responsibility of the researcher in collaboration with the participants to rediscover that which has been distantiated or submerged by cultural and historical events (Lemke, 1995:106-7).

Texts also comprise signifying practices involving a succession of signs and symbols in a social semiotic. Ricoeur (1981, in Gordon, 1988:426) defines symbol as

> any structure of signification in which a direct, primary, literal meaning designates in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary or figurative

and which can be apprehended only through the first', whilst interpretation is said to comprise 'the work of thought which consists in deciphering the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning, in unfolding the levels of meaning implied in the literal meaning.

Bartlett (1989) provides a good illustration of the presence of hidden meaning in his discussion of the lining-up boys and girls in crocodile formation.

Some commentators following the genealogical approach of Foucault refuse any mention of hidden meaning. For them, the murky interior of consciousness is considered a sham (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1986: 107). However, if we use 'hidden' in the sense of forgotten, or having shifted from view as a result of rupture and discontinuity, the concept is still of value.

In this research the 'practicum text' serves as an umbrella term for the collection of conference recordings, stories, verbatim notes, remembered fragments of incidental conversations, overheard remarks, negotiated accounts, and documentary and archival material, all of which combine together to produce a corpus in which meanings are continually shifting in spite of the intention of their authors. In this way these material tellings come to occupy, in Muecke's words 'the metaphorical space of representation' (1992:2). They are, in effect, the outpourings of the *bios*.

This corpus of work only requires more work: the work of interpretation as explained in Chapter 7. Throughout the research, the practicum text was constantly revisited and interrogated to identify key concepts which continually shift, re-emerge, and change relation. These concepts were frequently signalled by 'indexical expressions' (Bailey, 1987:278) which acted as cues to the interrogation of the text. However, these concepts are essentially context-bound or situation specific, and say nothing about meaning or hiddenness and even less about the deployment of concepts in practice. As Copek (1994:x) observes

> since concepts are not determinate packets of ideas, but are always inevitably unfinished, we will assume their proper deployment in every instance entails a further determination of them, an increase and shifting of their content.

As apparently critical concepts emerged, cross-case comparisons (Erickson, 1981) were used to determine the nature of these shifts, and to establish intertextuality amongst the stories told by the participants and those from other narrative research.

Establishing confidence in the research outcomes

The new Pragmatism suggests that the traditional concepts of validity, reliability and objectivity associated with the 'hard sciences' cannot be applied to the situated storied knowledge comprising the practicum text. In this section I address several concerns which affect confidence and trustfulness in the interpretive processes adopted. These concerns deal with corroboration, credibility and dependability, the stance adopted towards replicability, transferability and generalisability, and the replacement of truth by trustfulness.

Corroboration

The research design provided for a degree of 'structural corroboration' which enabled me to check my perceptions against those of the participants. In the event this proved difficult to institute on a regular basis because of work commitments. An unedited first draft of the report on the first phase was referred to participants in November 1989 for their comments with respect to the procedures adopted for the preservation of anonymity; accuracy of reporting and quotations; misperceptions and misunderstanding; the interpretation and use made of the interview material; and the way the research and the interviews were carried out.

Prior to the distribution of the first draft, student-teachers were shown those sections which dealt exclusively with their own experiences. Each student was asked whether they would have any objection to these sections of the report being published. The

response was highly enthusiastic and supportive. Only one student had serious reservations believing that she would be easily identifiable. She felt that she might be perceived as a troublemaker and that this could adversely affect her employment opportunities. Using procedures outlined by Guba (1978), she was invited to collaborate on the rewriting of the relevant section until she felt happy with the result.

Several other students were concerned that they appeared overly critical of their Field Supervisors and, not wanting to do them harm in any way, wished to emphasise that they had enjoyed a good personal relationship with them in other areas. Where students issued correctives or wished to qualify what they had said, this was incorporated in the draft before it was given wider distribution but it must be emphasised this necessity was a rare occurrence.

The response from Field Supervisors and Liaison Lecturers to the first draft was more muted and this can in part be attributed to the timing of the distribution which occurred towards the end of the year when teachers and lecturers were exceptionally busy. Generally speaking, teachers found the interpretations put forward possessed credibility. However, their comments were at a general, all-inclusive level and what they were probably saying was that the interpretations put on the text might be entirely possible and that they did not wish to dispute them, but that there might also be other, equally plausible, explanations.

Only one Field Supervisor appeared threatened and sought to justify her approach in the face of what she believed was undue and unfair criticism on the part of the student-teacher. Her response, which she has asked should not be published, demonstrates how the practicum can be brought to a successful conclusion in spite of different constructions of the 'real'.

In the second phase of the research a considerable amount of time elapsed between the collection of the stories and the transcription. By the time the transcripts were ready student-teachers and Field Supervisors had moved on. The relevant sections have, however, been shown to the University staff involved.

Peer-debriefing, triangulation (Jick, 1979; Zellermayer, 1991) and cross-examination are often cited as ways to corroborate accounts provided by participants (Wheeler, 1987). Some triangulation was employed but formal peer-debriefing and cross-examination would have endangered the rapport between researcher and participants. Blatant discrepancies became quickly apparent and any mis-representations on my part were soon drawn to my attention by the participants. Moreover, to speak of using triangulation to 'situationally check the validity of causal propositions' (Denzin, 1971, quoted in Guba, 1978:63), is questionable. A pragmatic approach suggests respondents might well say they agree with the interpretation because they cannot think of a better one, because it looks plausible, because they are not genuinely committed to the outcome of the research, or because they can no longer remember. Persistent inquiry, as opposed to cross examination, may well reveal the consistency of biases, prejudicial assumptions, and contradictions.

Credibility

Credibility (Wheeler, 1987) encompasses not simply the credibility of the stories told in the light of the notorious unreliability of self-reports, but also the credibility of the research process itself. Guba (1978:62) has identified a number of factors which can undermine confidence in the research process. These include the intrusion of the researchers into the research site; a preoccupation with coherence, order and regularity whereby incoherence, indeterminacy, contradiction, incommensurability, and irregularity are treated as unwelcome exceptions to the rule, messiness which has to be somehow removed; the neglect of emotional and affective considerations; the biases of

the researcher; the conduct of the interview; and problems of obtaining truthful responses.

The very presence of the researcher can influence the course of the investigation, and the nature of the inquiry itself can change current practice or introduce distortion. For example, in the current study some Field Supervisors who had not been providing feedback began to do so very conscientiously after the first interview with the researcher. During the trial run, my presence resulted in collusion between participants such that the investigation took on aspects of a detective story.

The conduct of the interview also affects credibility. There is always a real danger of putting words into the mouths of the participants, not allowing sufficient wait-time for a response, turning the interview into an interrogation, or making subtle but important changes to the wording of a question in later interviews.

Replicability, transferability and generalisability

Replicability, transferability and generalisability were not considered major concerns in what was in effect a localised study. Replicability involves homogeneity and a reliance on classification and category systems which are restrictive. Discrepant incidents or cases are frequently forced to fit particular criteria (Turner, 1974). Variations in category labeling and naming make replication difficult. If we are to retain replication, we need to interpret it less rigorously. It is for this reason that iterative research, which does not necessarily assume step-wise replication (Tisher, 1987), needs to be encouraged in a wide range of contexts.

As the intention of the investigation was to determine possibilities, and not to quantify instances, limitations on generalisability were acknowledged at the outset. In research of this kind we are not merely redescribing events but engaged in revealing new possibilities for human beings and creating new forms of human relationships which

involve changes in the position, role and skills of professional academics (Shotter, 1993:38). We are in the midst of identifying common places of shared significance, the places we have all been at and whose characteristics we can share and identify, which are essential to mutual understanding. Such understandings comprise what Shotter (*ibid*) calls 'rationally invisible moments'.

The replacement of truth by trustfulness

Given the partial and contested nature of truth, it has been suggested that truth be replaced by trustfulness. Truth needs both to be guarded and to be guarded against. Thomas (1992) suggests the use of an 'over-reader', someone who reads over the account provided by the interpreter-researcher and who determines whether it is trustworthy. Thomas tells us that presenters and 'interpreters of teacher narratives invite over-readers to trust the evidential bases of their reflections' (*ibid*:1) but that

> [I]n the last analysis it is the interpreter who has the privileged discourse and the task of the over-reader is to detect abuse of privilege. (Thomas, 1992: 11)

Whilst the overreaders as employed in this study can challenge comfortable explanations, offer protection from harm, and point to prejudice and bias, overreaders may adopt normative values and appreciative systems which the research seeks to challenge. Concepts of fairness and justice, and the admission of evidence are open to question.

Thomas (1992) also suggests a number of minimal requirements, which have been adopted in this study, for the publication of the interpretations of others' narratives. These requirements are intended to promote trust, and consist of providing information on the following:

> 1. the circumstantial and psychological variables which led to the production of the narrative including the particular context and the material setting, and cultural, social and physical features;

2. the particular listeners or readers addressed;

3. the relation of the narrator to them;

4. the narrator's motives for the telling;

5. the imposed or implicit narrative conventions which applied to the telling of the story, that is, how the story was obtained and structured; and

6. the reaction of the audience/reader which can influence the content and manner of the telling. (From Thomas, 1992:6, with minor alterations). These minimal requirements are addressed in different sections of this thesis..

Limitations of ethnography

The current study shares a number of limitations which are associated with ethnographic work generally. These include the following:

Self-selection of participants

Self-selection could have meant that only student-teachers who already felt more confident in their interactional and communicative ability, or those who felt comfortable and at ease with the interviewers, chose to participate. However, self-selection may have worked to the advantage of the research. Practically all the student-teachers felt they could discuss their attitudes, feelings, and beliefs in an uninhibited way. With a less motivated group, resentful at having to give up their time during an arduous practicum and possibly suspicious of the motives of the research, it is doubtful if the stories obtained would have been so eventful and varied.

Collusion between participants

Van Maanen (1983:46) points out that 'the protection of one's own self ... is based upon the protection of the selves of others'. Between schools collusion is not apparent but collusion did occur within schools in an attempt to maintain 'collective secrets'. In a number of cases such collusions was readily apparent. Some forms of collusion may have been helpful in that talk about the research between participants might have clarified the issues and provided peer support.

Sufficiency of the corpus

Concerns with sufficiency stem from traditional conceptions of research design (Guba, 1978). They encompass such considerations as the exhaustion of sources, saturation, the emergence of regularities, and over-extension. More frequently however it is the problems of not finding out enough which is of greater concern. To some extent problems of selection of what to include at the presentation stage are problems of design after the event (Rowan and Reason, 1981:112).

The practicum text has produced a wealth of readings and understandings not all of which can be encompassed within the bounds of this thesis, but which add to our repertoire of supervisory practices without implying any form of closure or completion. As Gore (1994) has said about her own work 'the theoretical concerns of the project neither depend on full accounts, nor deem such accounts possible'.

Difficulty in establishing emic viewpoint

As far as my own practice was concerned, *emic* and *etic* concepts could not be held separate - another unnecessary dualism. I frequently found myself acting as an interpreter, seeking to clarify particular utterances and introducing other concepts in an attempt to keep the dialogue going. Interpretation carried out some time after the event involved concepts and approaches not identified at the time the investigation was carried out.

<u>Authenticity</u>

The authenticity of the work is well accounted for in terms of the transcripts presented, context-of-site, and the reactions of the participants to the first draft of the work. However, authenticity is a contested issue as re-presentation involves authoring and reality construction (ABR, 1996/7).

Limitations specific to the project

These concern the gap between conception and execution or the intention and the actuality and included the following.

<u>The negotiation of situated meaning</u>

Negotiation was not as extensive as originally envisaged. Initial interviews were lengthy and in depth, but follow-up interviews were not always carried out, or were carried out some time after student-teachers had returned to the university.

<u>Insufficient Aboriginal involvement</u>

The research suffered from the failure to spend more time engaging with Aboriginal people and listening to Aboriginal voices. There is an urgent need for more collaborative research involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers and teacher educators if non-Aboriginal educators are to promote and assist with Aboriginalisation and adopt an oppositional postcolonialism. If this does not happen non-Aboriginal researchers risk being disabled through the presence of Aboriginalism, the insistence that

> Aborigines as the Other cannot (be allowed to) represent themselves, cannot even be supposed to know themselves as subjects or objects of discourse. This tactic deprives Aborigines of the possibility of authority, of being authors of

their own meaning, able to monitor and influence the meanings that circulate about and among Aborigines. (Hodge and Mishra, 1990:74)

Decision to disregard the questionnaires

The questionnaires given to the participants at the end of the first phase were not analysed. Given the need to prioritise the use of time, it was decided that the responses would not add substantially to the fine-grained nature of the interview material (Bailey, 1987:284). Moreover journal entries have been found to be more revealing about individual interactions than answers to survey questions (Conrath, Higgins and McClean, 1983).

My own influence on the research

In this section I examine my own role in the research by looking at some of the implications of psychoanalytic theory, and the circumstantial and psychological variables which led to the selection of the research topic as suggested by Thomas (1992), exploring some of the difficulties I faced as a researcher, and considering the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious

Choice of setting and research topic

In examining the implications of psychoanalytic theory to research, Hunt (1989) demonstrates how the choice of setting and the nature of the investigation may result from an inner dynamic and influence the work. Hunt's own work dealt with the Police. She examines her childhood fantasies and shows how her concern with the use of force fueled her curiosity and directed the focus of her research. The origins of my own interest in the practicum go back to my own concerns over the way student-teachers were assessed and evaluated when I was working in Zimbabwe and Papua New Guinea. The subsequent failure and exclusion of some students seemed to me to be a process of ad hocery working much like a lottery in which questionable judgements were made at considerable emotional and material cost to the individual

(Mansfield, 1986). At the same time the political dimension of supervision remained unacknowledged.

Looking back to my early years in secondary school, the concern for the individual in such situations is apparent. For example, as a fourteen year old, I caused major embarrassment to one of my teachers, who was being assessed by Her Majesty's Inspectors, by disrupting the lesson out of enthusiasm for the topic. After discussion with the Headmaster, I came to see the threat that existed to the teacher's career. The HMIs had not understood the self-directed, student-centred, investigative, nature of the project-based approach the teacher had been employing whereby the student could end up knowing more about the topic than the teacher. The final result was a very happy one but for a time the outcome was in the balance. My choice of topic, then, besides the functional and utilitarian objectives in terms of improvements to Teacher Education in the Northern Territory, might in some ways be considered a 'natural' choice.

Difficulties encountered in carrying out the research

In carrying out the research I found myself faced with three major concerns each of which has been identified by Lather (1991), cited in Schratz (1992). The first dealt with my own intrusive voice and finding a way to position myself away from the centre without painting myself into a corner (Britzman, 1989). As Lather (1991, in Schratz, 1992) points out 'interpretation and description are the foregrounding of one's own perspectivity'. Hunt (1989: 14) puts it this way: 'The researcher's subjective experience structures the sociological narrative because it provides the medium through which the raw material is gathered.'

Secondly, as did Maranhao (1993), I had difficulties with the textual staging of knowledge which attempts to give the original voices in the research more room. Although I was content that the text became a 'display' and allowed for interaction

amongst the different perspectives of the participants, there seemed little point in simply inscribing and deferring all discussion indefinitely. Whilst seeking to foment 'a dispersive impulse which fragments univocal authority', and to create a noise where previously silence has dominated (Biklen, 1993:19), I was still concerned with praxis and in what ways the research was empowering the participants. As a agent of the university, and one concerned to move teacher education in a transformative, socially critical direction, to what extent could I claim my research was 'disinterested'?

My editorial role

In retelling the stories I became increasingly conscious of my editorial role. Rowan and Reason, (1981: 109) look at the prospective nature of research activity in terms of documentary film-making and refer to 'a dramatic loss of meaning due to multiple causes'. They point out that there are problems associated with finding out too much and that as in film-making, some of the best scenes end up on the cutting room floor in the interests of the story line (Rowan and Reason, 1981: 111). This is true of this study where the examination of the practicum as ritual (McLaren, 1986; Moore and Myerhoff, 1977) has had to be excised, along with a discussion of the practicum as intellectual bricolage, a dilemma story involving religious objections to teaching a unit on self-esteem, and a detailed examination of the postmodern self.

Psychoanalytic approaches to the role of the researcher

Psychoanalytic approaches to the role of the researcher have been explored by Hunt (1989) who was concerned with how intra-psychic conflicts are revealed in the field, how the individual's past shapes present understandings, and what the methodological implications are likely to be. For Hunt, the researcher's self is the primary instrument of inquiry and involves action and real-life involvement.

Hunt maintains that until recently, affect, role, and symbolic action have been viewed largely as products of taken-for-granted intentionality, claiming that the unconscious

processes bound up with irrationality have been ignored in sociological research. Spontaneous and emotionally tinged behaviour, as we have seen, has also gone largely unexamined.

The experiential approach to sociological research attempts to redress the balance. 'The researcher's personal experience in the field is recognised as an important source of data about the subjects' psychosocial worlds' (Hunt, 1989: 16). Feelings are viewed as 'dominating the cognitive and intellectual dimensions of consciousness' and 'are considered to be prime movers of action' (Hunt, 1989: 21).

Hunt has identified three root assumptions which underlie the psychoanalytic perspective:

1. 'Much thought and activity takes place outside of conscious awareness: everyday life is mediated by unconscious images, fantasies and thoughts'. This activity is associated with 'jokes, parapraxes, dramatic themes, dreams, (and) fantasies' (Hunt, 1989:25).

2. Unconscious meanings which mediate everyday life are linked to complex childhood webs of significance which can be ultimately traced to childhood experiences. Transferences, defined as 'the imposition of archaic (childhood) images onto present day objects', are a routine feature of most relationships and that such transferences 'can hinder the development of closeness and trust' (*ibid*).

3. The theory of intrapsychic conflict. Hunt follows the Freudian account of id, ego, and superego but links symbolic interactionism to the revelation of hidden aggression, forbidden desire, and defenses against conflicting moral

demands. So the encounter between subject and researcher is now read as 'a complex exchange of unconscious fantasies' (*ibid*:26).

These conflicts and way that they are realised affect the growth of empathy and rapport, and structure field relations. They assist us in getting close to anxieties being experienced by the participants. It is important to remember, however, that 'the researcher may engage in countertransference which consists of unconscious, conflictual responses to the informant's transference' (*ibid*), hence the need for introspection.

Hunt points out that the unconscious structuring of conversational and interview data is subtle and not easy to detect. Researchers may 'forget' to ask questions of certain people. They may ask relevant question but fail to hear the answers. In my case I found I gave up on asking particular questions, acting on the feeling that would get nowhere with a particular informant. These judgements were based upon an intuitive understanding of body language and the direction of gaze, but clearly I was more attuned to one person's answers rather than anothers.

There can be a considerable amount of discomfort and guilt associated with the research task when the researcher is faced with denial, refusal, temporary amnesia or sheer fatigue. Not wishing to interrogate, cause harm, appear chauvinistic or sadistic, and fearing the poor opinion they may be held in by the Other, the researcher may behave in a distant, angry, cold, or provocative, antagonistic manner with certain informants, resembling the way he or she acted towards significant others in childhood (Hunt, 1989:57). Irritation, frustration, self-annoyance all have to be guarded against and I indicated instances in the transcripts where these intrude. Control over the parameters of the research-informant relationship has a critical bearing on the outcome in such situations.

The relationship of consciousness to unconsciousness

In entering the psychoanalytic realm we are involved in the unconscious and its relation to the conscious. Along with Searle, I would resist any attempt to see consciousness and unconsciousness as unrelated. 'The notion of an unconscious mental state implies accessibility to consciousness' (Searle, 1994:152). Although some mental states may never be brought to consciousness and remain subject to repression, this does not mean that mental phenomena are not, in principle, accessible to consciousness. In other words, Searle postulates *a causal capacity to produce consciousness'* (emphasis added), based on an acceptance of biological naturalism. Searle suggests that we view 'consciousness as an emergent property of the brain, in the same way that liquidity is an emergent property of H_2O in water' (Searle, 1994:14-15).

This account does not involve the subconscious although there must be occasions when in bringing a mental state to consciousness one passes through a stage of preliminary awareness. The attractiveness of Searle's account of intrinsic intentional states is that we cannot hide behind a view of the unconscious as mysterious and unobtainable, a view which enables us to absolve ourselves from responsibility for our actions, although clearly there will be times when events might be lost from consciousness following trauma and memory erasure.

Searle's account also lends support to the approach to subjectivity adopted in this investigation. Consciousness for Searle is 'an inner private, subjective, qualitative, phenomena of sentience and awareness' and he objects to the materialist view whereby 'the notion of consciousness has become redefined to refer only to observable third-person mental phenomena' (Searle, 1994:7).

Intrinsic intentional states, Searle (*ibid*) maintains, whether conscious or unconscious, 'always have aspectual shapes, that is, whenever we think about anything, something

is always believed or desired under certain aspects and not others and this aspectual shape must matter to the agent'. This shapes the way the agent thinks about or experiences subject matter and the role of language in all of this is predominant.

The aspectual feature cannot be exhaustively or completely characterised solely in terms of third-person, behavioural, or even neurological predicates. None of these is sufficient to give an exhaustive account of aspectual shape. Aspect relates to ontology but there may be a gulf between the ontology and the episteme. Inferencing is always necessary to determine whether there is a connection between neurophysiological facts and aspectual facts. But more importantly, the researcher needs to document these subjective, aspectual features as accurately as possible and this involves working with first person accounts in a psychoanalytic manner.

> Behaviour by itself is of no interest to us: we need to take into account the combination of behaviour with the knowledge of the causal underpinnings of the behaviour which forms the basis of our knowledge. (Searle, 1994:22)

CHAPTER 10

THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

This chapter provides general information on the participants. It explains how they were selected and asked to assist. More detailed information is provided as we meet them in the practicum text.

The student-teachers

Twenty-five students in the third year of the Diploma of Teaching volunteered to participate in the first phase of the research, representing 40% of the total enrollment in *EDN 304: Principles and Practice of Teaching IV.* Five of these students undertaking placements in rural areas could not be included for logistical reasons.

Any student at risk of not meeting the requirements of the practicum, was to be automatically dropped from the research. Failing the practicum, as distinct from withdrawing and repeating at a later date, is a very rare occurrence (Sudzina and Knowles, 1993), and requires a separate study. In the event only one student withdrew because of family difficulties.

All but two of the students were also enrolled in *EDN 308: Professional Communication* which provided assertiveness training, encouraged active listening, and dealt with problem resolution and communicating with parents. Students enrolled in this unit were required to keep a journal and were given a copy of notes on journal writing by the lecturer who also acted as a Liaison Lecturer. Students not enrolled were given broad headings to take into consideration by the researcher, and were encouraged to keep their journals private. Written permission was obtained from each student to look at the section dealing with the practicum conference.

The seven Diploma of Teaching students involved in the second phase had already completed *Professional Communication*, and had undertaken an elective unit *Teaching in Small Schools*, designed to prepare them for working in rural areas. One Graduate Diploma of Education student was also asked to participate after her Liaison Lecturer shared some of her stories with me.

In addition to the journal writing, all student-teachers were asked to assist by making themselves available for a series of informal semi-structured interviews of about four in number and lasting about twenty minutes each. The journal entries were to form the basis for the interviews. In the event the intitial interviews usually lasted for anything up to forty minutes and were not restricted to conferencing, but looked at practicum supervision more widely. The students were anxious to tell their stories and were pleased that someone was listening to them. Usually time permitted only one follow-up. Most students kept their journals at home to ensure security and confidentiality, and the interviews often proceeded without the researcher having had sight of the journals. This did not hinder the research as keeping the journal helped students frame their responses.

Student-teachers were also asked to complete a simple rating scale at the end of each conference and to complete questionnaires on their return to the University on the way Field Supervisors and Liaison Lecturers went about the conference. The rating scales were intended to provide a rough measure of the overall effectiveness of the conference.

The Field Supervisors

Once the student-teachers volunteering to take part in the project were identified, approaches were made to their Field Supervisors. Where team teaching was employed across year groups within the schools, one teacher was designated Field Supervisor for administrative purposes. In line with the normal practice of the Faculty, some limited

matching of student-teachers with Field Supervisors took place prior to obtaining the names of volunteers. In an effort to avoid attrition, the general aims of the research project were discussed with each teacher and the Principal of each school involved.

Field Supervisors were usually nominated by their Principals for a variety of reasons, including the opportunity to provide the class teacher with professional development. Whereas the choice of supervisors amongst teachers in urban schools is fairly wide, this is not the case in rural schools. Getting placements for non-Aboriginal student-teachers can be a difficult process, particularly in communities with commitments to the RATE (Remote Area Teacher Education) program run by Batchelor College. Access tended to be restricted to sites where progress in Aboriginalisation and self-determination was generally lacking.

Field Supervisors were asked to avail themselves for two informal, semi-structured interviews of about thirty minutes each, to complete a questionnaire at the end of the Practice teaching block, and to keep their own verbatim notes or journals if they so desired. Teachers with responsibility for student-teachers are frequently overloaded (Pitman and Dobbert, 1986), hence this requirement was not made binding.

The Liaison Lecturers

The Liaison Lecturer was usually known to the student from lectures or tutorials but staffing difficulties meant this was not true in every case. In the first phase of the research Liaison Lecturers were allocated to students and schools at random. All the lecturers undertaking supervision were involved, with one exception. It was originally intended that each lecturer be responsible for two or more students represented in the investigation, but this was not possible in one case. In the second phase all three lecturers responsible for supervision of the bush practicum agreed to be involved. Lecturers in the second phase nominated the communities they wished to visit.

Liaison Lecturers were asked to assist by easing the way of the researcher into the schools, to inform the researcher when it when it was convenient to carry out follow-up interviews with student-teachers, and to make themselves available for two informal, semi-structured interviews of about 30 minutes each. It was envisaged that one of these would take place in the middle of the practicum and one at the end after students had returned to the University. Lecturers were also encouraged to keep their own verbatim notes or journals.

The researcher

Participants were informed that my role was to direct and oversee the investigation and that I was purely an observer and not part of the conference or assessment process, and hence I could not offer any comment or advice to student-teachers on their performance in any way. By and large this restriction was observed although there were times when I volunteered advice when a student was becoming distraught. This is another reason why the approach is described as loosely ethnographic, as I was by no means a full participant in the conferences.

The schools

Fifteen schools were involved in the first phase of the project. These comprised eight Government urban schools in Darwin and four in Alice Springs, one Government rural school within easy access of Darwin, and two Catholic denominational schools in Darwin.

Detailed demographic information on each of the eight Darwin government schools is provided in Appendix 1. This information was obtained from *A Social Atlas of Darwin* (Taylor and Jaensch, 1989) and is based on the 1986 census figures, Unfortunately the same kind of information is not available for schools in Alice Springs or for the denominational schools.

In December 1974, Darwin was largely destroyed by Cyclone Tracy. Schools built post-cyclone followed the population movement away from the city centre and tend to be found in the northern suburbs or in the satellite town of Palmerston. Of the eight schools for which we have comprehensive demographic information, three schools (C, D, and F) are within two to three kilometres of one another in the older established northern suburbs and a further two (E and G) are just over a kilometre apart in the more recently developed outreaches. According to *A Social Atlas*, one would expect a reasonable amount of homogeneity between the schools in each of these two areas as far as demographic features were concerned.

Information supplied by the Department of Education indicates that the urban schools ranged in size from an enrollment of 230 with 14 teachers to 548 and 30 teachers. The majority were in the order of 350 to 450 pupils with between 20 and 25 staff. The rural school had an enrollment of 178 with 9 teachers. Size of school may be an important influence on how quickly a student settles into the school.

Age and architectural features may also be important. Two of the older Darwin schools dated back to pre-cyclone days and were composed of traditional classrooms featuring self-contained, one-teacher units arranged as separate entities. The rural school, and the denominational school, both constructed post-cyclone, follow this same pattern. The remainder reflect the changes in school architecture post 1974 and embrace various forms of open-plan ranging from satellite areas using modular designs, each area housing anything up to five classes around a central wet area, to a totally integrated open-plan design centred around the library or resource centre. Only School F, can be considered fully open-plan.

The architectural features of the school may determine where student conferences can be held. In the more traditional school it may be necessary to sit on benches on the

veranda outside the classroom in full view of the rest of the school. Modular arrangements permit more privacy and allow for conferences to be held in withdrawal rooms. When there is more than one student-teacher in an open-plan school it is possible for the movements of the Liaison Lecturer to be monitored. Hence, students are able to compare the amount of time a Liaison Lecturer spends with another student and this can sometimes lead to anxiety if a lecturer spends three quarters of an hour with one student and only five minutes with the next.

'Open plan' does not mean that the school is necessarily open in philosophy. In some open-plan schools, moveable partitions, book cases and display boards have effectively reintroduced some of the divisions and separateness of the more traditional classroom design. Students working in an open-plan school in which team teaching is practised have a qualitatively different practicum experience to those operating in traditional classrooms and are socialised differently.

Although the information contained in *A Social Atlas* is illuminating, it is difficult to estimate its value in the context of the research. The exact way in which the demographics functioned to influence the outcome of the practicum has not been systematically investigated. Whilst student-teachers had to attend to some of the effects of poverty and disadvantage, there is little evidence to suggest that such issues as homelessness and child neglect were in any way directly addressed.

CHAPTER 11

TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

This chapter provides a brief overview of Teacher Education in the Northern Territory at the time the research was carried out, concentrating particularly on the Diploma of Teaching (Primary and Early Childhood), and outlining the Principles and Practice strand within which the practicum was situated. The status of the practicum is then discussed and the conditions under which Liaison Lecturers carried out their work are described.

Teacher Education at the Northern Territory University

The NTU was formed from the merger of the Darwin Institute of Technology (D.I.T.) and the University College of the Northern Territory at the beginning of 1989. The Faculty of Education on the Casuarina campus is the only teacher education provider within the Northern Territory with the exception of Batchelor College which does not cater for non-Aboriginal student-teachers and draws its students largely from rural communities.

The Diploma of Teaching (Primary and Early Childhood)

The Diploma of Teaching was a three-year full-time or six year part-time course. Accredited in 1986, it began operating in 1987 and was superseded by a three year Bachelor of Teaching at the beginning of 1995. The research reported here had a considerable effect on the shaping of the new degree.

In common with other institutions in Australia, the number of students entering the first year of the Diploma of Teaching at the NTU had been dropping steadily: from

close to 120 in 1987 to just over 80 in 1990. The course suffered from a high attrition rate of some 50% over the three years, most students dropping out at the end of their first year.

An investigation into the reasons for attrition throughout the University was undertaken for the period 1989-90 by Price, Harte, and Cole (1991). The findings did not suggest that there was anything inherent in the Diploma of Teaching program which contributed to the attrition rate, although the rate for this program was well above the average for the Faculty of Education as a whole. The itinerant and transitory nature of the non-Aboriginal population in the Northern Territory and the stress of living in the Territory, (a recent medical report from the Australian Heart Foundation reveals that heart disease is 20% more prevalent in the Territory than elsewhere in Australia), must be considered contributing factors.

A large proportion of students were either Mature Age entrants or had been admitted under the Special Entry provisions. The figures for 1990 show that across all three years of the Diploma of Teaching, 95 students out of a total of 213 (44.6%) were recent school leavers aged 21 or younger, 88 (or 41.3%) were aged 22 to 35, and 30 (or 14.1%) were 36 or older. A cut off of 59 on the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) Year 12 examination was applied for entry. This would be considered low by the southern universities in Australia. Ninety-five per cent of students were women. Male students tended to be found in the age group 22 to 35.

The Diploma of Teaching course was divided into two broad areas of study: (1) *Professional Studies* including Foundation Studies, Principles and Practice of Teaching, and Curriculum Studies; and (2) *General Studies* which were discipline-based and largely taught by other Faculties of the University. It is not proposed to detail the contents of these two major areas except to highlight some features of particular significance to the investigation.

The Diploma of Teaching placed special emphasis on the multicultural nature of the Northern Territory. The course included an introductory unit on North Australian Studies, units in socio-cultural foundations with specific reference to urban and rural Aboriginal peoples, a Language Arts unit devoted to English as a Second Language, and the elective unit, *Teaching in Small Schools*. There were never more than 12 to 15 students in this unit and in 1990 there were only eight. Family responsibilities, the availability of part-time work, and a liking for the bright lights and comforts of Darwin contributed to this situation, as did uncertain attitudes with regards to race and ethnicity.

The Principles and Practice strand

As can be seen from Appendix 2 which comprises extracts from the accreditation document, the program adopted for Principles and Practice envisaged a graded developmental sequence of study based around a central theme or focus for each semester, incorporating stages of role development and role adoption. *Role development* began with the realisation and demonstration of suitability for teaching, and moved through performance, to effectiveness, whilst *role adoption* proceeded with orientation at the outset, and then moved on to conceptualisation, and assumption.

The total number of days spent on Practice Teaching amounted to 90 days, including a 10 day observational practicum at the end of the first semester. This was in excess of the median of 70-80 days for three or four-year preservice courses in Australia in 1989/90 (NBEET, 1990:19). Details of the distribution are provided in Appendix 2.

Formal teacher-pupil interaction was provided for in a lock-step manner. Student-teachers began by assisting individual children and small groups with simple teaching tasks in Semester 1, progressing to responsibility for a full four-week programme by

the end of third year in Semester 6. The Principles and Practice curriculum followed a

behaviourist, skills-based training model, each practicum having a specific focus.

The status of the practicum

Up until the merger with the University College of the Northern Territory, the

practicum enjoyed considerable status. However, this had begun to decline by the

commencement of the investigation. Harry Dale, a former practicum coordinator,

bitterly resented what he saw as a shift within the Faculty to an exclusive reliance on

theory and research leading to the downgrading of the practicum, taking strong

exception to some remarks made during the preliminary staffing round when someone

referred to the Principles and Practice units as 'the dregs'.

> That's the attitude in the Faculty, all theory. We give no recognition to the
> prac[ticum] but then comes prac time and we are told to go out into schools. It's a
> contradiction.

The time provided for supervision could also be seen as devaluing the practicum. In the

urban area, the maximum number of students allocated to each Liaison Lecturer was

15, for which 12 hours per week was allocated. Supervision was carried out in

conjunction with on-going lectures in other programs. It was expected that Liaison

Lecturers would pay four visits to a student during a four week practicum. Each visit

was expected to last for about an hour, not including travel time. Lecturers engaged in

the bush practicum operated under different arrangements but were still subject to the

same kind of demands.

The supervision round

The Faculty endorsed a clinical supervision model developed by Smyth (1983). As the

interviewing got underway it was abundantly clear that this model was only loosely

adhered to.

Given the conditions under which Liaison Lecturers were working, is not surprising that the supervision round induced in some a continuous feeling of pressure, of being punch drunk from repeated observations and conferences, with names getting forgotten or mixed up, formalities overlooked and courtesies omitted. Because lecturers were often unable to carry out conferences in the manner in which they would have liked, they began to rationalise the situation: if a student appeared to be doing well, then there was no need to make a return visit until the final week, and, if the Field Supervisor appeared highly competent and had established a good rapport with the student, the final assessment would often be completed without further input from the lecturer concerned.

The changing nature of teachers' work and the presence of institutional constraints led to inevitable delays and disruptions. In some schools student-teachers might not engage in teaching in any formal, instructional sense. Fêtes, camps and excursions, whilst of critical educational importance in themselves, limited the amount of time available to observe students.

The operational difficulties in carrying out supervision and the effects of over-loading were not lost on the schools. Some Field Supervisors came to regard as inevitable changed visiting times, curtailed conferences, unexpected interruptions, non-arrivals, or hurried exchanges, and took them in their stride - further disruptions in an already overcrowded day. Others became extremely perturbed on behalf of their student-teachers and accused the university and its agents of lack of organisation, poor administration, unreliability in assessment, unfair sampling of part lessons and failure to explain the practicum booklets.

CHAPTER 12

HOW LIAISON LECTURERS SAW THEIR ROLES

After examining current criticisms of the concept of role in sociological theory, this chapter profiles the seven Liaison Lecturers involved in the first phase of the investigation in terms of their experience in supervision and the way in which they saw their roles. The role perceptions of Liaison Lecturers in the second phase are dealt with separately in Part 5.

Role theory

The passive, non-agentic nature of role theory has been criticised by Giddens (1979:71) for implying 'the derogation of the lay actor'. 'Society supplies the roles to which actors adopt as best they might' (*ibid*:116), with the emphasis being placed on 'performance' and appropriate emotional response. As Giddens (*ibid*:117) points out, *'social systems are not constituted of roles but of (reproduced) practices'*, hence this thesis deals with supervisory *practice*. Besides objecting to the emphasis on the 'given' character of roles which pre-empts individual subjectivity and implies a form of social determinism, Giddens (*ibid*) rejects the assumption of normative consensus surrounding role expectations which leaves little room for a theory of change.

However, role theory cannot be entirely dismissed. Firstly, the 'givenness' associated with roles can be contested (Giddens, 1979:119), and there is evidence from Ratzlaff and Grimmett (1986) that role expectations do change over time. Secondly, functional beliefs regarding roles are part and parcel of the educational experience and training of many agents and cannot simply be disregarded. Teachers and supervisors achieve the definition of their practice in terms of role (Biddle, 1975).

The concept of perceived and ascribed roles therefore remains useful in explaining how supervisors and student-teachers theorise their work, particularly because 'role prescriptions ... connect to structures of domination' and may 'incorporate contradictions and focus conflict' (*ibid*:118). Role stress and role conflict are referred to by supervisors to explain contradictions of practice. Hardy (1978) has dealt with this from the point of view of heath professionals.

Previous experience

The seven Liaison Lecturers came from a wide variety of educational backgrounds. The two most senior Liaison Lecturers had been involved in practice teaching supervision for around twenty years. One, *David Hepworth*, had had experience of working at Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels. He was responsible for guiding the Faculty through the re-accreditation process for the Diploma of Teaching. The other, *Roger Lipscombe*, possessed extensive experience as a primary school principal elsewhere prior to coming to the Territory in 1986.

Susan Howe was able to draw on ten years' experience with various Colleges of Advanced Education mainly in the area of Early Childhood.

Harry Dale had about five years' experience as a Principal of small schools and as a practicum Coordinator. Harry also had a major input into the re-accreditation process and the writing of the practicum booklets.

Two members of the group had only limited experience, acquired over the previous two or three years. *Maralyn Nunn* had worked with students enrolled in an "In-School" program before coming to Darwin in 1988 and *Sarah Vaughan*, a former Northern Territory primary school teacher, had helped out with supervision in the past.

Geoff Quinn possessed extensive experience in supervising pre-service and serving teachers in Secondary Science and Mathematics in developing countries, but had only limited experience at the primary level in Australia.

With the exception of Susan Howe, none could claim any formal preparation or specific training in supervision. When asked whether they undertook supervisory duties willingly, only Roger Lipscombe expressed some hesitation. Whilst recognising the central role of the practicum and enjoying working with students, he believed the University would be better served if he were allocated to full-time lecturing and research. In his view the best people to take charge of supervision were the principals or senior staff members in the schools. Along with Harry Dale, he articulated a very real concern felt by teacher educators - that the further they travelled in time from first-hand school experience, the less equipped they felt to respond to student-teachers' needs.

The role of the Liaison Lecturer

Differences in the way Liaison Lecturers perceived their roles tended to relate to background and experience. Although some Liaison Lecturers saw their role primarily as *public relations* and *'flying the flag'*, others mentioned the happiness of their students as their first consideration, and some saw themselves as *providing support* for both student-teacher and Field Supervisor. Susan Howe saw herself as providing this through:

> *problem solving*, 'such as when the Field Supervisor got stuck and did not know how to provide feedback or what the next step should be to ensure further growth or advancement for the student';

> *conflict resolution*, both at a personal level where student-teachers needed to resolve a conflict between what they were doing and what the Field Supervisor

was doing, and at an institutional level where the Field Supervisor might be getting conflicting advice from the university; and

as *resource provider*, although this was at a 'decidedly lower' level of importance.

Problem solving and conflict resolution were achieved by helping student and teacher break down communication barriers. For this reason, Susan always insisted on the three-way conference where such issues could be squarely faced.

Sarah Vaughan liked to be used as a *sounding board* in dealing with the problems students had in interpreting theory and using it in practice. She saw her support role as enabling the student-teacher to implement these ideas once they had been enunciated.

All Liaison Lecturers sought to provide support and reassurance but not all mention this first off or develop this theme. However, in their description of their approach to the conference, all liked to think that they created a non-threatening environment. Roger Lipscombe, for example, saw the Liaison Lecturer as '*a security symbol, a back-stop*'.

Maralyn Nunn saw part of her role as that of an *interpreter*, helping to bridge the communications gap between student and teacher. She described her work as *trouble shooting*, that is, anticipating problem areas and damping down potential disputes. For example if a student was asked to take a lesson which, in her opinion as Liaison Lecturer the student was not capable of doing, she would try to intervene and negotiate a different approach.

David saw the Liaison Lecturer as playing a *moderating* role, preventing conflicts and differences from getting out of hand. Moderation also meant focussing on the appropriacy of the Field Supervisor's judgements in relation to the demands of the

particular practicum, the particular level of competence the student has reached, and judgements made elsewhere in the system. For David,

> this is an intuitive process- "what the belly tells you" - and it is on this basis that you determine whether the student-teacher will succeed.

Sarah Vaughan saw herself as a *guide* enabling the student to achieve certain standards. Assessment and evaluation permeated her thinking and she shared with David Hepworth the idea of the Liaison Lecturer as a *moderator* 'to provide some continuity in standard of performance across schools with student-teachers in different contexts', as she put it.

Maralyn Nunn saw herself as more of a *counsellor* than anything else and her desire to moderate student-teachers' behaviour is a predominant focus of a number of conferences. Moderation also involved ensuring that certain taken-for-granted and unchallenged expectations concerning dress, demeanour, and so forth were being properly attended to in so far as the schools were concerned. This picks up something of the *gatekeeper* role, insisting on conformity to publicly agreed standards.

Geoff Quinn saw himself very much as an *observer* and although he did not approach the work with any marked reluctance or apprehension, he was conscious of the need to go slowly and not push his way in. Familiar with a wide range of supervisory techniques, he did not consider himself a primary specialist and treated the practicum as a learning experience. The advisability of employing a secondary school subject specialist to supervise potential primary teachers who are generalists is a long-standing one but was not raised in discussion.

Whereas most Liaison Lecturers saw themselves as playing an interventionist role of some kind, Harry Dale saw his role as *non-directive* and *non-interventionist*. This only served to contribute to the perception in some quarters of lecturers as superfluous.

HARRY: Most [University] staff haven't taught in a school for a long time, some never. How are they going to help student-teachers? You can't expect them to go into schools for a week and pick it all up again, they can't! The Field Supervisors are there all day, every day. They are more in touch with the practical skills ... There would be no use for us at all if all the teachers read the Practice Teaching Handbook. All the expectations are clearly defined in the book.

Harry did not engage in extended discussion with Field Supervisors and his unpretentious and rather simplistic approach to the work of liaison was misunderstood by those he worked with. The result was a disaster in public relations terms.

Elements of the supervisory roles that Liaison Lecturers identified relate to the six role types proposed by Turney *et al* (1982). Although none describe themselves as *managers* or as *instructors* (the first two of Turney's role types), much of their work can be closely associated with the management function.

Except for Maralyn Nunn, Liaison Lecturers did not see themselves as *counsellors*, although several acknowledged the need to talk through problems of interpersonal relationships with student-teachers. *Observation* and the *provision of feedback*, central to the supervisor's role in Turney *et al*, were rarely given explicit mention. Liaison Lecturers held differing views on how observation should be carried out and the extent of feedback required.

The last of Turney *et al's* six role types dealt with *evaluation*. With the exception of Sarah Vaughan, this aspect was continually downplayed by Liaison Lecturers who recognised the contradiction they were caught up in as support person and assessor. Some were acutely aware that their own particular approach to teaching contradicted what was happening in the classroom. One Liaison Lecturer asked a Field Supervisor for help in supervising a student-teacher in an adjoining classroom as he saw himself as a traditionalist, and is said to have confided that he 'wouldn't feel confident about realistically assessing a student-teacher in a difficult, open classroom situation'.

In summary, Liaison Lecturers at NTU have a more fragmented view of their role than the integrated, combinational model envisaged by Turney *et al* (1982:8). This is in part due to the varying experience they possess and the different backgrounds from which they have come. Nevertheless whether trouble shooting, moderating, or providing support, the predominant role was one of liaison as the name implies, rather than managing or instructing. How their perceptions of their roles influenced the overall effectiveness of the practicum will become evident in Part 4.

CHAPTER 13

ASSESSING THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRACTICUM CONFERENCE

Procedures adopted

At the end of the first phase student-teachers were asked to rate the effectiveness of the conferences held with their Liaison Lecturers and Field Supervisors. In spite of the acknowledged subjectivity of this process, it was possible to obtain a rough, overall measure of the degree of satisfaction and the strength of student feeling. The results were examined in terms of the age of the students, and the experience and preparation for supervision on the part of Liaison Lecturers and Field Supervisors using the following procedure:

1. Student-teachers were divided into three groups on the basis of their age and recent school experience.

Group 1 comprised Recent School Leavers who matriculated at the end of 1983 or later. Ages ranged from 20 to 24 years old. This provided for part-time students who first joined the course straight from school and were in their final year of the Diploma of Teaching course, students who had entered into full-time employment for one or two years before commencing their course full-time, and students who had deferred their studies at some stage to travel overseas or get married.

Group 2 comprised Mature Age Students who left school between 1976 and 1982, and were admitted with matriculation or on provisional entry. Ages

ranged from 25 and 34. A number of these had young children. Several were returning to Teacher Education after a break in their studies.

Group 3 comprised Mature Age Students who left school prior to 1976 and were in the age group 35 to 39. Most had school-age children of their own and had acquired a significant amount of work experience.

The basis for the selection of cut-off points for age was made on the researcher's prior knowledge of the make-up of the entry group.

2. Field Supervisors were grouped according to their previous experience in supervision to allow for those who had had no previous experience except as students themselves and who were taking student-teachers for the first time; supervisors with less than five years experience; and those with extensive experience over a number of years.

Length of time spent supervising students tells us nothing about the nature of that experience, and the time division is fairly arbitrary. Novice teachers would not normally be expected to supervise a student-teacher in their first two years of employment. A number of supervisors with five years experience or less may have been relatively new to the Territory and unfamiliar with the curriculum materials used in Principles and Practice units. Some will have had intensive experience during that time having supervised nine or ten students, including students from Batchelor College and from out of state, whilst others may have had only two or three students. Studies elsewhere (Clark, 1990; Wheeler, 1987) suggest that trained cooperating teachers differ from untrained colleagues on four dimensions: specificity, stability, fluency, and rapport.

3. Liaison Lecturers were grouped according to whether they had ever received any form of training or preparation for supervision, however limited, and the length of time they had spent supervising student-teachers in Primary Schools in the Northern Territory.

Because of the smaller numbers involved in the second phase, students were not asked to rate the effectiveness of the practicum conference. The degree of satisfaction with the supervision process is readily apparent from the stories which emerge.

Experience and effectiveness

Table 1 on page 125 reveals the relationship between the experience possessed by supervisory staff and overall effectiveness as judged by student-teachers. All the conferences rated as ineffective were held with Field Supervisors who possessed no, or only limited, experience of supervising students. Conferences with experienced supervisors were invariably rated as effective.

The same pattern holds for conferences with Liaison Lecturers. Of the ten conferences rated as ineffective or partially effective, five involved two of the three members of staff with limited experience in supervision. Another four ineffective conferences are attributable to a member of staff whose considered views of the Liaison Lecturer's role are not shared by any of the student-teachers involved.

More alarming is the fact that six out of nineteen students (or just over 30%) experienced ineffective or only partially effective conferences with both their Field Supervisor and their Liaison Lecturer, and of these half experienced totally ineffective conferences with both.

The older group of mature age students records only two effective conferences out of a possible ten. It could be that mature age students are more demanding and have higher expectancies of supervisory staff and this could be compounded by the limited experience of the two Liaison Lecturers to whom they were assigned.

The failure to prepare University Supervisors for their work has been noted in other studies. For instance, Koop and Koop (1993:12) lament that

> [M]issing from the literature was any effective critique of the role of university staff in the [practicum] process, nor did we find strategies to better inform them of their role.

One way to prepare supervisors for their work has been the use of handbooks which are dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 14

THE PRACTICUM BOOKLETS

It was assumed by some Liaison Lecturers that providing Field Supervisors made a close study of the booklet *'Practice Teaching Information for Supervisors'* (D.I.T., 1987), together with the unit information and practical session guidelines, the Liaison Lecturer would become superfluous. A close study of these documents, which can be found in Appendix 2, and an examination of the re-accreditation proposals for the Diploma of Teaching suggests otherwise.

The re-accreditation document

The re-accreditation document adopted a stage model of role development and role adoption but the stages were not presented within a theory of professional teacher socialisation, nor addressed in any detail within the curriculum documents themselves. Field Supervisors were not shown how the stages inter-related or how role elements could be developed.

Although the documents provided for the introduction of teaching strategies alongside role development, a behaviouristic skills training model still predominated:

> Once a basic skill has been introduced, applied and practised ... it is expected that the skills will be exhibited and performed at a more refined standard and show cumulative development. (D.I.T., 1986)

Detailed examples of skill progression were not offered, 'teaching strategies' were subsumed under 'skill areas' and the connection between skills and strategies was not addressed. The reliance on 'role elements' and the inclusion of a skills-based approach, suggest a fragmented approach.

Practice Teaching Information for Supervisors

Practice Teaching Information for Supervisors (D.I.T., 1987), distributed to all supervisory staff, endorsed a clinical supervision model and included an article by Smyth (1983). The implications of this model were not worked through in any detail. Smyth's model assumed a serving teacher who gets to choose trusted colleagues to work with, and who can negotiate the data collection methods, and decide where and when lessons are observed. These requirements are more difficult to institute with pre-service teachers. The decision by the faculty to collapse the analysis stage into the follow-up and evaluation stages might also have led to confusion.

It was only possible to find one Field Supervisor who admitted to having read the Smyth article and felt able to discuss it. The booklet acknowledged that the model may not be suitable for all teachers, saying that '*ideally* it should be of a cyclic nature' (emphasis added). Teachers may, therefore, have been left with the impression that this cyclic approach could not be achieved and could be disregarded. This lack of conviction permeated the document.

A non-judgemental, collegial basis for supervision was advocated but the growth of 'professionalism' was assumed and not provided for. No indication of what constituted a satisfactory conference was provided, nor how a conference should be set up or how it should proceed. There was no unambiguous advice on leaving classes solely in the charge of the student-teacher, nor was the legal situation explained. There were some useful appendices on orientating the student-teacher to the school and introducing the student-teacher to the classroom, but these did not prevent some embarrassing situations from occurring.

The EDN 304 booklet

The Principles and Practice booklet for EDN 304 (D.I.T., 1988) did not address the individual student-teacher's level of competence and cognitive development. There was no indication of the amount of detailed advice required or how to deliver that advice, although the booklet did refer to the need for 'specific and constructive suggestions to aid skill development'. Field Supervisors were not told what to expect with regard to the growth of teacher competence and little help was provided with assessment which boiled down, in the language of the booklet, to intuition: 'a feeling for', 'in all likelihood'.

The impact of the practicum booklets

The booklets appear to have had very little direct positive impact. In a similar study, Wheeler (1987) cautioned against a naive view of training equated with the production of handbooks and short information-giving briefings.

The booklets reinforced the division of labour between Liaison Lecturers and Field Supervisors, and maintained the distinction between theory and practice. There was a perception amongst Field Supervisors, shared by Ann Jenkins, that the Liaison Lecturer possessed the broader perspective of what was to be covered from a theoretical viewpoint, whilst it was the Field Supervisor's job to deal with the immediate practical problems and concerns as they arose. According to Ann, the Liaison Lecturer was there to 'help the student-teacher explore theory in the classroom setting' and the lecturer should bring specific information relating to the characteristics and level of development of the individual student-teacher. Indeed, this confirms the original aims of the re-accreditation document which saw theory as providing the essential foundations of practice. However, the documents made it appear as if the two

groups operated in different, but cognate, languages. It is for this reason that Maralyn Nunn saw the role of the Liaison Lecturer as that of interpreter.

On their own admission, as confirmed by the comments of their student-teachers, knowledge of the Teacher Education curriculum and practicum requirements was generally limited amongst Field Supervisors with limited experience. Several could not identify the main focus of the practicum which dealt with individual difference. One supervisor, who hankered after aspects of the old apprenticeship system, gave the focus as 'general competence'. Another saw it as how well the student-teacher integrated within the school and the overall field of education. In George Bailey's opinion, most inexperienced teachers 'wouldn't have a clue about how the practicum progression operates, nor about the content of the course'. The university was frequently constructed as off-target and impractical. Comments such as: '[the student's] own ideas are closer to mine than they are to the things taught at Uni' were frequent.

The Principles and Practice booklets were rarely referred to during the conference except when a recommended approach was rejected, such as the advice on Lesson Planning which most Field Supervisors found they could not work with. Those who had read the booklets were preoccupied with the organisational aspects involving how much teaching the student-teacher was expected to do, and were dismissive of the theoretical aspects. Teachers tended to read selectively, taking from the booklets that which reinforced their own preconceptions.

Ignoring the constraints of the schools

The focus of the practicum proved difficult to implement given the ecology of the schools. The accompanying booklet suggested that teaching to the middle, normal, or average was totally inappropriate and unacceptable, yet a number of classes were arranged precisely in that way, or geared solely to high fliers. Whilst acknowledging

the constraints, the booklet did little to reassure those student-teachers placed in classrooms which disregarded individual difference.

> Where relevant and as far as possible, students are to accommodate individual differences and special needs by starting with the group or individual requiring most direct teaching or attention and dove-tailing planning into that group or individual. (D.I.T., 1988:9-10)

The authors were aware that

> a particular educational unit's existing arrangements may necessitate modifications and variations (*ibid*),

but left this to the Liaison Lecturers to negotiate. Once again the seriousness of the practicum requirements can be drawn into question.

In summary, there is sufficient *prima facie* evidence to suggest that the practicum booklets were making a confused situation worse. Teachers reiterated that they did not understand the requirements of the University. It is all too easy to assume that they did not read the practicum booklets. It would appear that they *did* read them, albeit selectively, but that the materials lacked conviction and did not make sense.

Table 1 - Experience and Effectiveness

Student Teacher	Fictitious Names	Field Supervisor's Experience in Supervision			Effectiveness of Conference with Field Supervisor			Liaison Lecturer's Experience in Supervision		Effectiveness of Conference with Liaison Lecturer		
		None except as ST	Limited less than 5yrs	Extensive	Ineffective	Partially effective	Effective	Limited	Extensive	Ineffective	Partially effective	Effective
Recent School Leavers i.e Matric in 1983 or later	Tricia Norman	X			X				X			X
	Wendy Johnson		X				X		X			X
	Pamela Pile			X	X						X	
	Christine Clayton			X			X		X			X
	CharmaineCreswell		X				X		X			X
	Olive Chesterton		X				X	X			X	
	Annette Masters			X			X		X			X
	Fiona McDonald		X		X				X	X		
	Barbara Knight		X				X	X				X
Mature Age Students (1) left school between 1976 and 1982	Olive Kent			X			X		X			X
	Sally Kuhlman		X				X		X	X		
	Margo Devine			X	X			X			X	
	Barry Collins			X			X		X			X
	Beatrice Kramer		X				X	X		X		
	Mary Motherwell		X		X			X		X		
Mature Age Student (2) left school prior to 1976	Nancy Learner			X		X		X				X
	Colette Massey			X		X		X		X		
	Tabetha Steinburg			X			X		X	X		
	Raylene Jackson	X			X				X	X		

PART 4

STORIES FROM THE URBAN PRACTICUM

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

PHASE ONE

STUDENT-TEACHER	FIELD SUPERVISOR	LIAISON LECTURER	SCHOOL
Annette Masters	Grace Marchmont	Roger Lipscombe	C
Barbara Knight	Cecelia Battersby	Maralyn Nunn	A
Barry Collins	Wendy Jones	David Hepworth	G
Beatrice Kramer	Melanie Hughs	Geoff Quinn	B
Charmaine Cresswell	Gerry Walsh	Susan Howe	K
Christine Clayton	Dorothy Harding	Roger Lipscombe	E
Colette Massey	Sandra Gregory	Sarah Vaughan	H
Fiona McDonald	Belinda Krathwhol	Harry Dale	F
Margo Devine	Frank Buchanan	Sarah Vaughan	J
Mary Motherwell	George Bailey	Geoff Quinn	B
Nancy Learner	Veronica Howell	Maralyn Nunn	C
Olive Chesterton	Chris Mitchell	Geoff Quinn	B
Olivia Kent	Thomas Jackson	Susan Howe	L
Pamela Pile	Hillary Stanton	Susan Howe	M
Raylene Jackson	Sally Proudfoot	Harry Dale	F
Sally Kuhlman	Sandy Knowles	Harry Dale	D
Tabetha Steinberg	Ann Jenkins	Harry Dale	D
Tricia Norman	Anne Bonner	Susan Howe	N
Wendy Johnson	Ruth Wells	Roger Lipscombe	C

CHAPTER 15

ISSUES OF POWER AND CONTROL

Space does not permit an extended discussion of the tactics of power employed by supervisors and I have written more fully about this elsewhere (Grenfell and Saunders, 1990). I return to the issue in Chapter 25 when I look more closely at positioning and agency. However, I wish to re-emphasise some of the ways in which power operates during the practicum.

The level of formality adopted

Informality is a significant feature of the social and cultural life of the Territory. Grace Marchmont, who had spent a considerable amount of time there, put it well:

> If I get in a formal situation I don't always listen and don't comprehend. A lot has to do with the life-style up here. There's little dressing up and acting ladies and gents. Some [people] have never been in a truly formal situation. Cultural expectations are very important. For example, we don't have the formality at Staff Meetings they have down South. The Band Ones' didn't open their mouths and just did as they were told.

Her comments recall Fairclough (1989) who observed that:

> Many people do not acquire even the necessary knowledge and skill to occupy peripheral positions in formal situations, and consequently find formal situations per se daunting and frightening - or ridiculous ... Formality both restricts access and generates awe. (*ibid*:68)

Resistance to informality can have its price. Grace Marchmont maintains that where conferences were 'starchy' or formal,

> the prac doesn't go well because you don't make concessions for them. You don't put yourself out and you leave them on their own a lot more. They also miss out on the little bits of advice that you give such as the cloth under the table for emergencies.

Operational procedures

These included whether supervisors negotiated explicit ground rules or explained to the student how the conference would be conducted as well as procedures for the giving out of completed lesson observation sheet or other written comments. Few of the younger students were able to take in written comments immediately after the lesson. Tricia Norman described the anti-climactic feeling she experienced after getting psyched up for a lesson, and Annette Masters admitted to being nervously exhausted by the end of the lesson and not really taking in the observation sheet so instead of going through it slowly, she just put it down and ignored it. Beatrice Kramer felt so stressed out at the end of her first lesson, she confessed 'I didn't really hear some of what [the lecturer] said ... then I suddenly came to'.

Students objected to the fact that few lecturers would change anything after they have written it, hence Pamela appreciated the approach used by her Field Supervisor.

> Any points successfully cleared up during the conference were not written on the evaluation sheet. I found this an extremely fair way of going about it and it made me feel better towards conferences.

The procedure adopted by Dorothy Harding was also appreciated. In order to increase the objectivity of the assessment, she wrote down each significant point on yellow stickers, 'then we talk about them before I write them down formally and this gives (the student) the chance to explain'.

Mixed messages

Another tactic for maintaining power and control was the use of mixed messages which produced a feeling of insecurity caused when the Field Supervisor's body

language did not match the advice being given as in this example from Barbara Knight:

> One minute I felt very safe, joking and telling me about the kids, the next minute she's looking out of the window and I felt my God, what's happening.

Dominance and submission

One student-teacher found herself caught up in an ideological conflict between the more dominant, radical members of staff and those who were perceived as more docile, submissive and accepting. The student-teacher, who wishes to go unnamed, was continually disturbed by what she had heard about the Liaison Lecturer's connection with the school. She had been told that her Liaison Lecturer was 'strongly supportive of the school - more than for the student-teachers'. Although she admitted to having seen nothing to confirm this, she remained ill at ease and, afraid of being treated unjustly, she sat with the dominant members until she was told to go and sit somewhere else by a friend. It was as if she had to be 'a totally different person to get on the good side of the Principal'.

> I was told that the Principal thought I was arrogant, thought I had ideas and opinions. I pulled aside my supervising teacher and asked if I really came across as arrogant. I was shocked and it made me feel quite frightened.

Playing on personal vulnerability

There were some instances where Field Supervisors exploited the personal vulnerability of students to ensure the maintenance of status and power differentials. For instance it did not take Nancy Learner very long to accept the fact that Veronica Howell, the Field Supervisor, was 'the boss'. Veronica uses Nancy's apparent vulnerability and sensitivity in the deeply personal area of language to remind her indirectly of the authority relationship and to assert her dominance in dealing with a

self-autonomous person who makes it plain in the interviews that she would not just simply go along with her Field Supervisor just for the sake of keeping the peace.

Although at the outset Veronica confessed to feeling 'very coyish' about giving advice and 'trying to explain positively and straight-forwardly any points that I want to bring forward', and claimed not to perceive anything 'higher or lower' in her relationship with Nancy, several differences emerged which suggest jockeying for position as this extract illustrates:

> NANCY: I picked up one of the points (Veronica) had written down. The one thing I didn't agree with, we didn't alter it, was she thought I could be more positive by actually using children's names. She moved her position slightly and said, 'It's possible you did. I can't write everything down.'

Veronica's reaction to this was significant

> VERONICA: I could tell from Nancy's reaction that she was obviously disappointed (with the way the lesson had gone) and was being very hard on herself. I had to make it much more positive, changing my words around and make it less factual (or direct).

Events came to a head with the writing of the mid-session report in which Veronica commented on vocabulary and grammatical errors.

> NANCY: I was shocked. Nobody had ever told me that there was something wrong with my language before. It threw me a bit and I discussed it with my husband. I wondered if it wasn't my pronunciation she wasn't used to but she denied this. When I asked her to tell me about my errors, she said I kept putting the verb at the end of the sentence, but she couldn't give me examples except for an occasion when I had ended an entry in my plan book with '... and verbalising'. The fact she told me about it only made me make more errors.

When the report came out Veronica stated that Nancy was from a Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) and needed to pay attention to her grammar and vocabulary. According to her Liaison Lecturer, Maralyn Nunn, Nancy was insensed as she considered herself to be bilingual, virtually from birth. Nancy admitted to being 'put out', but believed 'insensed' was too strong a word. Veronica eventually agreed to change NESB for bilingual after Maralyn intervened, but refused to delete the offending remarks.

Throughout what occurred, Nancy was in no danger of failing her practicum. The

significance of the incident is that it made Nancy feel very vulnerable.

> It hurt me very deeply and made me feel insecure, particularly because she
> couldn't give me any examples. I think if she'd given me specific examples which
> I could relate to, it would have changed the picture but I was floating in mid-air
> not quite knowing what I had to work on. I felt personally attacked, hurt,
> depressed. She picked this up and said 'I don't want you to worry about it. It's just
> something I had to tell you. There's nothing wrong. I just had to tell you.'

At no time did Maralyn notice

> any language use which I considered not to be a good language model,
> certainly not bad grammar any more than any other (first language) speaker of
> English.

Once again mixed messages predominate:

> All through this she didn't look Maralyn or myself in the eye when justifying her
> action.

Nancy realised that she had been placed in a double bind. 'What really baffles me

though,' she wrote in her journal,

> was that she remained sympathetic and reassuring because she constantly said I
> should relax and not worry about it. That's easier said than done.

Letting go of control

That teachers are beset by contradictory desires over control is well documented

(Kidder, 1989; and Connell, 1985). A disappointed and frustrated Tricia Norman told

me almost immediately:

> This teacher won't let her classroom go which is why I feel I'm not getting full
> control over the kids. On other pracs the teachers have allowed me to teach the
> lesson and bring forth discipline within the kids. Here, she's already stepped
> in. It makes it difficult because she's already taking away my authority and the
> children see me as a joke because if I say a thing they sort of say 'oh well she's
> got no authority'.
>
> The kids tend to act up. They don't realise there's an adult there so I've got to
> make my presence felt. I tend to call them up to me rather than move myself
> around and that only comes with experience.

The Field Supervisor, Anne Bonner, realised what was going on, but her perception of Tricia was very different from Tricia's own perception of herself and it is possible that some of Tricia's body language suggested that she was not as happy or as confident as she normally was and therefore was not ready to take full control of the class. Later, the Liaison Lecturer, Susan Howe, was to comment on Tricia crawling up into the sleeves of her jumper during the conference.

Dorothy Harding, on the other hand, Christine Clayton's Field Supervisor, worked out a way of sharing control. During the lesson itself Dorothy interrupted but never interfered, saying such things as 'Miss Clayton, could you repeat that please, we couldn't quite catch it all.' Perhaps it is easier in a pre-school setting to adopt this supervisory style which I have called 'participative modelling'. In a different context or setting the student-teacher might have felt put down, and a number of over-readers have said they found Dorothy's approach demeaning.

Dorothy and Christine had a sense of working towards a common goal. Together they would try to predict behaviour and outcomes and, if things went wrong, fixed them together. Usually, Dorothy reflects,

> she does things my way. I'm grateful for that otherwise it would have been difficult to work.

Later in the interview when we were looking at shared values she says:

> We're a good match but she's a unique person. My programme may not suit someone else's personality and expectations. I couldn't interfere with a student-teacher who shared another philosophy but [in a joking aside] I'd work damned hard to change it!

These are good examples of the process of slippage whereby unconscious desires are revealed through jokes and other asides (Hunt, 1989:25).

Conflict avoidance

There are many examples of strategic compliance and strategic redefinition (Lacey, 1977:72-3). However, two other strategies are also used: *strategic avoidance*, related to topic avoidance in communicative interaction; and *strategic accommodation* in which only certain features of the approach are adopted. These strategies also allow student-teachers to retaining their own pedagogical beliefs.

Student-teachers are adept at strategic avoidance when called upon to identify strengths and weaknesses. Barbara Knight is particularly successful in accommodating the requirements of her Field Supervisor in spite of her general disapproval of her philosophy. As Cecelia Battersby says, 'She's not cock-sure, has the courage of her convictions, knows what she can and cannot do, ... there's nothing obnoxious, nothing conceited... she's not out to stir up the fuddy-duddies'. Barbara relies on strategic avoidance:

> I didn't participate a great deal [in the conferences], just enough to answer her questions, but not get myself into hot water. When she came up with the positive stuff [about my lessons] then I start talking.

In an earlier interview she admitted that 'they (the Field Supervisor and the Liaison Lecturer) don't really know what's inside my head'. The ability to show a public face whilst retaining private beliefs is crucial to the successful completion of the practicum, and affects the nature of the communication in the conference. In this case all the parties were aware of what was going on to some degree and gave it their tacit approval. There appeared to be an agreement not to take each other on.

Mary Motherwell also admitted to having put on an act with her Liaison Lecturer and 'backing off' when necessary. George claimed that Mary wouldn't go along with what

he said just to keep the peace but he could detect the lack of response, and the looking

and nodding that she used to convey apparent agreement and avoid conflict.

Annette Masters also realised that

> you have to cover up your own beliefs and go along with it. For example, with
> phonics, I wouldn't teach phonics everyday when I get out into the schools. It's
> the same with homework. The Field Supervisor only gives it for language. She's
> probably got her reasons.

She was assisted in how to avoid clashes by her Liaison Lecturer who told her there

was plenty of time to do it her way later. Even Pamela Pile with her blunt assertions

and 'no time for putting on a face' employs a considerable amount of strategic

avoidance which is consistent with her attitude towards authority, as we will see in

Chapter 17.

In resorting to these strategies, it may appear that student-teachers play into the hands

of the system and resistance is effectively neutralised (Beyer, 1988:194). However,

students do retain their own pedagogical beliefs as in the case of Tricia Norman for

whom meaningful dialogue about education with her Field Supervisor was impossible.

Anne's teaching was very structured with a heavy reliance on 'cloze' type exercises.

Tricia can see the purpose, 'but there's no point in copying off the blackboard. It's not

the way we've gone about it in Language Arts'. Anne, on the other hand, persists in

believing that 'philosophically we come from the same position'.

Raylene Jackson believed the degree of control imposed on the classroom prevented

the adoption of a process-orientated approach to meeting individual needs. For her, as

for Tricia, education does not come packaged, and she wants to have some hand in the

design and choice of the materials rather than execute somebody else's conception.

Barbara Knight doubted the need for later conferences because of her teacher's

philosophical attitude towards individual differences. For the Field Supervisor, the

blame for poor performance or deviancy lay with the individual, not the social or
institutional system and Barbara is not prepared to accept this.

'Sometimes I've initiated [feedback],' recalls Barbara,

> but each time it's been like a blank wall. If anything went wrong it's always the
> fault of the kids and not myself. There's nothing constructive to work with and
> I've been looking for it.

Margo Devine, a mature age student working with two other teachers in a team
teaching situation, was particularly scathing:

> Anything that allows them to interrupt the program, they snatch it up. They don't
> teach so I suppose they are not concerned about me teaching. They fill in sheets
> all day with lots of testing. I don't know why. They don't teach so there is nothing
> to assess but that's worked for them for ... years.

Without necessarily being aware of it, all these student-teachers are protesting the
technicising of education involving the progressive disempowerment and deskilling of
teachers through the adoption of 'instrumental ideologies' (Giroux 1988:122). With
the exception of Pamela, it is the mature age students who are sufficiently reflective to
penetrate the contradictions and to contest and resist covertly this form of hegemony.

CHAPTER 16

THE GETTING OF FEEDBACK

Adequate feedback is central to the supervisory process, yet a number of student-teachers expressed their frustration and dissatisfaction at being unable to obtain feedback of any sort from their Field Supervisors. This section examines the experience of one particular student for whom trying to obtain feedback was like 'being up against a brick wall', looks at the ways in which the students coped in situations of no feedback, and speculates on possible reasons for the failure to provide feedback.

Initially students attempted to remedy lack of feedback by making direct approaches to the Field Supervisor, taking over control of the conference if one took place, or attempting to get the Liaison Lecturer to intervene. Their attempts to rectify the situation were usually unsuccessful and led to a breakdown of communication at anything other than a phatic level, accompanied by a resigned acceptance. Such students usually entered the practicum with very high expectations, and appeared to be progressing towards a considerable degree of self-autonomy and self-direction.

Frequent absences of the teacher from the classroom early in the practicum reduced the possibility of feedback. Absences were sometimes perceived as avoidance behaviour, even by student-teachers who demonstrated a high degree of teaching competence, and who might be thought to need little assistance.

A number of Field Supervisors did not provide written comments and this was a matter of considerable concern to students. Some supervisors appeared to be working on the

principle that written comments might incriminate the student, or that any comment at all was superfluous and unnecessary. Sandra Gregory, Colette Massey's Field Supervisor, didn't believe in writing much down. However, she usually tried to leave the student-teacher with one teaching point to follow up. She deliberately tried not to offer suggestions

> or the student-teacher thinks that's what is expected and won't try things for herself ... Its funny to see them modelling you and you think 'Oh, yes, I do that'.

Tricia Norman's experience

Although enjoying the practicum and feeling comfortable, Tricia Norman expressed her extreme frustration with her Field Supervisor, Anne Bonner.

> I keep thinking it's just not working ... it's not going to happen. I've dropped a few hints but didn't show my frustration except when I got uptight with the kids. I've tried to force the issue, but not directly. I've said a few things to try to spice her up.

> On a personal basis, outside of the classroom we communicate very well, but when it comes to teaching she's given me hardly any feed-back at all on my lessons although yesterday she did, [At end of the third week and following the visit of the Liaison Lecturer].

> I've no intention of asking the Liaison Lecturer to intervene but she'd have read my Journal. I only know what's going to happen one day ahead and that's really hard, it's not on a professional basis.

When Tricia forced the issue and tried to organise some sort of formal conference, she perceived her Field Supervisor as immediately going on the defensive.

> She spoke as if she had to justify herself, why she was doing the things she was doing and comparing the classroom procedures with her previous school. I found myself becoming tense yet at the same time trying to put her at ease, showing her that I wasn't investigating her but simply interested in her views. The conversation went in circles getting nowhere. It is just not worth the uneasiness. It's easier not to ask questions.

Tricia did not see this behaviour as relating to power and control, but as stemming from an inability to communicate:

> She's come from three years teaching by herself ... her class ... it's just her ... she hasn't had to communicate with anyone. For example she stays completely out of

staff meetings and blocks herself off from the rest of the school.

Anne confirmed this lack of communication. When asked if she had told Tricia *why*

her planning was 'great', and whether she had been through it with her, she replied:

> [It's] one thing I've thought about perhaps we haven't done enough of because I don't know how she feels about that. We haven't had a great deal of discussion over what she'll do and me not having had a student before.

Responding to lack of feedback

There were four ways in which student-teachers re-acted to a persistent lack of

feedback: (1) by adopting a non-confrontationist approach, (2) through increased self-

reliance, (3) through more positive assertion, and (4) through resistance and

contestation.

<u>Non-confrontation</u>

Mary Motherwell, who we will meet again in the chapter on age-related and gender

effects, was concerned that she was getting little meaningful feedback, but persisted

with a non-confrontationist approach because she wanted to protect the sound personal

relationship she and her Field Supervisor had built up. The same is true for other

students in a similar position. Barbara Knight did not tackle Cecelia head-on because

she had also established a satisfactory personal relationship which allowed her the

freedom she needed. 'I did like her though', she enthuses, 'and I thought she was a

lovely person and didn't want her to be upset by what I'd written.'

<u>Self-reliance and problematicity</u>

In some cases when feedback was non-existent, the student-teacher adopted strategies

to ensure problematicity, rather like playing a game of chess with oneself. Fiona

McDonald, one of the recent school leavers, set herself personal objectives and

formalised the prescribed lesson evaluations to enable her to do this.

> I'd like more specific feedback or you get stagnant without it. I set my own goals.
> I've always had to except on my last Practicum when we worked together which
> was fabulous.

Secure in her own abilities, Fiona was not concerned with assessment and, when asked

if she had ever been concerned that she might fail, went into gales of laughter and

responded 'you've made my day'. In some ways her ability to evaluate her own teaching

absolved the Field Supervisor from comment. Belinda Krathwhol genuinely believed

that there was little she could say and pointed to instances where Fiona had set up

conditions for self-evaluation and these were met.

Assertiveness

Margo Devine, in the first group of Mature Age Students, used a different strategy with

her Field Supervisor, Frank Buchanan, and became more assertive. Although she could

not remember it happening, Frank told of how she insisted that he would sit down with

her and talk to her, but the strategy was ineffective for two reasons. Firstly, in Margo's

view, although the Field Supervisor believed he was doing a good job, he did not know

the requirements of the student-teacher as an individual and could not begin to imagine

the sort of assistance she needed, and secondly, constant interruptions interfered with

any opportunity for her to actually teach. Consequently the level of analysis of the

student-teacher's performance consisted of generalities and no written feedback was

forthcoming.

Resistance and contestation

One of the first group of mature age students, demonstrated just how much frustration

and disappointment students were able to put up with.

> I kept psyching myself up to tell her [the Field Supervisor] what I wanted from
> her and what I expected to be able to do but I never had the courage. I thought
> she might threaten my Practicum, fail me, that disturbed me more than the
> unpleasantness it might cause.

When her attempts to get her Liaison Lecturer to intervene were unsuccessful, she

abandoned attempts at communication and resorted to tacit resistance and contestation

by deliberately adopting alternative methods of presentation, but to no avail. This produced no protest from the teacher.

> The Field Supervisor was not even aware there was a problem, didn't know that I was stressed, didn't guess there were things I wanted to say. She never asked me if I had ideas on how to do anything. It didn't matter, everything was from the book anyway. She made no allowances for personal preferences, different philosophies or ideas, I don't think she thought there were any others, she was just uninterested. She thinks there is only one way to teach. Follow me and you'll be right.

A possible explanation

Too often, failure to give feedback is seen in terms of personal inadequacy, lack of experience or training, emotional immaturity (or patriarchally defined neuroticism), a peculiar perversity, or a symbolic form of power/control. In view of the fact that the relational is thought to be the driving force in women's approach to moral questions, (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarula, 1986), it is perhaps surprising that so many supervising teachers in the current investigation, the bulk of whom were women, had such difficulty in providing student-teachers with feedback.

A possible explanation is provided by Stocker (1987) who suggests that such an occurrence may be related to the prioritising of moral duties. Stocker envisages a situation where people 'can take up a moral option not to do one's duty'. Such teachers may in fact be demonstrating considerable moral sensitivity to context and the plurality of duties. There may therefore be a more strategic, pragmatic explanation, related to the fragility of the relationship in its emergent state. Before moral decisions of a relational nature can be made, the relation has to be nurtured so that it becomes enduring.

To sum up: what we have in these stories are accounts of separate beings in relation. Very often the participants maintain their separateness, or are fearful of putting their emergent relationship to the test. There is an inability to view the situation from

someone else's vantage point, resulting in a variety of misperceptions relating to the degree of direction required and willingness to become involved. It is as if the needs of student-teachers are not differentiated and that the process of practice teaching is a simple reproductive one.

CHAPTER 17

THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

This chapter begins with an account of changing views with regard to the development of personal autonomy, before going on to examine the desperate struggle for autonomy in the life of one student-teacher. It examines the influence of the justice and care perspectives and the part played by emotionality in the attainment of autonomy. The importance placed on the generalised other is challenged from the standpoint of the concrete other (Benhabib, 1987).

Changing views of autonomy

Abstract liberalism

Liberalism embraces an unproblematised, Enlightenment view of autonomy which celebrates the rights of the individual and privileges free will, whilst at the same time incorporating a contractual view of power. Personal autonomy is assumed to be an entitlement, allowing people to pursue their own vision of the good in their own way.

> Fundamental to liberalism is the belief in the ultimate worth of the individual as a person possessing intrinsic value who should not be subordinate to the will of another (Porter, 1991: 122)

A number of supervisors operate on the basis of this assumption. On this view, autonomy makes little provision for self-governance and systematic, analytical thought, but inclines more toward the existential and libertarian, with no one being empowered to dictate how the individual should lead his or her life. Complex moral issues and the concept of the teacher as an 'ideal' moral legislator receive scant attention.

In her discussion of abstract individualism, Porter (1991) claims that liberalism assumes that the individual possesses a subjective existence and will *prior to* any expression in society. Abstract individualism therefore denies the concrete experience of individuals. Porter rejects an abstract individualism based on innate properties or traits given independently to individuals regardless of social context, and she distinguishes between individualistic notions of individuality, and individuality itself. Individualistic notions assume that 'the individual's thought and action is self-propelled, and is *not determined* by external agencies. Porter clearly believes otherwise: individuals are *determined* by society; any sense of autonomy is illusory; and people are merely the puppets of manipulatory forces, operating continually from 'behind the veil' (Meyers, 1987). Any possibility of self-initiated activity, any separate, subjective existence is denied.

Kohlberg's theory of the development of moral autonomy

Kohlberg's (1984) theory of the development of moral autonomy which postulates preconventional, conventional and postconventional stages of moral thinking, suggests that whereas moral autonomy cannot develop in any separate, subjective world in which we hold ourselves in isolation, agents still possess a subjective sense of existence, be it a subjective sense of time (Flaherty, 1992), a subjective sense of pain or bodily illness (Olesen, 1992), or whatever. It is this form of subjectivity which forms the basis for the expression of individuality.

Kohlberg's analysis revealed a six stage process divided into three two-stage levels based on a justice perspective (Meyers and Kittay, 1987:6). The first stage, belonging to a preconventional level involves deferring to authority. In the second stage people begin to consider the needs of others. In the third stage a conventional level begins to emerge characterised by seeking approval of others by conforming to stereotypical roles. The fourth stage is marked by considerations of social order and dutiful conduct to others. This stage is superseded by a fifth, postconventional stage, in which people

are concerned with the rights and standards of society. This is preparatory to the sixth and final stage based on 'self-chosen yet universal principles of justice' (*ibid*).

<u>Gilligan's alternative account</u>

Kohlberg's stage model was challenged by Gilligan who identified a care perspective as providing an alternative track for women in reaching moral autonomy. Gilligan's (1982) account has a six stage series operating at three levels. The first, preconventional, stage is concerned with an orientation towards individual survival. The second stage involves the recognition of selfishness and leads to a move towards responsibility. The third stage is characterised by caring for others and the notion of self-sacrifice. This is followed by a move from a concern with goodness to concern with truth in which the 'illogic of the inequality between self and other becomes apparent'. The postconventional is marked by a fifth relational stage, leading to a dissipation of self-other tension in stage six.

If this account is accurate, we would expect much of the interaction of student-teachers and supervising teachers to be concerned with the progressive dissipation of self-other tension and a preoccupation with establishing a number of relational strategies to promote self-autonomy. We would expect student-teachers exhibiting stage two type behaviours to encounter difficulties in working with teachers who engage in the heroics of self-sacrifice setting themselves and others excessively high standards.

Gilligan's account is rooted in the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* or practical morality, which, according to Meyers (1987), emphasises the contextual and the circumstantial. It comprises a debate over the return to virtue rather than justice. If moral judgements are constructed differently on the basis of gender and if, in the case of women, they are arrived at on a more relational, interactional basis with greater

attention being paid to contextual, circumstantial and contingent factors, this suggests ways in which supervisors can encourage the growth of moral autonomy.

The justice and care perspectives in the exercise of moral autonomy

Many of the anxieties experienced by supervisors can be attributed to the tension between a dispassionate, disembodied, decontextualised, 'justice' perspective on the one hand, and a highly personal, nurturing 'care' perspective with respect to autonomy and agency on the other (Kittay and Meyer, 1987). The fact that these two perspectives intersect, and that the duty of care is often part of a contractual, juridical approach to autonomy does not mean that the tension is in any way diminished.

The care perspective has been well summarised by Meyers and Kittay (1987) in their review of the work of Gilligan (1982). They explain how, in their view, women prefer to address moral questions without beginning from universally accepted principles.

> Moral problems do not result from a conflict of rights to be adjudicated by ranking values. Rather, moral problems are embedded in a contextual frame that eludes abstract, deductive reasoning ... Making moral decisions required not a deductive employment of general principles, but a strategy that aimed to maintain [relational] ties where possible without sacrificing the integrity of the self (Meyers, 1987:7).

I have added the word relational to the original for reasons which will become apparent later.

The justice perspective on the other hand is more closely associated with 'excessive formalism, calculated ratiocination and impersonal perspective' (Meyers, 1987:8). For some it represents the denial of compassion, stemming from its reliance on impartiality, neutrality and Enlightenment reason.

The influence of feeling and the importance of sentiment (or 'sensuous desires'), as distinct from instrumental reasoning, was acknowledged by Hume who spoke of the

need for 'the sympathetic shaping of sentiment'. According to Baier (1987), Hume's ethics provided for 'good company', a good fellow-person, and the capacity for sympathy and fellow-feeling.

> Moral cooperation for [Hume] includes cooperation in unchosen schemes, with unchosen partners, with unequal partners, in close intimate relations as well as distanced and more formal ones (Baier, 1987: 46).

The practicum constitutes a ready-made laboratory for such an exercise in moral cooperation.

Hume, however, resisted individualistic and egoistical tendencies and 'linked morality to overcoming, through reflection, the problem of internal contradiction, conflict and instability' (Baier, 1987:45), all of which find acceptance in postmodernist accounts of the self. Hume's views, as do those of the relational proponents who come after him, mask the fact that correct expressions of sympathy and sentiment are socially constructed and that what induces repugnance or revulsion today may not have done so in the past. There is in Hume's account and in those of many of his successors, a duty and responsibility to *feel* in a certain way, as if feelings were homogeneous and transferable, the Other merely constituting an extension of one's same self.

> Far from being the source and highest development of morality, autonomy may be the special ideal of a dominant group, and in fact an ideal which serves to reinforce old patterns of oppression (Hill, 1987:130).

Emotionality and the development of autonomy

Although the feelings of student-teachers were often an initial focus of the conference, there is little in the way of what might be called educating the emotions (Dunlop, 1984). Whilst accepting with Porter (1991:106) that a decision based solely on emotions is likely to prove inadequate, we need to take note of the emotional in supervisory practice and not disregard it. The emotional and the emotive relate to, and reveal, our motives, attitudes and dispositions. Emotional displays also serve as

communicative and rhetorical strategies and 'intellect without passion is barren' (Birch, 1995:32). We cannot afford to disregard emotionality, either from an overweening Enlightenment belief in the capacity of Reason, or by assuming that no rational interpretation at all can be offered for emotional reactions.

> The mistake lies in the assumption that reason must always be patriarchally defined and hence, to avoid being absorbed by a rationalist mentality, one should ignore reason. Anti-intellectualism (or a romantic fusion with nature) mystifies emotions. In doing so, it fails to recognise that anger, awe, disgust, hope, fear, jealousy and joy are not 'pure feelings' but are *rooted in social contexts*, where some rational interpretation can be offered even if the initial expression appears solely emotional. (Porter, 1991:107, emphasis added)

Moral autonomy is seen by some as very much a competence which is possessed or not as the case may be and is sometimes equated with professional maturity. It is not something which supervisors generally see themselves as attempting to inculcate, although as we shall see there are exceptions to that rule.

How are we to know what the Other is due?

The problem facing the supervising teacher is how to accord individuals the right to make certain personal and pedagogical decisions without undue interference. In other words how are we to know what the Other is due? Hill (1987:134) explains that

> [T]o respect someone as an autonomous person in this sense is to acknowledge that certain decisions are up to him or her and thus to refrain from efforts to control those decisions.

It may be that in the short duration of the practicum, student-teachers are not involved with crucial life-affecting choices, but opportunity to make autonomous choices is still required, hence supervising teachers may not unduly interfere with choices which rightfully belong to the student-teachers working with them. In fact Hill goes as far as to say:

> [W]ithin limits, people should be allowed to make their own choices even if the choices are likely to be foolish (*ibid*:135).

Many supervising teachers would have difficulty with this view. Compassion, for example, prevents them from allowing students-teachers to make complete fools of themselves before the children. Some are not prepared to engage in the repair work and restoration of discipline and order that can result when control is handed over to a student-teacher. As Hill goes on to say, to agree that we should respect a right of autonomy does not imply that we should ignore everything else (*ibid*:135).

Ways out of what has become a painful dilemma for supervising teachers are suggested in the work of Meyers (1987), based on the concept of 'imaginative introjection'. According to Meyers (1987:151), imaginative introjection poses such questions as what would it be like to have that done (to me)? Could I bear to be the sort of person who could do that? These are 'self-referential' responses which encourage the emergence of empathy. The student-teacher is engaged by the supervising teacher in consulting the self, in relation to the Other. In this process, a person's sense of her own identity, claims Meyers, acts as a moral filter. No one claims that such an approach is easy to implement, but

> obscuring morally suspect parts of the true self under the veil of ignorance
> may cripple moral intervention (Meyers, 1987:151).

Generalised and concrete others

Benhabib (1987) is rightfully critical of the dichotomies engendered by the justice and care perspectives - 'autonomy and nurturance, independence and bonding, and the sphere of justice and the domestic, personal realm' - and sees these being used to privilege a particular moral point of view based on 'the generalised will of the absent father' (*ibid* 163).

Benhabib (1987:163-4) rejects an exclusive reliance on the standpoint of the generalised other, suggesting instead that we attend to the needs of the concrete other.

> *The standpoint of the generalised other* requires us to view each and every individual as a rational being entitled to the same rights and duties we would want to ascribe to ourselves. In assuming this standpoint, we abstract from the individuality and concrete identity of the other.

On this view moral dignity is constituted by what we have in common. 'Our relation to the other is governed by the norms of formal *equality* and *reciprocity*' or 'public and institutionalised norms of interaction'. The moral categories associated with the generalised other are rights, obligations, entitlements. Moral feelings are predominantly those of respect, duty, worthiness and dignity.

> *The standpoint of the concrete other* requires us to view each and every rational being as an individual with a concrete history, identity and affective-emotional constitution. In assuming this standpoint we abstract from what constitutes our commonality. We seek to comprehend the needs of the other, his or her motivations, what he or she searches for or desires. Our relation to the other is governed by norms of *equity* and *complementary reciprocity*. (*ibid*)

The other is confirmed as a concrete, individual being, with specific needs and talents. On this view 'differences complement rather than exclude'. It is a complementary rather than an exclusionary view. Interactional norms are usually those associated with the private and non-institutional - friendship, love and care, confirming one's humanity and individuality - as in the supervisory approach adopted by Hillary Stanton in the next chapter. The moral categories which come to the fore are those of responsibility for others, bonding, and sharing, and the moral feelings are those of love, care, sympathy, and solidarity (Benhabib, 1987:164).

Benhabib does not lose sight of the universal principles of justice and fairness, but by focusing on the concrete, each will be 'given his or her due'. The Kantian view of autonomy as being subject to self-created, self-imposed obligations based on the rule-making propensity of the rational will is thus discredited.

All too often theoretical accounts of the development of practical morality and personal autonomy are not supported by reference to lived experience. The practicum

text which forms the basis of the next section shows how the justice ethic and the ethic of care work themselves out in the supervision of one student-teacher who is struggling to achieve self-autonomy. It demonstrates the need for a relational approach to the concrete other so that individuality and subjectivity can be sustained.

Pamela Pile and the struggle for autonomy

Some student-teachers are engaged in a desperate struggle to achieve self-autonomy and supervisory staff are not always aware of the dimensions of this struggle or the contradictory ways in which they themselves are implicated in the outcome. Such is the situation with Pamela Pile in her interaction with Hillary Stanton, her Field Supervisor and Susan Howe, the Liaison Lecturer. Pamela struggles with communicative apprehension (Hansford, 1988) related to a pathological distrust of lecturers. This manifests itself in emotional insecurity and dependence, a diminished sense of self-esteem, and an unacknowledged need for direction which at times leads to a refusal of autonomy.

Pamela is fearful lest her autonomy to make personal decisions affecting her future life and career is taken from her, but her demands for autonomy in other areas of her professional life are not so strident. The analysis shows both the justice perspective and the care perspective at work and how both interact to affect the degree of autonomy accorded. We see a student-teacher who, whilst generally at the preconventional and conventional stages of the development of moral autonomy, is also beginning with the help of her Field Supervisor to challenge the conventional and move to the post-conventional.

Communicative apprehension

Pamela describes the physiological effects of communicative apprehension very graphically.

> Up until .. this is the first prac I've been on that I've been able to speak to an adult, 'adult' in inverted commas, without my throat swelling up. I go into shock. I physically go into shock and *I can't help that* and that causes me a lot of problems [INT: Right (said in a nonjudgemental, accepting manner, conveying 'I respect what you say')] and I get really nervous and worked up about ...I've always found them very threatening. I came straight from school into Uni and that's my big thing. One thing you're being told what to do and your opinions are not valued at all, next they're saying come on tell us what you do, argue with me disagree with me, I mean, haaaaah [cynical laughter] that was my problem.

Pamela clearly feels the irony of being to all intents and purposes an adult, (she has just turned twenty and is, after all, married,) whist being unable to interact with other 'adults' *'in inverted commas'*. Although she demands autonomy for herself and the freedom to make decisions, she is not fully self-governing in that she does not feel strong enough to adopt a different viewpoint from that of the lecturer.

At the same time, although her condition appears to be capable of amelioration, she accepts it as a feature of her core self and in van Leeuwen's terms she existentialises the action, representing her problem as something which simply exists (van Leeuwen, 1995:97). Her view of the self is not one which allows for self-invention. The situation is beyond her control: *'I just can't help that.' 'I'd be gone, couldn't do it'. 'Wouldn't work.' 'I wouldn't have been able to.'*

Transference effects

Maladaptive, anachronistic, behaviours carried over from childhood are often associated with transference, whereby the feelings experienced with regard to significant others as a child are transferred to other adults in later life (Hunt, 1989). Rowan (1981:317) refers to the manifestation of 'the child-self 'in this regard, and Knowles (1992) has explored the links between beginning teachers' biographies and classroom practices with particular reference to coping strategies, and finds that strategies developed in the family situation carry through into teaching. Hence one student taught to be unassertive as a youngster was found to be unable to assert herself in the classroom.

In Pamela's interaction with her Field Supervisor we see evidence of the trusting adult-child, or mother-child relationship with which Pamela feels comfortable. She responds well to being gathered up and set down. There is safety in that dangers and pitfalls have been foreseen by the mother figure.

> PAMELA: *Every morning she gets me and sets me down and she goes through every lesson makes sure I know where I'm going* and that she knows cos she takes her job really seriously and that means for her she wants to make sure that I'm not going wrong anywhere, and that I'm organised and she won't let me loose on her class if I'm not organised, that attitude, I could tell that if I was really disorganised with something she'd just say 'no'. She wouldn't let me loose on her class if she felt I was going to destroy it and every afternoon she warned me that I wouldn't leave before four o'clock and we finish at three so she spends about an hour going through what happened.

Pamela's pathological distrust of lecturers

Pamela has an almost pathological distrust of lecturers, whom, with certain significant exceptions, she sees as powerful people with whom one cannot disagree.

> PAMELA: It's probably more with lecturers that you do it, [that is, being dishonest], *that's something I know everyone does it.* Even though they say, *most lecturers* say, we value your points, argue against us, all this *when you sit through every lecture and it's all on the same view, you think yeah, pull the other leg* [INT: You get a bit suspicious] and all your resources and all your texts and that you're given to read are all centred on one view you think, Hah! they're not going to take my view, irrelevant of what they say. There's very few lecturers I could write an honest essay and tell them my view.

Later on, however, Pamela comes to see the limitations of this view when she wants her Field Supervisor to believe in her honesty.

The level of generalisation in the above extract is maintained throughout the interview and provides Pamela with an assurance that she is right. She simply *knows* that everyone is 'dishonest' in their dealings with lecturers and that *most lecturers* will not take her view. The scornful and ironic 'hah' is another example of categorical modality. In this respect she appears to be operating at both a preconventional and a conventional level, although later on there is evidence to suggest she is moving towards a post-conventional stage. At the preconventional level she defers to

authority to ensure personal survival, whilst at the conventional level she accepts other people's view of the moral.

Having one's opinions valued

Pamela is not sufficiently self-autonomous to allow her opinions to be valued without becoming defensive.

> PAMELA: It [communicative apprehension] was ... *my problem is talking with one adult and having my opinions or views being valued and not being used to that and not being able to express it in a way that didn't sound like that I was being offended or defensive to their comments or trying to knock their comments.*

In the next extract she talks of a feeling of venturing into '*deep water*'. The hedging, '*I get really on something*'; the concluding tag, '*that's all*'; and the verbal confusion and hesitations, '*I get really out of deep water in*', reveal the degree of insecurity and apprehension which Pamela feels.

> INT: And what do you think .. why do you think that is? Have you any idea?

> PAMELA: No, I know it's more common than it's thought to be 'cos there's other girls I know who'd have the same problem and it doesn't come across because when you're looking at people they obviously can't see it because they tell me later you looked really cool after I've done a tute, you know, you didn't look nervous at all, meanwhile I'm struggling to even get a word out and there are other girls in the course who do have the same problem.

> INT: Did it happen while you were still at school?

> PAMELA: Yes, if there was ever a situation where a teacher talked to you, started to even look like they were listening to you in any *valued* way then *it would go and I'd start going* so it was just definitely with adults. I don't have any trouble with kids and I don't have any trouble talking with my peers unless I get really on something I'm really out of *deep water* in. When I get into deep water then it happens, that's all.

> INT: What do you mean deep water?

> PAMELA: It's either *personalised opinion,* I haven't got any backing or I feel I am not in control of the situation then it goes, definitely I've never felt I've been in control when I've been conferenced by lecturers except, perhaps, David Starkie, it'd never worry me with David. [Another Liaison Lecturer, not represented in this investigation]. He was more informal and possibly a bit more positive so that ... I don't know. I can't explain why it was David.

The modality in *except, perhaps David Starkie; possibly a bit more positive,* the unfinished utterance and the hedge *so that ... I don't know,* all suggest diffidence and uncertainty, and enable her to distance herself and to disassociate herself from her comments (Fairclough, 1992:142).

The evaluation of utterances is typical of teacher-pupil interaction and is in fact 'a powerful way of policing the agenda' (Fairclough, 1992: 156). Pamela is aware that anything she says is 'verbally marked' and continually frustrates the intention of her Liaison Lecturer by going on the defensive. Although her response may be pathological and militate against further autonomy, it is also politically astute in that she successfully refuses the ethos, or the total comportment, of the Liaison Lecturer (*ibid*: 166).

The intrusion of the personal and the private

Pamela's story reveals the way in which her personal and private life intrude into her developing professional life, and how this is handled by the Field Supervisor and the Liaison Lecturer. Without deliberately prying, Hillary Stanton has acquired considerable insight into Pamela's domestic circumstances.

> HILLARY: Well we took them out one night, Jan was one of my student teachers years ago. She and I took them out one night and we found out about them then because we talk usually during the day its work talk but after school we talk, or in the morning we talk about other things. I know she's married and sort of came straight from home into a marriage at a very young age. She's been married just about as long as I have, she misses her husband and I think that's some problem in this prac [INT: I think so, I'm sure of it]. I mean, I know how she feels. My husband's been up there in Darwin for a month so I know that's hard especially when you're in an uncommon situation, I'm in one that I'm familiar with, erm, I know that her dad was a teacher years ago and can't give her very much help and I know there's a lot of problems with her and the other, some of the other girls, which I think is another big problem here. She started off sharing a room with (one of the other students) and they fell out. She's had a few fights with a few of the girls there that she's told me about. She said you know that they'd say that she is bossy and she doesn't mean to be she's trying to work on that. So I think at the moment she's really got a lot on her plate, more than just her prac teaching.

Hillary's supervisory practice is informed by her awareness of Pamela's emotional life and desires. Susan Howe's response is very different. Susan was much less inclined to attempt to address these emotional factors. She confirmed that she 'was aware of Pamela's personal situation', and the fact that she missed her husband, but nevertheless, 'she seemed to be coping quite well' although she 'was exhibiting a high degree of anxiety'. At no time does Susan refers to the communicative apprehension faced by Pamela. She considers herself a rationalist and believes all things can be settled by rational discussion. This for her represents professional maturity, and as with doctors, non-professional problems are often seen as not strictly the business of the supervising lecturer, and beyond the call of duty (Fairclough, 1992:164).

The approach adopted by Hillary Stanton

Hillary had detected early on the communicative apprehension which she viewed as panic attacks, and she made Pamela's inability to engage in interpersonal communication an explicit focus of the conferencing.

> HILLARY: I had a talk to her about this yesterday. I find it easy to talk to her and say what I think but I think she panics about things too much, you know things that I would say to her. She puts a lot of work onto herself, mostly in writing up things ... overplanned a lot of times. She's had to do a lot more work than she needs to but when I suggested things, she says that's how she wants to do, she wants to be organised, so that's O.K.

Hillary is prepared to respect Pamela's personal autonomy and although she clearly feels that Pamela would do better to change, she gives the student reason and accords her the right to do things in her own way, even if she believes this is foolish. Throughout the interview Hillary speaks in a resigned way, her voice showing that she is determined not to let herself get ruffled by Pamela's failure to take advice. As she say in the next extract, *a lot of times its no big deal.*

> HILLARY: And when I've talked to her about her lesson, erm, I found that, often she has erm, sort of ... I don't think she er takes it very well, not that *she sort of gets upset about it but she seems to want to justify why she does everything erm before you've actually finished saying what you're saying. And a lot of times its no big deal,* only a little thing like her voice but she seems to

get quite upset but that happens and then, of course, Susan reinforced it. Her voice goes up really high when she's under stress, she might do it today while you're here [She didn't, although as we have seen she did experience other symptoms]. Her voice goes up really high. I don't think she likes being told that and the other thing is with timing, I tried to help her with her timing It's a hard thing to learn anyway, it's like cooking. She always seems to have some reason why which I don't always think sometimes it's valid but we've sort of ... I've said what I think about those sorts of things but when she give excuses I probably, I just say oh well what I think, that's up to her to use however that she likes to.

The 'problem' with Pamela's voice, however, is not a little thing but a persistent source of anguish ever since she was a child.

Hillary's refusal to allow herself to become emotionally upset by Pamela's apparent reluctance to take advice, and her ability to distance herself, to decentre as it were, enable her to act as a mirror for Pamela, revealing to her how others see her. Not even when Pamela passes on some uncomplimentary things that the other girls have said about her is Hillary at all put out. In the following extract Hillary reveals herself as both counsellor and coach - encouraging, leading, talking strategies, recreating the play, suggesting new moves, giving practical hints, drawing analogies.

INT: ... So you're encouraging her autonomy?

HILLARY: *I'm encouraging her to say what she thinks.* Yesterday, I said to her, she was worried about her interview with Susan, thinks Susan got the wrong impression ... I said the reason perhaps that that could come across is you *don't wait for people to say what they want to say first ... .before you butt in and say what you want to say ...* [INT: Great] so it *makes it look like you're not listening.* You may be listening, because she says she is, but you look like you're on the defensive because before Susan sort of finished saying something she says but I did that because ... She seemed to understand it and has taken it quite well. Whether she went home and worried about it ...

INT: Yes, she has, she's taken it quite well according to this. She's tried to explain herself. She talks about 'my inability to express myself without sounding self-opinionated' ...

HILLARY: Well, I've suggested to her that ... she says she's scared she's going to forget and not remember to say so I said write a note to help train your memory and she said I hate it when people write notes and I said that's what you've got to do. *You can't butt over people all the time because you'll always give the wrong impression.* Now I don't find that she does it so much with me, but she does it with Susan, but she does do it with me as well if I say how did you feel about the timing before I've finished timing. I have felt that she seems to listen but I don't know whether she believes me or not.

I asked Hillary if this reaction had something to do with Pamela's ability to evaluate her own work.

> HILLARY: Yes, yes, because I've said to her about her lesson plan in here I ask her what she thinks about the lesson before I actually show her or talk to her about the lesson so and I find that some of the things she picks up on that she's done wrongly but she doesn't pick up on everything and then when I point them out she either has a reason why it happened or she defends what she's done but I'd rather she'd picked it out that that had happened first before .. if she knows that something's going on or happening its better for her to say ... She's been getting a bit better at that I think [INT: Good] I suppose *I've been a bit leading*. Some kids weren't really participating in ... Who they were and what they were doing .

> And I've also told her that its not always a bad thing that all kids don't listen, because sometimes they don't. Sometimes things go wrong or they are off with the birds and I said as long as you make sure that next time they're the ones who don't always cop out one day they might be having a bad day and I also asked her to evaluate her lesson yesterday but I didn't see it ... but she hasn't done that.

Hillary rarely forecloses in her discussions with Pamela. Her practical experiential knowledge enables her to penetrate the very concerns that Pamela has about having to crawl for the teacher. Pamela is aware that Hillary knows this.

> PAMELA: *I'm sure she thinks I'm crawling to her ... because she teaches exactly the way I want to teach ... and I've been honest with her and tell her that I like it.*

Hillary, then, takes nothing for granted and remains for ever open-minded. As she says in the next extract:

> *I never quite know what they've got in their heads about what they have to do for their teacher.*

Hillary's approach is evidently successful. There are signs that Pamela is gaining increasing confidence in her own judgement and moving towards a post-conventional position which may involve *rebelling a bit* and standing up for oneself. This again supports the view that student-teachers are continually moving back and forth between the stages of moral autonomy.

> PAMELA: The other girls, they are still ... I can talk to you like this. I've always found you fair and I've always, I've never had any trouble with you but

a lot of the girls still go through it, and they told my teacher this, that they feel they must, must crawl and everything is a must, and everything must be positive and everything's got to be done to suit the teacher, to suit the lecturer, to suit everyone. and I'm getting ... I don't know ... *I can't understand myself but this year I think I'm rebelling a bit against that in that in some things I feel confident that perhaps I've found my way of doing it and I don't want to change to suit the lecturer* or whatever and if they say to me you know you spent too long on that conference, which was something I had, you know Susan said to me you took too long on that lesson and I agreed with that one, and then she said I also think you also took too long talking to those children explaining and I said "well I don't" *but I don't have enough words in my vocabulary without offending her and sounding defensive,* but I didn't feel I'd spent too long talking to those kids.

Nevertheless in spite of this move towards a post-conventional position, and Pamela's insistence on her personal autonomy or freedom to decide what she will teach and how she will teach it, there appears to be a unrecognised demand for direction as the next extract confirms.

INT: Would it be fair to say then, have I got the right picture, that she does require quite a bit of direction?

HILLARY: I've been giving her a fair bit because if I don't the times when I've let her go, give her her own free hand more or less, she seems unsure [INT: Yes, that's what I was getting it] about what to do so I've sort of suggested ways, I've sort of said if it was me I'd probably do it this way, you can do it this way, this way, this way but you do it how you like. I've always said you do it how you like. Like the timetabling. Some things are set, like the Maths because that's my relief time and I can't get around it you change to suit yourself so you don't have to cut if lessons. For example the other day it was ten o'clock it was drama time so she stopped her lesson to go and do drama. And I didn't say anything, er you know that was fine and then I said to her afterwards I said to her you stopped that lesson did you think that you needed to do that and she said I thought you wan ... I thought I needed to do the drama lesson otherwise I mightn't fit it in and I said well if that was me and the lesson was going fairly well I would have left the drama lesson and made sure I fitted it in at some other time and I don't know whether she didn't do that because she didn't know what to do or whether she was trying to please me. *I never quite know what they've got in their heads about what they have to do for their teacher* and I've tried to. [Laughter]

For someone who in other respects demands and insists on her personal autonomy and freedom to make decisions, Pamela certainly welcomes guidelines and direction. Hillary is able to offer these without undermining Pamela's ultimate responsibility for her own decisions, although at one point she is quite prepared to withdraw that

autonomy. The false starts and hesitations in this next extract suggest Pamela has not

benefitted from the autonomy that has been given her.

> HILLARY: I said to Susan yesterday I've been treating Pamela ... I've got high
> expectations of myself, I've got high expectations of the kids and I have high
> expectations of her and I said to Susan I look at Pamela as being someone
> who's going to be teaching next year. This is her second to last prac and the
> other one she's going bush at which we'll talk about later [although we never
> do] (apprehensive laughter) and erm I said I was treating her like you're
> somebody who is going to be working perhaps with me next year or in a
> school next year *you've got to be able to have the responsibility to do things
> and make your own decisions.* I don't think perhaps the freedom that I've given
> ... I think some other students might feel that's better than what Pamela does. I
> think she likes to have more of a guideline so I do sort of give her the
> guidelines to go through things.

In fact Pamela is somewhat in awe of the high expectations envisaged by Hillary.

When asked to what extent they shared the same attitudes and how much they had in

common Pamela replied:

> Pretty well, we're a pretty close match, she's probably a step higher than me,
> by higher I mean she has, I have a set of values but she's probably a step
> harder on herself than I am, she's probably a step more dedicated than I am.
> [INT: Did you say values then?] I said she had similar values to me ... she
> doesn't do a lot of the things I do.

As the more experienced and practised person in the dyad, Hillary aims to maintain

ties where possible without sacrificing the integrity of the self, the very problem

which Pamela has been wrestling with and which has caused her so much concern.

The concluding segment of the interview is of particular interest because it involves

reflection on the generalised other in the form of the other students that Hillary has

had over the years. At the same time the extract demonstrates that care and

compassion can be shown without descending to wishy-washy sentimentality. There

are times when the student-teacher has to make decisions for herself.

> HILLARY: And then she told me yesterday (incredulous laughter) that the
> girls at the college think I'm a bitch because I give her too much work to do, so
> we had a talk about that

> INT: Said in jest?

HILLARY: No, no, deadly serious I just about fell over and I said, well you know, I've been having a big think about this, the attitude of the girls is very different from the attitude that I had as a student and *the other students* that I've had. We wanted the most teaching we could get, the least amount of sitting around that we had to do because after two years you've watched so many people teach and do things. I look at this as a chance to get out and try all the things you learn at college and see if they work. Does all this theory work? and it doesn't (INT: Exaggerated laughter. Don't tell me that) you know, some of it works and some of it doesn't. It depends on classes. That's my view of a third year prac. Their view of a third year prac they expect to do a lot less, a lot less responsibility, and it makes me wonder. And I said to Pamela you don't have to do this, this is your choice. I'm quite happy in fact I'm happier to take my own class for more of the time but if you want to take it, do.

To sum up, Hillary's supervisory practice is characterised by attempts at imaginative introjection. Hers is very much a care perspective. She is constantly trying to stand in the shoes of the other, to puzzle out *what is going on inside their heads*. She does not foreclose, and attempts to see what is happening from the perspective of the other, using her own personal experiential knowledge as a basis for empathy. She persists in employing a relational approach even when she is not sure whether what she is saying is being listened to or is having any effect. She tolerates the subjective and the individualistic without being wishy-washy or tender-minded. This means she can demonstrate the attributes of the morally autonomous person and draw attention to aspects of the 'flawed self' which may be a source of harm to the student-teacher. But her approach to intervention is minimalist and invitational without distracting in any way from the autonomy of the other. She does not value or condemn, nor does she attempt to alter Pamela's view of lecturers' requirements. Some things simply have to be lived with.

The approach adopted by Susan Howe

Whereas Hillary saw Pamela's communicative apprehension much more in terms of a panic reaction and attempted to counsel Pamela on ways of coping, Susan attempted to disregard it and play it down.

INT: Have you discussed this problem as you call it about going into shock and your throat swelling up with anybody else?

PAMELA: I did tell Susan at one stage. She's got a lot of students so I don't know if she remembered, I did explain it to her when she suggested that we had peer assessment where they all sat and told you what your good and bad points were and I just went off at the person that suggested it in class and I went off and I went and explained it to her and said that it *wouldn't work* for me because I would go into shock and I *wouldn't been able to talk* half way through, my throat would be so swollen, *I'd be gone, couldn't do it,* so I have told her but that's about all, not many people know.

Later Pamela returns to this theme.

I told her once and I just went and visited her informally after writing something in my journal and I explained it to her but its not in writing anywhere, so she may not have remembered it.

Pamela's response is typical of what van Leeuwen (1995:93) calls de-agentialisation:

'an attempt to represent actions and reactions as impermeable to human agency and

brought about through natural and unconscious forces'. According to van Leeuwen de-

agentialisation, which I take to be a denial of agency or refusal of autonomy, is

achieved in three ways each of which is present in Pamela's story: *existentialisation,*

an example of which we have already seen, *naturalisation,* whereby an action is

represented as a natural process over which one has no control; and *eventuation*

whereby something is represented merely as an event which 'just happens' (*ibid*:97-8).

The inference must be that telling the lecturer did not bring about any noticeable

changes. The fact that such comments have to be recorded in writing before people

will act on them, suggests a justice perspective.

At the same time Pamela is well aware of some of the role conflict experienced by

Susan.

INT: Do you think [Susan] remembered what you've told her in the past?

PAMELA: I don't know [Drawn out, undecided]. I think Susan, ... it was harder for Susan to be a Liaison Lecturer than most because she had us in Professional Communication which is a trusting situation and now she's got us certainly turned back into being a lecturer, you're my student sort of thing.

Because of her heavy supervision load, Susan did not approach the conference in her

normal open-ended way. As Pamela put it:

> It made it so that you couldn't explain yourself I mean that I couldn't, I felt that I couldn't explain my self to Susan enough for her to understand what I was trying to say and she never got to explain to me what she meant, neither, very well.

Susan described herself as 'still coming in carrying other baggage without having geared up mentally'. She saw Pamela as the 'recipient' of all of this and as a result 'had to pull a bit of power'. Susan found the heavy load which meant she was seeing five to six students a day was 'emotionally and physically draining' and the resulting problems wereseen an 'endemic factor' in supervision.

> SUSAN: I think I didn't handle those well [the conferences with Pamela] and I think that's an instance where I needed to go away from that and come back a week later and tackle that again because I *just* felt totally frustrated with the second one which was on the day I was leaving and I didn't have time to go back and there was a breakdown I *just* felt we were not getting through to one another at all. I've talked to Patricia about that since. *We had a very rational discussion about it.* She said that she felt that she was becoming more defensive and as she became more defensive I became more aggressive and that's how I read it too. So I think I *just* got to the stage in that particular conference where I *just* felt, well, there is nothing I can give this student, it is not being received.

The repeated use of the modal adjunct 'just' to convey emphasis suggests a sense of inevitability, and an acceptance on Susan's part of her powerlessness to change the situation. Pamela was left feeling resentful. Her view was that she had been unfairly left with '*half comments*'.

Given Pamela's unshakeable views concerning lecturers, anything she says is determined by her sense of the political as when she returns to Professional Communication in the next extract. Pamela is clearly aware of the need to maintain a 'politeness accord' (Goodwin, 1980, cited in West, 1995: 121).

> PAMELA: I found that's the other hard thing about having Susan there. I had in mind that this was Professional Communications and this conference, and then I'm writing about her [in my Journal] and it's not that I wanted to be negative about it but you still find you want to be careful about what you're saying and it definitely does affect it
>
> INT: You mean from the power relationship point of view. From the lecturer/student point of view?
>
> PAMELA: Yes. I found her comments really helpful. I tended to ... I always have trouble when *they*'re observing you and this is any lecturer that *they*'re

observing but *they* also miss things too and *they* write down the things that they miss as things that you miss and if you try and say that I did do that then it's taken as an assault on *them*.

INT: Yes, carry on, this is very useful.

PAMELA: And I mean I sometimes change my tone in my voice down quiet and I know that and sometimes they don't hear what I'm saying and especially when I'm going around to individuals they don't you can only watch so much and they only see so much and sometimes when you try and fill them in on what was happening in the peer groups some lecturers tend to be upset by that and take it that you're just saying that their advice is wrong and usually I think that the advice they're giving me is great but I want to explain that some of it I tried to do it and it didn't work so maybe they could give me some other help. *I know I always come across as being defensive about any advice I'm given.*

Although Susan admits to pulling a bit of power she was apparently unaware of the effects of power and the way liaison lecturers are implicated in the outcome.

Pamela's struggle for personal autonomy was at its most intense when it became apparent that Susan Howe was not convinced that she, Pamela, would benefit from a bush practicum. In this extract her hurt and suffering are almost tangible.

PAMELA: Another thing I haven't told you she said and that is I told my teacher I'm having second thoughts about doing bush prac cos I don't know if I can cope with another four weeks away from Brett (her husband) [INT: Yes] in this year. It's really turning me upside down to be away that long and I thought we had to have our programs prepared before we went on prac and I couldn't see how we could do that to kids we didn't know and I told my teacher that and she told Susan ... and Susan told my teacher she felt it would be a good idea if I didn't do a bush prac and when she told me that it hurt me because I'm going bush next year, irrelevant, Brett's getting transferred and *I'm going* to teach in a bush station and so I figured its either she doesn't like bush pracs total or she thinks I can't cope? And when I got back to Roseville House, Charmaine told me that Susan had told her that she had no qualms about recommending her for a bush prac and I thought well, huh, that means it's me, she doesn't think I can cope with a bush prac.

As the original suggestion originated with Pamela in the first place it is difficult to see why she should object so vehemently to Susan's apparent reluctance to endorse her going on the practicum. I was never able to sort out the confusion surrounding this, but it is typical of the apparent illogicality which surrounds the practicum.

Pamela was never able to confide in Susan about her desires as she could with Hillary. This was only partly the result of time constraints and the fact that Susan left that

night. More significant were the messages Pamela thought she was getting with regard

to the separation of the personal from the professional as the following extract makes

clear. It also suggests that the supervisory processes involved were anything but

relational. There appears to have been no reciprocity, no co-mingling, no sharing.

Neither does Pamela view what has occurred as genuine caring or empathy: *obviously*

to me she doesn't care whether I'm, what's going on, you know, inside. The accuracy

of this perception is not the issue here. It is the reluctance to engage in relational

dialogue that is important.

> INT: Well, I mean how much of all this you've been confiding in me, have you confided in Susan?

> PAMELA: Susan left that night.

> INT: But for instance, Brett, have you told her about it? Does she know or have the other girls told her perhaps that you do feel your world is upside down without him around?

> PAMELA: That was the one thing I really..., the day she came and saw me Wednesday I was really sick. I'd been sick all that weekend, and during that lesson I got sick, I got stomach ache, and I squatted down on the floor and I was just trying to continue on but I couldn't rev up the lesson and that was one of her comments, that my spelling went too slowly.

> INT: Did she *know* you were ill? [Pregnant with significance]

> PAMELA: When I tried to tell Susan that I got the impression, she seemed to say to me as a professional, you should be able to overcome sickness and all these sort of problems, depression, put on an act, and go out there and do it irrelevant. and so I, at that point, *when I'm given that sort of cue, I cut off any, telling them anything personal, and from then on, I wouldn't have ever told her anything else about how I was feeling at the time because obviously to me she doesn't care whether I'm, what's going on, you know, inside,* and I've just got to overcome ... that is professional and be able to go out there and do it.

Susan's attempts to filter out or set aside personal and emotional considerations, lead

to rejection and disengagement. Pamela simply *cuts off* when given the sorts of cues

she receives. She does not see herself as receiving the love, care, sympathy and

solidarity she needs. Whereas she feels comfortable in the ethos of David Starkie and

that of her class teacher, she finds Susan's more detached, unemotional, and rational

approach with its considerations of worthiness difficult to come to terms with. She

cannot share her emotional life with her lecturer as she can with her Field Supervisor.

PAMELA: I had a hard time that morning so I wouldn't, I wouldn't have told her any more, I won't. I've told her that I was missing Brett.

INT: You really haven't answered my question. [Hint of impatience]. Does she *know* about you? [i.e. know well enough to be able to empathise]

PAMELA: She knows a little bit. She knows a little bit. She went out with us that night, the night before, but she wanted to go out and keep it non-business, it was a party. She doesn't know me very well all, no, and she wouldn't know that and she wouldn't know that I've had trouble with the girls back at the House and that her comments were just adding to it. She doesn't know any of that.

This last comment is somewhat naive for Susan does know of '*the business back at the House*'. I felt it necessary at this point to put a differing interpretation on Susan's concerns with the bush practicum, suggesting that Susan did in fact care and was acting out of concern for her. The hesitations and incomplete utterances in the following extract reveal the extent of Pamela's emotional suffering and hurt.

PAMELA: I know I want to go out for myself but I can't I don't know if it would be as valuable for me, because this is ripping.... this isn't one of my best pracs, I can't perform as well.... I know the bush prac is going to be hard. I'm just being honest with myself and I don't know if I can cope with that situation. What you're saying about Susan, it might be true. She may be saying that without Brett I can't cope with it but she didn't say that to my teacher and it get back to me. You see she spoke to my teacher for ages after while I was still teaching and I never got to talk to Susan. It happened after she had left.

May be that was a dangerous thing in itself, that *I get left with half comments.*

Susan's approach, then, is that of the cognitive rationalist who does not allow emotionality to affect judgement. A justice ethic appears to dominate over a care ethic. The student-teacher is made to feel that individual, personal, subjective considerations are not allowed to intrude. This prevents the growth of relational dialogue.

To sum up, this chapter has provided some insights into the nature of the struggle that some student-teachers enter into to achieve self-autonomy. Pamela's story reveals the

impact that student-teachers' personal lives can have on their professional

development (Pajak and Blase, 1989), the effects of attempting to keep the personal

and private separate from the professional, how emotionality can affect supervisory

practice, and how self concerns can frustrate the supervisory process. It suggests that

some supervisors may not be aware of how they are implicated in the final outcome,

nor how they prevent a relational dialogue from emerging.

CHAPTER 18

THE PRESENCE OF ANXIETY AND THE INDUCEMENT OF GUILT

On several occasions student-teachers tell of the anxiety they experience before the visit of the Liaison Lecturer. Anxiety is closely related to surveillance and continual assessment (Calderhead, 1988:39). However, in this section I argue that besides a generalised fear of the unknown and the unpredictable, this anxiety stems from feelings of guilt that are induced during the socialisation process, and maintained and exacerbated by institutional and system processes.

The experience of Beatrice Kramer

The account provided by Beatrice Kramer in the face of Geoff Quinn's visit epitomises the anxiety experienced by student-teachers and the way this affects their work.

> BEATRICE: Actually, I must admit that usually when I'm being watched I don't have any problems with it but I felt very anxious I just felt like chucking the whole thing in. You know in the middle of your lesson you've got panic stricken and when I came back I said to Chris [a Physical Education specialist and peer who had just qualified] I feel shocking now, I feel really emotional. [INT: Was this because there were three adults there?] I don't know to tell you the truth. I don't know. I think erm the fact that I don't know Geoff [the Liaison Lecturer] and that I've only met him once and don't know what he's expecting and I don't know anything about this person who's coming to evaluate you and it seems very unfair.

Invariably, previous lessons without the Liaison Lecturer present go well, or so it seems.

> BEATRICE: I didn't feel any stress with Chris and in fact the lesson I did the week before with Chris watching was really good, and I was really pleased with that lesson, but with this one I just felt panic-stricken and you feel like everyone's looking at you and that everything you do is wrong, you know. I feel a bit like this right now.

After the lesson has been completed and the conference is over the student-teacher

invariably feels happier with her performance.

> INT: But overall you were happy with the lesson.

> BEATRICE: In retrospect, yes. I was happy with it. But at the time I felt I'd made a terrible, terrible mess of it which is really strange because I don't normally feel like that, but Chris said it was all right, it was all right.

The anxiety and apprehension has been with her for some while.

> I can't really let.. you see, When I woke up this morning I felt really nervous in the pit of my stomach really terrible, and when I got to school I was alright and then about ten o'clock I started feeling shocking and when I got in the staffroom it was there I started feeling really awful. Everything was planned and out, everything was perfectly organised, I just felt this feeling of impending doom, you know (much relieved laughter) and when I got out there and Geoff hadn't turned up, I was supposed to be meeting him but he hadn't turned up so I was racing round. Where is this person? I went out to the ... I was just going across to the area, I saw him pull up in his car so I went and got him, took him over to the area and he sat there while I got everything out and organised it and stuff.

Beatrice has no explanation for her heightened anxiety, although she believes the fact

that she has not met Geoff before might have something to do with it.

> I erm don't really know whether its him or what it is. It might be not knowing who he is and where he's at and that sort of thing. It could have something to do with it. I think you need to know that the person is friendly and if you don't know them it's very hard to know whether they are friendly or not, you know. Maybe if I'd had him as a lecturer or something or maybe just seen him around, the first time I'd seen him was the meeting we had here even though I'd been up to the college a few times and looked in his door but he wasn't there, That was during that week and I'd just assumed he must be busy.

It may be that her previous practicum in Alice Springs which had to be aborted,

contributed to her anxiety on this occasion.

> I fell in a heap (in Alice Springs) and that was a big shock to me to suddenly not be able to cope with everything and I suddenly thought that all these things are perhaps things people should have told me before, little things like clean off the blackboard before you start a new lesson.

It is also possible that given the socio-dramaturgical nature of the practicum as a

performance, Beatrice is suffering from stage fright. She continually refers to being

watched or looked at. There may only be a tenuous link between anxiety and guilt in her case.

How supervisors are implicated

Close examination of the text suggests that anxiety, and the apprehension, guilt and self-doubting that accompanies it, are induced or inculcated by university supervisors and class teachers. Guilt is an effect of the supervisory process in four related ways. In the first place it stems from a damaging misconstrual of the purpose of self-reflexivity, secondly it relates to the rhetoric of perfection and the achievement of excellence, thirdly it is part of the socialisation process whereby novice teachers find themselves caught in a series of guilt traps (Hargreaves, 1994), and fourthly it is complicated by the presence of incompleteness, uncertainty, and fragmentation.

In his investigation into the social and motivational patterns which accompany the instantiation of teachers' sense of guilt, Hargreaves (1994:141) observed that whilst we know a great deal about how teachers teach,

> [W]e know much less about how teachers feel while they teach; about the emotions and desires which moderate their work.

Although a central emotional preoccupation with teaching is not 'inherently bad' or 'consistently damaging in its effects', anxiety and guilt can become demotivating and disabling. Hargreaves describes the guilt traps teachers find themselves in as

> the social and motivational patterns which delineate and determine teachers' guilt: patterns which impel many teachers towards and imprison them within emotional states which can be both personally unrewarding and professionally unproductive (*ibid*:142).

He distinguishes guilt traps from guilt trips which are 'the different strategies that teachers adopt to deal with, deny or repair this guilt' (*ibid*).

The practicum text demonstrates that the protagonists, particularly mature-age student-teachers, have very high personal ideals and standards and that they recognise these in their class teachers, openly acknowledging, as does Barry Collins, that they could never show such a commitment and that they fall short of the standards their class teachers set.

According to Davies (1989), cited in Hargreaves (1994:143),

> at the centre of the feeling of guilt is self disappointment, a sense of having done badly, fallen short, of having betrayed a personal ideal, standard or commitment.

It appears that the presence of the university supervisor only serves to highlight any discrepancy which occurs, creating a climate of self-resentment which sets in train a process of depressive guilt, the result of 'failing to protect people and values that constitute a good internal object' (*ibid*).

Hargreaves identifies four 'paths of determination' which embroil practising teachers in guilt traps.

1. *The commitment to care and nurturance*. Beatrice immediately assumes responsibility for her Liaison Lecturer, adding to her already heightened sense of anxiety, and she resents having been placed in such a position. She appears to feel that her commitment to care and nurturance has been exploited, but, at the same time, knows she would feel guilty if she had not behaved as she did. 'Teachers, it seems, *can* care too much.' (Hargreaves, 1994: 147)

2. *Openendedness of teaching*. Teaching is a potentially open-ended activity and there are 'no commonly understood criteria for acceptable care or appropriate care' (*ibid*: 148). Robert Scales, whom we will meet in the bush practicum, is one of the few Liaison Lecturers to address this issue directly. Robert realises the dangers and the

heavy toll on the quality of life and effectiveness that corrosive guilt brings with it, and seeks to provide alternatives.

3. *Accountability and intensification.* In their role as assessors, Liaison Lecturers often add to the intensification of teachers' work, particularly when they provide detailed advice and ask more of the student.

4. *The* persona *of perfectionism.* Student-teachers feel trapped into having to construct and maintain a *persona* of perfectionism. Some students however do penetrate what is occurring. For example Mary Motherwell is quite open and accepting of her 'failings' but as for many teachers

> [To] confess or confide personal difficulties is, in many cases, to betray signs of incompetence, inadequacy or unsuitability (Hargreaves, 1994: 151).

Guilt and perfectionism are one result of the separation of the public and private domains in which 'family and work are constructed as oppositional' (Biklen, 1993). The situation in which student-teachers find themselves is not simply brought about through 'irrational and treatable personal drivenness' (Hargreaves, 1994: 152), but as Biklen (1993) points out, is part of the acceptance, indeed the forceful necessity of enhancing the domestic reputation of teaching through the promotion of the heroic.

Teaching becomes heroic when teachers' consider their work to be central to their lives. The hero works with little sleep, is single-minded, and allows personal and private lives to blur. Heroes are expected to be prepared to sacrifice themselves. Very often Field Supervisors are chosen as role models on the basis of their proven heroism, because they *do* show student-teachers the sacrifice that is required, working into the early hours of the morning, coming in at week-ends, completing mammoth programming tasks, struggling against illness, disciplining the self. Wendy Jones is a case in point.

The inducement and inculcation of guilt proceeds by way of 'discursive interpellation' (Rocco, 1994). What we expect of ourselves is often shaped by what we believe others expect of us. Hence the fear and anxiety experienced when we feel we cannot live up to or meet their expectations. Those student-teachers who lapse, as in the case of Barry Collins, are often unwittingly made to feel inadequate and guilty. Moreover, they are in a no-win situation because they can literally never do enough.

In some cases of personal drivenness, Field Supervisors can see what is occurring but do not see it as part of their responsibility to intervene. Wayne's field supervisor, and Mary Motherwell's field supervisor both comment on the amount of work and sacrifice undertaken but do not see it as their role to intervene. This may well be connected with the nurturing and maintenance of collegiality. Huberman (1993: 29) points to the fragility of the interpersonal climate in schools. Unsolicited advice can easily be misconstrued whereas 'non-interference with the core work of others constitutes a sign of professional respect'. Some supervisors question their moral right to intervene.

It appears therefore that supervisors should address explicitly the nature of teachers' work and the relationship between their personal and professional lives, with a view to reducing the amount of guilt and anxiety some student-teachers experience during the practicum.

CHAPTER 19

COLLEGIALITY AND EMOTIONAL BONDING

A recurring feature of the successful practicum was collegiality, the feeling of being treated like a genuine colleague. This chapter examines how collegiality (or colleagueship) was accorded, how it related to autonomy, and the degree to which it was associated with emotional and relational bonding (Weiss, 1986).

Collegiality and the place of expertise

Expressions of collegiality were usually reciprocated. If a student-teacher claimed to be in a collegial relationship, this was confirmed by the Field Supervisor. Collegiality was rarely extended to embrace Liaison Lecturers, possibly because as an institutional phenomenon, it operates differently in schools compared to universities, and possibly because of the presence of power, status and knowledge differentials which are inimical to collegiality. As Billig and colleagues put it, no matter how mutuality and reciprocity are achieved,

> expertise, however constituted, circumscribed or expressed will not go away and cannot be ignored however deprecating, ambivalent or hunchshouldered the form authority takes (Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton and Radley, 1988:67).

Amongst Field Supervisors and student-teachers, an unequal form of egalitarianism, or non-authoritarian form of authoritarianism, could be detected which produced an ambivalence characterised by deference behaviour on the part of the student-teacher. Billig et al (*ibid*) tell us that the attenuation and restriction of deference in the face of authority often brings about humour and gentle rivalry, and that 'negotiating the appropriate tones of the conversations and thereby negotiating their respective roles and identities' (*ibid*:70) becomes an important part of the learning that takes place. 'The

interpersonal dilemmas of equality and expert are never fully resolved, but continue to reconstitute themselves in varying forms' *(ibid:*71).

Conditions for the award of collegiality

The conditions for awarding collegiality included showing evident concern and caring for children in the class and ensuring everything was being done to meet their needs; demonstrating a sound grasp of pedagogical and content knowledge; displaying resourcefulness by knowing how to obtain or manufacture teaching resources; showing concern for the reputation and status of other staff; and demonstrating support for culture of the school. This accords with the work of Little (1982:385) who concluded that collegiality is based on 'equality of effort, irrespective of function and status'.

The notion that all involved were doing similar kinds of work helped create a commonality and a solidarity, based on a shared understanding of the difficulties faced. This affected the way in which advice was given, the student's perception of what constituted professional behaviour, and the provision of autonomy. The earlier collegiality was established, the more successful and positive was the interaction. In some cases the opportunity to be treated as a genuine colleague, albeit a junior colleague, was extended to the student from the beginning of the practicum and, providing the student responded positively, became self-fulfilling.

Collegiality also involved trustfulness and at times appeared to stem from an unjustified optimism. In their review of research into private experience, Singer and Kolligian (1987:542) comment that in

> our society [western, WASP] it seems likely that we sustain positive emotional
> states and a consequent tendency towards relatively effective day-to-day action
> through a pattern of illusory hopefulness.

However just treating someone as a colleague did not always ensure collegiality. Some students, like Barry Collins and Pamela Pile, were aware that they had a subordinate attitude, and they failed to negotiate or respond to the appropriate tones of the conversation. In trying to overcome this they were often accused of insubordination and collegiality could not be maintained. In most cases, however, the supervisor's optimism triumphed and trust was not misplaced. For this to occur, there had to be a basis for affiliation and a sense of complementarity and compatibility involving shared interests and beliefs about situations (Weiss, 1986).

In her more recent writing, Little (1990) has argued that the use of the term collegiality is 'conceptually amorphous' and 'ideologically sanguine'. Under such conditions, collegiality often amounts to no more than 'widespread collaboration and collective capacity', leading to the breaking down of teacher isolation, and amounting to nothing more than 'getting along' and 'working well together' (*ibid*:311). Hence, Little concludes, 'much that passes for collegiality does not add up to much' (*ibid*). Whilst this is undoubtedly true, collegiality was a *sine qua non* of the successful practicum, and did much to raise student-teachers' self-esteem and give them a belief in themselves.

The emergence of collegiality

An analysis of the interaction between Christine Clayton, one of the recent school leavers in the group, and Dorothy Harding, a mature-aged teacher with children at High School, demonstrates the growth of collegiality and reveals the awkwardness that is sometimes felt in the early stages of collegial work (Little, 1982:337).

Early in the practicum Dorothy encouraged the growth of openness and autonomy and established the guidelines: 'For heaven's sake,' she said, according to Christine, 'tell me if you don't like the way I'm doing this. If you want me to keep right out of things, tell

me'. As the practicum progressed Christine began to use Dorothy in the planning of the

lesson. 'Would you sit besides George today?' she asked Dorothy, 'I'm a bit concerned

about him.'

Throughout the practicum there existed a sense of working towards a common goal.

> DOROTHY: I call her a teacher. I don't know what I'd do if the student-teacher
> was so different. With Christine it's all so comfortable and natural.

This acceptance of Christine as a teacher stemmed partly from what she was doing for

the children.

> DOROTHY: I'm so impressed ... She's working so hard for them and is so
> sensitive to their needs. It's wonderful having her.

For Christine the feeling of being a professional carried over into the conference. 'I

don't feel a kid any more,' she confided. At the same time, she was quite open and

honest about her inexperience. 'I'm so glad you did that,' she said to Dorothy on one

occasion, 'I didn't know what to do. I liked the way you settled them down again.' Such

humility is characteristic of collegial relationships and stems from the complexity of

the task and the limitations of one's own knowledge (Little, 1982).

Another student-teacher, Wendy Johnson, spoke of 'building better lessons' together

with her Field Supervisor, Ruth Wells. Although Ruth tended to dominate the

conferences, she never did this in a bossy, talkative way. 'I was not just a student to

her,' Wendy observed, 'but somebody with a point of view and a right to express it. She

doesn't always assume I'm wrong.'

In each of these cases, the Field Supervisor provided suitable conditions under which

self-autonomy could be developed. This did not mean that all controls were removed,

but conditions were provided in which autonomy could be exercised and strengthened.

The importance of high expectations and the presence of professionalism

Another condition for the award of collegiality was that Field Supervisors were likely to have very high expectations of student-teachers and insist that these be met. Paradoxically supervisors were also likely to think that students were too hard on themselves and over-critical in their self-evaluations. It would appear that Field Supervisors themselves contributed to this condition by creating high expectations, and this acted as yet another covert controlling device linked to the inculcation of guilt. Student-teachers invariably acknowledged the teacher's insistence on high expectations and were either stimulated or intimidated by it.

Conversely, collegiality was difficult to establish where student-teachers perceived a lack of professionalism, diminished effort, or deficiencies in content knowledge on the part of Field Supervisors. This is illustrated by such comments as:

> The teachers still hadn't got the program ready by the end of the prac! There could have been more professionalism. (Although, in this instance, the student-teacher had failed to recognise the process-orientated nature of the approach being adopted.)

> If she didn't know what negotiated text was, then how could she possibly offer suggestions. She's certainly not informed on the latest methods. A lot of her methods came out of the ark.

> One day he couldn't do *Racetrack* because he'd left his tables at home which may explain the lack of response. There's a problem too with his spelling. Should I tell him? Sometimes he picks up the dictionary and changes it but then he lapses.

The presence of emotional and relational bonding

In some cases, the growth of collegiality was reinforced by emotional bonding. In others the process was characterised by emotional detachment. Emotional bonding meant identifying closely with the feelings, triumphs, and sufferings of the student-teacher, and providing nurturance where needed (Weiss 1986).

Anderson (1987) concluded friendship groups and peer support had a more profound effect on determining attitudes towards teaching than professional socialisation. Baker (1983) working from a developmental model of interpersonal attraction found that 'individuals who like one another actively seek more interaction which in turn leads to more liking' but emphasised the distinction between personal liking and professional relationships.

Emotional bonding involving friendships did not negate respect for professional expertise, nor did it prevent significant personal differences and disagreements from emerging. Stocker (1987) warns us against a naive view of friendship as non-conflictual or non-political.

> In regard to friendship, the correct course of action and of feeling may not be a wholly good one, nor even one which allows one to escape guilt, shame, and the like, or to escape *wronging*, not merely harming, others ... The realm of ethics, including that of duties, admits of irresoluble conflicts - of dirty hands, unavoidable compunction, guilt or shame, and dilemmas. (Stocker, 1987: 60)

The 'quality of relation' (Noddings, 1986:496) remained crucial. The emergence of close friendships did not prevent participants from speaking out compassionately in the face of poor performance and marginal commitment on either side.

> One whose fidelity is part of his or her relations (to people) cannot ... simply accept the people they love and the institutions in which he grew up ... (and there can be) no self-actualisation in the acceptance of a flawed self. (*ibid*:501)

Many participants managed such situations very well by associating criticism with professional advice, and not allowing this to intrude or disturb the emergent friendship, thus lending support to Gilligan's conclusion that 'friendship ... has its natural home in women's morality' (Stocker, 1987:59).

Bonding appears to be of considerable importance for the maintenance of ontological security and the handling of existential anxiety (Giddens, 1991). Giddens sees practical consciousness, the creation of a shared attitude towards work, based on a level-headed, pragmatic approach whereby 'we do not go overboard' (Wildman *et al*, 1990), as providing for ontological security.

Trust, hope and courage are essential to underlying emotional commitment whilst 'confidence in the reliability of persons' is essential (Giddens, 1991:38). 'Basic trust is a screening off device in relation to risks and dangers in the surrounding settings of action and interaction' (*ibid*: 40), and threatening events are bracketed out through a generalised attitude of hope. Giddens seeks to establish close links between creativity and trust, and demonstrates that anxiety is associated with feelings of abandonment, and that feelings of helplessness can under certain circumstances lead to hostility (Giddens, 1991:46). This has important implications for the practicum for without sufficient trust, student-teachers find it difficult to be genuinely and spontaneously creative.

A gender dimension

By far the majority of the participants in this investigation were women. Some feminist writers believe that women are more comfortable in co-operative, collaborative settings than men (Ashton-Jones and Dene, 1990:282), and although collegiality does not necessarily imply collaboration, the former is often reinforced by, and provides the conditions for, the latter. 'Comfortability' is an important part of

connected or relational knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarula, 1986). It is therefore important to consider the subjective, contextual and variable nature of comfortability and its effects on the participants.

Disadvantages of bonding

Some forms of emotional bonding involving transference can result in the student-teacher remaining over-dependent on the Field Supervisor. Bonding can also work against collaboration, becoming exclusionary or incestuous and promoting privatism and separatism.

Factors preventing bonding

Factors threatening bonding are not easy to establish for, as Reason (1981:319) pointed out when he attempted to explore the dialectics of two-person relationships, we are still dealing with *'separate persons in relation'*.

Failure to empathise and provide psychological security can prevent emotional bonding. Barbara Knight's experience is very instructive. No desk was provided for her at the start of the practicum, she had to sit on a chair with a notebook perched on her knee and she was not involved in anything, even administrative tasks. On the second day she secured a desk of her own and brought a cover from home so she didn't have to look at the chipped paint and ripped vinyl: 'These are the things that help to make me a teacher ... to have space that was mine'.

This nesting behaviour did not go unnoticed by the Field Supervisor who failed to appreciate its significance. Her comments in the interview were dismissive and she treated it as something of little importance. However, comfortability is a highly

subjective notion. Not all student-teachers appeared fazed by not being provided with a desk or a space which they could identify as theirs.

Events occurring early in the practicum can militate against bonding. For example, the way the student-teacher is introduced to the class can affect the level of security. When Barbara Knight was not presented to the class as a teacher,

> I knew I was in for a hard time with the kids ... these kids don't think I'm real. She's the boss and she's my boss.

Although some students were not worried about their status, the majority preferred to be introduced as teachers rather than student-teachers or Teachers-in-Training, particularly in upper primary classes. Beatrice Kramer was not at all worried about being introduced as 'a student-teacher coming to train'. The Field Supervisor gave her the opportunity to talk about herself and treated it as a 'get to know you day'. Another student, on the other hand, wished to be treated as a practising teacher and was introduced as such to the class, although through a telling oversight this was not done until the afternoon of the first day. She was therefore most indignant when she was called to the School Office over the intercom and addressed as 'the student-teacher'. She felt as if her cover was blown. She saw the kids eyes light up. 'It was as if they were saying "Ah, now we know!"'

School climate tended to affect bonding and determined how a student-teacher was received. Schools that conveyed a negative approach and authoritarian image tended to regard the student as a *student*-teacher. Schools with a more democratic climate and open style of management promoted the student as a *teacher*. Charmaine Cresswell records:

> This school treated me like a professional, the whole school. I have the authority of a teacher and I'm treated like one. I was introduced as a teacher and given the opportunity to speak to the children. In the past a couple (of Field Supervisors) have introduced me as a student-teacher and you see the kids eyes light up - fun time! It's nice to be respected as a teacher. There's a big difference between 'helping' and 'teaching'. The kids can be confused by this.

Annette Masters described her 'wonderful' introduction to the classroom.

> She told them someone special's going to come, a student from D.I.T. She told them they were expected to treat me in the same way they treated her. For example, the children had to say 'goodbye'. It didn't happen on previous pracs and made you feel part of the classroom. It's lots of little things like that that Field Supervisors tend to neglect.

Emotional detachment

Notwithstanding the part played by bonding, emotional detachment, (controlling or concealing the emotions), was particularly admired and affected the quality of the relation. Opportunities for emotional learning emerged throughout the practicum, and some Field Supervisors offered instruction in how to manage feeling-states, and how to react appropriately to advice and suggestions. Autonomy was closely related to the ability to exercise self-control. This section examines the degree of emotional detachment demonstrated by two recent school leavers.

Early in the practicum Annette Masters wrote in her Journal:

> This is the best I've ever felt during pracs. The lessons are becoming easier to plan, I'm not getting myself worked up, I don't get the feeling I'm being watched and that takes the pressure off.

'Generally,' commented Grace Marchmont, her Field Supervisor,

> she doesn't show her emotions at all. She doesn't always react when you talk to her. She keeps a straight face and you wouldn't know whether it was ... which way it was affecting her ... she prides herself on her efficiency and being on top. Because she's like that, I feel obliged to ensure she has the time to work that way.

Certain types of admired student behaviour elicit reinforcing responses.

Opportunities for learning emotional detachment were provided prior to the visit of the Liaison Lecturer. Annette was clearly worried about being observed. This was the first time she had had anything to do with her Liaison Lecturer and she didn't even

know what he looked like. No-one at College had told her that he had gone away prior

to the practicum and she didn't know who to get in touch with during his absence:

> ANNETTE: No-one said I was definitely going to have him and it threw me when he arrived on the Monday and I found the other girls were going to have somebody else.

Annette's Field Supervisor played a crucial role in helping her learn how to overcome

her anxiety.

> ANNETTE: She told me don't worry at all. There's not a lot he can pick up on. I thought if she's happy, Roger is probably going to be happy too.

This simple advice was sufficient to reassure Annette and, when her experience of the

conference with Roger was positive, she could already feel her teaching improving.

Nevertheless, Annette avoided any close personal relationship with Grace. Although

she was thankful for the emotional support she received, she kept the professional

aspects of her work entirely distinct from the personal aspects saying

> a lot of it is not not being able to get on with a person, but a question of hard work and doing what you are meant to do. You can still get through [the practicum].

Grace recognised this professionalism saying 'if she was slacker we might have a few

more hassles'. Little (1982:334) observed that 'a focus on practices as distinct from

teachers, helps to preserve self-respect and eliminate barriers to discussion'.

Annette is therefore allowed a considerable amount of autonomy which, in Grace

Marchmont's opinion, reduces the risk of conflict.

> GRACE: I'm fairly free to give someone a go at something therefore the question of assertiveness may not arise. It's not their home and they are visiting. This is why I like to let them have the classroom.

At the same time she would not abandon her class. She kept herself unobtrusively

occupied during Annette's lessons, often working behind a screen or on the other side

of the room.

In Annette's case, there was no hint of a challenge to the Field Supervisor, neither does she 'persist or insist on doing something not approved of'. Judging by her comments on the advice provided, Annette is in fact very undemanding and modest, as when she says with due deference and humility 'I don't feel I'm that good. Other girls from here are getting regular feedback. I would have liked a few more hints. I'm always willing to work for my next lesson.'

Charmaine Cresswell, another recent school leaver like Annette, was also given a considerable amount of autonomy by her Field Supervisor, Gerry Walsh. Although her Liaison Lecturer felt that Charmaine didn't want direction, Charmaine is aware that she needs direction but 'not too much.' 'I'd ask a question but what I'm really saying is help!' This is a typical example of a help obtaining strategy (Weiss, 1986). Gerry's ability to read these indirect speech acts is crucial. 'She'll ask me usually is this O.K? Does this sound alright? And if I do suggest a method, she'll take it on board.' In Charmaine's view, Gerry, more than anything else, offered the freedom to experiment but before she could progress she needed to be told she was coping well, 'surviving, not striving' as she put it in her journal.

Charmaine did not need to argue for her point of view. She tells us that Gerry encouraged risk-taking but protected her 'in the subtle way he has of expressing his doubts if something is not likely to work' by saying 'O.K, do that but be careful, or, maybe you could talk to the kids and establish the ground rules'.

Gerry provided the confirmation and re-assurance that Charmaine needed and from that point on she gained considerably in professional maturity and awareness. This was not only demonstrated in her ability to evaluate her lessons but showed also in her manner and demeanour. Like Annette, Charmaine was not very demonstrative and possessed the same outwardly calm, relaxed, confident manner.

> I still haven't fallen into this professional role. If Gerry raises his voice my heart goes as if ... I've only been out of school myself for two and a half years and I think 'Oh, my God, what have I done!'

Echoing Pamela Pile she goes on:

> I don't think I've had enough experience for my opinions to be really valued.

Charmaine was quite happy to absorb what was happening and she concealed her reaction from Gerry who admitted:

> I tend to shout and scream. She's very calm. I was saying how good that is. Kids don't react well to people going out of their tree.

Such comments did much for Charmaine's emotional development and sense of self-efficacy, enabling her to discover how previous experiences may have caused her to underestimate herself.

> When the previous Liaison Lecturer marked me down, I felt I was doing so well. I ended up feeling I was intruding on him. I always felt under threat, particularly when he signed a blank report form and said it didn't really matter whether he saw it or not. This threatened me in that he was not providing the support between the college and the school. The Supervising Teacher could have failed or passed me and there was little he could have done about it. I got the impression he couldn't be bothered.

To summarise, the entry by the student-teacher into a genuinely collegial relationship made for an effective practicum. This relationship might be characterised by a high level of emotional bonding which itself might be dependent on the prior demonstration of emotional detachment. The award of collegiality was also associated with the growth of autonomy, with the Field Supervisor still being allowed to demonstrate expertise and exert subtle controls.

Collegiality was also associated with perceived equality of effort, high performance expectations, and demonstrated professionalism. In the absence of any formal award or ceremony to mark acceptance as a teacher, the according of collegiality, to 'know' intuitively, emotionally and bodily that one is accepted as a teacher, was eagerly sought after by student-teachers.

CHAPTER 20

AGE-RELATED AND GENDER EFFECTS

This chapter illustrates the way in which age-related and gender effects manifested

themselves at one particular school where the practicum was being unofficially used

to induct a newly-appointed member of the University staff. These effects are

examined from the point of view of patriarchy, maternalism, the discourse of 'mother

made conscious' (Burgess and Carter, 1992), and teaching-as-parenting. The account

provides further evidence of the difficulties student-teachers experienced in obtaining

feedback, and demonstrates the difficulties that all the participants had in overcoming

their entrenched attitudes towards the power structure of the University.

The approach adopted by the Liaison Lecturer

Geoff Quinn was first and foremost a specialist chemistry teacher and related what he

saw to his subject area. According to Beatrice Kramer,

> Geoff could have had a little bit more ... I don't really know how to put it but
> ... he wasn't really aware of the ins and outs of young children as regards to
> P.E. [Physical Education]. He said that himself, and erm I felt his feedback
> was very valuable and he did relate it back to science, like the safety aspects
> and that sort of thing, integrated with science.

Geoff makes it clear that he had no predetermined objectives for the practicum. He

simply wanted to ensure that the student-teachers were happy and that things were

going well.

Given his limited experience of primary schools, the practicum served as a learning

opportunity, a time when he could observe how primary teachers operate. For Geoff,

the practice of supervision is site-specific and not readily transferable.

> GEOFF: I felt that this time I was observing and er trying to find out how the
> schools worked and erm just making sure that our students were happy and er
> that things were going well. These were my major concerns.

INT: But you have had experience at nevertheless in supervision. You've supervised students [... Tapecript abridged] in a wide range of situations, so some of those actual supervision techniques such as the running of the conference you will be fairly familiar with.

GEOFF: Familiar with and erm ... but again, er in developing countries life is different to life in er developed countries and erm I've ... tended to ... feel that this time was a learning experience as much as er one that was teaching. Erm, I suppose that one always does rely on one's earlier experiences in sort of er, if problem situations arise, but erm I er have felt that I've been largely er finding out on this occasion rather than sort of erm saying how everything should be done. Erm I've been very much aware of my limited experience in this field and er I, I've watched teachers particularly as well as our student-teachers ...

I think you're right, in that I've been in so many situations, it's not really apprehension but just a feeling that I should go carefully and er not to sort of er push my way in particularly.

In trying to make things go well for the student-teachers, Geoff's first learning involved the organisation of primary schools which meant that 'it's almost impossible to have a conference with teacher and student all together with yourself'. The second area concerned methodology and here Geoff relied on the lesson observation notes prepared by the supervising teachers, comparing these with his own observations, particularly where his knowledge of the content material was limited. Thirdly, Geoff learned from the student-teachers' self-evaluations.

Geoff appeared to doubt the impact that he and other Liaison Lecturers could have on student-teachers. This became apparent when I asked him how much direction he thought the students actually wanted.

GEOFF: Direction? I suspect if you ask them they really don't mind whether they have direction or not but they're fairly self-directed people. That would be my suspicion, they feel that this is an exercise which has to be gone through, they're very willing and happy to oblige, but I'm not sure that any of those three really felt that that was what they wanted. [...] I think the supervisor from the University is an extra who comes in on top of that. I think that might be their perception, I don't know.

Nevertheless, Geoff was somewhat disappointed that the students did not make more of what he undoubtedly had to offer as in his discussion with Olive about the

Tasmanian paper-mill issue, which was current at the time, in which *the technical*

arguments ... left [Olive] fairly cold.

> GEOFF: ... (She) sort of put forward if anything a sort of greenie image, erm, the first lesson was she had made a number of collages illustrating the Australian environment and wanted the children to do the same and was trying to get them to express in their collage some particular feeling. It didn't matter necessarily exactly what the feeling was. Her purpose was to try and see what the children put together, had some sort of emotional impact ... about a week and a half later when I saw her next lesson which was on *Behind the News* which again was about the Tasmanian elections and the place of the pulp mill in how people would vote, before the results we got this ... so that was very interesting. She'd been having a number of lessons on the environment. Erm, yes she was reflective about it. She did try and give a balanced presentation for the the, ... putting both sides. But I think in the end she did feel very much, you know, the environment was much more important than pulp mills or jobs or any of the other things. We had a long talk about that afterwards, expressing, you know, different points of view and er what was interesting was that as far as the technical point of view of er what particular poisons the er pulp mill might get rid off, the concentrations of these and whether having the pulp mill would be dependent on this or whether one wouldn't want pulp mills any rate. She was very much more I think on the wouldn't want pulp mills at any rate but *the technical arguments presumably left her fairly cold.*

Whilst acknowledging the value of reflectivity, Geoff did not see himself as

necessarily setting out to promote it. Reflection was narrowly conceived, and

associated with neutrality, with giving both sides of the story.

Personal mannerisms

Geoff's speech is marked by several predominant features, particularly the use of the

formal pronoun 'one' to refer to people generally. This enables him to include himself

in what he is saying, or to distance himself as the case may be. All three students were

discomforted to some extent by a certain nervousness in Geoff's manner, although

Mary Motherwell, much closer to Geoff in age and highly competent in the

classroom, saw this as an endearing quality.

> MARY: Wonderful. I think his manner's wonderful. As I said he put me at ease straight away. He was the sort of fellow I felt I'd known him for a long time, and not just met, so I felt very relaxed with him, erm I'm just trying to get the old brain to ticking here. [Laughter] Even his questions, when he asked a question, he seemed genuine in that area as well, as if he really genuinely

> wanted to know my opinion about something which made you feel as if what you had to say was ... someone cared about your answer. So all that manner was fine. It wasn't as if I had to go through that process [of] let's go on with it.

This last comment calls into question Geoff's own perception of how the students approached the practicum.

Beatrice Kramer, younger than Mary and in her mid-twenties, was irritated by Geoff's manner.

> BEATRICE: At first, at first I felt that I was leading him, right? I smiled hello, come over here sort of thing, and sort of *treating him like a grandfather* or something, being very polite, I suppose, and erm just generally *treating him very carefully*, you know what I mean, I didn't want to upset him and that's not because, ... I don't know why it is, actually. Maybe its because he does feel nervous all the time or something and I don't want to add to that, maybe its very unfair to say it but its just a general impression. Erm.

There appeared to be an intergenerational age effect in Beatrice's interaction with Geoff. She is much less tolerant than Mary of the way that Geoff introduces the everyday concerns of his personal and private life into the conference, although she passed it off as 'human nature' and something that 'everyone does'. All three student-teachers were deferential and attempt to find excuses. To what extent these dispositions are patriarchally determined is open to question.

Consistent with what we know of women's conversational experience, all the students felt they had to carry the burden of the conversation and concern themselves with Geoff's welfare.

> INT: How much input did you have into the conference with Geoff?

> BEATRICE: If I hadn't said anything I don't think anything would have been said. He's very hesitant to actually start, erm, he did have some things to say, basically very minor things, to do with the lesson ... I don't really know and I haven't really had much to do with Geoff anyway, so, er ... I'll tell you one thing though, *he started telling me the story about how he had to go and pick up his wife and how he had to get to see Mary and all these things and he was telling me all these things that he had to do which I couldn't understand why he was telling me them. Do you know what I mean?* It's obviously important to him, but to me as a complete outsider who had nothing to do with anything I couldn't really understand why he was saying it. So *I mean it's human nature,*

> *everyone does it don't they.* Until Dianne [the P.E. specialist] came in and
> started putting input in there wasn't really much evaluation going on.

The question of where we draw the line between appropriate and inappropriate uses of

the personal in education has been raised by Noddings (1994) who maintains that

timely stories have 'a special credibility' and are 'morally obligatory', and that students

need the opportunity to share personal interests at the deep level of existential issues.

Beatrice clearly found Geoff's mannerisms off-putting.

> BEATRICE: You can tell someone is listening to you or not by what they say
> back, whereas I'm not so sure erm whether Geoff ... you don't really know and
> I think that is because of personal mannerisms of his. You know what I'm
> talking about? [INT: Yes] Herm! [INT: I'd like to talk more about that but
> maybe this isn't the appropriate time]. No I don't think erm no. Its very off-
> putting because you don't know whether it is real or not, or whether it's just
> part of it so I mean that *can't be helped obviously*, but it is a little
> disconcerting.

There is a tolerance and understanding in the comments of the student-teachers which

may be due to the ethos of the school. As Beatrice observed,

> [T]hey care for one another and they talk about caring for one another and
> being careful of one another and respecting other people's feelings and that
> sort of thing, and I think that really does help or it seems to. [INT: Yes, sure].
> They seem to be a very caring school generally.

The white board in the staffroom carried a negotiated draft of the school credo which

confirmed this ethic.

Beatrice's Field Supervisor, Melanie Hughes, did not find Geoff easy to talk to. She

remained in awe of the university and was fearful of criticising its agents. Until she

actually becomes aware that I knew Geoff, she referred to him as 'the lecturer' or 'the

person'.

> MELANIE: I found that particular lecturer very nice and that but just sort of
> not very confident, and not very easy to talk to. [INT: Yes] Erm, in a way that
> I thought I found the lecturer didn't find it easy to do, talk to me. I'm sure
> whether it was about the crit or anything else, just like face to face. Some
> people are different, He seemed very shy as a person. (Indistinct) It was good
> though that the person asked me some relevant questions ... about the group
> work that Beatrice was using in the thing like, asked if a particular group
> would have been the top group and I said yes and they said they thought that

would be so and did ask like you know relevant questions and that. The person was just er hard to er [INT: a bit hard to relate to?] hard to relate to [INT: He's a very shy guy, actually he's a nice fellow] You know who I'm talking about [INT: Yes I do] I don't think he had much to do with Primary School feedback. Just that, and for him to say, I know its hard to crit something like a PE lesson. If people haven't got a great idea about it because they're not into it.

Olive Chesterton, the youngest of the three student-teachers, also found Geoff's manner frustrating but was able to get beyond it. She also confirmed the genuine interest that Geoff had in primary school teaching and what she was trying to accomplish.

> ... but it's really frustrating. I don't know whether you've talked a lot to erm Geoff, but he sort of hums and hahs [INT: Laughter] when you're trying to talk to him. It's really irritating, but (the conference) went well. [...] I think it's quite easy to talk to him except when he's, I'm talking to him and he's going, 'hurm, hurm' [INT: Yes, he's got a few characteristics like that, hasn't he?] yeah. He's quite easy to talk to though I think. ... It was still a formal situation but it eased the tension he does sort of seem interested in what I felt, he asked me [...] He did seem interested in what I was doing. He did say it was artificial because I'm just looking at this one ... one time in a sequence.

Geoff himself recognised a certain degree of awkwardness in his interaction with the students, but was not over-concerned with this.

> I suppose there is early on some degree of awkwardness and so on, because I don't teach any of these students. They saw me for the first time on the first occasion I came in, In fact on that occasion all three of us and one teacher were together and we worked out our plans. But individually, eventually, no. I think we all got on well together after a time ...

> Primary teachers appear to get themselves more involved in schools than my own experience of secondary teachers *might suggest*. I think *it might be due to the fact that* they are with one class all the time very well. *I think* therefore at the end they were feeling more secure with themselves and their class and therefore more secure with their supervisor ... And security is confidence, isn't it. [Added as an afterthought].

The modality of this last utterance is worth commenting on. *It might be due to the fact that*, *might suggest* and the verb of mental process, *I think*, indicate uncertainty.

Gender-related and age effects

In this study, 'gender is conceptualised', following Jacklin (1992:xxi), 'as fluid and as emerging from inter-personal processes'. It is not considered 'an attribute of the subject', nor a determinate social construct or category. For this reason, it is not possible to systematise these effects, or to disentangle the relationship of gender and age. In the same way, 'given present society it is difficult to disentangle gender and power differences' (Jacklin, 1992:xxi).

Gender-related effects relate to the communicational style adopted by the participants and the positions that they choose to take up. The amount of self-disclosure in which participants engage, is related to gender. For example, I found Melanie Hughes very self-deprecating and very self-conscious of the power asymmetry. The indefinite, imprecise and elliptical nature of Melanie's spoken language made communication difficult.

As part of my investigation into bonding, I asked Melanie whether she perceived Beatrice as an easy-going, laid-back sort of person. Her response is worth analysing in detail.

> MELANIE: Yes I do, but I think she's a more organised and detailed person than me in a lot of ways. I mean I am (1) but I don't come across as that (2) and (3) different characteristics like erm I'm not a very good housekeeper or (4). I'm organised myself but any one else coming into the house (5). What's she doing (6) or something (7), like (8) Beatrice is more methodical, which is good (9) and as far as I was too as a student (10) like (11) you know what I mean (12).

Note the ellipsis after (1) and (3), the back reference at (2), the truncation after (4), the omission after (5), the reduced vocabulary 'doing' at (6), 'good' at (9), the hedging at (12), and the indefiniteness of 'like' at (8) and (11) and 'something' at (7). Spoken language is heavily contextualised. The features above are common to all speakers, and Schön (1987:101) observes that this kind of vagueness and imprecision is

evidence of knowing-in-action. Nevertheless one is left wondering about the depth and quality of the advice provided, notwithstanding the fact that Beatrice did not appear to have experienced any difficulty communicating with Melanie, finding her 'easy to please'. This manner of speaking may be an effect of the way I, myself, as the researcher, carried out the interview. Certainly Melanie felt compelled to answer everything.

Maternalism

Maternalism revealed itself in the m(Other)ing of the supervisor by the student-teacher. Its counterpart is the filial which fixes on duty and obedience owed. Mary Motherwell is the most maternal of the student-teachers, and in the following extract she reveals an acceptance of patriarchal control and institutional power when she tells us

> I felt really relaxed with Geoff, the only thing when I ... I didn't feel happy as the conference went along is that I got anything out of it. As Geoff said he didn't know very much about language, because of his area, his speciality area. So therefore, when I received my sheet he had written all my content as I taught it in the classroom. He made a note that he'd agreed with my lesson plan, he had a question for me, the story I used, did I feel it was sexist, which we had joked about that typical male/female role erm, and because we were looking at words other than 'said' there might have been a couple which were a bit dicey and that was it. He apologised a lot that he hasn't worked with in Primary Schools before and he doesn't know anything about language and where it started off, if I can use the phrase, Geoff being erm in control of the situation, I started to feel as it went along that I was in control and I didn't feel that should be the way.
>
> INT: So the control moved more to you.
>
> MARY: Yes but I didn't want it to.
>
> INT: [Stunned silence - I had not considered students might resist such a move!] O.K. I appreciate that but there's no reason in principle why it shouldn't have moved to you?

Mary goes on to re-present for us how she thinks the conference with her Liaison Lecturer could have gone, but at no time does she allow herself to become overly

critical. Moreover she is protective of Geoff, not wishing to cause him harm or distress.

> MARY: Well only because I don't feel, and I'm talking now about content of the conference, is that alright, is that what you want, [INT: Yes], I'm talking about content because I don't feel I learnt anything from the conference. I, er ... to me the conference should have been about my presentation, 'did the children learn anything', Mary: 'no they didn't.' 'Perhaps you could have done this something another way'. There was nothing in that regard. I don't feel that even the piece of paper I've got is worth reading again because I know what the content was. I didn't need that written down and given back to me, and I don't get critical like.

Mary's maternalism is also revealed in her dealings with her Field Supervisor, George Bailey who was considerably younger than her. George operates on an unproblematised assumption of teaching as 'mother made conscious' (Burgess and Carter, 1992), which also underlies the interaction of Melanie Hughes and her student-teacher Beatrice Kramer. Mary describes George as 'a wonderful man' who has 'totally shared' his classroom with her.

> MARY: Oh, totally shared, now, Mike, as far as that goes he's been wonderful. If I go back to my meeting with him before I started here, I sat down and he made me feel at ease. He's a wonderful man. What would you like to do, Mary ...?
>
> So he's virtually let me choose, so I've appreciated all that, how I plan it is fine. He doesn't mind. So I've got no criticism there. I feel very welcome in that class, in fact I was going to make the comment that in this prac I have such a relationship with that classroom and him, that I don't feel sometimes that I'm even a student, if you can understand what I mean. I sometimes think I'm here as his peer rather than his student. [INT: Have you ...] That feels good, that relationship feels good.

At other times, she describes what amounts to boyish enthusiasm as in this extract where she discusses their attitudes towards the environment.

> He has a very great value for the environment which I share, if probably not to the same extent perhaps, [INT: Mining, uranium, etc?] but he got really excited he came to tell me that he was watching, it might have been *Behind the News*, something he was watching for the kids and he became really excited to find out how much forest is really in Japan, and they are over here chopping our trees down yet they have all these forests, 50 to 80% I think it was and he came to tell me that because that really concerned him and I said that's terrible, but I didn't feel as upset about it even though there was a concern there.

All this is related in a detached, amazed, almost incredulous manner. Mary is very

aware of these age-related effects as can be seen in this extract concerning shared

expectations of social and cultural values. I was trying to establish the

prescriptiveness of the normative consensus which underlies collegiality.

> MARY: Are you getting on to say what his expectations of the children are in the classroom? [INT: If you wish, if you wish] O.K. We'll take that because that is something I have thought about. [Note the topic control Mary exerts here]. His expectations of discipline do vary from what I thought mine would be in respect to, and I use an example, lining up in two lines. I would never make children stay in at lunch time to practice lining up because there was a slight movement at the end, things like that, I feel yet at the same time he can share a joke with them and let them be a little bit lax. Now, I just feel, and *I put that down actually to his youth.* Now this is some times where I have felt on top of him again [INT: Yes, said very strongly, almost urgently] because and I think that's his view, *even though* [INT: Yes, age is an important variable] *he has experience over me I think perhaps when you get to my age* you think well is it so important the last three people aren't in a direct line, in fact they are a little bit off centre, things like that.

Another probable age-related effect concerns the problem Mary had in getting suitable

feedback from George which had caused her to feel down, 'but never to the stage

when I can't cope'. In the following extract we see the frustrations under which Mary

was working, trying to eke out some feedback, without directly confronting her

supervisor. Her frustration is all the more acute because, as we have seen, she cannot

rely on her Liaison Lecturer to provide adequate feedback.

> MARY: That area (feedback) I'm a little bit concerned with because there hasn't really been any as such, not that I would consider lets sit down and talk about. Now I didn't want to directly confront George as such and say look you've got to sit down and talk to me you've given me nothing. I've had lesson plans back which he's writing on but they are things I feel .. I don't feel they are in depth enough for a third year either. So I've asked him when we've been walking up the stairs or on playground duty, general things like now how has this lesson on quotation marks gone all week? George, have you been happy with the sequence each day? Yes they were great. OK, Gee that SACE lesson, my first lesson it was rowdy and I feel I didn't had total control in that group discussion situation, erm do you think may be the classs er the size of the groups were too large six or seven people? He said, yeah, they were a bit large M, you could perhaps start of with two and work up to six.

For his part George does not see that there is a problem. His attitude to education, like

Melanie's, is much more homespun and it is clear he is wondering what all the fuss is

about. In his view, just being a mother (he has no children of his own) is sufficient for

Mary to cope in most situations. He acknowledges the maternal in her. Right from the

outset, when asked about his first impressions of Mary, George focuses on her

maturity and the way she apparently knows her way around. Although Mary does not

believe that she intimidates George, the problem of dealing with an 'older woman'

creates difficulties for him, in spite of his immediate denials. The next extract reveals

considerable diffidence, hesitation and self-doubt, even if George does successfully

rationalise his position.

> GEORGE: Erm, I haven't really had any difficulties but *at times I've felt who am I to have the right to tell an older person what they should be doing* but then I think if you weigh up actual experience in the field, they may have experience in age and other areas, but I have the experience in the field that they are actually dealing with and me being the sort of personality I am I can cope with that quite well, I can sort of say, oh well, never mind, a job's a job, but *at times I often wonder how they feel me telling them, particularly if I'm picking up a fault, I often wonder how they feel.* But I think well it's my job, I've got to tell 'em, you know.

> INT: Do you think that feeling has limited your effectiveness with Mary or limited the amount of interaction in any way at all, the fact that she's been an older woman, that it's had any effect on the amount of support or advice you've given her?

> GEORGE: Not really, the only way I'd say it had affected her, is particularly dealing with a few problem children, *I've let her deal with that herself without giving her any real guidelines because she's got children of her own, she's dealt with children before, she knows the sorts of things to say to kids and how to deal with them.* Like, she doesn't need me to say this is the way you should treat little ... be gentle with that particular child. She can sense that. She's a parent.

> In fact I'd say that Mary shows more sympathy or empathy with the children than what I would in a certain case cos I haven't got children of my own and it's easy to fob them off at times.

Mother-made-conscious

This domestic view of teaching, which is part of a much wider teaching-as-parenting

discourse, is shared by Melanie Hughes. Melanie maintained that mature-age married

women with children are more suited to teaching than younger, single, people who are

assumed, in the eyes of the Church, to have no children. For Melanie, teaching

implicitly utilises the same skills as parenting. When asked about her first meeting

with Beatrice and how she had summed her up at the time she says:

> Well I suppose after er *like* erm, I thought that she was older than me and don't
> know if she is [INT: No, I wouldn't know either] but I would have termed her
> as an older person I thought that she was definitely a mature age student a
> mature age student and with her background, *like* having been a married
> person and with a child, with a young baby ... difference with a single person.
> Single people compared to say *like* married ones, married ones with children
> *like* it is different things *like that* and heaps of things *like that* I thought she
> was being very consc, *like you know* [INT: Really?] Consc *like you know*,
> consc [INT: Consc] conscientious I suppose [INT: Consc ...] yes consc, *like
> you know?*

(Here is another intergenerational, age-related effect. Not yet being familiar with

common Australian abbreviations, I must have come across as somewhat stuffy and

out of the ark!)

The over-use of the word 'like' here, sets up a vague sense of something shared or

understood and it is not surprising to find Beatrice saying that she and Melanie share

similar values and beliefs. Because these beliefs are at such a vague, generalised,

unexamined level, this is not difficult to accept.

Although Mary does not directly refer to George's view of teaching-as-parenting, it

clearly cuts no ice with her. In spite of her own sense of self-efficacy and her

acknowledged competence, she is still a dependent learner needing confirmation of

her success and an indication of where to make further improvements. More

importantly, her concerns are not simply self-directed, but other-directed. She has

developed a professional conscience and is concerned about the effects of lack of

feedback on other student-teachers.

> MARY: Now, I'm a student. What worries me is is there something else going
> on in my lesson I haven't been astute enough to pick up. I feel I'm reasonably
> astute and I could pick up that it was perhaps the size of the groups that was
> the problem, but what if I wasn't astute enough to pick that up? What if there is
> another student-teacher who wouldn't consider that? They would have
> received no feedback. I don't mind trying to work out what I'm doing but I'm
> looking at it generally for all those students who can't.

Like George himself, Mary did not believe that he, George, was intimidated by her age. When I floated this hypothesis she rejected it on the grounds that the two of them could talk easily about things that go on outside the school. She believed that he just did not know how to go about giving feedback. George believed that there is no need to give any more than he did, as he did not believe in unnecessary theorising about teaching or in problematising the supervisory process. The next extract also contains some maternal chiding on Mary's part.

> MARY: At a general level, I don't get the feeling that he is intimidated by age or that he feels 'I'm too young to help Mary' because we can talk about things outside the school, private life, as if we are on the same level. He's very relaxed and will talk about what he's doing: 'went to the casino, I'm really stuffed today Mary' and I'd say 'well I've got no sympathy for you if you didn't get home to four thirty that's your fault,' you know things like so we can talk like that so I feel he must be comfortable with me [INT: That's why I was asking about personal life earlier] to be able to speak like that. So we can talk like that and he's even dropped a couple of words that I nearly fell over with on playground duty so he's obviously assessed that Mary is not going to crack up if I use this particular four-letter word, so I don't sort of feel he's not giving me enough because of that. I really feel he I really get the feeling he just doesn't know how to give it to me or he just hasn't sat down, but I am having to ask him all the time.

Mary goes on to lay to rest another concern I had been harbouring.

> INT: I've worked with you now over a couple of years and I've got a great deal of respect for you and your forthrightness, but do you think your interactional style might intimidate him?
>
> MARY: Yes I can be forthright but I still believe because of the way we can discuss things that outside of what I'm doing in my lessons, that no I'm not intimidating him. Because if anything when it comes to talking about what I'm doing I, I back off a little bit. [INT: Right]. Otherwise I would have said, listen will you sit down and tell me something, but I haven't got to that stage instead I ask him little questions along the way. I mean, I'm not saying he's not giving me anything but I'm having to seek, I'm having to eke it out of him so to speak [...]
>
> Now, well, O.K., I guess well you could say you could be flattered but I'm not here to be flattered. I'm here to be told what I need to improve on.

As I went on to explain to Mary, we are dealing here with a very real concern which arises in supervisory practice. Some supervisors will look at a student-teacher and say

'ah that's all going well,' and assume nothing more is required. Now the student-teacher, because she is a hyphenated being, finds this unsatisfactory. It doesn't mean anything to her. Such teachers are not being defined in terms of their own success and they need to be and need to have just as much feedback as any other student.

The outcome at this stage in the practicum was anything but satisfactory.

> MARY: Well, in the end I said to him, he said you're going fine and I said to him oh well in what areas then am I going well so at least I can narrow down the other side and it was fairly general like, the lesson start off, the kids are interested, erm your voice control all areas like that. *I mean I couldn't even pinpoint, Mike, the concern I have in the feedback I'm looking for.* It's just that I have a gut feeling when something's not going right and I sort of hope that the person watching me can pick up for me what that is.

The lack of feedback, which can be traced to a general paucity of verbal interaction and a reduced level of involvement, stands in considerable contrast to Mary's experience on her last practicum which continued to serve her as some sort of benchmark. On this occasion she was again working with a much younger male teacher whom she confesses she 'found very arrogant' because of the way he spoke about the deficiencies of other students in the past, and the general contempt in which he held University lecturers. I was the Liaison Lecturer on that occasion!

> MARY: I didn't take this to heart because I thought this guy is really watching me and I don't want him to take up all the time with what I'm doing well. I can generally feel what I'm doing well. It's the things where I'm not doing well that I want to know about. And he was also very good in that he never gave me answers. He'd say to me like one Health lesson. Well, that didn't work. There are the objectives, it does not tie up. What do you think went wrong and I'd sit there and hum and hah and this went wrong. Yeah well OK. I want you to give that lesson again tomorrow but he wouldn't tell me how. This happened a couple of times so I'd go home, I had his home phone number all the way from ... it's a long drive and usually by the time I got home I'd have this inkling, you could have done that, so by the time I get home and after about an hour, it would just often it would just often just sort of sink in so I'd get him on the phone and I'd say is that what I should have done could I do this and he'd say that's exactly what you should do tomorrow that'll be fine and as the prac went on, we'd laugh about it and I'd say to him you never told me, you really wanted me to find out for myself and he said yes. So I appreciated that.

To sum up, it appears that the age-related and gender-related effects of supervision are very complex and work in very unexpected ways. It is apparent that participants find it difficult to acknowledge age-related effects at work. After all, age should not matter. Exactly what contributes to these effects is difficult to determine although the following appear to be important factors: personal mannerisms and the way particular behaviours are characterised and ascribed to persons; the nature of experience and the way this is viewed and interpreted by the participants; gender-related role expectancies; and inter-generational differences with regards to social attitudes, moral beliefs and representational language.

Nowhere in the text is there any pernicious or derogatory ageism, even under conditions of extreme frustration and irritation. There does appear to be some deference to age, however, which affects both the content of the conference and the way that feedback is provided or not provided as the case may be. Underlying this particular effect is an unproblematic belief in teaching as parenting, a belief which maintains that mature-age women who are bringing up children do not need to receive as much advice on relating to children as single persons do, and can therefore be left on their own to cope with class management and other issues.

CHAPTER 21

ROMANTICISM IN THE SUPERVISORY PROCESS

In this chapter I seek to demonstrate the extraordinary power that the romantic view of the self continues to exert in a postmodern world. I argue that supervisors who adopt a romanticist view of the self contribute to the embourgeoisement of education which detracts from radical action and promotes the middle class values of the bourgeoisie (Zavarzadeh, 1992). However, I maintain that espousing romanticist views is not incompatible with supervision carried out on a basis of disengaged and calculating reason.

The participants

The supervisory process we are about to consider centres on Barry Collins, a student-teacher in his late twenties who has just returned to college after a seven years break from teacher training in New Zealand, during which time he tells us he has moved

> from living as a derelict in a boarding house to wearing clothes and being in front of the kids again,

a turn around which in the best romantic tradition he still finds strange and baffling.

For his Liaison Lecturer, David Hepworth, Barry 'is not middle class conservative, the sort of standard stereotype of the teacher'. Barry considers himself working class and can best be described as a larrikin. He can be serious, irreverent, humorous, sardonic, quixotic, over-critical of himself, irritating and engaging by turns, but most of all, in his interaction with the staff of the school, he is loud, extravert, and puts his views across strongly. Imbued with an expressive and colourful turn of phrase, he spends much of his time 'battling bullshit' as he puts it. Generally resistant to authority and resentful of being made to feel subordinate, ('for the sake of my self esteem', he

confides at one point, 'I've got to overcome this subordinate attitude'), he possesses a degree of charm which according to his Field Supervisor, Wendy Jones, 'grows on you'.

David Hepworth was by far the most experienced of the Liaison Lecturers: benevolent, avuncular, and committed to seeing student-teachers like Barry find their way into the schools. Wendy had been specially selected as Barry possessed a reputation for being '*outspoken and retaliatory*' (his words), and it was thought preferable that he be placed with someone who could exert some control over him. As she says:

> He's got his own personality, very much so, very strong, he's erm, I'd say that it would be an advantage to look at the person he does the prac with, erm because it could be a terrible clash, erm, if the teacher themselves was not strong within themselves. Erm, I think it could almost be a disaster because he would, he would take over, or he would try to take over and a lot of teachers I don't think would like that.

Barry himself realises the potential for disaster were he placed with the wrong person. He views the placement of students, somewhat naively, in terms of a mix of class affiliation, political sympathies and shared values.

> BARRY: I think that when you put up a student in the classroom you should find out basically which side of the political fence he sits on because if you've got a working class lad with a middle class teacher you can sometimes have a conflict because there are definitely going to be different values for a start. I was lucky. Wendy is a working woman, an ambitious woman, but she's not, ... hasn't got, ... I don't know, ... but I do think there's a class thing about it.

The romanticist movement

According to Taylor (1989), the romantic movement set great store by nature, believing the first impulses of nature are always right. The romanticists believed that the original impulse given to us by Nature had been lost and that an estrangement had

grown up between Man and Nature, a depravation. All Man had to do was to find a way back, to listen to Nature, to the voice within.

> To regain contact with this voice would be to transform our motivation, to have a wholly different quality of will. (*ibid*:358)

In the process there was to be no more reliance on reason, or more learning, calculating reason being seen as one of the signs of corruption because of the influence of base interests. Man would be free from 'calculating other-dependence' or opinion. Nature was seen then 'as an inner source, a great current of sympathy running through all things'. The preoccupation with feeling and the rejection of Cartesian logic and disengaged rationalism in the post-formal period, may appear to be new discoveries but represent in fact a return to a central romanticist concern. Renewed contact with the deep sources in nature was seen 'as conferring a heightened, more vibrant, quality of life' (*ibid*:373).

Romanticism in the role of the supervisor

On this view, the supervisor can be seen as putting us back in touch with our inner voice, revealing to us, or encouraging us to explore how our natures (or personalities) 'fit' with providential circumstance or contingencies, allowing us to explore both voice and personality to fulfill our potential. Feelings themselves become central to defining the good life. The supervisor is a guide to inwardness and interiority and assists in the articulation of our impulses. Each individual is seen as possessing deep within themselves a unique character, a protoself, with which they have to be consistent. Expressions such as 'finding the technique that works for you', 'discovering your own beliefs', and 'being creative and unique' (Buchmann, 1990:489) are associated with the romanticists.

These unique, individual, differences involving character and consistency are referred

to by David Hepworth as he reflects on his supervision of Barry. Asked to elaborate

on the role of personality David says:

> The approach with Barry is very different, a very different sort of customer, so you've got to be, I mean, well, very sensitive to individual difference and very often you get it wrong. Sometimes you get it ... but it depends very much on the character ...

> It depends what you view teaching as. In my view *the most successful teachers are people who can be themselves, who are themselves, but who in themselves are intrinsically interesting to children and I think I made a comment on the last tape, its a maxim, a maxim I use with students that the teaching has to be true to self, know thyself, that's it basically.* Now it takes time to develop the repertoire of things that a teacher needs *in a way which is consistent with your personality* because I guess .. and you see it with students that initially their modelling is based on teachers that they have had and to some extent they model on teachers with whom they now are on prac placement, so it takes a number of years and I think that's partly what beginning teaching is all about where you start to explore yourself

> In conferencing its very difficult when you're supervising students because you only see them briefly and I don't teach them in the normal course of events so that you tend to make ... so that judgements you make about personality are snap judgements so they are not necessarily accurate but usually *there are attributes of personality that can come out*, that you can suggest to students that they exploit and there are some very obvious ones, the quiet, unassuming student with a quiet voice ... is well placed to develop a class climate that is quiet and soothing and relaxed. A character like Barry, very effervescent I guess would be one description, but a bubbling personality, loud voice, much dancing around and energy, there's a great deal of energy being exuded, then he will develop you you know that he will develop a different teaching style. It's likely to be a noisy, enthusiastic, bumptious, bouncy, so that I guess you can draw attention to that in the conference but particularly to *aspects of the teaching style which may be consistent with that*, it's really helping them to build on existing strengths but those bring with them deficiencies as well so that a bouncy character like Barry has potentially much more control problems in the area of noise and work management. There will be a lot of enthusiasm but it will be a very noisy classroom so he needs to work on control of his own noise to get control of the noise of the kids. The quiet students, the self-effacive have enormous trouble with presence so it takes them a long time to develop techniques by which they immediately grab the kids attention so you pick it up that way as well. So I guess in a sense I do address, you do address personality in conferencing but its only the more obvious external ones *and there is always a risk that you're not quite right.*

These views on the uniqueness of personality and the need to remain true to one's

inner self are echoed by Barry as he celebrates the commitment and genuineness of

his Field Supervisor.

BARRY: Before I was just outspoken and retaliatory because I didn't have an image of my beliefs ... are about ninety per cent there. [INT They are integrated?] Yeah, still open to change.

INT: And your class teacher, to go back to something you said earlier, she understands that?

BARRY: Well, yes she's not the sort of lady who comes to school when the bell goes at 8 o'clock the teacher comes in, she's a committed person so she'll be here after four, five o'clock most days, she'll only get a little bit of lunch a little bit of recess. She'll be here Saturday, Sunday afternoons which is an example on what a committed person does, *but she also doesn't change herself, she's her.* She laughs at her mistakes. She's still the boss like you never, never back down to a kid which is a rule I've learnt finally that will stay. If you've got a child whose going bananas in the class, you still can't give up. *But she's her, she's her, she's not a role playing teacher* and there are situations, had I gone to a school, I don't know if Darwin's typical but er larger city school you've got very middle class children, come from a very nice area and the teachers are very well spoken and it is required that the teacher lifts his conduct, 'you|must|speak|well' [attempting to take off the educated upper middle class British, bordering on received pronunciation and enunciating each word separately and distinctly] and I find that a little bit irksome but *it is a role play* and it is conditional of success. I find that hard to contend with. But I've been lucky I've been put in with a teacher who I find has similar views but those who can work in both worlds I will succeed so that's *the battling with bullshit routine,* I think. *I think the best teacher is going to be the one that does not get too far away from their own character,* because kids know when your lying to them. Eye contact works wonderfully and if you, ... if they you are saying what you're saying and you mean it your eyes will tell them.

This extract also testifies to another aspect of romanticism: the commitment to, and the significance of, productive work.

There is an unavoidable tension between getting Barry to curb his exuberance and outspokenness, and supporting him in becoming less dependent on the Other. Barry himself understands the difficulty as can be seen in comments he makes on his Field Supervisor who is contemplating going back to college to undertake further study. The parallel with the 1960's film *Educating Rita* is striking.

BARRY: Erm, and she's not thinking she'll be capable of doing studies yet. All she's doing is applying theory to her common sense, which is .. most of the learning is common sense, we just put more words to it. I hope she considers it, she'd be a good teacher. But she's thinking about it. She realises she needs to have that bit of paper. As long as she doesn't let the study bog her down because that ... is only a part of it and if she thinks she has to throw out her ideas because someone's giving her these texts saying otherwise, I don't think she'll like that.

The romanticist belief in uncorrupted expressivity is also revealed in the following
extract which testifies to the exuberance and enthusiasm which are part of the
heightened, vibrant quality of life which informs Barry's teaching, a *personality in full
flight*.

> DAVID: But the thing that I guess I would see about Barry during the practice
> was ... *the exhibition of his own personality in full flight* and that, that
> personality was at quite a variance with both his classroom supervisor's and
> mine and *there was no curbing in that and there was no desire to curb that.
> And if, and, well, if anything, I guess our advice was to curb it little bit, but to
> expl... curb it is the wrong word but to refine and build on it, so I don't think
> he was constrained* and his values, the exuberance and the enthusiasm and so
> on are an expression of what he sees as important in learning and working with
> children which aren't necessary those of his workmates and the classroom
> teacher.

David Hepworth and Wendy both appear to be pursuing similar ends: the promotion
of a new and fuller individuation. They both see 'the manifestation of an inner power
striving to realise itself externally' (Herder, cited in Taylor, 1989:375) which they
wish to encourage. Both realise, however, that this process of individuation is a risky
business in the narrow, intolerant and conservative atmosphere of a teaching
profession dominated by bourgeois concerns. Hence there is always a nagging sense
of doubt, a hint of the doom-laden hanging over their work, a feeling that Barry has to
be protected from himself. There seems to be no way in which they can get beyond
the liberal rhetoric which accompanies the contestation of middle class values, and the
bourgeois ethos which dominate the schools. The threat of suffering and rejection
remains.

Of all the student-teachers included in the first part of the investigation, Barry is
undoubtedly the most socially aware and politically committed. This became very
clear at the start of the interview when he criticised the inequities of text book
publishing following a discussion with David Hepworth

> BARRY: I'm a little bit cynical about the external forces on education. I see
> these international companies making millions of dollars of profit out of crap

texts which the teacher can produce but unfortunately she can't always produce the er decorations.

He also possesses a good understanding of the operation of power and control within the departmental hierarchy in the Northern Territory. In the following extract he penetrates 'the fraternity', the old boys' club that operated in the Territory (AEUNT, 1995). Once again the topic has been stimulated by comments made by David Hepworth.

> BARRY: I heard from one of my classmates ... They've got a Principal that apparently the staff aren't too impressed with and that sort of strikes me as strange and the rumour is that internal investigators have been called in and I think what teacher's put his block on the line to get this Principal investigated or how bad has this Principal been performing for it to happen because that is the sanctum there's a lot of power as a Principal. It's a very played down position but behind the front lines there's a man there that wields a lot of control and a lot of responsibility and it intrigues me ...
>
> Erm, its a fraternity
>
> INT: Yes its a fraternity ...
>
> BARRY: But that's playing the game though, isn't it. Now I'm up to my neck in it and I've got to get out of it.

The corruptive influences of base personal interests are simply regarded as an inevitable part of the game.

Barry is one of the few students who has given conscious thought to the issue of values and ideals and can talk in terms of state, or ruling class, hegemony.

> BARRY: We had a bit of a left wing lecturer [in New Zealand] who was good and into Antonio Gramsci, whose concept hegemony which completely rocked my working class socks. I was rapped with it. I thought this was wonderful. One comment on my essays was 'don't worry the revolution would come', or something like that. I've [moderated ? - the tape is indistinct] it since then. It's allowed me to reconcile this course. Having that knowledge of the philosophy, it enabled me to put it into perspective and for the first time I actually know what 'ideal' means. I mean we hear it and now we know what it means. It's a funny thing at my age it took me that long.

The element of risk remains. This is signalled by David Hepworth early on when he describes Barry as 'most probably a risky candidate' in view of the ground he has to make up to pass the course, but also in the sense of being a risk to himself.

Romanticists reject the necessity for other-dependency, and promote an atomistic view which denies the influence of a community with decision making powers over it's members. There is a resistance towards mimesis or forms of imitation which would be considered as incongruent with the 'true' self. This produces a tension with the external world and heightens the element of risk. The romantic individual cannot escape criticism.

> DAVID: Freshly laundered ironed, shirt, pressed long trousers, polished shoes, hair neatly brushed and so on I think he'd got all of that in place. He ran foul of the staff a couple of times because he's got fairly ... and I understood from comments made to me he transgressed in the eyes of the staff in putting those views forward very forcefully and not listening to the views of others and was very abruptly put in his place and I think he learnt from that.

Wendy confirmed these rebukes to Barry by the staff.

> WENDY: He also knows that he has a few way out ideas and that his ideas perhaps need to fit a mold erm not exactly but you know certain things are expected of teachers and he realises that he had to er fit that model. He's had a number of in-depth discussions on various subjects erm one we have a staff member here ... they sit in the smokers' room and they go into many discussions and he's been helpful to me because he's put him in his place a couple of times [INT: loud laughter: put Barry in his place?] He told him to shut up [INT: Oh yeah! oh, yeah!] and listen to other people's opinions before he voices his own erm ... and this guy, at times, has been a bit of a radical himself so he's sort of let Barry know erm the sorts of things that are expected of him and what the consequences are if if he sort of strays too far from that. Erm and we've discussed about pushing his opinions onto kids and what you must you can give the middle of the road and you can give both examples of extremes but you cannot tell the kids your own views or push them onto the kids you can let them thing about things and give them ideas but you can never give them your opinion. He would be one to do that he would really [INT: Oh yes? unconvincingly/unsure] Oh, yes [with certainty] he would have to watch himself.

Much to Wendy's satisfaction, Barry adopts rigid standards and manifests a conservative approach to education. This is in line with Gramsci (in Entwistle, 1979), who emphasised that even in a revolutionary situation one should not deprive children

of a knowledge of their social and cultural heritage and the associated norms of those one seeks to depose.

The reactions of the staff are fairly predictable. Although Darwin life still maintains a high degree of informality and tolerance of difference, there are limits to what teachers will tolerate. This may be a frontier society extolling acts of rugged individualism, one of the last places of refuge for the 'genuine character', but it can also be vengeful, bigoted, and take delight in reducing people to size.

In the meantime his Field Supervisor remains loyal and supportive.

> WENDY: I'd say to start with the staff would have thought "Oh, no, what have we got here" because of his ... like the first afternoon he came in for drinks and erm had a few which is quite, we all do Friday afternoon, we all do really a good finish to the week everyone can carry on stupidly or whatever and I think he got he voiced his opinions very strongly about certain things with a couple of beers and I got quite a comment from a few people: "take that student with you or tell him to go home early". They weren't really being mean or anything but I doubt whether they would say that now. He's started to fit in a lot more. They've got to know him. He's a smoker and relates more to people in smokers room. Nobody's complaining that he's over bearing they've really let him fit in. He's grown a lot within himself he's grown a lot. I think he was determined to do that. In the back of his mind, he knew, and that was one thing in his personal objectives that he wants to do.

Romanticists never really come to grips with the self-other tension. Accepting that we should not hope to find our models without but within, we are all, like Barry, 'called to live up to our originality' (Taylor, 1989:376). In opposition to those poststructuralists who see everything as intertextual, interchangeable and substitutable, we are each of us, 'without precedent'.

> The Romantic order ... was not organised on principles which could be grasped by disengaged reason. Its principle of order was not exoterically available. Rather it was itself an enigma, and one could only understand it by fully participating in it. ... a current of love of live, which is both close to us and baffles understanding (*ibid*: 380).

It is this 'current of love of live' which Barry conveys so powerfully. Even the depressions, the bodily discontent, the self-criticism and the over-reaction which are

part of Barry's experience, are part of that romanticism. Barry is continually affected

by self-doubt, particularly where his commitment and his ability to engage in

sustained productive work are concerned. In the final conference with his Liaison

Lecturer he refers to the perceptiveness of his Field Supervisor. David picks up on this

and reminds him, indirectly, of the importance of commitment.

> DAVID: But she's also a very committed teacher

> BARRY: Oh I don't know that's one thing that overawes me. She is more
> committed than I could honestly be at this stage in my life, she's.. My first year
> in the classroom is going to be a very busy year for me, but fifteen years
> teaching. I don't know whether I ...It seems a long time for a person to be
> doing that job and not getting ... Well, she is ambitious. I guess that's how
> she's kept herself going.

> DAVID: No, no, she would be ...

The negative thoughts do not go away. They come back at unexpected times. David

mentions the need for thorough preparation, something which has been causing Barry

some concern:

> Yes that's true because last night I did go home, Tuesday night though I had
> this negative thought that passed, I think that's part and parcel it's all so new to
> me.

It is common for romanticists and their interpreters to substitute nature for analytical

reason. However, there is a suggestion that romanticist views are not incompatible

with supervision carried out on a basis of disengaged and calculating reason. Barry is

struck from the outset with the careful, measured, and thoughtful way in which David

approaches his supervisory role.

> BARRY: Yes, it felt good. David is not er he's not er a very ... lively type
> person, that sounds pretty bad, too. [INT: No, I know what you mean, said in
> quiet, moderated, reassuring way] character. He's a quiet person who er who
> er, he thinks when he's talking to you [INT: Yes, you can see him thinking,
> can't you, yeah] and he's definitely involved with what goes on in education.

This emotional disengagement is characteristic of David Hepworth's interaction.

Everything that he says is uttered with studied carefulness and thoughtful

consideration. When Barry engages in the emotional language of the confessional and

repents of his transgressions (for two days he had not prepared in sufficient detail),
David appears uncomfortable and makes no attempt to pursue it. Although later he
acknowledges the emotionally draining nature of the practicum, the hedging in *Oh
yeah, well, that's that's er a little bit that way,* makes it quite clear that he is not
prepared to enter into this and he signals with the transitional conjunct *Now* that he
wants to move back to his original intention.

> BARRY: She [Wendy] picked me up so well. I needed her to kick me in the
> pants. I, er I was very ashamed of myself too because I er I woke up at three
> o'clock this morning kicking myself *again* for what I'd done. I didn't feel it
> happening. I er I just, I just thought gosh, you know, I can just see Friday and
> this great emotional load taken off my shoulders and looked positive.

> DAVID: *Oh yeah, well, that's that's er a little bit that way. Now ..*

> BARRY: I was like, I was trying to spread it through the week, get there,
> because I just felt so dragged out and then the right words from her reminded
> me of that I was, that I was, I *do* think I can, I can, I am *capable of self-
> initiating things.*

> DAVID: I think you are too. But she, she was raising it with me and I, I guess
> I'm raising it with you as something to think about.

> BARRY: I'm in her environment. When I started at the University I treaded
> carefully because I felt like I was in someone else's house.

> DAVID: Well you are, and prac is, *prac is emotionally draining,* teaching is
> too. The comment I really made was that I could see quite a considerable
> improvement in your teaching style. You do have a lot going for you erm and
> your personality, your enthusiasm, and all that's part of that.

David's comments are full of practical, homely, folksy advice delivered in a
benevolent manner, and Barry coins the word 'advisive' to describe this style of
delivery.

In the remainder of the conference there is a return to the everyday, the routinised, the
humdrum work of teaching. Little in depth reflection is undertaken and we are
listening to the voice of disengaged reason. Technicist considerations involving voice,
noise levels, and class management techniques are interpreted as extensions of
uniqueness, expressivity, and individuality.

David's approach is full of indirectness, building on the perceived strengths of the student-teacher. The 'strong voice' is acknowledged as an asset but there are ways in which this can be varied. Criticisms are implied or blunted and there is much downtoning (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik, 1972), as in

> But I guess it raises the bigger issue of er what sort of class noise do you want and that's, er, *I personally thought* it was *a little bit noisy in parts* this afternoon.

A little bit noisy, is intended to minimise any potential criticism, or negative face, as is the expression *in parts*. The admitted subjectivity of *I personally thought* is in some ways a let off and example of down-toning. At the same time, the energy and enthusiasm are commendable but there is the problem of rowdiness. The advice is resplendent with common sense, tips for teachers, and the kind of practical content that Barry can respond to: he has to be careful that he doesn't wear his voice out; he has to have something up his sleeve for when the kids are restless on windy days; he has to avoid letting the children dominate him, and so forth.

Advice is also given by extrapolating to the assumed behaviour of the classroom teacher or introducing a pseudo-problem: the way that Wendy will anticipate the problems; the expected lower noise level in her class which is left to Barry to confirm; and the management of excited and restless children *which wasn't a problem today* are examples of these. Psuedo-problems distance student-teachers from the possible implications of their actions and offer them some sort of protection.

David's advice is frequently punctuated or introduced with *I guess* and, to a lesser extent, *I suspect*. At all times the advice is measured and the monologue is punctuated with supporting acknowledgement from Barry: *yer, yes, yeah*. It is replete with home-spun, folk beliefs and philosophy from the lifeworld containing aphorisms and wise

sayings. In this extract David repeats the belief in three or four different ways that in teaching *you only ever get back what you put in.*

> DAVID: ... the comment I was making about preparation is well you only ever get back what you put in so that if you put a great deal in you get a great deal back. [BARRY: Those are the rewards] I think the, the very dedicated teachers get their rewards from their children. [BARRY: Yer, yeah]. If you're not putting it in, you're not going to get it back, Children will only respond to the extent that you are responding to them. If you don't get it back from children, then you don't get very much satisfaction. [BARRY: You just get upset] and the key really is the amount, the amount of preparation, the imaginative preparation.

Inwardness and interiority

In his chapter on 'Inner Nature', Taylor (1989) proposes a form of individualism which has three poles. Two of these are concerned with forms of radical reflexivity or inwardness and involve self-exploration and the exploration of feelings related to self-control, whilst the third pole involves personal commitment to the good life, and the nature of the will. To what degree, then, is Barry assisted in this process of radical reflexivity and inwardness towards a consideration of the 'good life'?

It would appear that in Barry's case his supervisors do no more than open up the possibility of self-exploration, alerting him to particular aspects of his personality whilst urging him to pursue the process of self-motivation and self-direction unaided.

As has been seen, Barry Collins is very aware of social injustice, class prejudice and political inequities. Yet these appear to be off-limits in the discussions with his supervisors. It is as if a belief in the neutrality and non-political nature of teaching is being maintained, even by those who might expect to show some sympathies with his beliefs.

> INT: Several things that you've said might suggest that you and he share a number of erm social attitudes.

WENDY: Really? I tend to disagree with a lot of the things he says. I often let him voice his opinion because he's its easier to let him say what he wants to first and then I sort of try and steer him to the way it should be, but erm, no I wouldn't agree. He's come through a different generation to what I have in lots of ways and his feelings about things are very different to mine.

INT: Well this radicalism for instance, would you ... how far do you identify with his radical theories and beliefs?

WENDY: Erm I go along with a lot of them but I'm not to the extent he does. I think you can inwardly agree but you don't voice it, you know to everybody else.

INT: OK, right in other words its the way you express them that were really talking about and erm and this whole danger of being non-neutral and probably verging on indoctrination if you're not careful

WENDY: Yes ...

At no time is Barry required to examine ways in which he can engage in social action or define his sketchy and emotive beliefs more clearly. *'I sort of try and steer him to the way it should be'* we hear Wendy saying.

The situation is compounded by David Hepworth's belief that student-teachers are not always ready to reflect on issues beyond the immediate instrumental, technicist aspects of their own performance:

INT: Would you describe [Barry] as a genuinely reflective practitioner yet?

DAVID: Well there are layers of reflection and the type ... and I would think that the type he's undertaking now is quite consistent with his stage of development so he's still a teacher-in-training if you like and so he's very vitally concerned with aspects of his own performance and he does reflect on his own performance, things that have worked well in his eyes, things that haven't worked well. He's yet to dive down deeper and I guess that's a much later stage of development to reflect upon the genuine impact he's having on children. Teaching practice doesn't allow a great deal of that any way in two or four weeks you don't see particularly with older children, see a major shift so you are unable to gauge the impact you've had on children. *And anyway I don't think you are in any position because you are so much concerned with your own performance that you're in a position to reflect on that.*

So I think ... I guess I was a little bit worried about the reflection ... that it wasn't self-motivated, that a degree of it was because the context required it. I suspect that Barry will be the happy extravert who will modify his style along with his reflections.

This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which romanticists views of the self permeate the supervisory process. The process results in the embourgeoisement of education whereby the radical cutting edge of resistance is blunted. Social injustice, class prejudice and political inequities are considered off limits, and there is little direct challenge on the grounds of moral principle and little in the way of the prioritising of ends.

Epilogue

The romantic character is frequently doomed, tragically flawed. Remaining true to his understanding of the self, sustained by the creative expression of his personality, Barry will not be allowed to teach after graduation. He presents too much of a risk to bourgeois society and the schools. He does not pass his probationary year.