



Professing Education

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Editorial: Beyond Professors of Teaching

John M. Novak

In 1989, Richard Wisniewski and Edward R. Ducharme edited *The Professors of Teaching: An Inquiry*. In the Introduction, Harry Judge noted that teacher education is institutionally weak and intellectually uncertain. Is that true where you work? Is that true about the type of work you do? If this is true, what should you, and we, do about it?

This issue of *Professing Education* looks at institutional and intellectual concerns of professors of education. Certainly teacher education is an important area of interest for the educational profession, but our mission moves beyond preparing and sustaining teachers for and in their work in schools. Our work also includes the development of education as a field of study and an exploration and improvement of the educative process in and beyond schools. Professing education takes many forms and includes the development of insightful ways of studying educational phenomena and the construction of defensible knowledge claims about matters of educational worth.

The six contributions to this issue explore the nature of the work of professors of education. In the first essay, Jan Armstrong provides a brief history of the Society of Professors of Education. Starting in 1902 as the Society of College Teachers of Education, the name was changed to the National Society of College Teachers of Education in 1909 and changed again in 1969 to the Society of Professors of Education. With these name changes came other changes that Armstrong lists. What changes do you foresee regarding the nature of our work? What changes would you like to see? Does the name, “the Society of Professors of Education,” represent a defensible identity in this age of specialization?

After her overview of the Society of Professors of Education’s history, Jan Armstrong does double duty and hones in on one member, former president Douglas J. Simpson. Simpson is a prolific scholar on John Dewey and teacher education and is a thoughtful person in all respects. In the interview he warns professors of education not to ignore ideas and skills that are immediately useful to classroom teachers and administrators. The importance of a grounded and imaginative approach to various facets of the educative

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process is stressed. How do you make practice intelligible and theory useful in your work? Are many of your students too young or inexperienced to appreciate the importance of going beyond techniques?

Professing education is not limited to the academy. Allan Jones, editor of *Caddo Gap Publishing*, shows how he contributes to the profession by reading, reviewing, selecting, revising, and publishing the works of his professional colleagues. Similar to his institutionalized colleagues, his work involves many possibilities for accomplishment and satisfaction. He also speaks to the importance of sustained service to the profession. How many professors of education do you know outside the academy? Does the academy encourage a very narrow and homogenized notion of professing education?

In speaking about the profession, Andrew Short looks at the gendered university environment in terms of the power possessed and exercised by professors. His claim that powerful professions represented in the academy are male dominated and encourage marginalizing attitudes towards women deserves further analysis and discussion. To what extent is this true in your university? Is it a matter of concern?

Gendered universities can also encourage gendered perspectives. Karen Csolli shows how this works in the area of spirituality. She points out that the spiritual portrayal of a man sitting on a mountaintop represents a limited notion of spirituality. Rather than emphasize solitude, female spirituality is found in experiences that are communal and social. Her suggestion to replace the spiritual image of the solitary man with the alternative vision of a group of people sitting together opens up different ways of being connected. Does this work for you? Would you want to become part of that group?

The final essay is Jill Grose's review of *Conflicting Paradigms in Adult Literacy Education: In Quest of a U.S. Democratic Politics of Literacy* by George Demetrian. Grose appreciates the author's attempt to find a Deweyan common ground among conflicting paradigms and points out the

difficulties of making this work in an accountability-driven political atmosphere.

We hope you enjoy each of the contributions and appreciate the authors' intentions to extend the conversation about the nature of the educational professoriate beyond a narrow, technical conception of teaching. A sense of history, focus, alternative professional commitments, the workings of gender in universities and on mountaintops, and a critical appraisal of new books should help make us all be better professors of educational living.

A Brief History of the Society of Professors of Education

Jan Armstrong
University of New Mexico

The Society of Professors of Education (SPE) was originally called the Society of College Teachers of Education (SCTE), and later (after 1909), the National Society of College Teachers of Education (NSCTE). Although records of the Society's earliest years have been reported lost, SPE traces its beginning to a meeting of the 1902 Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association in Chicago. The NSCTE's first organizational meeting was probably announced as a "special meeting" to be held on the morning of February 28, 1902, at the Auditorium Hotel in Chicago. The meeting took place after the adjournment of the annual conference of The National Society for the Scientific Study of Education, formerly the National Herbart Society, which met each year in conjunction with the Department of Superintendence (McMurry, 1902; Holmes, 1903). John Dewey (1859-1952) of the University of Chicago, Paul Henry Hanus (1855-1941) of Harvard, and Walter B. Jacobs (1861-1932) of Brown University were founding members of the Society (Hanus, 1937, pp. 229-230), as were James Earl Russell (1864-1945) and Frank McMurry (1862-1936) of Teachers College,

Columbia University, Charles DeGarmo (1849-1934) of Cornell University, and Michael Vincent O'Shea (1866-1932) of the University of Wisconsin.

The Society was established before disciplinary specialization became the norm in North American universities. Its members have included U.S. and territorial commissioners of education, university and normal school presidents, deans of colleges of education, department chairs, normal school teachers and professors of education, history, philosophy, pedagogy, "the science and art of education," "the theory and practice of education," and so on. The Society was, and remains an interdisciplinary association, providing an intellectual home for people with expertise in history, philosophy, psychology, educational administration, teacher preparation, and elementary, secondary and higher education. William Kilpatrick, George S. Counts and Elwood P. Cubberley and Harold O. Rugg were NSCTE members. Psychologists Charles H. Judd, Edward L. Thorndike and Lewis Terman were also members of NSCTE. Philosophers W. C. Bagley, Henry Suzzallo, George Herbert Mead, and James Hayden Tufts were members, as were historians Paul Monroe and Issac L. Kandel. From the beginning, NSCTE members were geographically dispersed. Some members lived in large cities (Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Minneapolis, Washington, DC). Members also lived in Ann Arbor, Austin, Baton Rouge, Berkeley, Boulder, Cambridge, Charlottesville, Columbus, Denver, Des Moines, Eugene, Iowa City, Ithica, Grand Forks, Morgantown, New Orleans, Norman, Portland, Purdue, Providence, St. Louis, and Urbana (NSCTE 1911).

The difficulties encountered by professors of education as they tried to gain a foothold in academe early in the 20th century were substantial (Hanus, 1934; Lagemann, 2000; Powell, 1980). The initial purpose of the Society was to "improve the work of the departments of education in colleges and universities of the country" by providing a forum for examining and evaluating the organization and content of courses in education. The Society also provided opportunities to examine the relationships between departments of

education and other academic departments ("to the end that this relationship may be most harmonious and helpful") and to "discuss current educational theory so far as it is germane to the work of the members of the association" (NSCTE, 1911). In 1916, NSCTE President Charles Judd appointed a committee to re-draft the Society's constitution. The revised constitution, adopted in 1925, stated that the purpose of the NSCTE was to "promote and improve the teaching of education in the colleges and universities of the country." It also identified three general "fields for its operation": 1) problems of the administration of departments of education, 2) problems of the teaching and organization of courses in education, and 3) problems of research in the general field of education. As scientific management, behaviorism and quantitative research came to dominate the field of education, the Society deemphasized "theory" in its constitution, if not in its publications.

The Society's Constitution was revised again in 1948 and in 1969. The 1948 Constitution added two additional foci to those listed above: 4) problems of the general education of teachers, and 5) problems of specialization in teaching fields" (NSCTE, 1950, p. 8). At that time, the Executive Committee had set up a number of committees of members who worked together for three or four years to prepare papers and reports on specific areas of interest. Many of the Society's yearbooks and other publications have been the products of work conducted by committees formed to examine specific topics. In 1947, committees were established in 9 areas, including higher education, social foundations, historical foundations, curriculum construction and supervisory procedures, organization and administration, educational psychology, special methods and integration of theory and practice, general education, and education of adult educational personnel.

In 1969, the Society changed its name to the Society of Professors of Education, and reframed its mission: "to serve the education professoriate through consideration of its tasks and problems" (SPE,

1998). The revised Constitution stated that the society shall emphasize the following:

1. Promotion of an increasingly comprehensive understanding of the relationship between education and the social complexities in which professors of education function;
2. Recognition and appropriate utilization of the inherent power and responsibility of the Society in voicing its interest in and concern for the realization of desirable educational ends;
3. Concern for fostering inquiry into the history, current status, and future alternatives of the education professoriate.

(SPE Constitution and Bylaws, 1969)

Regarding membership, the SPE Constitution broadened the association's potential membership base. In 1925, membership was "confined to teachers and administrators in recognized colleges and universities who are engaged in teaching and research in education" (NSCTE, 1925). In contrast, the SPE Constitution (which still guides the Society's activities today) employed a language of inclusion: "Membership shall be open to all persons involved in the education of teachers and to those in related fields who are interested in furthering the objectives of the Society" (SPE, 1969, *emphasis added*).

Membership in the Society grew slowly and peaked in the 1940s. In 1911, there were 115 members. In 1913 there were 131 members. The following year, 20 new members were added to the membership list. In 1916 there were 249 members; 207 in 1923. By 1940, there were 551 NSCTE members. This dropped to about 350 in 1950, and then rose to 427 in 1967.¹ [For purposes of comparison, in mid-1902 the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education had 114 members. At the end of 1918, the National Society for the Study of Education, which had dropped the word "Scientific" from its name in 1911, listed 1050 members (Whipple, 1920).]

In 1902, annual membership dues cost \$2.00 (roughly \$44.84 in 2005 dollars). Dues remained \$2.00 until 1949, when they were raised to \$3.50. In 1993, regular membership was \$20 for regular members, \$5 for graduate students and emeriti. In 1995, the cost of annual dues for regular members was \$35. Graduate students and emeriti members paid \$15. In 2005, regular members paid \$40 and graduate students and emeriti paid \$25. SPE is also a Special Interest Group (SIG) within the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

The Society of College Teachers of Education produced and distributed a number of publications over the years. In 1907, reprints of Sutton and Holton's "The Department of Education and Other Departments in Colleges" (first published in the *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*) were sent to members. The following year, the Society purchased and distributed *The History of Education as a Professional Subject* (Burnham and Suzzallo, 1908), first published by Teachers College, Columbia University. Early SCTE publications included an array of topics and titles: *Observation and Practice Teaching in University Departments of Education* (1909); *The Aim, Scope and Methods of a University Course in Public Administration* (1910); *Research within the Field of Education, Its Organization and Encouragement* (1911); *Reports of Investigations by Members of the Society of College Teachers of Education* (1913) and *Practice Teaching for Teachers in Secondary Schools* (1917). Other NSCTE monographs included *The Direct Contribution of Educational Psychology to Teacher Training* (Pechstein, et al, 1932); *The Educational Frontier* (Kilpatrick et al, 1933); *The Emerging Task of the Foundations of Education: The Study of Man, Culture and Education* (Rugg, et al, 1950), and numerous yearbooks and proceedings published as *Studies in Education* and *School Review Monographs*. From 1911 to 1916, NSCTE conference programs, minutes, membership lists and proceedings were published, apparently with some difficulty, in the widely read *School Review*.

Monographs and occasional papers published by the Society of Professors of Education include *The Professor of Education: An Assessment of Conditions* (Bagley et al, 1975). *The Dean of Education and the Looking-Glass Self* (Wisniewski, 1979); *Civic Learning in Teacher Education* (Butts et al, 1983); *The Black Education Professoriate* (Bagley et al, 1984); *An Invitation to Wisdom and Schooling* (Bagley, 1985), and *Accountability and Assessment in Higher Education* (Johanningmeier, 1989). The Society currently publishes two journals - *Professing Education* (John M. Novak and Kenneth A. McClelland, editors) and *The Sophist's Bane* (Donna Adair Breault and Rick A. Breault, editors).

The Society of Professors of Education has established several awards to acknowledge the work of distinguished scholars and institutions. These include the Charles DeGarmo Lecture, the Mary Ann Raywid Award and Lecture, and the Richard Wisniewski Award for Teacher Education. SPE has published the DeGarmo Lecture since the award was established in 1975. The 2005 Mary Ann Raywid Award Lecture was published in *The Sophist's Bane*. A list of SPE award recipients and lecture titles is available on the Society of Professors of Education website. Efforts are underway to establish an online archive for NSCTE membership lists, minutes, conference programs and other documents that shed light on the Society's activities in the early 20th century.

EndNotes

1. I have gathered membership information from the following sources: NSCTE (1911), Alexander (1912), Alexander (1913), Alexander (1914), Wilson (1916), SCTE (1923), NSCTE (1950, p. 9) and VanTil (1983, p. 366).

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JKA: Doug Simpson is the Helen DeVitt Jones Chair in Teacher Education and Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas Tech University. Prior to his present appointment, he was the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development (1999- 2002) at the University of Louisville; Dean of the School of Education at Texas Christian University (1988-1999); and Dean of the College of Education at Tennessee State University (1984-1988). In addition to serving as President of the Society of Professors of Education (1997-1999), he has served as President of the American Educational Studies Association (1998-1999), the Council of Learned Societies in Education (1994-1997), and the Texas Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (1993-1994). He serves on the Board of Examiners for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). He began his college education at the Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee, subsequently earning an M. Ed. at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro and a Ph. D. at the University of Oklahoma. His research interests focus on John Dewey, curriculum theory, Paulo Freire, teacher preparation, and education and ethics. Doug is the editor of the *Journal of Thought*, author of numerous articles, and author or co-author of *John Dewey: Primer* (2006), *John Dewey and the Art of Teaching: Toward Reflective and Imaginative Practice* (with Michael J.B. Jackson and Judy C. Aycock, 2005); *Recreating Schools: Places Where Everyone Learns and Likes It* (with Charles B. Myers, 1998); *Educational Reform: A Deweyan Approach* (with M. Jackson, 1997); *The Pedagogofathers: The Lords of Education* (1994); and *The Teacher as Philosopher* (with M. Jackson, 1984).

A Conversation with Douglas J. Simpson

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Douglas J. Simpson
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This is the first of series of interviews with past presidents of the Society of Professors of Education. I talked with Professor Simpson (DJS) by phone on June 1, 2005. The text of the interview was captured from notes taken during the course of our conversation. In the interest of clarity and accuracy, DJS reviewed and made minor editorial changes to the transcript. For an autobiographical account of Simpson's education and miseducation in Carteret, North Carolina in the 1940s and 1950s, see "The Miseducation of Bubba"¹



Douglas J. Simpson

JKA: How did you first become involved with the Society of Professors of Education?

DJS: I've been an SPE member for about 15 or 20 years. I'm not sure how I first became involved. I was probably invited to attend an SPE meeting by Joe DeVitis or Harvey Neufeldt.

JKA: What do you remember about your work with the Society?

DJS: Sadly, very little. But meeting, talking, and working with people was the most enjoyable part. I valued the opportunity to work with the Executive Board, committees, and contacting people to give addresses for the Raywid Awards and DeGarmo Lectures. I was particularly involved with offering invitations and awards to Gloria Ladson-Billings (Mary Ann Raywid Award in 1997), Michael Apple (DeGarmo lecture, 1997), Larry Cuban (Mary Ann Raywid Award, 1998), Nel Noddings (DeGarmo lecture, 1998), William Hare (Mary Ann Raywid Award, 1999), and Yvonna Lincoln (DeGarmo lecture, 1999). Of course, committee members played crucial roles in each of these affairs.

SPE is still the SIG I'm most likely to be involved with when I attend AERA, although I am involved with several other groups, including the John Dewey Society.

JKA: What else can you tell me about working with the Executive Board and other SPE committees?

DJS: I remember we were very concerned with raising the Society's profile at AERA, recruiting new members, and finding our niche among the many professional groups that exist. In part, we tried to do this with the DeGarmo Lecture and the Mary Ann Raywid Awards sessions. Plus there was an interest in acknowledging innovative and reflective teacher education programs. This led to creation of the Richard Wisniewski Award in 1999. We also discussed sponsoring a new journal, *Professing Education*. I think Bob Morris initiated the project, and we started working on it. It was delayed for a year or two but eventually emerged to serve SPE well. We also did some brainstorming and developed a call for submissions for the first issue, which was to be edited by John Novak and Jonathan Neufeld of Brock University. The theme of the first issue was to be "Education and the New Millennium." I don't want to take credit for the publication. Bob and others deserve the credit. I just happened to be president at the time.

We also had to deal with some difficult financial issues. AERA changed its way of working with special interest groups. The Association began collecting dues for SIGs as well as for Divisions. At a business meeting, Bob Morris delineated a number of options on how we could deal with the financial challenges. We selected the existing arrangement and the Society moved forward successfully.

JKA: What should others know about the context in which you were working during your term as President of SPE?

DJS: I think the context was similar to what recent Presidents have faced. There has been a continual marginalization of people with interests in social and cultural foundations and curriculum studies. It's not that there is no interest in these areas, but more interest is now placed on the cultures of students, multicultural education, and diversity. All of these studies are needed, but the interests are somewhat to significantly different from being engaged in

sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, ethics, and theory of education. The two groups have rather different goals although they are complementary. The former appears more immediately and practically oriented. The latter can be very practical, but it does so by seeing practice through the lenses of the disciplines, multiple disciplines, and theory. Reflective practice emerges by understanding both—and other—strands of thought and research. I've unfortunately oversimplified matters. Fortunately, SPE members are intelligent enough to know such!

Whatever the relationship of these two general fields to educator preparation, marginalization has continued in most places.

JKA: Why do you think this marginalization has occurred?

DJS: There are more influences than I have time to discuss. So, I'll mention just a couple of related ideas. The university and teacher preparation curricula are packed full of different and competing kinds of coursework—and there is a limit on how much coursework can be required for degrees and education majors. But if educational foundations were highly valued by most education professors and policymakers, the programs we offer would be different. This lack of valuing seems clear when we realize that few if any people would eliminate particular courses (e.g., literacy, child development, so forth) from the teacher education curriculum. On the other hand, very few professors and policymakers seem to think very long—if the courses are required in a program of study—about eliminating a course in educational theory, philosophy of education, or curriculum theory.

JKA: What do you think accounts for this?

DJS: There are multiple reasons. Some reasons are meritorious; others aren't. Recently, many faculty may unconsciously feel that whatever there is of value in the foundations can be taught by them in other

courses, e.g., multicultural education courses replace social foundations ones; critical or feminist theory courses may replace philosophy of education offerings.

But there is something very important to learn from these overlapping realms of inquiry. They are perceived as important, relevant, and practical. We, as a field, haven't created the same image of ourselves and haven't made ourselves *valuable* in many teacher education programs. Often, our teacher education colleagues don't think of us as relevant to contemporary questions. Maybe some of us aren't - or, at least, our courses aren't. We may have been seen as twiddling our theoretical, abstract, and evidentiary thumbs while educational Rome burns. Whether we appreciate such or not, teacher education and school cultures are frequently focused on ideas and skills that are immediately and instrumentally useful. Ignoring this is, as we have seen, suicidal.

I also hypothesize that the expansion of adolescence may make it more difficult to teach foundations in intellectually stimulating, rigorous, and satisfying ways. If so, the developmental level of present-day students may affect their appreciation of our courses. We too often view age as a static concept. If you are 18, then you are 18. Maybe. Maybe not. Perhaps an 18 year old today is in many respects like a 14 year old fifty years ago. This may mean that in universities we are teaching students who would have been viewed as mature high school students twenty or thirty years ago. This is a change — if the hypothesis is warranted or is even partially accurate—that has not been studied, as far as I know, for its implications for preparing future teachers in foundations and elsewhere. On the other hand, this idea may represent just another Simpsonian idiocy.

JKA: If you could talk with any past SPE president, who would you most like to talk with, and about what?

DJS: John Dewey. I think it would be interesting to hear him comment on what I will label the disagreements and controversies between modernists and postmodernists. I'd like to hear what he would say about people who see him as a post-modernist and those who argue that he is more of a modernist. Would he still criticize dichotomous thinking? What implicit dogmas of thought would he scrutinize today? How would he reconstruct himself in the 21st century and approach issues? How would he critique capitalism, privilege, and democracy today?

JKA: I have been thinking lately about the relative merits of brief academic writing projects—for example, research reports, book reviews, columns and articles in professional newsletters and essays. What are your thoughts about “writing small” in academe?

DJS: You are familiar with the old saying that academics—and, perhaps, education professors in particular—never say in a sentence what we can say in a paragraph and never say in a paragraph what can be stated in a chapter and so on ad infinitum. It is true that some professors count pages when they review files for promotion and tenure. On the other hand, short articles are often written for a different kind of audience. The last three places I've worked have had tenure and promotion guidelines that have stated that we ought to recognize manuscripts published for practitioners and not just those who write for the scholars in their fields. I like the idea but wouldn't want to universalize or prescribe such for all institutions.

I also think many of us just don't have time to read extensive works. So, if a person can't say what she or he needs to say in 200 or so pages, they may not be heard. I am a very slow reader, slower than probably most slow readers. When I read a lengthy work, it is because someone has highly recommended it. Oddly, perhaps, I decided to focus much of my work on Dewey. On the other hand, he is a good illustration of someone who wrote short books that have been widely read and influential —*The School*

and *Society*, *The Child and Curriculum*, *Experience and Education*, and *How We Think* are examples. But there are also *Democracy and Education* and *Art as Experience*. Thus, there appears to be market for longer and shorter works in spite of my limited literacy skills.

EndNotes

¹ Simpson (2001). The Miseducation of Bubba: An anecdotal and historical interpretation of selected aspects of Carteret county education in the 1940s and 1950s. *Educational Studies*, 32 (1), 4-37.

The Nature of Professing

By Alan H. Jones
Caddo Gap Press

What is professing? How is it best understood and described? Is it the work of professors alone, or can others take part as well? Let's grant that professing is traditionally something done by those who hold teaching positions, or professorships, at institutions of postsecondary education – at colleges and universities, where instruction is offered to undergraduate and graduate students. Professing in this setting, in addition to teaching, involves research, writing, and a variety of public service. For those professors in the field of education, it involves, most appropriately, service with teachers and administrators in the public schools at all levels.

This work of professors is, in my opinion, one of the most fascinating – perhaps the most fascinating – of careers. It is innately creative, exciting, and rewarding. It is also very hard work. Teaching at all levels is challenging. It always requires thorough preparation and continual flexibility, especially in a field such as education, where teachers and students alike – those who prepare teachers and those who will be teachers – are under constant criticism and attack. The other work of professing – the research, writing, and service – requires long hours, great detail, and the sort of creativity needed

to develop new ideas, along with perseverance and fortitude to shoulder the burden of the constant pressure of doubts, questions, and criticism. So, in total, the role of the professor holds great possibility for accomplishment and satisfaction within an arena of uncertainty, pressure, and negativity.

While those who profess are most commonly college and university faculty, occasionally others are able to share in this special activity. In a variety of disciplines and fields colleagues and collaborators from the world of practice are invited to teach some postsecondary courses, and in the field of education this typically evolves in partnership schools where the worlds of theory and practice are combined and exchanged. The world of professing also reaches into many arts and literary fields, drawing music, dance, video, film, and writing, academy out into those fields.

In my personal case I spent, a few decades ago, several years as a professor of education, at three different universities, after which I returned to my original university for additional post-doctoral study and research. Following that I spent time as a state educational consultant, a staff member with the American Association of University Professors, and an institutional researcher. For the past 25 years I have served as an educational editor and publisher, the last 15 years owning and operating my own company. Along with the work of my small two-person publishing house, Caddo Gap Press, I currently also teach one course most semesters at a neighboring university, participate in activities and committees of several educational associations, and serve as the executive director of a statewide organization of professors of teacher education. So I profess regularly, both at the local university, in the field of education, and in my publishing work.

I feel fortunate and privileged to be able to consider myself a professor of education, to be one of those who professes. I do so in my publishing work as I read, review, select, revise, edit, and publish the work of my professorial colleagues, and I do so in my teaching, my research, my own writing, and my service to and among those same professorial colleagues. It is good work to be involved in, done with great company, done because it is something one feels called to. I thank all of those colleagues who allow me in these ways to be part of the professing community.

Professional Marginalization in the Academy

*Andrew Short
Brock University*

When the nature of work is examined, issues of power and control emerge as important signposts to understanding that work. The idea of power concerns both the ability to make decisions and the scope and effect of the consequences of those decisions. Issues of power include who has it and who does not, and these issues often concern gender. This paper will investigate the gendered university environment in terms of the power possessed and exercised by professions, and the nature of power within the university as a place of work.

Professions and Power

It is no mistake that powerful professions have been traditionally dominated by males. Female dominated disciplines are subordinate to male disciplines primarily because of gender. Nursing for example is subordinate to medicine. In powerful professions females tend to occupy positions of less power within the profession. For example, in pharmacy, females tend to occupy the lower paid positions, which involve caring and nurturing behaviour within the profession (Muzzin, 2001). Mcpherson (1996) asserts that women have been assigned the role of being nurturers because it subordinates them to more 'important' male positions.

Knowledge is not a neutral concept but is instead subject to the imposition of values that determine its relative worth. It is the traditionally male dominated groups who assign the relative importance of the knowledge within individual professions based on what is traditionally valued by those groups. Freidson (1986) states: "Professional groups including scientists and academics are often represented as the creators and proponents of particular bodies of knowledge that play important roles in shaping both social policy and the institutions of everyday life" (Freidson, 1986, p. ix).

In the university, scientific knowledge traditionally holds the most value. In other words, within the university, "science is everything and science quite clearly is male" (Muzzin, 2001, p. 35). Universities need to legitimize the knowledge they construct and

convey, and they need to legitimate their control over this knowledge. According to Abbott (1988), professions do this by “attaching their expertise to values of rationality, efficiency, and science” (p. 16). Scientific or male knowledge is therefore legitimated.

Power within the university workplace

Witz (1992) claims that professional spaces are dominated by patriarchal capitalism. This informs decisions as to who occupies the positions of power within the institution. Witz (1992) refers to this phenomenon as occupational closure, which is characterized by the marginalization of women and other minorities to positions of little power.

This marginalization becomes apparent in examples such as that of part-time language teachers who work in an intensive English language program within a university. Feldberg (2002) writes: “Ninety percent of language teachers, full time and part time, are women. The university’s thirty year policy has been to depend heavily on part time, hourly paid teachers to deliver its core courses, not merely to take up slack or inject new blood; now, part timers assume responsibility for over 50 percent of the department’s instruction and student-contact hours, and this percentage continues to grow” (p.56). Language teaching is therefore a female ghetto as far as work is concerned. In Feldberg’s example these part time positions are not transitions to full time meaningful work. In fact, “Many part timers have been in the department long term, most for more than ten years and some for well over twenty years” (p. 57).

Those who teach in this area are not subject to the same privilege as others who teach within the university. As Feldberg (2002) points out: “Working on part time hourly rate teaching contracts brought me to experience in earnest the rotten core of marginalization: disrespect for my time, intellectual property, academic freedoms, qualifications, experiences, and professional aspirations” (p. 58). Demonstrations of skilled expertise and specialized professional knowledge “are simply regarded as volunteer work when carried out by part time professors, and are largely unpaid and unattributed” (Feldberg, p. 59).

There is a question as to whether these individuals can be called professionals when they carry out their work, as a profession concerns a certain degree of control over one’s labour (Freidson, 1986), and these

workers have little control over their work. Instead, women in these positions may be ‘semi-professionals’. According to Witz (1992), semi-professions are those in which women predominate but are subordinate to the true professions which are male dominated. This may be part of the ‘hidden curriculum’ of the university environment. In other words, male dominated cultures encourage marginalizing attitudes towards women, which relegate women to positions of little power within the institutions (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

Conclusion

Powerful professions are male dominated and less powerful female dominated professions are subordinate to male professions. Universities dominated by male models of science value some types or forms of knowledge above others. The knowledge constructed within the university is not neutral, but is constructed deliberately, and concerns the gender of the individual who possesses or constructs knowledge.

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Sitting Together on a Mountaintop

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In my former role as a Catholic secondary school teacher, I watched as students struggled and grew with their understandings of themselves, their world, and their spirituality. Even though religion was not one of the “cool” subjects (this was my teaching subject), the students were engaged in the discussions and were ready with questions that we could explore, if not answer. Now that my interests have taken me in the direction of female spirituality, I realize that my classes (and the curriculum) were lacking a balanced approach to spirituality. Whether my students were Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim or Buddhist (and I had them all), the feminine experience of spirituality was never part of our discussion or of my teaching.

So what is female spirituality and how does it differ from traditional views? A working definition of spirituality might be that it is an intrinsic capacity for the sacred or for that which is greater than the self, and that it is formed both within and outside religious traditions, beliefs, and practices. A typical image of spirituality is that of a man sitting alone on a mountaintop engaged in a form of meditation or prayer. Although this does not provide a complete picture, it is a common image. Female spirituality is a stark contrast to this image of sitting alone. Women do not appear to seek solitude as a primary source for spirituality (although such a source is valid). Instead, their experiences are much more communal and social.

Not only is female spirituality considered in terms of connectedness to others, but the research also indicates that transcendence can occur as part of a social experience (transcendence here is defined as a spiritual experience outside of or free from the limitations of the known self or reality). In one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies of adolescent spirituality, Starbuck (1899) found that many

conversion experiences, defined as a rather sudden change in character from indifference to spiritual insight and activity, occurred as part of a Christian Revival. Mattis (2002) found that the experiences of African-North American women suggest that spiritual experiences occur specifically due to intimacy with others and not as a result of disconnection from the world. Further research by Ray and McFadden (2001) and Bruce and Cockreham (2004) show that women have and seek spiritual experiences while with others in a community or group.

The image of the man sitting alone on the mountaintop suggests that spirituality is found outside of this world – above it. Perhaps your image includes a church, a monastery, or a mosque. Mercer and Durham’s (1999) investigation into gender orientation and religious mysticism found that those with high femininity scores also score higher on reports of mysticism and mystical experiences. While Mattis (2002) suggests that “the tendency to equate religiosity/spirituality with irrationality exists in tandem with a tendency to represent religiosity/spirituality as gendered (read female) experiences” (p.310). Even so, the image of a man in prayer or meditation can easily be replaced with the image of a woman in prayer or meditation.

Other discoveries from research into female experiences of spirituality indicate that spiritual experiences may be very physical as well as ethereal. Women report transcendent spiritual experiences during two key physical moments – childbirth and breastfeeding. Kanis (2002) believes that women’s bodies have everything to do with the way they interpret religious experiences. The women she spoke to interpret these experiences as spiritual transcendence even though their religions told them that women’s bodies were evil, and therefore could not be the source of the divine. This may result in confusion between what women are taught about themselves, and the very real experiences of spiritual transcendence occurring through the physical mother-child bond.

This is probably not what Jesus meant when he is reported to say that “the Kingdom is within

you,” but it does suggest that spirituality can be informed through our physical and embodied relatedness to the world and to others. Women may not have been allowed to speak of spirituality in this way, particularly in light of the Judeo-Christian tradition that tells us that childbirth (and women’s bodies) are unclean. This is an important step for women and adolescent girls to reclaim their physical spirituality.

Female spirituality might also help to illuminate another source of transcendence – transcendence as a result of suffering. Women may see themselves fragmented due to injury, abuse, death of a loved one, or divorce, and evidence shows that transcendence can occur as part of healing from this fragmentation or paralysis. Building on the assumption that spirituality is meaning-making, Mattis (2002) suggests that meaning emerges out of disruptions of taken-for-granted semantic and symbolic relationships. The breaking of these relationships through spirituality can lead to transcendence “by permitting people to develop alternative conceptualizations of life’s possibilities” (p.314). Slee (2000) takes women into account by suggesting that healing of fragmentation through transcendence can occur in a loving relationship. Many of her subjects report that finding a loving partner gave them an opportunity to heal.

Using her experiences with women and female spirituality, Slee (2000) creates a female-centred pattern theory of faith development as an alternative to developmental stage theories. Slee (2000) suggests that there are five possible strategies for faith formation. Although she does not explain her verbalized “faithing,” it may be speculated that this is an attempt to show faith as an active, continuous experience rather than an end-point or goal. The strategies for women’s faith formation are: conversational faithing (the way women converse to express important meaning), metaphoric faithing (the way women use metaphor, analogy and image to give shape to their faith), narrative faithing (types and styles of story to shape and pattern experience), personalized faithing (reference and relation to heroes or heroines of faith), and conceptual faithing (using psychological and theological concepts to interpret or analyze experi-

ence). These five faithings build upon women’s ways of understanding and relating to the world in general. They make use of women’s verbal propensities, the use of storytelling, and also emphasize the need for heroes or heroines of faith.

Just as the image of a man sitting alone on a mountaintop must be reconsidered, the hero myth must also be reconsidered in relation to female spirituality. Ray and McFadden (2001) found that the solo quest is not the best metaphor for women since women do not define themselves in this way. The solo quest requires separation and individuation before re-integration into the community, something uncharacteristic of women. Alternately, they suggest that women’s personal myths are best described as webs or quilts in order to emphasize the connectedness that women feel for their personal experiences and community.

We return now to the original question – what is female spirituality and how does it differ from traditional views? Perhaps, ultimately, female spirituality is the opposite of “sitting alone on a mountaintop.” It is physical, social, communal, relational, verbal, as well as transcendent. Women’s spirituality is sacred, yet informed by the here and now of the world in which we live. This here and now can be physical, emotional, and painful, yet at the same time it can lead us to the sacred. Peay (2005) believes that spirituality is fostering feminism’s fourth wave - a fusion of spirituality and social action (the first three, respectively, are women’s suffrage, fighting for economic and legal rights, and advocating for women’s rights while embracing a “girlie culture”).

Education is not just an intellectual process. Learning takes place emotionally, socially, physically, and spiritually. My own teaching would have benefited from an understanding of the nature of female spirituality in two ways. First, as a female, a thorough knowledge of my own experiences would have allowed me to bring more of my authentic self to the classroom (male educators may also see the range of their own spirituality and bring that to the

classroom). Second, both male and female students would have benefited from a class with depth in which they could more readily see images of themselves. By including these understandings in our curriculum, we may counter the traditional view of spirituality in isolation and foster the view of spirituality in co-operative, healing, and social action. The image of the solitary man sitting on a mountaintop might then be replaced by the image of a group of people sitting together on a mountaintop.

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Book review: *Conflicting Paradigms in Adult Literacy Education: In Quest of a U.S. Democratic Politics of Literacy*

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Conflicting Paradigms in Adult Literacy Education is an apt title for a book that attempts to reconcile disparate ideas and values covering a broad range of topics. Not only does Demetrior include a discussion of adult education and the ideologies that have created different epistemological stances on its policies and practices over the last 15 years, but he also incorporates lengthy discussions on the nature of democratic education, U.S. political traditions, the Deweyan concept of learning as growth, and the strengths and limitations of educational research paradigms that have molded modern conceptions of what is deemed *truth* in an age of accountability.

Demetrior's book is not an easy read but it is helpful and illuminating for those who wish to gain a greater understanding of the political and philosophical tensions that have given rise to adult literacy policies in the U.S. While many of the specific movements and organizations cited will be familiar only to those who are immersed in the field of adult literacy education, the ensuing analysis of the disparate approaches and policies is relevant to a broader discussion of how conservative and democratic ideologies play out in the specifics of curriculum and practice in a number of educational arenas.

To ground his discussion, Demetrior provides a helpful historical overview of three distinct perspectives that have informed adult literacy education: the Freirian school of participatory education views adults as change agents who must be given voice to determine their own needs and purposes for engaging in education. New Literacy Studies maintains a social constructivist perspective in its emphasis on the ways in which adults develop diverse literacies to make sense of the world contextually. The third perspective

is that which is driven by U.S. federal initiatives that link funding of adult literacy directly to performance outcomes within the workplace. Lack of agreement as to the purpose of adult literacy is at the root of these disparate viewpoints: finding a mutually agreed upon purpose is part of the book's mission.

Demetrian's thesis is to provide common ground between these conflicting paradigms, drawing upon a "renewed political culture... that embrace[s] the democratic, constitutional, and republican values reflective of the nation's founding political ideals" (p.2). He turns to Dewey's pragmatic philosophy for inspiration, particularly Dewey's concept of learning as growth, his vision of a democratic citizenship, and his notion of inquiry as a means through which social phenomenon can be examined, following scientific principles of investigation. Demetrian's vision of a return to a democratic ethos and active citizenry while upholding the republican values of the public good to advance adult literacy education is fraught with challenges but is essential for its survival. As he states, "if democracy as articulated in this study does not provide the core political identity for adult literacy in the quest to move from the margins to the mainstream, than one wonders what sources of value and influence will come to define the politics of literacy" (p. 294).

What is of interest in this book is that its discussion of the competing perspectives and conflicts that have evolved in the field of adult literacy is framed by the distinctly different paradigms of social science research. Chapter 9, which examines these research traditions based on the work of Mertens' text *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (1998), reveals the ways in which epistemologies can conflict in creating what is understood as "knowledge," resulting in politics that affect practices. Postpositivist (or positivist) research is cut from the same cloth as current U.S. federal policy with its emphasis on skills-based education; interpretive or constructivist research is parallel to the New Literacy Studies which support the view that adults make sense of their own lives through multiliteracies; and participatory research traditions are akin to the Freirian school of education as emancipation. When seen in this light, it becomes clear how the field of adult literacy education experiences the conflict and tensions arising from

competing perspectives. When program funding is tied into meeting standards or proving, in empirical terms, how curriculum (which might be based in constructivist ideology) has met externally defined objectives, the debate over the purpose of literacy education can become heated.

Demetrian has subtitled his book "a quest for a democratic politics of literacy." Indeed, his quest is probably quixotic, given the current government's positivist outlook. One need not look any further than the quotations Demetrian provides from the U.S. Department of Education's Strategic Plan for 2002 to 2007:

...the field of education operates largely on the basis of ideology and professional consensus. As such it is subjected to fads and is incapable of cumulative progress that follows from the application of the scientific method and from the systematic collection and use of objective information in policy making. We will change education to make it an evidence-based field." (p 205)

While Demetrian's search for common ground among conflicting paradigms is laudable, the current demand for accountability and skills-based learning threatens to continually erode any effort to value education as a catalyst for social or moral progress. This book, however, in drawing together the many conflicting arguments and ideologies, raises important questions about the impact of politics on practice and the need for a renewed national vision for adult literacy education. Those interested in educational policy issues, adult literacy, US politics, and educational theory can choose much to read, consider, and debate in this text. Ironically, as they do, adult learners in classrooms, churches, and community centers throughout North America will have no choice but to continue their daily struggles for basic literacy.

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