

CONTEMPORARY WAYS OF LEARNING IN SECONDARY
TEACHER EDUCATION:
Towards a deeper understanding of teacher learning

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Summary

The focus of this portfolio is an exploration of contemporary ways of learning in secondary teacher education. The site of the research is the Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) at the University of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. The research participants are all former students of the course and their experiences are shared throughout the portfolio. I am the researcher and the course coordinator and my story, and the stories of the research participants are woven through the chapters.

The portfolio consists of an introductory chapter followed by a chapter on methodology and the development of a research approach which has been called 'care-full research'. This approach informs the researcher's relationship with the participants, the data and subsequent analysis and writing.

Four research projects are addressed as separate chapters:

Teacher as enquirer into professional practice: A whole course approach to learning in teacher education explores the development of a revised GDE course and its components. The course is described and examined through the experiences of students and two lecturers.

Reading circles as a way of learning: a small group approach to learning explores a model of professional learning based on reading. Former students' experiences of the reading circle model and learning in small groups are told through a series of narratives and care-full readings.

Virtual mentoring as a way of learning: a partnership approach outlines a model of mentoring that was developed within the course. The model is described through a series of emails. The experiences of the mentors are examined through three constructed stories. The second part of this chapter explores some of the learning opportunities teachers can have from mentoring, through four teachers' stories.

The final research project is *Intrapersonal learning: exploration of the place of reflection, intuition and emotion in becoming a teacher*. This project provided an opportunity to discover some of the teaching and learning experiences of recent graduates and to explore understandings of their stories through a range of forms of writing. This project is presented as a 'Choose your own adventure'.

Appendix 1 contains an advanced study unit which formed part of the colloquium. It is entitled *Genesis of a concern: Looking back before looking forward* and it outlines some of the key influences on teacher education in Victoria from the 1860s onwards.

In all cases the research has focused on learning from course participants and graduates. Focusing the lens closely on beginning teachers' experiences has allowed the researcher to explore the interventions in the course in a detailed and personal way. The research has encouraged the exploration of some possibilities for different pedagogical practices in teacher education.

Statement of authorship

Except where explicit reference is made in the text of the portfolio, this portfolio contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been relied upon or used without due acknowledgement in the main text and bibliography of the portfolio.

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Date: _____

Statement of ethics approval

Statement of ethics approval

Acknowledgements

To all the former Graduate Diploma of Education students who shared their experiences and stories I am most grateful. Your willingness to participate in the research and your interest in the process has been inspiring. For it is in sharing your stories that I have learnt so much and understood parts of my own story. I hope my research honours your words and helps others learn more about 'becoming' a teacher.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisors Helen Hayes and Peter Swan. Their passion for their profession, the learning journey, learners and writing has been a very powerful influence. Helen's quiet insistence that I forge my own way in developing my learning has helped me to take risks, to find my own voice and to pursue some unconventional paths. Sadly she didn't see the final portfolio but I hear her voice as I write and I cherish the time we spent working together. Peter's confidence in me has been profoundly important and our shared love of writing has been a constant source of inspiration. I have been fortunate to have two such wise, caring and supportive mentors and friends. Vale Helen.

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Dedication

Dedicated, with love, to Monty, Lachlan and Chris, who have shared me with so many people and so many words...who have encouraged and supported me in every possible way.

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CHAPTER ONE

The beginning of the journey

Welcome to my 'never ending story'. The doctorate will end one day, but the learning journey won't.

I am a learner and a teacher. I have been employed mainly in secondary schools and more recently at a university. I am intrigued by how we live and live differently and how we make sense of the world. The belief in the power of relationships in learning, and living, is central to who I am. The acknowledgement of the power of constructivism (V. Richardson, 1997) and the individual's need to make his/her own sense and way in the world is also part of me. My role for the past five years has been to coordinate a one-year secondary teacher education post-graduate diploma course. This doctoral research is situated around the Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) at the University of Ballarat, and shared with people who have participated in the course.

The main purpose of this doctorate was to explore ways of learning to be a teacher. I have always liked the idea of teaching for the contemporary and future world, not for the world of the past; the world that teachers grew up in themselves. How to prepare teachers to always look forward to the unknown future is the challenge. Memories of teaching with the work of Ellyard(1998), Beare & Slaughter (1993) and Naisbitt (1990) surround me. These writers have spent their professional lives looking to the future, as 'futurists'. They have argued for the need to create our own futures through an understanding of the present and past. Ellyard, (1998), notes: "More than any other activity, education is the way we prepare for the future...Education is the most important investment in the future and learning is the most powerful instrument for shaping the future" (p. 62).

As teacher educators we always need to have a clear focus on the present and the future and a respectful regard for the past.

It is hard to know what you, the reader, expect of a professional doctorate. This portfolio explores the key research questions through the experiences of early career teachers and through my own learning journey. The literature which supports the research is woven throughout the portfolio. Herein lies a large part of my life; my thinking, energy, application, focus and philosophy. I invite you to share this part of my journey.

My story

Christmas Eve, 2000.

“Congratulations, you are the successful candidate for the position of Course Coordinator of the Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary). You will lecture in English curriculum and pedagogical studies. The conditions of the appointment are that you conduct a full and detailed review of the course in the next twelve months AND you will commence a doctorate at the same time.”

“Thanks so much,” I reply, “ I look forward to both tasks and I really appreciate the opportunity you have given me.”

[Subtext running in my head...Christmas, no proper break, two small children, six years of sessional work behind me. What have I done? Always the dilemma. I live an hour from the university and I have just agreed to travel up and down the highway for some years to come. Child care, petrol costs, alienation from the local community... and a passion for teaching...and a desire to learn more]

A step back. I had taught in the GDE program sessionally since 1995 and I was familiar with the course, the units and the relationship with local schools. I had been concerned from the start about the apparent disconnections within the course: the hierarchy of units - teaching methods beyond reproach, core

units perceived as slightly trivial and the practicum the REAL focus of teacher education. The values were entrenched and no real effort had ever been made to connect the various components, to work as a community of learners or to really deal with pastoral care issues. Committed lecturers did take a friendly interest in students but the voices of the students were not always heard.

A further step back. I am an accidental teacher. I 'fell' into teaching and then fell in love with it. I taught mainly English and Special Education for ten happy years and while I was always busy and sometimes stressed I just loved the interaction with the students; the magic when things clicked; the wacky adolescent humour; the privilege of sharing some very personal moments in their writing. Whenever I found the gloss fading, or my enthusiasm waning I enrolled in another part-time post-graduate course, explored my own work environment in research tasks and continued on, enriched, affirmed and excited by the possibilities that the study had opened for me.

And so this part of the journey began. Ever the pragmatist, and with some practitioner research behind me, I decided to see if I could connect the course review and the doctoral studies in some way. In my usual way this apparently simple or logical approach turned into something much more complex and unwieldy. It was not just a matter of taking the high road or the low road because I found myself on all sorts of different research paths. They were all compelling, all interesting in their own way. At some times I felt that I was on the 'road less travelled' and then I would find an article, a book or a person who shared some of my beliefs or interests and I would be on my way again. Some key beliefs underpin my life and have provided one significant layer of the bedrock of this doctorate.

This is who I am...

Beliefs that underpin my professional and personal life, that permeate all that I do and all that I am are important in this doctorate. They have developed over the course of my life: from the family I grew up in and the one I helped create;

from the professional and personal experiences I have had; from the study I have done.

People matter. Without this fundamental belief there is no point in being involved in education. As a teacher, the students, colleagues, parents and others I work with matter in some way. They form part of my 'circles and chains of care' (Noddings, 2003) and as such our relationships are important. Successful relationships of any type rely on communication, good will, sensitivity to others and openness to learning.

Learning matters. There are an infinite number of ways to live and be. To me the idea of continuing to learn is central to living an interesting and rewarding life. Learning provides the possibility to empower people, to liberate people (Freire, 1998), to strengthen relationships and communities. Learning can be informal and formal, it can be structured and unstructured and it takes time.

Meaning matters. Making sense of our experiences is an important part of learning. As Dewey noted so long ago, experience alone does not actually mean much. The capacity to reflect on and learn from experience is what leads to personal growth (Dewey, 1938). Rogers (2002) in her analysis of Dewey's work, goes even further: "The creation of meaning from experience is at the very heart of what it means to be human" (p. 848).

Asking questions is usually, if not always, as important as finding answers. This is the heart of reflective practice (Schön, 1983; Loughran, 1996) and serves to connect the personal, the intellectual, the emotional and the social dimensions of learning in teacher education - and life more broadly.

Constructivist principles underpin these beliefs. The idea that each teacher has the ability, indeed responsibility, to construct their professional life thoughtfully, imaginatively, respectfully and creatively has driven my thinking in this doctorate.

The professional doctorate

I have always researched my own practice as a teacher and I wanted to make the doctorate something relevant, meaningful and engaging. The professional doctorate provided the opportunity to develop projects around my work. Lee, Green and Brennan (2000) argue that the professional doctorate has a hybrid curriculum which involves the intersection of the workplace, the university and the profession:

The hybrid curriculum of the professional doctorate is one which takes explicitly into account that, in the intersections between university and the organization in which typically a doctoral project will be undertaken, new kinds of knowledge and new ways of producing knowledge will be developed, involving new relationships among participants and new kinds of research writing. (p. 127)

Learning and teaching are fascinating and I am intrigued by the way that some learners learn easily and others do not and how some people teach easily and some do not. It is not enough to say that people are “natural” learners and teachers: the world is too complex for such simplistic approaches. The professional doctoral research has provided me with a platform to explore this complexity in a systematic way. As course coordinator I am closely involved with all aspects of the course and within the doctorate I am at all times the participant researcher.

I am particularly committed to ensuring that pre-service teachers are encouraged to learn about teaching in all its complexity and are supported through their pre-service education to become engaged, committed, thoughtful professionals throughout their careers (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Day, 1999). There has been extraordinary change in the last century and we all know that – we have lived through some of it (see Appendix 1; Beare & Slaughter, 1993; Fullan, 2001; Kalantzis & Cope, 2001; Marginson, 1993; Reid & O’Donoghue, 2001).

There has been much made of the new ways of learning in a knowledge society (Beare & Slaughter, 1993; Commonwealth of Australia, 2003; Crowther, 2003; Down, Hogan & Swan, 1998; Evans, 2003; Sutherland, Claxton & Pollard, 2003) and various Australian states and territories have responded to the changes (see Brennan, 2000; Queensland New Basics, 2000; South Australia Essential Learnings 2001; Tasmania Essential Learnings Framework, 2001). There has been increasing attention paid to the need for teacher education to be responsive and adaptive and to encourage lifelong learning (Day, 1999; Evans, 2003; Husu, 2003; Pollard, 2002; Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001). Many educators have argued that it is not adequate to view teaching as a series of skills or the simple transmission of knowledge; the demands on teachers are so complex (Brennan, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; 2002; Huberman, 1993).

A response to some of these changes has been an increasing awareness of the social and personal dimensions of learning (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000; Boler, 1999; Clark, 1995; Claxton, 2000; Cochrane-Smith & Lyttle, 1999; Day, 1999); an awareness of the place of emotions in learning (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Goleman, 1996; Hargreaves, 1998, 2002) and in some quarters there has been a move towards highlighting this in teacher education (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Elbaz-Luwisch & Pritzker, 2002).

It is critical that the education system and those within it are responsive and generative in their response to broader social changes (Down, Hogan & Swan, 1998). This doctorate is about exploring some contemporary ways of learning in teacher education: ways that can empower teachers to operate confidently in a rapidly changing world (Arnold & Ryan, 2003; Dillon & Maguire, 2001; Kalantzis & Cope, 2001).

The key question guiding my journey has been:

How does a detailed examination of some different approaches to learning in the Graduate Diploma of Education at the University of Ballarat deepen our understanding of teacher learning and offer some new ways of thinking about pedagogy?

The research projects- asking the questions

The portfolio contains a range of products. There is the work prepared for the doctoral confirmation which explored some of the history of teacher education in Victoria (see Appendix 1). There is the off-spring of the projects- the various manifestations of trying to show what I have learnt. There are also the papers and conference presentations that have emerged from the research (Brown, 2001, 2003, 2005; Brown & Hayes, 2000, 2001; Brown & McGraw, 2002).

The research projects that are within the portfolio are:

- Teacher as enquirer into professional practice: a whole course approach
- Reading circles as a way of learning: a small group approach
- Virtual mentoring as a way of learning: a partnership approach
- Intrapersonal learning: exploration of the place of reflection, intuition and emotion in becoming a teacher

Each of these projects explores a particular way of learning as experienced in the Graduate Diploma of Education at the University of Ballarat, a small regional university. They are discrete projects in themselves but they are connected via their central focus on teacher learning. There are about forty-five students in the course each year.

Each project has its own research design, methods and methodology but they share a common epistemology and some common theoretical framing. As a researcher I have very clear beliefs that human beings need to make sense of

their world and that knowledge and meaning are constructed by individuals and co-constructed with others within a given context. The doctorate is a combination of pieces of social research (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Esterberg, 2002; Robson, 2002). Each report uses some form of qualitative methodology. Esterberg (2002) identifies features of qualitative research which resonate strongly with me:

Qualitative researchers try to understand social processes *in context* [original italics]... [and] pay attention to the subjective nature of human life. - not only the subjective experiences of those they are studying but also the subjectivity of the researchers themselves...Qualitative researchers try to understand the meaning of social events for those who are involved in them. They also try to understand the researchers' own points of view. (pp. 2-3)

A feature of qualitative research is that it is not neat (Brizuela et al, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It is not always relevant to establish a rigid study design, hypothesis and methodology at the outset. The general questions or direction of the research can be established but the studies can alter and develop along different paths as they are being implemented (Hatch, 2002). So while the projects vary in their research objectives they are fundamentally inductive and they have evolved and developed through the research process.

A constructivist epistemology underpins the entire doctorate (Crotty, 1998; Esterberg, 2002; Hatch, 2002; V.Richardson, 1997). I am sensitive to people's lived experience (van Manen, 1990) and how they make sense of their world. Hatch (2002) observes that in constructivist epistemology "...multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage points" (p. 15).

In some cases it is the purpose of the research to understand how others construct meaning and in others I explore my own journey of meaning making. Usually the participants and I are involved in the process of co-construction (Hatch, 2002). In all cases I am trying to reach a deeper understanding of teacher learning.

It is impossible and undesirable for researchers to be distant and objective. It is through mutual engagement that researchers and respondents construct the subjective reality that is under investigation. (Hatch, 2002, p. 15)

The projects all express a broadly interpretivist theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998; Radnor, 2002). In order to develop a personal understanding of a given situation an individual interprets events through his/ her own framework. The interpretation thus becomes part of the individual's constructed understanding.

The interpretive approach rests on the premise that in social life there is only interpretation...The purpose of interpretive research is to clarify how interpretations and understandings are formulated, implemented and given meaning in lived situations. (Radnor, 2002, p. 4)

My story- meetings to review the GDE course

This sounds so neat and orderly but it wasn't like that at all. Memories of the course review are of a chaotic, busy, exciting year. There was no formal course review model in place at the time so in typical fashion I made up my own. Clearly I needed to hear the voices of current and former students and then the other 'stake holders' too. I was very keen to have all the staff teaching in the program closely involved with the review as I knew that change could only happen if they felt some ownership of the process (Fullan, 2001). I was also clear that we needed to come up with something that would draw the course together and make it a more cohesive experience for the students.

Students in the GDE course in 2001 were involved in open meetings throughout the year. Opinions were sought from former students via survey and informal interviews. Some school teachers and administrators were surveyed and the Department of Education was consulted through an extensive interview with a senior official.

Regular meetings were held with university staff. Some university staff had not had recent experience in schools so I felt it was important to bring everyone 'up to date' with some readings given out before meetings. The readings included current policy documents, some position papers and some journal articles about contemporary thinking in teacher education (Cochrane-Smith & Lyttle, 1999; Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001). We explored our values and beliefs about teacher education and we established some common goals.

My search for a connecting thread or way to make the program cohesive was challenging. Then one very hot day in a dusty, cramped upstairs classroom of the Spetses Island School (in Greece, at the Learning and Educational Research Network Conference, in July 2001) I heard Associate Professor Alan Reid talk about the University of South Australia's full School of Education review which was underway at that time and some of their tentative recommendations. One of the possibilities raised was the need to develop teachers as 'inquirers into professional or educational practice'.

Talking to Alan Reid briefly afterwards he stressed that the work was in progress but suggested I keep in contact about it. I remember walking down the hot, narrow, cobbled streets to the waterfront after the talk. The cafes were full and buzzing with conference delegates, the water was impossibly blue, the rest of my family was on a scooter touring the island and I was terribly excited about the possibilities this approach could offer. Even now the memory of that day is clear.

There have been a number of 'ah ha' moments in my life, where things have connected or fallen in to place just perfectly. That day in Spetses was pivotal for my academic life as it showed that sharing our thinking, however tentative it may be, is of vital importance. (Reid modelled deep thinking, thorough research and an ability to question openly, to think aloud.) The other thing, in hindsight, was that it showed that we can never know quite where our thoughts and ideas will end up once we have had them.

Teacher as enquirer into professional practice- the connecting thread

Professional learning has become an integral part of teachers' lives. For many teachers this is nothing new but for others it is. Sachs (1997) argues that teachers frequently focus so strongly on students' learning needs that they neglect their own. In times of rapid change and burgeoning information sources it is important for teachers to have the means to develop their own understanding of learning and teaching and the capacity to critique changes as they arise.

Another issue of concern is that the number of teachers is declining as the bulk of the profession reaches retirement age. This, coupled with the difficulty in retaining teachers in the profession (Preston, 2000) is reason enough to look for a new pedagogy in teacher education. We need teachers in the profession who can work with 'complexity and uncertainty' (Clarke & Erickson, 2003) and who can sustain their own engagement in the profession.

Inquiry into practice is not a new concept. Reid & O'Donoghue (2001a) note that Dewey (1929) identified the importance of teachers studying the effects of their teaching on students' learning and developing a sensitivity to teaching being "an inherently non-routine behaviour" (p. 28). Hargreaves (2000) argues that it is critical for teachers to inquire systematically into their practice to "lift teachers out of the pre-professional prejudice that only practice makes perfect" (p. 167). Interest in inquiry into professional practice has gained momentum in recent years and Clarke & Erickson (2003) explore the rise of enquiry as a 'requirement' within current policy in the US, UK and Australia. They note: "...there is almost universal agreement that inquiry and reflection in and on practice are essential elements of the teaching profession" (p. 2).

Reid & O'Donoghue (2001a, 2001b) make a compelling argument for the development of an approach to teacher education based on enquiry and it is this work that informed the model adopted at the University of Ballarat. The argument centres on the fact that 21st century educators must work within a context of 'change, paradox and uncertainty'. They argue that educators are

“engaged in the process of producing, as well as accessing, new knowledge. They are making their own meaning”. Traditional ideas of teachers as transmitters of knowledge or skilled artisans are no longer relevant and “in contemporary times the complexity of the task of being an educator calls for deep professional expertise in a range of areas” (Reid & O’Donoghue, 2001b, p. 28). This idea is developed further:

When educators use knowledge resources in their role as educators, drawing upon research, experience and formal and informal sources to make a professional judgment about some aspect of policy or practice, they are not simply transferring and applying this knowledge. They are critically engaging with this knowledge in use, addressing specific problems/ issues/ dilemmas in the context of their work, problem-posing and problem-solving, theorising, devising strategies, and implementing and evaluating these. That is, they engage in the process of making new meaning through the critical application in new contexts of knowledge resources they have accessed. (Reid & O’Donoghue, 2001a, p. 9).

The question of how teacher educators develop an ‘enquiry into professional practice’ approach in teacher education courses is an interesting one. Reid & O’Donoghue (2001a) argue for an approach that includes modelling what it means to be an enquirer into professional practice and one that promotes change in the structures, processes and practices of educational institutions. “Partnerships should be established with educational institutions and settings based on the concept of ongoing mutual self-renewal.” (p. 10)

The actual interpretation of ‘inquiry’ can be seen at its most simple level as the act of asking questions. But it is more than this. Clarke & Erickson (2003) argue for inquiry as a central tenet of a profession. They identify teacher inquiry as “a generally agreed upon set of insider research practices that promote teachers taking a close, critical look at their teaching and the academic and social development of their students” (p. 3). Preparing teachers to adopt this approach requires careful planning in pre-service courses.

The model adopted at the University of Ballarat is explored in Chapter 3. It supports the concept of teachers developing a disposition towards inquiry. It addresses the need to link theory and practice; to work in partnership with

schools; for teachers to be reflective practitioners; to practice close observation and attention to students; to engage in learning and their own meaning making and for teacher educators to model acts of inquiry. The aim is to empower prospective teachers so they “have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to theorise systematically and rigorously about practice in different learning contexts, and to take appropriate action on the basis of the outcomes of this enquiry.” (Reid & O’Donoghue, 2001a, p. 9)

On a personal level I wanted the course to encourage future teachers to be fully and actively engaged in their professional lives. I want their students to be the beneficiaries of teachers who are lifelong learners, actively involved in their own development and passionate about the teaching profession. As Mitchell (2003) notes: “Teachers decide to engage in research for a number of reasons, but concerns about aspects of their own classrooms are almost always the most important.” (p. 201) Teaching is an extremely rewarding career and it is emotionally and physically demanding (Hargreaves, 1998). There is no doubt that those teachers who are happy and engaged in the profession are a positive influence on their students. The idea of engaging teachers in a model of enquiry, “taking part in looking closely and by taking the time to notice, seeing so many other parts to learning and teaching...” (Cooley & Lugar, 2003, p. 32) is one that is appealing, interesting and offers many possibilities to future teachers. Enquiry into professional practice is explored more fully in the first project in the portfolio.

My story- focusing the lens

There seem to be threads all over the place over the years of research. Somehow I had decided on the four projects (after plenty of thinking and talking with supervisors) and the doctoral confirmation at the end of 2003 required that I draw the threads together in some way. The plan and line of enquiry was developed according to the following plan. I am always intrigued when chaotic ideas seem to fall neatly onto the page. The neatness belies the complexity of the thought process and hides the emotional investment in this work.

Systematic line of enquiry

Genesis of a concern: Looking back before looking forward. Advanced study setting the historical context for the doctoral projects. Historical context of teacher education programs/ models in Australia (focus on secondary teacher education- social, political forces that shape teacher education programs). Stories of individual teachers to be included.



Project 1

A whole course approach to teacher education

Looking at the contemporary GDE UB model– “enquiry into professional practice” Theoretical framing- Constructivism – constructing our own understanding using previous paper (Brown & McGraw,2002), student feedback analysis, lecturer reflections, focus group data and documentary data analysis.



Project 2

Ways of learning in small groups – Reading Circle model

Description, explanation, reflection on learning. Theoretical framing – broadly interpretive using reading/literature as source of information; knowledge and collaborative learning; discussion as a way of developing broader and deeper understanding. Student evaluation reflections, semi-structured interviews, focus group data and previous paper (Brown & Hayes, 2000) form data.



Project 3

Ways of learning from school students in 1:1 mentoring role

Discussion of purpose of mentoring; virtual contact. Methodology – loosely framed as evaluative case study investigating positive human relationships/ mentoring supporting learning. Participant reflection, semi-structured evaluation interviews form data.



Project 4

Intrapersonal learning -Ways of learning through looking inwards

Exploration of emotional, intuitive and reflective aspects of becoming a teacher. Methodology – broadly phenomenological, around reflection on experiences of teacher education course and teaching. Writing as inquiry.

It is well understood that individuals learn in different ways. There has been a great deal of research into how people become teachers. In many instances it is explored in terms of developing professional knowledge through an understanding of themselves and their experiences (Beattie, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2000; Cochrane-Smith & Lyttle, 1999; Elbaz, 1990).

The first project addresses the “enquiry into professional practice” model developed by Reid and O’Donoghue (2001a, 2001b) and adopted as the basis of the GDE at the University of Ballarat in 2002. This model became the foundation for the other research projects. There are a multitude of ways of learning in teacher education but the foundation in ‘enquiry into professional practice’ seemed to provide a link to the other ways of learning explored in this portfolio. It also provided the frame for a ‘whole course approach’ to teacher learning.

The second project focuses on small group learning through the experience of participating in professional reading circles. The model has been developed and researched as part of the GDE. The group method of learning in the reading circles was investigated (Brown & Hayes, 2000, 2001) and formed the basis of a “new look” at the model. The research project focused on data from interviews and written reflections.

The focus of the research lens narrowed to one-to-one shared learning. This project revolved around GDE students mentoring secondary school students. The Virtual Mentoring Program (VMP), which runs as an elective component of the GDE, is described and critiqued within a narrative and care-full reading framework.

The final research project explores some of the less tangible aspects of becoming a teacher and it focuses on personal learning. The research involves former GDE students interrogating their own experiences and learning, with the researcher, in relation to reflective practice, intuition and emotions in becoming a teacher. A range of creative analytic practices (Richardson, 2000) are employed.

Learning and writing together

A number of pieces within this portfolio have arisen from research that has been conducted and written up in collaboration with others (Brown & Hayes, 2000; 2001; Brown & McGraw, 2002). The actual research projects are my

work and I have indicated where co-authored works have formed some data or foundation for the projects. Where shared construction is used in this portfolio it is both as a form of data and as an indication of the way I work.

It is academic convention to identify how a piece of writing is divided; often pieces are written separately and then merged and percentages are attributed to various authors. My experience of co-authorship has been different. We have planned the process, conducted the research, shared the writing up and presented the research together. We have discussed and reworked the written pieces together. The research relationships have been based on mutual trust, respect and a shared focus on learning. We have enjoyed sharing the writing and learning process. In many ways the research process we have shared fits the idea of 'care-full' research which is developed in the following section.

CHAPTER TWO

Wrestling the tiger: Issues of methodology and methods of inquiry

To understand any living thing, you must, so to say, creep within and feel the beating of its heart. (W. Macneile Dixon)

Issues of methodology have arisen throughout this doctorate. I have wrestled with finding a place for myself within existing models and I have been challenged to develop my own methodology as the research has progressed. What follows is a description of my journey with methodology and then the development of an idea of 'care-full research'.

Denzin & Lincoln (2000) provide a useful analysis of the complexity of methodology in qualitative research. They develop the idea of qualitative researcher as 'bricoleur and quilt maker' and these roles have resonance for me. I have always been interested in big picture thinking and intrigued by the 'parts that make the whole'. From a professional point of view as a teacher I have sought a multitude of ways to help students learn and make sense of the world. On one level my approach could be seen as eclectic, even messy, and yet it is always held together by theoretical understanding and strong beliefs about students as individuals and different learning needs and styles.

As a researcher I found myself (unsurprisingly) with a similar disposition. I wanted to explore the bigger picture of teacher education but to do that I need to explore the 'parts that make the whole'. There was never any question that my research methods would be firmly around hearing the voices of pre-service and early career teachers, through their words in conversations and writing. To that end, each project relies on a mixture of data from interviews, discussion and reflective writing.

The researcher as bricoleur (or a “Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person”) (Levis-Strauss, 1966, p.17 quoted in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 4)) or as quilt maker, is a compelling metaphor. I like the idea of being a problem solver, of being independent and being creative in the research process. The quilt maker is particularly appealing as I have made quilts in my life and I know the complexity of thought that goes into the planning; I understand the layers required to make the quilt and the serendipity involved in finding just the right piece of fabric or colour or shape at a given moment. My doctorate, like my quilts, has had a general overarching plan but the final product has emerged in the making. Denzin & Lincoln (2000) provide a supportive explanation for this process:

The qualitative researcher as bricoleur or maker of quilts uses aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand (Becker, 1998, p. 2). If new tools or techniques have to be invented, or pieced together, then the researcher will do this. The choices as to which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily set in advance. (p. 4)

My story- cupboards and containers

I have always liked large cupboards and small containers. I also like collecting useful things. I have a cupboard (rarely opened of late) which holds masses of materials for making things. There are neatly folded fabrics of all textures and colours; there are bags of wools and cottons, embroidery threads and ribbons; there are scraps of fabric from many things I have made and somewhere in the past I even put colour related scraps into ice-cream containers. There are buttons, zippers, bits of leather, stuffing, carding combs, knitting needles, Christmas jewels, beads and baubles. There are some partly finished projects. Every item tells part of my story, represents a memory of something dreamed about, created, often shared with others. The cupboard is usually a nice mixture of deep order and superficial messiness. I can almost always find what I am searching for.

So why tell this story here? I think it tells something about the portfolio. There is a metaphoric cupboard which holds all the parts of my learning, and all the

stories that make up my own narrative. There are the hundreds of articles and texts that I have read, and sometimes re-read, that have formed what I call the security blanket or bedrock on which fledgling academics can rely - and rest occasionally. The authors I can go back to over and over again who provide support and encouragement through the journey. There are the bits and pieces of research projects and writing that I have done over the years; the photos I have taken, images collected; the letters written and received; the sketches and patterns I have fiddled with.

The doctoral projects are all in my 'cupboard'. They have been worked on together and separately. Each has had times of intense focus (usually prior to a conference presentation) and they have vied for space in my waking and sleeping moments. Each project has captured my attention and imagination and each has demanded that I work as a methodological *bricoleur*, that I move between a range of methodologies to seek a way 'inside' the data. The doctoral cupboard has not been kept neatly and that has made the journey frustrating, exciting, sometimes unnecessarily complex and full of endless possibilities.

Perhaps the messy cupboard is just the way things work out (Richardson, 1997). Or perhaps it represents the process leading to the doctoral product that Denzin & Lincoln (2000) describe so eloquently:

The product of the interpretive *bricoleur's* labour is a complex, quiltlike bricolage, a reflexive collage or montage- a set of fluid, interconnecting images and representations. This interpretive structure is like a quilt, a performance text, a sequence of representations connecting the parts to the whole. (p. 6)

Robson (2002) suggests that it is helpful to look at research design as strategy and methods as tactics (p. 76). The strategies that I have adopted have some key features: the research is based in a constructivist epistemology and is framed theoretically in broadly interpretive ways. The process of constructing meaning is dependent on the people involved and their interpretation of their experiences. The role of the constructivist researcher is "to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and

knowledge...the research participants are viewed as helping to construct the 'reality' with the researchers" (Robson, 2002, p. 27). Each participant in the research is involved in interpreting his/her experience and ultimately "researchers' writings are always interpretations of what they think their research subjects are doing" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 16).

The constructivist and interpretive foundations of the projects is evident in the following ways. In the first project the participants in the GDE course (both students and staff) interrogate their own experiences of the course. The project is very loosely framed as action research where participants and researchers "cogenerate knowledge through collaborative communication processes...The meanings constructed in the inquiry process lead to social action or these reflections on action lead to the construction of new meanings" (Greenwood & Levin, 2000, p. 96) The data collected from interviews, written evaluations and reflections was the result of participants interpreting their experience and constructing their own narratives for the researcher. The writing up of the research is my interpretation and construction of how course changes have been experienced.

The reading circles project involved students providing written reflections about the experience and then some semi-structured interviews. It was in the writing up of this project that I became particularly engrossed in ways of 'reading' transcripts and 'writing' research. I was wrestling with a way of explaining the reading circle model in a creative way and honouring the experiences of the participants. There was something about the way the participants described their experiences as part of a learning group that struck a chord with me. Yet again there was a profoundly emotional component of the learning experience and I needed to respond carefully. I found myself wanting to interrupt the data (Evans, 1995) and then I needed to search further. This led ultimately to the journey into 'care-full research' which is explained more fully in a later section.

The virtual mentoring project was initially conceptualised as a case study and as Bassey (1999) notes: "the exploration of a particular case is essentially

interpretive, in trying to elicit what different actors seem to be doing and think is happening, in trying to analyse and interpret the data collected and in trying to make a coherent report..." (p. 44). Again, this project took me on a powerful learning journey. As I explored the mentoring relationship and how mentoring is experienced differently by others I found myself drawn to scholars who had written about the relational aspects of learning (Beattie, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2000; Elbaz, 1992, 2000; Estola, 2003). From there the step to exploring care theory seemed clear and logical and the work of Nel Noddings became an important resource.

The final project is most profoundly interpretive and constructivist because it deals in the difficult realm of trying to understand emotions and intuition. The participants responded to questions personally but it was up to me to make sense of the stories and to construct my understanding of their experience. The venture into narrative methods was an overt exploration of my construction of someone else's experience, of 'writing the other' and in turn exploring my own understanding (Richardson, 1991; Swan, 1995).

What leaps out over and over again is the place of emotion in so much of what teachers do. The emotional overlay is profound; the intuitive responses that guide teachers and the reflective practice which supports teachers through so many challenges all interconnect; they intersect and swirl and eddy around the daily lives of a teacher.

The projects all have a broadly inductive framework. I wanted to develop a deeper understanding of teacher education and I was intimately involved in the GDE course which is the research site. As researcher, I was a participant in one way or another in each of the research projects and I was required to listen carefully to the stories told and the data collected; to be sensitive to the nuances of interpretation and to be always aware of my role as co-constructor and interpreter. A multi-method approach to data collection has been used. Much of the data is oral or written evaluative material. Interviews (structured and unstructured) have been conducted; informal focus group discussions

have been held; personal narratives have been shared and different narrative techniques have been explored.

To reach a deeper understanding I needed to be able to “get inside” the research and try to find out how participants have experienced the various interventions in the course. The work of Moustakis (in Janesick, 2000) is particularly helpful. He provides a five-step framework for inductive analysis:

Immersion in the setting starts the inductive process. Second, the incubation process allows for thinking, becoming aware of nuance in the setting, and capturing intuitive insights to achieve understanding. Third there is a phase of illumination that allows for expanding awareness. Fourth...is a phase of explication that includes description and explanation to capture the experience of individuals within the study. Finally, creative synthesis enables the researcher to synthesize and bring together as a whole the individual's story, including the meaning of the lived experience. (p. 391)

I am clearly immersed in each of the projects - and have been for some time. The incubation period is important and an intrinsic part of reflective practice. I suspect that the various stages of inductive analysis can be revisited as the research is proceeding: that depths of immersion may vary; that illumination can occur at any point; that incubation is necessary for understanding; that explication occurs at different stages and that creative synthesis is not a neat process but one that occurs in fits and starts. It seems that collaborative inductive analysis is an overarching approach in all the projects. I am collaborating with the participants in generating a deeper understanding of lived experience.

All the projects were based in the assumption that learning does not occur by osmosis but that it requires some sort of interaction or metacognitive action. The subjectivity of lived experience (van Manen, 1990) is valued and the co-construction of meaning is pivotal.

The place of the researcher in the research process was significant in this portfolio. Clearly I was the participant researcher in each project and I was closely involved with other participants, both students and colleagues, in the

co-construction of meaning. The notion of trust was pivotal. Was my data collection trustworthy? Was my representation of data trustworthy? Did the participants trust me to represent them accurately or effectively? The research was informed by sensitivity to the 'crisis of representation' (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, p. 1050). I was aware of the need to work carefully when representing 'the other'. As the portfolio developed the issue of care in research became increasingly important. Notions of researcher integrity and ethical responsibility have always concerned me.

Ethical considerations- being inside the research

I am cognisant of ethical considerations throughout my research and teaching. The power of one person's words or actions to adversely influence another's life has always concerned me (Robson, 2002). In a teaching context it is critical to be fully aware of ethical considerations - particularly in relation to working with children and adolescents. Working with beginning teachers as they embark on their journey into the teaching profession I am constantly reminded of the vulnerability of human beings.

That being said, there are also a multitude of ethical dilemmas which need to be considered in the course of a project. There is an interesting interplay between personal ethical and moral behaviour and the ethical considerations demanded in academic research. There is also the concern of ethical considerations changing over the course of a project (see Robson, 2002).

Esterberg (2002) particularly emphasizes the importance of maintaining confidentiality and obtaining informed consent. She also identifies some key questions to consider when planning research:

- How should we conduct research so as not to hurt others?
- What kinds of relationships should we attempt to create with our research subjects?
- What kind of power relations are there between those who are doing the research and those who are being researched?
- Who benefits from social research? *Who should benefit?* (p. 45, italics in the original)

I ponder these questions at length and in the end I must respond to them personally as well as formally.

Clearly my work should not ever hurt someone physically - we are operating in a cerebral domain not physical! But I am troubled by the idea of emotionally hurting someone, particularly in the intrapersonal learning project. I am at pains to represent participants' feelings and experiences as truthfully as possible. Anonymity is ensured by using pseudonyms and masking identifying details. Members are invited to participate in the research and permission to use their words has been obtained or informed consent (prior to interviews) has been granted. I return transcripts to participants to check that I have conveyed their words accurately and participants are provided with drafts and copies of papers as I am writing. Despite these safeguards there is always the possibility that I may inadvertently raise some painful issue or memory for someone or I may represent their story in a way that is hurtful to them. Are all participants going to honestly let researchers know? Or are we such a researched society that we just let research happen despite what it may really make us feel?

Perhaps it is Esterberg's second and third questions which help me. The relationship I have with all the participants is not created for the purpose of research. For all the former and current GDE students I have been their course coordinator. We have learnt together in units relating to teaching, learning, adolescence and/or English curriculum. My coordination role is administrative but also pastoral. The students have shared their learning autobiographies with me and their reflective journals. Our classes have often focused on discussion and sharing ideas together. Our basis of communication is long established and generally one of mutual respect and trust.

Colleagues who have participated or co-researched with me are also well known and our relationships have been established outside the parameters of

the research projects. We approach these relationships with a sense of openness and a willingness to learn from each other.

Power relations are hard to clarify. I believe I approach life with a democratic outlook. Certainly I uphold each individual's right to be heard and involved and I am convinced of the importance of good relationships if learning is to occur. I work hard to break down the traditional lecturer/student hierarchy within the university setting – and often my way of doing this is sharing my stories and modelling vulnerability. It is not possible to know how a participant may really feel about the power relations in research but I can do my best to surface my concerns and foreground these in the writing.

Esterberg's final question is very important. Who benefits from social research and who should benefit are significant questions. I do not believe any research should be done for a trivial purpose or for simple political point scoring. I also believe that my research should have the potential to benefit the participants or at least future teachers in some way. Clearly the benefit on a simple level can be entirely personal but it needs to be more. I hope that teacher educators will benefit from this research and that I will encourage them to think more broadly about ways of learning to teach. I also hope that some of the research may help practicing teachers think about their own practice and in some ways be affirmed.

Questions of interpretation

Radnor (2002) offers a very useful way of addressing issues of interpretation. She argues that interpretive research is considered “robust” when the following principles are adopted:

The researcher cannot remove her own way of seeing from the process but she can engage reflexively in the process and be aware of her interpretive framework...She accounts for herself as researcher and in the process of writing of the research enters into a dialogue with the reader...The climate of the interaction, the researcher's attitude and approach to the people in her study should convey to these people the confidence that they are going to be

listened to without prejudice. The establishment of a trustworthy basis is important...The principle of ethics-in-action-focuses centrally on the need for the researcher to show respect for the participants... (pp. 38-39)

These principles have guided the research process throughout. The layers of understanding have been developed as I have interacted reflexively with the research participants and the data. The various projects all combined to steer me towards a different way of thinking about the research process.

Towards care-full research

Echoes from my youth...the little 'why' girl...

I grew up in a house where research, study and writing papers were a way of life. I have memories of the dining room table being 'taken over' for weeks, even months as another major project was underway. Both parents studied when we were growing up and both parents supported our youthful research endeavours unconditionally.

'Your grandfather made some significant discoveries about tape worms and blood diseases'- and he did... and I always wondered why he couldn't save his eleven year old daughter, Mary Ann, from leukaemia. A sadness lingers through our family still.

'Your grandmother worked with Frank Tate at the Australian Council of Educational Research in its earliest days in the 1930s'. I can still hear her Canadian accented voice telling with pride, the stories of those days. She was not allowed to work after her marriage. I often think about the frustration of that.

At about nine years of age my mother took my twin sister and me to the local Junior Field Naturalists Club. Guest speakers would show slides or specimens of interesting things. Members could bring specimens along and some knowledgeable person would comment, describe, identify or explain

what they were. I learnt how to ask questions, how to preserve things in formaldehyde, how to pin poor insects to boards.

From the end of primary school I would accompany my father into the animal laboratory at the hospital in which he worked. He was investigating accidental anti-depressant drug overdoses in children for his doctoral research. I loved being with Dad and I was intrigued by all the equipment. I would very helpfully collect the dogs from the kennels, hand equipment out as electrodes were placed on the dogs and watch carefully as the ECG machine told stories of the drugs coursing through the dogs' veins. I was fascinated that this research could end up saving children's lives. Another day I watched as an anaesthetised dog was opened up and its heart was operated on. I was surprised when the machines were switched off and we went off to morning tea. It was explained that this was one way for doctors to learn how to operate. So much has changed over the thirty years since then and no one can be blamed for practices that were acceptable in times past. After all we live in our own present with the mores of our times. I wonder if this is where my interest in care and research had its genesis.

Sometime in the teenage years my twin sister and I were invited to be part of a major twin study. We agreed and ever since we have participated at various intervals in surveys, interviews and medical examinations. At one point our whole bodies were x-rayed for a bone density study. Our blood was tested. In recent years our involvement has waned as members of our wider family objected to being included in the broader social research studies and I found some procedures too invasive.

As I grew older my own study took over and I have done all sorts of informal and formal research over the years. My world has intersected with other people who share similar interests. Some of the most fascinating moments were when my special education world intersected with my mother's paediatric physiotherapy world and we would discuss our student / patient questions together. We still do that and I cherish those conversations. I also cherish the ongoing conversations in my wider family about all the different

activities and learning that fill people's lives. Our gatherings contain little people and big people and laughter and questions. Now my own children have their own research projects for school and the cycle continues. 'Why, Mum?'

And so to care-full research. Each step has led me here.

To be care-ful

To be full of care

Two-way- the cared for and the one-caring:

Interaction where both parties are growing

To be attentive to the person

To listen with in-hearing

To look with insight

To look again and again- to re-search

I was looking for a way to work with all the 'data' I have collected over the last few years. I have experimented with various forms of showing my learning: from the conventional academic paper to narrative, poetry and script writing. Working on a recent paper on mentoring headed me into the world of 'care' in the academic sense. Caring has always been very much part of my own practice as a teacher but I needed a way to give it some depth. I wanted something richer and deeper than the commonly understood commercial, saccharine, slightly patronising notion of 'care'.

Initially I worked with the idea of 'care-ful' reading and writing about research. This idea developed from the work of Evans (1995) and his exploration of reading transcripts from conversations with principals. He wrote of 'interrupted' and 'strong' readings of the transcripts and these ideas engaged me. The idea of 'strong' reading was promising but not exactly what I was looking for. I preferred the idea of 'care-full' reading and the more I explored the idea the clearer it became that I was looking at a way of researching, not just of reading.

The word careful can be understood in different ways. It can be something cautious, wary and suspicious. We think of politicians or defendants giving 'careful' answers to questions which might incriminate them in some way; or criminals covering their tracks carefully. A related type of careful is when researchers share results carefully, knowing that there may be some backlash from an opposing interest; or even knowing that the research is ethically or morally dubious. There is something restrained about this type of careful; there is a withholding of information or a part of the self. There is also something self-protective and un-giving.

Another way of understanding 'careful' is in terms of being 'full of care' for something: when we care for children or when we hold precious objects or living things. We are cautious because we do not want to break them or hurt them. We are tentative because we want to support them in appropriate ways. This is the idea that resonates for me.

My reading about 'care' took me in new directions. Noddings (1992, 2002, 2003), Elbaz (1992) and Estola (2003) all provided interesting insights into notions of care. All clearly identify the centrality of 'relation/ relationships' in learning and this was what resonated so clearly with me. Noddings (2002, 2003) highlighted the centrality of care being a two-way process: there is the one-caring and the cared for and if the caring is not perceived by the cared-for then it does not exist.

Much has been written about the 'ethic of care' and how it informs our way of living. Diller (1991) provides a succinct explanation of the four features that structure the ethic of care: "(1) a relational ontology; (2) a relational ideal; (3) a methodology of caring attentiveness; and (4) an insistence upon knowledge of the particular." (p. 161). Each of these features resonated with me and the exploration of the notion of care became increasingly important in the doctoral research.

Noddings' analysis and development of the ethic of care is soundly developed in the various books she has written. Much of it resonates strongly with my thinking about 'care-full' research. Both Noddings (2003) and Estola (2003) connect caring with mothering or something maternal. This is an obvious connection but one that is troubling too. It is perfectly possible to care deeply and to have had no experience of mothering. There is also a risk of alienating men if the notion of care is somehow seen as the domain of women. Schutz (1998) provided one analysis when he noted that Noddings "developed caring as an essentially "feminine" response to what she perceived as the "male" ethic of justice that has permeated human history" (p. 375). Hoagland (1990) provides a strong feminist critique and argues that focusing on the feminine aspect of care is dangerously limiting and risks perpetuating notions of dependency. Houston (1990) argues that the one-caring can become almost morally 'paralysed' and the subject of exploitation. As a 'care-full' researcher I need to consider these arguments and respect the position from which they are developed. At the same time the fundamental arguments developed by Noddings and others are important and the relational and attentive aspects are important foundations for my work.

The idea of care-full research is one that developed over time. It needs to be understood in the sense of 'full of care'- hence my spelling. It developed from the feeling that some research seems to lack care for the participants and the data they provide is merely material for the researcher to use in any way he or she chooses. Care-full research clearly identifies the relationship between the researchers and participants as central to learning. It values the dialogue within the relationships (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and supports the idea that research is something that should be 'useful' for both the researcher and the participant. Care-full research is respectful of what is shared and 'given' as data. It is attentive to the whole research process and it focuses closely on what is being said. It is tactful, thoughtful and reflective and as such has some larger purpose. Care-full research has pedagogical implications; it has the potential to transform the practice of the researcher and possibly the participants. It has its theoretical foundation in hermeneutic phenomenology and yet it springs from the heart and the mind. The idea of care-full research

was developed with the image of the inquiring educator firmly in the front of my mind.

Care-full research is relational

The first issue is that care-full research is relational. At the forefront is the understanding that the researcher and the research participants are related through the research (Clandinin, 1986; Ellis & Berger, 2003). It starts at the interview process. These are really conversations that are two-way (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003; Herda, 1999; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). The relation from the researcher's point of view is one which is full of care in terms of wanting to learn, empathise, and hear the stories. Noddings (1992) outlines the importance of dialogue in moral education as a search for "understanding, empathy or appreciation...a genuine quest for something undetermined at the beginning". This fits well with the idea of 'care-full' research, particularly when placed alongside the suggestion that "'conversation' is an ideal for what ought to happen during the hermeneutic process. Conversation exemplified the responsiveness, creativity and freedom so central to genuine understanding." (Sharkey, 2001, p. 22). So care-full research develops out of conversations with participants and the relationship is central. The feelings and values of the participants are important aspects in a relationship and they are important to consider when researching (Elbaz, 1983). Connelly & Clandinin (1990) explain this in relation to the shared construction of narratives, where "both practitioners and researchers feel cared for and have a voice with which to tell their stories" (p. 4).

In a sense bringing empathy and care was inevitable in this doctoral research because I have known the students, shared their experiences during the GDE year, led the course and introduced the changes. For this type of research the relational aspect is complicated by there being a pre-existing relationship with participants. This no doubt will be the case for many teachers acting as enquirers: in fact participatory methodologies like action research virtually demand that the researcher is 'inside' the research (Kemmis & McTaggart,

2000). Acknowledging the relationship and respecting the participants is a hallmark of care-full research.

The second part of the care-full relationship is with the data. On one level data can just be seen as words on a page or words on a recording. In another the words are jewels, gifts, bequests from the participants and as such they need to be treated with care. To read words 'care-fully' is to read with sensitivity. It is reading to understand more of the participants' lived experience (van Manen, 1990) and to honour the stories being told. Part of this includes avoiding making assumptions about what is said, or rushing to conclusions that might fit the research question but not the person telling the story.

From a personal perspective, I cannot separate myself into the dispassionate researcher and I don't really want to. Erkkilä and Mäkelä (2002) argue that a researcher "should not try to separate the emotional and cognitive aspects" of their work (p. 51). At one point I was deeply moved by a particularly painful interview; where a beginning teacher was clearly struggling on so many fronts. The result was some very deep reflection on my part about my responsibility as a teacher educator and a determination to write about his experience honestly- ultimately in a poem.

I have wondered whether the relational sensitivity of care-full research only applies when the researcher has a prior relationship with the participants. I don't believe this is the case. There have been situations when research has been conducted prior to the doctorate where the same issues have arisen. In each instance the desire to honour the participants and to relate their stories honestly has been profound. In one awful situation I found a co-researcher grabbing sentences from transcripts and throwing them into a very neat and rigid analytical frame. Sadly that research did not ultimately reflect the depth of the emotions and experiences shared by the participants. It was just another piece of utilitarian writing.

Care-full research is respectful of what is 'given' and 'shared' as data

Care-full research is embedded in respect for the participants and what they have shared. This links closely with the previous point in that respect can be construed as an aspect of care but it also highlights the participants' right to provide whatever information they choose. It is also informed by the understanding that:

Just like literary stories, the personal stories we tell each other have thematic structures and artificial ends. In contrast our lives are complex, ongoing and incomplete. Many of our life histories cannot be integrated into a harmonious whole. Our identities are layered and laterally segmented... (van Manen, 1991, p. 23)

So we only learn about experiences in ways that people choose to share them. Through much of the research I have been troubled by a sense of honouring the stories as they are told to me. My concern over 'working with the words of others' seems to have this issue of care at its heart. I have always been suspicious of research that has been a one way process; where the researcher has gathered data from someone (taken something, perhaps stolen something precious and personal) and then created some document that claims to 'know' or represent something of the subject. We see so much of this sort of representation in the media.

Beattie (1995) provided a useful insight into respect in research. She described how her own research with a teacher was actually enhanced by their mutual respect of the other's work: "We built on the initial trust and respect we had for each other and moved forward toward a greater understanding of the other and a greater valuing of each other as collaborative partners" (p. 123).

In the doctoral projects I was very conscious of respecting the individuals I was working with and learning from. All the participants were familiar with my classroom management mantra: "the single rule that matters most is that we respect each other" and I believe they approached the research very respectfully themselves. So while the research relationship could be

considered “unequal” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003; Noddings, 1992), there is no doubt the respect was mutual and we learned from each other. As one participant said, “Having this conversation has encouraged me to think in a different way about my work”.

Care-full research is attentive and focused

Care-full research is deeply attentive. Elbaz (1992) discussed attentiveness in relation to teachers’ relations with children. She identified the aspect of attentiveness that “relates to the ability to notice details, to watch for small signs of growth, to remember important bits of information at the right moment, to maintain “a sense of a children’s complexity” (Ruddick, 1989, p. 426). These qualities of attentiveness are also relevant to a care-full approach to research. In conversations with research participants the researcher notices details, watches for growth or change, remembers relevant information or connectors and always acknowledges the complexity of the individual lives being shared in the research (Diller, 1991).

Attentiveness in research conversations requires the researcher to focus fully on the interaction. It is not to be preoccupied with asking the next question, or pushing for a particular response. It is to listen very carefully to what is being said and to hear the subtle changes in a voice as a story is related (Chambers, 2004). It is to carefully observe the person speaking. I well remember the excitement in the voice and beaming smile of one participant when he said: “The GDE turned me into a helpful person!” He then went on to relate all the things he did at school that were beyond the regular first year teachers’ job description. He was excited that he felt able to do these things and not trapped in the image of beginning teacher as novice. I also remember the sadness when one participant talked about ‘buying the dream’ of being a ‘perfect’ teacher and not being able to live up to it. On one level I could just accept the stories as told but if I am applying ‘care-full’ principles I actually have to practice ‘inhearing’ and ‘inseeing’ (Delpit, 1988). As Evans (1999) notes when discussing ‘strong reading’: “it means seeing the stories as not merely descriptive statements” (p. 29). This requires me to think harder about

the stories and reflect on what insights they are giving me. Do I personally need to respond to them in any way? Or are they being told that way to give me a better understanding of the lived experience?

Van Manen (1991) provides an interesting perspective when he notes that “pedagogical understanding is sensitive listening and observing” (p. 83). In a way ‘care-full’ research could be seen as a natural development from the pedagogical understanding an enquiring teacher looks for.

Attentiveness also occurs after a transcript is produced and can be practised by people other than the original researcher. ‘Care-full’ reading involves holding a lens up close to the text: looking carefully for insights into the participants’ experiences. Looking at the language chosen, the words selected to tell the story. The care-full reader is ‘listening’ carefully for details, for the sounds of the voices and the emotions being conveyed. The reader is attentive to the nuances within the text.

Care-full research is tactful, thoughtful and reflective

Care-full research is predisposed towards tactfulness. Van Manen (1991) explained in detail the place of tact in teaching. I would argue that the same qualities he looked for in the tactful teacher should be found in care-full research. Van Manen’s interpretation of care is narrow but I think his understanding of tact adds strength to the qualities that a ‘care-full’ researcher should bring to the research process. He discusses the concept of care in relation to tact:

To be tactful is to be able to take other people’s feelings into account. Tact is sensitive to delicate situations and having a feel for what they require... tact is the expression of thoughtfulness that involves the total being of the person, an active sensitivity toward the subjectivity of the other for what is unique and special about the other person. (p. 145)

‘Care-full’ research demands that the researcher displays ‘active sensitivity’ to the research participants as part of the research process and also when

working with the data. This also requires a predisposition to thoughtfulness which van Manen (1991) notes is the product of “self reflective reflection on human experience” (p. 127).

Van Manen (1991) addresses the issue of tact in scholarship and interestingly he sees this as a “highly reflective human activity” practiced while reading and writing texts. In contrast, he sees tact in human interaction as something more spontaneous, more immediate. To me tact in scholarship can be the same as tactful action because it is “thoughtful, mindful, heedful” and as van Manen himself notes: “Tact is the effect one has on another person even if the tact consists, as it often does, in holding back, waiting” (p.127). Care-full research also requires the researcher to hold back and wait and to accept that developing understanding takes time.

Care-full research is reflective and reflexive. It stays in the mind of the researcher and questions about the process, the data, the relations and the writing compete with other everyday activities and thoughts. The research process can change and develop as the reflective thoughts become actions. The care-full researcher is naturally reflexive as they acknowledge like Shacklock and Smyth (1998) “that there are no privileged views on getting at the truth in the generation of research problems, processes, and accounts, because these things are, like the researcher, socially situated” (p. 7).

Care-full research is hermeneutic

Care-full research is essentially hermeneutic in that its central purpose is to find meaning or gain understanding from the research activity. There are elements of creativity, exploration, imagination even, in the process. The work in the field of hermeneutic phenomenology provided a useful framework here (Gadamer, 1989; Sharkey, 2001). The gaining of understanding was not seen as something that required a particular research method. Conversation was central to reaching genuine understanding. There is an acknowledgement of the relationship between the research participants and the texts created:

Common meaning is found between the interpreter and the text. Metaphors like play and conversation point to the interactive and responsive nature of that encounter. (Sharkey, 2001, p. 24).

Interpreting conversation as data was always something that troubled me and still does. There are all sorts of interpretive methods and mechanisms available to researchers (Crotty, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Radnor, 2002; Richardson, 1994) and as stated previously all this doctoral research has its base in a broadly interpretive theoretical framework. Sharkey (2001) notes: “[in] the hermeneutic conviction ...the revelatory power of research is animated by the researcher’s powers of observation, reflection and judgement” (p. 22). The strength of this lies in the connection between the researcher, the participants, the data and the texts that are created.

Certainly I often found myself writing in ways that I didn’t initially understand. Why did some pieces lend themselves to narrative, others to poetry? In early stages of the doctorate I remember talking about the idea of ‘space’ as the place where transcripts and my thoughts somehow became transformed into a new text. Gadamer (1989) explained this in terms of “the phenomenon of human understanding as a fusion of horizons” (p. 306) and Sharkey (2001) explained it further:

The encounter is so engaging that the participants get lost in the creative middle spaces where their own ideas and horizons are brought into creative fusion with the text. It is in this middle space that understanding unfolds and the text is heard for what it has to say in the context of those who seek to interpret it. (p. 24)

Care-full research leads to care-full reading and writing

Care-full research demands care-full reading and writing. The personal connection that the researcher has with the participants, their stories and the research questions requires the researcher to be fully engaged, attentive, respectful, reflective and thoughtful when reading and writing about the work.

I found myself drawing on different aspects of past learning when thinking about care-full reading. Many researchers have explored reading as a cognitive act (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989); others have explored reading and literary analysis (Rosenblatt, 1970, 1978), or as a socially critical act (Lankshear, 1994, 1997); or as a pedagogic act (Evans, 1999). Ways of writing have also been explored extensively in the literature (Moffett, 1981; Richardson, 1994, 2000) and throughout history.

The work of Rosenblatt (1970, 1978) was instructive. While her work focused on analysing literature I found her approach helpful in developing the idea of care-full reading. She identified the highly personal aspect of reading and making meaning. She was very clear that the reader had a critical role in making meaning of a text. "The reading of any work of literature is, of necessity, an individual and unique occurrence involving the mind and emotions of a particular reader" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. xii) and further to that she noted: "The reader's attention to the text activates certain elements in his [sic] past experience...Meaning will emerge from a network of relationships...as he [sic] senses them". (1978, p. 11). The care-full reader needs to be cognisant of his/her personal and emotional response to the transcripts and sensitive to the place of his/her own history in taking and making meaning. Teachers who inquire into their practice could find that memories triggered by some texts or transcripts inspire a strong personal or emotional response.

Critical reading has been a strong focus in academic institutions and learners are often encouraged to develop a critical or doubting stance. Elbow (1986) provides a challenge to this notion and asks that readers adopt a stance of methodological doubt and methodological belief. He identifies methodological belief as "the equally systematic, disciplined and conscious attempt to believe everything no matter how unlikely or repellent it might seem- to find virtues or strengths we might otherwise miss" (p. 257). The value of this type of process is that it is not defending or creating an argument in an abstract way, it is opening other possibilities of learning and understanding and it highlights "experiences as ways of seeing" (p. 261). A care-full reader would be one who

is able to adopt both positions and in so doing may be able to find insights that a purely critical reader would not.

The work of Evans (1999) was useful in terms of providing a frame for 'reading'. His study was "based on the view that the capacity to grasp meaning is what is decisive for practice" (p. 23). The methods he employed were based firmly in the hermeneutic phenomenological realm (Evans, 1989, 1999; Van Manen, 1990) and his method of searching for meaning resonated with me. Evans used interrupted reading and then 'strong' reading. Evans used data collected from conversations with principals about the 'meaning' of educational administration. He used an interrupted reading as a first level of 'conversing' with the transcripts. He retold the stories and then interrupted them with questions and comments "as a way of opening up the text to further questioning". He saw interrupted reading as a "conceptual bridge between the 'raw' stories and the hermeneutic readings" (p. 47). The importance of the interruption - or rupturing - was as "a way of engaging the text in a questioning and problematising way" and also as a way of engaging the reader in the hermeneutic task. The idea of 'interrupting' a text was something that I had been doing intuitively all through the research projects. There were many stages where I seemed to converse with the data and question what was developing. The Reading Circle project and also the 'Conversations with teachers' piece both have interrupted reading within them.

Care-full reading of a text lends itself to this sort of interruption. The reader is deeply attentive and wanting to engage fully in the hermeneutic task. The interruptions could be seen as metacognitive exercises where the reader consciously engages with a text (Brown, 1999) and also part of what Rosenblatt (1978) terms 'aesthetic' reading. "In aesthetic reading, the reader's attention is centred directly on what he [sic] is living through during his [sic] relationship with that particular text." (p. 25)

Evans followed the interrupted reading with a 'strong reading'. The strong reading was pedagogically oriented and acknowledged the situated and motivated character of the principals' stories. Evans (1999) was keen to get

beyond an abstract meta-discourse about the meaning of being a principal. He outlined how the strong reading was an interpretive activity and “to be engaged in the practice of a strong reading, is to be engaged in judging, in rendering a verdict.” (p. 30)

Many aspects of the strong reading were attractive but I was troubled that my relationship with the research participants was too close to be ‘rendering a verdict’. They were too new to teaching to be subjected to that, and besides I had never indicated that that would be the purpose of the research. The idea of ‘care-full reading’ developed out of this concern.

So to read care-fully is to be full of care and to read with care and attentiveness. It is to read and not to make assumptions about what is being said. It is to listen to the voices and hear the tone as well as the words. It is to watch the body-language carefully. It is to listen and to search for ‘in-hearing’. It is to read with belief (Elbow, 1986) and respect.

To write care-fully is like reading care-fully but harder again. Once the participants shared their stories and experiences with me and I ‘analysed’ the data in the way described in each project, then I wrote. I wrote with their faces before me and their trust beside me. I saw their eagerness to provide me with ‘useful’, thoughtful responses. I remembered the pinched faces of some who have struggled; the wry laughter as experience and theory are seen as connected; the sadness as dreams are broken through bitter experience; the shining eyes as passion and excitement are expressed.

Care-full writing also involved making choices and selecting which stories to tell. Frequently I was troubled by that very decision as each participant had so willingly shared their experiences. In the end I have chosen the stories and words that seemed to bubble to the surface; that connected with other stories, which asked to be told. In some the emotions were powerful; in some the stories are evocative. Each story is personal and has something to tell the reader and comes from the fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1989; Sharkey, 2001). It is impossible to include all stories in a single piece of research, even

a doctorate, so the stories that I have not included in this doctorate I have called the 'shadow stories'. Not in the Jungian sense of dark or negative stories but more that they are waiting in the shadows, or the wings, to be revisited and told in some later work.

In care-full writing I am honouring the stories and I am also trying to find a place where making meaning is a way of life, where being deeply thoughtful is celebrated and not derided. I hesitate as this may sound pretentious but I wonder if care-full writing comes out of what Denzin & Lincoln (2000) identify as sacred discourse:

This is interpretive scholarship that refuses to retreat to abstractions and high theory. It is a way of being in the world that avoids jargon and incomprehensible discourse. It celebrates the local...and seeks to understand how people enact and construct meaning in their daily lives. (p. 1052)

I have always loved writing and for years I dreamed of being able to write more. This doctorate has taken me unexpected places and it has certainly given me plenty of scope to write. Often the writing has been a struggle – maybe it always is when the power of academic convention looms so mightily. Sometimes the writing has been fun and engaging. I have been driven by the need to write 'care-fully' and in so doing I have made myself vulnerable. Art Bochner (2000) captures this well for me:

The stories we write put us into conversation with ourselves as well as our readers. In conversation with ourselves we expose our vulnerabilities, conflicts, choices and values. We take measure of our uncertainties, our mixed emotions, and the multiple layers of our experience. (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 748)

Care-full research in this portfolio

Care-full research for educators has as its core a mindfulness of pedagogic possibility. From engaging in research in teacher education I am linking the pedagogy within a teacher education course with the pedagogy of a practicing

teacher. Our learning from this type of research has the possibility of enhancing and informing our practice.

Van Manen (1991) identifies the qualities essential to good pedagogy and I think many of these qualities can be applied to the care-full researcher too:

[Good pedagogy is] a sense of vocation, love of and caring for children, a deep sense of responsibility, moral intuitiveness, self-critical openness, thoughtful maturity, tactful sensitivity toward the child's subjectivity, an interpretive intelligence, a pedagogical understanding of the child's needs, improvisational resoluteness in dealing with young people, a passion for knowing and learning the mysteries of the world, the moral fibre to stand up for something, a certain understanding of the world, active hope in the face of prevailing crises, and, not the least, humour and vitality. (p. 8)

Taking these qualities and transferring them to research practices will provide the foundation of care-full research. In many ways it is obvious that a teacher practising 'good pedagogy' will bring the same qualities to their research. My understanding of van Manen's notion of good pedagogy is that it is a deeply thoughtful care for young people combined with personal integrity, strength and passion. Such qualities will also always be the province of the care-full researcher.

What follows represents my attempts at using a care-full approach to research. The projects are not presented as neat conventional pieces of research. They are framed by a constructivist world view. The methods are eclectic and a care-full form of analysis is employed. The relational aspect of learning is present throughout the projects. Reflective practice and reflexivity underpin much of the writing.

Writing to understand

Throughout the doctoral research I have endeavoured to find a place for myself within academia. Many writers have explored the importance of stories and narratives in educational research (Bruner, 1987; Clough, 2002; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 1993). They argue that

human beings have a narrative approach to their lives and our desire is to tell about things that are important to us. Some people have argued for particular analytical practices (Reissman, 1993; Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and others have developed more organic approaches. I explored a number of conventional approaches (e.g. thematic matrices, Miles & Huberman, 1994) and I attended workshops on qualitative data analysis packages (for example NUD•IST). I kept finding myself writing about what I was finding and how I was responding rather than simply categorising.

Listening to stories of others in the research generated a need to explore more. Erkilä and Mäkelä (2002) argue that “the need to listen to other people’s life-stories awakens a desire to consider one’s own biography” (p. 51). Clandinin & Connelly (2000) identify the feeling of being drawn into the research. Elbaz & Pritzker (2001) go further and highlight the difficulties of the conventions of academic research which seem to deny the feelings of the researcher. I found some comfort from the words of Erkilä and Mäkelä (2002): “acknowledgement of one’s own feelings also helps the researcher to understand both herself and the object of her research.” (p. 51)

I have written parts of ‘my story’ (see Sparkes, 1995, ‘narrative of self’) to position myself within the research and as a way of examining why I think, feel, operate the way I do. Elbaz- Luwisch (2001) argues that “we need to be able to attend to our own stories as teachers if we are to be able to attend to the stories of our pupils” (p. 84). This is a compelling reason for working in the narrative realm. Connecting with students will always be the foundation of my practice.

Constant writing and rewriting has allowed an examination of my practice and how I understand the teaching profession. I have attempted different ways of writing to show my developing understanding. The pieces are not all complete narratives but I have drawn on the stories of the research participants. Gubrium & Holstein (1997) note: “ Narratives need not be full-blown stories with requisite internal structure...As a meaning-making device, a narrative

assembles individual objects, actions and events into a comprehensible pattern; telling a story turns available parts into a meaningful whole.” (p. 147)

In Chapters four and five I use different ways of writing to describe different pedagogical practices. Writing descriptively in third person, or through constructed emails or stories has provided a way for me to share my ‘lived experience’ and will hopefully allow the reader to experience the events described in more personal way. Chapter six employs a range of different writing activities (stories, poems, a script) to explore some of the intrapersonal dimensions of being a teacher.

My work is positioned in a postmodernist climate “when a multitude of approaches to knowing and telling exist side by side” (Richardson, 2005, p. 961) and where all ways of knowing are subject to doubt and enquiry. Clearly this portfolio is informed by the feminist desire to hear marginalised voices (of beginning teachers) (Lather, 1989; McWilliam, 1994). The tenets of poststructuralism provide a useful base in this research:

Postructuralism suggests two important ideas to qualitative writers. First it directs us to understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular positions at particular times. Second, it frees us from trying to write a single text in which everything is said at once to everyone...writing is validated as a method of knowing. (Richardson, 2005, p. 962).

Matters of validity, reliability and so on may continue to flourish in some research but as Richardson (2000) notes: ‘in postmodernist mixed genre texts, we do not triangulate; we *crystallize*. We recognize that there are far more than “three sides” from which to approach the world’ (p. 934). This portfolio aims to explore some moments in the lives of beginning teachers from a number of different angles, in a range of different ways of writing. It is a study based around a single course with a small number of research participants. The concept of crystallisation has provided a powerful metaphor throughout the doctoral writing:

In post modern texts we crystallize...what we see depends on our angle of repose... Crystallization, without losing its structure, deconstructs the traditional idea of "validity" ... and crystallization provides us with a deepened, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. Ingeniously we know there is always more to know. (p. 934)

The work presented in this portfolio should be judged in relation to its verisimilitude and 'care-fullness'. Is it attentive, respectful, relational, thoughtful, reflective and hermeneutic? In the end, you, the reader, are the ultimate judge of the 'goodness' or 'worthiness' of any piece of writing. My story is interwoven with the stories of the beginning teachers. Together we have constructed, co-constructed and reconstructed our understanding of some experiences at one section of our lives. The narrative does not stand still it is a 'continual unfolding' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

CHAPTER 3

Teacher as enquirer into professional practice: a whole course approach to learning in teacher education

Introduction to the project

Teaching isn't just about teaching, it is a whole lot more. It IS a profession, and about the whole person and we can do so much with it. We can be leaders, we can do research, we can constantly learn from students, from each other; together (Graduate teacher, 2003)

This project explores some developments in the Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) at the University of Ballarat following a course review in 2001. A collaborative investigation of the first year of implementation in 2002 was undertaken. The resulting paper (Brown & McGraw, 2002) provides a starting point for the first project. The importance of educators becoming 'enquirers into professional practice' (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001) was central to the changes in the course. The project provides the opportunity to explore pre-service teacher learning from a whole course perspective. The focus is on how students learn through this model of enquiry and whether it is really possible to implement a carefully constructed theoretical approach to a whole course; whether the students find the enquiry into professional practice approach a useful model for becoming a teacher. Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon (1998) reported on teacher education courses with an "innovative program approach [which] provide a form of shelter for the students within which they could examine their beliefs" (p. 152) and this was certainly an important component of the development of the GDE.

The project is loosely conceptualised as participatory action-research. Key features of this are "improvement of a practice of some kind; improvement of the understanding of a practice by its practitioners and the improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place" (Robson, 2002, p. 215). The GDE

is constantly under informal review and this project provided the opportunity to explore the philosophical underpinning of the course and how it is experienced by the participants. The changes implemented in the GDE program and how students and staff responded to them formed the focus of the research. The findings from the project have resulted in changes being made to the introduction of the concept of 'enquiry into professional practice' in the course and so the cycle continues.

The project reports attempts to turn theorising into a practical program through more focused school observation visits; a practicum seminar series which provides more time for an explicit focus on examining the practice of teaching; a mentoring model in schools experience and core units with enquiry as a central focus.

Some reflections have been made by students and staff involved in the course on the experience as it has been lived. The model is under development and clearly the research is a work in progress. As time passes the lecturers involved respond to student evaluations and broader feedback and the model itself evolves.

The lecturers who collaborated in the initial research came to this research as people who were intensely interested in learning; people who held strong beliefs in the power of collaborative learning and in the need to talk and think deeply if learning is to occur. We positioned ourselves within the research (as teacher educators and researchers) and worked together to develop the initial paper. We were working from a constructivist epistemological stance and we were keen to hear how the participants (both students and lecturers) experienced the enquiry into professional practice model.

As part of course development we invited students to be involved in discussions about the course. The aim of early discussions was to provide ongoing feedback to us as unit coordinators. Students volunteered to attend a small number of group discussions where we sought feedback on any aspect of the course as students were experiencing it. Notes of these meetings were

made and in two instances the meetings were taped. The lecturers involved also provided feedback in the regular course meetings and notes were made of this feedback.

The original research project concluded in June 2002 and minor changes were made to the course in response to some of the feedback. The doctoral project has extended the initial research through further exploration of the experience of participants in the GDE course. I was particularly interested in finding out how the 'enquiry into professional practice' model affected beginning teachers. Semi-structured interviews with recent graduates have been conducted to gain a better understanding of this. It is impossible to quantify how each beginning teacher experiences his or her career and it is also impossible for them to compare ways of learning to teach from a personal perspective as they only ever have to experience one pre-service teacher education course. What I am interested to learn is: How does framing learning to teach as an 'enquiry into professional practice' influence the way beginning teachers respond to the demands of the career? How can their stories contribute to deepening our understanding of the complexity of becoming a teacher?

I have chosen to present this project in a slightly unusual way. I wanted to revisit the original research paper and explore it in the light of the intervening years' experiences. In a way it has been a process of 'reframing' (Richardson, 1997, p. 3) where previous work is revisited in the light of new experiences. The structure of the GDE course that was introduced in 2002 was conventional but implementing some of the underlying thinking was challenging.

The key features of the initial course changes were:

- Framing the course around the idea of teachers as 'enquirers into professional practice' through focused school observation visits; collaborative inquiry; formal and informal research; deep thinking and reflective practice;

- Building stronger connections between theoretical and practical learning, through introduction of activities which bring pre-service teachers and school students together in non-traditional ways and the introduction of a schools experience seminar unit.
- Schools experience to be reconceptualised as a shared learning experience with practicing teachers acting as mentors rather than supervisors.

As the course coordinator I have lived and worked through the changes. As the researcher I have kept records of my own reflections and of students' evaluative comments and reflections. In more recent interviews with graduates, I asked them to "Consider how framing the course around a central notion of teaching as 'enquiry into professional practice' has influenced the way you respond to the demands of your teaching career".

The original Brown & McGraw (2002) paper was written only six months into the course changes and was presented at the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) conference that year. What follows is parts of the original paper interspersed with my own current reflections and 'replies' or 'updates' from the graduates. The 2002 paper was co-written with both of us planning and writing together, then writing sections and meeting to discuss and rework our writing. The final paper was a complete synthesis of our work. The 2005 sections are highlighted by being placed in text boxes. I have chosen to have the two stories told together because that is the way I have lived them. The past paper sits there in my memory and bookshelf and each year I live through a new group of students experiencing the course. The actual data used in the 2005 version is a compilation of data from the intervening years and I will identify this on the way through.

Now meets then

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Paper for ATEA Conference, Brisbane, July 2002

'[A] pedagogy for enquiry into educational practice should...aim to model what it means to be an enquirer into educational practice. Second, it should promote change in the structures, process and practices of educational institutions.' (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001a, p. 10)

Introduction

This paper will explore some developments in the Graduate Diploma of Education at the University of Ballarat following a course review in 2001. The need for educators to become '**enquirers into educational practice**' (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001a) was central to proposed changes in the course.

We will describe how we have attempted to turn our theorising into a practical program through more focused school visits, a practicum seminar series, a mentoring model in schools experience and core units with enquiry as a central focus. Some tentative reflections will be made on the experience as it is being lived this year. The model is under development and the implementation is clearly a 'work in progress'.

2005 update and we have lived with this model in the course now for four years. My own sense is that the key structural components of the model are still in place and the 'enquiry into professional practice' idea still underpins the course explicitly. The enquiry approach is a positive way to build pedagogical understanding (van Manen, 1991). Certainly the notion of enquiring and questioning permeates all aspects of the course. I have some questions though about how the course is being 'lived' by some of the students and the lecturers. The model evolves each year as the course is evaluated. Some components of the changes have been enhanced, some new ideas have

been introduced, some of the initial staff has changed and of course each year a new group of students arrives.

We both spend part of each week working in secondary schools as well as lecturing in the School of Education. For both of us, only in different ways, our school-based work involves enquiry into current practice (within particular institutions) and helping to bring about change. Our role as change agents in schools has a profound impact on the way we perceive pre-service education and operate as educators within it.

Amanda continues her work in schools and her role as a change agent has been profound. My own work in schools has temporarily ceased as I try to balance coordinating a course and completing a doctorate. There is no doubt that my previous experiences as a change agent are cherished and my learning from them has become part of me. My aim once I finish the doctorate is to get back into schools. The stories from regular school life are an important part of my university teaching.

We are particularly interested in how implementing changes in the course affects all those involved. We are challenged by the power of existing models and we are conscious of the need for significant change. As Groundwater-Smith et al (2001) argue, “the most significant possibilities for change in the institution of schooling will come about when there is simultaneous transformation in the classroom, the work of teachers, the relations between teachers, students and the broader community, and the management of the school itself” (p. 21).

As teacher educators we have a role to play in ensuring this transformation occurs. As we write this paper, we are very much living through the experience, critically reflecting, questioning, wondering, exploring and learning.

The argument for transformation has gathered strength since we first wrote. Some change has occurred and that is heartening. Our local state government has produced a 'Blueprint for Government Schools' (Kosky, 2003) that identified 'flagship strategies' for reform. The Blueprint clearly identified the need for teachers to be continually learning; for development to be part of professional life. It also identified the importance of induction and mentoring within the teaching profession and new graduates are required to have a mentor in their first year of teaching. The needs of students are foregrounded through the first flagship strategy of 'student learning' which focuses on developing understanding of diverse learning needs. Some former GDE students identified feeling comfortable with working with these changes:

[The GDE] was very much in line with governmental ideas and the VIT (Victorian Institute of Teaching) I feel very much more comfortable being a professional teacher. It [the GDE] taught me the jargon and it taught me what I was supposed to be aiming towards; the idea that teaching wasn't sort of a neutral career, where you went into neutral and then just coasted for the next fifteen years. That it was always about self- improvement. (Carole, first year teacher)

The requirements of the Blueprint have identified the need for teachers to think deeply about their work but it is not straightforward. There are questions about language and what words like 'quality', 'initiative' and 'effective' really mean (McGraw, 2004). The Blueprint is also peppered with the discourse of performance, standards, improvement and data collection.

A range of other voices can be heard asking for a different approach to schooling, to education. The challenge to educators, to governments, to communities is profound. Noddings (2002) argues that we need to pay less attention to competitive, standards based approaches. She argues that "our society needs to care for its children, to reduce violence, to respect honest work of every kind, to reward excellence at every level, to ensure a place for every child and emerging adult in the economic and social world, to produce

people who can care competently for their own families and contribute effectively to their communities” (p. 94).

Arguing for a different type of transformation, Longworth (2003) identifies the need to move towards a model for lifelong learning: ‘the changes need to take us from the educational world dominated by the education and training paradigm of education for those who require it , into the lifelong learning era of pleasurable learning for all’. (p.116)

Both Noddings and Longworth are asking for transformation, not simple ‘tinkering around the edges’ (Smith, 2003) of what exists. They identify a broader understanding of the purpose of learning. Both would support van Manen’s (1991) argument for pedagogical understanding and thoughtfulness.

Thinking about preparing teachers

For many pre-service teachers the idea that ‘knowledge’ passes transparently from expert to novice dominates. Most have successfully navigated their way through a traditional school system and grown up in a society that packages schooling in defined, usually narrow, predictable ways. They come to the study of teaching and learning ‘knowing’ school. They have also spent three years or more immersed in the content area they plan to teach. Many arrive with a passion that has developed from this study and they want to share the passion. Most people have not thought too much about how they will do that other than through a transmission model.

Whatever history these students bring with them they almost all expect to be ‘taught how to teach’. There is an underlying assumption that teaching consists of learning explicit teaching skills mixed with some theory about development and learning and educational policy. There is a strong understanding of the importance of practice ‘to get it right’. The apprenticeship model of learning to teach is powerful and still has currency. (Ramsey, 2000). The challenge for teacher educators is to move pre-service

teachers beyond this model. As Reid & O'Donoghue (2001b) argue: "such approaches draw a false distinction between theory and practice and so misconstrue the nature and complexity of professional knowledge" (p. 27).

The intervening years have seen continuing discussion in the area of the practice/ theory divide. A recent Victorian state government inquiry into teacher education criticises teacher education courses and calls for much longer periods of school based learning (Herbert, 2005).

Our experience in the course is that we have worked to make the connections explicit, rather than the divide. Simply bringing school students and teachers into the GDE classes or getting GDE students working closely with school students has reaped great rewards. The theory is 'lived' in practice. School students are invited to university classes to share their experiences and insights. The practicum seminar series runs throughout the year and its key purpose is to connect practical and theoretical learning; often with the contribution of school students or practicing teachers and principals. The GDE has continued to provide opportunities for students to act as virtual mentors and learning mentors (see Chapter 4); to connect with students in different ways (Brown, 2002). Various programs such as Special interest projects; Learning support; Big Buddies program; primary arts program and so on have been introduced where GDE students support school students and work as co-learners with school students on projects of mutual interest.

The internal mental models (the assumptions, the stories, the images) that students arrive at a pre-service education course with, need to be surfaced, analysed and tested so that the familiar is not only made explicit, but can be challenged (Senge, 1992; Argyris, 1982). Real change might then be possible.

Because of the hectic places that educational institutions tend to be, there is little time for thinking together deeply, questioning and reflecting. What tends to happen is that current trends and innovations enmesh, intertwine and

sometimes collide with what remains from the past. Rather than a linear development, it seems as though our beliefs and practices related to teaching and learning have tossed and turned and tumbled over themselves. If it were a narrative, it would read like a complex post-modern text rather than a traditional biography divided into discrete chapters.

For teacher education institutions to merely reflect what currently happens and introduce former and contemporary teaching and learning models is not enough. Holding up a mirror to schooling only enables you to see what is familiar. More powerful is the notion of holding a lens to enable close observation (Edwards, 1998). Inquiry based research as well as critical and creative thinking should form the basis of how we learn about teaching – and how we continue to learn about teaching when we work in schools.

This still holds true and has developed within the course. We do not want to simply adopt ‘innovations’ or new practices uncritically. The metaphor of the lens is explicitly used and the importance of observation at a range of levels is emphasised. We talk about developing the supersensitive sight of the teacher (the ‘in-sight’): the necessity of carefully observing faces, bodies, positions, structures, facilities and so on as a way of making sense of what is happening in a school. We talk about focusing in on certain parts of practice as the basis of further enquiry: we encourage pre-service teachers (PSTs) to do the same. We help PSTs develop skills for looking closely; the metaphor of a ‘toolbox’ is used for holding those skills.

Thinking about myself as an observer and a reflector was really stimulating for me and gave me a lot of ideas on the educator as inquirer. It expanded my existing ideas about teaching and the importance of being truly attuned to what is going on around me. Observing your surrounding environment carefully helps create successful teaching. (Alice, at the end of the GDE year)

Clearly there has been an enormous development in the understanding of learning (Atkin, 1993; Gardner, 1991; Hermann, 1989) and a parallel development in the understanding of the nature of knowledge and how it is

constructed (Bates,1983; Belenky et al, 1986; Goleman, 1996; Minnich, 1990). There have been challenges to the traditional ways of learning to become teachers (Bentley, 1998; Groundwater-Smith et al, 2001; Korthagen, 2001). These developments need to be carefully integrated into pre-service education courses.

There continue to be developments in our understanding of learning (for example Costa, 2000, 2004; Ritchart, 2002) and we aim for thoughtful, careful integration - not superficial, uncritical adoption of the material. In the past four years some of the 'changes and initiatives' in the course have become part of government policy (e.g. mentoring); but change in schools takes times. The GDE graduates leave with an awareness of a range of contemporary approaches and this can be affirming: they feel comfortable with new initiatives in schools because they expect to be involved in ongoing learning.

Towards new developments in teacher education

The Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) at the University of Ballarat was reviewed in 2001. Extensive feedback was sought from current and former students, school teachers who participate in the schools experience program, regional education consultants and staff teaching in the course. Much of the feedback was very favourable but a few patterns emerged. Clearly the links between university learning and school practice needed to be strengthened.

The review process also highlighted that certain aspects of teacher education needed to be more explicitly emphasised. Students need to be empowered to be 'lifelong learners' (Candy, Crebert & O'Leary, 1994). At the same time, we wanted them to develop ways of enquiring into their professional practice so that they were always engaged in their work and focusing on the learning that was occurring rather than just classroom procedures. We were interested in helping students enquire into what IS and then into what CAN BE. We had a sense that we needed to explicitly develop personal and professional skills to

enable students to work in a rapidly changing world. We were interested in exploring ways of ensuring the enthusiasm of pre-service remains with them despite the future difficulties they may encounter (Cole & Knowles, 1993). We also felt it was important to address the often-underemphasized aspects of the teacher/learner interaction: the importance of relationships, the powerful impact of our emotions and the place of intuition in teaching and learning (Atkinson, 2000; Hargreaves, 1998).

These ideas are still held close to our hearts. It is hard to really know how teachers experience their education courses and the research project provides one way in to the story. Here is part of Alice's reflection three years on:

First some words to describe how I feel about this profession. Positive, passionate, rewarded, affirmed, supported, friendly, turbulent, extremely busy, demanding, stressful, engaging, challenging. I have been involved in so many camps, excursions, sports days, projects, action learning teams, PDs [professional development days], Innovations and Excellence meetings, Intel training, SOSE co-ordination, school socials, dance championships. The list goes on and on...I learn something new every single day.

Countless conversations and emails from former students echo this. So many are involved in interesting projects; so many are clearly conscious of their own learning.

The research for this doctorate has also taken me unexpected and sometimes painful places with research participants when their idealism has been challenged. Some of the work for the intrapersonal project was confronting. More recent interviews have highlighted some of the difficulties beginning teachers have experienced.

I don't think that I had my feet on the ground. I think I thought I would come out of uni and it would be more and more of that great stuff. And then this

whole reality thing you know of budgeting and personalities and the real world, you know...

I thought that's what teaching would be like. I would love it so much that I would be worked to death but it wouldn't matter.... You know I bought the dream wholesale and then the instant I couldn't make it happen I fell apart. Yeah, but I'm like that. (Carol, end of first year teaching).

For beginning teachers in some schools that have moved more slowly in terms of adopting more dynamic approaches to professional learning, the experience has been difficult:

It just gets really hard to get in conversations, like serious conversation about how are you doing this? Sometimes I think it's not challenging me enough, it's not really allowing me to grow, how I want to grow. (Amy end of first year teaching)

I worry about this. Are we presenting a view of teaching that is too idealised? Is the disappointment too great when teachers don't all share similar views about professional learning? Maybe this is where we need to connect in with the emotional aspects more carefully and really explore how we 'make our own professional life'. On the other hand, perhaps the discontent could inspire graduates to become more involved, to push harder for change, to insist on more complex thinking. Perhaps that will become my next research journey.

The report from the University of South Australia, *Shaping the future: Educating professional educators* (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001b), arrived at the perfect moment [for the initial course review]. Here was a document that explored what it means to be an educator in the twenty-first century. The prevailing characteristics of the present were acknowledged: the scale of social, economic and political change; the diminution in the credibility of traditional knowledge bases and the need to develop in learners the 'personal resources to work within contexts of change, paradox and uncertainty'.

The authors of the report developed two propositions which resonated strongly with us:

Proposition: Since traditional knowledge bases and old divisions of 'academic' and 'practical' knowledge are no longer appropriate, people must develop the resources to work effectively within contexts of change, paradox and uncertainty. Learning must be a dynamic engagement which promotes greater flexibility in understanding and the capability to generate new ideas, insights and explanations.

Implications: Programs which prepare educators must aim to develop educators who can design curricula flexible enough to encompass the rapidity of knowledge production, while recognising the increasing religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in our societies, and engaging with the cultural influences of new and changing technologies and media.

Proposition: Knowledge for teaching involves enquiry into practice as the basis for professional judgment and action.

Implications: The content and structure of programs which prepare educators (and offer ongoing professional development for practicing educators) should place a central focus on the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for educators to function as enquirers into educational practice. (p. 29)

Some possible strategies for implementing these propositions were identified and the University of Ballarat team attempted to incorporate these into the planning for the revised course. We also attempted to build in stronger connections with schools and explicitly work on collaborative thinking and personal/ emotional development. Images and metaphors of school and learning were explored through school students' and university students' eyes.

“Learning must be a dynamic engagement which promotes greater flexibility in understanding...” is demonstrated by both lecturers and teachers and through focused learning activities. Questions are constantly raised; assumptions are challenged; metaphors are explored and reflective practice is developed throughout the course. The idea of working together to learn in different ways

is exemplified in the reading circle model (Chapter 3), curriculum projects and through various school based initiatives. School based research learning is shared through a mini-conference and an exhibition of learning. In 'Teamquest' mixed groups of GDE students work with groups of year 9 students to develop an activity based around one of the multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1989). On the special presentation day the groups participate in each other's activities; they learn from each other in interesting ways.

In the GDE course you help people out and we work together. Like 'Teamquest', we worked together in groups. [The GDE] was based on group work activities and within groups some people were weak on certain days and some people were manic on certain days. So you sort of mesh it all together. I think I've worked with other people, sharing ideas and creating with other people. Whereas I think the general idea [traditionally] is that you work at something yourself and share it if it works. (Bill, end of second year teaching)

Teacher education courses must foster deep levels of thinking about self, about learning, about thinking itself, and about collaborative thinking. Rather than present teaching as something that can be easily understood and learned, we attempt to portray the complexity and encourage our students through the processes of reflection and problem solving, to build their own understandings. Central to this is the notion of fostering a questioning attitude or disposition, of creating an environment where students can grapple with difficult issues and be empowered because they are the ones doing the thinking.

The complexity of teaching is something that some pre-service teachers struggle to appreciate at the beginning of their teacher education course. As Karen noted during her GDE year:

I have started to see that everything is really a whole lot more complex, that you can't just believe someone and you have to work it out for yourself. So this course is highlighting this for me and helping me develop things for myself.

The complexity, and our insistence that it is explored, causes intense frustration for some students, particularly the students who arrive with a sense that teaching is just a set of skills to be learnt. Jackie articulates this:

I have been very disappointed with the course so far [half way through year]. All the overlap of the units. I am trying to see the relevance of it all. I guess that's maybe the science background. It is so frustrating'.

The units are deliberately designed to overlap and interconnect as a way of demonstrating the complexity of teaching (Beattie, 1995) and the fact that there is intermeshing between learning and teaching, relationships, emotions, politics, social contexts and so on.

Educators in all sorts of places, including Victoria (Russell, 2000), are now advocating the importance of developing thinking-oriented curriculum. There is a strong call for teachers to equip students with thinking and learning strategies so that they can operate independently and collaboratively. A number of primary and secondary schools are placing an explicit focus on students learning how to learn and on building skills to enable students to be reflective, metacognitive and autonomous (Australian National Schools Network has done some useful work in this area). Traditionally our schools have placed very little explicit emphasis on thinking skills and teachers generally find it difficult to articulate processes that for them have often occurred intuitively or naturally. For these reasons, and others, we feel it is important that pre-service teachers develop a better understanding of themselves as thinkers and learners as well as the tools they can use to broaden, deepen and challenge their own habits of mind.

As teacher educators, it is important that we surface the internal models that exist in the minds of pre-service teachers. They are heavy with cultural knowledge and experience and this must enter the arena and be open to analysis. What are their beliefs about teaching and learning? What were their personal experiences? What was modelled to them in teaching and learning

contexts? What enabled them to learn powerfully and what did not? For us, providing opportunities for students to reflect on their own experiences and thinking is important. Students create their own autobiographical texts that depict their journeys as learners. They examine different philosophical viewpoints and in an experiential way, they position themselves depending on current beliefs and values. Students surface the mental models held in their heads, through the use of imagery and metaphor. We make them visible, we articulate them in order to challenge, rethink, redesign or perhaps explicitly confirm.

Turning our theorising into a practical program

The introduction to the 2001 Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) Course review stated:

There has been a continuing need to re-examine the nature of the work undertaken by teachers. The need to provide educators with the personal resources to be reflective practitioners, able to continually learn and develop their pedagogical skills is acknowledged. The need for educators to become inquirers into professional practice is central to the proposed changes. (p. 13)

The review made a number of recommendations particularly in relation to developing stronger connections between school-based and university learning and reframing the school supervisor role to become a mentoring role (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000; Claxton, et al 1996; McBurney-Fry, 1998). These were incorporated in the new program as far as possible. The notion of enquiry underpins all the core units.

The year started with an orientation program which introduced the course as a series of questions. The notion of enquiry was presented from day one. Students were encouraged to enquire into their own histories through writing, drawing and metaphors. Looking back is a very important part of looking forward as a teacher (Knowles, Cole & Presswood, 1994). Constructivist ideas support this – teachers need to know themselves well (perhaps have good ‘intrapersonal intelligence’) if they are going to relate well with students.

The course still begins this way. Early in the year I take the students on a 'journey' back through their lives as learners via a creative visualisation exercise. This surfaces all sort of memories (some good and some painful) and forms the catalyst for the students to write, or draw or create their own learning autobiography (Cole & Knowles, 2000).

When you got us to do the autobiography it was amazing. It was more about me than about teaching...It is through things like this that we think about what it really means to be a teacher and it encourages us to think in this way about our past experiences and the influences people have had on our lives... Starting the course the way we have has made me think. Students will come with all sorts of backgrounds. (Jen, first year teacher)

This is still an incredibly powerful learning experience for me. I am sensitive to the fact that some people's learning experiences have been traumatic and I always offer people the chance to leave if they want to. Occasionally someone does. Usually there is silence at the end and then gentle conversations start erupting throughout the room. It is very important for all of us to debrief after this experience. I am always amazed by the 'learning autobiographies' when they are submitted. They are thoughtful, challenging, and engaging. They help me get to know the students better [relationships] and they form the basis of a conversation that continues throughout the year and beyond. As Cole & Knowles (2000) note, "becoming a teacher is a lifelong process of growth rooted in the personal" (p. 27). Turning the lens closely on the personal seems to be an important starting point in the course. It is also a profound way of helping beginning teachers understand the need to be sensitive to their future students' personal histories.

Research workshops occurred in some core units. Ethical practice was foregrounded in one and this provided a good starting point for further enquiry. Framing questions was explored and notions of data collection and searching for appropriate methodology were the focus of another. We are explicit about the tentative nature of enquiry and the need for sensitivity towards the people

involved. The ideas of Discourse (Gee, 1991) and critical literacy (Lankshear, 1994, 1997) were introduced early in the course so students are aware of the power and frailty of language – and aware of the need to construct their own understanding of becoming a teacher.

This still occurs but I have been challenged to explore the difference or similarity between 'enquiry' and formal research. Pre-service teachers (PSTs) have tended to adopt a concept of inquiry as being something quite formal and finite. Often this formality can be threatening ("I am not a researcher; I don't know how to do this..."). Sometimes it is comforting: a project can be designed, 'executed' and the PST can move on. I don't think either approach is what we were aiming for. Maybe we caused the problem by setting a 'school based research project' in one unit. So when asked about 'enquiry' the graduates often mentioned those particular projects first.

The positive part about the 'research projects' is that they have provided a fairly free space for students to explore an issue that interests them:

My research area was 'what motivates and engages students'...I got a lot of information on engagement and engagement strategies and it sort of fast-tracked my experience. Instead of going out and just having the experience and just getting a little bit out of it, I put all the research together and I've got a really good base of engagement strategies which I think is really important for working with students. (Doug – end of GDE year).

It built on our existing interest in the areas as well...If we research something that we're really excited about then we are going to take it in a lot more and do more with it, and share it. (Bob, end of second year teaching).

I did some enquiry into management because at the beginning of the year that was something I was really concerned about, now it is something I don't even really think about, don't worry about. I've moved off into another area, into sex education in the curriculum, that was something that really motivated me to read more, and find out more. (Alice, end of first year).

So as the interests change and the findings from early enquiry have given confidence, the teachers are motivated to explore other areas of interest. The knowledge and understanding gained from inquiring can provide security, a bedrock on which to build professional confidence.

As a response to the earlier slightly narrow interpretation of inquiry (as a formal research process) another form of inquiry was introduced in the form of 'professional reading circles' (see Chapter 3). The reading circles provided another opportunity for students to learn collaboratively and they also gave students a different way of enquiring: one that relied on reading and discussion and shared meaning making.

We have attempted to create stronger connections between the schools and the university in order to give students opportunities to enquire into the processes of teaching and learning. One way of doing this has been to create opportunities for pre-service students and students and teachers from local schools to enter into dialogue about issues related to teaching and learning. Groups of young people have visited university classes to express their views and experiences; they have also prepared materials which highlight what school is like for them. Including the voices of young people, in particular, has become a powerful way of further challenging the thinking of pre-service teachers.

The connections between schools and the students have been enhanced through an observation program which required students to spend five single days in different schools (including one primary) early in the year. Prior to starting the visits the students participated in a range of activities designed to help them explore and reflect on their values and beliefs about teaching, learning and schools. We talked about the notion of observation. We looked at the philosophical principles of observation and listening as defined by the Reggio Emilia early childhood program:

We must keep in mind that the work of teachers (or better the group of teachers working together) involves constant discussion and making of hypotheses and predictions about the ongoing work of the children. This dynamic activity is closely linked to the other aspects of the teacher's work involving documentation – namely listening, observing, gathering documents, and interpreting them. (Rinaldi, in Edwards, 1998, p. 120)

The Reggio philosophy emphasizes the importance of learning to teach through the close observation of children at work. This is a way of thinking that we would like to cultivate in our students. We talk explicitly about the metaphor of the lens. When they go into schools for observation days, we encourage them to consciously apply a lens to what they see happening. This is not what they would be naturally inclined to do. For some students, their first desire is to get involved in classroom activities – to support the work of teachers or to participate as a student. For others, the application of a critical lens allows them to see the layers of complexity they may not otherwise recognize. Students attend observation days with a questioning attitude and they document what they see, hear and feel. They collect stories, conversations, documents, drawings, their own reflective comments and questions. They are encouraged to talk to students and teachers as they work and pose open questions that enable them to gather information about what is happening for individuals as they learn and teach. When the information has been gathered, students interpret their data independently and collaboratively. They look for patterns, messages, points of interest, and then they present their findings in a way that somehow captures the complexity of what they have learned.

Again, this still happens. The outcomes of the visits are extraordinary. The visits usually take place on a Friday and the following week classes are punctuated by comments from students, their thoughts, concerns, feelings, observations...

The observation days were good as well that you could actually just go in, not hide behind the wall or anything, but be able to talk to the kids but not actually have to perform. (Bill second year teacher).

One of the most interesting outcomes has been the way students have chosen to show their learning from observation visits. They are encouraged to push themselves outside their comfort zones and as a result some of the work is stunningly creative. There are sculptures, mosaics, mobiles, board games, paintings and so on. These pieces are shared with the group and some are displayed in the School of Education and at the GDE exhibition at the end of the year. The work generates another whole series of substantive conversations (Newman & Wehlage, 1993)

The role of school supervisors has been reconceptualized as one of mentor because we want to emphasise the importance of learning together and the value of learning from experienced teachers without falling into the simplistic 'apprenticeship' model. (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000). The Schools Experience Handbook outlines the vision:

Mentors and student teachers have to share an interest in working together and learning together. Effective mentors need to have a sound understanding of the importance of good relationships in the learning process. They need to be prepared to work with the student to establish that relationship and to accept the learner-teacher as an individual. The mentor needs to be able to support the student without stifling them, to challenge them without threatening them.

They need to introduce the student to the complexities of the organisational structure of the school and the profession without daunting them, to share their passion for their content area and their profession, and their understanding of the complexity of the teaching and learning interaction. The realities of teaching need to be addressed but the enthusiasm and idealism of beginning teachers should never be quashed. Mentor teachers need to see the student holistically and to work with them to develop their potential. It is crucial that communication channels remain open even when there is tension and that all parties appreciate the value of reflecting on professional practice. The use of

open-ended questions designed to encourage reflection and critical thought would be a useful way of opening up and extending dialogue with students.

The mentor model is not a new or unique idea (Claxton et al, 1996) but it seems to fit the idea of professional growth through enquiry. It also fitted with the collaborative thinking model which aims to develop deeper understanding through substantive conversation (Darling-Hammond, 1994). The traditional 'supervisor' model has usually placed the power with the teacher and has emphasised learning from emulating others rather than developing a personal teaching style through shared understanding.

This is the change that has been hardest and still needs most work. It is very easy to change words in documents (e.g. supervisor to mentor) but it is more difficult to really effect this change, (see Chapter 5). The university documentation highlights the shift in emphasis to one of mentoring and we prepare students to explain this to the mentor teachers. We have also spent quite a bit of time with students exploring how to negotiate learning experiences with mentor teachers. We have not worked as closely with teachers as we would like. Teachers are always pressed for time, and so are we. Interestingly, the policy foregrounding induction and mentoring for beginning teachers (Kosky, 2003) has helped our situation. There is mentor training and professional development available for practicing teachers and the word mentoring has become part of current educational discourse.

An outcome of the GDE approach which has been commented on is that the graduates of the GDE are very good mentors themselves. Many of the graduates said in interviews that they had found themselves naturally adopting mentoring roles:

GDE also turned me into a 'helpful' person! Almost like a mentor myself...[tells story of helping another new teacher and developing a unit together] I didn't have to go out and create the thing with the other person. I felt I needed to help this person I think. (Bill, second year teacher)

Some tentative reflections on what is happening and on our learning

Maryann's thoughts:

This model of enquiry into professional practice poses challenges for us as teachers in the course. We are constantly challenging ourselves with questions about what is happening and why. I am finding myself challenged to explore more about how students 'become' enquirers. I am concerned about the people who don't like reflecting and enquiring or don't see the purpose of them. I am concerned about the people who want the 'recipe' for teaching and not the exploration. This sort of teaching is not safe, stable or secure. Our semester programs have to have flexibility built in to respond to the students' needs as they arise. There is a need to live through issues as they evolve: a need for reflexivity and flexibility. The conflict develops when we are challenged by questions from students and how far we should go to working with those questions, knowing the very tight timeframes in a Dip Ed year.

I feel as if I am doing some things the same as I have in the past: the autobiography of learning and the need to observe carefully and be sensitive to people have always been part of my teaching. I like having a place to make 'lifelong learning' a reality rather than a term. I feel as if we are empowering our students with the skills and understanding to go into the teaching profession with a willingness to keep learning, with open minds, with creative approaches and with confidence.

I am challenged by the difficulty of generating change within the course and within schools. Some schools and teachers have responded very positively to the enquiry approach, to the observation days and the shift to a mentoring model. Some have not. We are constantly seeking dialogue and feedback with participating teachers and while much is affirming there are real challenges in negotiating change. Asking for more connection with schools is

exciting but in so doing I feel vulnerable. In some ways it is not surprising that teacher education models have stayed so static: change is hard.

My reflections 2005. The notion of 'enquiry into professional practice' has become embedded in the course in many ways. Certainly from a practical point of view the elements of observation days, questioning and reflective practice, involvement in real life learning activities, individual school based research projects and so on are all there and operating. The philosophy behind 'enquiry into professional practice' is introduced early each year and we link back to it at various points. I wonder though whether the power of it has been diluted as staffing changes have occurred and maybe we have become more comfortable with the ideas. Sometimes the impact of something weakens as the presenter becomes more familiar.

On the other hand the 'enquiry into professional practice' focus has highlighted new ways of thinking about teacher education. I have been challenged to think hard about whether enquiry is useful and supportive to teachers. Various aspects of the course have been strengthened to support a complex understanding of enquiry and learning. Reading circles have been introduced to highlight the importance of literature in enquiry and to provide another opportunity to learn collaboratively.

Opportunities to show learning are provided in presentation days where GDE mentors and school students work together to present their shared learning. The Course Conference is designed to celebrate and model professional engagement. The conference is a highlight where professional learning is shared through group presentations, keynote speakers and electronic and artistic exhibitions of work from the year.

What I have no doubt of is the impact the model has had on some of the teachers as they embark on their careers. The stories from the teachers reinforce this. Some things from the transcripts seem to leap out at me. Are they leaping because I want them to, because I connect with them? Are they leaping because they are in some way representative or powerful?

Students' thoughts ...

Students have explored on a number of occasions how they feel about the 'teacher as enquirer into professional practice' model. Some comments from students' journals or discussions (with their permission) provide some preliminary insights:

I am trying to challenge what understanding I have had ... I need to find contemporary understanding and ways of doing things ... We have got to be doing a lot more than going through a formula of teaching, and teaching us to enquire will help us work out ways to engage I think...

...we are all enquirers whatever our backgrounds. Whether we research through science or literature or whatever it is still enquiring.

Starting the course the way we have has made me think about these things for the future. It is a reminder for us as teachers 'the more you teach, the more you learn'.

I feel like it is sort of a seesaw between [the 'tell us how to do it' approach] and what you are saying [the enquiry into professional practice approach] which is like I now have a set of wings, like I've never really felt before.

This course is actually fantastic because it makes you enquire and when you work you don't always have the luxury of sitting back and enquiring deeply. All the enquiry is just pivotal, it is vital that you do that. When you get out there you have to run, you don't always have time... For me the questions come too easily and I get frustrated about what to do with them. We don't have time to address them all.

It's like I observe lots of things and go 'why?' But I feel sort of inadequate about framing questions. Then there is the snowball effect where I think how am I going to survive? How am I ever going to take it all in?

The 'educator as enquirer' is such an engaging and interesting subject and I am really quite drawn to this idea and practice. Teachers need to be passionate about this and totally involved in the process. The concept of teachers as researchers and teachers being intimately involved in what is going on in the classroom and the space around the schools is a seemingly positive thing...It [enquiry] is a frame of mind, something that some people have instinctively and for others it doesn't come so easily but it's so important that we work on our skills of observation and enquiry to change situations not just to gain a better understanding of them.

2005 Teachers' reflections

Graduates from the course have been willing to share their thoughts about their experiences. There is the feeling right from the start of their careers that enquiry is seen as something integral to the role of the teacher as learner and teacher as change agent.

*To always ask questions of ourselves and of our surroundings, to develop skills and practices to explore these things we need, **to learn all the time**. We also need **to listen** and listen not just to our colleagues but to our students most importantly. Don't dismiss. The idea of **reflecting with students** is great and I am going to wholeheartedly engage with this practice because I think that it is crucial to having a positive and trusting learning space... (Alice at the end of the course).*

And three years later:

What I said three years ago fundamentally underpins my practice, it's a deep part of who I am and the sort of teacher I am striving to be.

The complexity of teaching and the multiple demands made on teachers can sometimes leave them struggling emotionally and physically (Hargreaves, 1998, 2002). The power of enquiry as a way into improving practice was highlighted by a number of graduates:

I think having that as a whole approach is important because even if you are useless to start with you can turn it around by asking questions and thinking hard. To be taught that to start with, I think that was extremely important (Alan, first year teacher).

Because of my understanding of enquiry, I am pretty open to doing different activities. I can accept that because I do that, I am going to stuff up sometimes, but then other times it's going to be brilliant type thing. I am not scared of taking risks. (Shane, second year teacher)

Participating in professional learning, and even generating change, was identified as an important role of teachers. The idea that teaching is a complex, challenging and potentially rewarding career is well understood. The 'enquiry' model seems to have empowered some teachers to be leaders within a school:

If we are enquirers then we are more likely to take on an issue and take it further rather than just accept what is coming in. We can actually be bringing things in and it [this model] is good for that. And I think that is a good way to keep your interest in your life in school.

The skill [of enquiry] is actually a leadership skill...and your ideas change and you need to keep changing. But you have that skill, the questioning, researching, behind it, fuelling it the whole time.(Bill, second year teacher)

Enquiry, even in its simplest form of information gathering, has potential to provide some form of security for beginning teachers. As Jan commented in her discussion of the research projects:

It is good knowing that that information is out there which you can access, that will give you some sort of support facing whatever issues arise in schools (Jan, graduating teacher).

The never ending journey

2002

We are keen to explore the students' perceptions and experiences as the year continues. Addressing these issues will form the basis of further research, learning and writing.

Engaging pre-service teachers in 'enquiry into professional practice' has so far been challenging for them and us. We want pre-service teachers to have a mental model of a professional life that is rich and challenging, which has a sense of wonder, enquiry and passion at its core. The sorts of questions we continue to ask ourselves and others reveal not only the complexity of the teaching and learning processes, but that we have much to learn. We are interested in exploring a range of questions. How can the idea of enquiry into professional practice become a real and powerful way of thinking and operating? What is the relationship between enquiry into professional practice and creating change, for individuals and schools? There is also a real need to explore what impact the implementation of this model will have on us as teacher educators.

Concluding thoughts 2005

The experience of a teacher education course which has a philosophical base of 'teaching as enquiry into professional practice' has impacted on people in different ways. For students it has provided an opportunity to deepen their understanding about themselves, their beliefs, their knowledge and so on. It has given them some skills and confidence to work collaboratively in schools; to accept multiple professional challenges; to acknowledge that risk-taking is an important part of learning (Costa, 2004); and to be engaged in professional learning. The whole course approach to enquiry has highlighted the importance of cohesive and collaborative approaches to professional learning and development.

The impact on us as teacher educators is multifaceted. On a practical level we have been challenged to arrange different and powerful learning experiences

and to explicitly connect theoretical and practical learning. Sometimes the effort to organise these has been overwhelming, but the profound belief in the importance of connecting university and school learning has kept us focussed. On an intellectual level we have been constantly challenged by the diversity of questions that arise within the course. We have learnt so much about how students approach challenges, we have learnt so much from their enquiries. We have celebrated with students as they have shared their learning: through exhibitions, projects, teaching practice, mentor presentation days and the course conference.

On a personal level, the whole idea of enquiry into my professional practice has sustained me through the years of doctoral research and has shaped the nature of this project and its outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Reading circles as a way of learning: a small group approach to learning

Introduction

In tertiary education, there is currently much discussion about the best ways to encourage genuine participation in learning, shifting the focus from teaching to learning and developing in students what is needed to become lifelong learners (Candy, Crebert & O'Leary, 1994; Chapman et al, 2003). Within the GDE, we have attempted to develop such genuine participation in learning by implementing a model of professional reading circles. It was hoped that the experience of professional reading circles would challenge beginning teachers to assume ownership of their own learning, and would provide them with some insights into reflective practice and a model which supports keeping abreast of contemporary educational issues in a collaborative environment. The basic concern in the model of learning that has been implemented and researched, and forms the focus of the project, was therefore for students' ownership of learning within the framework of a constructivist pedagogy (Doolittle & Camp, 1999).

An initial piece of collaborative research was conducted within the Graduate Diploma of Education course with lecturers and students acting as co-researchers and participants. This was presented at the Literacy and Educational Research Network (LERN) conference, Melbourne (Brown & Hayes, 2000) and provided documentary data for the doctoral project.

Both implicit and explicit aspects of the reading circle model were explored in this project. The model involves small groups of GDE students meeting to discuss academic articles that they have chosen. The unit lecturer, with the intention of having a mix of gender, age and teaching method in each group, assigns the groups. Each member selects a recent article or book chapter,

designs some probing and reflective questions relating to it and leads a group discussion about the article. One person acts as leader at each reading circle and they present their article and lead the discussion. All group members are expected to read the article and prepare responses to the questions prior to the discussion meeting.

The methodology of this research was participatory and evaluative. Students who had participated in the Reading Circle process in 2003 and 2004 were invited to share their evaluations and reflections on the model. This took the form of spoken conversations which focused on the research questions used in the initial collaborative research (Brown & Hayes, 2000). These questions focused on exploring the students' thoughts around learning; material and content; questions/assumptions and group arrangements. Some written reflections were provided and these tended to focus on the experience of participating in the reading circle. Overarching questions were: what does empowering learning mean in this situation? How could students see themselves using this model in their professional career?

The learning from this research is presented initially as fiction and subsequently as vignettes or stories from the research participants. These stories are subjected to interrupted readings followed by 'care-full' readings.

The researcher's story

I am the person responsible for introducing the reading circle model into the GDE. What follows is a fictional rendering of my experience. I have chosen to describe the model in this way as it helps establish the scene, the feeling and the image of the activity. What I describe is a situation so familiar to me that it feels representational or typical. The story is a construction of many different reading circle sessions and it is not made up of any formal data. Writing in this way allowed me to reflect on what matters to me in the reading circle activity. The writing was unplanned as I wanted to see what parts of the story came from my fingertips first. There is a chronological order to the writing but the issues seemed to write themselves. It has been a useful way for me to find

the issues that concern me and also the frames to form some analytical structure. As Laurel Richardson suggested, this process was a way of using 'writing as a method of discovery' or writing to find something out (2001, p. 35).

The classroom fills slowly as students trickle back from the lunch break. There is a gentle hum as people continue their lunchtime discussions, perhaps even discussions from the morning's classes. The lecturer answers questions and chats with a few students. Finally it appears as if everyone is present.

'Could you please get into your Reading Circle groups now? We'll meet back here in forty minutes.'

The noise of movement. People call out to their group members:

'Let's go to the downstairs foyer, to the comfy chairs.'

'We'll go outside, it's a nice day [and I can have a cigarette]!'

'Oh, we'll stay here. What do you think, I can't be bothered moving.'

Some groups don't really talk they just gather in their usual place in the classroom or outside in the corridor.

The conversations usually start easily and proceed well. There is a different group leader each time the reading circle meets and the lecturer is always interested to see how different students approach their role as discussion leader. In fact their job is partly complete. The leader has had to select the article (from either a journal or a book less than three years old). They can select anything which interests them and has some connection to education and learning. They have also had to devise a series of reflective questions which will form the focus of the discussion and they have had to organise copying and distribution of the article.

The lecturer watches carefully. Sometimes people haven't read the articles and she observes them apologising to their peers, or squirming. 'Oh, I've been so busy,' or 'I lost the article, sorry' or 'I really hate all this reading, I'm just not a reader' or 'Why didn't you give it out in time?' or 'How come I didn't get one?' Mostly the groups are well organised and the articles have been distributed a week or more in advance, giving everyone time to read them and consider the reflective questions that have been set by the week's group leader.

The lecturer is always relieved to see the groups settle down to their discussion. She is disappointed when some people have not prepared adequately. She listens as those who have read the article try to give a hasty synopsis. She watches the disappointment as some leaders realise that not everyone values their article or leadership role. That some people haven't bothered to prepare.

Usually the discussions start with a definite focus on the set questions. The leader poses the question and the various group members respond. It does not take long for the discussions to develop and digress. Sometimes voices are heard rising as different opinions bubble up. The lecturer watches the body language of the students. They have spent some time as a class talking about group dynamics and communication. The students have strategies to listen carefully and allow everyone to contribute. Sometimes the topics are so contentious that the sparks start to fly early. Sometimes potentially controversial topics generate peaceful discussions because the group members all hold similar beliefs. The opposite happens too. Apparently straight forward articles can become the focus of very heated discussion as people realise they care passionately about something and others in the group couldn't care less. Issues such as the environment, gender, racism, or difference spring to mind.

From the upstairs window the lecturer observes. A group out in the sun is looking very relaxed. The leader is calm and very focused. The discussion develops and everyone is involved. They move in closer to each other and

their faces seem to develop a serious intensity. The lecturer wonders what they are discussing.

A group in the corridor stops talking as the lecturer passes. She gives a quizzical look, 'Are you OK?' One man is looking very peeved and has his body turned away from the group. The leader looks at the lecturer and crosses her eyes as if to say, 'He's doing it again'. Another group member says, 'We're ok- just the usual issues'. The lecturer is troubled that one person in the group can generate so much tension. He IS different and that should be acceptable but he just can't listen to people. And he talks so much.

Most groups have settled into their usual patterns. The lecturer wonders how these patterns develop so quickly. Some groups always have fruitful, thoughtful discussions. Most groups work well together. Every year there are one or two groups that seem to struggle. They appear off task- or they digress quickly to anecdotes and gossip. Sometimes they struggle because one or two members just don't prepare properly.

The lecturer is intrigued by her focus on the groups who have problems. She doesn't intervene, because she has elected not to have that role. She wants the students to work through the issues and the articles in their own way. Each year most groups operate very well and the majority of students take the Reading Circle task very seriously. Later many students will acknowledge that Reading Circles have been very important in their learning in the GDE year.

As the forty minutes draws to a close the students start trickling back into the classroom. The lecturer wanders out and draws the stragglers in. She likes to leave at least twenty minutes for discussion about the articles but there is always a time pressure. Usually the leader of each group presents a brief outline of the article and key discussion points, others are welcome to join in. The key to this part of the activity is that the students can hear about the articles from other groups and can make connections with people or texts which may be valuable in other parts of the course; in research projects or presentations.

‘So who would like to start? What was your article about? What issues were raised for your group today?’

‘Well my article was about girls and maths. Our discussion was very interesting. The people who are good at maths seemed to look at this differently from those of us who aren’t. (I chose the article because I am interested in gender roles and I always struggled with maths at school)...’

‘My article was about resilience and we started our discussion with reflections on our own adolescence and our sense of resilience. We then explored the article through the questions I had set. We all liked the suggestions that were made to build resilience but we are not sure how we will really be able to help kids who have very difficult home lives...’

‘I found an article on computer games and we talked about our own attitudes to computers generally. We had really strong disagreement about the purpose of computer games. Personally I think they are mostly a waste of time and they are making kids fat. Some group members have played a lot of computer games and they were clear that there is so much to learn in terms of strategy, eye hand coordination, general knowledge and so on. Our discussion ended up moving onto leisure and how we do different things...’

The lecturer listens, asks some questions, asks students if they have any comments, and occasionally makes a connecting comment or reference to some other part of learning in the unit. She is intrigued by the range of topics chosen and the depth of some of the discussions. The Reading Circle model was introduced to provide students with an opportunity to read contemporary literature and to learn from each other. It was also introduced without strict content criteria because she wanted students to really engage in the literature in their own way. The sessions always seem to end abruptly: ‘We have run out of time again, I am sorry. Again, so many things to think about, thank you.’

Stories from the participants.

The fictional introductory story is followed by small vignettes or stories provided by research participants. Rosenblatt (2003) describes situations where the boundaries between fact and fiction are blurred in post-modern research. He also notes how in interviews he is looking for the stories that will make fascinating reading: “the vivid story, the powerful metaphor, the touchingly authentic statement of feelings” (p. 230). I have endeavoured to find stories that would help me understand the reading circle experience; to shed light on why some of the groups may have operated in the way they did.

What follows is evaluative material presented by students at the completion of the 2003 GDE year. The exact words of a number of students have been used to create stories which contain insights into the reading circle as a way of learning. The bold type represents my interrupted reading of the story (Evans, 1999). These interruptions are reflective questions or comments about the process and they are provided to encourage the reader to engage with the text and the comments.

Each interrupted reading is then followed by a ‘care-full’ reading. The care-full readings all start with a comment about the relational aspect of the research. They then explore the readings in light of the principles of care-full research; the foundations of which are essentially hermeneutic. Care-full research is respectful of what is given and shared as data; attentive and focused; tactful thoughtful and reflective and rich with pedagogic possibilities.

Kathryn’s story

I believe that I have learned a lot from the reading circles. This is not only from reading the articles but mainly from the discussion that the articles generate. There have been some very interesting articles that I have enjoyed reading but there have been articles that I have not been very interested in. I found that with the articles that didn’t appeal to me, I relied a lot more on the discussion that we had as a group and I learned a lot this way. **[Reading is**

important but the talking is equally so and provides a good support when the content of the article is less accessible or engaging.]

When I read articles that I was interested in I found that I was more keen to talk in the reading circle discussions. I felt as if I had the right to speak my opinion whereas the articles I wasn't interested in were mainly ones that I didn't know a lot about and I tended to stay quiet and listen to the rest of the discussion taking place in the group. **[What is it about level of interest and knowledge in relation to 'right' to talk? Is 'staying quiet and listening' a valued and valuable way of learning in teacher education?]**

Various articles extended my understanding of educational issues however I find that I am not a very keen reader and therefore I learnt a lot more from group discussion. I liked the concept of sharing articles and discussing them. I think it's a good opportunity to read about someone else's interest and also to hear other people's opinions on certain educational issues. **[How important is reading ability in any learning situation which relies on reading? Kathryn highlights the importance of hearing other perspectives.]**

The main question I am left with is 'Do I know enough to be a teacher?!' Although this sounds negative I think it can be a positive as now I am aware of aspects of education I was unsure about prior to reading circles. I notice a lot of the time members in my group would contribute a lot of discussion, particularly on the political side of education and I find that I have no input into these topics. **[Does the 'do I know enough?' question deserve more attention? Does it matter if students do not feel comfortable with particular types of material? What is the place of political insight in the teaching profession?]**

During group discussion it was very clear that everyone has their own thoughts on different issues and that everyone interprets questions differently. This was great because it allowed me to learn a lot more from hearing the opinions of five different people on the same issues. On the other hand sometimes it was confusing when the group interpreted the questions

differently. Generally the leader of the article would lead the conversation back on track but when they didn't it could become confusing especially when I was unfamiliar with the issue. **[The notion of confusion is being raised here and attributed to a lack of leadership skills in directing the discussion. Is this masking something more uncomfortable? Does the reading circle truly reflect collaborative learning?]**

Care-full reading

Kathryn's story is unique to her but a care-full reading highlights some interesting issues that deserve further attention. Kathryn was a practical, well organised, physical person. She clearly had some difficulties with her Reading Circle experience and yet she managed to find a positive in the fact that she learnt about other educational issues. The question 'do I know enough?' is one that legitimately concerns many beginning teachers. After all, teaching is a profession which relies on a strong base of professional content knowledge. An experience such as the reading circle could affirm someone who has a broad understanding of a range of issues or it could make another person, like Kathryn, feel less confident.

A care-full reading raises an interesting contradiction. Kathryn commented that she learnt more from discussion because she was not a keen reader and yet she was not confident to speak out if she was not comfortable with her level of knowledge in an area. This deserves close attention. Kathryn articulates something that possibly many students at different levels feel: uncomfortable with their knowledge or skills and unable to participate actively in discussion or activities because of this. Perhaps a double edged sword? Perhaps the positive aspect is that being in a group (even without actively contributing) provides insights and can lead to a better understanding than the student would get from just reading on his/her own. The simplest pedagogical possibility is for beginning teachers to appreciate Kathryn's comment: 'various articles extended my understanding of educational issues' and the potential that reading and discussion can have.

On one level we can never know everything (Gudmundsdottir, 1996) but the key for me in teacher education is to provide ways for teachers to question, to think, to enquire, in effect to continually find out more (Longworth, 2003). Given the constant presence of educational issues in the media and political realms it would seem imperative that all teachers have a strong awareness of the issues and an ability to engage in thoughtful debate.

Jason's story

The reading circles gave us all an opportunity to explore many aspects of education. Some articles seemed closer to school curriculum based issues than others and that made the whole exercise greatly varied and richly rewarding.

Everyone who presented, seemed to have an interest in what they wanted to present, whether it be an issue on eating disorders, the effects of new technology, or the role museums play in our education system. I would not have sought out any of the directions the other members of the circle took, not out of disinterest for their chosen subjects, just a lack of knowledge of them. This is where the whole exercise worked well- as the subjects presented themselves they opened my mind at the same time. **[This suggests possibilities of new knowledge, new territories to explore, the opening up of new ideas. Is this what our aim should be for new teachers?]**

This is a good model of learning for many reasons. It promotes mutual respect for what each of us believes is a valuable subject to discuss. It also reflects our varied backgrounds, not just in education, but in life as well. Assumptions were only challenged by the authors of the articles themselves and not the 'messenger' of them. In fact it was refreshing to have a presenter taking apart the article they presented, finding flaws and things to question. Quite often the presenter was quite happy to say: "Did you read it?" and then the conversational flow would begin. So this 'leaderless' way of leading a discussion, seemed to give everyone equal time and an equal chance to have a say. Of course, as in the eating disorder article, it was good to sit back and

listen, mainly because the issue was quite foreign to me. **[Interesting to distance the leader from the text. Is this important? Again, lack of familiarity with content leads to listening rather than active participation.]**

I enjoyed questioning everything, making sure not to undermine or make too light of anyone's presentation. Again, this sort of exercise is about respecting each other's contribution, so you are not only gaining new knowledge on various issues, you are also honing in on those vital social skills that group work requires. **[The 'double value' is identified: developing new knowledge and interpersonal skills.]**

The reading circle discussions were sometimes very robust and other times quite flat. This, I can only put down to human nature and not all of us could be as tuned in for each session. This is not so much a weakness of the reading circle format- just the reality of human nature and the ability to be inspired and attentive before lunchtime! **[The interesting thing here is that the variability of attention and involvement reflects what happens in a school class. Should this be highlighted explicitly at some point in the analysis of the model or is it something they all appreciate in their own way?]**

Care-full reading

Jason was a mature-aged humanities student and he writes very positively about the reading circle experience. He highlights the social value of working in a reading circle and also the responsibility of the leader to critique the text. This pulling apart of the text was not an expressed part of the process but it is an important skill for teachers to have. It also probably reflects his academic background. The notion of 'leaderlessness' was not intended (in fact the model relied on someone leading the discussion) but I wonder if there is something important here about distance from the text too. Does this make the whole exercise less threatening? Was this a common experience? Jason also mentions 'conversational flow' (Hickey & Fitzclarence, 2000) and maybe the fact that the students were familiar with this model (it had been introduced

in another class) established this pattern for the particular reading circle group.

Jason also highlights the place of respect in the model. He is sensitive to others' vested interest in their presentations 'making sure not to undermine or make too light of anyone's presentation'. An attentive reading suggests that this is important to Jason, and probably is to others. Respecting each other (and respect as central to classroom management) is certainly a pivotal value in the GDE course and the development of group skills was an explicit aim of the reading circle process.

The pedagogic possibilities that a care-full reading of Jason's response raises are practical and intellectual. Jason presents the vivid reality of classrooms, where it is impossible to be fully engaged at all times. It is important for beginning teachers to understand that 'not all of us could be tuned in for each session' and that this is not necessarily a fault of the teacher or the task. Many beginning teachers are very distressed by students' inattentiveness and it is important for them to develop a reflective response to this.

The potential for the reading circle to broaden a participant's knowledge and understanding of themselves is significant. Jason identifies the importance of honing social skills and teaching involves constant interpersonal interactions. A school and university education system which highlights the development of these skills is desirable (Arnold, 2005; Boler, 1999; Goleman, 1996).

Joe's story

The reading circles have been a breath of fresh air to my own motivation to learn and as a potential tool to add to my own teaching repertoire...I can now fully appreciate the true learning and reflective potential in small group learning. Reading circles offer a two-fold approach to learning: there is the obvious learning brought about by digesting the concepts within the material that is being presented and secondly, possibly more importantly is the learning about the process of learning. Most of the learning I have identified is

fundamentally due to the socialisation process, of being part of a small group and sharing ideas and stepping outside our own safe thinking zone clearing the way for deeper thinking. **[It is interesting that Joe has also focused on the model and the potential to learn in a group. But it is more than this. The personal challenge to think deeply is highlighted.]**

The notion of ownership of one's learning is a powerful motivator for me to use 'reading circles', as I am a strong advocate of experiential learning and holistic approach to student development. Having the freedom in choosing an article of interest and developing a series of review questions encourages students to become an expert and take pride in their learning. I found this to be the case when I presented my article to my group. There was a feeling of empowerment whereby I wanted to present my article to others and direct conversation in a way that would add to my understanding of the topic. **[Joe's sense of pride and ownership in the task is high and he identifies the usefulness of the reading circle task. The interesting thing for me is that the experience is yet again so personal. We can never really know how someone else experiences something.]**

Developing questions that tease out key issues and provoke deeper levels of thinking was at first difficult as I was afraid that my peers would possibly switch off if they were too complex. With this in mind, I mixed up my questioning with content related questions and personal opinions. In the end it appeared to work well and as most group members engaged themselves in the discussion that helped me dissect the issues and re-think my views on the article. It was alarming how involved I became in articles I would not normally seek out myself. **[Joe is clearly making an effort to be sensitive to his peers and provide something challenging and accessible. His use of 'alarming' is interesting. Does it reflect his openness to learning in this way?]**

In critiquing the reading circle model I found that it accurately represents the essence of my experience. The resultant outcome is a deepening of

understanding of not only new issues in education that we explored, but rather the process and value of reading circles as a unique learning tool.

[Working with others is an integral part of the teaching profession so maybe highlighting it through the reading circle experience is useful.]

Care-full reading

Joe's story is interesting on a number of levels. He really grapples with the issue of 'deeper thinking' as a result of 'stepping out of the safe thinking zone'. He draws on his background in outdoor education when he identifies himself as a 'strong advocate of experiential learning and holistic approach to student development'. He certainly valued the freedom to choose and the collaborative learning and he indicated that the experience of the reading circle mattered more than the content. That being said, he used the word 'alarming' to describe his involvement in other people's readings. I know Joe would have been comfortable taking physical risks (of his making) but the fact that he was drawn into issues outside his control through articles not of his choice caused him 'alarm'.

At the risk of sounding psycho-analytical, I wonder if this connects with an earlier comment Joe made. He was positive about his role as leader to 'direct conversation to add to MY understanding'. So the way Joe values collaborative learning is not just to hear different perspectives and to share with others it is more intensely personal. His focus is on HIS learning. Perhaps he became 'alarmed' when he found himself so involved in something he perceived as someone else's learning.

Joe notes the pedagogical possibilities '[the reading circle task] encourages students to become an expert and take pride in their learning'. He highlights the focus on the learning of knowledge and social skills again. Perhaps the important thing is for beginning teachers to have opportunities to feel empowered and engaged in their own learning so they can then encourage their future students to experience the same engagement.

Karen's story

I had many different feelings about the reading circle activities. Most of the time I dreaded the hour of sitting with my group and discussing issues that I sometimes felt were irrelevant or I didn't understand. However some of the articles raised interesting questions which led to good discussions. **[Karen's response is strong. She immediately identifies her disconnection from the process- through apparent 'irrelevance' or lack of understanding. What does this mean?]**

The sense I gained from each of our group members was that the reading circle activities could be quite boring. I am not sure whether this was because sometimes the questions or discussions were boring but it just seemed that no one could be bothered doing the questions or participating in the discussion. The first time we had the reading circle activity everyone had read the article and answered all the facilitator's questions, but by the second or third time, reading the article was of little importance and the enthusiasm had died right down. **[This is important. The apathy is palpable. There is a lack of commitment and care about the process after the first week. Perhaps something difficult had occurred in the group from the start?]**

I feel that I didn't really learn that much from the articles...I didn't really have a role to keep me on my toes with what was going on in the discussion. Maybe in future there could be more important roles to keep people interested...Maybe in future reading circle activities could involve discussing issues not only from articles but also from videos, internet sites, images etc. It could be up to the facilitator to decide how he/she wants to express and discuss the issue with the group. **[Karen is trying hard to be constructive about something that was clearly a difficult experience for her. Her comments raise some interesting points about engagement and how much an individual manages his/her own motivation to learn.]**

Now that I have said that reading circles were a little boring, there were some good things gained from it. When we did have good discussions the time went

by and the reading activity was a success. New things were learnt. **[This contradicts the previous paragraph and perhaps reflects the emotional dimension of engagement in a task.]**

From the reading circle activities I have learnt that people from differing education and curriculum backgrounds have different priorities and issues of importance. It was interesting to see how people had strong beliefs about certain issues and how those who didn't agree would raise points to argue their case. Most of the time I had someone to agree with so I didn't seem to get into any major arguments. **[So it was important to Karen to have an 'ally' to affirm the opinions or responses she had- and to avoid arguments.]** However two people, Vince and Sharon, who have very strong beliefs about things, often ended up having their own discussions and arguments. This at times was interesting and funny to see them 'at each other' but other times it was just like, "shut up and let's get on to the next question". This side of the reading circle was a good experience as I know when I get into a school, not everyone is going to agree on the same thing and I have to learn to deal with that. **[Karen was able to identify a positive in terms of learning how to deal with difficult people in her career, but it was disappointing that she did not have the positive learning experiences that others had. Maybe the learning here is that teachers cannot ultimately ensure that a planned learning experience is positive].**

The reading circle activities provided a good chance to share ideas with others about educational issues and often think of ideas that you would never have thought of before. Ideas were broadened and new questions and concepts were introduced. The other good thing about the group work was that it helped to develop communication skills, especially assertiveness. The ability to speak up and say what you think can sometimes be hard, but I think with this kind of activity this skill can be developed. **[The development of personal skills and confidence in this task are important for Karen.]**

Care-full reading

The reading circle was a difficult experience for Karen and I had been aware of that during the year. The insights provided by Karen were useful for me for a number of reasons. Karen tended to be a practical and physical learner who was confident with her content knowledge in her teaching method areas and she appeared confident in social situations. She worked hard to be balanced in her comments about the reading circle experience and she made suggestions to improve the experience for others.

A care-full reading of Karen's comments raises some important questions for me as an educator: What does it really mean when a student says something is irrelevant or that they don't understand? I wondered if the material was deemed irrelevant **because** Karen did not understand it or was not interested in it. Perhaps the leader found it highly relevant but didn't share that. How much responsibility should leaders take for engaging the group; how much responsibility should learners take for their own learning or how hard should learners push to make connections, to become engaged? As Rosenblatt (1978) suggests, readers bring their own history to reading tasks and they need to be active in trying to make meaning. Perhaps this needs to be developed further when the reading circles are being introduced. Or maybe Karen's experience was difficult for other reasons.

Karen suggests that roles should be imposed for group members and this is probably a model she was familiar with in health education classes. I wonder if it was the group situation that was the problem or whether 'reading' was in fact the central problem. Asking for videos or internet sites could indicate a discomfort with print text or it could also reflect a need for a broader interpretation of 'reading'. It is relevant for teachers to consider the mode of presentation of material to students. Certainly there is currently a need to develop information literacy, visual literacy and critical literacy skills as part of learning.

The paragraph about Vince and Sharon was particularly poignant and instructive for me as it gets to a possible source of tension in the group. I imagine (but don't know) that Vince and Sharon may well have set the tone for the group from the first meeting. Vince was mature-aged, talkative, left leaning and carrying some interpersonal issues. Sharon was young, conservative, from a rural background and equally talkative. I know I struggled at times with them in class as they were incredibly demanding of 'air-space'. In some ways the reading circle's small size must have concentrated the problem and made it really awkward for the others in the group. I wonder about Vince and Sharon's learning from the experience. I am reminded of the power other people have (both good and bad) over the learning of others in collaborative situations.

The pedagogic possibilities raised by Karen's contribution are broad. Teachers need to consider how individuals manage their own learning. Karen also provided a valuable insight into group dynamics and the question of 'playing the game by the rules'. As teachers, are we aware of the multiple ways that the learning game can be played? Karen identifies the strengths of the model in terms of learning new ideas, and developing personal skills and assertiveness skills. These might well be very important personal outcomes for Karen. So while the experience was not generally positive it was still possible to learn something. As teachers we need to be reminded that we cannot assume to know how anyone will experience something and that maybe our role is to help learners gain the most personally from each situation.

Anthea's story

The reading circle has enabled me to widen my whole approach to reading, as most of the topics selected by my peers have been ones which I would not independently choose to research myself. In fact, some of the articles have been so interesting they have led me to delve into them on my own and use them along with study I am doing in areas of my interest. **[The potential for learning is clear and challenging.]**

The discussion generated in our group was varied: there were some who preferred to put their opinion across frequently on every aspect whereas there were some others who preferred to say less. The body language of the people who didn't verbally contribute as much was none-the-less very engaged, thus these people were not disinterested, but rather liked to listen and respond only when they really felt they had something worthwhile to contribute. **[This is important for beginning teachers- not all people will contribute equally AND we must not assume that 'quietness' reflects disinterest.]**

At the same time, the several who were quite interested in putting forward their view or interpretation were very mindful of the concept of 'group' discussion, and at times the quieter people were asked for their opinion by others, thus we made for a very democratic group. Our group was quite fortunate in that no one was an absolute control freak, and there were not overly passive personalities: we were in fact all quite assertive.

I learnt a lot from the discussions, particularly the various views presented on articles dealing with personal development (i.e. resilience and motivation and mental health issues). These issues fascinate me and I have used many of the articles- and the points made in the discussions- as references in other projects for other subjects. **[So Anthea has connected with the content of the articles and has integrated the learning from the reading into her other study.]**

Not only did we discuss the issues presented in the literature, but we all drew upon relevant individual life experiences which made the process more worthwhile, as everyone loves to listen to stories (and we all had plenty of those!) **[The idea of story as a powerful way of connecting to the reading is conveyed here.]**

I think the model that our reading circles were based on was effectively integrated into our course, and I feel that the groupings made for a good social experiment. One can read an article, but it is only when one's ideas and

beliefs are challenged that the learning occurs. Just because something is written by a professor or an expert, or just because an article is printed in an exclusive journal does not make it gospel.

The critiquing and discussion- from which new ideas are made and old ones revisited- that follows in a reading circle is the most important part of the circle. The article can be pulled apart, concepts analysed, hypothesis made or smashed and conclusions drawn, all because there is more than 'one mind/one thinking/ learning process/ one personality' contributing to the whole process. There were differences in the way we interpreted some of the questions but this was to our benefit because it forced us to 'think outside the square'. **[This paragraph highlights the importance of interacting with others if 'real' learning is to occur. It also clearly shows Anthea's willingness to be challenged and to learn. I wonder now whether all beginning teachers can reach this state within the course. For some the process seems so much more challenging and confronting.]**

I feel fortunate to have been placed in my reading circle, as we all come from different backgrounds and teaching methods and we all have multiple intelligences, which made it possible to learn a lot from the varied beliefs and values. We all respected each other's views and had a lot of laughs along the way.

Care-full reading

Anthea clearly had a disposition for thinking and learning. As a former nurse and future health teacher she was very clear about group work and dynamics. This possibly helped the group function well. Her sensitivity to others and knowledge of self is evident.

An attentive reading encourages reflection on how people make a judgment on when to contribute or as Anthea noted "[they] were not disinterested, but rather liked to listen and respond only when they really felt they had something worthwhile to contribute" It is sometimes frustrating for teachers

when students don't contribute to discussions and it is useful to reflect on our attitudes here, and to think carefully about what we value in our classroom. Sometimes quieter students are pushed to be more involved and I wonder if this is the best thing for them. Sometimes confident contributors can dominate a classroom too and this needs careful consideration. Teachers need to be mindful of the multitude of ways students can learn and 'be' (van Manen, 1991).

Anthea raises the value of talking about stories and life experiences as easy ways to connect with the text, and implicitly connect theory with experience. The pedagogical challenge is to consider the place of story telling in learning and the need for students to be able to connect new content with old understandings. Sometimes students are discouraged from telling stories as they are perceived to be irrelevant or time wasting. Perhaps teachers need to think carefully about integrating story telling as a powerful way of learning.

The value of reading circles for Anthea lies in the 'critiquing and discussion'. She eloquently explains the power of the model and a care-full reading highlights her willingness to learn with others. The pedagogical possibility that is raised is for all educators to work towards empowering learners to critique and argue and learn together without feeling defensive or aggressive. As Anthea noted: "There were differences...but this was to our benefit because it forced us to 'think outside the square'."

Alex's story

The reading circle model worked particularly well for me for various reasons. The most important aspect of the reading circle was the comfortable atmosphere of the discussion. The group seemed to gel quickly and there weren't any dominant personalities. I was able to express my feelings and experiences to a greater degree than I would with the entire GDE group. I was able to get feedback about my ideas without having to argue or be made to feel inferior. **[The social aspect of the learning is highlighted as is the need to 'feel comfortable'.]**

The articles were simply a prompt: discussion was based on the articles but not restricted to their content. Additionally, the reading circle group allowed discussion with members of the GDE group that I would not necessarily converse with normally. It allowed me to discuss issues from a perspective other than that of a science teacher. I enjoyed the artistic flavour of the group and found it a useful outlet for my creative thoughts that were often dismissed in the science circle. **[The mixed group had benefits for Alex and it actually supported his 'creative' side.]**

Having five different interpretations of articles and questions provided me with a greater understanding of the issues involved in the topics. The ability to see issues from a different perspective and to discuss aspects I had not thought of was very valuable. This was particularly evident when guiding the discussion myself. It was rewarding to hear the perspectives of other group members in response to an article that I had provided. **[Alex highlights the importance of being able to see different perspectives. This is significant in a teacher education program.]**

My role in the group discussions varied depending on the article being discussed and the flow of discussion. I found I was often in a leadership role especially early in the formation of the group. I often asked what other group members thought and attempted to facilitate discussion with all group members. A few times I had to tell myself to "shut up" and let someone else talk. **[Managing our own role in collaborative tasks is important.]**

Care-full reading

Alex was a highly creative GDE student who was studying to be a science teacher. He was initially quite reserved and didn't share his creative 'side' until well into the year. The tension between the scientific and creative parts of his life seemed to find some resolution within the reading circle group.

A care-full reading of Alex's story highlights the value of creating groups of people from mixed backgrounds. It highlights how much learning can occur from working with diversity. It also encourages reflection on how students are defined (by teaching background, by gender, by history and so on) and how teachers can make such limiting assumptions about students based on these definitions.

Alex highlights the value, again, of learning from differing perspectives and the potential to provide a broader and deeper understanding of the articles and issues discussed. Maybe this is a crucial aspect of being a teacher and contributing to the profession: of having a disposition to respect different perspectives and a willingness to learn from them. It is not as simple as saying 'group work or collaborative learning is good so as a teacher I had better arrange some'. It requires more thoughtful consideration of how working together can be useful to us intellectually and socially.

Managing his role in the group shows Alex possessed a sensitivity and maturity that is important for teachers to access. Part of secondary teaching is about providing students with the opportunity to learn different ways to manage themselves and their learning; the reading circle potentially provides the opportunity for future teachers to explore their own behaviour and group working skills explicitly.

Closing the circle

Small group learning has a well-established place in teacher education and school education (Reid, Forrestal & Cook, 1989). Providing the opportunity for PSTs to learn together is an important part of developing an enquiring disposition. Using literature and reflective questions as the base for discussion provides a focus for the learning and the potential opportunity to explore issues in a complex way. The pedagogical possibilities of Reading Circles may not seem unique as many education courses require discussion of reading material but there are some differences: the model combines personal interest areas; leadership opportunities and feedback opportunities.

It gives the students a language and a way of speaking about their learning experience. The relational processes of learning are brought to the foreground through the model.

The research in this project has added an important dimension to my understanding of the reading circle model. The exploration of the experiences of participants has afforded an insight into collaborative learning and reading that mere observation and evaluation questions may not. For the participants it is the opportunity to learn through reading and talk that is initially important. Another level of learning is added when they reflect on their learning from the experience: the cognitive experience is transformed through the metacognitive practice of reflection. Reflection as a form of research or exploration of practice is an integral part of the process and helps the participants understand the experience. The research project highlighted the multi-layered learning and afforded an opportunity to enhance learning. In a sense the reading circle is completed through the research process.

CHAPTER FIVE

Virtual mentoring as a way of learning: a partnership approach

Introduction

Learning from others is hard work. Learning from each other in a reciprocal relationship is even harder. Relationships come in all sizes and colours...But each individual relationship is uniquely configured, representing a particular connection between two people. (Bentley, 1998, p. 156)

Mentoring is another type of collaborative learning and it has been receiving attention within the teaching profession in recent times. The Virtual Mentoring Program (VMP) provided a chance for teacher education students to experience something different from the usual university and school based learning. At the time of the program's inception there was a strong push for the university to build links with the local region; there was also an awareness of the need for rural school students to be offered opportunities outside their local communities. The VMP connects well with the course focus on enquiry. Mentors have the opportunity to discover more about individual students and they can examine their own practice as mentors and the implications of this on their lives as teachers.

The VMP was introduced to the Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) in 1999. GDE students were paired with Year 10 students from regional schools and together they designed a project of mutual interest on which to collaborate. They then communicated, mainly by email, as the project developed. Over the years the model has evolved. It was first reported on at the LERN conference in Spetses, Greece (Brown, 2001). In that paper it was described, evaluated informally and suggestions were made to aid others in implementing a similar model. The purpose of that conference presentation was to share the model with other teacher educators.

The idea of using the advantages of email communication (Picciano, 2001) and the growing understanding of the value of mentoring as a way of learning (Bentley, 1998; Brown, 2002; Porter, 1997; Rolfe-Flett, 2002) were the catalysts for developing the Virtual Mentoring Program in the GDE at the University of Ballarat. There were perceived benefits for the school partners and the GDE students. Including the VMP in the course provided the opportunity:

- for beginning teachers to experience mentoring as a way of learning;
- to use technology in a real situation;
- to help beginning teachers understand more about adolescent learners and their interests;
- for beginning teachers to develop their confidence working with students;
- for mentors to establish a relationship with students which was different from the usual teacher/ class relationship;
- to explore learning through a mentoring experience;
- to model the importance of providing challenging, interesting and different programs within schools despite the work it might involve and the risks that may be encountered.
- for beginning teachers to construct their own understandings about students, learning, teaching and mentoring.

There are a number of interconnecting stories that relate to the Virtual Mentoring Program. There is the practical story of the program and its development over time. This involved living through each year, evaluating with all involved and modifying the program the following year. There are the individual and shared stories of the mentors and their experiences of the program. They are in a one-year teacher education course. Time is short, the pressure is on and they need to learn all they can about teaching and learning in the year. They come to the program with personal life histories and experiences about learning, teaching and mentoring. Some are clear about their perceived role; others are very open about what might transpire.

There is the story of the University of Ballarat and the Central Highlands/Wimmera region of the Department of Education and the university's strategic intent to connect more closely with the rural and regional communities. The program was initially funded by the Department of Education as part of the gifted students' program. It was devised to provide an opportunity for students in isolated schools to develop interests and connections with universities.

There are the stories of the various school participants: the students who actually develop the projects with their mentors; the teachers who support the students in their endeavors and the families who support the students too, even coming to the presentation day. There are the unspoken stories of the teachers who don't support the students, who don't see the value of spending class time on this type of project. There are also the untold stories of the school students who are not particularly interested in the program either, maybe even feel they were pushed to be involved. Maybe they just did not want extra work; maybe they did not want the scrutiny of a mentor? I wonder if some of the less successful mentoring partnerships were a result of this problem.

Then there is my story as the program coordinator, someone who values diverse ways of learning and believes in the importance of connecting school and university learning. My role was practical in terms of organizing the program but also personal as I became the mentor to the mentors, and to some of the school participants. There are layers within this story because each year saw another set of mentoring pairs involved, a slightly different program and different interactions with the schools and education department.

The purpose of the entire research project is to explore the Virtual Mentoring Program as a contemporary way of learning in teacher education. Essentially the focus is on the stories of the mentors and the place of the VMP in their learning. There is a parallel focus on my learning as the researcher, within the context of being the coordinator and organiser of the VMP and a doctoral student.

The questions that I have wrestled with during the running of the Virtual Mentoring Program have become the focus of the doctoral research project. There is not a neat starting point or a neat end point and that is the way it is. The research questions are explored through the literature and the reflections provided by participants. The questions that consumed me were: what does it mean to mentor someone and how does this influence the learning of the participants? What role does mentoring play in the development of beginning teachers? Initially I was interested in the place of technology in learning (Porter, 1997; Wellburn, 1999) and wanted to explore how mentoring was influenced or affected by the electronic communication. Over time, and in response to the data, the focus shifted away from the technology towards the relational aspects of mentoring.

The account of the LERN paper (Brown, 2001) provided some documentary data for the doctoral project. The mentoring relationship itself is of particular interest as there have been developments in mentoring programs in general over the past decade (Bentley, 1998; Eppert, Casemore & Davis, 2002). Various forms of mentoring have been introduced into work places, schools, sporting clubs, social organisations and so on. People need to connect and learn from each other and mentoring has a powerful role to play in this.

Clearly the framing of this project is within the constructivist paradigm and it explores how individuals experience the mentoring relationship and their learning within it (V. Richardson, 1997). The theoretical approach is broadly interpretive and hermeneutic: what meaning are the participants drawing from the experience? And what meaning do I, as researcher, draw from their discussion and writing about the mentoring experience (Crotty, 1998)? The hermeneutic approach is appealing as it acknowledges the constant return to a text for interpretation and it acknowledges the close active relationship of the researcher to the data and participants in the research process (Robson, 2002).

The methods used in this particular research are a combination of interviews, narrative and reflective writing. GDE mentors were invited to participate in the research project and former mentors have given permission for their written

reflections to be used as data. The final section of the project relies on data provided in conversations with five early career teachers. These people were from the group of eight former students who had been invited (in 2004) to share some of their experiences about early career teaching. These five had all volunteered to be virtual mentors in their GDE year.

Structure of the project

The initial doctoral project 'Being a mentor while learning to be a teacher' was conceptualised and developed using data collected from written reflections from students at the end of their GDE year. These students volunteered to be research participants. They had undertaken their GDE in 2002 and 2003 and the reflections were submitted as part of their 'Introduction to Teaching and Learning' unit final assessment. Many students gave permission for their work to be used and in the end I had masses of data. The focus of this project was on outlining the model of virtual mentoring and exploring some of the insights and experiences of the mentors. The virtual mentoring model is presented as constructed emails between the mentors and the program coordinator/researcher. The experiences of mentoring are explored through a series of constructed narratives based on reflections provided by the participants. These stories are then subjected to a 'care-full' reading.

The second part of the project 'Caring and Connecting' developed almost by accident and led into the work on 'care-full' research (see Chapter 2). Interviews with five early career teachers in late 2004 provided a whole new series of insights into how the virtual mentoring experience had influenced the teachers they had become. Subsequently a paper was developed for the ISATT 2005 conference (Brown, 2005). The work for this paper brought to the surface the issue of care in teaching and led to the subsequent development of 'care-full' research. As I revisited the virtual mentoring project, it became clear that 'care-full reading' provided a new way to think about the words of the teachers. This has become the basis of the second section of the project.

What is mentoring?

The term 'mentor' is derived from the story in Homer's 'Odyssey'. When Odysseus went off to fight the Trojan wars he entrusted his advisor, Mentor, with the care of his household and the education of his son. Over time the term mentor has developed to mean a trusted advisor, counsellor, teacher, wise person and friend. Mentoring is a process that has been used over the centuries to pass on knowledge and experience through generations (Ryan, 2000). The concept of mentoring has evolved. In a work place it is common for a new employee to be given an experienced staff member as a mentor to introduce them to the culture and practices of the workplace. The mentor can also guide the person through planning career development and changes. There is implied concern but not necessarily care or responsibility (Lacey, 1999). In the teaching profession the concept of mentoring has developed slightly differently. The development of teacher education from the technical apprenticeship model has meant that teachers have ostensibly learnt 'how to teach' from someone knowledgeable and experienced. The role of the experienced teacher has been cast as one of 'supervisor' and the imbalance of power is clear. In many cases the relationship has been supportive and positive but this has not been a requirement. The relationship between a novice and an experienced teacher is slowly changing. In recent years the term mentoring has been introduced to replace the notion of the 'supervisor'. There has been a shift in emphasis from transmission and modelling to one of a learning relationship which acknowledges the emotional and social dimension of becoming a teacher (Feimen-Nemser & Beasley, 1997).

I would like to argue for a more subtle and complex understanding of mentoring in education. Mentoring involves a relationship between two people. It can be formally or informally arranged (Lacey, 1999) but it should be based in an assumption that both people will benefit from the relationship in some way. The relationship connects two people who learn from each other (Clark, 1995; Walkington, 2003). Van Manen's (1990) notion of pedagogic tact is informative here: "Tact mediates through speech, silence, the eyes, gesture, atmosphere and example... The touch of tact leaves a

mark on the child” (p.169). This could be equally important for the mentor teacher and the novice. Tact and care within the relationship can support powerful learning. Another important aspect of mentoring is communication and as Witherell & Noddings (1999) note, “a caring relation also requires dialogue...time is required for such dialogue” (p. 7).

Mentoring explicitly connects two people but it cannot guarantee care. Noddings (2003) clearly establishes the importance of care in teaching and that this is based within the relationship between teacher and student. The role of mentoring and the concept of care can be explored through teacher education programs.

Being a mentor while learning to be a teacher

The structure of this first section of the doctoral project endeavours to reflect some of the formats of the virtual mentoring program. The format of a constructed and fictional email ‘conversation’ between the course coordinator/researcher and the potential mentors is used to introduce and describe the Virtual Mentoring Program. Email was used as the main form of communication between mentors and school partners so it seemed appropriate to use an email format to explore some of the features of the virtual mentoring model.

The wording of the questions was ‘made-up’ or constructed but they are all questions that have been asked over the years. The responses are also constructed by the researcher and their purpose is two-fold. Firstly to give the reader an insight into the VMP model as it exists and secondly to provide the researcher the opportunity to reflect on some of the key issues, the common issues, the troubling issues, that have been arisen over the years.

The research project was broadly conceptualised as an evaluative case study (Bassegy, 1999; Stake, 2000) which is “enquiry into [an] educational programme, system, project, or event to determine their worthwhileness, as judged by analysis by researchers, and to convey this to interested audiences” (Bassegy, 1999, p. 58). As the research developed the concept of

'worthwhileness' became troubling. The notion of worthwhileness is something driven by the cultural, social, political and educational context. It could be argued that any learning experience is worthwhile to some degree. The evaluations of the Virtual Mentoring Program have generally been positive; the 'worthwhileness' of the experience is something to be judged by the individual participants.

The Virtual Mentoring Program model

The content of the following emails is entirely fictional/ fictive but it does capture the flavour of the interactions and the type of questions that are raised. Richardson (2000) explores the difficulty of writing fiction as research and the possibility of leaving one's self open to criticism (p. 933). Tedlock (2000) also addresses the difficulty of creating fictional ethnography. I am using the fictive emails as a means to invite the reader to learn about the model and the issues in a way that is hopefully more engaging than a conventional description (Richardson, 2000; Sparkes, 2000). The emails are based on my experiences over the years and are structured in ways that highlight some issues I invite the reader to consider.

From: **Maryann Brown**

To: GDE Students

Sent: Monday, 19 April 2004 11.30

Subject: **Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hello everyone

You are invited to participate in a Virtual Mentoring Program (VMP) with Year 10 students from the Wimmera and Central Highlands region. This program has been organised jointly by the University of Ballarat and by the Department of Education since 1998 and it provides an opportunity for students from rural schools to develop a project with a mentor from the Graduate Diploma of Education at the University of Ballarat.

You will be matched with a student and will act as a mentor over two terms. Together you will design a project and work towards its completion. The final presentation involves the development of a webpage and an oral presentation of key findings from the project.

It is anticipated that you will meet your student partner at the commencement of the program to decide on the topic of your project. You will then communicate regularly by email to develop the project. Your role as mentor will involve supporting the student as the project progresses in whatever way seems appropriate. You may be required to help frame the project, provide useful resources, share ideas, read drafts, help develop the web page and so on. At the end of two terms there will be a presentation day held at the university.

I do hope you will participate in the VMP. It has the potential to provide you with a range of experiences: new insights into adolescent learning and personalities; mentoring relationships and the use of technology in learning. If you are interested could you please fill in the Mentor Data form which just asks you to outline your academic degree majors and sub-majors and personal interests which may be relevant for mentoring a year ten student? Schools will be contacted shortly and students will be invited to participate in the program.

I am happy to answer any further questions.

Thanks

Maryann

From: **Anthea Andrews**

To: Maryann Brown

Sent: Tuesday 20 April 2004 10.30

Subject: **Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hi Maryann

The VMP sounds interesting but I have a few questions. How do you match mentors and school students? How much does the mentor really have to do? I like the idea of mentoring but my email skills are not that great. Does this matter?

Thanks.

Ant.

From: **Maryann Brown**

To: Anthea Andrews

Sent: Tuesday 20 April 2004 11.30

Subject: **Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hi Anthea

Good questions- I'll do my best to answer them! Matching mentors and student partners is a fraught business. Over the years I have tried different things. In fact originally the people in the Department of Education did the matching but I found that problematic as they didn't know any of the participants at all. In recent years I have asked for more specific information from the school students in terms of what they are interested in, what they dream of doing with their lives, what they hope to get out of the program. Mainly I try to ensure the pairs are well matched in terms of interests and aims for the project. Usually I try to match by gender but this doesn't always work out. To me the common interest area is more important than gender but I am aware of the possibility of difficulty mentoring young people of opposite gender.

It is difficult to quantify how much work is involved in participating in the project. The expectation is that you will make email contact at least once a week. You will also need to be available for the initial meeting day and the final presentation day. You will probably need to spend additional time assisting your partner in a number of ways. The main thing is that you take your responsibility as a mentor seriously and that you consider the difference between a teacher and that of a mentor. You are not meant to direct the project or dominate the thinking within it. You are meant to support, encourage and suggest possibilities. A mentor is someone who is conscious of developing a supportive relationship and aware of their role in opening a whole new range of possibilities for their school partner.

It won't take you long to become familiar with emailing and I am happy to help. The main thing is just to get started and learn as you go. You will probably find your school partner is quite proficient and will be able to assist you!

Hope that helps

Maryann.

From: **Rob Bailey**

To: Maryann Brown

Sent: Tuesday 20 April 2004 1.30

Subject: Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation

Hi Maryann

VMP is an interesting idea but what do you really mean by mentoring? I have coached people in sport and I have informally mentored people at my workplace but I wonder if this is any different? Also how do you plan to 'control' the mentoring? Are there restrictions on what you can talk with students about? I also like to use MSN to chat – is that allowed?

Cheers

Rob

From: **Maryann Brown**

To: Rob Bailey

Sent: Wednesday 21 April 2004 11.30

Subject: **Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hi Rob

I guess we need to talk further about the details of the program. Your previous experiences will be useful I am sure. I am particularly interested that you as a beginning teacher focus on your learning (and your student partner's) from the VMP experience. Mentoring for me is something two-way and relational. You have some knowledge and experience to share and your school partner will have interests that connect with you in some way. As a beginning teacher mentoring might provide an insight for you into how a young person thinks and works and being mentored might give the young person some new opportunities for learning.

Your question about control is interesting. I don't particularly want to define how much contact you have with your student partner as I cannot possibly know what mentoring support you will need to provide or what the learning needs are for each pair. However, there are a number of ethical considerations which underpin all our interactions with students. The relationship must be mutually respectful and I would hope very positive. You will notice that we have set up Electronic Mail Guidelines which were included in the information package.

Ultimately you need to be professional about what and how you communicate with students. You need to be sensitive to the vulnerability of adolescents and to your influence as a role model.

As far as MSN goes – I don't have a major problem with it but I do know that many schools have it blocked on their networks. You may need to think of developing other real time chat options.

Hope that helps

Maryann.

From: **Ros Newton**

To: Maryann Brown

Sent: Tuesday 20 April 2004 2.30

Subject: **Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hello Maryann

How are students and schools chosen to participate in the VMP? Have there been any changes over the time it has been running?

Just wondering

Ros

From: **Maryann Brown**

To: Ros Newton

Sent: Tuesday 22 April 2004 2.30

Subject: **Re: Virtual Mentoring Program Invitation**

Hi Ros

The VMP initially started with some funding from the Gifted Students program in the Victorian Department of Education and Training, specifically targeting rural students who were very able. The university was invited to participate and we readily agreed because we are always looking for interesting innovations in education and we could see there would be benefit for all participants. We were also keen to develop links with schools in our region and there was quite a political push for the university to be involved in partnerships.

Information was distributed to all schools in the Central Highlands Wimmera region and all year tens were informed about the program at assemblies and any interested students were invited to participate. Some students were targeted by teachers because they were very able

and it was believed they could benefit from the stimulus provided in the program. Students were required to fill in an application form, which basically asked them about their interests, and then they had to gain parental permission.

Over the years the funding arrangements have changed and the length of the program has also changed slightly in response to program evaluation. Occasionally students from other years have been involved. We have been keen to make the program available to all students, not just the very able.

There have been between seven and nine schools involved in the program each year with about twenty pairs of students and mentors. Our numbers have been slightly limited by the number of GDEs available to mentor. As you know participation in the VMP is one of a number of options for assessment in the Teaching and Learning unit in the GDE. Usually I have had enough mentor volunteers. Occasionally I have encouraged some GDEs to be mentors because their background seems to match perfectly with one of the school students' interests.

So as you can see the program seems to be naturally evolving!

Maryann

Stories of mentoring experiences

Three narratives were created from the written reflections of GDE students who volunteered to be research participants. What follows is my attempt to share pre-service teachers' insights into their experiences of mentoring. The narratives are not strictly representative but I selected a range of experiences to share so the reader can have a sense of how the mentoring experience affected some beginning teachers. The first story reflects a generally positive mentoring experience; the second addresses the emotional dimension of mentoring and the potential for learning in the model. The final story looks at the skills required in the model and the breadth of learning that can occur.

I wrote the stories because "I wanted to find something out...to learn something I did not know before I wrote it" (Richardson, 2000, p. 924). I

wanted to see what issues 'bubbled to the surface' or troubled me. The approach does not fit neatly into particular research methods but is broadly ethnographic in that it "combines research design, fieldwork, and various methods of inquiry to produce historically, politically and personally situated accounts, descriptions, interpretations and representations of human lives" (Tedlock, 2000). It is also informed by Richardson's (2000) Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) ethnography and it shows "the writing process and the writing product as deeply intertwined" (p. 930). The stories provided a way of exploring the experience of mentoring and foregrounding some key issues.

Caroline's story

I was keen to be involved in the Virtual Mentoring Program as I had been involved in a really valuable mentoring program, as part of a previous job. I also really liked the idea of using email to communicate because I am comfortable with the technology and I like the opportunity it provides for communicating at any time. The idea of working with a student from a rural school was interesting because I had toyed with the idea of applying to teach in rural areas next year. I am from the city and I feel a bit nervous about heading into a rural area to work. I was enthusiastic to create a mentoring relationship with a student in a remote town.

It was funny how our e-relationship developed. I emailed Jane first and told her about myself. How I had traveled, run a business and worked in all sorts of jobs. She emailed me and I could tell right from the start that she was a very special person. She was involved in so many activities and her parents drove her all over the state every weekend for sporting or music commitments.

Very quickly we built a relationship between one another. I believe sometimes it is easier to do because of technology. There is an absence of human physical contact, I do not deny this, however, there are advantages to cyber contact. Jane and I could correspond any time of the day that suited us. Because of the nature of both our studies, we were often connected to the internet anyway, so sometimes we could be corresponding while we were

working, like two work mates sitting side by side. We communicated via email, however we both are connected via a chat/ messenger service called MSN. We are still connected even now after the program has finished.

We eventually met at the planning day at Ararat and when we met in person, it was weird because we already knew so much about each other. To our eyes we were new, but to our minds, we were familiar.

I was apprehensive at first, not of the relationship, but what I might be able to offer in a mentoring role. I really surprised myself. Not only did I have more knowledge than I was aware of, I didn't realise how a mentoring role could be reciprocal. I was always aware of how easy the relationship was to establish and nurture. I often compared it to relationships that I had during my business career with other business owners. I found that Jane and I would share experiences, suggestions, ideas, thoughts and feelings.

As far as the technology goes, Jane and I had no trouble communicating that way but I think that was because we were both very comfortable with the medium. I imagine it could be harder if one person was not as familiar with emailing. We tended to write quite long emails about much more than the project. Aside from talking about the project, Jane and I wrote about what had been happening in our lives, the weekends and other issues. I really liked emailing Jane and always looked forward to her reply. I liked hearing about her schooling and her weekends, boyfriends and friends. It reminded me about the times when I was her age (16 years old) and brought me into reality about what is happening in young peoples lives today. I believe as a secondary teacher it is important to understand the issues adolescents face as these often have an impact on their learning and schooling lives.

What did I learn from being involved in the program? So many things. Mentoring is different to teaching, you can have the luxury of getting to know someone quite well. It is also something that can be mutually beneficial. I found that Jane was very self-motivated so as far as her project went she did not really need much input from me in terms of content. In fact I was just a

sounding board or critical friend for her. I certainly learnt that very able students can cram a lot into their lives.

The actual presentation day was my favourite part of the whole VMP. I was very proud of the work Jane had done which she had organised mostly herself. She has obviously put a lot of time and effort into her work and I was very grateful. I really believed Jane gained a lot from this experience as she learnt more about a topic she was interested in that will also help her with her future-schooling.

Overall the program was of extreme value to both Jane and I and I would like to see this kind of program extend beyond the university and into other areas.

Care-full reading

The key to this story lies in the insight it provides to the way good mentoring relationships can be established over the internet. The partners had made email contact prior to the initial meeting day and the comment 'to our eyes we were new but to our minds, we were familiar' provides a powerful insight into the experience. The partners were comfortable with the technology and committed to the project. The possibilities of email and asynchronous contact (Kirk & Olinger, 2003) are highlighted. It is heartening that mutual learning was identified by a number of participants. Clearly I had hoped that would be the case but it was interesting seeing the words used by mentors to describe the surprise and pleasure they got when they realized they were learning and benefiting from the exchanges. The story also offers insight into learning about teaching. The mentor feels a sense of responsibility not to disempower the student by solving the problem but by working through possible solutions together. From a teacher-educator's perspective it is interesting to hear the mentor's apprehension about 'what I might be able to offer in a mentoring role'. As it turned out the mentor had plenty to offer but we need to be sensitive to that initial apprehension.

Renee's story

I was quite interested in the Virtual Mentoring Program. I thought it would give me a good chance to work with an adolescent and I was pretty confident I had something to offer. I have done a great deal of sport coaching and I have always been able to help kids and tell them what to do. Looking back on the program now though I can see I was far too idealistic about what a student would want from me – or from the VMP all together.

Andrea was your typical quiet country kid who had been encouraged to be in the VMP by the year 10 coordinator. She was matched with me because we were both interested in sport. We arranged the project at the initial meeting day and I thought everything was OK.

I then didn't hear from Andrea for over three weeks after sending numerous emails. I guess from my point of view this was the most frustrating part of the program, as I had no idea of what Andrea was up to. But in hindsight I came to realise that even despite the fact they wanted to do this project, it is still considered homework and homework inhibits social life and fun, thus they always leave these things to the last minute. I mean, I must have a very bad memory or I'm very ignorant of myself as naturally, I was doing the exact same thing when I was at school.

I was really stressed before the presentation day. Would Andrea's failure to produce a project reflect badly on me? When she arrived she seemed 'cool' and told me that everything was fine. I relaxed until it turned out that Andrea had not actually got the website launched and that she didn't have anything more than one disk with her. (Her project was huge and involved many photos of local sporting venues so it couldn't possibly have been on a single disk).

We did have a difficult time on presentation day regarding technology, I felt Andrea's stress and tried hard not to let her see mine (this was difficult, as I can get a bit anxious with deadlines!). We had to bluff a bit and put together a short PowerPoint presentation. It is really hard when you are annoyed with

someone and they are upset. I think Andrea was rattled but she masked that in her presentation. I know I was a bit disappointed at the time but I was actually really impressed with the presentations overall.

Despite not learning much as to mentoring students [as in guiding them along in their project rather Andrea just did it], I did learn immensely in other areas. Firstly I learnt that I am quite ignorant especially with regards to adolescents. I mean how stupid am I to imagine a student would start on their project a month before it was due! But I suppose through my ignorance, I learnt more about adolescents and the way they think and act, and I also learnt to communicate with them. I came out of my previous teaching rounds despising adolescents as they had such a big attitude, so the VMP was positive in that it enabled me to understand and appreciate adolescents. Through this experience I think I will become a better teacher.

Care-full reading

The power of this story lies in the emotional intensity it conveys. The mentor describes feeling frustration, stress, annoyance and disappointment in her partner. The fear that the mentor describes 'Would Andrea's failure to produce a project reflect badly on me?' is something that many beginning teachers (and experienced teachers) grapple with. It is interesting to consider how those feelings of irritation and disappointment would affect an ongoing relationship or a teacher/student relationship in a classroom.

A care-full reading of this story demands that I look closely at the mentor's language. The frustration and disappointment are profound and yet there is an acknowledgement of learning taking place. 'I must have a very bad memory or I'm very ignorant of myself as naturally, I was doing the exact same thing when I was at school' is a pivotal moment. The mentor (soon to be teacher) actually realised that her own irritation was misplaced and that her student was just doing what students do. The later comment 'I came out of my teaching round despising students' was reflected in the mentor's irritation with the student partner and yet the exercise of reflecting on her learning has

helped her 'to understand and appreciate adolescents...to be a better teacher.'

Each year some mentors complain about their student partner's lack of correspondence or work. I model reflective practice. I ask them to put themselves in the student's shoes and imagine what it must be like with an adult having such a close interest in them. Some students thrive on this contact, others reject it. So much seems to depend on the mentor's initial beliefs about the purpose of the project and his/ her role as mentor. Some cannot get past the idea that they are somehow still in charge and that the final project is a direct reflection on their ability to control a student. For me, the learning then is in the 'letting go', in the acknowledging that students need to be 'free to fall and free to fly' but also protected in some way by the mentoring experience.

I wonder if we need to address explicitly the emotional dimension of mentoring within the course. The fact that being in a one-to-one relationship with a student means that you may know them better than a whole class and that 'knowing' can generate stronger personal emotional responses: frustration, joy, pride, excitement, disappointment and so on.

'Support (of mentors and partners) with freedom' is a tacit part of the program; I wonder too whether this needs to be made more explicit or transparent, prior to starting the program. There is a tension between allowing students to construct their own learning experiences and the possible need for clearer guidelines to prevent disappointment and frustration. Some learners require explicit guidelines; others (effectively) generate their own.

Greg's story

One of the main reasons I volunteered for the Virtual Mentoring Program was because I have always avoided using email because I did not feel confident using it. It has been fantastic because after all the weeks of sending emails and researching on the World Wide Web I have gained a lot of confidence in myself to be able to competently use the internet.

The idea of mentoring is something that appeals to me. I have had mentoring in previous jobs and I had a clear idea of what a student should get out of this experience. I know I grew up with older mates who showed me the ropes a bit. It helped.

I was keen to keep in contact as often as possible...I could see that Andy was really keen for this project to work. I had to sit down and think about the way I could provide mentoring so that Andy could gain the most out of the experience. I listed the things I saw as important for him to get out of the project:

- To gain confidence in himself to be able to discover things for himself
- I wanted the end product to be totally his work
- To develop skills in using the internet for both communication and as research tool
- To answer the questions he has about botany and weeds in particular
- To build a data base that is useful to others

I felt that Andy had a passion about botany that would help him overcome any fears he may have in developing a website, therefore, what I tried to do was to be available to him when he had questions. I would not give him the answers, but just enough information for him to find the answers himself. I also decided to keep minimal contact but give Andy a feeling of security that I was there if he needed me. I did this by sending emails once or twice a week just to say hello, and talk about stuff other than the weed project.

I think, well I hope, this gave him a sense that he could delve into the thick of things and be confident that if he got himself into a pickle there would be someone there to guide him back on track. Overall I feel that this was the right way to go about mentoring a student with a lot of ability as he managed to complete the web page with minimal help or supervision.

I believe the VMP was a positive and fantastic experience for all those involved, students, mentors, teachers and lecturers. One thing I learnt when comparing my mentoring student to others, was the interest they had in the projects they were working on. I think this related to the whole education

process, if the students are not interested in what they are learning they will not have motivation to reach their full learning potential. If there is one other important thing to be gained from the VMP it is NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE ABILITY OF YOUR STUDENTS! The depth of some of the projects was at a level that I would expect from university students.

I hope to keep in contact with Andy. I am more than happy to help him out, I have every confidence that he will achieve his goal of entry into a botany course. One of the most enjoyable parts of the program was that we were able to talk about anything in the emails. Andy asked me heaps of questions about going to university and the sort of things you do. I was able to answer him honestly and talk to him about living on campus and mucking around too much. It was good for me to think back to those years and some of the issues I had as a country kid away from home for the first time.

Care-full reading

Confidence is a central concept in this story. The mentor's lack of confidence in using email is highlighted. The mentor's desire to instill confidence in the student partner 'to give a feeling of security'; to 'guide him back on track' is important. The mentor's ultimate confidence in the student partner's ability to achieve his goals in the future is also highlighted. All these points came from the same transcript and a care-full reading shows the mentor's beliefs about his own responsibilities, and his student partner's learning. The research project is not really the main focus; the mentoring is.

One of the original purposes of the VMP was to provide an opportunity for participants to use their IT skills in a 'real' way. This story shows how the skills developed but it also shows the power and complexity of the mentoring. The relational aspect of the mentoring experience is important. In some ways the research project became less important than the insights the mentor could provide into life after school. The story also shows how beginning teachers could learn about the skills and abilities of students in ways that are much more difficult to see when teaching a whole class.

The message never to underestimate the ability of students is one that came through a number of the interviews with former mentors. A care-full reading of this indicates that pre-service teachers might have a tendency to make assumptions about students' abilities that are based on limited experience. Perhaps the mentoring experience positions future teachers to have a positive disposition towards students and their abilities. The surprise and delight they spoke of when describing the presentation day was powerful and highlighted for me the importance of providing different ways of learning about students and learning.

Reflections on the method

My electronic 'Mentoring' folder is huge. For years I have been evaluating and developing the VMP both formally and informally. In some of those years I have presented or written about the model. So the mentoring folder contains transcripts, notes, letters, reflections, notes from the literature, email conversations, attempts at writing in various ways and so on. As a teacher I was (and am) keen to share the pedagogical possibility inherent in the virtual mentoring model. As a person I am very wary of making assumptions about how people experience things. I struggle to 'render a verdict' (Evans, 1999). I hope the constructed narratives allow the reader to engage with the model and to think about the possibilities it presents. As Ellis & Bochner (2000) note: "Invited to take the story in and use it for themselves, readers become co-performers, examining themselves through the evocative power of narrative text." (p. 748).

I am ambivalent about the method I have tried and I have rewritten various parts and even considered rewriting the stories. In the end I have left them because their purpose was to deepen my understanding of teacher learning and they have achieved that purpose in a number of ways. I have been challenged to think about the dilemma between a constructivist approach to learning and then the apparent need to make some things more clearly structured/ constructed for the mentors. How far should we let mentors 'go' when the experience is clearly frustrating them? Should we raise issues about making assumptions about students and their needs or about the mentor's

role and responsibility prior to them starting the experience or should we let them construct their own understanding through having the mentoring experience? So I am left with more questions and new insights.

Mentoring project Part 2: Caring and connecting

The Virtual Mentoring Program provided a unique learning opportunity for all participants and the researcher. Usually teacher education students learn about adolescents theoretically in the university and practically in their school experiences teaching whole classes. The VMP provided an opportunity for pre-service teachers and schools students to form a partnership to learn together. This second part of the project developed from the previous section and came about because I did not feel completely comfortable with what I had learnt from the written reflections on mentoring. Or more precisely, I felt that I needed to know more about how some of those who had been mentors were experiencing their teaching lives.

What follows is an early email which I sent out to research participants. It outlines the initial research process. Research participants were selected on the basis that their earlier written reflections had been particularly thoughtful or challenging and I was interested to explore the experiences of teachers of different age and gender in different educational settings. The stories are in no way representative but they did raise some important issues. The research questions are the same but the stories could be different given that the participants are now teachers and not students.

From: **Maryann Brown**

To: VMP participants - from 2000-2003

Sent: Thursday, 22 April 2004 11.30

Subject: **Virtual Mentoring Program and Learning**

Hello everyone

I hope you are enjoying teaching. I am continuing my research into the Virtual Mentoring Program that was run as part of your Grad Dip Ed and I am hoping to gain a better understanding of the experience from your point of view. I am contacting you to participate further in this research, based on your interest in the VMP and your written reflections at the time. As you will remember you were paired with a year 10 student from a regional school and you communicated mainly via email and worked together to produce a project to present at the university presentation day. While you were in the course you were required to keep a record of your contact with the student and then to provide a written reflection on your learning. At the final presentation day you were asked to fill in an anonymous evaluation form. Each year I have made modifications in response to them. Some of your written reflections were also kept, with your permission to copy them at the time.

As you know, I am always interested in learning and how people 'become' teachers. In endeavouring to deepen my understanding of the learning that has taken place within the Virtual Mentoring program from the beginning teacher's perspective, I have developed a series of questions that I would like to explore and I would be very interested in your thoughts on any of them.

What does it mean to mentor someone in the VMP and how does this influence the development of beginning teachers?

What did you learn from participating in the VMP?

How is mentoring influenced or affected by electronic communication?

The next one is really for me!

What meaning are the participants drawing from the experience and what meaning do I as researcher draw from their discussion and writing about the mentoring experience?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Maryann

As I explored the virtual mentoring data from the final set of interviews, in late 2004, it became increasingly obvious that the 'virtual' part of the mentoring was not what provided the most learning for beginning teachers. It was the

fact that they mentored at all: the fact that they had the opportunity to learn more about an adolescent through mentoring.

Mentoring is playing an increasingly important role in the teaching profession (Fraser, 1998). In Victoria, the Department of Education has developed programs where beginning teachers are formally mentored in their first year of teaching; more recently principals have been offered the opportunity to be formally mentored. Traditionally pre-service teachers (PSTs) have been mentored while gaining practical experience in schools. There has also been recent development in mentoring programs to support people of all ages in different ways (Bentley, 1998; Eppert, Casemore & Davies, 2002). It is important for all humans to feel connected to community and to feel cared for and valued. My interest in mentoring as a way of connecting with students and caring for them has evolved from my years as a secondary teacher and more recent experiences as a teacher educator. As a secondary teacher I was acutely aware of the many students for whom school was not a positive experience. I learnt very early that showing an interest in students, connecting with them personally in some way, made a difference. As a teacher educator the context has changed but I am aware of how significant the experiences of pre-service teachers in schools are. They need to feel supported and cared for as they embark on their new profession. Mentoring is a way of connecting people and it provides an opportunity for people within the education system to support and care for each other as they learn. There are many possible mentoring relationships within learning institutions (Brown, 2002; Walkington, 2003).

Mentoring and pre-service teacher education

There are two main purposes for including mentoring within a teacher education program. The first is to provide an opportunity for PSTs to learn about mentoring itself. Students can explore the concept of mentoring critically and reflectively through their own experiences. They can address questions such as: What is a mentor? How does one become a mentor? What is expected of a mentor? What are some of the difficulties of mentoring?

These questions can be addressed within university classes formally and in discussions with peers and others.

The second and in many ways more important purpose of being a mentor within a pre-service education course is to learn more about students as individuals. To learn about how they learn and how they communicate. In essence to gain insight into the people teachers will spend their working lives with. Van Manen (1999) notes: “We can only be pedagogically perceptive if we develop our understanding of how the young people we teach experience things, including our influence” (p.18). Good relationships are central to good learning and learning how to establish and maintain these is an important part of teacher education.

Caring and connecting

The concept of care is inherent in the teaching profession: indeed it is mandated through a legal ‘duty of care’ and it is manifested in many ways in teacher-student interactions. Teaching is recognised as one of the ‘caring professions’ but care is not a simple concept. As Noddings, (2003) notes: “caring is a relationship that contains another, the cared-for...and the one-caring and the one-cared for are reciprocally dependent” (p. 58). In teaching the situation is not automatically one of interpersonal care. Teachers have a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of students and a professional obligation to ‘teach’ something. It could be argued that they have some moral obligation to care for students but this is not guaranteed.

Teaching involves a meeting of one-caring and cared for. I can lecture to hundreds, and this is neither inconsequential nor unimportant, but this is not teaching. To teach involves giving of self and receiving of other (Noddings, 2003. p. 113).

Noddings (2003) develops a case for circles and chains of caring and this model can be useful for teachers. We are surrounded by concentric circles of care, from those closest to us outwards to proximate others for whom we have personal regard. Then there are the people we have not yet met ... so

they are not yet in our circles of care but they are connected by 'chains of care'. We are "prepared to care" because we understand the links to others: "Because my future students are related (formally, as students) to present, actual students for whom I do care, I am prepared for caring for them also" (Noddings, 2003. p.17).

The importance of caring within the teaching profession can not be underestimated. The importance for adolescents to have positive relationships with significant adults is well understood (Fibkins 2003; Fuller, 1998; Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996). The dilemma is that in an increasingly complex working life it is difficult to sustain and maintain strong care for all students. Caring takes time and effort and the carer also needs to be sustained and supported. This is where mentoring in all its layers can be so powerful. Beginning and experienced teachers can be supported through mentoring programs. An understanding and appreciation of the process of mentoring and the role of mentors can lead to stronger support and connection for teachers, 'those caring' for students.

Through having mentoring experiences with school students, pre-service teachers can learn more powerfully about how young people think, learn, feel and communicate. In understanding more they can appreciate the difficulties and sensitivities of young people and in this sense they can learn to care. This strengthens the chains of caring, the important learning relationships, and ruptures some of the charges of 'lack of care' or lack of connection. At the heart of mentoring at any level is the relationship. Day (2004) highlights the importance of this to teachers:

In teaching, care and compassion are essential features of becoming and remaining connected to students and colleagues. Teachers and students alike work better when they are cared 'about'...beyond the contractual 'caring for' (p. 27).

Connection to students and colleagues is desirable for a teacher's sense of satisfaction with their work. Elbaz (1992) highlights the centrality of

relationships even more forcefully: “Teachers’ concern for children is grounded in relationship, in the connectedness of teachers and learners” (p. 421).

Connection is also important in a broader sense in education. It involves developing effective ways of communicating with all stakeholders (Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996) and developing explicit links between students and teachers, learners and co-learners, schools and parents, schools and community and so on. It involves sharing understanding and working with change together. It requires integrating “the different aspects of schooling (i.e. curriculum, pedagogy, guidance, assessment and staff development) not [dealing with them] as isolated sub-systems” (Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996. p. 5). These connections can be developed through mentoring relationships at a range of levels.

Layers of mentoring, layers of learning

Mentoring is possible across all levels of education. Pre-service teachers can be mentored by experienced teachers in schools; students can be mentored by teachers; beginning teachers can be mentored by other teachers; experienced teachers can be mentored by colleagues; pre-service and beginning teachers can be mentored by university mentors; principals can be mentored by retired principals and so on. In many ways mentoring embodies some of the critical dimensions for successful teaching: communication, support, good relationships and shared learning.

As a starting point for writing about mentoring more ‘carefully’ I revisited my past and wrote my own story of learning as a pre-service teacher. My learning at that time was intense: most of the mentor teachers introduced me to the culture and tasks of teaching; they were very positive role models who had strong relationships with students; they were very willing to share resources and they were enthusiastic about their chosen profession. One very negative mentor worked to destroy my confidence and enthusiasm. I am reminded again of how influential this pre-service learning relationship is. I realise now

that I am very much informed by all my own pre-service experiences and that the supervisor/mentors influenced the teacher I became and the teacher educator I have become. I have experienced very powerful mentoring in my own professional life. Sometimes it has been formal and sometimes it has been informal. Either way, it has had a profound influence. My concept of mentoring is not the traditional one of the junior sitting at the feet of the wise expert. It is something much stronger, more subtle, and more mutual. It involves dialogue, real connection, tact, care and mutual engagement in learning. My own experience is that mentoring is a powerful way of learning and developing within the teaching profession.

The research

In this research mentoring is explored through conversation and narrative (Beattie, 1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with five early-career teachers (ECTs) who had all completed a Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) program which provided them with opportunities to act as mentors to students in schools. As course coordinator I knew the participants quite well. Was I too close to the research participants? Maybe, but I don't think we saw it that way. For me the beauty of having an already established relationship with the participants was that our conversations quickly moved to quite complex realms.

The interviews followed a reflexive dyadic model (Ellis & Berger, 2003) where the "interview is conducted more as a conversation between two equals than as a distinctly hierarchical, question-and-answer exchange, and the interviewer tries to tune in to the interactively produced meaning and emotional dynamics within the interview itself" (p. 162). This method evolved naturally. Perhaps my relationship was already a mentoring one. I was particularly moved when one participant who had had some troubles in her first job noted:

You see the frailty... When things started 'going down the toilet' you were the first person I thought of calling because you were the person who had

experience as a teacher. You knew what I was going through and where I was coming from BUT you were on my side. Whereas the people at school, if you confessed to them that you were feeling vulnerable and stuff you open up this whole other can of 'oh that's X, she's not quite coping' . And there is that real emphasis on having a professional façade. (Siobhan, first year teacher)

Transcripts of the interviews were made and then read and re-read. Emerging themes seemed to bubble to the surface and sections of the conversations were noted. Some themes were the threads of connection, some themes were about learning from experience. Gradually these sections of transcripts were pared down until they contained what felt like the essence or the threads of the mentoring experiences. Various small vignettes/ narratives were compiled using the words of the research participants. These form the basis of the research data presented. What is presented is both the participants' description of their experience and my own 'interrupted' reading (in italics) of the narratives (Evans, 1989) where I endeavour to distil some of the essences of the mentoring experiences.

I have used multiple readings of the data in an effort to understand the experiences of the beginning teachers and to see mentoring in a more subtle, different way. "The idea of a single "take" on the complexities of human lives is naïve and antihuman. Our understanding of our own and others' lives is enhanced by multiple and multifaceted readings" (Richardson, 1997, p.107).

Pre-service teachers and mentoring opportunities

What follows are some stories of learning from mentoring as a pre-service teacher (indicated in highlighted boxes). The exact words of the research participants are used. The connection with the pre-service learning and experience as a graduate is then addressed in italics.

Jack's story

Virtual mentoring hooked me up with one individual kid from a class of twenty. The amount of detail you get in just having conversations, I don't think you get

that in class unless you do it outside the classroom. So being able to listen, just to see the way they talk I guess. What is actually on their minds. Just putting the decision making in their hands and watching. I think most of the Virtual Mentoring was just watching and it was pretty much preparing us for how students work, or how they can work.

Jack highlights the 'detail' or the fine grained focus he could achieve through mentoring. On a superficial level all teachers listen to students but Jack is expressing something more than this. He gained insight/ 'inhearing' to a single student and this was different. The experience helped Jack understand how students can operate in a class. Finding out what the student was thinking about was important for him and helped him connect with students more fully. Perhaps the mentoring helped him to establish the 'chain of caring' which developed into a 'circle of care' once he was teaching:

Jack's story

There's a kid in my year seven class...who'll be a failure soon... he's failed six subjects in his first half year and it's cos of his behaviour. I've actually been pulling him out during one of my extras usually once a fortnight. And it's taking him out of the classroom where he thinks he has to be clever. Actually he does great work. He can't work at home because his home life sucks and he can't work in the classroom because there are too many distractions. He's actually been doing a bit of work...I think that whole idea of mentoring- it's so important and it's unfortunate you can't do that for everyone. If you're able to like vent. Max goes "He's a f...idiot and I hate him and she hates me and ..."
And I listen. It's that listening isn't it? And he's been suspended a few times and we've talked through that.

Jack has taken the initiative to work one to one with this troubled student. He noticed the student was 'in trouble' and he cared enough to do something about it. He explicitly connects the mentoring of his past experience to this situation: the listening, the space to talk, the openness to hearing the student's perspective and the learning support. He acknowledges the importance of providing an opportunity for students to be heard to 'vent'.

Alan's learning from the mentoring gave him insights into how students learn and how he reacted to students.

Alan's story

Virtual mentoring helped me out a bit in terms of knowing what to expect of kids. Being in that group [of mentors] we were all probably putting our hands out in the same effort and sometimes the kids would match it and exceed that effort we were putting in, giving those big presentations. And then other kids don't match it and are probably a little bit less involved. It prepared me sort of what to expect as well...

You could see the different efforts kids put in so it prepared me for that as well...On [practicum] rounds I still had the ideal[istic] thing that every kid wants to be there and 100%...[involved]. In terms of presentations, how they all did a lot of different types of representations it helped me out ...to think about those type of things as well...like not to go straight to the 'do a poster on this' type of thing. My role was just making sure he was on track and doing [the project]...not directing them how to do things and not being an expert on it and giving suggestions on what they should change and things like that. I guess the motivating as well, the urgency of it, trying to relay that to him, like getting things done.

Alan learnt a great deal from the VMP. He found out more about how students learn, and what to expect (or how we can be surprised), how they present their learning in different ways. The level of insight into the differences between students is what stands out for me. Teaching is not a 'one size fits all' occupation and sensitivity to difference is critical. His own idealism was challenged by being involved in the VMP. He learnt that not all kids are completely focussed and interested. Alan's story also explores the role of a mentor. He did not see himself as an expert in the area but he had an important part to play in motivating and supporting the student doing the project.

As a teacher Alan has utilised his learning from being a mentor.

I always find I give them [current students] about five different options [of presentation] to choose from. I guess a lot of mentoring is similar to teaching, a lot of it goes hand in hand...Even though you are more of an expert in the field when you are teaching (you've got more knowledge than the kids), I guess if you don't mentor them as well, then you are not doing your job as well. Just knowing their individuality, knowing the different kids ...When I do reports I don't have standard comments I just sit down and write them and it takes a while ...but a lot of the parents say they think I know their kids well. ...I think a part of mentoring is suggesting how to improve and evaluating as well...It helps me to do that.

The concept of mentoring has become part of his practice as a teacher and he identifies it as something important. He connects this with the reporting process. He cites "knowing their individuality" as important and he connects that to being able to write personal term reports. He was proud of the fact that parents considered he "knew their kids well" and he believed that this was a result of his relationship with the students and his mentoring experiences of suggesting how to improve and evaluate.

A different story is told by Maxine. She came to teaching as a slightly older student and she had young children of her own. She was excited and anxious about her ability to connect with students.

Maxine's Story

As a mentor I am not meant to do it, I am meant to be there as guide. If they are really struggling you will help them along and I've found that with this, I kind of pushed her in the end. I think the lack of confidence was the real thing. She wouldn't have done [the project] if she didn't have a mentor. It is a bit like being a big sister kind of thing, you can be really nice, but you have to sometimes get to the truth and say 'you have to really do this. We have to stand up in front of people and do this'.

I didn't talk to many teenagers, I mean I didn't have that contact with them, [before the GDE course] and I think mentoring gave me the confidence to actually talk to them one on one, kind of as a friend. But you still had that bit of difference. I went to the school for one day to catch up with my mentee, and that was quite good, just to sit there and have a bit of a chat. It showed that you can get along with a lot of kids and even just by doing one on one you can relate to them even though they're re a fair bit younger than you, you've got something that usually you connect with.

For Maxine, the involvement in mentoring provided an opportunity to build her own confidence (about relating to teenagers) and to build her understanding of how to connect with them through conversation. Clearly communication is critical to the establishment of good relationships but in the teaching situation it is often very difficult for teachers to spend time with individual students (Day, 1999). It is also interesting that Maxine sees mentoring as a 'bit like being a big sister'. The role is supportive AND honest. The hard things have to be said as well as the easy ones. This appears to be evidence of significant care: of 'caring about' rather than the 'contractual caring for' (Day, 2004, p. 27)

The next story also identifies the 'big sister' aspect of mentoring. It describes a particularly strong mentoring relationship and one that extended beyond the initial programs in the GDE course. Jen volunteered to act as a mentor to a troubled student as part of a formal mentoring community program. She saw this mentoring role developed out of the mentoring she had done at university.

Jen's story

You form quite a strong attachment working with young people so close. I mean when I mentor I am a role model for a young girl, and show her that women can do this, women can be independent, and working, and it's fine to work like this. And in public, this is the right way to do it, and you are just modelling good behaviour really. You're a big sister or big brother to the person, and it was funny I didn't say it at the time, but when I was at the

school [visiting], I was kind of not so much an authority figure, but, just an older version of someone they could be.

The role modelling aspect of mentoring is perhaps less obvious in the other stories and yet it is embedded in them. Simply matching rural students with university student mentors provides a model for a way of life that involves further study. For all students the mentor may provide some sort of option or as Jen says 'an older version of someone they could be'.

All these stories highlight the learning of the mentors in relation to young people and themselves. The experience of mentoring gave insights into ways to connect with students- maybe very obvious ways but nonetheless important. They also provided opportunities for mentors to think about what it means to care about students as individuals rather than as part of a class. Students need to know that their teachers care (Webb & Blond, 1995). Each year the mentoring programs have been evaluated and the response from students, parents, teachers and schools has always been very positive. That is why we have continued to include the programs in the GDE course.

Back to the research questions...concluding thoughts

Questions of meaning are always difficult to capture. What mentoring means to someone will depend on the people involved in the mentoring relationship and the experiences they share on the journey. It will depend on the histories the mentors bring with them to the experience; their prior experience of mentoring, their earlier experiences with adolescents, their beliefs about learning and student attitudes. The stories shared in the first part of this research project identify some of the different ways mentors have felt about mentoring. Both parts of the project have shown the potential for learning from the mentoring experience; learning about oneself, learning about students, learning about learning, learning about technology and so on. The second part of the research project focuses on the role mentoring has played in the development of beginning teachers. It is interesting to see, yet again, that the experience is entirely personal but the common threads are there. The

opportunity to mentor has given beginning teachers another way of thinking about their students and their professional life.

What is important is that the significance of connecting with students and caring for them as individuals should always be highlighted in teacher education programs. Opportunities to mentor need to be provided when people are learning to be teachers so they can gain a deeper understanding of what it means to mentor. Ultimately these teachers should be stronger mentors themselves and the mentoring within the profession may become based on something more than lip-service or serendipity. Teacher education programs need to provide a forum for students to explore their own 'circles of care' and ways of connecting with people so that they develop strong 'chains of care' as they step into the teaching profession.

The final image for me is of a 'chain of mentoring'. It connects the various levels of the teaching profession through different mentoring experiences; it provides a solid base for learning relationships to develop and yet it allows freedom to learn and explore in a secure and 'cared for' environment.

CHAPTER SIX

Intrapersonal learning: an exploration of the place of reflection, emotion and intuition in becoming a teacher.

Introduction to the adventure

The purpose of this research project was twofold: to gain an insight into the experiences of some teachers who are recent graduates of the GDE in relation to reflective practice (Loughran, 1996) and their “lived experience” (van Manen, 1990) and secondly to explore the interconnection of intuition (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000) and emotion and reflection in becoming a teacher. I have observed and experienced throughout my career the power of emotions in learning (Hargreaves, 1998) and the way emotions influence the way teachers react and behave. I had long thought about doing some research in the area and the doctoral project provided a perfect opportunity. An unanticipated additional benefit was the opportunity to explore a range of approaches to writing and to explore my own role as researcher more extensively.

The study was based on interviews with seven early career teachers who had all completed their GDE between 1999 and 2002. The participants were asked to read short passages provided by the researcher about reflective practice, intuition and emotion in teaching, prior to an interview with the researcher in which they were invited to describe and explore their own experiences in relation to these issues. The interviews were transcribed and a number of products emerged.

The people I interviewed were keen to explore their own understanding of their experiences and to share that with me. So as researcher I was closely involved in the generation of a new or deeper understanding of the participants’ (and my own) experiences. The result of this closeness to the

research was that I felt compelled to try different forms of writing to explain what was happening or what sense I was making of the experience. I embarked on a journey of learning about narrative inquiry methods and narrative forms of writing (Carter, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clough, 2002; Conle, 1999; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Gudmundsdottir, 1996; Hatch, 2002; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Polkinghorne, 1988, 1995; Richardson, 2000, 2001).

All [narrative studies] are based on the notion that humans make sense of their lives through story...The emphasis of this kind of work is on the meanings individuals generate through stories, and constructivist researchers and their participants co-construct the stories that are told as part of the research. (Hatch, 2002, p. 28)

The initial paper is a combination of conventional academic content and reflections after interviews and while writing. I was struggling to convey the depth of feeling expressed by the participants so I experimented with writing poetry (Cahnmann, 2003; Piirto, 2002; Sparkes, 2002), narratives and a scripted conversation. I also attempted to capture some of the stories and emotions through images. The initial research was reported on at the International Study Association of Teachers and Teaching Conference in Leiden, Holland in June, 2003 (Brown, 2003).

Following feedback from Leiden I found myself looking at the research quite differently. I had approached the initial research with excitement and a sense of wonder about the journey on which I was to embark. I had completed units in research methodology in my masters and I had worked on a few different research projects so I was familiar with conventional research approaches. I was determined to explore the realms of emotion, intuition and reflection in a way that was meaningful for me. I plotted my own course and while I was aware of different research methods I wanted this work to be organic, emergent and different. The feedback from Leiden was interesting. Many people were very encouraging. One gentle Finnish man said, "You are very courageous!" Another respected Belgian academic said, "Your work is interesting but I would never have let you ask those questions or approach the

research that way.” I was not sure what to think but I know I had learnt so much from the whole research experience. I talked with Helen, my supervisor about it and she was very annoyed: “You must be able to explore things in your own way. It is YOUR journey not anyone else’s”. She had always believed that questions of methodology and even exact research questions could emerge out of the work. This whole doctorate has been a powerful journey of discovery about things that really matter to me, about the work that I do and the people who share the learning with me.

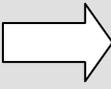
I have decided to present the research project as a constructed simplified ‘choose your own adventure’ style text. This may appear to be a slightly frivolous approach in academic work but it seems to represent the complexity of the learning journey for me. I am very conscious that different aspects of the research bubbled to the surface at different times and that my engagement with the separate representations wavered. At the time of writing each section I was very enthusiastic and engaged. The process was fascinating because I felt the sense of ‘space’ or ‘horizon’ (Gadamer, 1989) where the data became transformed and some new meaning emerged through my words. Once written and following the space that passing time provides I found myself relatively discontented with most of the renditions. This was intriguing and disconcerting. Partly it represented my developing awareness of academic convention (the early abandon and naivety about the ‘rules’ allowed for a different type of writing); partly it represented the genuinely deepening understanding of the difficulty of catching the meaning of others’ lived experience particularly in the intangible realms of emotions, intuition and reflection.

‘Choose your own adventure’ is a style of young adult or junior fiction writing that developed in the in the late 1970s and involved the reader adopting the role of the main character in the narrative and making decisions about where to proceed next. There were multiple story lines and multiple possible endings. Often the stories portrayed goodies and baddies. These stories were completely fictional and encouraged a different type of engagement in a text. (I was teaching adolescents with literacy problems in the mid 1980s and I

found many 'non-readers' became enthusiastic readers of 'choose your own adventures'.) More recently, 'choose your own adventures' have been developed into complex games and narratives using hypertext, blogs and other contemporary approaches. There has been the development of all sorts of online, multilayered narratives, known as interactive fiction and distributed narratives (Walker, 2004). Space and time become less relevant in the construction of the narrative and the reader has an active role to play in constructing their own version and understanding of the narrative.

The purpose is for the reader to navigate his/ her own way through the texts. The inspiration for the multiple ways of writing came from Laurel Richardson's work on Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) ethnographies. She suggested: "Write your "data" in three different ways...What do you know in each rendition that you did not know in the other renditions? How do the different renditions enrich each other?" (2000, p. 943). You will find the original paper presented at Leiden (and the PowerPoint presentation), some stories constructed from participants' words, some poems and a constructed conversation between the participants. You will find some particular parts are repeated through the various pieces. This is what happens when different renderings are made from the same data. I invite you to share my journey of exploring the place of emotion, intuition and reflection in becoming a teacher.

WELCOME TO THIS 'CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE'. The main text tells of the research story and is based on a conference paper presented at the ISATT (International Study Association of Teachers and Teaching) Conference, Leiden, 2003. The original piece has some updated reflective comments added and these are identified by text boxes with italic print. At various points you will be invited to make a choice between reading on through the paper or digressing to one of the other products that developed from the research. The decision is entirely yours.

The digression will be indicated by:  . Each digression will present a different way of writing. Each rendition will be followed by some reflective comments about my learning from the exercise. In each case I am trying to

'write myself into understanding' (Richardson, 2000). It is also possible to read what follows as a single linear text, in which case you just read through and then read the different renditions one after the other. The different components in the 'adventure' are all based on the same set of data but they are different representations of exploring teacher learning and experiences. There is no single ending. There is certainly no single story. You are invited to engage in whatever way suits you.

Choose your own adventure

The Conference Paper

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is twofold: to gain an insight into the experiences of some teachers who are recent graduates of the Graduate Diploma of Education (GDE) at the University of Ballarat, Australia in relation to reflective practice and their 'lived experience' and secondly to explore the interconnection of intuition and emotion and reflection in 'becoming' a teacher.

The GDE is a one-year post-graduate education course that prepares students from a variety of teaching subject areas to become secondary school teachers. The course has been developed with a strong focus on on-going learning, enquiry into professional practice and developing as reflective practitioners. There is acknowledgement of the complexity of the teaching/ learning interaction and students are encouraged to explore their emotions as they embark on the journey of 'becoming a teacher'.

The teachers were asked to read short passages about reflective practice, intuition and emotion in teaching prior to an interview with the researcher in which they were invited to describe and explore their own experiences in relation to these issues. Interpretative analysis and narrative methodology will be employed to hear the voices of the early career teachers and to draw out some common themes. This is a preliminary exploration of this complex area.

This is a story of a person who did not intend becoming a teacher: a person who 'fell' into teaching and then fell in love with it. This person was immediately fascinated by the complexity of relationships that developed between teachers and learners, and learners and learners. She was intrigued by the role that emotions played in how teachers and learners learnt. The

connection between confidence and happiness and good learning was constantly reinforced as was the importance of effective communication. Over the years this person was privileged to work with many wonderful school and university students who provided insights into the way they thought and learnt. As reflective practice developed as a foundation of teacher learning this person felt affirmed. Now there was a term and some helpful structure to support what had always been part of her: the need to think and question constantly. Behind this conscious thinking and reflection something more nebulous seemed to be at work. What was it that made teachers and learners react and sometimes operate so swiftly and convincingly, seemingly without ponderous thought? The idea of intuition as a powerful part of teaching gradually surfaced: a vague sense of 'knowing' how to operate in a situation. This person was also fascinated by the place of power, creativity and what constrains teachers. The idea of exploring the interconnection of some of the elements that influence teachers' lives gradually evolved.

This is my story and another stage in the journey...

Whither...

I am consumed by questions. I embarked on this project with an interest in meeting up with former students from the GDE at the University of Ballarat and discovering more about their learning journey post-university. I wanted to know more about the relevance of their pre-service learning. I could have embarked on this particular journey in all sorts of straightforward ways, but I didn't! I could have sent surveys to all graduates; I could have organised focus groups with questions like, 'How relevant was your pre-service education to your development as a teacher?' I could have asked former students to write a reflective piece about their learning. I did not do any of these probably because I had this extra interest in exploring the less tangible aspects of teacher learning. I was fascinated by the place of emotions in how we operate as teachers and learners. I wanted to learn more about the place of emotions in other teachers' lives (Goleman, 1996; Hargreaves, 1998). I was also very aware of the importance of intuition in my own practice and I

was interested in exploring this further with former students (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000). I wanted to hear from former students about the place of reflection in the reality of busy teaching lives (Loughran, 1996). That is the key. I wanted to hear teachers' voices and their stories and I wanted to engage with them in this exploration in a very personal way (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). The construction of narratives seemed to offer some interesting possibilities. As Pat Sikes in the preface to Clough (2002) notes:

'Narratives offer an exciting, important and, at this time, essentially exploratory way forward for educational research. Human beings are storying beings. It is natural for us to make sense of our lives, the lives of others and the contexts in which we live through telling and hearing/ reading narratives'. (p. xii)

How to begin the search...

Questions of methodology arose right from the beginning of this project. I knew that I wanted to 'hear' the voices of some former students and that I wanted to know more about their teaching lives. I was also keen to find out useful how some aspects of their pre-service education had been. Clearly the research was going to be qualitative and Denzin & Lincoln (2000) provided some useful insights:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible...At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world...Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials...that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3)

Some preliminary reading material was chosen to give the participants some background into current thinking about reflection, emotion and intuition (Appendix 2). I designed a series of questions which I hoped would elicit some interesting responses (Appendix 3). Most of the questions had multiple components; mainly to see if the connections between emotion, reflection and intuition could be established. The questions seemed to be quite straight

forward as I was developing them. I don't have great experience designing formal schedules of questions but I do have plenty of experience asking questions within my teaching life. I thought the questions would gently open up the discussion and encourage deeper thinking. Of course that didn't really happen. There is no doubt the questions did guide our discussions but the complexity was problematic for some people and in reality various components were glossed over. I had all sort of anxieties during and after the interviews. Was I forcing something (the interconnection) that wasn't really there? Was I actually just looking for some sort of personal affirmation about my own teaching? Had I designed things that were simply too nebulous to really address? There was, however, something very strong about the questions too. They allowed teachers to think and talk in ways that they don't often have time for; they provided an opportunity to reflect on their lived experience and to think hard about their own emotions, intuitions and reflective practice. All the participants commented that they had gained something personally from the discussion. Maybe it was the chance to jointly construct meaning:

An interview is a form of conversation. Through their cooperation in the research process, researchers and informants jointly put the pieces together into a meaningful whole, something that makes sense to both with each participant having left his or her mark on the process and the product. (Gudmundsdottir, 1996, p. 294)

2005 - In hindsight I am interested that I even pursued this approach. As mentioned earlier, when the initial paper was presented at ISATT in 2003 a professor whom I respect said, "Well I wouldn't have let you ask those questions". I was taken aback for a moment. Now I understand why. It seemed as if I was trying to engineer particular responses from the participants by giving them the set readings and then asking such complex questions. Or maybe it seemed that I wanted the participants to answer my research question for me. The professor pointed out that I needed to 'answer' them myself. I guess what this shows was partly my naivety at the time but also that my supportive 'teacherly' relationship with the participants was still present. I have always tried to present literature to students to help form a

secure foundation for further discussion. I thought I was helping position the participants for the interview. In fact I still feel that I did just that and that our conversations started from a different and deeper place because they had had a chance to think about some of the issues beforehand.

Who to invite to travel with me?

Purposive sampling of participants was undertaken (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and ten former Graduate Diploma of Education (University of Ballarat) students were invited by mail to participate in the research. The students were selected because they had indicated an interest in thinking deeply about their practice whilst undertaking their pre-service training and I was keen to have a range of perspectives in terms of gender and teaching subject area. The participants were in their first to fifth year teaching. Seven students agreed to participate in a one hour semi-structured interview with the researcher which would be taped. The other three declined due to work commitments and distance.

The participants

Emily is in her second year of teaching at a rural campus of a city private school. Emily came to teaching as a mature age student with a background in communication, drama and English. Year 9 students attend the campus for one term. The school has a strong commitment to the local community, personal development, learning and reflective practice. Emily is very clear that the school 'fits' her approach to teaching and learning and she is passionate about her work.

Campbell is in his first year of teaching at a three-year-old school in Melbourne's outer west. The school is designed to model an integrated curriculum and caters for students from Year 7-9. Campbell is an artist and has travelled extensively. He came to teaching with a clear idea of what sort of teacher he wanted to become. He has found this year very demanding and described himself as in 'survival' mode.

Katrina is in her third year of teaching humanities subjects in a government secondary school in a provincial city. In her second year, Katrina took on a range of positions of responsibility and these provided many opportunities to attend professional development sessions. Katrina

felt that these positions actually took her away from focusing on her students so this year she has relinquished them and now concentrates on the students and their needs. Katrina's initial degree was in Asian Studies.

Laura is in her first year teaching at a small country P-12 school in the alpine region of Victoria. She teaches physical education, health and science. Laura has travelled and lived overseas and she was very keen to obtain this position. She undertook her pre-service training with enthusiasm, openness and a real interest to ask the 'hard' questions. She enjoys the independence of teaching her own classes and particularly enjoys the relationships she has developed with students.

Ewan is in his third year of teaching at a Catholic boys' secondary school in a large regional city. He came to teaching after some years as a research scientist. The school is large and fairly conservative and Ewan has clearly enjoyed his teaching experiences. A need for closer study of his new profession has led him to start a Master of Education this year.

Sarah is in her fifth year of teaching. She came to teaching after obtaining a Master of Dietetics and now teaches chemistry, maths and science. She taught for three years in a small country school, for one year in a government high school and now teaches in a prestigious private school. Sarah is very clear about her responsibility to her students and their learning. She has thoroughly enjoyed teaching up until this year.

Sophia is in her second year of teaching English and humanities. She taught at her own secondary school, a large urban government school last year. This year she has moved to a small private school in a country town about seventy kilometres from Melbourne. Sophia is a passionate teacher, a published poet and a writer and artist. She is very clear about the need to connect with students and the power that can be harnessed or exploited in teaching.

I made a taped reflection after each interview and it is interesting to revisit my thoughts. I was always delighted to meet up with the participants and to engage in the discussion. They were all leading interesting, thoughtful lives and they had fascinating insights to offer. I was interested in how absorbed I became in the discussion and my empathy and engagement was palpable. I was operating at 100% capacity during the three weeks of the interviews. I was energized and excited by what I was learning. My gratitude to the participants is profound.

Planning the journey... working with data

Preliminary reading material was sent to participants at least one week prior to the interview. The reading material consisted of three short passages and provided some sort of definition and discussion about intuition, emotion and reflection respectively (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000; Hargreaves, 1998; Loughran, 1996) (See Appendix 2). Most participants had read the reading material prior to the interview.

Transcripts of each interview were prepared, read, and reread. I was particularly interested in hearing the participants' voices, in looking for common elements and interconnections. Particularly relevant and powerful quotations were collated under key headings.

In reality I was mesmerised by the transcripts. I kept revisiting them. I listened to the tapes again. I was intrigued how some things leapt out at me, particularly the really powerful images or emotions. I was troubled by so many things. I empathised with the teachers and the 'hard parts' of their work. When you discuss emotional labour you really get to the heart of the teaching experience. I struggled with the fact that all the participants had provided powerful insights and stories and yet there was no way I could use ALL the material, particularly in one small paper. Clough, (2002), offers useful insights here when he suggests that the writer is actually the 'architect' concerned with more than the technical "how do I construct the building' but with the deeper question: 'what is this building for?" (p. 8).

I was also concerned with the questions of how could I do these teachers justice? I was completely consumed by the problems of creating stories from other people's lives; of constructing something which may not be 'true'. In some ways the work of Gudmundsdottir, (1996) was reassuring but it was also troubling.

Despite our best efforts at re-creating, describing and interpreting our informants' reality in our research reports...We listen to their words, and try to reconstruct

their meaning in our minds but we can never be sure about the accuracy of these transformations. (p. 303)

I supposed the best I could do was make the stories make sense for me and to help me make sense of my own experiences. Or as Clough (2002) notes; “We need to look more closely at the narratives which organise our own experience” (p. 64).

A number of attempts were made to make sense of this research. A great deal of reading was going on at the same time. I tried to write a conventional academic paper and found myself quickly losing interest. How could I convey the richness of these stories in a seemingly bland format? How could I convey the excitement and pleasure I was getting from all the research? Laurel Richardson (2000) talks of the disenchantment of reading so much academic literature that is sterile and doesn't inspire engagement. I found myself writing and writing at all times of the day and night. I would put ideas together in a particular form and then pull them apart. The reflective part was easy:

May 2003

I can't believe how this project is leaping out of my head, my fingers, just wanting to be written! I went to bed late after finishing one transcription. I woke at 5.00am with ideas racing through my head. It is not 5.30 yet and here I am – all chirpy!

I had the most fascinating day yesterday. I started the transcribing and I found the whole process incredible. I have only transcribed small pieces before but this extended dialogue was interesting. How to capture the silences, the subtleties of the expression? Sarah postponed her interview which was disappointing as I had hoped to get all data collection done this week. Still that gave me an hour to go back to Atkinson & Claxton (2000) and revisit some of the arguments around intuition. Atkinson, challenges the place of reflective practice and the focus of it as the 'saviour' [my word] for the teaching profession 'Reflection on practice may lead to better understanding but not necessarily better practice' (p.70). He argues that some people are not ready for it, can't do it very well. And maybe there are other more important things for beginning teachers to 'master'. There is an interesting link back to Schön and Atkinson & Claxton who argue that reflective practice has been misused/ misapplied and that Schön was after something closer to intuition. The reflection 'in action' seems to me to be more intuitive and

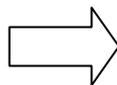
the reflection 'on action' maybe closer to my sense of reflection – something a bit more distant.

Eventually I 'wrote' three of the teachers' stories. I used their words and threaded them together into small stories. I liked this because I could choose the really powerful parts but I also struggled again with the idea of interpreting someone else's life. And I was so conscious of the gaps, the spaces. I had Richardson's (1994) warnings echoing through my head: that desires to speak "for" others are suspect and 'The greater freedom to experiment with textual form does not guarantee a better product'.

June 2003

Today I spent all morning reading after a huge library visit yesterday. I just had to build that security blanket of literature and it did help. I am not completely odd. Other people do write about these things [emotions, intuition and reflection], just not all together. I loved a chapter by Ardra Cole and Gray Knowles and one by Jean Clandinin. Cole and Knowles' chapter was about writing and becoming a writer and it resonated so strongly (Knowles & Cole, 1995). Clandinin's had a shining honesty that I found inspiring (Clandinin, 1995). I think narrative approaches will work.

This afternoon I have started to write properly...sort of. I have decided to write the participants' stories. I started with Emily's (again) and it seemed to fall into place. She has expressed herself so beautifully. I am stuck on Campbell's now because to be honest I find it so damn bleak that it depresses me! Coupled with a few students in crisis on their teaching rounds and I feel as if everything has been sucked out of me. Campbell uses amazing imagery in his speech and I can't seem to capture that well in the story. I will try something different later.



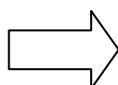
TO READ THE CONSTRUCTED NARRATIVES PLEASE GO TO PAGE 159

The next path...combining stories through conversation

It is interesting how things just seem to happen and something feels quite right. I decided that the only way I could do justice to the participants' contributions was to include parts of all of them. I wrote an imaginary conversation between all the participants and myself. Most of these people do not know each other as they did their GDE in different years but they have certainly shared some common experiences. They all responded to the same questions in the interview/ conversations and this meant that I had a range of different perspectives on the same issues to explore. By placing them together as a 'script' or imaginary conversation I was able to work towards Richardson's (2000) notion of 'crystallisation' "where what we see depends upon our angle of repose" (p. 934).

It was fun making the conversation work. I tried just to let it flow, using the teachers' voices from the transcripts and inserting the odd connector myself. The first drafts were messy and again I am conscious of what I am missing. The choice and selection of material is so critical in what becomes the story. I decided to rework this and include an 'interrupted reading' or comments from the literature and my own thoughts on the way through.

Writing the 'script' was exciting. I felt as if I was back in the conversations with the participants and the process felt like selecting pieces of rich fabrics, of different textures and hues, and sewing them carefully together with my own care-full thread. Writing myself into the conversation allowed me to provide a level of analysis and interpretation or clarification of the comments. It had also provided a way for me to thread the literature through the piece. I was comfortable that the 'script' had allowed the voices of the participants to be authentically 'heard'.



TO READ 'CONVERSATIONS WITH TEACHERS' GO TO PAGE 172

Pictures and poems on the journey

When presenting material at conferences I am always conscious of trying to help the audience make their own sense of my material in a range of ways. Including images was a way of introducing the audience to some of the metaphors that the research participants had shared.

Participants in the interviews had suggested a range of images or metaphors and I felt they conveyed something powerful. I felt I was beginning to understand that this whole project was an invitation to think in a slightly different way. I thought presenting images might help elucidate some of the interconnections between emotion, intuition and reflection in a different way.

Including images adds another level of interpretation and construction. I don't know whether my images help tell the participants' stories but they do help me make sense of the words. I found some of my own photos of reflections and pathways; I searched the internet and elsewhere and found images of labyrinths, a maze, brick walls, woven materials and other interconnecting things. My father helped with pictures of an iceberg, some reflections and another pathway.

However, I still needed something more.

I was having trouble 'capturing' the range of the emotions described by the participants. I was clear about the importance of foregrounding the comments about emotions. Goleman (1995) had highlighted the importance of emotions in teaching and learning and Hargreaves (1998, 2002) had conducted extensive research in the area. Hargreaves (1998) notes:

Four fundamental theoretical precepts – that teaching is an emotional practice, which depends on emotional understanding, involves immense amounts of emotional labour, and is integrally bound up with the purposes of teaching and schooling. Together, these precepts present a compelling case for conceiving the emotions as a central rather than an ephemeral part of teaching and schooling, and

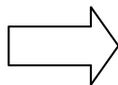
therefore as phenomena worthy of much more explicit attention in educational policy and reform. (p. 841)

The participants clearly had no difficulty talking about the emotions around their teaching and I was fascinated by the power with which they spoke. It seemed important to do something more than just list words or quotes about their feelings.

The exploration of feelings and images seemed to lead naturally to the idea of writing poetry. I needed to capture a whole range of ideas quickly. I was not at all confident about my own poetry writing skills but I did know that I love reading poetry. Richardson, (1994) offers some useful insights into poetry as a form of writing:

When we read or hear poetry, we are continually nudged into recognizing that the text has been constructed...therefore poetry helps problematize reliability, validity and "truth"...Settling worlds together in new configurations lets us hear, see and feel the world in new dimensions. Poetry is thus a practical and powerful method for analyzing social worlds. (p. 522)

In constructing the poems I used metaphors and phrases that had been provided during the interview conversations. The poems evolved out of my desire to convey the intensity of the emotion expressed by the research participants and felt by me. I chose the words from transcripts and then placed them in ways evoked memories of the stories. I used my own words to connect various components and as the writer I was clearly constructing my understanding of the events. There was no planned poetic style or subject; just powerful emotions.

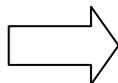


TO VIEW THE POEMS GO TO PAGE 194

In preparation for the conference presentation and in an effort to draw the threads together I decided to construct a PowerPoint presentation. I spent some lovely hours thinking about images, words, messages: in essence constructing my own meaning. I wandered down one path thinking about the place of technology in representing understanding. Clearly the editing function in word processing is wonderful asset. I am not so sure about the 'bells and whistles'. Do they matter? Does a sound effect, or even an image or template add to understanding? Do they add an aesthetic dimension or a distraction?

I am not at all sure that the PowerPoint presentation really did convey what I wanted it to but it helped. It gave me an opportunity to connect things in a new way. It also gave the audience some different memories of the conference presentation. Certainly, there was interesting discussion at the conclusion of my 'paper'. I had raised some questions and many people felt inclined to respond with their own experiences of similar situations. I remember feeling frustrated that some people just wanted to tell their stories and anecdotes and I felt more interested in the comments that were responding to the points raised in the talk. In later discussions I discovered that the images did not 'work' for some people and they were distracting; for others they resonated strongly. In the end we just respond in an entirely personal way.

The story digresses to Leiden, Holland and the ISATT conference. A beautiful university town and many interesting people.



TO VIEW THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION GO TO PAGE 199
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The interconnections

All of the participants spoke eloquently about the importance of reflection, emotion and intuition in their professional lives. Some seemed to capture an explicit interconnection which was helpful to me. In some ways the lack of

connection was also helpful, because we do not all experience this profession the same way at all.

Atkinson and Claxton's (2000) identify an interesting connection between intuition and reflection:

Intuitive thinking is characteristic of experience and its product of tacit knowledge in action which is evident in and supportive of practice. However, practice alone is inadequate and calls for both preparation and review. At the preparation stage, rational thinking makes use of theoretical knowledge in order to draw up a plan of what is to be done. At the review stage, reflective thinking allows lessons to be learned from practical experience that build into local, contextual craft-knowledge which can support future planning. (p. 6)

Clearly the participants were happy with the interconnections of reflection and intuition. And it is helpful to be able to see it as a cyclical thing: interestingly both Sophia and Katrina had suggested that in the interviews. Interestingly too, van Manen's (1991) idea of pedagogical tact was raised by a number of participants: "the ability of instantly sensing what is the appropriate, right or good thing to do".

The interconnection of reflection and emotion was highlighted by some of the participants. Quite a few commented that they reflect particularly when things do not go well and a couple raised the importance of reflecting on the good things too: to learn from and reinforce those good teaching experiences. Day (1999) makes an interesting and important connection between reflection and emotion:

Fundamental to the notion of reflective practice is that good teachers need to maintain not only their intellectual but also their emotional health over the span of their careers...Fundamental to this is that teachers need to be both technically competent and 'passionate' in teaching – a recognition that teaching requires not only an appropriate range of knowledge and skills but also intense emotional investment (p. 221).

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This reading hits a nerve. Some current students complain about the reflective tasks I expect them to do (each year some people complain). I have tried so many things over the years and I abandoned the extensive journals in place of smaller more diverse and creative pieces. I am challenged by my desire to encourage teachers to think deeply and by some people's resistance to this. I talk through the power of reflective practice with them but I am not sure they agree. Interestingly the final year evaluative comments included a number of statements such as: 'Thanks for teaching me about reflective practice; it has already made me a better teacher.' Or 'I enjoy thinking and writing, I loved the reflective tasks, and the chance to be creative.'

Other things that matter...

The various written pieces have provided ways of exploring the different dimensions of emotion, intuition and reflection and some of the possible interconnections. There were other responses to the question 'what else matters for beginning teachers?' I think they deserve recognition here too. Interestingly many of them have an emotional connection or foundation.

The participants noted that "relationships matter". In fact, all through the interviews there were comments about how relationships develop and sustain teachers. Perhaps connected to this was the idea of compassion as a quality for teachers to have. Some identified creativity and the desire to be creative as really important to their development of teachers. When these qualities were quashed or denied the negative aspects seemed to appear.

One person identified "the harshness and the loneliness" as profoundly disturbing issues. Others commented on the structures that can be very restricting. I empathised with this and I wonder if we need to prepare PSTs for these possibilities. A useful response came from another participant who

commented that “structural blocks can be overcome, through gentle subversion”. A key issue was “really learning what really matters”. This comment related to how much of what happens in schools is made to seem important (uniforms, rubbish, timetables, extra classes and so on) when ultimately it is the people, the relationships and the learning that matter. Beginning teachers get very strong messages about what matters in their school. The research participants identified the need to question this.

One concern that many beginning teachers have is how to manage the complexity and demands of their career. We talk about it within the GDE course and we provide different models for organizing oneself. One of the research participants volunteered that something that beginning teachers needed to know was that ‘organisational skills can be learnt’.

Perhaps the most poignant response to the question “what matters for beginning teachers” was the suggestion “that classrooms can be healing.” Someone who had experienced some very painful moments volunteered this and it was so powerful to hear them suggest that classrooms are not just war zones or sites for confrontation; that they can in fact be healing.

The participants gave me a profound insight into the sorts of things that matter to teachers early on in their career. The words are powerful reminders of those paths we once trod ourselves, and perhaps still do.

Whither...

I have come to the end of this part of the journey and I am left with so many questions. I have many more journeys to plan. Things I want to explore further. I am thrilled that this particular journey has absorbed me so totally and that it has excited me so completely. Perhaps an insight from a reflection early in the process highlights this:

What am I actually envisaging? Expecting? It is only a piece of writing but somehow it feels like it means so much more to me. Is it because this is the

first thing that is truly mine, which I have done completely on my own? And am I asking the questions that really matter to me. Maybe my emotional and intellectual 'investment' is different this time.

Or at a later time:

At one point I said I felt disappointed, I don't know what I was expecting, perhaps something just to 'jump out' and suddenly make sense for me. Immediately after writing that I realized that I was the one who had to help the words leap out and I was the one responsible for making my own meaning. In one sense the participants had offered very powerful and profound insights into their own understanding and now I had to make mine.

I don't know whether I have succeeded in terms of conventional narrative methodology, but I have certainly learnt a great deal and I have been supported by the work of many people. I have had this experience: "in this [writing] process the emotional and cognitive cannot be separated, and the learner is fully engaged in the inquiry with all their senses." (Elbaz-Luwisch & Pritzker, 2002).

My learning from the journey...

The distance provided by passing time is always useful. It allows the crystal to be turned in changing lights, for ideas to be viewed differently, for different perspectives to develop. What does this particular piece of research mean for me? Or perhaps better questions are: What does it matter? How does it matter? To me? To the participants? For future GDE students?

As the end nears I can now address a question that has puzzled me throughout this project. Why did I explore these particular dimensions and why did I see them as contemporary aspects of teacher education? Reflective practice has had a significant place in teacher education for some time and I knew the research participants could talk about it fairly easily. I felt there were other dimensions missing. As I review my earlier literature notes some quotes

leap out, and make me realise that others were thinking about the same issues and I have just accepted their invitation to explore further.

In the writing of certain postmodernists...you see a renewed appreciation for emotion, intuition, personal experience, embodiment and spirituality. (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 747)

We know our texts have specific locations. We know they represent ...our baggage as individual social scientists. We care less about our 'objectivity' as scientists than we do about providing our readers with some powerful, propositional, tacit, intuitive, emotional, historical, poetic, empathic experience of the other via the texts we write. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 1058)

My exploration has led to significant change in my own practice, and possibly to those who learn with me. The research meant that I had a whole series of new ways to think about how beginning teachers enter their profession. The participants helped me know more about their experiences in the course and as early career teachers. Being privy to their stories has made me very conscious of the range of ways people respond to situations and also my responsibility to provide a comprehensive and thoughtful introduction to the profession.

It matters that teachers understand their own emotional responses and those of their students and colleagues. Emotions are not something to be avoided or ignored: they are a pivotal part of our existence and they need to be understood just as well as cognitive aspects of learning and teaching. To that end, my teaching now involves explicitly addressing the emotional dimensions of teaching and the concept of teaching as 'emotional labour'. PSTs are encouraged to develop their emotional intelligence and build their personal and professional resilience.

Having some understanding of intuition and our intuitive responses has also become part of the enquiry into practice. Identifying different types of intuitive experiences and responses are explored after the first teaching round,

particularly in relation to building relationships with students and classroom management.

Reflection continues to be fore-grounded but possibly in more subtle ways. There is a meta level in reflective practice- how am I feeling as I undertake this reflective task? What emotions were present in the situation upon which I reflect? Does reflection actually become intuitive as a way of dealing with strong emotions? Does the reflective task actually change the way I feel about a situation. Rather than taking everything personally, maybe reflective practice provides the foundation for the development of the teacher's 'skin'.

What matters? The stories shared, the metaphors suggested, the layers of emotion addressed, the uniqueness of the experiences, the different responses to difficult situations, all these things matter to me. As a teacher educator I want teachers to be resilient, thoughtful, competent and caring. As a teacher educator I need to work with PSTs care-fully and thoughtfully. This project has provided a range of pieces that have merged together to make a strong and supportive base for the complex and multi-layered quilt that has become my metaphor for teacher learning.

Individual journeys...Constructed narratives

These are constructed narratives based on interview transcripts. Each participant had his/ her own series of experiences, their own stories. I have selected three to share. The words are those of the participants. The selection and construction of the stories is mine.

Emily as the journey leader...

I undertook my GDE in 2001. My journey towards teaching was an interesting one and I embraced the course with enthusiasm, passion and some apprehension. My background was in English, drama and communication. I have since been working in the rural campus of a large city private school. Designed for Year nine students, the campus has what would be recognised as an 'alternative' approach. There is a strong element of student personal development and negotiated curriculum. Learning and reflection are foundations of the program.

I'm a very emotional teacher and a very emotional person and I think that I have mastered being able to, at times, repress those emotions. I think I'm very passionate and enthusiastic about what I teach, to the point where it becomes physical. My emotions are often connected to my physicality so that's a very big part of my teaching. I do a lot of physical sort of teaching so it all seems very inter-connected, my emotional and physical being and my intuitive ways of thinking are all really tightly knitted.

Reflective practice is an integral part of my working environment and a very important part of my own life. I have written extensively in the past and so a working environment that values reflection so profoundly has proved a very positive experience for me. In my workplace, everybody is able to have the space and the time to make the reflective learning process work well because you can't force it in a small time span. You can't get those results; you need to have time and space and the right place and environment for that reflective, deep reflective learning to work with most students. I think that if you're not

naturally reflective, in one way then it [reflection] loses all meaning, the whole process loses meaning. I think, as a student you don't connect to learning, and then you're finding it all pointless.

Intuition is something that I understand well and use often. It's something that's quick, you respond to it quite quickly and you're reading a situation and you're using your past experiences to determine what's going on in that situation, in some ways, but it's more instinctive. My response is very fast when I'm using my intuition, so I don't know why that happens but an example is when a student is not responding in the same way as other students perhaps, or I'll instantly feel drawn to a student and I'll need to ask them what's going on. To them it's almost, it's like magnetism.

As far as intuitive learning and teaching is concerned, when we are out in a situation say at a beach or sitting and doing our reflective writing or sharing discussion about personal issues, intuitively I will know if things need to move on and intuitively I will know if I need to extend the time that we're spending on a certain topic.

Intuition is an empowering thing and I think that maybe only intuitive people are proud of it. I think students can be taught resilience and [to] have a stronger sense of self and rely on themselves more and therefore learn a lot more because they have that base. It's part of the base of who you are, and not all students are totally intuitive but all students can tap into it intuition, I think.

When I think about the interconnection of intuition, reflection and emotion in my development as a teacher, I think it works like this:

The subject matter that I teach stems from me and it stems from who I am. How I teach and how I think makes it work as a writer and a reflective person prior to teaching. I think all of my past leading to my teaching as a mature aged person has been integral. I think it's been really important. I might not have become a teacher if I hadn't had the intuitive, reflective and emotive

experiences prior to the course. I think it's just a whole, it's a whole way of being and every experience that I have as a teacher is connected to these practices to these approaches.

Of course they have been integral to my development in my role as a teacher, who I am. So it's who I am as a teacher and even if I wasn't conscious of those three ways of being intuitive, reflective and emotive all the time, I think now I can use them as tools. I use them, I don't always just use them from my being, I use them as, as tools in my teaching and I sometimes use them consciously. And most of the time I probably don't use them consciously.

Care-full reading

A care-full reading of Emily's story highlights the importance of working in a place that supports the teacher's particular beliefs about learning. Emily can be affirmed and confident that her attitude to reflective practice and intuition is supported. Emily powerfully explains the importance of emotions and reflective practice in her life and her teaching. Her comments about not all people being naturally reflective or intuitive are interesting. The pedagogic possibility that Emily shares is that teachers can work in interesting and creative ways to develop these dimensions in themselves and their students. The interconnection that Emily identifies between her physicality and emotions, between her intuitive self and reflective self, is powerful. It presents an image of a complex and passionate teacher and challenges us to reflect on our own experiences.

Campbell as journey leader...

I came to teaching as a mature age student after extensive travel and working as an artist. I completed the GDE in 2002. I had a very clear sense of what I wanted to get from a teacher education course and my deep thinking and constant questioning provided a rich foundation for my learning. I am teaching in a three-year-old campus of an urban school in what is known as a 'growth corridor' of Melbourne. The school has been purpose built to model an

integrated curriculum although it is not actually finished. Some rooms are not fitted out completely and the outside has not been landscaped. It has students from about fifty nationalities and generally lower socio-economic backgrounds.

A naturally reflective person, I have found the reality of teaching very challenging. The time and space for reflection is consumed by many things and the emotions I have experienced are very powerful.

Last year as part of the [GDE] course I found it really easy to be reflective because it was understood, that was part of the way the course was run and I find it naturally easy to do that. In my life that's how I've made progress in becoming a different person through time. But this year because of the learning curve that's teaching I found that I haven't probably been able to have a enough time to reflect, so that I can actually document or look from a distance.

We [another first year teacher and I] do pretty much reflect the whole way home, and without that I think I probably would have quit pretty early on.

I'm finding it very much a survival day to day thing at the moment...[I am] in a situation where the student behaviour and student desire not to learn is so overwhelming that's its difficult to manage a class and try to 'drive the bus' of the educative process in a direction you want to go in every lesson. They [the students] like to disrupt their own education. The energy they're putting into their education is in disrupting it, not in actually going forward with it and I'm completely overwhelmed by that.

I have had to dramatically alter my plans and beliefs about teaching in an effort to engage the students. I kind of semi-ditched what I would call the thing that I thought is the way I'd teach and I'm going in a different direction. Of having to find out exactly where every kid comes from in their understanding, so that there's been a lot of surveying of what they think art is

and so I've ditched a lot of the, the seriousness of CSF [curriculum guidelines] ...I ditched a lot of that for things that will relate to them.

I'm very frustrated that I'm not satisfied with my teaching at present not by any standard. I'm not up to the standard that I want to be at and so that I feel I'm letting myself down but I can't tell you exactly how it's going to improve, other than just to keep being me.

You have to become a different person you have to embody something different than you previously thought and it's not easy to just go, 'Oh, I'm changing from this to that,' so that requires adjustment and that you know in 13 weeks I've gone through a lot of adjustments. I feel vulnerable because I'm not completely comfortable and I should say, I feel this thing coming over me lately where I do feel this sense of this thing which I would call the 'teacher's skin'. I've said something exactly right as a teacher would say it and that's kind of like the outer form, the outer protective surface as a teacher, starting to form. Whereas I haven't had that, I've been like you know a bird without its wings, all just floppy and so that skin is slowly starting. I can feel one to two percent of that starting to happen. I know when I did it, I said the thing in a correct way that you know there was no room for misunderstanding or misconception about it. It feels right.

Intuition to me means being able to read a situation and adapt to it and some days I think I read a situation well and other days I don't and so I think probably, in hindsight, if I handled something differently in an earlier stage of the class maybe some of the discipline issues that eventuated may not have eventuated. So I think it will take me time to intuit it: when to be really firm over here and when to allow that little bit of naughty behaviour over there, because it's hard. I find it hard to know the best response, and I've already fallen into terrible traps which I don't like, of the voice going right up! I hate doing that and sometimes unfortunately I've found no option because the noise level is so loud, I can't come over the top of it. I can't establish discipline and it's just where you've got five or six kids who refuse to sit down and they're all out of their seat and it's just sent into chaos and that's not

uncommon at this school. So I don't feel I'm terrible at teaching but I find that being able to intuit earlier that, that was about to start snow balling cause it doesn't happen all the time. So I don't know how to pick it how to short circuit that, I need more skills in intuiting what's going on.

The influences on my development have been the harshness, contending with feeling isolated in terms of being in a team but feeling isolated and just the 'just go out there and do it and you can' attitude. You're expected to do it really well but you're expected to also have this pre-knowledge of how to do it really well, when you just don't.

It just seemed at times that I could have quit but I felt that I'd just shut down and in some circumstances I'm still in survival mode because its tough going but I'm trying to find a way to make the best of it all.

Care-full reading

Campbell was clear about his expectations of a teacher education course and how he would teach. His story highlights a range of emotions and the language he uses is important. He describes being in "survival" mode; how he has had to change his "plans and beliefs" (profound parts of himself); having to become a "different person"; dealing with isolation in a team and the difficulty of living up to expectations. His journey has been a difficult one. Campbell sees intuition as something that develops with time- and something that he could manage or generate. This is in contrast with Emily and Sophie's inherent intuition. The pedagogic possibilities it raises in teacher education are interesting: do we need to challenge the views we are presenting, the passion for the profession that we are encouraging? Should we explore the development of the "teacher skin" more explicitly?

Sophia as journey leader...

I completed my GDE in 2001. Last year I taught at my old school and this year I am teaching English and Information Technology at a small independent school seventy kilometres from Melbourne. I love teaching, and writing and thinking...

Reflection is a part of my professional life and I think it is also part of who I am. I think it is important that whenever there is, any incident regardless of how small it is or how big it is, that you need to think about it. One of the major lessons in life related to teaching that I have had, that related to reflective learning, would be when a Year 8 boy who has a number of discipline issues was in the classroom and rather than putting his hand up and giving me the answer or waiting for me to ask him, he blurted it out and I stupidly said to him, "Daniel, you need to wait like everybody else and put your hand up", and just the look in his eye told me that what I had done was completely wrong and uncalled for.

I thought about it. I thought about what I did to him and thought perhaps instead of focusing on the negative, that he didn't put his hand up – which isn't really a negative, but there is a kind of expectation that we place upon our students, that maybe next time I can congratulate him on participating in the classroom discussion regardless of whether it is a right or wrong answer. Then perhaps I could suggest 'that it might be even better if you can follow the other students and see if you can get your hand up quicker'.

That really made me think about what happened that day and myself as a teacher because I have never thought of myself as being a 'down the line teacher'. I always thought I was pretty easy going until that day when he made me realise that there were certain things that I was doing that I kind of swore that I wouldn't do. .. And then after that, I encouraged him to be more present during classroom discussions, regardless of whether he has got his hand up or not.

I wonder whether my reprimand was intuitive or something that has just been droned into us. Like from when I was four. You went to school and you put your hand up if you want to answer a question or make some sort of comment. So then there are all those years of being dominated in such a way and even though you know that's not necessarily the correct thing, that's not your rational response you still do it.

As far as reflection goes, I don't have to make a conscious effort to say, 'Right I am going to go home tonight and think about what happened, because I know I will anyway. I don't have to remind myself.

I think the emotions involved with teaching can sometimes make or break a teacher. Also the emotions that you have during teaching are sometimes the link that you have with students. I think it is natural if a student's being really troublesome that you feel angry and that you express that and that you tell them, 'this makes me feel...' and you tell them why it makes you feel that way. So there is a basis to how you are reacting to that particular person. Rather than blocking it in and then turning around and snapping which I think is what a lot of people end up doing: either snapping at the kids or just chucking the profession away.

You have just got to be true to yourself because if you start building an environment where there is the 'teacher you' and the 'individual you' you are just going to alienate the two and the teacher you will become less human and the kids pick up on that. They are only young and they desire that connection, some sort of bonding with their teacher that they spend so much time with. So you can't be a cold fish all the time, you know not laugh until Easter as the advice was given to me.

I think the most common emotions around teaching would be happiness and satisfaction and also a sense of frustration at times. Happiness comes from either connecting with students or being able to get a student to see their potential that they thought they may not have had. It clicks with them and you

feel as though you have had some sort of part in that and you see that flicker in their eye when they think that you genuinely believe in them.

I get frustrated sometimes when I am not able to deliver what I feel like I need to be able to deliver to students. I perhaps know that this is the outcome they need to get to and in some ways I feel let down because I feel as if I haven't been able to bring them to that standard. I try not to let that seep through or filter or dilute the positive things or the positive emotions and being happy with the kids and waking up in the morning and thinking, 'Great I've got this class, I can't wait to try this lesson out or have this classroom discussion'. Too many teachers want their happiness by belittling kids or patronizing them and that really gets me frustrated and I am beginning to realise that adults have a different sort of relationship with each other than students do and I don't think it's ever innocent.

I think intuition and being reflective go hand in hand. Because if you reflect over something then it's inside you and then it comes out next time you might see a similar situation. You have that immediate sense that you 'know' or you have a feeling. It's turned into an intuition, or almost an intuitive response.

I think as a new teacher the only thing that you may be able to rely on is your intuition and then as you slowly gain confidence you start pushing that back a bit and you say 'well no, this is the correct way to do things' and you do it in that way. Or it can be that you continue to gain intuition and reflection. So it might go two ways, I'm not sure. For me personally, I just think intuition is really important. For me it's a struggle, not to repress it, but to understand it even better. Maybe the argument that too many new teachers don't rely so much on intuition is because their courses don't allow them to be intuitive enough.

I think intuition has a lot to do with our personalities too. Perhaps if you are a bit more introverted, and you internalise things so then when it comes up again, you are putting out what you've taken in and it becomes an intuition. There are times when you just get that gut feeling, that you 'know' and there is

no rationale behind it and if someone said to you, "What is your reason for doing this?" You'd probably say, "Oh, I don't know, I just had the feeling". Kids are really good at this and I think we hassle them so much about it. When you say to a kid, "Why did you do that?" and they give you a look and they genuinely don't know. Obviously something's prompted them to do it and the most common thing a teacher will say is something like, "Stop and think about what you are doing before you do it," or that really rational response and perhaps maybe we should be getting them to recognize, "Where did this feeling come from? Why did you suddenly punch Bobby in the head? Or what were the feelings that were there?" There is so little work done on it you can't say "this is how intuition plays a role," because you are not even aware of it sometimes until you do reflect on it. And then once you've reflected on it, it's in there. It's locked away then next time it happens it will come back up again. It's like a cycle.

Care-full reading

Sophia highlights the interactions with students through her exploration of reflection, intuition and emotion. Her story about Daniel gives a challenging insight into classroom management and how intuitive responses may well not be reliable - or the best in a given situation. Sophia's discussion about the 'teacher you' and the 'individual you' raises some important questions around contemporary teaching. In the past teachers may have been encouraged to develop a professional façade, the 'don't smile until Easter' façade. Sophia points out that the contrasting selves can actually cause teachers problems. In raising the issue of 'relying on intuitive selves' Sophia offers the pedagogic possibility: that teacher education courses need to encourage students to explore the intuitive self more explicitly.

Reflecting on the stories...

Each of the story leaders identified that they were naturally reflective. In fact all the research participants identified themselves as being inherently reflective or having developed reflective skills within the GDE course.

I find Emily's story quite inspiring and I was taken with her total enthusiasm during the interview. She was honest about her own difficulties and misgivings but she was also very passionate about her own learning journey and how she connects with students and colleagues. This is interesting when I consider Gudmundsdottir's (1996) comments on participants' 'truth'. She points out that informants don't deliberately lie but "the force of the narrative tradition is strong...We have to accept the fact that the full story can never be told" (p. 300).

Perhaps the most powerful part of Emily's story was about her relationships with people and the importance of those in her development as a teacher. Clark (1995) notes, "the essence of good teaching, for teachers, is in the arena of human relationships" (p. 14). Hargreave's (1998) research with practicing teachers also supported the idea that many of the rewards in teaching came from the relationships.

Many people have written about the different stages in the development of teachers (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Huberman, 1993) and the multiple influences and experiences in the complexity of becoming a teacher. Both Emily and Sophia's stories seemed to show this clearly and echoed Huberman (1993):

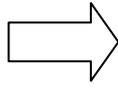
Teachers teach in the way they do not just because of the skills they have or have not learned. The ways they teach are also grounded in their backgrounds, their biographies, in the kind of teachers they have become. Their careers- their hopes and dreams, their opportunities and aspirations or the frustration of these things- are also important for teachers' commitment, enthusiasm and morale. So too are the relationships with their colleagues - either in supportive

communities, or as individuals working in isolation, with the insecurities that this sometimes brings. (p. 8)

I was intrigued by Sophia's story as she was clearly very comfortable talking about emotion, reflection and intuition (as Emily was) but she wanted to make a clear connection or interconnection for me. I wondered whether it was part of a desire to please the interviewer or whether I was trying to listen actively and constructively and to build a "seamless web of belief" (Gudmundsdottir, 1996, p. 298). I was very taken with the constant use of imagery in Sophia's speech. The imagery itself was not surprising as she is a poet and an artist. What excited me was the powerful message that the images conveyed. She talked about teaching being a labyrinth and constantly used metaphor. Maybe I could use images as a way of conveying my understanding.

Campbell's story troubled me deeply as I read over it. Clearly the experiences were terribly difficult and the emotions were at times overwhelming for him. I was troubled by my responsibility as GDE course coordinator to adequately prepare people for the teaching profession. He had mentioned the need to be "roughed up" more during the pre-service education and shown the harsh reality more clearly. I drew some comfort from Munby and Russell's (1995) comment that "experience cannot be taught, it must be had" and their reference to Schön's advice: "There is something you need to know but your teachers cannot tell you what it is" (p. 175). It was also useful to revisit the literature around beginning teaching and the 'survival' stage. I wondered whether it would be helpful for Campbell to know that his experiences were shared by others.

The 'survival' aspect has to do with the 'reality shock', with the initial complexity and uncertainty of the classroom environment, continuous trial and error, preoccupation with self ('Am I up to the task?'), the discrepancy between educational ideal and classroom life, the fragmentation of the work, the difficulty of combining instruction and classroom management, the vacillation between intimacy and hostility towards one's pupils, inadequate teaching materials, unruly or intimidating students- the list goes on. (Huberman, 1993, p. 5)



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Conversations with teachers...

I have interwoven the voices of the teachers from the transcripts of the 1:1 interviews into an imaginary conversation.

Maryann: Thankyou all very much for coming today. I enjoyed meeting you all again when I interviewed you recently. It is so interesting to see how your careers have developed since you did your Graduate Diploma of Education at this university.

Now I know most of you have only just met but you do share the common experiences of undertaking a GDE in the past five years and now working as teachers. I guess I am the link or connector for you as you were all enrolled in the unit 'Introduction to Teaching and Learning' with me during the GDE year. As you remember one of the emphases in that course was the development of teachers as reflective practitioners and you were all required to keep a reflective journal of your learning through the GDE year. You also started the year with revisiting your own learning journey and writing your 'Autobiography as a learner' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Day, 1999; Elbaz, 1991).

You might have wondered why I invited you to participate in the research with me. As you know I am fascinated by learning and I wanted to know more about how the learning in the GDE and beyond had affected you. I invited you specifically, because I know you were really interested in learning while you were doing the course and you seemed to raise lots of interesting questions in our discussions. I was also interested to get a range of perspectives so I wanted to hear from people from different genders, teaching subject areas and teaching experiences. It's called purposive sampling when a researcher selects individuals to interview (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). I guess I could have asked a whole lot of other people and had many different perspectives.

- Sophia: Those questions you asked us in the interview. Did you make them up? They were good cos they really made me think. They were quite complex but they lead us to really trying to sort out that interconnection you were interested in.
- Emily: They were interesting questions and I enjoyed the interview but I didn't really feel like I gave you enough of what you wanted, not enough stories.
- Maryann: I designed the questions quite quickly but I thought if the questions had multiple components it might help you make connections when you were answering them. I must admit as the interviews progressed I thought that the questions were actually too long and messy and not as helpful or supportive as they might have been.
- Campbell: Yeah, I found that I only answered the first part of the questions and when I looked back at them I realised we had digressed fairly early on in many of them. There seemed to be 'natural' places for the questions to lead.
- Katrina: Yes, I found that too. I had actually prepared brief written answers prior to the interview and when it came to the real interview I found I had answered part of the questions or interpreted it in what felt like a different way from Maryann, specially the interconnectedness question.
- Maryann: I was fascinated by the way you each addressed the questions and I must admit I found myself being drawn into the discussion and wanting to explore things further with you. In that sense the whole process really felt like a series of one hour reflective conversations with you – and in some cases 'post-GDE' debriefing sessions! I was so conscious of knowing you quite well and having all those shared hours of learning together at uni. We had spent so many hours practicing how to be more reflective (Loughran, 1996). I was intrigued that you were all very clear that reflective practice is an important part of your teaching life.

Sarah: Reflection was introduced to me, by you and initially being a science person I tend to be you know a logical type thinker, I thought what is this reflection? Don't I just go in and do what I've gotta do?! But now it makes up a huge part of my teaching. Of what I've done, of my experiences.

Campbell: Last year as part of the course I found it really easy to be reflective because it was understood that was part of the way the course was run and I find it naturally easy to do that. In my life that's how I've made progress in becoming a different person through time. But this year because of the learning curve that's teaching I found that I haven't probably been able to have enough time to reflect, so that I can actually document or, you know, look from a distance.

Laura: I find the time thing really hard. I like to think that reflective practice is part of my professional practice but I found that I have not done as much of it as I would have liked because I have been too tired to reflect on things so I'm trying to get around that by trying to talk on tape and just to work through things that might have come up during the day because I'm too tired to write at the end of the night and I fall asleep. I would rather put a bit more time into it and question what's gone on a bit more. I probably do that when I talk to other people. Or if I go for a run that's when I find that I do probably the most reflecting or when it's more productive. I'm learning and I will think about what happened and I will think about how I reacted to it and sort of think about why and also think about other scenarios and how it could have gone differently.

Maryann: So there is something there about time. Sarah you commented that you have reflected more as you have become more experienced but that there is still a shortage of time. That is supported by Day (1999), when he comments:

there is not always time or energy needed to undertake in depth enquiry either alone or collaboratively . The availability of time itself may be governed by any one or a combination of four dimensions: the micro political...; the phenomenological...; the socio-political...; and the personal, which relates to the ways in which individuals themselves construct their priorities... (p. 227)

What I want to think more about is the whole nature of reflective practice after your pre-service training and how that can be better supported. I know I do most of my thinking as I drive to and from work - luckily I have an hour each way.

Katrina: I think reflection for me is important because it really dominates what decisions I make and it really challenges me. It helps me work out the bigger picture where sometimes you feel you can only make certain progress by talking to people and you know hearing stories here, there and everywhere but if you go away and think about it, weigh up the options, try and make a better path to where you want to get to. I think you're much better at figuring out the big picture and, and being a lot happier that you're probably in control of the decisions that you've made. Instead of if you're not reflecting on where you're going, all of a sudden in ten years time you get to a position and you're really unhappy.

Also reflection can be highly informal and sometimes formal, so being informal, talking to other staff, just in like a friendly setting and other times formal reflection is part of meetings, and curriculum meetings can often be that way. Talking about our experiences with certain subjects, like I said, at regular times. I don't really think there's a common pattern with it. It's often the most challenging circumstances are ones that beckon reflection. If you're put in a situation where you either sink or swim, I think you're more inclined to go back to reflect on that incident. That's just how I feel. So if it's super challenging or there's an issue that's come up you will tend to go over that more and think about what

you should have done or what you can do. In terms of reflection, it gives me insight into how I can improve my teaching.

Ewan: Part of the pleasure I get from teaching is the fact that there is no set way of doing something and that as a teacher you're directing things at different people and at the class as a whole and always looking at how those things work. And especially if it's a class that it hasn't worked in or a set of classes, I do a lot of reflection after that.

Sophia: Reflection is a part of my professional life and I think it is also part of who I am. That's why it is probably part of my profession. I think it is important that whenever there is, you know, any incident regardless of how small it is or how big it is, that you need to think about it. My reflection is usually in writing, in talking and unconsciously. In those three methods I don't have to make a conscious effort to say, "Right I am going to go home tonight and think about what happened", because I know I will anyway. I don't have to remind myself.

Emily: It's like that for me too. I have always written and thought a lot. The GDE course validated that further and now in my school we have regular reflection time set aside for students and staff. As a beginning teacher I have plenty of occasions where I have to sit down and break apart what I'm learning or trying to construct as a teacher, so as far as lesson planning and teaching practise is concerned I need to do that often.

The interesting thing for me is how to encourage students to be reflective. Everybody is trying to have the space and the time to make the reflective learning process work well because you can't force it in a small time span. You can't get those results, you need to have time and space and the right place and environment for that deep reflective learning to work with most students. Not all students just want to write but if you give them other ways of reflecting, that suit them, then that works a lot better. It just seems that some people are inherently better

at reflecting. Maybe it is genetic, 'cause they're young, they're very young people.

Sophia: Yes, I wonder about that too. I like to teach my students how to reflect and I model reflective behaviour all the time, like you did, Maryann. Yeah, that's important, that thinking aloud idea and sharing writing.

Maryann: It would be interesting to explore further how the reflective process is really lived out. There is no doubt that it is an important part of my life and there is plenty of evidence supporting the place of reflective practice in teacher education (La Boskey, 1994; Loughran, 1996) and in learning in general. I am also interested in the connection of emotion and reflective practice. Day (1999a) offers interesting insights into this: "To ignore the place of emotion in reflection, in, on and about teaching and learning is to fail to appreciate its potential for positively or negatively affecting the quality of the classroom experience for both teachers and learners" (p. 33).

Laura, you commented on the strong interconnection between reflection and emotion for you. Would you like to explain that to us all?

Laura: Yes, usually when I'm feeling quite emotional it will follow on that I will reflect what I'm feeling and why. I need to be careful though. I think the first time I went through [debriefing on a difficult episode] I just thought that's about as much as I could get out of it at that time. Maybe if I look back on it in a week or so you know with other things having happened since then, that might help me reflect on it more but during that initial 24 hour period, I don't know that it's gunna change, sort of, 'cos the feelings of anger and everything are still there. I tend to sometimes reflect too much on negative things. I do think about that class and I tell them how good they are as well. Which I think they really appreciate. I think emotion and reflecting on emotion is probably the most powerful thing really in terms of how you're feeling and I just think that attitude's everything when it comes to teaching. It has a huge

influence on how you're developing as teacher and how you're actually teaching day to day.

Maryann: Perhaps it would be useful to look at the emotions involved in teaching more closely. I have been very relieved to see emotions becoming a central part of some academic research in teaching and learning (Goleman, 1996; Hargreaves, 1998, 2002). Goleman (1995) identifies:

Four of these domains of emotional intelligence may be applied directly to the intelligences or basic competences needed by teachers in their management of classrooms:

1. *Knowing one's emotions.* Self-awareness is the keystone of emotional intelligence.
2. *Managing emotions.* Handling feelings so they are appropriate is an ability that builds on self-awareness.
3. *Recognizing emotions in others.* Empathy...is the fundamental 'people skill'.
4. *Handling Relationships...*skill in managing emotions in others...social competence. These abilities underpin popularity, leadership and interpersonal effectiveness. (pp. 43 - 44)

I have always had a sense that my own emotional state is very influential in how well I learn and how well I communicate. I am also very clear about how learning will not occur if the learner is not in the right emotional state. I have seen so many incidents of students being berated for not completing a task or not concentrating and really there is something profound or difficult going on for them.

Katrina: Yes, that's right, I had an incredible example of that. I've got a student in year 10 at the moment whose boyfriend's best friend committed suicide and the fact of the matter is she hasn't done her work and if I didn't invest the time with her finding out why she has not been working, what's going on in her life, how can I make it easier? I think I'm about the only teacher that has done that in the school apart from the school nurse who the students confide in and everything else is, well there are punishments if you don't hand in work on time and not even bothering to delve into the very first layer of why. I mean it's just

accepted or they just believe that its laziness where there truly is a reason behind it, which is really quite disturbing.

While we are on emotions I would just like to explore this a bit further. In the interview you asked us about the emotions around our teaching and I said: I don't think that I could ever walk in to a class without feeling some form of emotion. Some days I walk in just so excited and there are times where I get so angry that you know you feel like you want to cry. I guess there's just another level, that idea of angry where I probably deemed it more frustration: that there's something that hasn't been resolved. I am just constantly like fluctuating with emotion in terms of teaching.

Sarah: I can understand that too. I think I talked about anger as one of my strongest emotions. Anger and I'm feeling frustrated because, you know, I don't NEED to be there if all they're doing is failing tests all the time. Really I am supposed to be there to give them confidence, and you know, help them with their maths, not just have them fail.

Some days you do find it hard. It's interesting what people say, a place is really a lot of the people you work with. And I really enjoyed my other school. We did our job properly but we just had a nice, nice place to be at. No matter what was going on in the classroom the support of colleagues made up for the fact that there could be more difficult issues to deal with. The school I am in now is so cold. And yet I feel really positive about teaching as a career. It is interesting how my emotional state has changed so profoundly with the setting I am in.

Campbell: I know what you mean about frustration. In certain classes, the sheer weight of the numbers of certain individuals who are pushing the borders, make it really difficult to conduct a class where the ideals of everyone moving forward and taking in new knowledge and doing their own research and owning their own knowledge, just cannot happen. So that leaves me feeling very frustrated with some classes in particular.

And then I feel disappointed too that I am not able to teach the way I want to. I'm very frustrated that I'm not satisfied with my teaching at present not by any standard. I'm not up to the standard that I want to be at and so that I feel I'm letting myself down but I can't tell you exactly how it's going to improve, other than just to keep being me.

Sophia: Yes I get frustrated sometimes when I am not able to deliver what I feel like I need to be able to deliver to students. When I perhaps know that this is the outcome they need to get to and in some ways I feel let down because I feel as if I haven't been able to bring 'em to that standard. But I try not to let that seep through or filter or dilute the positive things or the positive emotions and that's, you know being happy with the kids and waking up in the morning and thinking, "Great I've got this class, I can't wait to try this lesson out or have this classroom discussion".

Ewan: I guess for me the main emotion is around the feeling of enjoyment. A lot of teaching for me is about enjoyment. I've got to enjoy it but I also want to see the enjoyment on their faces. It is knowing that science is not everyone's cup of tea, and I understand that, and I accept that. And we speak about that in class and say, 'Look, you know, you don't have to necessarily have to like science to enjoy bits and pieces of it.' Another emotion when I did the new idea of a concept map was confusion. Through it I was worried that, "Am I doing the right thing?" When I saw some of these guys it just wasn't clicking with them, there was you know a bit of concern there that, you know, is it working? Is it not working?

Maryann: So that's interesting. Some of your concern is around your own teaching and some is around your care for the students?

Emily: I am always concerned about the students. In my case I feel that often my personal emotions come to play when I'm teaching and sometimes they need to be suppressed and sometimes they need to be brought

out. I think there's a degree of performance involved in teaching, but also I think you need to generate emotions and spread the emotions through the group if you want to have certain learning outcomes. Sometimes you need to inspire or awaken certain emotions in students so that you can achieve some of the outcomes that you hoped the group would achieve.

I think the strongest emotional feeling that I like to drum up is in my courses is the sort of feeling of awe or inspiration where the group shares a feeling of excitement and awe about the topic or about something new. But there are certainly feelings of empathy and especially in a year 9 group it would be good to try to encourage feelings of empathy amongst the group or for the topic or for each other. There is excitement and joy that needs to come up at certain times or just a feeling of wanting to enquire about something that they don't know about going into the unknown, being brave I suppose it's one of the emotions you need to have as a young person when you're dealing with philosophical issues that might be challenging.

Sophia: That's interesting thinking about courage as an important emotion. I think the emotions involved with teaching can sometimes make or break a teacher. It's also the emotions that you have during teaching are sometimes the link that you have with students. You know, the ability to sit in a classroom and to share that this passage in a particular text makes me sad and having them identify with that sorrow or you know whatever you are feeling.

I think the most common emotions around teaching would be happiness and satisfaction and also a sense of frustration at times. Happiness comes from either connecting with students or being able to get a student to see their potential that they thought they may not have had.

Laura: Yes I love the moments of connection to. Often it occurs outside the usual lesson, when you have time to get to know students in a different way. Like on camp. Sometimes I feel like I'm a yo-yo in terms of my emotions. I can have a bad sort of or not a productive period three/ four and just be distraught and really upset at lunchtime and then have a good five and six and feel just over the moon at the end of the day. You have to sort of not only act out feelings (Hargreaves, 1998) but actually get yourself into that mood and that requires a lot of effort, particularly if you're tired or other stuff is going on and I find you know I really try when I walk into a classroom to give a big smile and say, 'Good morning and how is everyone?' Just so that I'm positive going in there because I think if you go in there and you're disengaged you automatically lose a few of them or put them in a bad mood. You can't hurt by being completely over the top and positive, but it is more of an effort some days. If I'm in a good mood anyway it's easy, but other days it's really hard and sometimes I will have the kids say things to me like, 'You're always happy, you're always positive'.

Emily: I'm a very emotional teacher and a very emotional person and I think that I have mastered being able to, at times, to repress those emotions. I think the words that come up are I'm very passionate and enthusiastic about what I teach, to the point where it becomes physical. My emotions are often connected to my physicality so that's a very big part of my teaching. I do a lot of physical sort of teaching so it all seems very inter-connected, my emotional and physical being and my intuitive ways of thinking are all really tightly knitted. There's always a sense of stress around my work but a good sense of stress. It's a lovely driving feeling, it's a motivational sort of feeling and an exciting feeling although there's a bit of pressure there [but] it's a healthy pressure because it helps me achieve my potential.

Maryann: Emily, you mentioned the intuitive ways of being and how that is connected with your emotions. I think many of you explored this in a really interesting way in the interviews. I am very conscious that

intuition as a discrete entity was not really addressed in your GDE course. I am sure we would have touched on the 'gut feeling' of teaching and the 'knowing' when and how to act but we did not explore developing intuition in any formal sense. Perhaps you could explore your thoughts about intuition in general. A number of authors have explored intuition in teaching and your insights are very useful (Atkinson, 2000; Atkinson & Claxton, 2000; Claxton, 2000; Neville, 1989; van Manen, 1990).

Intuition refers to a family of 'ways of knowing' that have in common a lack of clearly articulated comprehension or rationale, but which differ in a variety of other ways. Non-mystical members of this family include:

- Expertise – the unreflective execution of intricate skilled performance;
- Implicit learning – the acquisition of such expertise by non-conscious or non-conceptual means;
- Judgement – making accurate decisions and categorizations without, at the time, being able to explain or justify them;
- Sensitivity – a heightened attentiveness, both conscious and non-conscious, to details of a situation;
- Creativity – the use of incubation and reverie to enhance problem-solving and
- Rumination – the process of 'chewing the cud' of experience in order to extract its meanings and implications. (Claxton, 2000, p. 40)

Emily: I really value intuition as part of my teaching practice and my learning. It's very hard to put that moment in words of when, you, when you realise you're working intuitively with someone. It's something you feel you automatically respond to. It's something that's quick, you respond to it quite quickly and you're reading a situation and you're using your past experiences to determine what's going on in that situation, in some ways but its more instinctive. My response is a very fast when I'm using my intuition, so I don't know why that happens but I... an example is when a student is not responding in the same way as other students perhaps or I'll instantly feel drawn to a student and I'll need to

ask them what's going on. To them it's almost, it's like magnetism. It acts like that sometimes.

Sophia: And I think intuition has a lot to do with our personalities too. Perhaps if you are a bit more introverted, that whole idea of internalising things so then when it comes up again, you are putting out what you've taken in. It kind of becomes an intuition. But there are times when, you just get that gut feeling, that you 'know' and there's no rationale behind it and if someone said to you, "What is your reason for doing this?" you'd probably say 'Oh, I dunno, I just had the feeling'. And kids are really good at this. And I think we hassle them so much about it. When you say to a kid, 'Why did you do that?' and they kind of give you a look and they genuinely don't know. But obviously something's prompted them to do it. When teachers, and students, are under stress they can react by lashing out. The emotions are there, that intuitive feeling of lashing out is there. Let's see if we can turn it around and express it in a more healthy perhaps, or non-violent expression...If we did more study on intuition then perhaps there can be some sort of method for 'training teachers' how to recognise intuition and you know how to cope with it rather than just, you know, letting loose.

Sarah: I found the intuitive stuff hard to grapple with. I know it's there and I can trust it more as I become more experienced (Claxton, 2000). And I've seen it in a lot of cases. A response to so many situations can be either appropriate or inappropriate. And sometimes it can be something that is just natural, that you can either respond to that situation, in so many cases it is sort of part of me – instead of taking someone on, in front of students and I just think you know it naturally. It's got to do with interpersonal skills and your ability to relate to students. The difficulty for me is that part of me has been ruled by this 'I've got to get through this, in two weeks. Then I've got to start the next topic, and I know intuitively, and cognitively, that I should let something develop naturally and I don't have time.

Ewan: Yeah, I recognise that too. I actually started thinking about it. As you're teaching you tell from their faces, from how they reflect the questions or their involvement and that's the type of intuition I suppose. Or the other side, there's intuition, before it gets to the stage that you've got proof that they are not able to understand it. But you also know before hand: this is not quite working right. But there are to me, times I just continue down that path there you know, we're having a discussion but I can realise that half the class may not be understanding, so they've missed the beginning. The reasons for that I suppose, the curriculum is too crowded, I think. So you know where you've got to get to, you've got this thing at the end which doesn't often allow you to sort of swing too far and that's part, I suppose, of the problem. Being able to head off, not being able to head off, because it is so crowded.

Maryann: So you feel that the busyness of school and the 'crowded curriculum' might actually be stopping you acting on your own intuition?

Laura: I wondered about that too, I certainly recognise the 'continuing down the path'. I think intuition is something that I probably need to develop more. Sometimes I feel when I'm teaching that I have very narrow sort of tunnel vision and that I'm not as open to picking up on cues or things that would help me be a bit more intuitive. Especially if I'm feeling at all flustered, then I really tend to close off and miss things that might be really important. It's something I think I need to be a lot better at 'reading the mood' and maybe it's when you get more and more comfortable with teaching and the things that at the moment I need to concentrate on I don't need to concentrate on as much later on, that I'll be more open to being able to pick up on other things that come up.

Katrina: Intuition is about 'gut feeling' and reading signals with certain students and within myself as well. I mean there are times when I think I'd love to do this, this, this, this, and this and then I look at my watch and think 'no, it's only this, this and this'

Campbell: Intuition to me means being able to read a situation and adapt to it and some days I think I read a situation well and other days I don't and so I think in hindsight, if I handled something differently in an earlier stage of the class maybe some of the discipline issues that eventuated may not have eventuated. So I think it will take me time to intuit it. So I don't feel I'm terrible at teaching but I wish I was able to intuit earlier something that was about to start snow balling because it doesn't happen all the time. So I don't know how to pick it how to short circuit that. I need more skills in intuiting what's going.

Katrina: I think too, in terms of intuition, probably the hardest thing is assessing the tone and mood in the classroom environment. Sometimes you think you've got it and then before you know it it's changed really quickly. So in terms of how I respond to that, yeah, I'm aware of it but yeah, it's always quite challenging. But I think that it's really important to use your own intuition and deal with those really difficult areas that you would tend to stay away from.

Maryann: The literature about intuition is quite fascinating. The people that argue for a developmental or stage based approach to becoming a teacher argue that intuitive responses only develop as you become more experienced as a teacher (Borich, 1995; Dreyfus, Dreyfus & Athanasius, 1986; Huberman, 1993). Yet I think some of you would not agree with that.

Sophia: I think as a new teacher the only thing that you may be able to rely on is your intuition and then as you slowly gain confidence you start pushing that back a bit and you say, 'Well no, this is the correct way to do things,' and do it in that way. Or it can be that you continue to gain intuition and reflection and all that. So it might go two ways, I'm not sure. But for me personally I just think intuition is really important and for me it's a struggle not to repress it, but to understand it even better. Maybe the argument that you know too many new teachers don't rely so much on intuition is because their courses don't allow' em to be

intuitive enough. Well how can we make them be more intuitive? By restructuring a place where they can have that freedom. Which is what I found in most of the courses I took in the GDE, that you always encouraged us to talk from our background experiences.

Maryann: There is interesting work around developing intuitive skills and understanding in learners (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000; Neville, 1989). Have you thought about how this happens in practice?

Sophia: I think intuition and being reflective go kind a hand in hand. Because if you reflect over something then it's inside you and then it comes out next time, you know, you might see a similar situation. You have that immediate sense that you 'know' or you have a feeling.

And I think because, yeah, there's so little work done on it you can't sit here and then say 'this is how intuition plays a role' because you are not even aware of it sometimes until you do reflect on it. And then once you've reflected on it, it's in there. It's locked away then next time it happens it will come back up again. It's like a cycle.

I guess there are emotions around and because you sometimes don't understand it, that emotion of being frustrated, 'I thought I had it right, it's not right' or that emotion also connected to writer's' block, you know, 'What is missing? I can't think of it, I can't think of the next scene, I can't think of the next lesson.' You've got a lesson there but you just know that it is not THE lesson to have that day and I don't think it's about being disorganised or being a bad teacher. I think its just about being perceptive and reflective. So you are thinking, constantly thinking about what you think is going to work and what not. When it doesn't work, when your intuition is telling you something that you are not particularly happy about but this, you're frustrated, But then you've got maybe another intuition that maybe this one is the correct one and you feel happy a sense of satisfaction.

Katrina: I just went to the interconnection of intuition, reflection and emotion and for some reason when I read that I said they are inextricably linked. I think the way I've understood, if you feel intuitive you would have to reflect upon that and it involves some type of emotion in terms of a process, I could be wrong but I'm just trying to jog my memory.

Maryann: What you've said though is fascinating: that you have the intuitive response, you actually reflect on it and, that there is an emotion involved at the intuitive stage and also at the reflective stage. Is it something happening there?

Katrina: And even at the emotional stage it's the reflective stage, you think 'oh was that right? Should I be feeling like that? Or looking at it in a different way?

Emily: That's interesting because I was thinking of course it's all interconnected. It's connected to the practice of reflective writing. It comes out in reflection, it comes out in discussion, when students are all sitting around in a group and 'I did this because', or 'I was feeling this way' and then you can draw some of the intuitive things out of the students' mind by saying, 'Well, why do you think you reacted in that way or how else do you think you could have reacted if you were in someone else's shoes?' Intuition is an empowering thing and I think that it's, something that maybe only intuitive people are proud of. I think students can be taught resilience, have a stronger sense of self, rely on themselves more, and therefore learn a lot more because they have that base. It's part of the base of who you are, and not all students are totally intuitive but all students can tap into intuition, I think. Many of my teaching experiences, ah where the learning is intrinsic, is that the word? Where some of that magic is flying about, in the experience aspect of the learning. Of course it's smaller teaching groups, learning groups, smaller class groups. So there we form a bond very quickly with the people you are working with and intuition, reflection and emotion are coming from maybe fifteen different places

and all intermingling in discussion and behaviour and its just very much part of who I am. And I feel that's what makes my teaching work because I'm not being something I'm not.

Maryann: So a couple of interesting aspects seem to be developing. Firstly, how much of intuition and reflection, for that matter, is something innate or particular to the person? Secondly is the notion of being authentic or being 'who I am'. I know we talked about that quite a bit in class and we analysed our personal beliefs about teaching and learning and our own learning journey.

Emily: The subject matter that I teach stems from me and it stems from who I am and how I teach and I think that makes it work as a writer and a reflecting, reflective person prior to teaching. I think all of my past leading to my teaching as a mature aged person has been integral, I think it's been really important. I might not have become a teacher if I hadn't had the intuitive, reflective and emotive experiences prior to the course. I think it's just a whole way of being and every experience that I have as a teacher is connected to these practices to these approaches, yeah.

Sarah: I love that sense you know, in the classroom. The classroom's mine and in the end I get through the curriculum and you can have as exciting a class as you like. I like the fact that, you know, it's up to me.

Maryann: So there is a sense of freedom for you? I must admit I find the classroom a liberating place. It doesn't matter what has gone on before I walked in, I just walk in and feel safe. Do you like that idea of actually operating intuitively; is that something that interests you?

Katrina: I guess that's who I am, I think. I know I do it [operate intuitively] and sometimes if a comment's made to me, like I am amazed at what I come back with, you know in terms of survival, yeah. But some people

don't have it at all; I don't think everybody has intuition although some people like to think they do. I think it can be well masked, yeah.

Sophia: You have just gotta be true to yourself because if you start building an environment where there is the 'teacher you' and the 'individual you' you are just going to alienate the two and the teacher you will become less human and the kids pick up on that.

Emily: For me, the three components are integrated in this way. They have been integral to my development in my role as a teacher, who I am. So it's who I am as a teacher and even if I wasn't conscious of those three ways of being intuitive, reflective and emotive all the time, I think now I can use them as tools. I use them, I don't always just use them as from my being. I used them as, as tools in my teaching and I sometimes use them consciously. And most of the time I probably don't use them consciously.

Maryann: Another thing I was interested in exploring with you was the nature of relationships you have developed as teachers (Clark, 1995).

Katrina: This is a really, really tough one because the thing that keeps me teaching in this school is the students and the bond that I have with many of the students. And currently like my year 7's that I've had for two years are now in year 9 and next year will be in year 10 and I feel like I'm just seeing them grow into such wonderful people and I really love them.

Emily: My workplace is a very supportive and exciting environment to be in, because we are all learning together and it's not a group of disseminators. It's a group of learners, so we are all open to new experiences in learning and therefore our students see us learning along side them and I think that works well.

Campbell: I don't have that experience. The positive side of relationships is those kids in the middle, who are kind of a little bit cheeky, a bit of a laugh! Generally I feel I've got a good rapport with them so I'm getting reasonable work out of them. The irony is that I am working in a school with an integrated curriculum and 'teams' of teachers and yet it feels lonely and I feel isolated because Art is not seen as integral to the curriculum.

Laura: I like it when kids say: 'You're really good to talk to. I like talking to you. I don't like, you know, talking to most teachers but I like talking to you.' But it is hard because when I realised my frustrations with working with these particular teacher in PE I thought: 'Oh I thought I was good at team work, you know. Am I not good as part of team? Is there something wrong there that I can't do this? That I'm loving teaching by myself, but then I think, well no because team teaching with the nurse, I love having her in the class.

Ewan: If I didn't have a good relationship with the students I don't think I would be enjoying it any where near as much and to me for any type of work, I don't really care what I do, as long as I enjoy it.

Sophia: Maryann, I remember how important YOU made it, that we recognise these feelings in and not to push it away slightly, or just to ignore it. And not to have a superego or anything but a lot of the times teaching's like, kind of like, Jesus who tells you all the stories to signify other meanings. And that's kind of like what it is, you know, it'll happen to an individual student or an individual teacher but there is some greater meaning to it. And without the intuition, the reflection or the emotion, there's no way you can decode it. 'Cos they're the language of the symbolic, if you know what I mean. Yeah.

Reflection on the Conversation with teachers

As I noted earlier, this piece was a pleasure to write. It was created within a month or so of the interviews and it just seemed to write itself. It is always interesting to see how a piece of writing eventuates and I remember having the participants' faces clearly in my mind as I created their 'conversation'.

As I re-read the conversation a couple of years after its creation I am reminded of the pleasure of the interview and writing experience. Some new ideas emerge about my learning from the experience.

Early in the conversation Emily comments that she 'didn't feel like [she] gave me enough of what I wanted'. At the time I remember assuring her that her contribution had been significant. She was concerned that she had not given me enough specific stories or experiences. What she did do though was vividly describe herself and her teaching; the physicality, the intensity, the reflective moments and so on.

I wonder now about the whole issue of researchers 'getting what they want', of teachers 'getting what they want'. If we set out in a true spirit of openness to learning then surely we can't have preconceived ideas about what we are looking for. And yet so much of teaching seems to be about getting students to do 'what we want'. So much research seems to be aimed towards getting a particular outcome. As educators we need to be really mindful of how we position beginning teachers, and research subjects.

Campbell, Emily and Sophia all commented that reflective practice was easy and part of their way of being. Sarah, Katrina, Ewan and Laura all noted that it was an important part of their practice and yet I have a sense that it was a bit harder to manage. The issue of time for reflection was mentioned a few times and I was concerned that some people felt pressured about not having time to reflect 'in writing'.

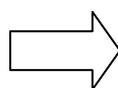
Time pressure and the crowded curriculum also interfered with people's ability to respond intuitively to situations. This is interesting because on one level an

intuitive response is rapid (or so Emily and Sophia suggested) and on another level it is something to be developed and managed as Campbell suggested.

Sarah noted that intuition 'has got to do with interpersonal skills and your ability to relate to students'; Sophia also felt it was related to connecting with people. It seems that the way teachers connect with people (intuitively or more consciously) might have an important role to play in how they respond emotionally to their profession.

All the participants were able to articulate their emotional responses to teaching and I found the examples and metaphors they chose powerful and evocative. I was particularly intrigued by the effort the participants went to to work out their response to my question about the interconnection of emotion, intuition and reflection. Despite the criticism that I should not have asked the question the responses indicate some profound thinking from some teachers and they helped me understand some beginning teachers' experiences more fully. It is in asking hard questions that we open ourselves to all sorts of possible new ways of thinking.

I don't want to make any conclusive statements about what the interconnections between emotion, reflection and intuition might be because they are different for each person. Simply asking the question and pondering possible answers has been a valuable learning experience. The question opens a range of pedagogic possibilities in terms of content in teacher education courses. Reflective practice has an established place; emotional dimensions are becoming better understood; intuitive practice probably deserves further attention. They all deserve to be explicitly addressed and explored personally, collaboratively and inductively within teacher education.



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The poems...

That which doesn't kill you makes you strong

I am a bird without wings, floppy and frail
I am vulnerable, afraid and bitterly frustrated.
I wanted teaching to work for me
I wanted kids to value Art.
They say it sucks and it's boring.

I am thrown into icy water,
I am rigid. Frozen.
Fear overwhelms me, I am drowning...

A young voice: You're not too bad, you're ok.
A tiny spark ignites and I warm a little

Slowly I become more comfortable
Slowly I learn to say the right things
Slowly my 'teacher skin' grows. Slowly.

Connections

Freedom and energy
Passion and excitement
The flicker in the eye – 'I understand, Miss',
Creative energy flows
Learning is powerful.

Happiness and satisfaction
Connections with learners
Connections with colleagues

Links to the past, the present and the future.

Liberated. This is who I am

The teaching labyrinth

The labyrinth offers infinite possibilities.

Strong wall of curriculum confronts me-

I pause, reflect. Today I won't go there.

The pathways offer endless journeys

Sometimes aching frustration.

The solid wall of budget restraints rises ahead:

I think quickly and offer alternatives.

Groups of smiling faces

I am comforted.

Another path and leering, angry faces

I am threatened.

But I smile and search,

Reaching for those connecting points.

We talk, we share, we laugh.

We can be safe, we can learn

Classrooms can be healing places.

Reflections on poetry

I wrote these poems soon after the 'Conversation with teachers' as a way of capturing some of the emotions and metaphors expressed in the interviews. I feel ambivalent about them now, so much so that I wonder whether they should be called 'poems' at all, whether I should rewrite them or discard them. On one level, they definitely capture some of the feelings and they certainly provided an interesting diversion into exploring 'what matters' for beginning teachers. They helped me think about what the interviews might have meant to the participants: perhaps they provided a place to talk about experiences and think about images and metaphors more explicitly (knowing that I would be interested in this, as I had been in their GDE days).

My real ambivalence with the poems lies in two places. Firstly they were criticised in a research group meeting (So what? What do they prove? You are putting yourself up as a writer...) and secondly they do not fit the academic convention of poetry writing; where only participants' words are used and the writer tries to capture the rhythms and cadences of the language (Richardson, 2001; Sparkes, 2002). My response to the first criticism is that the poems don't prove anything but they do help deepen my understanding. Cahnmann, (2003) notes that using poetry in educational research is a 'risky business' and potentially makes the researcher an easy target. Maybe this is just the same experience many different qualitative researchers have had as they have aimed for 'gaining legitimacy...and pushing the edge of tradition' (p.30). The value of poetry to Cahnmann resonates: "Just as the microscope and the camera have allowed different ways for us to see what would otherwise be invisible, so too, poetry and prose are different mediums that give rise to ways of saying what might not otherwise be expressed" (p. 31). So the 'lens' is different and the poems are causing different aspects of experience to be highlighted. Cahnmann's response to the "so what?" question is "why not?" She points out that academic traditions are not fixed entities and notes that while we may not all be great writers we can "draw on the craft and practice of poetry to realize its potential, challenging the academic marginality of our work". The potential for poetic techniques and

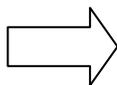
forms is to communicate our research findings in ‘multidimensional, penetrating, and more accessible ways’ (p. 35).

As far as being a writer goes, I just have to respond that any researcher has to be a writer too. Besides I have never claimed the poems were good poems, they are just poems!

My second concern is one that I feel I have learnt a great deal about. I have gone back to reading about poetry construction in much greater detail (Piirto, 2002; Rich, 2002; Richardson, 1992, 2000). Technically maybe I should only have used the words of the participants and developed a conventional ‘poetic representation’. What happened was somewhat different. The title of each poem was taken from participants’ words and they struck me as important words or phrases that represented more than a single experience. The subject of each poem and most of the phrases were directly from transcripts. Some writers identify that the importance of poetic representation is that it “allows readers greater interpretive freedom to make their own sense of the events and people focused on” (Swan (1999) in Sparkes, 2002, p. 119).

Piirto (2002) argues that researchers who use artistic modes must have a strong background in the chosen artistic form. I have taught and written poetry for years, but I would not classify myself as a poet. In this research the poems have given me a “new way of seeing” and a “chance for multiple perspectives” (Piirto, 2002, p. 441). Using poetry allowed me to draw threads together to help make my own sense of some of the emotions explored in the interviews and to connect some of the stories and key themes. It provided me the opportunity to discover what was troubling me about the interviews: to explore my own emotional response alongside the research participants’. Richardson (1991) provides a useful insight into ‘writing the other’ and learning more about ourselves. She also points out the difficulty of this approach:

The culture suppresses and devalues its members’ subjective experiences. For example we are expected to write papers in prose, reference others, place our work in a lineage, objectify the topic and focus on the expressed topic rather than on the self as a producer. (p. 126)



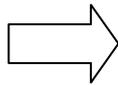
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Presenting learning through words and images

This PowerPoint was constructed to present at the International Study Association of Teachers and Teaching conference in 2003. I am always conscious of the rushed nature of conferences and I enjoy presentations that make me think, that engage my interest in a different way and that generate interesting discussion. Sometimes conventional presentations of research findings can be tedious and somewhat self-congratulatory. My aim is to engage the audience.

Reflections on this conference presentation.

I remember feeling anxious prior to the presentation; being thoroughly aware that I was working in some 'difficult' or unusual territory. The audience was interested and supportive and the discussion afterwards was interesting, although I was disappointed at that some people wanted to tell their own stories, not comment on mine! Maybe the presentation triggered memories and demanded personal responses. Some people commented that they liked the images and one said they were distracting. With the distance of two years I still find the images evocative and I believe my message was conveyed. My 'findings' were always going to be tentative and partial and they still are. Tentative is not weak: it is simply an acknowledgement that it is not possible to 'know' or understand how another person experiences their life. We tell stories as the conduit to sharing understanding.



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CHAPTER SEVEN

A deeper understanding of teacher learning

We have to accept the fact that the full story can never be told (Gudmundsdottir, 1996).

For every quilt maker there comes a time when the quilt must be put together. Usually this involves sewing together the smaller components in a chosen pattern. Some quilts are carefully planned and follow time honoured designs and traditions. Time is spent ensuring that planned colour combinations will 'work', or anticipated design features will be aesthetically pleasing. Some quilts just evolve as the maker finds useful pieces, connecting pieces, the right inspiration or a perfect adornment. The final piece is a celebration of imagination and risk taking. Some quilts are entirely utilitarian and are made with scraps with the sole purpose of keeping someone warm.

In some ways research in education can be seen similarly. Some research is carefully planned and designed according to clear guidelines and traditions. Some is utilitarian and usually the result of winning a tender or a consultancy from some organisation with a vested interest in particular results. Some research involves the researcher in something more intimate and is in some ways more frightening. There is no single pattern to follow. There are some conventions of ethical practice and theoretical framing and sometimes method but there is a gradual drawing in of the researcher until they are central to the research and not peripheral. This is what happened to me.

This final chapter will be divided into sections that reflect the people involved in the research and the separate doctoral projects. It will be followed by some tentative drawing together of threads. The real focus of the chapter is what have I learned about learning to be a teacher? How has each piece of research deepened my understanding?

My learning

This section could be enormous as five years of learning has occurred. The entire process has been fascinating and totally engaging. I have shared the time with the writing of so many interesting researchers and teachers. As I have said before the literature has provided a solid bedrock of support. Some literature has challenged my views and the issue of what constitutes research (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004) has troubled me. In the end I have had to accept that research in a post-modern world can mean many things.

The past five years have been shared with some extraordinary people. The doctorate would not have been possible without the involvement of a significant number of former GDE students. These people have shared their experiences so thoughtfully and willingly. Their words are heard throughout the chapters and I hope that I have represented them with integrity. The support of my two doctoral supervisors has been profound. Helen helped guide the planning and development of the projects (always pushing me to do it 'my way'). She shared the journey for the first four and a half years and I hear her voice as I read through various sections. Peter joined us a few years in to the program and his support has been gentle and profound. He picked up my ideas quickly and supported my attempts to write in different ways. He insisted I write myself 'in' to the doctorate, he encouraged me when times were tough and he guided me to the end.

Care-full research matters to me and it is part of who I am.

The development of my thinking about care-full research has been a key learning from this whole process. It is much more than just being pedantic and oversensitive or quoting people's words in neat ways. It is a shift from people being research 'subjects' to research 'participants'. It honours the learning that can occur at a range of levels in research - for the researcher, the participants, the readers.

At times I have been concerned about the interpretation of the data and how a narrative is created. Gudmundsdottir (1996) provides a useful perspective on this:

There is no one-to-one correspondence between the reality that informants try to express and their words, or their texts. We listen to their words and try to construct their meaning in our minds, but we can never be sure about the accuracy of these transformations...Subsequent readers of our reports also re-create the informants' reality...an endless hall of faulty mirrors. (p. 303)

The judgement criteria have been woven throughout this portfolio. The 'goodness' criteria emerge from the concept of 'care-full' research and the components identified in Chapter 2. The key to care-full research is that the participants are respected and while the end product may be a series of 'faulty mirrors' at least the mirrors are in use. For it is in reflection that we reach a deeper understanding.

The other key part of care-full research is the pedagogic possibilities that it generates. As a teacher I am always searching for ways of developing my practice. The insights gained from research clearly inform my thinking about my practice and offer a range of new ways of thinking about pedagogy.

The literature discussed earlier in the portfolio formed the bedrock for each of the projects and has been supported through the research. Noddings' (1992, 2002, 2003) foregrounding of the ethic of care as a core value in education has become a central feature of the portfolio. Teachers making meaning through reflective practice (as described by Loughran, 1996) was in evidence throughout the interviews I conducted. Many participants were able to identify moments where reflection had been instrumental in them developing as teachers. The fact that the participants had been through a teacher education course which focused on 'enquiry into professional practice' (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001) was clearly evident in the way they probed their own understanding through our interview conversations. Their willingness to ask questions of themselves and others was inspiring.

All knowing is partial and tentative

Of course I knew this before I started the doctorate but the long term research process has served to reinforce this. The post-modernist approach doubts all methods and claims that all knowledge is partial (Richardson, 2000; Kincheloe, 2003). While this is the case, each project has helped me learn more, particularly in relation to how students experience the course and what they take from it. But I am so very conscious of the fact that the projects are not exhaustive. They do not cover all aspects of the participants' experience. They can't. I have put my lens up close to some moments in a group of people's lives. I am left with dozens of questions.

I am conscious also that this is an incomplete and partial exploration of the teacher education experience. I have not addressed the learning from the general schools experience program. Nor have I explored the learning from the separate teaching methods or disciplines. In the end all research involves making decisions and I have elected to explore the components of the course for which I am directly responsible. In some ways these were the sections of the course I understood but they were also the ones I felt I could learn more about. I am also conscious of not exploring the history that the participants brought with them into the course. What sort of people were they? What were their hopes and aspirations? Of course I am interested in these questions and I know a little about some of their backgrounds but I elected to 'take a snapshot' of their lives from the time of the GDE and a little after. I have no doubt that our personal dispositions play a pivotal role in the teachers we become.

Writing for understanding

Writing has always been a pleasure and at various times in my life it has served a cathartic or creative role. In recent times my writing has been directed to academic purposes and I have enjoyed the opportunity to think hard through writing. I have had many discussions with people about the

process of writing and what happens to us when we write. Laurel Richardson's notion of 'writing oneself into understanding' is very useful. It fits the therapeutic model of counselling when you question and talk around an issue enough for it to eventually make sense or reach some sort of resolution. I also like the idea of not knowing what is going to be written until it happens. There is nothing 'pre-planned' or anticipated about the final product. In some ways this is risky, in others it is profound and liberating.

The construction of this portfolio, like any doctorate I suppose, has been demanding. The decisions about what to say and how to say it can be difficult. The heavy mantle of academic convention has hung over me. I respect the way this mantle has developed and the people who have devoted their lives to developing different methods of inquiry but I worry that sometimes something precious is lost when the strategy outweighs the ability to feel, to learn, to care. Richardson (2000) notes that "much writing, even qualitative writing, is unpalatable, boring, doesn't go anywhere". I hope to have avoided this through trying different types of writing, by adopting Richardson's Creative Analytic Practices (CAP) where "ethnographers learn about their topics and about themselves that which was unknowable and unimaginable using conventional analytic procedures" (p. 931).

Experiencing life in our own way

One of the most profound insights I have gained from this research is that people really do experience events in an entirely unique way. I have been reminded again and again through the research that participants experienced the GDE course in an entirely personal way. They may have participated in the same class, in the same group, in the same year and the story can be quite different. Obviously people bring their own past and present to the experience but from a teacher's point of view it is really important not to assume that we 'know' how someone is experiencing something. The fundamental insight is that people experience their GDE year differently and I have NO control over that. This does not call for a passive response or a denial of responsibility but it does encourage teachers to think carefully about

our practice and to constantly remind ourselves that the learning that we are planning for will occur differently for each person.

Emotions matter

Teachers' emotions do matter, even for those who choose not to express them overtly. The process of interviewing people provided a very particular insight into how people felt about their experiences. The eyes lighting up when a connection with a student was described; the forlorn look of defeat with the horrible realisation that one individual could not compete against the weight of tradition; the animated voice as a successful lesson was shared; the hunched shoulders as sadness overwhelmed a disillusioned beginning teacher; all helped to give me an additional insight into the experiences. Observing the body language provided another source of information and allowed empathy to develop.

It is interesting how often teachers tend to discount their emotional response to a situation 'it was silly for me to be upset', 'I shouldn't let that kid get under my skin'. As adults we are aware of needing to manage our emotions and many research participants mentioned their responsibility as role models and some mentioned the importance of 'being in control'. I am left wondering if teacher educators would not be better to address the emotional dimension of teaching more explicitly. To encourage teachers to acknowledge their own emotional responses more carefully and to respond to them in ways that are kinder to themselves. I was conscious that participants were sometimes apologetic or dismissive when they described something that didn't seem to be very positive. We know that teaching is emotionally very demanding (Hargreaves, 1998, 2002); perhaps we need to support beginning teachers better in working with these demands. Perhaps we need to think about ways of supporting all teachers. I am reminded of my early work looking at older teachers and the 'chip on the shoulder' they carried (see Appendix 1). Perhaps they needed to have their frustration or sadness addressed more carefully by leaders. Perhaps they needed the chance to develop responses other than anger or disillusionment.

There is no right way to learn to be a teacher

A seemingly obvious statement? I am beginning to think that the ongoing debate around teacher education may ultimately be futile. Apparently there have been twenty-five inquiries into teacher education in Australia over the past twenty-five years (Dinham, 2006). I am not sure that continued inquiry and continued tinkering with programs is actually enhancing the learning experience for pre-service teachers or their students.

We know that people learn differently. Understanding the complexity of learning and the range of ways of learning offers more possibilities in teacher education. Wanting a 'recipe' for learning how to teach is natural for some people and wanting to explore how to teach is also natural for others: the research projects reinforced this. There are clearly common elements in good practice but teacher educators need to be very sensitive to the myriad ways that people learn to teach and we need to plan for that diversity. The various projects in this portfolio have highlighted some different ways of learning and thinking about teaching. The real issue is how we go about meeting those different learning needs and how we integrate changing understandings about education within our own practice. Kincheloe (2003) offers a useful perspective when he talks about the conditions of uncertainty in which we live and that "Knowledge doesn't age well, it often turns to vinegar" (p. 149). I find this heartening in the sense that we can abandon the 'quest for certainty' and learn to live with uncertainty in useful ways.

Learning for research participants

It would be presumptuous for me to say too much about the research participants and their learning. Their experience is entirely personal. Certainly all the research participants gave willingly of their time. They provided thoughtful responses and insights into their experiences. Immediately after the interviews many participants commented that they had enjoyed the conversations and that the questions had made them think more about some

of their experiences. It provided a lens or a focus on some parts of their work. I have had further contact with participants following the interviews, particularly in relation to asking them to check my transcripts and writing for 'accuracy'. Apart from some minor corrections the participants seemed happy enough with the transcripts. One commented, "My English is so bad, can you correct my grammar before you use it?" Another said, "Do I really sound that negative? I didn't realise it all sounded so bad. It made me really wonder about what image I portray to the kids and the other teachers."

A number of the participants have started post graduate study in education. It would be fascinating to know what everyone is doing now. Perhaps that is where my next project could start.

Learning from the reading circle project

Reading itself is a real issue for teachers. There has been public attention on the literacy standards of teachers and while many teachers read effectively the reading circle has highlighted the different experiences that some people have. Sometimes the actual physical and cognitive activity of reading can be the problem. Teacher educators need to address this within pre-service courses. Sometimes the problem lies more with the content of the material or interest level of the reader. Teacher educators need to consider how this is dealt with. Should we explicitly encourage PSTs to monitor and manage their own reading, through teaching metacognitive reading strategies (Brown, 1999)? Do we work to make reading material more relevant, more accessible, and more palatable? Do we encourage students to strive to reach the levels we are asking of them in a supported way?

The collaborative nature of the reading circle activity presents its own strengths and problems. Discussing reading activities with others can enhance understanding and provide different perspectives and other ways of learning but it can also serve to silence some less confident readers.

The reading circle model does provide an opportunity to address group work issues and interpersonal communication or relationship issues. Researching it more closely has highlighted the importance of explicitly working through some of these issues in a more structured way within a teacher education course. So often we assume that people can just work together or get on with each other. In reality much of the tension in schools comes from people lacking some of these interpersonal skills. Hearing research participants talk about the positive aspects of successful reading groups has reminded me of the value in ensuring all students have the opportunity to experience this.

Learning from the Virtual Mentoring Project

So many possibilities arise from this project. It highlights the power, both positive and negative, of relationships in learning. The potential to discover more about an adolescent and his/ her world is the key learning component of the program. In all cases I believe mentors set out with a sense of promise (because they volunteer to become mentors). What the research project has taught me is that mentoring is a personal experience that depends ultimately on a mentor's beliefs, prior experiences, values and expectations. People who enter the program with a sense of openness to learning with another person tend to have very positive experiences. As a teacher educator I can provide the opportunity for PSTs to act as mentors but I cannot make the relationships work. I think that by rupturing some of the myths about adolescents or misconceptions PSTs might hold about how the program should work, by surfacing these deeper concerns more explicitly, we might have a chance to make all mentoring experiences mutually beneficial.

Learning from the intrapersonal project

This project proved the most challenging in many ways. The central concepts of emotion, intuition and reflection are all 'slippery' concepts with which to grapple. The research participants were eager to talk in the interviews because they were interested in these domains. I am left wondering about the people who are not particularly interested in these aspects of teaching. The

research project has encouraged me to raise the issues of emotion and intuition much more explicitly within my own teaching. This has been beneficial for both the students and me. We don't seem to have trouble talking about reflective practice- probably because it is integral to teacher education courses and much has been written about it.

On one level it is easy to identify emotional aspects of teaching and there is no doubt that Goleman's (1995) work in emotional intelligence has encouraged teachers to think about emotions more. It is relatively easy to talk about emotions in an abstract sense or in terms of how others might be feeling ("that student looks really sad today, I wonder why?"). What does concern me is the reticence with which some people address their own emotional state. There is still a heavy cultural overlay of denial of emotions or the expression of emotions as being seen as somehow weak. Issues of the emotional intelligence of teachers have arisen through investigating this area. Some participants were clearly very comfortable working in these abstract realms; others could identify feelings but didn't expand on them much. I have been inspired to look more closely at the emotional dimension of teaching with the PSTs. We have also addressed building emotional intelligence within ourselves and our students. The research gave me confidence to address this explicitly.

Intuition is a more subtle concept again. The research project showed that some people are happy operating intuitively, trusting their intuitions. Others found it much harder to grapple with. The idea that intuition develops from experience is worth exploring further and integrating into a teacher education program. The point at which a practice becomes intuitive is also worth exploring.

Learning from enquiry into professional practice

Revisiting the 'enquiry into professional practice' paper was a useful way to explore the experience of some beginning teachers. A number of people have commented that it is unusual to have a teacher education course based

around a central theme or approach. Maybe it is. The introduction of the enquiry into practice idea was a direct result of many students complaining about the disjointedness of the course and the lack of connection with practical experience. Perhaps we could have developed other common connectors between units. We chose enquiry because it fitted our beliefs and it offered a contemporary perspective on teacher education.

Learning theory supports the idea that learners need to make sense of the learning and connect it to prior experiences (Anstey & Bull, 1996). It seems natural that people learning to be teachers would want to be able to make connections too. Enquiring into professional practice provides a particular way of thinking about work. It encompasses reflective practice, constant questioning, and lifelong learning. It also provides a way for teachers to think about their practice in a way that supports the emotional dimension of teaching. Teachers can be empowered through the enquiry process, through the search. They can develop a 'futures' orientation to their work (Slaughter, 1993) and they can establish connections and coherence in their understanding of their professional life.

By connecting past, present and future learning we are moving towards a deeper understanding of professional learning. Just as we talk about surface and deep learning for students (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993) so we need to ensure that teacher education courses provide opportunities for deep learning. We need to understand the increasing complexity of the world, and the increasing demands on teachers by providing opportunities in teacher education courses to explore this complexity. Offering 'enquiry into professional practice' as a foundation to a teaching career may go some way to helping teachers develop and respond to the changes they will face. Teacher education courses need to model ways of connecting learning and providing a range of opportunities for deep thinking.

The research project provided insights into the experiences of some beginning teachers. They spoke honestly and thoughtfully about their work and they identified that enquiry was an integral part of their professional

practice. This project particularly 'opened' my eyes and gave me a reason to inquire into my own practice.

Shadow stories

Learning from the research has occurred on many levels. I have heard of experiences through reading and conversation, I have written in various ways about the different projects. I have shared the experiences of so many people. But what about the people I did not interview? What about the stories that are not told in the in the writing up? I have decided to call these the 'shadow stories' and I am not sure if anyone else has used the term in this way.

These are the stories not told and also the stories I may not have heard. In my development of 'care-full' research I was very mindful of listening closely to what was being said. I know I have tried to hear all the stories but I know they are not all told. Partly this is a purely pragmatic response: a doctorate cannot go on forever. All researchers have to make choices. Obviously we tell the stories that have particular resonance for us. I was determined not to present only the 'good news stories' as this would have been unbalanced and self-serving. In telling different stories I was endeavouring to look at the various facets of the crystal (Richardson, 2000).

The shadow stories are the ones that could have been told by people who weren't invited to participate. What about those who really didn't enjoy the course? I know I invited some who were ambivalent about some of their experiences but what about those who didn't respond to the invitations? I haven't learnt enough about those people yet. I am sure that there are some things I have not learnt. Yet there is so much that I have.

The shadow stories have not been deliberately or mindlessly omitted. They are part of the fabric of the research because I have been thinking about them. They are just not obvious in the end product. But they are there, in the shadows.

The ever-learning journey and endless pedagogic possibilities

The research projects have provided insights into some contemporary practices in a single teacher education course. The pedagogic possibilities that have emerged from the research are numerous.

Collaborative work in teacher education (in pairs or small or large groups) offers the opportunity to learn about other people and the way they operate; to explore the emotional dimensions of working with others and to develop the affective domain. The opportunity to develop positive learning relationships is foregrounded through collaboration.

Each of the research projects has contributed to my understanding of what it means to 'become' a teacher. The various stories and ways of writing have allowed different stories to be told. As Estola (2003) notes: "narratives allow stories to be read as multi-voiced discourses. They enable research on both how things are spoken and what is said about them" (ch. 8.3) Like Estola, I too have experienced the sense that "narratives are a tool to hear differently" and through studying the words of beginning teachers I have simultaneously studied my own story. Also, like Estola, "no clear cut answers have been found" but I was not looking for answers, I was looking for a deeper understanding of teacher learning. That, I have found.

The capacity to enquire, which is fundamental to the course I teach and to the person I am, requires a certain letting go. As Nias (1988) observes, 'commitment to such [enquiry-based] courses is not for the faint hearted. Involvement in them is a greater risk-taking enterprise than is the delivery and consumption of conventional academic courses (p. 1). Acknowledging the uncertainty requires a relinquishing of tradition and forging new ways of learning as we live. Kincheloe (2003) explores the difficulties this way:

If the act of teaching were known and constant, teachers could act on empirical generalizations and teacher educators would know exactly what teachers needed to know to perform successfully. But teaching is not constant and predictable- and it always takes place in a microcosm of uncertainty. Teachers know, for example, that

sure-fire teaching methods that worked last year may not work this year. Thus, what we call valuable practitioner knowledge is elusive. How to teach teachers what to do in conditions of uncertainty is even more elusive. (p. 157)

The key is that we don't succumb to a state of inertia due to uncertainty. As teacher educators, and teachers, we need to keep learning and deepening our understanding through care-full and thoughtful enquiry into our practice. Bringing an ethic of care to our teaching practice, acknowledging the courage needed to explore boundaries in education and working to develop strong relationships throughout the learning endeavour are all challenges to be embraced.

APPENDIX 1

Genesis of a concern: Looking back before looking forward (Advanced study unit setting the context for the doctoral projects)

Where have we come from and where are we going in teacher education? I am puzzled by some perennial issues around teaching and learning to teach. Is there anything in our history that can help me understand the present situation and perhaps help us plan better for the future? I have tended to avoid studying the history of teacher education so far because I have developed a forward looking approach to my profession. It seemed as if the past was somehow less important than the future. This particular research journey has been profound. All the way through there have been moments of illumination as I have come to understand more about why we are where we are now. I have researched the literature and shared the stories of current and former teachers and I have a clearer understanding of what it has been like to be a teacher, as a professional and a person, in the context of personal histories and the greater social, economic and political forces at work.

In the past I have been concerned by the ‘chip on the shoulder’ that I have felt and heard from teachers. Sometimes it is quiet, sometimes it is strident: the lack of recognition from the non-teaching wider community; the lack of status; the lack of pay; the lack of appreciation; the notion that everyone thinks teaching is easy because they have all been to school; the constant change in policy and approaches; the increasing complexity of the teacher’s role (Apple, 1996; Fullan, 2001; Kelchtermans, 1996). Where has this attitude come from? Does it matter? Does it relate to the issue of bureaucratic control over the teaching profession?

As I write this litany I think I can appreciate why some people have a ‘chip’ or grudge. The thing that always puzzles me is that some people become consumed by these issues and it pervades their teaching, their private lives, their very being. On the other hand, some people retain an optimism and sense of pleasure about their jobs, sometimes in the most difficult situations.

Maybe I am on the wrong tangent here, my doctorate is about teacher education and I am not sure that the education a teacher receives actually influences their intensely personal attitude towards their profession. But maybe it does in some way. Perhaps my exploration of the whole course approach and the intrapersonal side of teaching will help me understand more.

I must admit I was shocked when I started attending teacher education conferences to find the same sense of frustration, sometimes anger: that 'chip on the shoulder'. Some of the issues were similar (Marginson, 1997; Seddon & Angus, 2000): certainly the imposition of constant policy change was a problem and the changing economic and political landscape led to a general sense of instability or unreliability in the academic profession. Another layer of tension was around the universities' relationships with schools and teachers - as played out in the frequent theory/ practice divide debates (Korthagen, 2001; Loughran & Russell, 1997; Zeichner, 1999).

Another issue that is often raised by teachers, and sometimes the public, is that things were somehow better in the past (Beare & Slaughter, 1993; Price, 2003). Students were more respectful; a teacher's role was more manageable; schools were more ordered; students left school being able to read and write. Certainly this ties in with the rapid changes we have experienced in society in general but it is more than that. Beare and Slaughter (1993) provide an interesting explanation for the expression of nostalgia: "One consequence [of change] is that we flee to simplicities, like the regression from education to economics...another is a retreat from a different present to a safely reconstructed past" (p. 16). I need to find out what teacher education was like in the past and why.

'Teaching is the only profession that has stood still. You can walk into a classroom now and it is exactly the same as a hundred years ago'. I don't know about that but it is certainly an opinion that is trotted out with monotonous regularity at gatherings – mainly when people want to inspire or generate change in education OR when they want to strike a body blow to the

people desperately trying to reform practices. Certainly some things are similar, but I would argue that there are also much bigger differences. I need to look at the past to see how different things really are now.

Another issue that seems to frequently float to the surface of teacher education discussions is about how people learn to teach and how much practice they need (Beswick et al, 1980; Campbell et al, 2001; Loughran & Russell, 1997; Munby & Russell, 1995). There is the dichotomy between the 'put them in schools and give them plenty of practice in the real world' and the 'expose them to some deeper theoretical understandings and critical skills with the aim of deconstructing set notions of teaching and perhaps creating some more radical transformations in the system'. Sounds a bit grand – often the latter is 'give them the theoretical stuff and then worry about the practice'. I need to explore past models to see if this debate has been around for a long time and whether it actually matters.

'I didn't learn anything in my education course, it all happened once I started to teach' (Beswick et al, 1980; Braiden, 1997). This is related to the previous point and it was certainly the dominant view when I started teaching in the mid-eighties. It always bothered me because I felt that I did learn from my Diploma of Education and certainly since I have moved in to teacher education I have been determined to make the university learning experience valuable. Does the attitude to teacher education matter? Does it make any difference to the sort of teachers that students become? What is our history in relation to teacher education and its value in Australian society?

Ultimately I am interested in how teachers learn. How does anyone 'become' a teacher? What do they need to know to teach well? I want to know how teachers learnt in the past or what knowledge was valued and why. I need to understand the past better before exploring the present contemporary ways of learning in teacher education.

A journey through time: where I went...

I have approached this part of the study from a number of directions. I have reviewed the literature about the history of teacher education, mostly developed from the 1960s onwards (Barcan 1980; Bessant & Spaul, 1976; Hyams, 1979; Hyams & Bessant, 1972; Jones, 1974). I have also sought out primary source documents and texts to help provide a 'flavour' of the language and concerns of the times (Richardson & Bowen, 1967; Smith, 1903; Turney, 1975). I have spoken with current and former teachers about their teaching careers and their initial teacher education (Davies, 2003; Hayes, 2003; Price, 2003; Pringle, 2003; Swan, 2003; Wright, 2003). The notes and transcripts from these conversations have been used as texts in this study. Clearly I am influenced by my own teaching experiences. I completed my GDE at Ballarat CAE in 1984 and I have reflected on my own memories and experiences. I have been employed as a teacher and/or teacher educator for the past eighteen years and I have reflected on these experiences too. The notes from my experiences and my reflections from various periods in my career have formed a further text.

This tour through the history of secondary teacher education in Victoria is not exhaustive. What it represents is my attempt to understand the forces that are the bedrock, or sedimentary layers, of the present. I am conscious that any history is really a personal construction and interpretation of events and I have relied on many different constructions. I am clear that what follows is my construction and that I am looking for clues, hints, experiences, that may help in my further doctoral work.

Where have we come from?

Australia's colonial heritage had a major impact on its early educational institutions and the way students were taught. Even today we remain heavily influenced by outside models, particularly the UK and US. The British model of education was initially adopted uncritically. Up until 1862 there was dual control of educational matters by the national and denominational boards. The

Common Schools Act 1862 saw the development of the first Board of Education in Victoria. This was followed by the Education Act 1872 which set Victoria on the track of 'free, compulsory and secular' [primary] education for all. Free secondary education did not become the norm until after the Second World War and tertiary education was briefly free, and thus more accessible, in the 1970s and 1980s.

Initially teachers from the 'mother country' provided the only trained teachers in the colony. Other people who were educated but not trained as teachers also became teachers: in those days teaching was about transmitting knowledge. Eventually, in 1852, the pupil-teacher system, championed by Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth in England, was introduced in Australia. Pupil-teachers of thirteen years were required to teach classes and attend out-of-school hours classes to enhance their own education and their knowledge of teaching. They were required to teach and undergo examinations each year for five years until they could compete for a place in teachers college (Hyams, 1979).

The pupil-teacher model was very popular because it provided a cheap and expedient solution to a shortage of teachers. It also resulted in a fairly docile workforce: something championed in the nineteenth century but something that could also be seen as laying the foundation for a certain passivity in teachers and teacher education. (Teachers colleges were later often criticized for following and not leading educational debate). The focus was on survival in the classroom and deep content knowledge and theoretical understanding was not highlighted (Hyams, 1979). The pupil-teacher system, or apprenticeship model as it was also known, existed in some form in teacher education in Australia until the early 1950s (Richardson & Bowen, 1967). Teachers were also subject to the system of 'payment by results'. A certain body of knowledge had to be transmitted, students examined and teachers paid upon successful examination results (Theobald, 2000).

From a twenty-first century perspective there were some interesting patterns developing. Decisions about teacher education were made for economic and

pragmatic reasons rather than pedagogical or social reasons. Overwork was a feature of the pupil-teacher's life; something which echoes through today. The early teaching workforce was largely female and the 'docility' or 'passivity' has raised some interesting gender issues which still prevail today (McWilliam, 1994). The transmission model of teaching was dominant and any philosophical approaches to learning which may have prevailed in Europe at the time seemed to be ignored. The dominance of the practical aspects of teaching over the theoretical was established from the beginning.

By the 1870s in Victoria, a teacher training model had developed and prospective teachers were required to spend one year in a designated training school prior to attending a training institution. In that year they continued their own education and started to learn about teaching. Once their training formally commenced they would study: school management, English language and literature or Australian and English history, geometry or algebra, Latin or French, and a choice of elementary physics, chemistry, physiology and botany. Other subjects included music, elocution, drawing, military drill and gymnastics (Hyams, 1979, p. 28). The range of subjects is quite broad but clearly the focus is on content knowledge. Hyams (1979) and Barcan (1982) have both argued that narrowness and rigidity of teacher preparation was a feature in early teacher education:

There is strong support for the long established and much less creditable educational tenets- the accumulation of factual knowledge, the complete domination by the teacher in the learning process and the faculty psychology which was based on the belief that the study of certain subjects sharpened certain faculties of the mind. (Hyams, 1979, p. 31)

Interestingly some of this attitude remained a feature for much of the twentieth century. The "accumulation of factual knowledge" remained highly valued and the "domination by the teacher in the learning process" was a feature well into the 1960s. Miss Parry began her long teaching career in technical schools in the 1940s and she experienced many changes in that time:

Well [in the 1940s] there was much more emphasis on lecture demonstration with a summary of notes developed on the blackboard and then the students copied those into their notebooks. And when you think back to those days, there was either no library in the school whatsoever. Prahran didn't have a library of any sort – or it was a very small fiction library for students to borrow but very few reference books in each department. There were no trained librarians or library technicians. There were no public libraries with reference books. So all the students could get was what you gave them and those notes needed to be accurate.

There was a period of pedagogical enlightenment following the depression of the 1890s and before the First World War. The conservative bureaucratic approach to education in general was being challenged. There was considerable criticism of the pupil-teacher system - the academic weakness of the pupil-teachers and the harshness of their working conditions (Hyams 1979). Overseas influences were being felt through the “New Education” movement (for example, John Dewey in US, Ellen Key in Sweden, Philip Magnus in Britain and Ovide Decroly in Belgium) (Hyams & Bessant, 1972). There was no single philosophy but a series of approaches which had the common focus of education being for the child and his/ her role in society. There was a broadening of the curriculum: manual training, drawing, science and nature study were included; health and physical education were introduced. Questions such as: ‘What should we teach? How should we teach? And why should we teach?’ were being asked (Hyams & Bessant, 1972).

The place of teacher education was highlighted through the creation of teachers' training colleges in all states. The Cyclopedia of Victoria notes as a work of good omen in 1900:

the re-establishment of the Training College [after its abandonment in 1893 during the depression], an institution so essentially necessary in connection with any efficient system of public education, as providing the best means of making a practical acquaintance with sound methods of instruction, and of ascertaining and disseminating new and higher ideas in connection with the profession of the teacher (Smith, 1903. p. 282).

These colleges were initially established for the training of primary teachers as 'secondary education for all' was not a concept until the 1920s. Secondary education was available in independent schools and a small number of state agricultural high and high schools. A typical way of training for a secondary teaching career was through the completion of an initial degree followed by a diploma of education. The Diploma of Education for secondary teachers was introduced at Melbourne University in 1902 (Hyams & Bessant, 1972).

I am struck by the questions raised by the 'New Education' proponents at the turn of the twentieth century (Hyams & Bessant, 1972). These questions are still fundamental today. The child centred approach to learning is also one that rings clearly for the twenty-first century- to the extent that some schools are advertised as places where "students matter most"! The fact that the challenge to traditional epistemological concepts and pedagogical transmission models had its genesis a century ago can be seen as heartening in one sense: there was a student focused approach to learning in that past. It is perhaps worrying that some of the gains made at that time seemed not to take hold and the traditional pedagogical approaches were tenacious. This may be tied to the fact that the bureaucratic control of teacher education content was essentially conservative, as was the strong inspectorial system. Interestingly the discourse of control has echoed through the decades. There is still tension between bureaucratic directives and teachers' and teacher educators' pedagogical beliefs and it is frequently played out in the media and through union activity.

The depression of the 1920s and 1930s cast an economic pall on society and not least on education. Teachers' colleges were closed, schools were closed, and life was difficult. Interestingly the notion of 'secondary education for all' which was adopted at a policy level in the 1920s placed increasing pressure on the community at a time when it could ill afford it.

Tension existed between some of the progressive teacher educators and the values of the community and this has been evident throughout Australia's

history. By the end of the 1920s teacher educators were exploring more enlightened 'scientific' approaches: A commitment "by teacher educators to psychologically based study, to the concept of the individual differences and measurement of intelligence, to the input of philosophy and history into the understanding of education and to more scientifically derived application of learning theories in classroom practice" (Hyams, 1979. p. 92). Interestingly these approaches were contentious then and now. The content of teacher education remains a significant issue (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001).

There was also enormous public criticism as secondary education was perceived to be a privilege which should be paid for and the province of the 'intellectual aristocracy'. This debate was played out for a number of years in the media and in 1930 The Argus suggested:

To a very large section of the people education, as it is understood, is utterly useless. That section is not confined to any class... (7 February, 1930)

And on 23 May 1930:

The time has come to scrutinize educational services, in both state and public schools, with the view to the elimination of costly non-essentials... The state of mind fostered in children and parents by scores of useless books in the home is not sufficiently realized. The tradition of extravagance is a psychological condition that is extended to food and clothing and even amusements. (Quoted in Hyams & Bessant, 1972, p. 136)

We can look at this with amusement and some concern. What would the 1930s author think of the incredible extravagances in our twenty-first century lifestyle? They would probably be appalled and mutter, "See what I mean - education was REALLY damaging!" Another perspective is that this attitude may have set the stage for a cultural attitude that challenged the value of education generally and may have created the feeling that teachers had to fight to be heard, to be valued, to have a legitimate place in society. Certainly the "elimination of costly non-essentials" has echoed through the decades in Australian education.

Obviously history is not neat and there are always conflicting attitudes about public issues. There were political, social and academic forces countering the negative attitude at the time. The teachers colleges took on the role of training secondary teachers in the late 1920s. Secondary teachers could study three or four years at the college and then take an education diploma at a university. Teachers colleges were located close to the universities and students could take some discipline subjects from within the university. Teachers holding a university degree in Arts, Science, Commerce or Economics followed by a Diploma of Education, became more common after the depression (Barcan, 1980). The subject matter of the diploma of education remained largely unchanged for the next two decades. The course usually consisted of practical work, method studies and theoretical subjects (Principles of education, history of education, rise of national systems of education, comparative education and organisation of education).

It is interesting to ponder what the significant influences in teacher education really were prior to 1945. In many ways the ties to the motherland were strong and certainly the British education model prevailed (Barcan, 1980). Jones (1974) argues that themes of equality, opportunity and rising aspiration in Australia largely directed the development of education systems up to 1945. Hyams (1979) argues that the main feature of teacher education prior to the 1950s was a tendency to pragmatism, noticeably convenient eclecticism and conservatism- driven by expedience, government parsimony and centralised control (p. 140).

The development of different forms of secondary schooling: government high and agricultural high schools, technical schools and independent schools seemed to generate a range of associated teacher education models in Victoria from the late nineteenth century onwards. Secondary teachers could be educated through the traditional degree and diploma of education at university (usually the case in independent schools although many people did not have the education qualification); through a series of diplomas and part-time training as was the way for many technical teachers and through diplomas at teachers colleges or through private education providers such as

the Associated Teachers', Mercer House. This range of teacher education models may well be partly responsible for some of the confusion that prevails today about how people best learn to be teachers. Different purposes for teacher education led to the different models being developed (Hyams, 1979; Barcan, 1980).

The Second World War signalled the beginning of many changes in Australian life. The population boom after the war placed increasing pressure on schools, teachers and teacher education facilities. The criticism of secondary education subsided and "it came to be taken for granted that the education system which was to help build the new society would include the maximum opportunity for all children to attend a post-primary school" (Hyams & Bessant, 1972, p. 172).

Miss Parry's story provides a useful insight here:

At the beginning of 1942 when I decided to go teaching I was appointed to the Girls' section of Prahran Technical School as an assistant. Only to find that there was no one to assist, that I was the entire girls' science department! There was a boys' section at the back of the school. I had no contact with them whatsoever, except to borrow a piece of apparatus from the Head of the Science department there if I didn't have it. And the only material that was available was a printed syllabus for each year. Not a thing else. So I appealed to a former student from Maryborough who'd been teaching for some years. And for the first few days all I had to help me with my teaching was what I remembered having those lessons taught myself! And Cath was very good and collected material from her students, their notebooks and lab books. I went down and got them from her and it was much easier after that. I taught general science to years 7, 8 and 9 to girls, I never taught boys. I was trained to teach general science to that level. At the end of year 9 students sat for the external assessed, set and checked, intermediate exam and that was all that was available for students at Prahran. And I was very thrilled after my third year there one of the students that I'd taught three years, the first one ever from that school, left and went on to Swinburne to do a science diploma there. I was thrilled about that.

I worked a full teaching load, there were 40, 40 minute periods in a week and I worked 36 periods. And in the remaining four periods there was always

laboratory preparation, making up solutions and preparing apparatus and so on. And then in my own time I looked for and ordered laboratory equipment and then this is the actual teacher training part of it. On two evenings a week outside school time I attended lectures in, I am trying to think what the lectures were in! Really, General Method of teaching, English Expression I remember, at RMIT which was then known as the Working Men's College. And I was the only female in a group of about twenty trainee technical schools teachers. For all subject areas there were only 20 people being trained – that was usual for that time. And during the second year I must have had some time off, an afternoon or something, because I remember going in to Emily McPherson College to the head of the science department there and doing special method of science teaching. Ah, but it's a bit dim! After sixty years!

Miss Parry's story provides a powerful insight into the reality of teaching at that time. Some things that I find interesting are the heavy workload, the paucity of resources and the expectation that the teachers would create all their own teaching materials.

The method of teacher training running parallel to actual teaching was a feature of learning to teach in Australia until the 1950s. Often it was the expedient and pragmatic response to extreme teacher shortage and this was certainly the case in the 1940s. Another factor behind this was that university education was fee based and although the Commonwealth did supply some scholarships or allowances as early as the 1920s it seems that full time tertiary education was beyond the means of most people.

The Diploma of Education at the major Australian universities in the 1940s was really the first year of a Bachelor of Education degree. The course consisted typically of compulsory subjects of history and principles of education; organisation of education; educational psychology, methods of teaching and practical teaching. To achieve Honours, students selected from comparative education, history of education, philosophy of education and modern developments in educational practice. Courses in methods involved general teaching methods and special methods. The practical component involved demonstration lessons, observation sessions and periods of

continuous teaching experience in which lessons were criticized by supervising teachers. Students were required to keep a record of their practical work, notes of observations and lessons given and an account of educational visits (Turner, 1943).

Miss Parry provides an insight into the supervisory support and criticism lessons as she experienced them:

And as well as preparing all the lessons that I had to teach, you know do that year, and correcting the students' work I prepared two criticism lessons per week. Written up in the approved manner and delivered to the two teachers who were appointed to supervise my teaching practice. And they were hard task masters but I could hardly have had any better mentors really. They were wonderful teachers, very experienced and qualified, you know ex-primary teachers. They were part of the school, at Prahran. They were the ones, probably because they'd been used to giving lessons in this, supervising the primaries, you know. Any way they were the two appointed and I remember Mrs Furlong, 'You are here to teach the dull and the uninterested students, the bright students will learn anyway! [laughter] And Mrs Harrison, the other one, commented on one lesson, "a very good lesson. Even Olive C was interested!" [laughter]. But that was the attitude you know. That you had to work to keep the students interested and to make them understand.

The 1950s heralded a time of difficulty in secondary education. There was increasing demand for places; there was a shortage of qualified teachers (in 1955, 33% of secondary teachers were unqualified); new schools were being built at a rapid rate; the curriculum did not appear to meet the needs of the more diverse student population staying on at school (Barcan, 1980). Education was seen as valuable by parents hoping that their children would have a more secure future than they had. The post-war industrial and commercial expansion led to employers requiring higher qualifications from school leavers. "These circumstances led to an almost continuous period of crisis in the provision of classroom accommodation and qualified teachers during the 1950s and 1960s." (Hyams & Bessant, 1972, p. 173)

In the 1960s teacher education began what appears to be a gradual and significant transition. The concerns of teacher educators seemed to be changing. There were huge social changes occurring which are well beyond the scope of this paper but the challenge to the traditional technical and apprenticeship models of becoming a teacher was occurring. The teacher was expected to do more than transmit a set body of knowledge; the purpose of education was more complex. One attempt at explaining the purpose of education suggested:

The major and overriding aim of education [is] for the provision, as far as possible, of those conditions which will enable each individual to develop as a unique person in the face of the various dehumanizing trends of society... The teacher needs a measure of wisdom as well as knowledge, of empathy as well as understanding; he needs to be mature and to be seeking for himself a greater level of intellectual emancipation which it is his aim also to give his pupils...(Richardson & Bowen, 1967, p. 204)

The development in the understanding of learning and child development (e.g. Piaget, Erikson) had a significant impact from the 1960s onwards. The role of the teacher needed to be active as the value of practical experience was acknowledged. It was becoming clearer that learning was not just about passively absorbing transmitted knowledge. Mr Kenworthy started teaching in the early 1960s and he describes the prevailing attitude to how people learnt this way:

Basically, that you [the teacher] presented with clarity and precision and in logical sequence, having made an attempt to gain interest, then with some extra individual help now and then they got it straight and took it in. There was acceptance that there would be individual differences – one of the ideas proposed in Education Psych. was Erikson's eight stages of man – growth in mental capacity and therefore readiness to cope with certain ideas. Also there was an acceptance that you learnt by doing, so there was much practical work and problem solving.

I remember that Principal of the Secondary Teacher's College suggesting that we should be "benevolent dictators". There was fair optimism that kids wanted to learn, but the feeling that they should be kept in line, particularly

early in the piece. There was a fair amount of strictness regarding appearance - hair length for boys and dress length for girls.

In 1967, Richardson and Bowen noted that “When acting as an ‘instructor’ the teacher is concerned mainly with conveying a predetermined body of information or set skills; when acting as an ‘educator’ he is concerned primarily with the care, welfare and development of the individual pupil” (p. 1). This has echoes of the ‘New Education’ of the early twentieth century and it is interesting to consider how quickly those ideals disappeared in the tide of war, depression and the resultant conservatism.

Teachers faced other challenges too as issues of cultural diversity, changing work patterns and the value of education began to be appreciated better: “They must: 1. Ensure a higher level of education than ever before for every Australian child, including immigrants and aboriginals; 2. Cultivate a will for deeper understanding of our Asian neighbours; 3. Help both children and adults to learn the satisfactions to be gained from creative work and leisure.” (Fogarty, 1967). Some idealistic teacher educators were also interested in transforming the structure and content of teacher education courses and they bemoaned the time spent on lectures and moving to lectures, and the lack of provision in teachers’ colleges of areas to sit and talk [the value of discussion as a way of learning was developing] (Richardson & Bowen, 1967; Shears, 1967). In contrast to this Hyams and Bessant (1972) note that “By the mid 1960s the numbers of children entering the post-primary schools may have increased dramatically but the aims were still those of the nineteenth century public school – the production of an elite...” (p. 178). The tensions in attitude and beliefs about teacher education are evident within the literature (Jones, 1974; Richardson & Bowen, 1967).

Interestingly the stories that teachers tell of that time do not actually reflect these changes. Perhaps it is just that the reality is that change is a very slow process in education and that the subtle shift was just the beginning of more radical change of the seventies.

The stories of practicing teachers have a number of common elements: education courses certainly contained the usual mix of theory and practice; beginning teachers gave 'criticism' lessons which were assessed; the inspectorial system still existed; externally set exams prevailed in secondary schools from Intermediate onwards; there was a relatively fixed body of knowledge that was expected to be taught. Some insights from teachers trained and working in the 1960s and 1970s help clarify this:

Discipline knowledge and the development of personal skills was what mattered. I was really expected to be a technician. The syllabus was set: we [males] boxed, they [females] danced...For me people mattered disproportionately... (Swan, personal communication, 2003)

We studied discipline subjects. We studied the philosophy of education, but noone asked me mine [personal philosophy]. It was all so 'out there' [impersonal]. The content of the syllabus was addressed but not how to actually teach it... (Hayes, personal communication, 2003)

Many teachers received their training while they were actually teaching. This was largely a response to the teacher shortage but also would have been considered quite acceptable given Victoria's strong history with pupil-teachers.

Mrs Scott began teaching at the end of the 1950s after her family had grown up:

...and I felt rather useless so I wondered what it was I would do. I went overseas for six months to think about it and came back and decided that I would like to teach. So I went in to the Associated Teachers in the city and asked them were there were any vacancies or what they could suggest and she said, 'Oh yes there's one at St Leonard's at Brighton and I am sure they would like to see you.' So I went down and Mrs Moorhouse interviewed me and said yes there was a vacancy right away, I don't know why. Third form level so I thought alright, well I will have a go. And I got to the door of her study and she said, 'And it's for a twelve month period of course.' And my heart sank! I had been imagining myself having a go and seeing what it was like. So anyway I did it for the twelve months and the only reason I was able

to do it I think was because my sister was in the Faculty of Education at the university and had been a teacher and she came in every night and went through all the lessons with me. And so that was my teacher training! And so into the classroom more or less straight away.

So at the end of the year I went to the Associated Teachers at Mercer House and did the part-time teacher training course there, after school each Thursday I think it was. And that was with Miss Ross, who had been a headmistress of Melbourne Grammar and she was very enlightened for those days.

Due to the intense teacher shortage, many people teaching in schools were not qualified as teachers. Mrs White's story provides an insight to this:

I had not considered a university education when I left school in 1951 because it was just too expensive. I trained as a nurse and would not let myself think about university any further. In the late 60s things were so desperate that advertisements were placed in papers asking for people with matriculation and 'a little bit else' to consider becoming teachers. I had my matriculation and nursing qualification so I went to teach at Ballarat High School – mainly science and health. I enjoyed that although it was a difficult time in the system. The high school was very highly regarded all through my youth and it still was a good school in many ways but there were some major changes occurring. The unions seriously objected to unqualified teachers being employed and they were very strident about that. There was also the problem of some teachers considering it no longer appropriate to discipline children; it seemed as if children could do what they wished. The early 70s were a time of enormous upheaval...

The official story at the time, as seen through the Commonwealth Government Report into Teacher Education in Australia in 1970, did not reflect the turmoil but did indicate that the content of the Diploma of Education had not developed much at all:

The first three or four years are spent at university doing a degree course full time in arts, commerce, economics, science, agricultural science or music. The fourth or fifth year is spent doing the first year of the post-graduate Bachelor of Education course at the University of Melbourne or Monash

University or Latrobe University which qualifies a student for a Diploma of Education on successful completion...[subjects studied may include] educational psychology, philosophy of education, history of education, principles and methods of teaching, methods for subjects and practical experience... Studentships were available in four year education courses.' (pp. 29, 97).

The report also noted that 40% of government teachers in training attended university and students who planned to teach in non-government schools could pay their own way through university or apply for a Commonwealth scholarship. They could also attend private training institutions such as Mercer House, the Associated Teachers Training Institution.

The choice of teaching as a profession was encouraged by a federal government that was keen to get more qualified teachers into the profession. A system of studentships was developed and this provided the opportunity for many people to attend university who otherwise would not have been able to afford it. As Mr Stevens who trained in the 1960s noted:

Most, if not nearly all people who went into initial teacher education were on studentships...I got into law, didn't get a commonwealth scholarship [no bond and hard to get], so I went teaching on a studentship – a very common tale indeed. Absolutely no thoughts about teaching whatsoever...had to sign up to teach for three years – go anywhere they sent you.

Because of the fees in Australian universities and the small number of places, the teaching route was a common way to go...University was for private students with money, or more initiative than me; for people on studentships and for students on commonwealth scholarships...I was grateful to get into a university course and to be paid for the privilege.

It was during this difficult period of the 1970s and increasing industrial activity that some animosity towards teachers festered. Society was going through a period of rapid change and some commentators saw issues such as the breakdown of families, the abolition of some external examinations, and the increasing freedom given to teachers as causing the collapse of the education system as it was known, and a resultant drop in standards (Barcan, 1980).

I wonder if what happened during the sixties and seventies goes something like this: There were larger numbers of young teachers being trained as a response to the post-war population boom and teacher shortage. Access to tertiary education was provided by studentships or Commonwealth scholarships. Some students may not have really passionately wanted to be teachers but they saw the opportunity for tertiary education as important and liberating. The social forces of the time were challenging post-war conservatism and some of these students responded to the more liberal times by challenging the traditional authority of experience. Perhaps they were excited by the sense of freedom and the opportunities to change. A sense of challenging tradition was prevalent and this certainly generated some criticism of students and younger teachers (Marginson, 1997). Maybe for the first time what 'counted' as knowledge was being challenged? Maybe some of the 'chip on the shoulder' that has developed as these teachers have aged has come from a sense of frustration that radical change did not really occur; maybe the studentship encouraged people to be teachers when they were not really suited so they are dissatisfied with what they have done with their lives; maybe the rate of change has increased so enormously that even they could not keep up...I wonder... In the end each person's story is entirely their own but I do wonder about the power of the staffroom conversations that have allowed discontent to fester.

Beswick et al (1980) provide a very important insight into what teacher educators were thinking about teaching in the late 1970s. Some key points that echo now were raised by teacher educators they interviewed in the late 1970s. There was debate about academic dominance and the absence of practical consideration: "the problem is to maintain autonomy of subjects while offering students a coherent and articulated course in teaching" (p. 39). One educator noted: "I believe that teacher education is too narrowly construed as training rather than education- part of this results from the narrow focus on school/ classroom performance rather than viewing 'teaching' as an activity which occurs in a much wider range of contexts." (p. 40). Other issues that concerned teacher educators were: "the appalling emphasis on the evaluation

procedures to the exclusion of nearly everything else” (p. 40); the “stifling impact of a tightly controlled teacher education system contrasting with the values of a broad liberal and humanistic education” (p. 48); and there was criticism from those experiencing a Diploma of Education as somehow trivial or “mickey mouse” after what they had done in their degree (p. 90).

Certainly the language of twenty-first century teacher education is about education rather than training, and learning rather than teaching, but I wonder whether the looming teacher shortage will generate a return to a more “training” based approach. There seems to be a common belief that someone can learn to teach fairly quickly. The desperation to get teachers into schools may really challenge the important work that has been done over the past thirty years to develop teacher education.

Criticism of teachers is not a new thing in education. At the beginning of the twentieth century teachers were criticised in the press when they were vocal about pupil-teachers and their appalling conditions (Hyams, 1979). Teachers were criticised during and after the First World War for not being patriotic enough (Hyams & Bessant, 1972). There are interesting connections with teacher unionism (initially known as teacher associations), which developed in the late nineteenth century, and the public perception of the teaching profession as militant. After the Second World War teachers were criticised for being communists; this was a very serious threat and criticism in the nervous post-war Australia (Hyams, 1979).

The rise of criticism of teachers can be explained in political and social ways. Marginson (1997) explores the New Right and the conservatism that prevailed from 1975 -1990. He argues that the dominant conservative agenda had a powerful impact on teachers, their work and the perception of the profession in the community.

Conservatives supported orthodox academic disciplines and forms (“rigor”) in the context of ability streaming, didactic pedagogy, unreflective curricula, authoritarian classrooms, continuous competition and the terror of failure. They saw governments, teachers, radical educationists and academics in teacher

training as complicit in the erosion of the systems for producing and assigning these “standards”. (p. 135)

In the 1980s teachers were seen by some elements of the media and community as lazy and subversive.

The standards debate has raged since that time (Kelly, 2000; Reid & Johnson, 1993). The media is constantly littered with articles and segments about falling standards. Teachers are frequently accused of not teaching ‘the three Rs’ and there are many stories about students leaving schools without adequate literacy skills. This is not the place to continue the ‘standards debate’ but I wonder if it has actually had a significant impact on the teaching workforce and demoralised many people (Reid & Johnson, 1993). I am also concerned that it has the potential to do real damage in the education community. Teachers and teacher educators do not necessarily hold similar views about what constitutes appropriate standards or even curriculum content (McWilliam, 1994; Reid & O’Donoghue, 2001a). These are deeply political issues and I wonder about the amount of time spent on ‘fighting out’ the issues at the expense of other important pedagogical and social concerns. Certainly teachers of the future need to be well informed about the issues and they need to be active participants in responding to the debates and generating change.

From a personal perspective the 1980s were my introduction to the profession. There was no doubt that teacher education was important to me personally and I had the opportunity to explore my own interests. I remember a big project on the Integration Report (1984) which I undertook in the GDE which then sparked my interest and later study in Special Education. As a junior teacher I was certainly expected to follow the set syllabus but I was fortunate to be mentored by people who encouraged me to take risks, and who trusted me to try different approaches. There was still a sense that content was what mattered but I was actually much more interested in learning. There is no doubt that the 1980s were a time of discontent within the profession. I remember dozens of conversations around the lunch table where

older staff reminisced about days when “teachers taught and students learnt, and did what they were told”. Teaching conditions were constantly under threat as the economic recession bit deeper. I was involved in almost constant industrial action as we watched our class sizes swell, our working conditions deteriorate and bureaucratic control tighten.

The 1980s saw the beginning of the movement towards teachers as learners. Watts (1987) writing in a document forecasting teaching in the twenty-first century notes the move towards “teachers as well educated lifelong learners” (p.77). There was also a sense of teachers being empowered in new ways through school based curriculum development (SBCD). Schools could supposedly have some control over the way the curriculum was developed and presented. Reid (1993) provides a challenge to the political rhetoric and argues that SBCD “comes to be viewed as a process of working out how to implement externally developed curriculum frameworks” (p. 133). So on one hand teachers were being given freedom but at the same time education departments were still working on developing outlines or frameworks that would ultimately limit any real change. It is interesting that the tight control of education by a powerful bureaucracy appears to be a feature throughout the history of Australian education.

I find it fascinating as my history becomes entwined with the literature. I am constantly reminded of my experiences and I sometimes find myself saying “yes, I remember that” and sometimes I am clear that I did not experience what is being described. Clearly each individual’s history is personal and set in his/her own context, place and time. It is worth looking at the literature of the time to really appreciate the range of experiences, interpretations and influences.

In the 1990s in Australia teaching is in crisis. Strikes and other forms of industrial action by teachers are frequent; teaching has the highest stress rate of any occupation; and many teachers are alienated from or disillusioned by the job. (Reid, 1993, p. 125)

Things **were** difficult and yet I remember reading this in 1993 and thinking that this was overstating things. Certainly my experience did not reflect this degree of difficulty. Reid goes on to explain the criticism of teachers and teaching that was played out in the media and the response at national and international levels to analyse the problem. He identifies that the activity is characterised by a “deficit approach to teachers” and notes that the “various ‘reforms’ that are proposed, seek to ‘improve’ teachers in different ways often by reconstructing teachers and their work” (p. 125).

I am intrigued by this. I wonder if criticism of teachers in the past was also based on a ‘deficit approach’. Certainly in the 1960s and 1970s there was criticism of teachers for not maintaining standards, for being too ‘laissez faire’, by not being ‘professional enough’ (Barcan, 1980). Further back, in the 1920s, teachers were accused of not being patriotic enough and too militant (Hyams & Bessant, 1972). Even earlier, at the turn of the century some teachers were considered too militant when they complained about the awful conditions faced by pupil- teachers – and pupil-teachers were certainly criticized for being deficient in their own knowledge and learning (Hyams, 1979; Barcan, 1980).

The deficit approach seemed to be taking hold in some way. There is an interesting shift in the language and I wonder if the culture of blame somehow gained momentum here. McWilliam (1994) raised the issue of teacher educators accusing student teachers of being deficient in some way:

Meanwhile teacher educators continue to bemoan the apparent lack, however defined in their charges, some fretting over perceived deficits in student teachers- their suitability for recruitment, mastery of curriculum disciplines, and the like, and others fretting over the perceived mindless pragmatism in the student response to ‘emancipatory’ agendas. (p. 51)

So not only are teachers seen as “deficient” by some members of the community but now some student teachers are perceived as ‘deficient’ by their educators. I wonder if there is a connection to teachers criticizing their own students as being somehow deficient and not learning properly (Wideen,

Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998). Perhaps it is some sort of insidious negative domino effect.

It is interesting to contrast this with the experience of some GDE students at the University of Ballarat at the time. Braiden (1997) produced a Masters thesis on “the problems that beginning teachers encounter”. Many of the problems were familiar but the personal stories were a poignant reminder of how difficult it was in the early 1990s to get a teaching job. It was a time of economic recession, teachers were being put off or made ‘in excess’ and it was the time of the rise of economic rationalism. Seddon and Angus (2000) identify this as the “polarisation of the care and cost motif for the 1990s”: they argue that the provision of teacher education was reduced as “a consequence of neo-liberal reform which set cost and care as opposites, and privileged the former over the latter” (p. 186).

Some teachers’ stories support this. Beginning teachers found it very difficult to obtain work. Not one of the seven studied by Braiden (1997) found a full time position within the first year. If work was found it was often short-term, or contract based or sessional. The lack of sick pay, holiday pay and stability was a problem:

...which makes it hard to plan you know. I've been trying to move and I am really aware that I don't get holiday or sick pay 'cos I am casual... [It would be 'nice' to get a holiday]...Cos I have six weeks off at the end of the year and that means I have to go back on the dole and I still hand my form in because if I don't hand it in, even though I'm not being paid, then I'll have to reapply by the time it was Christmas. (Braiden, 1997, p. 49)

It is also illuminating to explore the students’ experience of their teacher education in the 1990s. Clearly each student comes to a course with different expectations and life history. Braiden notes that “all the students did find some aspect of the course helpful, with most indicating rounds to be the most important factor”. The dominance of the teaching rounds experience has been a feature of many comments about teacher education experience (Groundwater-Smith et al, 2001; Loughran & Russell, 1997). It is certainly

something that students value highly as it represents the 'reality' of what they will do when they are working. I am glad though that we have been able to challenge the unquestioned dominance of the practical experience in the design of the new GDE program as we move towards a more reflective and enquiry orientated approach.

One comment from a 1992 GDE student highlights the changes in the decade since then. She noted :

There are a lot of lecturers and tutors here who have been sitting in their little offices all the time and don't know what's been going on. And they say that they do and they say they go out and visit and all of that but I don't think they bothered to ask their students, "Is this helping you?", "Have you used anything that I've taught you?" And I certainly didn't use much of it during my rounds or anything and that's the real test because that's where you are gunna use it. (Braiden, 1997, p. 60)

Nowadays we are very conscious of connecting university and school based learning but the tension between theoretical and practical learning has been evident for over a century. Australian teacher education started out as "undertheorised" and transmission based. This has been challenged by teacher educators for a long time (Barcan, 1980; Hyams, 1979; McWilliam, 1994).

McWilliam (1994) refers to what she calls the folkloric discourses of teacher education and she identifies key assumptions that inform debates about the relevance of teacher education. (They are worth noting in their entirety as they do surface sporadically throughout the literature):

- Students will always differentiate between "theory" and practice" and eschew the former.
- The more "practice" the better...
- School culture is in opposition to and wins out over university culture in the "battle for hearts and minds" of pre-service teachers.

- Pre-service teachers enter idealistic or “soft” and leave realistic or “hardened, an attitudinal change in which the main ingredient is the practicum experience.
- Pre-service teachers are ideologically conservative, and therefore fail to comprehend the political nature of the teaching act.
- Pre-service teachers are less competent/ skilled than they used to be (this is the perennial conservative policy discourse about teacher education in the 1980s and 1990s). (McWilliam, 1994, p. 51)

These assumptions have had a subtle yet powerful influence on public perception of teacher education. Certainly teacher education students arrive with some strong beliefs about how one learns to teach. In my experience the first three of the above points are very heavily entrenched and particularly difficult to challenge.

A final feature of recent decades which must be addressed is the rise of critical pedagogy and the influence that has had on teacher education. It is not the place to present a detailed analysis on this but I think there are some important aspects to consider. The belief in the emancipatory role of education (Darder, 2002; Freire, 1998) has taken hold in many spheres. This has helped shape the curriculum and also the demand for education. Teacher education courses have developed in line with these changes; social justice and equity issues have been addressed as part of courses. McWilliam (1994) identifies a relevant problem: critical pedagogy was adopted with enthusiasm by teacher educators but not all students have adopted a critical stance and this has caused discontent of teacher educators. So perhaps this is a possible cause for the ‘chip on the shoulder’ of some teacher educators.

There have been many influences on teacher education and education in general over the past century. The professional lives of teachers always occur within a given social, political, historical and personal context. Beginning teachers need to be offered ways of learning that are contemporary and responsive to change.

Where am I now?

A great deal of reading and writing later, I am left with a sense that it is no wonder I avoided history for so long- it is just so complex and unwieldy. What I think I understand better now is:

- There are many players in the education game and the different perspective and beliefs will always provide a source of tension – sometimes this tension is framed in terms of a tension between teaching and learning; sometimes it is around the competing agendas of teacher educators and bureaucracy. What should beginning teachers know? How are standards defined and achieved and so on?
- Criticism of teachers has been a part of the Australian education system since the nineteenth century. Teachers have been criticized for being underqualified; too compliant; not compliant enough; too political; too lazy. This criticism must have had an impact on teachers. In some ways teaching has been the profession subject to the most profound and ongoing public scrutiny probably because education underpins our society and economy.
- Australia has experienced patterns of teacher shortage followed by ‘oversupply’ as economic conditions have deteriorated. We seem to have trouble getting the supply and demand issue ‘right’. We are facing another teacher shortage and I wonder how we will respond.
- Dissatisfaction with a teaching career has many causes. Perhaps studentships encouraged people into teaching when they were not passionate about it. Perhaps the changing teaching conditions- the increasing workloads, stress, and complexity of teachers’ role- the intensification (Apple, 1986) of teachers’ work have created discontent. Often I hear teachers say “this is not what we are trained for” but I wonder if it is. Certainly twenty-first century teacher education needs to be responsive and broad reaching.

- Individual teacher learning as a concept has arrived relatively late in the educational discussion but it is definitely where we must head. For too long the dominance of a transmission model and a commonly recognised teacher education curriculum has dominated. We need to provide opportunities for beginning teachers to learn about their own learning, to interrogate their own beliefs; to inquire into their practice and to develop sophisticated strategies to become lifelong learners who are responsive to change.
- Student learning did not seem to be a focus in the past. It seemed to be based on some grand assumptions about what mattered as knowledge and this has changed significantly. Teacher education needs to provide teachers with a deep understanding of how people learn and how to support evolving ways of learning.

In addition to the above concerns and challenges there have been some important challenges presented to the education community. One challenge was presented recently in the Commonwealth Government's Review of Teaching and Teacher Education (2003):

Education faculties have a central role in preparing teachers. To equip teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to develop an innovative capacity in students, and to contribute to a culture of innovation in Australia's schools, universities need to value and encourage innovation.

(p. 20)

Another challenge presented by the Australian Council of Deans of Education (2001) is ambitious and important:

What is required today is a very dramatic rethinking of education systems, the nature of knowledge and the role that educators need to play.

Rather than being led by political processes we need to take the lead. What we do is more critical, socially and economically, than it ever has been in the past. We have leverage now to improve the conditions in which we work and the

outcomes for learner. This is an opportunity to influence, and to transform, education and society which we must grasp. (Kalantzis & Cope, 2001, p. 149)

These are some of the challenges that will be explored in the course of this doctoral research. The research focus is on various interventions and experiences with the GDE at the University of Ballarat, however, it is my hope that the doctorate will contribute to our understanding of teacher learning and respond to some of the important challenges facing contemporary teacher education.

APPENDIX 2

Thankyou for agreeing to participate in my doctoral research. I am interested in exploring intuition, emotion and reflective practice in teacher education and I thought it might be useful for you to read some relevant literature as 'positioning material' prior to the interview. There is no compulsion to analyse it and don't worry if you don't have time to read it. I look forward to our conversation.

Atkinson, T. & Claxton, G. (2000). *The intuitive practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

...intuition refers to a family of 'ways of knowing' that have in common a lack of clearly articulated comprehension or rationale, but which differ in a variety of other ways. Non- mystical members of this family include:

- Expertise - the unreflective execution of intricate skilled performance;
- Implicit learning - the acquisition of such expertise by non-conscious or non-conceptual means;
- Judgement - making accurate decisions or categorisations without, at the time, being able to justify or explain them;
- Sensitivity - a heightened attentiveness, both conscious and non-conscious, to details of a situation;
- Creativity - the use of incubation and reverie to enhance problem-solving; and
- Rumination - the process of 'chewing the cud' of experience in order to extract its meanings and implications.

Intuition refers to a close-knit family of 'ways of knowing' which are less articulate and explicit than normal reasoning and discourse. This family has tended to be ignored, marginalized, romanticised or denigrated in mainstream educational cultures, partly because of its historical association with claims for its validity that seem grandiose or mystical; and partly because we have, until recently, lacked a cognitive psychology which makes scientific sense of its

nature and its value. The members of this family include the ability to function fluently and flexibly in complex domains without being able to theorise one's expertise; to extract intricate patterns of information that are embedded in a range of seemingly disparate experiences ('implicit learning'); to make subtle and accurate judgements based on experience without accompanying justification; to detect and extract the significance of the small, incidental details of a situation that others might overlook; to take time to mull over problems in order to arrive at more insightful or creative solutions; and to apply this perceptive, ruminative, inquisitive attitude to one's own perceptions and reactions – 'reflection'.

Intuitions manifest in a variety of different ways: as emotions, as physical sensations; as impulses or attractions towards certain goals or courses of action; as images and fantasies; as faint hunches and inklings; and as aesthetic responses to situations. Intuitions are holistic interpretations of situations based on analogies drawn from a largely unconscious experiential database. They integrate (in an image or an impulse) a great deal of information, but may also incorporate assumptions or beliefs that may be invalid or inappropriate. Thus intuitions are instructive but fallible hypotheses which are valuable when taken as such. The intuitive mental modes are not subversive of or antagonistic to more explicit, verbal, conscious ways of knowing; they complement and interact productively with them. People vary in their facility with intuition, their willingness to trust it, and in their ability to create both the inner and outer conditions which are conducive to it. These skills, dispositions and tolerances are acquired through both informal life experience and in the course of formal education. Professional education and training thus have the opportunity, both through explicit instruction and modelling, and through the epistemological culture which they embody, either to enable people to harness and develop their intuition, or to neglect it, to allow it to waste away. [pp. 40, 49-50]

Hargreaves, A. (1998). The emotional practice of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 14 (8), 835-854.

Emotions are at the heart of teaching. They comprise its most dynamic qualities, literally, for emotions are fundamentally about movement. Emotions are basically “mental states accompanied by intense feeling and (which involve) bodily changes of a widespread character” (Koestler, 1967)...Emotions are a dynamic part of ourselves, and whether they are positive or negative, all organizations, including schools, are full of them... [p835]

1. Teaching is an *emotional practice*
2. Teaching and learning involve *emotional understanding*.
3. Teaching is a form of *emotional labour*.
4. Teachers’ emotions are inseparable from their *moral purposes* and their ability to achieve those purposes. [p. 837]

Caring occupations, like teaching call not only for emotional sensitivity; they also require active *emotional labor*. In her classic text on the subject, Hochschild writes:

This labor requires one to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others...This kind of labour calls for the coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honor as deep and integral to our personality (Hochschild, 1993).

Teaching involves immense amounts of emotional labor. Not just ‘acting out’ feelings superficially like pretending to be disappointed or surprised, but also consciously working oneself up to a state of actually experiencing the necessary feelings that are required to perform one’s job well – be these feelings of anger or enthusiasm, coolness or concern. As Jackson and his colleagues note, teachers are commonly expected to ‘smile and appear cheerful on days when they are not quite up to par and would rather be somewhere else’ (Jackson et al, 1993).

Emotional labour is an important part of teaching, and in many ways, a positive one. For many teachers, it is a labor of love. Classrooms would be (and sometimes are) barren and boring places without it. With Hochschild, though, it is also important to recognise that emotional labour also exposes teachers, making them vulnerable when the conditions of and demands on their work make it hard for them to do their 'emotion work' properly (Ben- peretz, 1996; Blackmore, 1996). The concept of emotional labor puts care into context. It takes care beyond being a personal choice, or moral imperative to an act of work that can be supported, made difficult or turned against the person exercising it, (through stress and extreme self-sacrifice) depending on the context in which the work is performed [p. 840].

Loughran, J. (1996). *Developing reflective practice: Learning about teaching and learning through modelling*. London: Falmer Press.

Reflection is an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it. It is this working with experience that is important in learning. The capacity to reflect is developed to different stages in different people and it may be this ability which characterises those who learn effectively from experience. (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985, p.19) [p. 3]

I define reflection as the deliberate and purposeful act of thinking which centres on ways of responding to problem situations in teaching and learning. Reflection can be seen as deliberate such that:

...reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a *consequence* – consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each outcome in turn leans back on, or refers to its predecessors. The successive portions of reflective thought flow out of one another and support one another; they do not come and go in a medley. Each phase is a step from something to something- technically speaking, it is a term of thought. Each term leaves a deposit that is utilized in the next term. The stream or flow becomes a train or chain. There are in any reflective thought definite units that are linked together so that there is a sustained movement to a common end. (Dewey,1933, pp. 4-5)

Reflection is, then, clearly purposeful because it aims at a conclusion. The purpose of reflecting is to untangle a problem, or to make sense of a puzzling situation; reflection involves working towards a better understanding of the problem and ways of solving it. Reflection, then, can be seen as a number of steps in thinking, which when organised and linked, lead to a consequence in action. These steps are suggestions, problem, hypothesis, reasoning and testing. Although these phases need not follow in a particular order, the five phases combined comprise a reflective cycle...Because of the complex nature of teaching and learning, problem resolution is not absolute. It is context bound. Solutions from one context may guide thinking in another, but solutions are not necessarily universally appropriate or applicable. Reflection helps the individual to learn from experience because of the meaningful nature of the inquiry into that experience. [p. 14]

APPENDIX 3

Interview Questions – Chapter Six

1. Is reflective practice part of your professional practice? Can you describe any incidents when you have consciously used personal reflection as a means of understanding your practice? What emotions were present during those times?
2. Andy Hargreaves describes teaching as 'emotional labour'. Would you agree with this? Why?
3. Can you identify the most common emotions around your teaching? Your students' learning? Can you give examples of incidents which highlight those emotions? Have you reflected on these emotions in any way? Do you think your experiences are common?
4. Intuition has long been a powerful part of teachers' professional practice. Are you aware of the place of intuition in your own practice?
5. Can you describe any situations where you believe you have responded intuitively? How do you feel when this happens and are you aware of reflecting on this?
6. Do your teaching experiences offer insights into the interconnection of intuition, reflection and emotion? Does this connect in any way with your pre-service education?
7. Have these dimensions been important in your development as a teacher? Have there been other more powerful influences on your development as a teacher?

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