



Editorial: Reflections on the field, reflective research, and international perspectives: SPE today.

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The current issue of *Professing Education* is ambitious in scope and broad in content. It includes the Raywid lecture given by Craig Kridell, remarks given by members of the SPE Past Presidents panel convened at the 2013 AERA, and two pieces about international contexts: teacher education in Japan, and teaching Chinese students in Canada. In sum this issue identifies exciting and troubling trends in education at home and abroad.

In the 2013 Raywid lecture, Craig Kridel describes a research project called the “Secondary School Study”, which occurred between 1940 and 1948 and aimed “to assist high school teachers to experiment with their administrative, curricular, and instructional practices.” Kridel visited over 25 school settings where he engaged in archival research and conducted oral history interviews looking into the impact of this project. But Kridel speaks not only of this research project; he emphasizes the importance a “scholarship of service”, one based on a sense of responsibility to the field and to those we research, in which scholarship and advocacy become inseparable. This approach is not a choice, but a moral imperative and social responsibility. Kridel emphasizes that his responsibility to the field called him not to publish articles but rather advocate for preserving the memory of these schools, for example by helping establish museums, murals, political representation, and days of celebration. With touching details and poignant stories, Kridel demonstrates his humane position in relation to his human ‘subjects’, concluding with a moving letter written in memory of a participant – and mentor — who passed away. We are reminded that we are not impartial and distant researchers — nor should we aim to be.

The SPE Past Presidents panel presents compelling, distinct, and eloquent accounts of personal and professional experiences in SPE leadership positions, which together give us a portrait of the field as it stands and a sense of where it may be going. A few themes emerge: the decline of tenured positions, the erosion of intellectual standards, the growth of commercial values and models of governance, and challenges to University-based teacher education programs.

Bill Schubert (2001-02) emphasizes the importance of theory in the role of the lives and work of professors of education, and notes the dangerous erosion of the very public upon

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which education depends and which it must help preserve. He describes the challenges presented by privatization, corporatization, commodification and an acquisitive orientation towards education. But in the face of these trends Schubert emphasizes the importance of SPE as a place where professors can regroup and articulate alternative possibilities.

Joseph Watras (2003-04) notes how far the field has come since the Society was inaugurated in 1902 — but quickly laments its decline in the face of commercial forces: tenured faculty are rapidly declining. But Watras comes down firmly against political activism or any expectation that the Society pursue political influence, citing a famous story of a Latin professor confronted at Oxford a hundred years ago while guns ring out on the Continent during the Great War. He is asked: “Aren’t you ashamed to be teaching Latin when people are dying to defend out country”? His response: “The Classics is what the military is fighting to preserve.” Fortunately the good guys won the war— though the Classics declined nevertheless. Let’s hope that those of us who profess fare better; justifying ourselves in the face of the war is not our dominant concern, but narrow instrumentalism and commercial demands may be even more of a threat.

John Novak (2005-06) describes a patronizing description of our profession by a University President as the ‘pursuit of our pet hobbies in depth in a pleasant and protected ambiance’. Novak objects that Professing calls us to “make the world a place where educational lives can flourish.” Noting that this is no easy task, he calls us to address four questions about what it is that we do: What does it mean to be a professor, a professor of education, a member of SPE, and an executive of SPE. Our task is to stand up for something worthwhile, to live more educational lives, to savor and make sense of personal and collective experiences. As a leader on the executive Novak notes that SPE must address and advance engagement in all questions. Finding meaning is imperative to ensure that we stay true to our task of helping educational lives to flourish.

Donna Breault (2007-08) describes a bumpy multi-university career trajectory fraught with troubles and turmoil. Her account demonstrates that the professoriate faces considerable challenges in contending with a sometimes backwards administrative culture and bleak financial climate. In her concluding call to arms, contrary to the title of our professional organization — and this journal — she encourages professors of education to become administrators of education so as to better influence the field and save it from instrumental, inhuman and narrow values. Who better to lead than those who Profess!

William Wraga (2009-20) briefly lists steps SPE can take to increase its profile: attracting junior faculty, including new people in governance, and by promoting SPE lectures and publications throughout AERA.

Jesse Goodman (2011-12) opens with a bang, announcing that this contribution to PE will be the last paper of his academic career, having moved on to other interests. In response to his concern about an overemphasis on testing, about declining academic freedom, Goodman outlines a vision for what SPE should work towards regarding teacher education. This is a significant issue: He notes that from its beginning SPE has been concerned with promoting an intellectual engagement with teacher education. Goodman also emphasizes anti-foundational approaches to educational thought in order to present knowledge as “tentative, contingent, and open to critique” so as to discourage dogmatism and absolutism. Like Dewey, he argues that inquiry into knowledge is pursued in community rather than isolation. Reductive, mechanistic and instrumental models of teaching and learning are an invariable consequence of the ‘deskilling’ of teachers. But referenc-

ing pragmatism, Goodman concludes by emphasizing the need to chose optimism, and maintain it in the face of adversity.

Turning now to the two final contributions:

Recent years have seen a huge expansion of the number of international students, presenting new opportunities to rethink what it means to teach and learn. The huge international movements of students across — and increasingly frequently, back across those same borders — will likely increase in years ahead, becoming a central part of the lives of faculty members. Professing diverse students compels us to rethink ‘what works’, to rethink our assumptions about what it means to teach and learn, and to pursue new pedagogies. Roger Saul describes in compelling terms what is involved in teaching Chinese students in Canada. His humble questioning and self-reflection leads Saul to emphasize that this is an opportunity to rethink what may otherwise be taken for granted. Saul asks: what happens when teaching students whose culture and pedagogy is radically unlike that of the teacher, when students conception of education and authority and knowledge is at odds with that held by the teacher? For example, what happens when an emphasis on interaction, collaboration, and democratic relationships runs up against more didactic, insular or authoritarian assumptions? That the only valid knowledge is that which comes from the professor—and will be tested. Is it pedagogically appropriate to put students into uncomfortable positions by asking open-ended questions, by challenging beliefs, and by trying to promote more egalitarian relationships—even if never asked for? That Professing is not a monolithic and uniform undertaking is never more evident than in the face of cultural difference.

Dr. Yoshimi Uesugi of Tokyo Gakugei University writes about the historical formation and current transformations of teacher education in Japan. This process is presented with respect to its impact on the experience of studying education in Japan today. She presents a detailed description of how particular administrative structures impact the character of teacher education. Uesugi notes that pre-war teacher education was conducted in normal schools promoted ideologies of loyalty, patriotism and militarism. After the war, teacher education moved to Universities where it emphasized the liberal arts and encouraged more democratic relationships. However, current gains are fragile: As in some countries such as the UK, and as Goodman notes in some states such as Indiana, there are attempts to move teacher education into schools and out of Universities.

We must ask: in the face of multiple professional commitments, countless professional organization, and often overwhelming amounts of scholarly publications to read, what is the fate of SPE and PE? And second, how can we stay true to our goals even as we contend with an unfavorable and often anti-intellectual political climate? The need for a common space where we can explore and articulate what it is that we do – and why it is important – is made even more evident by the thoughtful engagement that contributors bring to this issue.

Education is one of the most important human undertakings, through which we aim to preserve what is good and change what is less good. In our attempts to articulate who we are and what it is that we do as an intellectual and professional community, let us consider that although we see the world differently, are compelled by different concerns, and motivated towards different ends, we do more than just “deliver the goods”. We think about what makes them good and why. We are involved not just in Professing, but in thinking and talking about what we Profess and towards what aim, in making judgments about what is educational desirable and worthwhile. The following essays contribute substantially towards that end.

The 2013 Mary Anne Raywid Lecture, Society of Professors of Education Explorations and Responsibilities: Advocacy Research and the Black High School Study, 1940-1948

Craig Kridel
University of South Carolina

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to the Society of Professors of Education Awards Committee. I am so pleased and, quite frankly, very touched to be receiving this award¹. Initially, deciding what to present proved a bit disconcerting. But I was comforted by Mary Anne Raywid, who unfortunately I never met, but whose book *The Ax-Grinders* I own and have enjoyed through the years. And I was taken by one of her comments:

An exclusive reliance on facts to build this commitment [belief in the public schools] among the ‘neutral’ population has not done the job. It seems equally true with the neutral population, as with the confirmed critic, that “tellin ain’t teaching’.” Critics’ values – and the neutral population’s lack of them – simply block assimilation of the information presented. (Raywid, 1962, p. 211)

That statement resonated with me and begins to formulate one motif for today’s talk because, as a museum curator who designs on-site and web exhibitions, I have come to realize the significance of building communities for groups to assimilate ideas rather than to engage in direct instruction. And as many of you know, that “neutral population” is the group that we must engage in discourse. Raywid notes “tellin ain’t teaching,” and I have come to realize that “seeing is believing.” In its own way, I think the Museum of Education

– on-site and virtual via web exhibitions and the use of the internet – builds such educational communities where “the neutral population” comes to understand and to redefine educational issues and values. Please know that I am not here to talk about technology; however, an underlying premise for today is that the internet has given professors of education access to “the neutral population” and, as has been done with the Museum of Education, I believe everyone can build communities that speak to all – especially those individuals outside of universities, colleges, and schools – Raywid’s neutral population.

A second motif for today’s talk arises from an essay I published in the *Sophist’s Bane*, *To embark, willingly, upon a life’s work* (Kridel, 2012) where I described the eighteen years I spent researching the Eight Year Study (a case study of secondary and post-secondary school experimentation), and the importance for all professors of taking on a massive topic that needs to be researched – not as determined by the individual researcher but by the needs of one’s field. I will be extending that theme today, in part, from a recent reading of the SPE purposes. I could have appeared and talked exclusively about my Black High School Study research and, indeed, I will devote a portion of my talk to discuss my findings and understandings about black progressive education of the 1940s. But an SPE statement “using the inherent power and responsibility of the Society (and I interpreted broadly to include all professors of education) to work toward desirable educational ends” proved very powerful and

caused me to pause and reflect upon this work and for a much different set of professorial responsibilities than I had ever accepted before. I was also urged on – in a nice way – by the SPE statement for “understanding (or, as is often the case in my Black High School study research to not understand) the relationship between education and the social complexities in which professors of education function.”

I found these two planks to resonate – the power and *responsibility* of a professor of education AND *attempting* to understand social complexities – because this project has put me in situations that I could not have imagined. My quest has taken me to over 25 archives: school settings throughout the country where I engaged in archival research and held day-long forums conducting oral history interviews. I would send countless letters of introduction to former students and teachers from the 1940s noting that I was researching the Rockefeller Foundation project, staged from 1940 to 1948. At the end of one visit, after two days of delightful interviews with students and teachers from that period, I was taken aside, sat down, and asked by my host “How much do we get? Rockefeller gave you money... how much do we get?” Other times, people – I guess they would be called informants – responded by saying that they would participate in my oral history project if I funded their travels to USC for the interview. Some would become upset that I did not underwrite their trip to the Museum. On another occasion (actually, a few times) a dear woman arrived 30 minutes before the interview session, politely sitting by herself. After introductions I realized that she had never responded to my requests to attend that session. She then pulled out my three letters of introduction – two quite crisp and one worn from showing to her friends – and she told me that she had never received a letter from a university professor

before and was so happy to have these. The stationary was so pretty. She hadn’t responded to me because she was hoping that I would send more letters, as I did. As I say, research situations that I had not imagined or anticipated.

While social complexities would remain forever “intricate,” I began to realize that “my inherent power and responsibility” was not those desirable educational ends as determined by me but, rather, by those groups with whom I was meeting. I return regularly to Ernest Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990) where he articulated a profound redefinition of the role of scholarship for higher education, bringing into consideration important but then (and still now) overlooked dimensions. He discussed the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of application, the scholarship of integration, and the scholarship of teaching and expanded conceptions of what research could and should accomplish. I suggested, in *To embark, willingly, upon a life’s work*, another form beyond *Scholarship Reconsidered’s* array of research – namely, the scholarship of service. I have come to see this now not as a choice – to allocate some time for the scholarship of service – but as a responsibility as articulated by the SPE. I’m not talking about engaging in public history or imagining oneself as a public intellectual. Rather, there are roles we adopt by accepting our place at an institution of higher learning, and there is a responsibility to serve as advocates for those we study and research – in short, the scholarship of service and scholarship as advocacy research. I was well aware of this; my colleagues have conducted ethnographic studies of day care centers, ill-equipped schools, mistreated teachers, and abused students, and they were engaged as researchers, advocates, and moral people attempting to correct injustice. My

experience with the Black High School Study (formally known as the Secondary School Study) brought this role to the forefront in different and very profound and powerful ways.

I first wrote about the Secondary School Study as an outgrowth of the Eight Year Study in Richard Altenbaugh's *Historical Dictionary of American Education* (1999). With a sense of the scholarship of service, I thought someone needed to take on this project and my entry would be an invitation. And, actually, I thought the piece was a nice write-up – pithy and to the point – but, alas, no one seemed interested. I swore that upon completion of my Eight Year Study work, if no one had taken on this research project, I would. And I did. But not just as a form of “black school research” or the long civil rights scholarship. I had read enough about W. A. Robinson, who attended the 1937 Sarah Lawrence- Eight Year Study workshop, to know that my approach, similar to his, was from the tradition of progressive education and school experimentation (this reconfirmed as I have befriended his son and grandson).

The Secondary School Study, sponsored by the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes (ACSSN) and funded by the General Education Board (GEB), was established in 1940 to assist high school teachers to experiment with their administrative, curricular, and instructional practices. While the ACSSN sought to achieve accreditation for its member schools and to make strides for equitable support – separate AND equal – for black education, some educators believed the teachers were not involved in progressive education's “stream of educational ideas” and, thus, were placing too much emphasis on existing, traditional practices. With assistance from members of the Progressive Education Association, the participants in

the Secondary School Study ultimately came to reconsider the basic purposes of secondary education and sought ways to discover the needs of black secondary school students in relation to their social setting in America.

Sixteen sites ultimately participated in the Study and were selected according to the distinctiveness and quality of their programs and the willingness of school staffs to engage in program experimentation. (I visited my final site in May 2013 for two day's worth of oral history interviews and archival research.) The “laboratory sites” reflected a cross-section of rural and urban and large and small settings from the eleven states that represented the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (the regional accreditation agency).

The Secondary School Study helped me better understand the Progressive Education Association's conception of community, teacher-pupil planning, definition of core curriculum, and an articulation of social-political engagement. I cannot state that the glories of progressive education as typically conceived were readily proclaimed by Study participants. My interviews with participating Secondary School Study teachers did not typically include discussions of progressive education theory nor did they proclaim themselves as progressives; however, “codes” were clearly in use and, on one occasion, I was told that the word “innovative” was used as an alternative term and as a way of concealing progressive education beliefs. At this time, smart, dynamic black teachers were being dismissed for technicalities, and the term “progressive” was seen by some as a set of dangerous, non-traditional beliefs. My conversations with teachers and students abounded with references to “teaching the whole child,” the name of John Dewey was often invoked, and, I noticed, Eight Year Study materials were held in libraries at the schools. But I never discovered

a specific statement of “common progressive education beliefs” nor was there a definition of progressive education for black high schools in Secondary School Study documents.

I then came upon a rather startling realization – albeit, one that certainly will not be accepted by all: our contemporary images of progressive education may be too simplistic to portray the progressive education research of the Black High School Study and that of many participating teachers and principals at these schools. Their curricular programs could not be reduced to a one-dimensional dichotomy between child-centered progressives who attended to the interests of children versus those society-centered/social reconstructionist progressives who sought to change the social order or any other equally simple view of competing groups – pedagogical progressives versus administrative progressives. Further, their work – deliberations and planning – fell naturally into a different conception of progressive education, not as necessarily conceived by Dewey with Chicago elementary school children but, instead, as forged in the high school classrooms of the Eight Year Study schools during the 1930s and guided by the writings of V. T. Thayer, Harold Albery (who served as doctoral advisor to some of the participants) and the Curriculum Associates.

As I reviewed documents, I realized that the prevailing conceptions of progressive education in these black high schools were neither child-centered nor society-centered. These are definitions, in part, more for teachers to pronounce their primary interests than to describe the curriculum; in essence, I came to see these constructs as meaningless. Those black secondary school teachers who were child-centered would not have permitted the curriculum to revolve exclusively around the interests of the child, as this definition has become viewed within the context of PEA

elementary-level schooling. Such a position would have been too self-indulgent for the student and too irresponsible for the teacher. Albeit, the mantras of “learning by doing” and “the whole child” were noted but not stressed by the participating high school teachers with many experimental sites incorporating teacher-pupil planning, integrated core curriculum, and the project method. Further, the catchphrase “dare the schools change society” and whether teachers should engage in cultural indoctrination and the imposition of values seem rather meaningless to these teachers when social injustice was so readily apparent in black communities and when teachers would have been dismissed for merely posing the question of equal pay or maintaining membership in the NAACP.

Rather than attempting to force the schools of the Black High School Study into what I view as irritating caricatures of progressive education, I realized that the defining conception of their experimental efforts related to the conception of needs and the Eight Year Study Thayer Commission’s development of personal-social needs. Instead of focusing on students’ interests or societal change, student “needs” were forged together as individual and social in nature. I came to realize that the four areas of adolescent needs as developed by the Eight Year Study – personal living, immediate personal-social relationships, social-civic relationships, and economic relationships – served as a foundation for the participating school’s curriculum development. These were not students’ interests or teachers’ gestures of social agency; rather, the four areas of student needs became “personal-social in character.” Thus, when Secondary School Study teachers drew upon the phrase “living in a democracy” and quoted text from the U. S. Constitution’s Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, the words became more grounded since student interests

and needs were conceived as being personal-social in nature and attention was given to the wider social context of learning. Since this project occurred during World War II, teachers prepared the young men for a future in the military, recognizing the possibilities for a better, more racially fair life (certainly better than life for a young black man in southwest Georgia or east Carolina). Those personal qualities that were to be developed by students – for example, social living – were conceived in relation to the student finding an appropriate role in their communities or elsewhere.

These traits and characteristics helped define what were the shared aims of general education in a democratic society. Thus, reference to Dewey and democracy by participating teachers was not just an idle gesture of mentioning a few words. Black High School Study educators were building communities among the participating sites as well as in their specific locales, and adolescent needs served to bring together students and teachers to learn and to forge their roles in society. Child-centered and society centered progressivism were superfluous in contrast to the important “implementative” studies – site-based research studies where beliefs and practices were explored and implemented – in which teachers, staff, and students were engaged. This is not to suggest that the Secondary School Study program did not recognize or address the social injustices of the time. Moral outrage withstood the years as the teachers I was interviewing expressed their anger, sadness, frustration, and clever ways of outsmarting a white, patriarchal system. Yet, these schools had balanced a conception of personal-social needs where the interests of the students were naturally and appropriately directed to societal issues.

The Secondary School Study officially ended in 1948, lingering for a few years

asking whether they should meet with me. My friendship with The Tigers also confirmed my credibility. When you are able to say that you run with an evangelical trombone shout band, in these circles, it helps [www.berliozhistoricalbrass.org/pentecostal_shout.htm]. I'll also add that coming from an area with an exotic genre of barbecue sauce also provided some credence and lent to endless good-natured arguing. These are the oddities of qualitative inquiry that may not be discussed in research courses.

Knowledge and credibility are balanced with trust, and I came to realize that I established trust through time and perseverance with my correspondence to the over 250 individuals that I have interviewed thus far. Before I visited, I would send from one to five letters of invitation and confirmation – letters displaying appreciation and building trust. After the visit, I would send a lovely 8x10 glossy photo of the individual – the oral history informant – as thanks for participating and would continue sending letters to every reply. Trust (rather than credibility) came in other ways as well: knowing the first verse of *Lift Every Voice*. I assure you, when we sang, many were listening to me. And my heart would sink at the end of the chorus as I would hear the ladies inhaling and see the pianist toss her head back: we're doing the second verse! When I became a source of humor among my participants, I knew that I was accepted and that I had gained their trust as they would talk to me and poke fun at my accent or some other characteristic.

somewhat of a great burden on its members with its call of responsibility. My research on the Secondary School Study took a great emotional toll and to this day hangs heavy. This was a moral calling and not everyone understood what I was doing nor did everyone have the opportunity to learn their importance and significance – not to my

and then falling into obscurity. The PEA was closed in 1955, the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes dissolved in 1964, and the GEB was officially closed in 1965 although it had essentially closed long before. And, while the General Education Board terminated its funding for all “general education” research projects, the Black High School project must not be viewed as a failure. Melaine Carter, a leading scholar of the history of the ACSSN, argues that the impact of the study was profound, with the teachers “exposed to a new level of professional development support from which they and their students benefited greatly” (Carter, 1996, p. 140). And this is similar to the position Robert Bullough and I took with the Eight Year Study (Kridel & Bullough, 2007), these implementative research projects were successful even though they did not change the course of educational thought and school practice. Rather, they served to redefine areas of study in evaluation, curriculum design, professional development, and testing. However, for the Black High School Study, “impact” is a concern as I am trying to reconcile the experimental work of these 1940s schools in relation to the educational transformations – decades later – caused by the unsettling effects of desegregation in many of these communities, i.e., desegregation plans that were punitive and served to fulfill the letter of the law, more or less, by punishing well-established African American schools and communities. I am still formulating my thoughts and interpretations.

Equally important, as a professor of education, I realized during this research that my inherent responsibility to work toward desirable educational ends would not be achieved by writing articles but, rather, by engaging in advocacy research for the memory and public profile of these schools in their communities. As an outsider, I had anticipated difficulties

establishing trust with those whom I wished to interview, but I did not have any problems in raising the wrath of a university curator – with some inherent power arising from the status of the professoriate – to badger local school superintendents and city council members – the uninformed and thoughtless neutral population – about the lack of public recognition of their significant and nationally renowned black schools. My ten year study of the 8 year Black High School Study is going to surpass my 18 year study of the Eight Year Study because my work is not just to write a book (which I am going to do) but to help local educators, historians, city officials, and school alumni to establish museums (or corner displays in libraries and schools), wall murals, formal presentation to city councils by school alumni, and days of celebration where local libraries turn over their computers to alumni associations so that all members of the community, many who do not have internet access, can visit the Museum of Education’s websites. All of this has already happened and much more will occur.

I wish to conclude by returning to my *idée fixe*: I have underscored our inherent power and responsibilities as members of the professoriate, but I wish to talk briefly about the oddities and social complexities of doing this type of research. I found that conventional instruction did not prepare me for this work, and I want to mention a few points.

While I had done my prep – my scholarly homework – I had to establish credibility with the participants (as is always noted in intro-to-qualitative research textbooks). I was never told that my friendship with Cleveland Sellers, current president of Voorhees College and former staff worker with SNCC, would be a determining factor for the success of this project. Cleve knew my research schedule, as people all over the south called and wrote him

research but to me. Any activity – scholarly, administrative, personal – became an unwarranted diversion from this project. On the web, I ended each exhibition with a curator’s statement always expressing joy and, at times, conveying sadness [www.ed.sc.edu/museum/second_study.html]. My exhibit on BTW High School in Rocky Mount, NC, includes a statement that represents this sorrow, words that are very important for the tenor of this speech but ones I cannot say aloud – I break down. I ask you to read this panel as I extend a moment of silence for John Perry. As I say, this wasn’t research – it was a moral calling.

With the joy stemming from my Rocky Mount visit, I also have great sadness. The extensive demands of this far-reaching scholarship, coupled with my professional responsibilities as curator and professor at University of South Carolina, caused delays. And, for this reason, the lovely John Perry will never know how important his comments were to my research. Further, the kind Mr. Perry will never learn of the profound impact that he had on my life – how in his gentle way he could convey a sense of calm and good cheer. I cherish the moments I stood next to him, silently, as we smiled and looked at Booker T. Washington High School documents. With his passing, he will never know his influence on me; however, to paraphrase Mr. Cooper’s earlier quote, when I left Rocky Mount and went out into world, I took a bit of John Perry with me. [www.ed.sc.edu/museum/btw-rm-curator.html]

This grand exploration into secondary school experimentation has caused me not merely to learn about progressive education in

black high schools. Advocacy research and the SPE’s call for the responsibility of professors of education has allowed me to address Raywid’s neutral population not just as a research project. I engaged in moral and local community struggles not for my academic benefit but for the benefit of others and for the field – certainly a fitting tribute to Mary Anne Raywid and to the Society of Professors of Education.

I know that everyone here can find a research project that NEEDS to be researched. I hope you find one that gives as much meaning and joy to you as the Black High School Study has given to me.

Notes

1) During the spring 2013 Raywid Lecture, these autobiographical comments were included:

I found a home at the University of South Carolina – located in an interesting foreign land – and just went about my work at the Museum of Education as I have done for over 25 years. The state of South Carolina was a nice venue to research the topics of race and civil rights and to participate in educational reform – continuously frustrating and infuriating and rewarding – with many good people engaged in the struggle. To some initial surprise, the university was accepting of me. They were never quite certain what I would do but always seemed pleased with those inevitable unexpected outcomes. I had colleagues who were very intent on becoming famous and widely published. I just wanted to go about doing my work, and if others were interested, that would be great. But as I defined my research projects carefully, I accepted the fact that even if they were not particularly popular, they were still important and significant... and not self-indulgent. So I extend thanks to the Society of Professors of Education (SPE) for recognizing the significance in what I have done through the years, a career defined and guided by my mentor, Paul Klohr, with his most fundamental belief in the importance of secondary and postsecondary school experimentation. Few people realize that Paul always defined himself first as a principal of a laboratory school, in the progressive tradition, and I believe that was the period in his career when he was happiest. I was also guided by my friend, Ted Brameld, and by another mentor, Harold Taylor, with their social reconstructionist beliefs in the nature of democracy.

Progressive school experimentation and social reconstructionism have been lifelong interests as I came

to the South seeking to find a home where I could work and, I hoped, make a difference. The history of school experimentation became my research motif and the Museum of Education, for which I serve as curator, became the place where I could address issues of social reconstructionism and race – since, in the South, educational reform is a form of civil rights and social reform. The reason why I am mentioning all of this is that my career has been one of not receiving recognition but, with the public venue of the Museum, rather of giving recognition to others: the

Travelstead Award – named after the USC dean of education who in 1955 called for the desegregation of schools and who was then fired by the university; the Museum’s Hall of Honors with recognition to Septima Clark and other civil rights leaders; Carolina Shout, a celebration of teachers, and many other events [see www.ed.sc.edu/museum]. So, to stand here receiving an award is a bit uncomfortable. I typically make a 5 minute introduction for others and then sit down. I guess I am supposed to keep talking.

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SPE, What Can We Be?

*William H. Schubert, University of Illinois at Chicago
 (SPE President, 2001-2002)*

I am recently retired, though certainly NOT tired of theorizing about education, something I have been doing all of my life, at least for the past 50 years. Theorizing is so practical, and so widely unappreciated for its practicality. It is both active and passive. It is praxis, a politicized living of theories to enhance personal meaning and social justice within each situation in the flow of life. I have tried to express this in book-length work on numerous occasions (e.g., Schubert, 1986; Schubert, 2009a). The latter is an extended riff on a little known statement by John Dewey (1933) in the *New York Times* in which he meets Utopians who practice and extrapolate

his theories while never accepting that being utopian means accepting that perfection can be met. In a sense, it is a debunking of the latter image of utopia: that being utopian is a continuous quest for the good and the just that can never be reached and is always in the making.

More than at any previous time in my career in education, from elementary student, to public school teacher, to professor emeritus, I feel that the *public* that Dewey (1927) envisioned is on the brink of destruction. In colleges and universities, the professoriate is besieged by attacks on its academic freedom, integrity, ethical and political values, the

necessity of criticism and deliberation, and the relevance of its scholarship, teaching, service, and academic freedom. We experience immense pressure to fund ourselves by altering the purposes of our scholarship to respond to (and not criticize) the interests that advance the greed of corporate and governmental forces. Those who we try to serve in schools and related educational spaces are more severely attacked than we. The barrage of tests upon tests, berating by self-appointed accrediting agencies, pitting of student against student, school against school, state against state, nation against nation constitute the tip of an iceberg of globalizing propaganda that seeks to discredit the public and to privatize the world.

I am both tired and re-tired by the pronouncements of policy pundits who know more about their greed or the greed of those for whom they labor than they know of most anything else. They seem to know so little about living theories amid life's exigencies in teaching and learning, growing and becoming, doing and being, overcoming and sharing – while continuously asking: What is worthwhile? (Schubert, 2009b)

Building on the example of John Dewey, Charles DeGarmo, and other founders of SPE in 1902, I urge current members of SPE to engage in reconstructing education and its relationship to today's society and world. Historically, SPE has been a place for those who work in foundations of education and curriculum studies, i.e., professors who see their calling as keeping alive the above concerns and questions – sadly and ironically those who are dismissed as irrelevant and expendable by universities, policy-makers, and school systems.

Forces that beset both the professoriate and the schools today are so intense that there is a great need for respite and regeneration. We need a place to refresh, replenish, and move

toward reconstruction. We need to garner momentum to resist, contest, and overcome the structures, strictures, and *stratagem* (as satirized by comedian Will Farrell) of our *acquisitive society* (Dewey, 1933; and Schubert, 2009a). It is this acquisitive society that changes educational meaning into commodities to be acquired by focusing on tangible items. Hence, such meaningful educational values as edification, imagination, problem-posing, and participatory democracy are shoved to the side while test scores, institutional rankings, grade point averages, diplomas, myriad certificates, and other commodities are at center stage. Race to the Top is a race to the top of the commodity heap, and it is too often the case that the most privileged race does get to the top. So, when I am asked if I want “no child left behind,” I am compelled to ask: Left behind what? What do they plan to do for children when they get there? Where? *Ahead*. Well, if in *Ahead* they merely receive more commodities, then I prefer to have children I care about left behind that image of *Ahead*!

To overcome acquisitive education, professors of education need a place to imagine, criticize, share, and problem-pose; they need to let edification soar, to savor meaning, and to experience participatory democracy. SPE already meets in a place (AERA's Annual Meeting) where more than 20,000 professors of education gather each year. I think that many of them would relish the opportunity to meet, regroup, and reconstruct a challenge to those who want to eradicate theory that questions assumptions. We need a seedbed of alternative possibilities, strategies for opposing privatization, and capacity-building to reconstruct the public through education.

Thus, I suggest that SPE can fashion a place where professors of education can (1) engage problems and possibilities; (2) pose telling questions; (3) exercise imagination with

others; (4) learn about opportunities; and (5) find a community for growth.

Engage problems and possibilities: We need to create a space where besieged professors can come together to renew strength to pose possible solutions to the educational issues of the day. I think of the exemplary work that Myles and Zylphia Horton (1990) provided at the Highlander Folk School, leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and which William Watkins (2012) has so tellingly brought to our attention by trying to counter the assault on education that truly serves the public.

Pose telling questions: Here I do not say “answer telling questions.” Rather, I say *pose*, meaning to keep them alive in situation after situation: to *live the question* as Wade Tilllett (2011) calls for and exemplifies. I call the central curriculum question “the what’s worthwhile question” which I elaborate above and elsewhere (Schubert, 1986 & 2009b).

Moreover, though there is no citation for this story, I vividly recall an AESA session in 1983 in Milwaukee, when R. Freeman Butts asked at a symposium: “What is the most important question?” Many tried to respond and no one gave the answer he wanted. So, later as a mere assistant professor I found myself in an elevator with Professor Butts and dared to ask him the question. He looked at me and with calm assurance, said, “How shall we live together?”

Exercise imagination with others: If there is a central message for me in the work of Maxine Greene (e.g., 1988 & 1995), it is her relentless call for imagining possibilities (Schubert, 2010) as central to the thriving of a dialectic of freedom in public spaces. Earlier, Alfred North Whitehead (1929, pp. 91-101) expressed similar sentiments when he argued that the function of universities could no longer be the creation or distribution of knowledge. Think tanks and books could do that, he said. Universities are needed to bring young and old together for the

imaginative consideration of learning, i.e., for Greene’s (1995) *releasing the imagination*.

Learn about opportunities: Together we can share and create opportunities for contributing to the public and to education situated within the public ethos, as Paulo Freire (1970) constructed with, of, by, and therefore for the people (Schubert & Lopez Schubert, 1981). Moreover, opportunities should be derived not by monocular vision (Shiva, 1993) within cultures; rather, they should be generated through seeing and experiencing *in-between* cultures, sub-cultures, and nations (see He, 2003 & He & Phillion, 2008), in a kind of exile from them (He, 2011) in the spirit of public in which Ed-Said (1994) represents public intellectuals.

Find space for community: Community among scholars is sadly a rare phenomenon. Sometimes a gathering can provide a beginning. SPE can be that. We can provide a place where professors share concerns and pose possibilities in a non-threatening setting – a place where we can cultivate discussions and presentations that lead to publications and action-oriented projects. Our current president, Jim Garrison, has been moving productively in this direction, and I heartily support this. When I think of shared projects, I often think of the Eight Year Study (Aikin, 1942) which Kridel and Bullough (2007) show as a community of scholarly action and experimentation to reconstruct professors and scholarship, teachers and curriculum, and lived experiences of students.

I hope that we in SPE will cultivate a place for professors of education to address pressing problems, ask fundamental questions, pose possibilities, unleash their imaginations, create opportunities, and build community that reinvigorates the public to seek personal meaning, bringing theories to life in situations that yield greater social justice.

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My Service to the Society
Joseph Watras, University of Dayton
(SPE President 2003-04)

My service to the Society of Professors of Education spanned the years of 2002 to 2004. I served two years as vice president and two years as president. In those years, the duties of the president and vice president focused on the annual meeting that was held in conjunction with the conference of the American Educational Research Association. Both of those officers worked to schedule the various sessions including the DeGarmo Lecture and the Raywid Award Lecture.

The Society hosted presentations from such scholars as Sonia Nieto, Lee Schulman, Jeanne Oakes, Michael Fullan, Faustine Jones-Wilson, O. L. Davis, Bill Pinar, and Wayne Urban. This allowed the members of the Society to hear about ways to think about multicultural education, curriculum organization, educational administration, and teacher unions. These lectures appeared as pamphlets that the Society published and distributed to members. In hosting sessions such as these, the Society fulfilled its mission of providing a forum for consideration of major issues, tasks, problems, and challenges confronting professional educators.

During the time that I worked for the Society, the nature of university educators changed dramatically. When the Society began in 1902, few universities offered courses about education. By 1969, most universities had full time professors in departments dedicated to preparing prospective teachers and educational administrators to work in American schools, and the Society became national in scope and in name. By the time my tenure as president ended, the profession was in decline. According to the American Association of University Professors, fewer than 30 percent of the faculty members in American Universities today

work full time in tenure track positions.¹ The overwhelming majority of college professors endure part-time or non-tenure track assignments that are contingent on the decisions of university officials. The profession of professor of education is rapidly disappearing.

Given this shift in the nature of the profession, some activists ask organizations such as the Society of Professors to link with unions such as the AAUP to fight the transition of universities from places of scholarship to corporations that seek profits in serving client needs. It might seem that, since the professoriate is disappearing, the Society of Professors should hold rallies and lobby politicians rather than listen to lectures about such issues as democracy and education. Furthermore, current educational reformers are uninterested in the aims of education beyond economic advancement. Officials expect the education professors who remain to show prospective teachers how to help children demonstrate achievement on standardized tests.

Although it is important to restrain the corporate university, it may not be wise for the Society to become a political organization instead of place for intellectual exploration. The gift the Society offers to the world is the best thinking about profound educational issues.

In this regard, I recall a story told about an encounter that was supposed to have taken place between a soldier and a professor of classics on a British university campus during World War II. The soldier asked the don if he was ashamed to teach Latin to young people while the country was fighting for survival. The professor replied that his classes of Latin were what the military was fighting to preserve.

At any rate, I can say that I am proud of the

contributions the Society of Professors has made, and I am confident the organization and its members will continue to advance scholarship about educational issues. In that way, the Society can represent what political organizations, such as the AAUP, are fighting to preserve.

(Endnotes)

¹ AAUP Research Office, *Trends in Faculty Employment Status, 1975-2011*, <http://www.aaup.org/issues/contingent-faculty/resources-contingent-appointments>, March 20, 2013.

What, Me Profess? Questions for a Committed Educational Vocation

*John Novak, Brock University
(2005-06)*

Several years ago our newly selected, energetic president came on a barnstorming tour to speak to each faculty in the university. In an attempt to treat all academics equally, he gave each faculty the same talk. He told us, as he had told the other faculties, in a reverse Lou Gehrig display of appreciation-guilt, that we were the luckiest people in the world because we, as professors, had careers in which we could pursue our pet hobbies in depth in a pleasant and protected ambiance. There was silence in the room and some smirks and bemused looks. As the newly elected president of the Society of Professors of Education, I was taken aback and felt that I needed to say something. Responding in an adrenalin burst of indignation, I told him that what he said was probably not true about the rest of the university, and was certainly not true about a faculty of education. As I said then and seek to explore now, our job, actually our life work, is not to find out more and more about less and less, but ultimately to make the world a place where educational lives can flourish.

Obviously this is an enormous, complex, and idealistic task that needs clarification

and elaboration and is not one for the faint of heart or narrow of focus. However, without such a hearty vision, professors of education run the risk of becoming, at best, charismatic advocates of the status quo, teaching teachers to teach the official and often superficial and one-sided made-for-prime-time version of what's going down. Without trying to be grandiose, I think we are capable and desirous of a more encompassing project and the Society of Professors of Education can play an important role in this vocational visioning. Let me explore some aspects of this larger educational project briefly by asking and commenting on four questions we should at times ask ourselves:

1. What does it mean to be a professor?
2. What does it mean to be a professor of education?
3. What does it mean to be a member of the Society of Professors of Education?
4. What does it mean to be on the executive of the Society of Professors of Education?

First, what does it mean to be a professor? The historical relevance of this question underlies

the change of the name of our esteemed organization from The Society of College Teachers of Education to the Society of Professors of Education. Implied in this name change is that being a professor is more than being a teacher, even more than being a teacher of teachers. It certainly involves being a teacher, just as it involves being a researcher, an academic, a scholar, and a grant-getter. However, as I see it, for us being a professor should involve something more; it should mean developing a stance, a committed and self-reflective way of approaching and promoting knowledge exploration and ethical ways of being in the world. It should not be primarily about exclusive, academically-absorbed hobbies, as the president of my university was stating. Rather, it should be about developing and sustaining conversations and projects about inclusive, expanding, and self-correcting ways of making sense of the world and human possibilities. So, I suggest, to begin a conversation, we should ask ourselves and others, what are we professing? Why? How? When? Where? How do our larger vocational projects overlap and diverge? What are the distinctions that make a difference in our differences? How do we use our academic freedom to pursue these issues?

The second question is intended to hit closer to home and explore what it means to be a professor of education. To profess is to stand for something. What is the education each of us stands for? What is unique about education? When are we professing something other than education? During a time of academic specialization and disciplinary suspicion, it is easier—and possibly safer—to ignore these questions. The dangers of explor-

ing and articulating too large, too small, or too complex a disciplinary, research, and professional focus can be an invitation to closer scrutiny by those who are suspicious of those who are uncertain, while collecting professorial salaries. Going beyond this uncertainty involves asking questions such as: Is a faculty of education just like any academic faculty or is just like any professional faculty? If it is about something different, what is it and what is it doing in a university? My way of handling these questions is to define myself as a “Professor of Educational Living.” Quite simply, I want everyone to lead more educative lives, lives in which they and others can savor, understand, and better more of their personal and collective experiences. This certainly includes what happens in schools, but of necessity involves larger societal and intellectual issues. As a hopeful educational activist, I look at what is nourishing and depleting the possibilities of inviting and sustaining educational experiences. Although I am painting with broad strokes, this focuses my energies and imagination inside and outside schools. Questions we need to ask each other include: What do we mean by education? How does it connect with what happens within and outside schools? What makes working in education worthwhile and frustrating? If you had to do it over again, would you work in a faculty of education? If you were not working in education, what would you be doing and why?

The third question, “What does it mean to be a member of the Society of Professors of Education?” is intended to look at the purpose and possibilities of our professional organization. As I see it, SPE works to com-

municate and improve the common factors that are necessary for functioning educational communities. Put another way, SPE is about identifying, exploring, and elaborating core issues regarding what is involved with being a part of a faculty of education and a larger educational community. Rather than looking at an educational faculty in terms of their specializations, SPE looks at an educational department in terms of their educational glue, asking such questions as: What holds a faculty of education together? What does it mean to be “housed” in a faculty of education? What are issues that relate specifically to members of faculties of education? How can someone be a professor of education outside of the academy? The point here is to examine what it means to look outside one’s specialization and be generative generalists, educators without borders seeking to develop communities of learning. To be a member of SPE is to value

this larger educational purpose and promote it within and without the academy.

Finally, the question, “What does it mean to be on the Executive of the Society of Professors of Education?” points to the responsibilities and realities of the elected few for creating the opportunities for members of SPE to deal with and expand these questions. If professing education matters, what imaginative and sustainable practices can be developed so that members of SPE can have an effective voice for speaking up for educational purposes in educative ways? What types of symposia, public events, and writing and media projects need to be created and sustained? This certainly goes well beyond and contrary to promoting pet hobbies in protected environments. It involves providing educational thinking, research, and action in an often threatening anti-educative world. This is not for the faint of heart or narrow of focus.

The Future of the Professoriate: Dark Days Call for Movement to the Dark Side

*Donna A. Breault, University of South Carolina
(2007-08)*

If you had asked me about the future of the professoriate when I was president of SPE, I would have probably answered optimistically. After all, I’d just received tenure from Georgia State, and I was looking ahead to a long career serving doctoral students in the city I loved. Boy, do things change quickly. Within the next two years I faced being the sole tenured professor in a program that had over fifty doctoral students. All of my colleagues chose to leave, lost their bids for tenure, or changed their lines to clinical to avoid

being denied tenure. Meanwhile, I found myself administering nineteen comprehensive exams in one week, advising 21 active dissertations, and attempting to develop an executive Ed. D. in a month so that we could capture a larger share of the school administrator market. The situation became so impossible that I chose to leave.

Nevertheless, I did not completely lose my optimism. After all, the circumstances at Georgia State were an exception. As I looked for other alternatives, I found

many options – largely because of my “golden ticket” – having been a school administrator. I chose a new doctoral program – one where they seemed to be challenging the status quo and offering a degree tied to regional stewardship. I felt it was a chance to escape the pursuit of prestige that so clearly defined the operational behaviors at my former institution, and it provided an opportunity to help create something new. My year at Northern Kentucky University can best be characterized as a “dream unrealized.” It became clear that in spite of the organizational flexibility the institution had with a new program, the key players were nevertheless constrained by their own image of doctoral education. It became all too easy to provide something that could be implemented easily. Action research became code for poor research. Faculty members were assigned advising when they had no experience or understanding of what it means to mentor research. Finishing something – anything – in three years became more of the focus than what students were learning. When we attempted to be even more innovative and explore ways to embed the learning experiences into superintendents’ daily work, we ended up acquiescing to their demands for an easy degree. “No one told us we would have to write anything” was their lament.

By the end of the year West Virginia University had called, and called, and called. Believing that it would be a better fit for both of us, Rick and I came to WVU. I was hired to teach in the doctoral program. Rick was hired to do whatever was left over – and to do so in a 4/4 load. Such is the life of a visiting professor. While NKU has no bureaucracy

and no historical constraints but little professional capacity, WVU seems to have the exact opposite: many faculty who are eager to participate in doctoral education but who cannot because of the system: those who have the power control who teaches what, and the wishes of emeriti faculty outweigh those of assistant professors. They are also overcoming a history of the degree serving the institution by admitting students who do not fit elsewhere in the university. While at WVU, I worked with those eager faculty members to try to change the way things are done – engaging all faculty in the admissions processes, gathering data about the program to make informed decisions about its future. We made promising gains – however delicately – to support a strong program. We tiptoed around senior faculty who are reluctant to change and worked to make decisions more transparent. We did so with a shared commitment to quality and the university. These slight gains were enough to maintain some degree of optimism for the future of professors of education: seeing committed faculty work together to improve their programs.

However, my optimism was really challenged last fall. In November the dean shared with me that they were not renewing Rick’s contract for next year. Yes, the dean, not the department chair, and yes, shared with me, not Rick. According to the dean there weren’t sufficient funds to maintain his position as a visiting professor. Needless to say, this came as a blow given that the university wooed us both for more than two years before coming – wooed with veiled promises that a second tenure line position would be possible

if we were patient. Given that there are few institutions near Morgantown, we both began looking for positions elsewhere – trying desperately to stay together – the sole reason Rick gave up his full professor position in the first place.

Whatever optimism I may have maintained for the professoriate has since been drained. Institutions assume something must be wrong with Rick because he was a visiting professor. Obviously, he must be a bad teacher. They seem to ignore the teaching awards – both from Kennesaw and the one from the Lincoln Center for creative teaching. They ignore the fact that he earned tenure at three institutions. They ignored the fact that while teaching a 4/4 load the past three years he still managed to publish six single-authored articles in top journals, write a book, and earn a Fulbright to Moldova. Those things don't matter. He was a visiting professor. Something must be wrong with him. We wonder if they'd say the same thing if he was a woman – as if only then it is acceptable to put one's career on hold for the sake of keeping the family together.

So, I suppose timing is everything. After several months of turmoil, we have accepted positions at Missouri State University, where I serve as department head of their Early Childhood and Family Studies Department. Rick is the Coordinator of the Southwest Regional Professional Development Center. Thankfully – and at the last minute – we were able to secure positions at what appears to be an exciting institution that is willing to see what each of us can bring to it.

So, what does this mean? My aim is

not simply to express the lamentations of a former SPE president who happened to go through a difficult time in life. I think our experiences point to the very real fact that life, as a professor, is a constant challenge. While some of us manage to find decent positions and stay put, those decent positions seem to be fewer and fewer. As “the 70%” (those who are not in tenure lines) can attest – fewer and fewer among our academic ranks continue to enjoy the spoils long associated with the professoriate. Our work hours are increasing, our work has become more prescribed, and the pressure to pursue grants is growing. More importantly, our presence in most institutions is taken for granted. As the administrator from “Midwest State University” in our book, *Red Light in the Ivory Tower*, says, “Let them leave. We can always hire more.” Meanwhile, those who have power have more incentive to abuse it. The call to increase institutional prestige leads many in administration to discard programs as well as the faculty and students associated with them. This trend – this abuse of power- will continue to increase as lines at the assistant and associate levels are not renewed, leaving long-timers and administrators to exert even more control.

Senior faculty are not leaving – and many of them maintain power over programs. Further, when assistant and associate professors leave – whether by choice or because of tenure denial – their lines are often not renewed. In addition, university administrators are rewarded for increasing profits or prestige – neither of which requires high quality programs. These conditions make it increasingly difficult for professors to impact the quality

of programs in which they teach. In fact, these conditions reward the professors who disengage from the institution, do as they are told, and spend as much time as possible publishing and pursuing grants. And, stay with me here, this creates a bit of a cycle, does it not? If you are an eager but programmatically disengaged professor who spends a great deal of time writing and pursuing grants, then you really aren't committed to your organization. In fact, you are probably poised for a move if it means that you will find yourself with a lighter teaching load and a more prestigious institution. While some professors experience this sort of vertical advancement, often the moves faculty make are more horizontal - "The grass is always greener" scenario. However, as you can see from my own example, this is more often than not a fantasy. Nevertheless, the productive professor moves, and his or her position may or may not be maintained once he or she is gone. As a result, those who remain must do more with less: serve on more committees, chair more dissertations, and often teach more classes. It's hardly a reward for organizational commitment!

Depressed yet? Angry? We should be. And those of us who are committed to the

ideals of the professoriate – sustaining strong programs, mentoring future scholars, and informing our various fields – need to be angry enough to do something about it. I'm talking about the dark side: administration. I think those of us who have been in the professoriate for ten or more years need to seriously consider the degree to which we can serve our institutions in administrative capacities – especially those of us with strong backgrounds in curriculum and leadership. It's time. I know I'm asking us to give up a lot: flexible schedules, the joy we get from teaching, the opportunity to work closely with doctoral students as they grow into scholars, etc. We should feel morally compelled to lead. If we don't, then those leadership positions will be filled with those who do not question and who are not ready and willing to fight for the integrity of programs and the wellbeing of professors and students.

I encourage all of us to seriously think about the leadership opportunities we may encounter in our new future. And while we know it would make us miserable, we need to be courageous and step up. It will take strong and caring leaders to preserve the professoriate for the future – and I believe that will only happen if take this responsibility seriously.

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Revitalizing The Society Of Professors Of Education

*William G. Wraga, University of Georgia
(SPE President, 2009-10)*

Revitalizing the Society of Professors of Education at a time characterized not only by a proliferation of opportunities for organizational affiliation, but also by a retrenchment in faculty activity as a result of economic recession, presents quite a challenge to the Society. In my view two of the biggest problems the Society faces are low membership and low visibility among professors of education. The Society needs obviously to increase its membership and to enhance its presence in the academic community it serves. Here are some ways the Society may accomplish this:

We need to generate opportunities for members to engage with the Society's work. This can be accomplished perhaps by dedicating a portion of our few sessions to presenting the work of junior faculty and accompanying opportunities for those presenting junior faculty to be mentored by senior faculty. Our journals can then provide opportunities for publication of the presented papers, especially if we can certify that the selection process is refereed.

Members can also engage with the Society's work through service on committees and in elected capacities. Society governance should be as participatory as possible. Again, providing these opportunities to junior faculty can hopefully foster a career long commitment to the Society.

We need to put our lectures in the service of the AERA conference community by identifying lecturers who will speak to substantive and engaging issues, by widely publicizing the lectures to the AERA conference community, and by subsequently making the lectures available in published form.

Similarly, the Society's awards can enhance our presence among constituents if they recognize substantive and important work and are widely publicized.

The Society can contribute to our constituents perhaps through the efforts of high profile commissions tackling important issues facing our field. For example, it seems that recently accreditation criteria increasingly capitulate to current reform agendas, rather than advance established professional practice. It seems that accreditation criteria serve more to enhance the political viability of accrediting agencies than to improve educational work. A project examining accreditation could analyze trends in accreditation criteria and recommend constructive action.

The Society can distinguish itself by eschewing narrow ideological commitments that seem to animate other learned societies in our field, and instead embrace intellectual openness and exchange. Similarly the Society should avoid becoming insular and strive to cultivate a cosmopolitan membership that represents the variegated specializations within the broad field of educational research through extensive networking and recruitment efforts.

All Society initiatives should be featured in detail on an enhanced web site.

The Society of Professors of Education can be revitalized by providing opportunities for engagement to our members and services to our constituents. The Society has already begun to enact some of these recommendations. Revitalization of the Society will depend upon establishing and maintaining a momentum with these activities.

Reflecting Back and Forward

Jesse Goodman, Indiana University
(SPE President, 2011-12)

I recently retired, and most likely this will be the last academic paper of my career. Unlike many of my colleagues who continue to do scholarship well past their retirement age, there are too many other interests (e.g., playing music, creative writing, gardening, tutoring children) I wish to pursue in this short life. Nevertheless, I will continue to follow progressive efforts to improve the education of our nation's children such as the work of our members in *SPE*. One of the highlights of my career came when I was elected President of the *Society*, the oldest still in operation in the United States.

Unfortunately, our younger members are entering a profession that has become much more conservative during my career. Testing has replaced a concern for educating, commitment to providing a quality education to our impoverished children is in decline, and our public schools are constantly being labeled as "failures" using highly questionable criteria for making such judgments in many states. These and other policies have greatly narrowed the curriculum, and in some places, laws are passed that prevent schools from offering meaningful curriculum to students. The most notable effort recently took place in Arizona which outlawed the teaching of ethnic studies in their public high schools.

Most disturbing is the attack on academic freedom of teacher educators in our nation's universities. Many states have tried

to undermine this freedom by identifying over-specified curriculum content that must be taught (i.e., so called, "standards") and testing of specific and in many cases dubious information prior to receiving a license. No longer does it seem to policy makers that scholars of education should have a say in what is taught not only in our K-12 schools but also in our teacher education programs. Some states, such as Indiana, have recently passed laws that by-pass teacher education altogether. Anyone with any type of bachelor's degree in Indiana can now simply take the state test and receive a license to teach. These issues are particularly important to the members of *SPE* given our tradition of working to improve the education of our future teachers. In light of this context, this paper will outline a few priorities for our work as teacher educators and then end with a few comments regarding our other responsibility as scholars.

Intellectual Engagement

SPE was originally formed over a century ago, in part, to encourage a more intellectual approach towards the education of teachers. Most preservice teachers, at the time, received their occupational education (if they had any at all) from Normal Schools which tended to focus almost exclusively on instructional methods, such as management techniques, rather than cultivating an intellectual orientation to difficult educational questions. *SPE* members, such as John Dewey, suggested

(in his 1904 paper, *The Relation of Theory to Practice in Education*), that the central purpose of teacher education is to intellectually engage students. It is useful to remember that the first university-based teacher education programs were most often located in Departments of Philosophy. These early 20th century members of *SPE* argued that learning to become a teacher ideally requires a substantive and thoughtful education rather than the learning of a few “tricks of the trade.” From their perspective, the education of teachers might best be viewed as a time when young adults get the opportunity to explore their thinking (individually and with others) about children, learning, pedagogy, curriculum (its development and content), power, and the relationship between schooling and society, among other topics. As Dewey stated, successful teacher preparation encourages future teachers to become “students of education,” people who are always curious, experimental, and thoughtful about their work and the children/society they serve. Intellectual engagement suggests that teacher educators and their students take a thoughtful and stimulating journey together into the complexities of educating our children. It is extremely difficult to create and maintain a democratic society unless the population is well educated, thoughtful, and open-minded. As *SPE* members, we would be wise to make the intellectual engagement of future teachers a top priority.

Anti-Foundationalism

A second priority is epistemological in nature. One of the most common assumptions about teacher education is that it is relatively

easy to identify the characteristics, information, and techniques of a “good teacher.” Many think our work is to present this knowledge and give students tests and other experiences (e.g., field work, simulations, demonstrations) to “prove” that they have “mastered” it. This knowledge is often presented as absolute and unambiguous, that is, as universal and timeless “Truths.” From a democratic and pragmatic perspective, we should reject this concept of knowledge. Knowledge is best viewed as a tool, something to enrich and deepen our experience of living. I have found it useful to present knowledge as tentative, contingent, and open to critique, and to always identify its source. Developing the habit of saying “according to...” or “based upon my experience...” helps one internalize the idea that knowledge should never be taken as absolute. Even when sharing specific techniques and strategies for teaching, it is important to present them as ideas to consider, experiment with, and reflect upon, rather than merely “master.” Our democracy cannot thrive in a society with teachers and pupils who believe there is always an unambiguous “right answer” for every question.

Community

Our democracy is not a metaphysical value or utopian ideal. It is, rather, a social contract among diverse people, with diverse public interests, to live together and resolve conflicts peacefully and inclusively with respect for minority rights. As such, democracy is a form of associative living or community. Unfortunately, in most educational settings, the emphasis is placed solely on individuals.

Most of us have school memories of being told not to worry about other pupils, just our “own work.” The easiest way to foster community is by having students share experiences over several semesters. This happens in most small teacher education programs. Large programs facilitate community by organizing students into cohorts. However, one should not assume that community implies a lack of conflict or diversity of ideas. We would do well to stress that not only will our students disagree with their each other but they will also hear differing views and approaches to education from faculty. Respecting divergent views (and sorting out which are valuable) is part of what it means to become a thoughtful educator in a democratic society. However, perhaps the most important aspect of community is fostering a sense of collective inquiry among future teachers. Although each individual should be encouraged to arrive at their own understanding of what it means to become a teacher, it is crucial to create an environment in which future teachers explore questions of education together rather than in isolation. Students of education should not feel as if they are “alone” as they struggle to understand this complex occupation. Future teachers benefit greatly from learning with other students who face similar dilemmas, phenomena, and challenges. Teachers have a long tradition of isolation, and confronting this situation should be a priority in all we do as *SPE* members.

Curriculum and Its Development

As Michael Apple and other scholars (including myself) have noted, many in our country (especially in light of the take-over of

education by conservative politicians) view teachers as little more than technical managers. Sometimes referred to as the “deskilling of teachers,” many in our society fail to see the importance of having teachers make substantive decisions regarding **what** is taught. Rather, teachers are expected to limit their preparation to questions of **how**. Even “how to” questions are often determined by others outside the classroom through the use of pre-packaged, “comprehensive instructional programs” that often tell teachers not only what to do (and have their pupils do) but also what to say (i.e., scripted curriculum). As I have discussed elsewhere, from this perspective, teachers are encouraged to focus their energies on coordinating the day’s work (e.g., schedule time for each subject, maintain paper work, distribute seat-work, administer tests, discipline pupils to keep them on task) rather than establishing relevant and meaningful curriculum goals, developing original curriculum and stimulating content, and designing thoughtful learning experiences based on their knowledge of their students’ intellectual needs, interests, and talents.

As *SPE* members who are guided by a democratic ethos, we would be wise to resist all efforts to “deskill” the future teachers of our children. Instead of “methods” courses, it would be better to think of them as “curriculum” classes that not only expose preservice teachers to strategies of instruction but (more importantly) also encourage them to explore what to teach children in a given subject area. Standards (and sub-standards) in this case would not be taken as “the canon” but would

be questioned and analyzed for their value related to intellectually engaging our children. We would do our future teachers and their future pupils a service by helping students learn how to determine and design novel curriculum units of study on topics associated with a given subject area. From this author's perspective, nothing is more important than helping our students become thoughtful about not only how but also what to teach. In a democracy, the latter question should be continually raised in both preservice and inservice teacher education efforts.

Scholarship

Much of what has previously been stated also applies to our roles as scholars. In spite of the efforts of conservative politicians to undermine post-positivist scholarship, as *SPE* members, we would be wise to continue the lively and challenging academic discourse that has emerged during the last thirty years. We should resist and continue to be suspicious of all efforts to produce scholarship that supposedly "proves" the "best methods" of teaching or identify other forms of absolute "Truths." As Richard Rorty often wrote, our primary goal as scholars should be to continue the conversation. Yet, as previously mentioned, academic freedom in our universities has been under attack, especially in the field of education. This development makes it imperative that we continue offering *SPE* membership meetings (currently held at AERA), increase our membership (especially among young academics), and continue publishing papers in our two journals. It is also important that the *Society* continue its practice of publically recognizing outstanding

contributions to our scholarly discourse each year. Establishing a mentorship program for young scholars is an action that the membership would be wise to consider.

Conclusion

There are many priorities that come to mind when considering the education of teachers and their pupils in a democratic society. In addition to the ideas discussed in this short article, there are many others just as worthy. For example, helping future teachers become more sensitive and responsive to the ancestral and gender diversity of our children, providing field experiences that allow for experimentation and reflection, providing opportunities to consider the legal and ethical responsibilities of teachers in public schools, and exploring the role public education can play in fostering a more socially just society. All of these initiatives are worthy of being identified as "priorities." Although many in our society believe preparing teachers is relatively simple, I have come to recognize during my career that the substantive education of future teachers is a complex endeavor with many competing priorities.

Finally, as I reflect back upon my career and look forward, I am reminded of one more very important contribution to our work by Dewey and other members of *SPE*. As pragmatists, they tended to be optimistic towards the future even in light of the terrible conditions of life for many people at the time (e.g., WWI, racist lynchings, extreme poverty, widespread ignorance). They noted that being optimistic is a choice not a reaction to external events. While these events can dampen an

optimist's spirits for short periods of time, his/her spirit cannot be destroyed. Looking to find ways to make life more meaningful and fulfilling is the pragmatic creed, and the many obstacles we find along the way are best viewed as challenges and opportunities. Life doesn't

stand still. The current condition of teacher education and public schooling will not continue down its current path forever. In the meantime, we can find our own meaning by finding and expanding "freedom within constraints" in our daily work as scholars and educators.

Educational Values in Conversation: Teaching and Learning with Chinese Graduate Students in Canada

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Introduction

In this era of global cultural flows (Appadurai, 1996) – of people, of information, of commodities – the contemporary university classroom takes on increasing significance as a meeting place of divergent bodies, ideas, communicative practices, and approaches to knowledge making. In Canada, where I teach in a Faculty of Education, twice as many international students arrive to study as did just a decade ago. The greatest number, roughly one-quarter, come from China (Statistics Canada, 2012). Some estimates claim that international students contribute roughly 8 billion dollars a year to Canada's economy (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013), a figure that foreshadows the new importance of international student recruitment and programs to the growth imperatives of Canada and its universities.

Given that universities in Canada and elsewhere in the developing world are in the throws of a demographic shift in student population (Wilhelm, 2013) – whereby the figure of

the university learner is coming to represent a much more varied set of geo-cultural experiences than in times past – the work of university teaching promises to change within such a context. Scholarly deliberations attempting to map these changes abound. We can, for example, look to an expanse of writing about the promises and perils of online spheres as emerging global delivery systems of university teaching and learning (Heller, 2013; Lewin, 2013). We can further look to a preponderance of writing on the shifting role of the professoriate in a time of global competition (see Stromquist, 2007). My own orientations to questions about the changing landscape of university teaching center on a series of pedagogical curiosities which are both more partial (because they derive from my own teaching experiences) and more finite (because they bear specifically on the work of *Professing Education*) than the debates cited above. Nonetheless, they are, I will argue, perhaps no less resonant to contemporary educators.

In January 2012, I began teaching

several graduate classes in the International Student Program of my university's Faculty of Education. The overwhelming preponderance of students in these classes are Chinese, students who have come to Canada to learn, to credential themselves, and to experience student life in a new cultural context as they aspire to embark on careers as educators in China, Canada, and elsewhere. My work with these students, at once gratifying and challenging, has opened a series of teaching inquiries that I wish to explore in what follows.

My inquiries coalesce around these questions: What becomes of the work of professing education when one teaches students whose cultural frames of reference suggest radically different views than yours, yet often very thoughtful ones, about the very purposes of education for selves and societies? And what opportunities for learning does this dissonance present for those who find themselves professing education within such a context? Citing my recent teaching experiences, my consideration of these questions will focus on how I have, with my predominantly Chinese students, negotiated the ways we have learned together.

The relevance of my questions to notions of "professing education" (rather than to notions of professing otherwise) are perhaps especially significant in that many professors of education, myself included, have long embraced a student-centered pedagogical model based on interaction, collaborative knowledge building, and democratic virtues. They have likewise eschewed more didactic, insular, or authoritarian teaching approaches. The im-

plication here is that when diverging cultural frames of reference exist within any teacher-student relationship, they are only rendered educative if these divergences are put into conversation – the very wont of many professors of education.

Context

Two short disclaimers are necessary before proceeding. The first is that in writing about any group of students, one runs the risk of characterizing what is always a diversity of subjectivities as instead comprising collective like-mindedness. I aim to avoid such an oversimplification. My students, although almost all from China, are to my mind as distinct from each other in outlook and orientation to self, to society, and to education as they might be to any other group of students. My concern in what follows is therefore with interrogating presumptions that several students – read: not all students – have tended to share in my experiences with them; presumptions that strike me as dissimilar to those that many students educated in North America might hold. A second disclaimer is a reiteration of the inevitable idiosyncrasies of what follows: as with any impressionistic work, the views that follow are my own and may diverge in significant ways from those of others who have worked with these very same students.

The teaching I will refer to takes place in a Master of Education – International Student Program within a Faculty of Education. The program comprises a year of intense study in which over the span of one academic year students take 10 half-credit courses (36 hours each) in addition to an initial non-credit

orientation course. The focus of the program is on educational leadership, administration, and change – students take roughly half of their courses in areas bearing upon these subjects and the other half on a range of other educational issues. Students in the program, the total number of which has tended to range between 40 and 55 in the time I have been there, are usually divided into two or three cohorts. Each cohort represents a self-contained class, and all students within a cohort take all of their classes together.¹ While in the program, I have taught courses called Comparative and International Education, Reflective Practice, Graduate Seminar in Education (a non-credit orientation course), and Culminating Seminar in Educational Studies (an “exit course” in which students are required to assemble a culminating research paper on a subject of their choosing). Students are required to pass all of their courses with a minimum B average to maintain enrolment in the program.

Educational Values in Conversation

As many of my current and past students have shared with me, and as is borne out by research (Hayhoe, 2008; Nisbett, 2010), the institutional and cultural structures of learning in China can differ in significant ways from those in Canada. My Chinese students, many of whom are critical of their own school system, are often quick to cite a slew of differences between the two contexts. Perhaps most notably, they site their exam culture, a culture in which students are from a young age assessed, tracked, and differentiated via exams with a rigor and intensity that would perhaps be unrecognizable to North Americans, even

by the standards of “back to basics” testing approaches making a resurgence in North American schools (Delblanco, 2009).

Against the backdrop of these realities, my work with Chinese graduate students often turns toward discussions of how such systems – systems they are most familiar with – create a particular set of relations between teachers and students, as well as particular associations toward the pursuit of knowledge. In undertaking these discussions, we often tend to first arrive at a reiteration of familiar, yet perhaps not unimportant discourses, about the differences between traditional and progressive notions of education. Many of my Chinese students recognize traditionalism as embedded in their educational biographies. They acknowledge that their system has conferred upon them the notion that valued knowledge is knowledge that will be tested. And, likewise, that teachers are vaunted repositories of said knowledge, powerful figures who offer a gateway toward accessing one size-fits-all test answers, a path fully actualized through drill learning, rote memorization, and acquiescence to static conceptions of understanding. This, then, is a construction of knowledge acquisition disconnected from the experiences and interpretations of students. According to many of my Chinese students, the effect is a suppression of many of the key exercises of progressive education: criticality, creativity, relationality (between self and knowledge, self and teacher), and pleasure in learning.

Inevitably, our discussions also turn to conversation and debate over how a range of additional factors may impact upon the preced-

ing, be it demographic (“China’s huge population and class sizes are not as easily amenable to ‘progressive’ approaches”); historic (“testing is and has always been an important way to preserve a complex matrix of Chinese historical and cultural knowledge”); political (“as instruments of authoritarian government control, schools are limited in the creativities they can allow”); and cultural (“according to predominant Chinese cultural discourse patterns, wisdom is equated with silence, an orientation that arguably favours traditional over progressive educational approaches in a variety of ways”).²

Against the backdrop of these discussions, a particular observation has continued to peak my interest. Although in our discussions several students eagerly embrace more student-centered modes of educational discourse than they suggest they are used to and look critically upon their own systems of education in their talk (as well as upon other systems as they become infused with a spirit of critique) – in fact, they often claim to be doing both in an institutionalized setting for the first time in mine and my colleagues’ classes, –many more signal that they still find real comforts within classroom environments that replicate what they know best even as they acknowledge the shortcomings of these environments to their own learning goals. They find comfort, their actions suggest, in the anonymity of teacher centered classrooms. What is more, many seem entirely reliant on such orientations.

For example, to ask some students to do a presentation in our classes has at times been to elicit queries about precisely how

many power point slides such a presentation should contain; to announce to students that class participation is important has at times been to elicit well-meaning students to memorize reading notes for empty recitation; and, at least early on, to pose open-ended discussion questions was often to encounter group silences. Students would often later explain that they kept silent because they could not be sure they had the “right” answers to my questions (my attempts to do away with presumptions of right/wrong in discussions were initially viewed with suspicion – at some level, many of my students presumed (perhaps rightly?) that a covert assessment was taking place).

The paradox here is that many students engaging in critiques of their own educational disenfranchisements were synonymously reproducing the very relations of these disenfranchisements. They were doing so, it seemed, as a means of negotiating the anxieties of breaking with the traditionalism that these classes were asking of them. And it early on became clear that to try to teach too differently than what they knew, to give them too much agency over their own learning, was to make a significant number of students profoundly uneasy, anxious, and even embarrassed. In short, it was to risk shutting them out as learners.

What should a teacher’s role be within such a context? Should a teacher aim to reproduce the relations that students are familiar with or, at the risk of isolating and even distressing a great many, aim to offer them an experience that challenges their presumptions – often unarticulated – about the work of learning? I suspect that for many this seems

like an easier question than perhaps it is. An idealist inclination might be to favour orientations that challenge and unsettle students in the name of effective learning, according to an assumption that students will eventually come to appreciate having been unsettled as a necessary exchange for reaching new depths of learning. A version of the preceding was certainly my inclination before I began this teaching. And it perhaps continues to ring true for me in contexts where what is at stake in learning endeavours is a mode of knowledge construction that is contained by an observable sense of emotional safety among students. Yet, the immediacy of the obvious emotional discomfort I observed in too many of my Chinese students caused me to rethink this view early on. There seemed something missing in an approach to teaching that favoured one set of learning ideals – again, the promotion of notions of criticality, creativity, and democracy – at the expense of the immediate well being of the students sitting around me. It is not that I at all abandoned these ideals with my students; it is that these students taught me that I was taking “progressive” principles for granted in assuming that the act of valuing them was all that was needed to put their practices into motion.

In fact, it quickly became apparent that these educational values, my educational values, which often existed in tension with those of my students (whose values in turn often diverged from each other), were shaped by cultural frames of references that necessitated collective interrogation lest they become impenetrable impasses. Conducting such interrogations is conceivably beneficial

for any group of people who come together to learn, but the need to do this seemed to take on an added intensity in our work. We needed to ask prior questions of each other in order to be able to proceed with those mandated by the fields of study designated in our courses.

At the root of these impasses were often tacit tensions over broad foundational concepts like individualism and democracy. I often found myself implicitly valuing these notions in myriad subtle ways that my students did not – to the extent that encouraging students to conduct practices such as expressing their views among their peers (which they interpreted as calling attention to themselves) or disagreeing with others in discussion threatened to become impositions; they ran counter to what for some were fundamental values about the purposes of education. Many of my students, I learned, held notions like harmony in much higher esteem than democracy as markers of enlightened intellectual discourse even when that meant suppressing ones views about issues important to them. They likewise valued notions like convergence over divergence, accord over debate, community over autonomy, and assertions of commonality over uniqueness (see Nisbett, 2004). Within such a context, the act of inflexibly ascribing to a series of educational values (even ones important to me) at the expense of suppressing those held by my students seemed misguided. Given my role in the teacher-student power relation, it smacked of a subtle form of cultural imperialism.

My response to these conditions, a response still under construction, has been to integrate a mixture of pedagogical approaches.

If my earlier preference was to run my graduate seminars through the kinds of interactive discussion formats I have found most effective throughout my own teaching and learning life – formats of the sort designed to prompt students to critically conduct, share, and debate the arguments put forth in well chosen readings, that in the best of circumstances push them to extend their thinking and complicate their views of subject, self, and other – these now become later goals, and they share space with discussions organized according to different presumptions. While I still value an interactive classroom dynamic and share this value with my students early and often, I recognize in these particular students the need for space to experiment with determining how this dynamic might look and how they might contribute to it.

Given earlier aversions to cultural imperialism, I begin our courses somewhat counter-intuitively: by lecturing. A practice designed to comfort, this lecturing initiates a gradual move across what I see as a pedagogic pendulum of increased student agency and interactivity, the end point of which are student discussions that feel more resolutely carried out according to terms they have created and thus consented to. Criticality, creativity, and debate are well in evidence in our class discussions, but the path

there often moves with more circularity, less direct contradiction, and a distinctly communitarian feel. In the space of our classroom at least, the question of whether these discussions are best described as instances of democracy, harmony, or a combination therein seems less important than our new found commitment to the notion that the work of education is never conducted according to a set of neutral cultural presumptions. Negotiating this commitment affords us the chance to look upon and recreate these presumptions, and to learn together in doing so, in what is bound to become a much repeated and increasingly deliberated exercise for professors of education working within globalized contexts.

(Endnotes)

¹ The rationale for having international graduate students learn apart from “domestic” students is that this set-up allows for the former, whose first language is usually not English, to obtain a variety of direct Departmental supports aimed at helping them thrive in the program – they receive close writing support from a team of language advisors, their professors are usually attuned to their particular needs and conduct classes accordingly, and they benefit from the peer support of working within a close-knit cohort. Upon obtaining approval, students can elect to take a class with “domestic” students and therefore outside of their self-contained cohort, but almost none do.

² The quotations in this paragraph are paraphrases meant to capture recurring perspectives that arose during class discussions.

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Education in Japan's Teacher Training: History and Problems

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Introduction

Almost all educators working at universities anywhere in the world must be engaged in teacher training to some degree, and Japanese educators are no exception. However, most do not take on the role of teacher educator without reluctance. The likely reasons are the following:

First, educators have a perception that the outcome of educational studies does not count for teacher training. Lectures by educators who might pursue only a professional life of research without schoolteacher experience are often criticized for their lack of practical knowledge by administrators and consultants of school board and principals. Second, educators recognize that teacher training is a minor part of academic education. In Japan, discussions related to teacher training are premised

exclusively on preparing primary school teachers, a practice which originated in normal schools as secondary education institutions for the common classes in the pre-war multi-track system. However, almost all the educators were trained in higher education institutions that had been established during the pre-war period. Although the normal schools were raised to higher status as universities after the war, the inferior image established before the war has persisted to some degree up to the present day.

In this paper, specifically addressing these two factors and keeping their historical context in mind, I outline the characteristics of Japan's teacher training system and thereby examine the difficulties in studying education in Japanese universities today.

1. Pre-war to post-war system continuity

Today, education lectures are given at most universities in Japan. That is not only because a department or faculty of education exists, but also because an optional teacher-training course is introduced for non-education students. In Japan, even students of a single-subject college of, say, business or engineering, can obtain a teaching certificate for junior high school and high school by taking a four-year concurrent teacher-training course approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)¹. At such colleges, while working as faculty in fields other than specialized education, educators teach subjects related to educational studies to students who want to earn a teaching certificate while specializing in business or engineering. In this way, students who are unaffiliated with any department or faculty for teacher training can earn a teaching certificate. Consequently, for example, as of 2011, high-school teacher training courses are in place at 563 universities, constituting three-fourths of universities across the country (junior high school teacher training courses exist in 513 universities)².

In contrast, MEXT rules stipulate that primary school teacher training courses should be approved only at departments specializing in teacher training. Therefore, primary school teacher training courses are conducted at 207 universities, which is approximately half of the junior high school teacher training courses³. Before the easing of approval in 2000, there were only 94 universities, fewer than half the number today⁴. More than half of them were successors of pre-war normal schools and are

still serving in the substantive role of primary school teacher training, mainly in rural areas.

From the viewpoint of openness of teacher training, primary school teacher training is vastly different from secondary school teacher training, which originated in the pre-war period. Before the war, primary school teacher training was monopolized by normal schools. In contrast, although secondary school teachers were trained in higher level normal schools in principle, graduates of universities were able to take teaching certificates because the number of higher level normal schools was limited. It prevailed in post-war Japanese educational circles that the policy of democratization of teacher training conducted by the occupation army promoted “preparation at universities” and the “open system.” However, while the former was fulfilled, the latter was not.

2. Liberal arts education and democratization

This section of the discussion elucidates aspects of the curriculum reform of primary school teacher training in the years immediately after the war.

The education content of pre-war normal schools, with details stipulated by the Ministry of Education of that era, emphasized not the teaching of subject matter knowledge but training in educational skills. Although university students were expected to think for themselves, normal school students were provided to only a slight degree with advanced knowledge to think critically. Instead, they were required to learn educational skills to transmit the given education content reflecting

ideologies of loyalty, patriotism, and militarism to their pupils.

After the war, state-run Gakugei universities and universities' departments of Gakugei, with pre-war normal schools, as their parent organizations were established nationwide according to a proposition by the Japan Education Reform Committee (1946–1952), established by the request of the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers. Because the field for primary school teacher training moved from normal schools to universities, the teacher training policy also switched to emphasize the importance of a liberal arts education (Gakugei in Japanese means liberal arts). Through this process, educational skills, suggestive of normal schools, were kept to a minimum. Teachers were expected not to teach prescribed content but to let students acquire the ability to think both democratically and scientifically. To realize this practice, teachers themselves were also required to have that ability.

The new teacher training policy was well understood and welcomed by students at the time. An interview survey of early alumni of Tokyo Gakugei University conducted during 2009–2010 revealed that five of ten respondents reported that learning disciplines related to liberal arts subjects and specialized subjects developed their intellectual curiosity and were their own source of self-confidence in conducting classes as a teacher after graduation⁵. At Tokyo Gakugei University, where the author works now, even students in primary teacher training courses, whose graduates teach almost all subjects, must have one specialized subject

in principle. That principle has persisted since the university opened. The system reflects the spirit of post-war teacher training reform, but it might be an exceptional case in today's primary teacher training institutions.

3. Return to the trend of emphasizing educational skills

The post-war principle of primary school teacher training to emphasize liberal arts and specialized subjects rather than educational skills was based on the criticism and reflection of pre-war normal schools' education. Nevertheless, it broke down; the return to pre-war teacher training started as early as 1958, with the response to the Central Education Council, the education minister's consultative body, which asked universities and departments for primary teacher training to enrich their function of teacher preparation more than ever before.

The response garnered support from the Japan Association of Universities of Education consisting of state-run teacher training universities and departments. Staff dedicated to teaching subject matter at member universities and departments were fewer in departments of non-teacher training universities. Therefore, it was advantageous for the former to remove the latter from the teacher training market.

Of course some faculties feared the policy as a threat to the freedom of their own research and education. Simultaneously, students assumed a critical attitude related to it. According to a survey of the students of Tokyo Gakugei University conducted in 1962, although 48.9% of the respondents wanted their university to develop specialists who are vari-

ously involved in the educational world as it serves its purpose, as many as 40.5% of them wanted it to cultivate business workers as other universities do. In contrast, only 8.8% wanted it to specialize in teacher training⁶. This result shows that education students at the time widely shared views of hatred toward an agenda of specialization only in teacher training at their university since it was associated with pre-war normal school system in non-democratic society.

To a question related to the number of educational skill subject credits, the rate of students answering that there should be “more” showed the lowest number of respondents (11.2%), followed by students of no opinion (16.6%) and those answering that they should “not be changed” (34.1%). The most popular response was “fewer” (38.1%). More than half of students who chose that response did so because they thought that the university should increase subjects in which students can conduct fundamental or basic research related to education instead of educational skills⁷. However, regardless of students’ awareness, a policy that would return to the old system was pursued further. In 1978, the Central Education Council pointed out that the education to train the actual instructional ability of teachers was insufficient. Thereafter, against the background of aggravated problems of bullying and truancy, the Teachers License Act was revised in 1988 so that the percentage of education subjects necessary to take a teaching certificate increased. Some subjects related to educational skills were newly introduced⁸.

Since the beginning of this century,

“strengthening teachers’ expertise” has become a cliché as an educational policy issue. A 2012 report from the Central Education Council required teachers to acquire sufficient expertise to foster children who can survive in a society that will become increasingly complex, subject to changes by globalization, and which will require particularly good educational skills. The background affecting these necessities is declining academic ability, which has been regarded as a problem especially since Japanese students’ scores of PISA in 2003 were not good⁹.

At the Central Education Council who made the report, administrative officers of education boards and school principals expressed a feeling of distrust that universities sent their students into schools without adequate educational skills. Some education boards across the country have sought to undermine the post-war system, by which universities take on the responsibility of teacher training by organizing their own internship systems for students who aim to be primary school teachers. Furthermore, it is pointed out that students in this time, unlike those in the 1960s, strongly desire that faculty teach useful educational skills immediately after entering university¹⁰.

In terms of the series of teacher training policies and the changes occurring at education boards and schools, not a few educators are worried that the principle of post-war education reform has been lost. Little prospect exists that such concerns can be understood by schools and that teacher educators can convince their present students of the importance of educational theories, expert subject matter

knowledge, and liberal arts.

Today, when teaching educational skills is emphasized in teacher training, what is required for educators by school administrators and teachers is not to study education and teach the research outcome but to transmit practical skills in a sustained manner. It is also no exaggeration to say that the only research that MEXT and schools expect educators to develop is that of educational skills that are immediately applicable in schools. This fact is distressing for researchers who pursued their studies of philosophy, sociology, and history of education at prestigious universities with a tradition from the pre-war period. It also implies that educational research that has been conducted along the post-war road to democratization has come to be regarded as unnecessary, at least in the field of teacher training. After all, public demands on educators changed: they reverted to their original condition.

Conclusion

Looking back over the pre-war to post-war history of teacher training in Japan, it is readily apparent that an emphasis on democratization, particularly regarding how primary school teachers should be trained, has been almost consistently excluded, except for a period of time after the war. That view of democratization has also probably isolated not a few potential educators from teacher training.

In addition to one problem attributable to such a conflict of ideals, in reality, another stems from the character of the business of teacher training. Today when any university might be rushing headlong to attract tuition-paying students, a change of the legal sys-

tem related to teacher training would benefit some universities over others. For example, if MEXT were to raise the authorization standard of teacher training, state-run teacher training universities and departments with many staff members but with no attractive feature other than teacher training would be pleased. In contrast, small private universities would be pushed out of the market. Most educators, aside from some experts, might prefer not to become involved in financial areas, where possible.

For these reasons, teacher training has long been a function from which many educators want to detach themselves. Nevertheless, while they stand by quietly, educational studies have been engulfed by the business practiced in the name of response to social needs. The significance of their very existence has been at stake. The key to the future retrieval of educational studies' importance is that educators question the existing social needs of education or teacher training. Based on those insights, they should dialog with various members of society about education and our social future. Teacher training at universities requires autonomous and responsible educators who never simply appease school administrators and teachers.

(Endnotes)

¹ For basic information related to teacher education in Japan see Howe, E. R. (2008). Teacher induction across the Pacific: A comparative study of Canada and Japan. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 34(4), 333-346.

² Educational Personnel Division, Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau, MEXT. (2012). *Kyouin menkyojyou no jyuyo jyoukyou (1)* [Conditions of granting teacher's license:

Part 1]. In *Kyouiku iinkai geppou* [Monthly reports of the board of education], No.752, p. 64.

³ Educational Personnel Division, Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau, MEXT. (2012). *Kyouin menkyojyou no jyujo jyoukyou (1)* [Conditions of granting teacher's license: Part 1]. In *Kyouiku iinkai geppou* [Monthly reports of the board of education], No.752, p. 64.

⁴ Educational Personnel Division, Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau, Ministry of Education. (2000). *Kyouin menkyojyou no jyujo jyoukyou tou ni tsuite* [About conditions of granting teacher's license]. In *Kyouiku iinkai geppou* [Monthly reports of the board of education], No.610, p. 51.

⁵ Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University. (Ed.). (2011). *Kyouin yousei karikyuramu no kenshou: souseiki no hongaku sotsugyousei ni taisuru intabyu chousa wo motoni* [Examination of teacher training curriculum: Based on interviews with graduates of Tokyo Gakugei University in the early period] (pp. 52-53, 55-56, 87, 89). Tokyo, Japan: Author.

⁶ Tokyo Gakugei Daigaku Souritsu 50 Shunen Kinenshi Henshu Iinkai. (Ed.). (1999). *Tokyo Gakugei Daigaku 50 nenshi: shiryohen* [The 50 year history of Tokyo Gakugei University:

Appendices] (p. 394). Tokyo, Japan: Author.

⁷ Tokyo Gakugei Daigaku Souritsu 50 Shunen Kinenshi Henshu Iinkai. (Ed.). (1999). *Tokyo Gakugei Daigaku 50 nenshi: shiryohen* [The 50 year history of Tokyo Gakugei University: Appendices] (p. 393). Tokyo, Japan: Author.

⁸ Subjects of "educational methods and technique," "extra-curricular activities," and "student guidance" were introduced in 1988. Educators who teach these subjects mainly come from a research circle of educational methods.

⁹ For the debate on the results of PISA 2003 see Takayama, K. (2008). The politics of international league tables: PISA in Japan's achievement crisis debate. *Comparative Education*, 44(4), 387-407.

¹⁰ Suwa, H. (2013). "Manabu gawa" ni totteno kyouin yousei karikyuramu [Teacher training curriculum for "learners"]. In Y. Iwata, J. Besso, & H. Suwa (Eds.), *Shougakkou kyoushi ni nani ga hitsuyouka: konpitenshi wo deta kara kangaeru* [What is required of a primary school teacher?: Considering competencies from the data] (pp. 87-89). Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo Gakugei University Press.

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