

THE VALUE OF CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Landon E. Beyer

Indiana University at Bloomington

Among the thorniest of issues that teacher educators deal with is the relationship between theory and practice. Moreover, there are a number of theoretical traditions on which we can draw to create new programs in teacher education or critique ongoing programs. This article discusses the range of theories that are available and their characteristics and orientations. Though critical theory has not been widely used in teacher education, it is valuable in helping us see the connections between commonsense practices in schools and institutions and ideologies in the wider society. Critical theory promises both critique and new directions, as it focuses on issues related to social justice, equality, and democratic values. An example of what a teacher education program that is based in critical theory might look like is included.

The preparation of teachers is clearly a practical undertaking in at least two senses. First, dedicated to helping prospective teachers develop the understandings, perspectives, and skills that will enhance the education of P-12 pupils, teacher educators have an obligation to provide the highest quality programs we can create. Those programs must prepare our students for their initial teaching activities while also helping them understand the need for ongoing study as they continue in the profession. Second, prospective teachers need to be guided by what we might call "the practice of possibility" as they create opportunities to consider future school practices.

Preparation for teaching focused exclusively on practice, however, is not sufficient. As Dewey (1904) put this point almost 100 years ago,

Ultimately, there are two bases upon which the habits of a teacher as a teacher may be built up. They may be formed under the inspiration and constant criticism of intelligence, applying the best that is available. This is possible only where the would-be teacher has become fairly saturated with his subject-matter, and with his psychological and ethical philosophy of education. . . . Practical work should

be pursued primarily with reference to its reaction upon the professional pupil in making him a thoughtful and alert student of education, rather than to help him get immediate proficiency. (p. 15).

Aspiring teachers prepared through what Dewey (1904) describes as an "apprenticeship" orientation may be seen as "fitting into" the culture of the school and the orientations to teaching that are dominant there. The apprentice, as a result,

may appear to superior advantage the first day, the first week, the first month, or even the first year, as compared with some other teacher who has a much more vital command of the psychology, logic, and ethics of development. But later 'progress' may with such consist only in perfecting and refining skill already possessed. Such persons seem to know how to teach, but they are not students of teaching. (p. 15)

If one of the central purposes of teacher education is to assist in improving the quality of teaching in the public schools, as it surely must be, students need to learn more than the mechanics of instruction, something beyond classroom management techniques. Instead, the preparation of teachers must include courses

and experiences that incorporate theoretical understandings, conceptual analyses, a range of inquiry orientations and activities, an array of literatures and research studies, and an openness to novel ways of seeing and thinking about teaching, schooling, and society.

Even when the value of theoretical work is acknowledged by teacher educators, however, it is not always clear why certain theoretical traditions are included or excluded in the course of study. There is, of course, a wide range of theoretical perspectives and traditions that teacher educators might build on as we prepare new teachers or support experienced ones. Many of the traditional theories used in teacher education tend to take what I would call a “professional-internal-individualistic” perspective on the preparation of teachers. Focusing on subject matter traditions, an ethic of individual pupil achievement increasingly connected to standardized testing, and behavior management plans, teacher education students are not always required to understand and analyze broader perspectives and contexts or—worse—they assume those contexts are irrelevant for the preparation of teachers. Nor are students always encouraged to develop critiques of the status quo or a set of normative ideas that could develop new meanings for teaching and schooling. Often missing from teacher education programs is the development of a synoptic vision, which is grounded in theoretical traditions dealing with cultural, social, and political issues that are interconnected with classroom dynamics. Teacher education, in my judgment, must be grounded in intellectual studies and theoretical pursuits.

WHAT IS THEORY?

Theories and theoretical perspectives are often associated with the domain of philosophy and the activities associated with philosophic inquiry. Consider, for example, the emphasis put on philosophy and the kind of theory that is advocated by Friedrich W. J. von Schelling (cited in Habermas, 1971):

The fear of speculation, the ostensible rush from the theoretical to the practical, brings about the same

shallowness in action that it does in knowledge. It is by studying a strictly theoretical philosophy that we become most immediately acquainted with Ideas, and only Ideas provide action with energy and ethical significance. (p. 301)

The Greek *theoria* refers not only to the contemplation of the cosmos but also to understanding and to living in harmony with those things that are real—not the shadowy, insubstantial images with which we may be infatuated (i.e., things that are temporal and thus unreliable as a source of genuine knowledge); instead, eternal and nonchanging realities can come to be perceived that provide deeper, more genuine understanding.

Theories also allow us to go beyond the familiar and the taken for granted. As they generate new ways of seeing and thinking, theories may, for example, (a) account for the ability of some animal species to combat pollutants in the surrounding environment or within their internal organs; (b) explain misperceptions, such as “seeing” railroad tracks merge in the distance; or (c) articulate new activities related to some new ideal. More generally, theories may chart empirical phenomena, correct perceptions that are inaccurate, and generate arguments for alternative values or ways of life. The latter, normative theories create not only novel ideas but alternative actions.

Within education in particular, normative theories are of vital importance. As collections of beliefs, commitments, and positions framed within arguments, forms of evidence, and ideals, such theories provide possible directions for the aims of education and the practices that are associated with those aims. Through a consideration of value-laden forms of analysis and theoretical perspectives, our students may come to make choices related to their possible agency as teachers and as participants in social change.

Normative theories also focus on the values and ideals that ought to guide education policy and practice and sometimes reveal connections and purposes that are hidden or consciously submerged—for example, those related to curricular emphases, particular texts and assignments, and structures and cultures in the classroom. In disclosing such realities, educational theories can lay bare the connections between

school practice and social, political, and ideological processes and structures in the wider society. Focusing on those connections can result in exploring deeper, more complex issues and processes that tend to be overlooked or downplayed. This can happen when a particular way of thinking or seeing becomes ossified and a part of the “commonsense” in schools that is not questioned (Apple, 1979).

In sum, theory plays a significant role in many kinds of experience. As we reflect on the insights gained through theoretical inquiry and conceptual understanding, we may be able to use those insights to undertake actions and generate meanings of one sort or another. Theory provides lenses with which to see the world. When theoretical perspectives are connected to social life, they can help develop visions and commitments. Philosophers who write treatises on ethics, aesthetics, or politics, for example, point us toward new understandings of what it means to act in just and politically appropriate ways or toward reforms in the basic institutions of society or the kinds of cultural and aesthetic forms that will enhance our lives. Classroom teachers, too, can develop new ways of asking what it means to be morally responsible or wide awake with respect to the aims and activities of education. As Maxine Greene (1978) eloquently puts this point,

In a public school . . . we scarcely notice that there is a hierarchy of authority; we are so accustomed to it, we forget that it is man-made. Classroom teachers, assigned a relatively low place in the hierarchy, share a way of seeing and of talking about it. They are used to watching schedules, curricula, and testing programs emanate from “the office.” They take for granted the existence of a high place, a seat of power. If required unexpectedly to administer a set of tests, most teachers (fearful, perhaps, irritated or skeptical) will be likely to accede. Their acquiescence may have nothing at all to do with their convictions or with what they have previously read or learned. They simply see no alternatives. *The reality they have constructed and take for granted* [italics added] allows for neither autonomy nor disagreement. . . . The constructs they have inherited do not include a view of teachers as equal participants. “That,” they are prone to say, “is the way it is.” (pp. 44-45)

Creating conversations within which teachers may generate a sense of autonomy, in part

through the generation of a theoretical framework and a commitment to a set of principles, may also challenge hierarchy and enhance their autonomy. The interconnections of theory and practice in an educational context may come to involve attention to policies informed by ethical and political values and commitments, not just individual prerogatives or hierarchical tendencies. Such values can enable teachers to pursue a different vision of classroom activities, one that challenges what has been taken for granted.

CREATING NEW FORMS OF EDUCATION: CRITICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE

Education as a field of study comprises normative frameworks and a set of ideals that generate theoretical perspectives related to social realities and possibilities. Those frameworks and ideals can lead to initiatives for educational institutions. Yet, educational studies is broader than any particular set of classroom practices. Indeed, the study of educational ideas, concepts, and precepts may lead to forms of social reproduction that alter current educational policies and classroom phenomena (Beyer, Feinberg, Pagano, & Whitson, 1989). Moreover, education as a process predates and extends beyond schools, historically and conceptually. Just as important, schools represent a particular institutional context that is itself enmeshed within often shifting theoretical traditions, social priorities, and political terrains that affect what we consider normal or necessary.

Unlike some other theoretical traditions, critical theory has been concerned with the day-to-day lives of people and the structures and cultures that shape their futures. Beyond more traditional philosophical treatises that focus on contemplation, ideas, and forms of speculation, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels believed that material structures and interests—not abstractions—shaped individuals and groups. Having published a critique of the Hegelian philosophy of “right” in 1844, Marx (cited in Tucker, 1978) said, considering legal matters,

My investigation led to the result that legal relations as well as forms of state are to be grasped neither

from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum total of which Hegel, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of "civil society," that, however, the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy. (p. 4)

Instead of beginning with philosophical treatises or abstract reasoning, then, Marx (cited in Tucker, 1978) focused on the actual ways people live and the functional structures that shape people's actions and ways of thinking. As he put it,

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. . . . The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society . . . to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. (p. 4)

In other words, the actual social and economic exchanges and patterns that are created within a society shape the consciousness of people.

More contemporary critical theorists have argued that at least certain forms of philosophical analysis, cultural values and activities, aesthetic experiences, and human subjectivity generally have a significant place in civil society—even in changing that society. Such emphases have attenuated some of Marx's historical materialism while acknowledging the material realities and social roles that dominate in capitalist societies. The concept of hegemony has become increasingly discussed as an alternative to the bare social and economic production of life (see Williams, 1977, especially chaps. 6 and 9).

Critical educational theory can help us understand how educational ideas, policies, and practices help give shape to forms of human consciousness and how they are related to larger political and ideological perspectives and social realities. Yet, it is still too common to hear many teachers and teacher educators describe schools as politically neutral, meritocratic institutions isolated from social, political, and ideological crosscurrents. As teacher educators think through issues like those concerning which texts and issues are to be conveyed through the formal curriculum, which attitudes

and ways of thinking are promoted through the hidden curriculum, which patterns of interaction are supported or suspended—in public schools and higher education—we also begin to see the interests that are served and not served, the values and agendas that are condoned and that shape students' consciousness. Understanding and analyzing the linkages between day-to-day practices in schools and larger domains and values that are often linked to social and political realities is central to the generation of critical theory for teaching and teacher education.

Every society must provide for the continued existence and development of its populace. The particular beliefs and values that are central to a society in a given time or era help construct ideals or sets of ideals, or they generate criticisms and new initiatives to undo what has been commonsensical. It is precisely in understanding the normative dimensions of education and how they are intertwined with social, structural, and ideological processes and realities that critical theory plays a key role. Social life generally, and patterns of individual socialization that are part of schooling in particular, often provide avenues for ensuring forms of social continuity that are counterproductive to the generation of democratic values and ideals as well as to commitments to the common good and to social justice. Perhaps more often, patterns of socialization are regarded as natural or unproblematic, especially when disconnected from larger social arenas. When a pattern of unexamined beliefs, taken-for-granted values, and unconscious assumptions is built into educational processes, social control of a seemingly non-evasive kind can take root. As examples of such control, consider the following beliefs:

1. "People are 'naturally' arranged into groups such that some are better (intellectually, emotionally, morally) than others and thus deserve more." This belief has supported such allegedly meritocratic school practices as ability grouping, pull-out classes, tracking, and gifted and talented programs.
2. "Competition is a force for good in the world." In schools, various forms of competition commonly exist, from relatively harmless games wherein winners and losers constitute fluid, changeable categories within which there is little or no risk of losing status to more harmful competition for grades, re-

wards, and recognition, which can have significant negative personal and social consequences that may be long lasting.

3. "People must adjust to their social environment as it currently exists" rather than attempt to change it. This belief is often crystallized in classrooms where students are consistently instructed to do as they are told rather than allowed to question some direction or activity or to suggest an alternative.
4. "Our primary responsibilities must be to ourselves or perhaps our immediate families." Educational activities that enhance individual status and achievement, as compared with cooperative activities in which people work together for a common good, provide examples of how this point of view is enacted.
5. "The 'bottom line' is fundamental to decision making, as is a culture of consumerism." Within this orientation, the number of goods we can own, the differential access to privileged forms of everyday life and cultural objects, and the need to be seen as advantaged (and thereby more virtuous and admirable) become benchmarks of success.

Not long ago, I observed a classroom of 5- and 6-year olds from mostly upper-middle-class, White, suburban homes reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by another pledge, the second one to the school. Following those recitations, the students began counting the money they had brought to school so that it could be recorded in their savings books and later deposited in a local bank that had allowed the students to open interest-bearing, no-fee savings accounts. It is not an exaggeration to say that these children were being prepared for the upper-middle-class, consumerist life that indeed awaited them. Rather than seeing these kindergarten students' actions as something that is natural or educational, teachers might come to see such actions as providing a form of socialization related to the dominant interests in a capitalist society.

In sum, critical theorists have pointed to social-political ramifications of classroom activities and the educational policies that are consistent with them. The most important of the areas that have been scrutinized include

- how the values embedded in the hidden curriculum affect students' self-perceptions and their possible futures (Anyon, 1980; Apple, 1975; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Dreeben, 1968; Jackson, 1968);
- the texts, tests, and standards that compose the overt curriculum, whose interests are represented in the

curriculum and whose are not (Apple & Weis, 1983; Shor, 1986; Whitty, 1985);

- the kinds of cultural values and structures of power that dominate in schools and classrooms and what their effects are, especially in terms of race, gender, class, ethnicity, and disability issues (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Nasaw, 1979);
- the forms of assessment that occur in classrooms and how they affect students and teachers (Beyer & Apple, 1998; Lawton, 1980); and
- the aims or purposes of schooling and how they are related to moral questions, political influences, ideological frameworks, and social possibilities (Freire, 1973; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1995).

Educational policies and practices too often provide teachers and pupils with images of the good life, "necessary" beliefs and orientations, and "American values" through the inculcation of attitudes, norms, values, and forms of knowledge that are included or excluded as well as a pattern of apathetic noninvolvement for many students. In short, educational institutions (and many other influences, of course) have been useful in reproducing forms of consciousness that help maintain social inequalities and forms of hegemony that support the status quo. In summarizing empirical research on "the modal classroom," Sirotnik (1983) concludes, "We are implicitly teaching dependence upon authority, linear thinking, social apathy, passive involvement, and hands-off learning," all in a "virtually affectless environment" (p. 29). Are these the qualities and values we really want for our children and our schools?

It must be said here that many teachers struggle every day to challenge and alter the dominant, conventional messages of school and society and to overturn the beliefs and actions sanctioned there as they work to bring democratic values and social justice concerns to bear on classroom interactions and activities. Critical perspectives on education and society, in short, can significantly alter what we take to be normal and necessary in P-12 classrooms.

Critical Theory in Teacher Education

Progressive critical theories focus on the social dimensions and consequences of educational practice, the ideological meanings of texts and experiences, the power relations in schools

and other institutions, and the need to integrate theory and practice in new ways. Such attention is vitally important when, for example, we ask to what extent schools serve all children equally well, who benefits when they do not, and what we ought to do about that state of affairs. Critical theory also acknowledges the value-ladenness of forms of analysis. In making connections between the day-to-day realities of teaching, teacher education, and larger social structures and values that are too often ignored or denied, theorists working in this tradition seek to lay bare the ways in which classrooms contribute to the reinforcement of forms of social stability that are especially injurious for students who are marginalized. Critical theorists also explore ways in which teachers and researchers may develop activities and modes of interaction that work for social justice and toward social change (Apple & Beane, 1995; Beyer, 1996).

The idea that teachers are or might become reflective practitioners has gained a significant amount of acceptance over the past couple of decades, thanks to the work of people like Peter Grimmett and Gaalen Erickson (1988), Donald Schön (1983, 1987), John Smyth (1989), Linda Valli (1992), Ken Zeichner (1983), and many others. Although not all these researchers are regarded as critical theorists, this work provides a body of literature for prospective and practicing teachers that resists the trends toward the deskilling of teaching and the reliance on teacher proof curriculum. Action research projects and inquiry-oriented approaches to teaching have also demonstrated ways that student teachers, as well as experienced professionals, have incorporated reflective activities in classrooms that can reconstruct practice (Beyer, 1989; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Haggerson & Bowman, 1992; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994; Noffke & Brennan, 1991; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1991; Wells, 1994).

A number of educational researchers have been influential in arguing that democratic values and ideals ought to provide an important part of the framework for teacher education and classroom practices (see, e.g., Apple & Beane, 1995; Bastian, Fruchter, Gittell, Greer, & Haskins,

1985; Beyer, 1996; Kreisberg, 1992; Ross & Yeager, 1999; Wood, 1984). This literature is accompanied by commitments to incorporating social justice concerns into the curriculum of teacher education and to the inclusion of a multicultural orientation to programs that prepare teachers (Banks, 1993; Berman & La Farge, 1993; Bigelow, Christensen, Karp, Miner, & Peterson, 1994; Carlson, 1994; Sleeter, 1991; Ullrich & Jorissen, 1992). By creating both courses and field experiences for prospective teachers that deal with issues of social class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, teacher educators may link broader political, ideological, and social issues with the concrete realities of schools. Teachers who embody these orientations will intervene in the lives of their students so as to help construct with them futures that are personally rewarding, socially responsible, and morally compelling.

Critical Theory and Programmatic Initiatives

Elsewhere I have discussed previous efforts to reconstruct programs of teacher education that centrally incorporate critical perspectives devoted to changes in classrooms as well as the larger society (Beyer, 1993, 1995, 1996). I want to conclude this article by discussing a wide-ranging effort to reconceptualize teacher education at Indiana University at Bloomington (IUB) and one specific elementary education program that was created as part of that effort.

To provide some context for this discussion, it should be noted that the teacher education program at IUB enrolls more than 2,000 students (excluding those pursuing graduate degrees). Elementary education is by far the largest of our programs. A total of 899 students are currently enrolled in elementary education, with women composing 87% of that group. When our efforts at reconceptualizing teacher education are completed, we will have a total of 10 programs. About one half of our programs will be completely new (i.e., contain courses, requirements, and emphases that did not exist before this effort), the other half revised versions of continuing programs.

The teacher education community in Bloomington was actively and collectively engaged in the process of discussing and articulating a new direction for teacher education beginning in January 1995. The process began by formulating and then answering two fundamental conceptual questions: What should teacher education at Indiana University be committed to? and, based on the articulation of that commitment, What should our programs look like? These questions and others that followed from them were to begin the process of rethinking teacher education at IUB. As this mandate was conceived, we were to pursue what Harold Rugg (1952) called "The Creative Path," not "The Conforming Way" that has been so dominant in teacher education, both historically and currently. It should be noted here that faculty taking part in this endeavor (and at least 75% did so) were not given released time, nor did they receive a stipend. Instead, the faculty saw this as intrinsically important work and an important opportunity.

An ad hoc teacher education steering committee (TESC) was assembled and began the conversations necessary to articulate a new conceptual orientation to and direction for our programs. The TESC subsequently sponsored small-group discussions, open forums, and two school of education retreats so that everyone interested in teacher education could share in the conversations and the eventual outcomes of this undertaking.

The process of creating a new direction for teacher education was, in short, open, principled, inclusive, and democratic. Our aim was to outline a cohesive vision and a set of parameters for all teacher education programs. We assumed that every component and phase of teacher education could be changed, that nothing was sacred, and that together the teacher education community could forge a new beginning. These conversations continued through the spring of 1996, when six principles that had been suggested, amended, and discussed again were formally adopted by our teacher education council (see appendix).

By the summer of 1997, all license areas had submitted documents that contained outlines

for revised or new program offerings. As of the fall of 2000, all but two of our programs have been approved, and some programs have begun implementation. Our programs include the following:

Early Childhood Education

We have a new program in early childhood education, which emphasizes a commitment to enhancing academic rigor in the curriculum, integrating methods courses with content areas so that those areas are seen as interconnected, integrating field experiences more fully with campus-based coursework, emphasizing student explorations of literacy and diversity so that students can nurture literacy, and understanding diversity in young children. Virtually all classes in this program integrate topics and issues in courses that will be team-taught.

Elementary Education

Democracy, Diversity, and Social Justice (DDSJ) (described in detail below) is a new elementary education program based on commitments to inquiry projects and frames of mind; democratic communities, ideas, and practices; critical reflection on experiences and actions; and a comprehensive understanding of social justice. Theory Into Practice is a revised elementary education program that focuses on the need to help prospective teachers instruct students with diverse backgrounds, cultures, and learning abilities. An emphasis on the necessity of continued professional development is also central. Praxis: A Program for Innovative Education is a revised elementary education program, similar in many ways to Theory Into Practice. Teaching All Learners is a new combined elementary education–special education program. The Elementary Certification Graduate Program is a modified version of the current program for post-baccalaureate students seeking an initial teaching license.

Secondary Education

A Community of Teachers is a continuing program leading to performance-based certification at the secondary education level. Students enrolled in this program are vitally connected to the development and implementation

of policies and practices and are responsible for determining who is admitted to the program. *Teachers as Agents of Inquiry and Social Justice* is a new secondary education program in the final stages of development and approval. *Anchoring Secondary Teacher Education in Student Beliefs and Knowledge* is a new secondary education program whose design is in process.

K-12 Education

Art Education includes work in the fine arts, art history (ancient, medieval, and modern art), and courses dealing with the teaching of art. Students must also take a course dealing with special-needs students.

THE PROGRAM FOR DEMOCRACY, DIVERSITY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE¹

A part of our effort to rethink teacher education and design new programs, the ideas undergirding this elementary education program have been developed over several years. The initial conversation with elementary education faculty and students resulted in a group of about 15 people who declared they wanted to build a new program from the ground up (i.e., to create new courses, new expectations, and a new set of values). When the group first met to discuss the possibilities for a new elementary education program, it was not at all clear how much the participants had in common in terms of a cohesive direction. Although there were a number of people who had an understanding of critical theory (either in terms of its theoretical/historical underpinnings or in its implications for specific subject areas) and shared its perspectives, there were certainly differences in emphasis. For example, some had a rather broad vision for critical theory throughout a program, some had a keen interest in critical literacy, and some were committed to diversity and related social issues, and so on. We all agreed with the central ideas communicated by the three concepts that constitute our title, especially democratic ideas and practices. It is that mutual commitment to democratic practices (in our conversations as well as in our program-

matic initiatives) that finally, I believe, held the group together. As the group continued to meet, we each contributed to the creation of syllabi for the DDSJ courses, shared ideas about how we should communicate with faculty colleagues and prospective students, debated various positions, and generated papers and discussions for professional meetings.

As opposed to programs that may focus on more particular domains or issues—for example, the importance of racial diversity and dealing with issues of gender, nonnative English speakers, and cultural perspectives—DDSJ has created what we believe is a more comprehensive normative and critical framework. That framework has the potential to integrate issues of class, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, and so on, so that our students may see how these issues are connected and how the forms of inequality represented may build on each other. Many courses in DDSJ will also focus on moral and political issues related to teaching, curriculum, inquiry assignments, and so on. In addition, the DDSJ classes and field experiences were created to help prospective teachers understand the problems associated with social inequality and how those problems can be used to raise the consciousness of public school pupils. In that sense, DDSJ has created a farreaching, comprehensive set of expectations associated with a social reconstructionist orientation that seeks to alter classroom practices and provide an impetus for social change (Counts, 1932; Freire, 1973; Liston & Zeichner, 1991).

The DDSJ group is in fact cohesive, in part because of common understandings. For example, we believe that democracy as a way of life is related to how we regard others, how we make choices, and how we foster more widely shared decision making, in the process diminishing inequalities of power and influence. We are also committed to a deep sense of the common good, collectively decided by people engaged in open discourse with others, which requires a commitment to genuine communities and equality. These ideals resonate with Freire's (1973) emphasis on "integration" with the world rather than "adapting" to it, which the DDSJ group

also shared from the beginning. To become an integrated person is not only to understand the social, physical, and political dynamics of the world in which we live and work but to develop the attitudes, forms of consciousness, and commitments that will allow us to take part in shaping and reshaping that world. This emphasis on critique of current realities and on participating in the re-creation of our educational and social worlds is a central part of our understandings of democracy.

A general pattern of reflection and analysis emerged as the group of faculty and students involved in developing this program continued our conversations. Committed to critical inquiry into the means and ends of education and a moral sensitivity to public school pupils, their futures, and the contexts of their lives, we have developed a way of working that is both collegial and challenging, open ended and supportive. There is no doubt that we have different ideas and priorities from time to time (a critical necessity for democratic groups, in my judgment), but it is also the case that we have been able to work through our differences. In short, we have been considerate and respectful of each other and have generated a program that has a set of coherent threads running through it.

Because the DDSJ program will begin implementation in January 2001, we cannot discuss the success or failure of our courses or the program as a whole. We have, however, created a partnership with a local elementary school where our students will complete early field experiences and student teaching. It is fair to say that the initial response by some teachers to a program with the name *Democracy, Diversity, and Social Justice* was less than enthusiastic. The members of DDSJ, however, persevered, and the teachers came to see the value of the efforts we have charted for our work in the school. We have developed a working relationship with the principal and teachers, and we believe that it will continue. The fact that various members of DDSJ have discussed in detail the kinds of activities our students and we can support in the school's classrooms is one major reason the school has agreed to become a partnership school. We hope that down the road

we will also be able to have conversations with parents and the larger community.

The education courses in the DDSJ program include the following: The Study of Education and the Practice of Teaching, which examines both contemporary and historical perspectives on the aims and purposes of education, the moral and political issues that surround schools and the larger society, and the history of teacher education. Learning in Social Context, which is a team-taught, interdisciplinary course that is framed by questions such as, What tensions or contradictions may arise for teachers when learning and development are seen as fundamentally individual or social processes? What is the connection between the elementary curriculum and the structure of American society? and What constitutes accomplished or effective teaching for promoting the ideals of social justice?

In terms of questions regarding teaching and developing curricula, the Curriculum and Pedagogy course will focus on the influential models, metaphors, and ideas for curriculum; the relationship between the curriculum and other social institutions and contexts; and the relationship between knowledge and power. Technology issues and topics will be taken up in The Infusion of Technology, which will emphasize (a) critical reflection on social, moral, and equity issues and (b) addressing the appropriate development, design, and implementation of technology to enhance teaching.

A course focusing on multiple literacies will pursue social inquiry and developing ways of facilitating social understanding and social action by elementary students. Subject areas will include reading, writing, listening, and speaking; poetry, literature, drama, music, photography, dance, and visual arts; and raising and examining issues of literature in society that promote social action.

Seminars dealing with issues related to diversity and social justice will assist prospective teachers in developing curricular projects and pedagogical activities that respond to issues of diversity and social justice, especially related to cultural diversity, disability, and social activism.

A combined mathematics and science course is aimed at enhancing students' comfort and familiarity with the skills and conceptual knowledge of science and mathematics teaching, using three main strands: constructivism, the history and philosophy of mathematics and science, and a focus on science, technology, and society.

To help prepare students for the emotional, social, and intellectual challenges of student teaching and to help students make a successful transition from an undergraduate to a school culture, this program will include a one-credit course that will help our students integrate and think through what they want to do in the classroom and to contemplate possible difficulties (personally and professionally) they might experience.

All DDSJ students will complete a 15-week student teaching assignment and a 3-hour weekly seminar that meets in the partnership school; students will observe, reflect on, and share their teaching activities via writing, discussing, reading, and participating in supervised activities. They will also meet periodically with cooperating teachers.

The final course in this program is a senior seminar in teaching and schooling. The point of this course is to help our students reflect on both their university education and their field experiences and to further develop their identities as scholars and practitioners of education. Each student will complete an in-depth exploration of an educational issue, addressing its philosophical, social, and/or ethical dimensions as well as its significance for classroom practice.

In addition to these requirements, each DDSJ student is required to complete a 15-hour inquiry project. That project will be framed by a question that each of our students would like to pursue, with faculty serving as advisors for this project. Courses for the inquiry project can be selected from around the university.

CONCLUSION

Theory and theorizing are central to teaching and to teacher education, in part because they

offer new understandings and in part because they can generate new worlds and new ways of seeing, being, and acting. Theoretical perspectives and critical theory perspectives in particular, are valuable because they offer new ways of generating practices in schools and in society, along with the generation of new aims and purposes for education. One central aspect of critical theory in teacher education is how it can uncover hidden realities and examine the choices others and we have made and what they are linked to.

It should be noted here that at the same time the DDSJ and other programs were being discussed and generated, the Indiana Professional Standards Board (IPSB), which reflects the current national direction for teacher education, was charting a new direction for teacher licensure and new requirements for programs and courses. That direction focuses on accountability—for prospective teachers and teacher educators—in terms of incorporating the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium principles, IPSB-approved and developmental standards, and portfolio assessment activities. There is no question that there is a tension between, for example, the DDSJ program and the direction, concepts, assumptions, and expectations being chartered by the IPSB (see Beyer, 2000). What this portends for participants in DDSJ (and other new programs) is the need to do two things at once: meet the requirements of the IPSB and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (the compliance agenda); and provide evidence concerning how DDSJ students deal with the ideas and perspectives that are a part of our conceptual framework and that are built into the DDSJ program in particular (the quality agenda). Although this necessarily means creating two very distinct ways of assessing the program, gauging the quality of teaching practices and evaluating the understandings that students develop in our courses and in public school classrooms, at least for the time being we have no real alternative if our students are to be certified to teach and if we are to play out our ideals and the practices that are linked to those ideals.

Such is the contemporary state of affairs in teacher education and the promise of a better future for our field.

Appendix Principles for Reconceptualizing Teacher Education at Indiana University at Bloomington

1. Community

Effective teacher preparation requires that participants develop a sense of community. The longevity of relationships required to establish community has several advantages for all of its members. It brings coherence to programs, fosters an appreciation of the power of cooperative effort, and encourages a dialogue that promotes the continual rejuvenation of teacher education. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must foster a sense of community among their students, among faculty members, between faculty members and students, and between the university and the schools.

2. Critical Reflection

Effective teachers reflect critically on the moral, political, social, and economic dimensions of education. This requires an understanding of the multiple contexts in which schools function, an appreciation of diverse perspectives on educational issues, and a commitment to democratic forms of interaction. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must encourage students to develop their own social and educational visions that are connected to critically reflective practice.

3. Intellectual, Personal, and Professional Growth

Teachers who are more than technicians or mere purveyors of information must be committed to lifelong intellectual, personal, and professional growth. Both faculty and students must continually develop these habits of mind, requiring that our programs stimulate the exploration and development of the full range of human capabilities. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must foster intellectual curiosity and encourage an appreciation of learning through intuition, imagination, and aesthetic experience.

4. Meaningful Experience

Teachers must be effective in actual educational settings. Accordingly, our teacher education programs must maintain or create experiences in schools and on campus that will assist in the development of their expertise in those settings. Students should be expected to act as thoughtful, reflective, caring practitioners as part of those experiences, and instructors must be able to assess their abilities in such settings. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must include early and continuous engagement—through direct immersion or simulation—with the multiple realities of children, teaching, and schools.

5. Knowledge and Multiple Forms of Understanding

Effective teachers possess a well-grounded knowledge of the content areas that are central to their teaching. They also have an in-depth comprehension of the forms of knowledge embodied in the traditional disciplines, of the interdisciplinary nature of inquiry, and of the multiple forms of understanding that individual students bring to the classroom. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must help students acquire a “practical wisdom” that integrates forms of understanding, skilled action in and outside classrooms, and a particular sensitivity to the diversity of students.

6. Personalized Learning

Good teachers build on their students’ interests, learning styles, and goals. Similarly, teacher education should offer its students opportunities to individualize and personalize their preparation as teachers. Consequently, all of our teacher education programs must give students a significant measure of control over how, when, and where their learning takes place, thus enabling their interests and values to shape major portions of their work.

NOTE

1. The current members of Democracy, Diversity, and Social Justice include Lanny Beyer, Lynne Boyle-Baise, Amy Seely Flint, David Gordon, Mitzi Lewison, Judy Lysaker, Terry Mason, and Fritz Lieber. The following additional people were instrumental in the development of this program: James McLeskey, Jonathan Matthews, Tom Keating, Esther Gray, Elizabeth Heilman, and Mary Lou Morton.

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Landon E. Beyer is a professor and the associate dean for teacher education at Indiana University at Bloomington. He completed his Ph.D. in 1981 at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His central interests are in the areas of philosophy of education and social foundations, curriculum studies, and teacher education.