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# Learning and unlearning: the education of teacher educators

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## Abstract

Despite the many expectations that US and other teacher educators around the world are striving to meet, there has been little attention to development of a curriculum for *educating teacher educators*, or to local and larger policies that might support the development of what teacher educators need to know and do in order to meet the complex demands of preparing teachers for the 21st century. In this article, Cochran-Smith analyzes four teacher educator communities in different contexts and entry points across the career lifespan. She makes the case that the education of teacher educators is substantially enriched when inquiry is a stance on the overall enterprise of teaching, schooling, and teacher education. © 2002 Published by Elsevier Science Ltd.

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## 1. Introduction

There is agreement among many educational reformers in the US that “the single most important strategy for achieving America’s educational goals [is] a blueprint for recruiting, preparing, and supporting excellent teachers in all of America’s schools” (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996). Recent US opinion polls suggest that “the public” apparently concurs with this position. They have consistently ranked education near the top of the list of what concerns them most (Mosle, 1996), and most respondents to a recent Gallup poll agreed with the statement that having qualified teachers in all classrooms is the surest way to improve the nation’s schools (Rose & Gallup, 2000).

Despite the fact that teacher education has a long history of criticism in the US (Imig & Switzer, 1996; Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris & Watson, 1998) and despite the growth there of alternate routes and school-based and/or for-profit teacher education projects (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001; Morey, 2001), the responsibility for preparing qualified and competent teachers in the US continues to rest primarily with teacher education programs at higher education institutions. Whether by design or by default, then, this means that teacher educators—those who teach the teachers—are now the linchpins in educational reforms of all kinds. For example, US teacher educators are charged with preparing teachers who can teach to new K-12 curriculum standards (Lampert & Ball, 1999), teach computer literacy and integrate technology into all subject areas (Willis & Mehlinger, 1996), meet the needs of the increasingly diverse student population (Ladson-Billings, 1996), and insure that K-12 students can pass

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(if not excel at) the high stakes tests now linked to funding and policy decisions in 47 of the 50 US states (Firestone & Mayrowetz, 2000). In addition, teacher educators at many US higher education institutions are responsible for developing the outcomes-based documentation now required by professional accrediting agencies (e.g., the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1999; the Teacher Education Accreditation Council, 1999), complying with stringent new state-level regulations regarding the education courses, field experiences, and arts and sciences majors that are prerequisites for teacher certification (Earley, 2000), and building genuine partnerships with schools, community activists, parents, and other stakeholders in the educational enterprise (Goodlad 1994; Holmes Group, 1995). Furthermore, even at many US colleges and universities where research has not traditionally been the primary emphasis, teacher educators are now expected to conduct and publish research at the same time that they develop curricula and programs, teach courses, and work with school-based teachers (Zimpher & Sherrill, 1996).

Although the US context is the focus of this article, it is important to note that disparities between the multiple demands placed on teacher educators and the lack of attention to a curriculum for teacher educators and/or to policies that would support their ongoing learning are not unique to the United States. In a recent volume on teacher education trends in the Netherlands (Willems, Stakenborg, & Veugelers, 2000), for example, Korthagen (2000) suggested that teacher educators have long been a neglected group, although they also are now assumed to be the spearheads in a variety of Dutch educational projects. Prompted by a similar concern that the educational needs of Israel's teacher educators were virtually being ignored, Ben Peretz and colleagues (Ben-Peretz & Silberstein, 2002; Ben-Peretz, Silberstein, & Siv, 2001) recently began developing and documenting an experimental program wherein teacher educators from diverse teacher preparation institutions across Israel come together at the MOFET Institute in Tel Aviv to create a learning and teaching community of the nation's teacher educators. Along somewhat different lines, in

Norway in response to the new global context, collaborative efforts have recently been made by college leaders and teacher educators/researchers to develop a new culture of research where there has traditionally been a strong teaching environment; the goal is to make research an integrated part of the work of teacher educators (Holmesland & Tarrou, 2001). Addressing larger policy issues, Gore and Morrison (2001) recently pointed out that in Australia, the highly publicized "Adey Report on National Standards and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education" does not adequately acknowledge the cultures and contexts within which teacher educators at higher education institutions actually do their work and thus does not adequately account for some of the serious limitations on the capacity of teacher educators to enact the very reforms proposed in the report.

Each of these selected examples reflects the need for more attention to what teachers of teachers themselves need to know, and to what institutional supports need to be in place in order to meet the complex demands of preparing teachers for the 21st century<sup>1</sup>. In the US, scholarship along these lines includes the work of Sharon Feiman Nemser and colleagues at Michigan State University where a doctoral curriculum specifically for prospective teacher educators has been shaped and reshaped over the course of two decades (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Feiman-Nemser & Featherstone, 1992) as well as some of the work at "centers for

<sup>1</sup>Enormous attention has been devoted over the last two decades to what K-12 teachers need to know and be able to do in order to be effective in their work with students. In fact, to a great extent, "the knowledge question" has driven the field of teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2001) and dominated the literature. Much less attention at the policy level, however, has been devoted to what teachers of teachers need to know. Along these lines, two knowledge base books on teaching and teacher education were published by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (Reynolds, 1989; Murray, 1996) and two handbooks of research on teacher education were compiled by the Association of Teacher Educators (Houston, 1990; Sikula, Buttery & Guyton, 1996). In these, however, even when the topic of discussion is teacher educators themselves, the emphasis tends to be more on demographics and general trends—who teacher educators are, what their backgrounds are, what they teach in methods and foundations courses—than on what they know or need to know and/or on how it is that they learn to teach teachers.

pedagogy,” such as the center at Montclair State University, where regular “faculty advances” and other structures support the ongoing learning of higher education faculty who are participants in the teacher education community (e.g., Patterson, Michelli & Pacheco, 1999; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Related documents are the Association of Teacher Educators’ report on the certification of “master” teacher educators (ATE, 1996), and the Land Grant Colleges and Universities’ Task Force report on the education of the professoriate (Task Force on Education of the Professoriate, 1998). These projects and reports reflect different operating assumptions about the education of teacher educators and different entry points into the professional careers of teacher educators.

Among the most promising programs of research about the education of teacher educators is the burgeoning body of work nationally and internationally that is being conducted by teacher education practitioners/researchers themselves and disseminated in journals, books, and conferences across the world. In work of this kind, teacher educators (and university-based educators in other areas of study) take their own professional contexts (e.g., teacher education/ professional development courses, programs, and projects; school-university partnerships and collaboratives; school reform and leadership initiatives of various kinds; teacher learning communities and networks) as research sites in order to study a variety of topics, including, for example: students’ learning in various curricular, classroom, and socio-cultural contexts; teachers’/teacher educators’ learning across the professional lifespan and in the context of varying educational climates and agendas; the development and functioning of teacher learning communities and the organizational, social, and intellectual contexts that sustain and/or constrain educators’ learning; the role of inquiry in the generation of knowledge and the construction of practice for local contexts as well as more public arenas; the development and implementation of curricula in keeping with and/or in order to challenge various agendas and standards; teachers’/teacher educators’ roles as change agents at curricular, school, university, and other levels; the role of inquiry in teaching/

teacher education for social change and social justice; and, relationships among teachers’/teacher educators’ learning, professional practices, and students’ learning (including both the K-12 students of school-based teachers and the collegiate level and beyond students and colleagues of university-based teacher educators). Much of this work suggests that the *opportunity to engage in inquiry within a learning community* may be a vital part of teachers’ and teacher educators’ ongoing education.

## 2. Educating teacher educators with inquiry as stance

This article draws on analyses of my own participation in a variety of teacher educator learning communities in two different institutional settings over more than 20 years. Highlighting key examples from four communities, I suggest that the education of teacher educators in different contexts and at different entry points over the course of the professional career is substantially enriched when inquiry is regarded as a stance on the overall enterprise of teacher education and when teacher educators inquire collaboratively about assumptions and values, professional knowledge and practice, the contexts of schools as well as higher education, and their own as well as their students’ learning.

In a discussion of inquiry communities composed of K-12 teachers and teacher educators, we have previously described *inquiry as stance* as follows:

In everyday language, ‘stance’ is used to describe body postures, particularly with regard to the position of the feet, as in sports or dance, and also to describe political positions, particularly their consistency (or the lack thereof) over time. In the discourse of qualitative research, ‘stance’ is used to make visible and problematic the various perspectives through which researchers frame their questions, observations, and interpretations of data. In our work, we offer the term *inquiry as stance* to describe the positions teachers and others who

work together in inquiry communities take toward knowledge and its relationships to practice. We use the metaphor of stance to suggest both orientational and positional ideas, to carry allusions to the physical placing of the body as well as to intellectual activities and perspectives over time. In this sense, the metaphor is intended to capture the ways we stand, the ways we see, and the lenses we see through. Teaching is a complex activity that occurs within webs of social, historical, cultural and political significance. Across the life span an inquiry stance provides a kind of grounding within the changing cultures of school reform and competing political agendas.

*Inquiry as stance* is distinct from the more common notion of inquiry as time-bounded project or activity within a teacher education course or professional development workshop. Taking an inquiry stance means teachers and student teachers working within inquiry communities to generate local knowledge, envision and theorize their practice, and interpret and interrogate the theory and research of others. Fundamental to this notion is the idea that the work of inquiry communities is both social and political—that is, it involves making problematic the current arrangements of schooling; the ways knowledge is constructed, evaluated, and used; and teachers' individual and collective roles in bringing about change (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 289).

My suggestion in this article is that in addition to providing a conceptual framework for understanding K-12 teachers' learning, *inquiry as stance* also offers an intellectual as well as practical perspective on the education of teacher educators—a way of learning from and about the practice of teacher education by engaging in systematic inquiry on that practice within a community of colleagues over time. Conceptualizing the education of teacher educators as a process with inquiry as stance is consistent with a number of related concepts in the field, but draws particularly on the conceptions of teacher research that I have developed over the last 15 years with my colleague, Susan Lytle. Lengthy discussions

about teacher research and the notion, *inquiry as stance*, as well as their roots and relatives nationally and internationally have been widely disseminated elsewhere (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992, 1993, 1999a,b, 2001, forthcoming; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1995).

As noted above, both the professional literature and the proceedings of many professional conferences nationally and internationally indicate that a growing number of new and experienced teacher educators around the world are engaged in various forms of practitioner inquiry, including “teacher research” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Loughran & Northfield, 1996), “action research” (Noffke, 1997; Dahlström, Swarts & Zeichner, 1999); “autobiographical inquiry” (Florio-Ruane, 1994, 2001), “self study” (Hamilton, 1998; LaBoskey, 2001; Russell & Korthagen, 1995), “reflexive inquiry” (Cole & Knowles, 2000), “becoming a student of teaching” (Bullough & Gitlin, 2000), and developing the “scholarship of teaching and learning” (Lieberman et al. 2001; Shulman, Liberman, Hatch, & Lew, 1999). Although these terms are by no means synonymous, Zeichner (1998, 1999) included some of them collectively in what he referred as “the new scholarship in teacher education.” In much of this scholarship and in a variety of new professional forums, teacher education practitioners/researchers have been presenting and critiquing studies wherein the research site is a program, project, partnership, or course in which the researcher himself or herself is also an active practitioner and participant. A number of these have appeared in recent issues of this journal as well as other journals and newsletters (e.g., Elbaz Luwisch, 2001; Kinach, 2002; Winograd, 2002).

One of the most visible signs of the trend that teacher educators in many parts of the world are engaging in research on their own work is the rapid growth of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) special interest group, “Self Study of Teacher Education Practices” (S-STEP), which has existed now for a decade. Over the last 10 years, S-STEP has sponsored multiple AERA sessions, organized three international CASTLE conferences on self study in teacher education, and encouraged scores of papers on the

topic. Leaders of the S-STEP special interest group are currently in the process of organizing an international handbook of self-study research on teaching practices, to be published by Kluwer Press (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, *in preparation*), which will include chapters on the theory and practice of self study research by teacher education practitioners/scholars from Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition to S-STEP efforts, there are many other current professional outlets for the dissemination of research conducted by practitioners about their own professional work. A Teachers College Press book series on “practitioner inquiry” (edited by Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle), which published its first volumes in the mid-1990s, for example, now has more than 20 books in print and includes books about K-12 teachers’ research as well as those written by higher education faculty and teacher educators in other professional sites who have conducted research within the context of their own professional practice. In addition, numerous recent writings in teacher education combine teacher educators’ analyses of their own learning/teaching experiences with their analyses of the experiences, understandings, and practices of the teacher candidates they teach (e.g. Cochran-Smith, 1995b, 2000; Cole & Knowles, 2000; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Loughran & Russell, 1997).

All of these examples point to the emergence of new terminology and new contexts for doing and making public the work of teacher education. They also suggest a reconceptualization of the role of teacher educator and a valuable way to think about the ongoing education of teacher educators. This new role privileges neither scholarship nor practice but instead depends upon a rich dialectic of the two wherein the lines between professional practice in teacher education, on the one hand, and research related to teaching and teacher education, on the other, are increasingly blurred.

In this article, I draw on four examples of this kind of work in order to suggest that inquiry can be central to the education of teacher educators in a variety of contexts and configurations and to argue that *inquiry as stance* can make an important

contribution to conceptualizing the ongoing education of teacher educators. I also suggest, however, that working from an inquiry stance is a complex and recursive process with built-in difficulties and contradictions as well as consequences that are sometimes unintended. I show that over time, this process involves both *learning* new knowledge, questions, and practices, and, at the same time, *unlearning* some long-held ideas, beliefs, and practices, which are often difficult to uproot.

### 3. The education of teacher educators: four examples from an inquiry stance

In the pages that follow, I explore what it means to conceptualize the education of teacher educators as an ongoing process of learning and unlearning with *inquiry as stance*. To do so, I use four illustrations featuring teacher educators at different points in their professional lives and occupying differing roles and positions in the teacher education enterprise. (See Fig. 1.)

Example 1 (*unlearning racism*). A series of inquiries by one teacher educator interested in how student teachers and teacher educators constructed the issues related to race and diversity within the context of an urban inquiry-centered teacher education program;

Example 2 (*reinventing supervision*). A long-term project by a 14-member fieldwork supervisors group who attempted to reinvent supervision as inquiry and remake the role of supervisor as fellow learner within the context of an urban inquiry-centered teacher education program;

Example 3 (*seeking social justice*). A collaborative self study by 10 teacher education faculty members from very different backgrounds who wanted to explore their understandings of social justice and how these were instantiated in teacher education programs, policies, and practices;

Example 4 (*facilitating inquiry*). A collaborative inquiry by a 15-member doctoral student group who examined what it meant to facilitate small groups of teacher candidates learning to use inquiry to document their own learning, their

Example	Context	Roles/Configuration	Duration	The "Work" of Teacher Education/ The Questions Addressed
Example 1: Unlearning Racism	UPenn- urban research university	1 TE faculty member, part of larger inquiry community	10 years	Directing urban TE program, teaching courses, working with supervisors and cooperating teachers  What happens when my student teachers explore race, culture, and diversity while they student teach in urban schools? How do they (and I) understand and construct the issues?
Example 2: Reinventing Supervision	UPenn- urban research university	11 fieldwork super- visors (P-T), 2 field- work administrators, 1 TE faculty, part of larger inquiry community	9 years	Supervising student teachers in year-long placements, working with faculty and cooperating teachers  What happens when we shift supervisors' roles from evaluators (& supporters) to fellow learners? What happens when we reinvent supervision as inquiry?
Example 3: Seeking Social Justice	Boston College- Jesuit research/ community service university	10 TE faculty members, different backgrounds, ranks, program areas	3 years	Teaching courses in many TE areas, coordinating programs, admitting & advising students, documenting program for review  What happens when we meet over time to develop shared understandings about teaching for social justice? How are these ideas instantiated (or not) in our policies, programs, and practices?
Example 4: Facilitating Inquiry	Boston College- Jesuit research/ community service university	14 inquiry seminar facilitators (doctoral students), 1 TE faculty member	1 year	Facilitating small group discussions for inquiry seminar  What happens when we help student teachers learn to teach and document their teaching through inquiry? How do they (and we) construct inquiry and social justice? What are our roles as teacher educators?

Fig. 1. The education of teacher educators: four examples from an inquiry stance.

professional practice, their K-12 students' learning, and their efforts to teach for social justice.

Taken individually, each of these examples highlights one or two important points about conceptualizing teacher education as a process of learning and unlearning from an inquiry stance. Taken together, the examples reveal what it looks like when groups of differently positioned teacher educators engage in the process of educating themselves and educating each other by working together from an inquiry stance.

The one constant across the examples that follow is my own participation. In each, I functioned as a member of the group and in that sense, a learner and inquirer, but also as a more or less explicit facilitator. It would be inaccurate (and even dishonest) to suggest that I did not play a central role in shaping the work of each of these groups and influencing the directions they took. This is one of the contradictions of inquiry as a central approach to the education of teacher educators (or K-12 educators). When inquiry is regarded as stance rather than as project or strategy, all the members of a community are regarded as learners and inquirers, and the model of an expert transmitting information to others with lesser or lower status knowledge or position is conspicuously absent. In this sense, everybody is equal in an inquiry community. However, it is often the case that some members of inquiry groups are "more equal" than others. Especially when some outrank others and/or when some are professors and others are part-time adjunct faculty or students, there are unavoidable tensions between genuine and "imposed" collaboration and between predetermined and emerging questions and modes of inquiry. (for further discussion of issues of this kind, see [Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1995](#)).

### 3.1. *Example 1: unlearning racism*

The first example draws from a series of inquiries by one teacher educator (myself) over more than a decade ([Cochran-Smith, 1991; 1995a,b; 2000a](#)). My own inquiries and those of the supervisors' group presented in the second example were part of the same larger project at the

University of Pennsylvania to theorize and enact inquiry-centered teacher education. This meant that student teachers were regarded as agents for change and learning to teach was understood as a process of learning to work for social justice in the company of more experienced teachers and supervisors also engaged in reform and inquiry.

For the purposes of this article, I concentrate on my explorations of how student teachers made sense of and constructed the issues of race and diversity that they read about in their courses and seminars while they simultaneously student taught in urban schools. I use *Example 1* to introduce the idea of educating teacher educators from an inquiry stance that involves learning as well as unlearning. This example also illustrates the dialectic of research and practice, or, the reciprocal relationship between researching or inquiring about the work of teacher education within the context of one's site of practice, on the one hand, and the evolving quality and character of the work itself, on the other.

Over the last 12 years, I have written many articles and chapters that draw on data from the Penn program in order to analyze and illustrate the perspectives of teachers, student teachers, and teacher educators who were co-participants in the inquiry-centered teacher education program there. In my articles that focused on diversity and racism in teacher education, there were major changes over time in terms of language, style, and inquiry stance. This was the case because to study issues of diversity and racism in teacher education—and to do so with some degree of integrity and honesty—I found that I was forced to alter my perspective as a researcher and move progressively toward a more insider, less distanced role. Over time my role evolved from that of outside researcher, using the local teacher education program as a strategic but also convenient research site, to that of practitioner researcher, taking an inquiry stance on my practice and investigating from the inside out. In doing so, I began to deal with issues that blurred the boundaries of the professional and the personal. I also began to uncover the underside of my own ethics—both the ethics of practice and the ethics of researching and writing about practice, especially the ways I presented and

represented the perspectives and beliefs of others. And over time, I not only learned about how my students constructed the issues, but I also exposed the limits of my competence, the extent of my uncertainty, and the arrogance of some of my assumptions. In short, my own education as a teacher educator evolved with my ability and my willingness to call into question not only my students' assumptions and practices, but also my own. Over time I learned that taking an inquiry stance on my education as a teacher educator involved both learning and a great deal of unlearning.

Below I use three short excerpts from my articles, arranged chronologically, to illustrate the evolving dialectic of research and practice in the education of one teacher educator as well as the process of learning through unlearning. The first excerpt is from "Learning to Teach Against the Grain," an article I wrote more than a decade ago (Cochran-Smith, 1991):

I use Gramsci's clarion call for social accountability to reassert that teachers are decision makers and collaborators who must reclaim their roles in the shaping of practice by taking a stand as both educators and activists...

Drawing on data from four [urban] schools, I...provide vivid descriptive evidence that regular school-site talk among experienced reforming teachers and inexperienced student teachers is an indispensable resource in the education of reformers (pp. 279–280).

This passage directs the reader to a footnote, indicating that the analysis draws on my experiences as a teacher educator and on data from an innovative program.

I was, and continue to be, proud of this article, and I believe it has something important to say about teaching and teacher education "against the grain." But I, as a teacher educator, am really absent from the piece, writing essentially from what we called in our book *Inside/Outside. Teacher Research and Knowledge* (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993), an "outside" rather than "inside" perspective. In other words, the stance in the piece is primarily that of traditional researcher, of one who stands outside of the data and speaks with

authority about its meaning and interpretation. Along these lines, it is not entirely clear that the data for the article were collected in the context of my own program, students, and colleagues. The questions the article explores, which I believe are important ones, were conceptualized primarily from my reading of the literature about the nature of supervisory discourse, the conservative culture of schools, and the potential of critical inquiry in learning to teach, questions that were certainly related to my work as a teacher educator but were framed in terms outside of it.

The second passage is from an article published 5 years later, "Uncertain Allies: Understanding the Boundaries of Race and Teaching," (Cochran-Smith, 1995b). By then, I had realized that I could not continue researching issues of race and culture in teacher education without making my own assumptions more public and problematic, that I could not continue investigating my students' constructions of the issues without interrogating my own, and that I could not continue writing with a kind of distance and authority that I no longer felt were legitimate. This passage touches on the uncertainty I was grappling with as I developed an inquiry stance on my own work, not just my students'. In this piece the underbelly of questions and doubts I had been experiencing (but not writing about) for some years begin to come through.

As director of the program, my general commitment to opening and sustaining a discourse about race and teaching is unflagging. Over the last few years, however, I have become increasingly uncertain... I worry about who and what we are reading... the implicit—and powerful—messages we give when our school has so few faculty of color... I worry about divisions student teachers perceive between... Black and White teachers, poor and privileged children, their own and 'others' families—divisions that may be subtly reinforced rather than challenged by students' field experiences across school sites and by the critical and more or less progressive perspectives our program espouses...

I have become certain only of uncertainty about... who and what to have student teachers

read and write...who can speak for or to whom, and who has the right to speak at all about...promoting a discourse about race and teaching in preservice education (Cochran-Smith, 1995b, pp. 545–546).

With these questions in mind, I set out to examine how student teachers and teacher educators (including myself) construct the issues of race and teaching during their preservice program. Clearly the questions in this piece come from the dissonance of my own experience as a teacher educator and reflect the dialectic of my experience as both practitioner and researcher. These questions are influenced by the literature, but they are also directly shaped by the realities of day to day practice in teacher education, by the immediacy of working with student teachers in urban schools, and by the very imperfect world of doing teacher education within a research university.

The final article I draw on cuts closest to the core of what it means to take an inquiry stance on one's work as a teacher educator and to learn by unlearning one's assumptions. The article, "Blind Vision: Unlearning Racism in Teacher Education" (Cochran-Smith, 2000), begins with a lengthy narrative based on my experiences as a teacher educator at a moment in time when issues of race and racism were brought into unexpectedly sharp relief. The article questions how I as a teacher educator (and others) were complicit in maintaining cycles of oppression in school and society and considers what conditions might make it possible to alter long-standing beliefs and practices. The piece also makes it clear that taking an inquiry stance does not mean making self-absorbed confessionals or baring one's soul to gain cathartic relief or public approval. Rather, it is the dialectic of inquiry and practice that is central:

It would be an understatement to say that these events were galvanizing as well as destabilizing for me, for the people I worked closely with, and for the students who graduated just a few months later. Everything was called into question—what we thought we were about as a program, who we were as a community, what learning opportunities were available in our curriculum, whose interests were served, whose

needs were met, and whose were not. . .

Of course, it is what we do after we tell stories like this one...that makes these stories matter at all. In the remainder of this article, I examine what I tried to do as a teacher educator and what we tried to do in our teacher education community after this story was told. We wanted to do nothing short of total transformation, nothing short of inventing a curriculum that was once and for all free of racism. What we *did* do—over time—was much more modest. Over time we struggled to unlearn racism by learning to read teacher education as a racial text, a process that involved analyzing and altering the learning opportunities available in our program along the lines of their implicit and explicit messages about race, racism, and teaching as well as—and as importantly—acknowledging to each other and to our students that this process would never be finished, would never be 'once and for all.' In the pages that follow, I analyze and illustrate this process, drawing on . . . the evolution of three courses I consistently taught; the changes we made over time in the...program; and the persistent doubts, questions, and failures we experienced. (Cochran-Smith, 2000, p. 165)

In *Example 1*, I have juxtaposed excerpts from three articles—written over a decade—to reveal my evolving stance and voice. The excerpts also illuminate the dialectic of research and practice as well as the need to learn by unlearning. These notions are central to the way I am suggesting we conceptualize the education of teacher educators.

### 3.2. *Example 2: reinventing supervision*

Example 2 comes from the same larger project at the University of Pennsylvania as the first example. Rather than focusing on the inquiries of a single teacher educator within a larger inquiry community, however, this second example draws on the work of a 14-member supervisors' group—all women—which included 11 part-time university-based supervisors of student teachers, 2 full-time fieldwork administrators (who also supervised students), and 1 full-time faculty member

(myself). Although there were some changes in group membership over time, there was remarkable stability across group members and enough common ground to accommodate the comings and goings of individuals.

I draw here on a paper written collectively by this group that concentrated on their work as a community of teacher educators after 9 years together (Agre et al., 1996); other papers written about the work of the community provide background information (Cochran-Smith, 1991, 1994; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992, 1993; Colgan-Davis, 1993; Black et al., 1993; Brody et al., 1993). I use excerpts from the whole group paper to explore two aspects of the education of teacher educators with *inquiry as stance*: the identity of participants (or, who teacher educators are) and the knowledge teacher educators need (or, what the content and subject matter of their education is). This example makes the point that teacher educators include many people who are not part of the education “professoriate,” or, those with doctoral degrees who serve as regular faculty members in schools, departments, and colleges of education. Rather many teacher educators are K-12 teachers (often very experienced) who adopt the role of teacher educator *on the side* (e.g. graduate students in some area of education who take on supervision as a part-time job or part of a graduate assistantship), *in the middle* (e.g. teachers on maternity or other temporary leaves but intending to return to K-12 teaching careers), or *at the end* of their careers as teachers (e.g. retired teachers who may or may not have served earlier as cooperating teachers in the same programs). As the group suggests in this excerpt from their paper that introduces the inquiry community, K-12 school experience was central for supervisors of student teachers:

Supervisors are experienced teachers who are primarily university-based. [We] function in the spaces between two worlds by straddling the cultures of fieldwork schools and of the university. . .

On most Tuesday afternoons over the last nine years, we have gathered for two-hour meetings to explore a wide range of topics

relevant to our work together. This year, there are fourteen of us, and most have been with the program for years. Collectively we have three hundred and fifty-nine years of teaching experience at all grade levels from nursery school to graduate school. We have taught in public, private, and parochial schools on the continents of Australia, Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America and in fifteen of the United States (Agre et al., 1996, pp. 3–4)

It was not only the common ground of teaching experience that was important to this group, however. Continuously raising questions and using field-based data to make decisions also played major roles in the group’s evolution from a collection of individuals with extensive teaching experience into a community of teacher educators who worked from an inquiry stance.

These statistics of our collective experience, however, only tell about some of the resources we have to draw on in our work together. In preparing this [paper], we have explored another resource—some of the nine years of documentation of our work, including journals, notes, and audiotapes of meetings at our school sites and at the university, notes and transcripts of seminars, and our responses to journal articles and books we’ve consulted to facilitate our work as a research group. . . Doing supervision as inquiry means constant questioning of our own assumptions and practices, systematic collection of useful data, and ongoing analysis of the data we collect. When a group this size reinvents supervision and engages in research together [however], dissonance is both unavoidable and necessary (pp. 3–4).

This last comment about dissonance introduces a second major point I want to make using *Example 2*. In the education of teacher educators, some of the most important “content” or “subject matter” is the yeasty stuff of the day-to-day work with prospective teachers and their more experienced cooperating teachers. Often this is based on the dissonance that exists between the ideal and the real, between a plan and its enactment in local

sites, or between what “the university” thinks new teachers should know and what “real teachers” (including student teachers) find most important.

The idea that the subject matter or the “curriculum” for teacher educators is drawn from day-to-day work in teacher education is captured well in the supervisory group’s description of the process in which they engaged to revamp their procedures for evaluating student teachers’ progress in classrooms. The program had for many years used a checklist format for the evaluation of student teachers despite participants’ increasing awareness that the very nature of a check list—even one the supervisors had developed collaboratively, which called for three-way discussions and thus had multiple perspectives built into it—was not congruent with the philosophy of a program that emphasized inquiry and social change.

We decided to begin a year-long inquiry into beliefs and practices about evaluation in pre-service teacher education, a project which we called ‘Interrogating Evaluation.’

Throughout that year, we read articles on mentoring and learning to teach.<sup>2</sup> We interviewed former students and cooperating teachers. We read about different approaches to teacher education and the ways in which other programs at various colleges and universities around the country evaluated student teachers.

We also explored and analyzed our own perspectives on evaluation, supervision, and mentoring as well as the differences and similarities among those three. Drawing on individual supervisors’ notes from classroom observations, lesson plans, and conferences with student teachers, we asked ourselves, ‘What does learning to teach involve?’ Over the course of several months, we shared data and looked for common themes and patterns...

Brainstorming, discussion, and close attention to the data of our work eventually led us to the realization that a new evaluation process

needed to address two central questions: ‘What is knowledge for teaching, or, what do student teachers need to know?’ And, ‘what are the action contexts for teaching, or what does teaching look like when student teachers work from this knowledge?’ By knowledge for teaching, we meant teachers’ theoretical frameworks, beliefs, attitudes, values, pedagogical strategies, ways of knowing, and dispositions. By action contexts, we meant the concrete ways student teachers demonstrated and were informed by that knowledge. Struggling to answer these big questions took months of disagreement, compromise, [and] concern . . .

At last we...developed the framework which became known as the Descriptive Profile of the Student Teacher.<sup>3</sup> It draws on the data of action: rich vignettes from practice, journal entries, lesson and unit plans, observation notes, excerpts from student teachers’ interactions with children and teachers, and other documentation of the student teacher’s work in the school and classroom. This narrative profile is jointly constructed two times a year by the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the supervisor... Rather than general impressions or abstract categories, we use concrete examples to construct a dynamic portrait of the student teacher in action.

We had moved toward a theory of evaluating student teachers’ growth that was grounded in practice. Yet, because practice is not uniform or generic, dissonance continued to emerge as we worked to maintain the integrity of the process at the same time we worked to accommodate the diverse demands of teachers’ work in different school contexts (pp. 15–19).

This excerpt makes it clear that the group’s learning process was not a matter simply of “learning from experience.” But it is important

<sup>2</sup>These included Dewey’s (1904) discussion of laboratory and apprenticeship models of teacher education, Carini’s (1986) discussion of processes for documenting children’s learning, as well as many other current articles on learning to teach and the evaluation, mentoring, and support of teacher candidates.

<sup>3</sup>The format and approach of this Profile drew heavily on the work of Pat Carini and others at the Prospect School, particularly on the “Descriptive Review of a Child,” which the student teachers in the Penn program all learned to use in their work with elementary school children. See Carini (1986), Himley & Carini (1991) and Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1993) for discussions of the Descriptive Review.

to note that it was also not a process of “book learning” or simply reading what others had written about student teacher evaluation or supervision. Rather these excerpts suggest that the knowledge teacher educators need to teach well (i.e., the subject matter of teacher education) is generated when they treat their work as a site for intentional investigation at the same time they treat the knowledge and theory produced by others as generative material for interrogation and interpretation.

### 3.3. *Example 3: seeking social justice*

The third example comes from the work of a group of ten teacher education faculty members at Boston College (including myself). Unlike the supervisors’ group above, this group was composed entirely of full-time faculty members and included both men and women from elementary, secondary, urban, and special education who differed from one another in disciplinary background, academic rank and tenure status, religion and cultural background, race, and ability/disability. I focus in this article on the first 2 years of the group’s work.<sup>4</sup> All of the participants were members of a teacher education department committed to “social justice,” as one of several unifying themes in keeping with the Catholic and Jesuit mission of the university. However, there was not a clear or shared sense of the meaning of social justice in teacher education nor was it central to most courses or program decisions. Over a 2-year period the group designed a project that came to be known as “Seeking Social Justice.” It involved seven 2–3 h discussions for the entire department about the topic of social justice in the work of teacher education accompanied by bi-weekly meetings of the 10-member inquiry group to plan, analyze data, reflect on, and learn from what was happening.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>In the third and fourth years of the project, other faculty members joined the group as did two directors of the office of student practice.

<sup>5</sup>Topics for these sessions included the meaning of social justice generally, teacher education programs centered on social justice, policy issues such as tenure and promotion and their relationship to social justice, gay and lesbian issues in K-12

I draw here on papers written collectively by this group during the first 2 years (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Zollers, Albert, & Cochran-Smith, 1999) as well as a number of presentations the group made at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association and other conferences (Albert et al., 1997, 1998). I use the excerpts that follow to highlight two aspects of the education of teacher educators from an inquiry perspective: the purpose of education for teacher educators (or, why teacher educators engage in inquiry) and its consequences (or, what risks are involved in this kind of education).

Just as the previous examples do, *Example 3* makes it clear that the purpose of the ongoing education of teacher educators is to have an impact on both thought (knowledge, beliefs, assumptions, ideas, premises, concepts, and so on) and action (teacher education programs, practices, policies, strategies, courses, curricula, assessment systems, and so on). The seven department sessions on social justice were interspersed with ongoing department business meetings, thus building “opportunities for extended and repeated discourse about social justice” (Albert et al., 1997) into the daily work of teacher education. The group’s analysis of the impact of the 2-year project suggests that some group members changed or expanded their views of social justice and all developed broader understandings of other people’s perspectives (Zollers et al., 1999, 2000). Personal transformation, however, was not the ultimate purpose of the work. The purpose was collectively generating understandings and conceptual frameworks that allowed the group to take action, as this excerpt suggests:

Integrating extensive discussions about social justice into the business of the department over two years influenced individual beliefs and perspectives and made possible new insights into the perspectives of others... Talking about social justice also influenced who we were as a department and how we carried out the daily work of teacher education—negotiating

(*footnote continued*)

schools, and anti-racist pedagogy in K-12 schools and in higher education.

policies, establishing practices, developing curriculum and working with students...

Social justice became a unifying theme in how we described our work and in our identity as a group that worked together to tackle difficult issues. This was evident in the ways we began to present ourselves to prospective students and faculty and in the ways we socialized newcomers into the department...As we continue the process of curriculum review, we have begun to ask whether our personal and departmental commitments to social justice are clear to students. Rethinking the format and emphasis of each course is an important step as we begin to shift away from the idea that teaching for social change and social justice is a supplement or add-on to the curriculum and toward the idea that it is a fundamentally different way of doing teacher education...Policies and practices around graduate admissions were also influenced by our focus on social justice...What was most important about this new process was not only that it made issues of diversity an explicit part of the admissions process but also that it took faculty differences in values, beliefs and experiences—usually left unspoken in admissions decisions—and made them explicit and public, thus also opening them to critique and question by others. The process used to search for new faculty was also influenced by departmental emphasis on social justice...Newly worded advertisements emphasized teaching and teacher education for social justice as well as scholarship that linked theory, policy and practice (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999, p. 239; pp. 243–244).

Educating teacher educators with *inquiry as stance* is always about the links between thought and action. As I have suggested, the subject matter is the daily work of teacher education in the first place. For this reason many of the traditional concerns related to the ongoing education of professionals—how to “translate” new ideas into practice or “apply” new knowledge to a particular context—simply do not obtain. Likewise, figuring out the “implications” of a group’s endeavor to educate themselves and each other by taking an

inquiry stance on their own work is built into the work from the start.

Particularly for a group of teacher education faculty members, some of whom are tenured and some not, however, engaging in inquiry as a way of educating one’s self and each other is somewhat risky. Although the purpose is noble (and may be effective), the consequences may be difficult. The Boston College group points this out explicitly:

Over time we discovered that an inevitable result of seeking social justice was not only increased opportunity for understanding but also increased tension around self-exposure and self-knowledge, orientations to social justice and research, and issues of community building (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999, p. 244).

All of the important topics in teacher education—student teacher evaluation, admissions policies related to high stakes teacher tests, meeting new accreditation standards—have implications for diversity, access, and opportunities to learn. And all of them involve certain kinds of risks when participants choose to name those implications directly and make the issues public. When the topic is social justice itself, however, and when the discourse draws on multiple, critical, professional, and *personal* perspectives, the risks are multiplied. Discussions of this kind are never finished, rarely consensual, and lead as often to increased uncertainty as to certainty.

As the following excerpt suggests, then, educating teacher educators with *inquiry as stance* involves tensions and risks for participants—an unintended purpose of course—but an inevitable consequence:

Extended and repeated conversations about social justice changed the boundaries of what could be included in the discourses of teacher education and took us outside the safe space of our own expertise...It allowed us to be more honest and forthcoming and prompted new insights into the viewpoints of others...But honest talk is complicated. Our individual past experiences and socially constructed subjectivities meant that some of us talked more than others about certain issues, some of us talked

far more personally, and almost all of us said some things we feared would expose our ignorance, prejudice or suppressed anger, even rage. In addition members of the group were differently positioned, entangled with each other in multiple professional and personal relationships. Issues of rank and job security clearly influenced who felt free to speak on what topics and under what circumstances as well as who felt silenced at certain times...

It is important to note, of course, that the setting for this 'honest talk' was a university, an institution traditionally characterized by hierarchy, secrecy and privilege. As the talk of our group became more honest, some of us felt more vulnerable—unclear about whether it would be safer to be silent, non-committal or completely un-sensational in all of our comments... For some individuals, being part of the social justice group exacerbated personal issues with others and fed into tensions about status and role... Part of what this project pointed out, then, is that the considerable tension between a commitment to collaboration, on the one hand, and genuine critique of others' ideas and positions, on the other, is a tension that is always operating in this kind of group inquiry—sometimes just beneath the surface of conversations, at other times bubbling up and breaking through the surface, and in a few instances erupting into confrontations or withdrawals from the group (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999, pp. 244–245).

These excerpts make the point that the education of teacher educators with *inquiry as stance* has a critical purpose that challenges the status quo. In this case the group wanted to go beyond the rhetoric of social justice in order to develop a teacher education program where the courses, curriculum, practices, and policies all were aimed at social change and social justice. As these examples suggest, this kind of project has unintended risks and consequences as well as great potential.

### 3.4. *Example 4: facilitating inquiry*

Like the example above, *Example 4* draws from the work of teacher educators at Boston College. The teacher educators in this example were doctoral students who were co-teachers of a year-long large inquiry seminar at the master's level for both teacher candidates seeking initial certification and practicing teachers seeking a master's degree in education. Their primary role was to facilitate small break-out discussion groups, respond to students' work, and reflect on/help plan sessions.

The teacher educators' group in *Example 4*, composed of one teacher education faculty member (myself) and fourteen doctoral students (13 in Curriculum & Instruction, 1 in Educational Administration), included men and women, 1–3 year doctoral students, those continuing to work full- or part-time in classrooms and schools as well as those doing full-time doctoral coursework alongside graduate assistantships. Their areas of expertise and interest included elementary education, special education, literacy and language, technology, school policy and reform, multicultural curriculum, urban teaching, and curriculum and instruction in science, mathematics, history and English. Every member of the group had at least 3 years experience as a K-12 or special education teacher, and some had as many as 20 years. Some of those in the group hoped to enter the professoriate in curriculum and instruction (in a subject area), educational leadership, teacher education or related areas; and some intended to continue working in school systems as teachers and educational leaders. Others hoped to break new ground, inventing or benefiting from positions that combined K-12 teaching with professional development work, research with program administration, university-level teaching with classroom-based research, or public school teaching with educational policy research, thus blurring traditional boundaries.

As teacher educators, the inquiry group members described in *Example 4* met in thirteen 2½–3 h sessions over the course of one academic year to prepare for, follow up on, raise questions about, and document, the experiences of their students in

the inquiry seminar. These students were teacher candidates, full-time classroom special education aides, and/or experienced teachers who were learning to use inquiry as a way to document their teaching and investigate the connections (or not) among their own learning, their day-to-day professional decisions and practices, and their K-12 or special program students' learning over time<sup>6</sup>. The teacher candidate seminar met 11 times over the course of the year, with each meeting including a 1 h large group session followed by a 1 ½ h break out session in small groups organized loosely by grade level, subject matter, or specialist area of certification (and facilitated by the inquiry group members whose work is highlighted here).

This fourth example draws primarily on lesson plans, handouts, overheads, and lecture notes from all of the large group sessions as well as detailed notes and reflections from each of the break-out sessions that followed up on these. In addition, the group collected all of the students' written work for each session, their own overall comments on each student's participation, and students' final projects for both semesters. Two doctoral student facilitators also worked together to write papers about certain aspects of the group's work, particularly the competing agendas that were at play during the year (Donnell & Harper, 2002; Harper & Donnell, 2002).

For the purposes of my larger discussion about the education of teacher educators, I use this fourth example to make an important point about the reflexivity that is involved when groups work with *inquiry as stance*. The process of inquiry is not only reflective and critical, as the above examples have already suggested, but also reflexive, with the learning of the students (in this case, K-12 teacher candidates) functioning as a kind of reflecting pool or mirror for the learning of their teachers (in this case, doctoral student group facilitators).

Reflexivity is nowhere more clear than in the emerging questions of teacher candidates juxta-

posed with the emerging questions of group facilitators. In the teacher candidates' inquiry seminar, students brought all kinds of questions and issues of practice to each session—from complaints about the lack of resources in some schools relative to others, to uncertainty about their own abilities to manage groups of students, to concern about the increasing time and attention being given to test preparation in K-12 classrooms. In the teacher candidates' inquiry seminar, we spent a great deal of time developing and fleshing out these issues and questions, attempting to make distinctions among questions that were important but not directly within the control of teachers themselves, questions that were significant but not “researchable” by classroom-based teacher researchers, and questions that were not only important but also researchable by teacher candidates. Ultimately teacher candidates were required to use a “What happens when...?” or, a “What's going on with ....?” question stem in order to encourage open-ended, researchable questions that would accommodate both qualitative and quantitative data sources and analyses of their own practice and would also allow them to explore the links among K-12 students' learning, their own learning as professionals, their teaching strategies, and issues of social justice.

Among the more than 50 teacher candidates in the seminar, some posed tentative questions about their work as teachers and their K-12 students' learning as follows:

- What happens when I teach a math unit with graphing calculators that is traditionally taught without graphing calculators?
- What happens when I empower my second graders to solve social problems on their own or with very little guidance from me? How do I help these children avoid conflict and begin to control their feelings?
- How do I build empathy in my second grade classroom? What does it take to help students become socially conscious of the impact they have on each other?
- What happens when history is taught from a non-US perspective in an American classroom?

<sup>6</sup>The doctoral student inquiry group is hereafter referred to as either “inquiry group members” or “facilitators' group” to distinguish them from the masters-level students who were members of the inquiry class and are hereafter referred to as “teacher candidates” for clarity.

- What happens when a unit which emphasizes grammar and sentence structure is taught to children who are second language learners in a school that emphasizes a whole language approach to literacy?
- What is going on with “K\_\_\_” when she acts out? Is it obsessive compulsive disorder? Is it cultural differences? Is it the different expectations from this school compared to the old school? Is it the different expectations of home and school?
- What happens when I add teaching science as a way of thinking and investigating to the more traditional science as a body of knowledge?
- What happens when I introduce the topic of racism to urban fifth graders through reading selections and writing exercises? Will it effect (positively or negatively) how they treat one another?
- What do teacher candidates in the class with different amounts and kinds of experience make of the notion of inquiry (the experienced teachers in the group, those with no experience, others)?
- How are the teacher candidates constructing their ideas about social justice?
- Which comes first (or should come first) when people are learning to be teachers—the day-to-day stuff, the know-how for getting through the day, or, the inquiry approach, the reflection?
- How do teacher educators shape teacher candidates’ ideas about teaching and their conceptions of teachers? What part do we play in that?
- How do teacher educators help students understand an inquiry model?
- What issues about race and racism in schools do and do not get addressed in inquiry sessions?
- What happens when teacher educators come together to talk about their own practice? How does this inform our work as teachers, as supervisors, as faculty members?
- How are we as teacher educators reflecting and demonstrating the notions about inquiry that we are trying to teach to the students?
- What happens when doctoral students change their focus from K-12 teaching (which they know how to do) to teacher education, supervision, and being faculty members (which they don’t know how to do)? Is the basic philosophy of teaching and learning different? Is teacher education the same as professional development?

Much of the teacher candidates’ inquiry seminar time was devoted to figuring out how to link specific teaching practices with K-12 students’ learning in response to these questions, but also how to document the teacher candidates’ own learning as they explored the issues and struggled with how social justice related to everything else.

At the same time that the facilitators’ inquiry group struggled to help teacher candidates pose researchable and important questions, they also posed their own initial questions about what it meant to be teacher educators. The process of learning to be teachers of teachers often centered on balancing different purposes, needs, and agendas:

- How do our agendas, as teacher educators, interrelate with, or collide with their agendas, as teacher candidates? How do our agendas coincide/clash with the agendas of their co-operating teachers and supervisors?
- How do our different small groups respond differently to the idea of inquiry? How does the concept play out with different populations of teacher candidates (e.g., those preparing to be special education teachers, elementary teachers, secondary teachers, etc.)?

In grammatical terms, “reflexive” is used to refer to an action that is turned back upon the subject, often designating a verb whose subject and direct object are the same. In *Example 4* the reflexivity of *inquiry as stance* in the education of teacher educators is unusually clear-cut as both teacher candidates and facilitators learned by posing questions and then gathering and analyzing data in order to answer those questions and in light of larger ideas in the field.

#### 4. The education of teacher educators: lessons learned

In the final section of this paper, I offer a discussion of lessons learned about the education of teacher educators with *inquiry as stance*. These lessons draw on the four examples I have offered above and on my experiences over 20 years as a participant in a variety of inquiry communities where teacher educators worked to educate themselves and each other as they engaged in the ongoing work of teaching prospective teachers. As noted above, these lessons also draw on the conceptual frameworks for teacher research as a way of learning in K-12 teacher communities that I have developed over the years with Susan Lytle. The major lesson learned is that *inquiry as stance* is a valid, valuable, and perhaps necessary way to conceptualize the major questions involved in the education of teacher educators, as noted below.

*Stance:* What intellectual perspectives support teacher educators' learning? What is the relationship of the knower to knowledge?

*Participants:* Who should be called a "teacher educator"? Who are the participants in their education?

*Knowledge/subject matter:* What is the content or the subject matter of teacher educators' education? What kinds of knowledge are of most worth? What should the curriculum for teacher educators be?

*Time, timing, and social/organizational contexts:* What structural and social/organizational contexts support the education of teacher educators? When and for how long should teacher educators be educated?

*Purpose:* What are the purposes and goals of the education of teacher educators? What are its consequences and risks?

##### 4.1. *Lessons learned: inquiry as stance*

Throughout this paper, I have tried to conceptualize the education of teacher educators as an ongoing and recursive process that depends on inquiry as a stance on the work of teacher

education. As I have pointed out, conceptualizing inquiry as stance on teaching, learning, and schooling is quite different from conceptualizing inquiry as one among many other methods useful for teacher educators' learning. Rather than inquiry as a project or an activity in teacher education, inquiry as stance is an intellectual perspective—a way of questioning, making sense of, and connecting one's day-to-day work to the work of others and to larger social, historical, cultural, and political contexts (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999a). Each of the examples I have used above highlights a group of variously positioned teacher educators who are learning by posing questions: How do my students (and I) understand racism and schooling (*Example 1*)? What does it mean for us to supervise (and evaluate) teacher candidates but also be fellow learners (*Example 2*)? What is the meaning of social justice, and, how does it (or, how should it) play out in our teacher education policies and practices (*Example 3*)? How do student teachers document the outcomes of their teaching, and what happens to issues of equity and social justice in the press to be accountable (*Example 4*)?

Central to the idea of *inquiry as stance* is the relationship between the knower (here, the teacher education practitioner/researcher) and knowledge. With inquiry as a stance, the practitioner/researcher is both user and creator of knowledge, which is always regarded as generative and tentative, to be questioned, challenged, connected, tried out, revised, reshaped, and held problematic. A continuously questioning stance toward knowledge and practice in teacher education has enormous implications in the current context of educational reform which is increasingly governed by state and federal mandates intended to control many aspects of teacher education. From an inquiry stance, teacher educators continuously raise questions about the context of educational reform—the purposes of schooling, the perspectives represented and missing in the teacher education and K-12 curriculum, the tensions between high standards and standardization, and the roles of critique and interrogation of ideas and practices in the current press for compliance and consensus.

#### 4.2. *Lessons learned: participants*

In teacher education programs across the country, particularly at research universities, many of those who work closest with prospective teachers in school settings are not “regular” higher education faculty members, or what is referred to in the literature as the “teacher education professoriate.” Instead, as Examples 2 and 4 make especially clear, many teacher educators are part-time, adjunct, temporary, and/or clinical faculty and fieldwork supervisors; graduate students who supervise as part of financial assistantships or part-time jobs; and school-based personnel who work as site-based supervisors, coordinators, and school-university liaisons. These people are not the professoriate, whose preparation and training for the field have been analyzed in the research literature in terms of demographics, university status, academic background, research productivity (or, more often, the lack thereof), and pedagogy (e.g., Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Lanier & Little, 1986). It should be noted that the roles of adjunct and part-time faculty in teacher education are acknowledged to a certain extent in two different bodies of literature. The literature of instructional supervision includes attention to the nature of supervisory discourse in teacher education and the roles and relationships of supervisors and school-based teachers. The emerging literature on professional development schools touches on the role in teacher education of school-based supervisors, partnership liaisons, and site-based coordinators. For the most part, however, adjunct faculty, supervisors, and group leaders are seldom regarded as teacher educators, and issues related to their “education” are virtually absent from the literature.

The examples I have offered in this paper suggest that we need a broad answer to the question of who is called a teacher educator in the first place if we are going to consider seriously the education of teacher educators. This definition would certainly include the teacher education professoriate, but would also include the many adjunct and temporary personnel engaged in the everyday work of preparing teachers (e.g., supervising students, leading fieldwork seminars, work-

ing as partners in schools and classrooms, teaching methods courses part-time, and so on). This definition would also need to include the many professors who teach teacher candidates every day and yet do not generally think of themselves as teacher educators and do not generally read or contribute to the teacher education literature. Rather the identity of these professors is closely linked to subject matter areas such as mathematics or composition, to specialty areas such as early childhood or learning disabilities, and/or to the disciplines generally housed within schools and colleges of education such as psychology or testing and measurement. Several of the faculty members involved in Example 3, for instance, did not think of themselves primarily as teacher educators prior to the inquiry project described above. If the subject matter of educators’ education is “the work” of preparing teachers, as I argue below that it ought to be, then all of those engaged in the enterprise need to be participants.

#### 4.3. *Lessons learned: time, timing, and social/organizational contexts*

Taken together, the four examples I have included here suggest that the education of teacher educators is a process that needs to be conceptualized as extending across the professional lifespan and not one that occurs at a fixed point in time prior to taking on the role of teacher educator. For example, while most of the doctoral students in *Example 4* were just beginning to take on roles as teacher educators—teaching undergraduate courses or supervising teacher candidates, many of the participants in *Example 3* had taught courses in teacher certification programs for more than 20 years and were highly experienced in the daily activities of teacher education—advising students, admitting new candidates to programs, documenting programs for accreditation review, and so on. Almost none of these highly experienced faculty members, however, had had graduate level work in teacher education per se prior to taking on their roles at the university. This is the case in many colleges and universities across the country and will likely continue to be so, especially

since there are relatively few doctoral programs in teacher education as a field of study itself.

Although we can imagine a “curriculum” for teacher educators who may be preparing for the professorate, it is not likely that this will be the major entry point or role definition for the majority of teacher educators. We need, then, to think of the education of teacher educators as a continuous process that occurs across the lifespan, a notion that is completely in keeping with much of the current thinking about professional development for K-12 teachers. Educating K-12 teachers is no longer seen as a one-time process of preservice “training” prior to real teaching in schools or as a process of periodic “re-training” or inservice staff development wherein teachers receive the latest information about effective techniques. Rather what have been referred to as “new models” of teacher education and even “new paradigms” of professional development stress continuous learning over the professional lifespan (e.g., Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; Little & McLaughlin, 1993).

Along these same lines, as all four examples make clear, the education of teacher educators with *inquiry as stance* occurs within the context of inquiry communities wherein everyone is a learner, a researcher, a seeker of new insights, and a poser of questions for which no one in the group already has the answers. Although consultants and outside speakers as well as wide readings from multiple perspectives are frequently utilized as resources, as was clear in the examples, when the education of teacher educators is conceptualized from an inquiry perspective, the model of one “teacher” teaching a group of “students” is not in evidence. Instead, as I have alluded throughout this discussion, the process is one where teacher educators educate themselves and each other by regarding the work of others as generative but open to interrogation. This kind of education occurs when groups meet and work together over relatively long periods of time—1, 3 and 9 years. Particular projects may have clear time frames with specific beginning and ending points, such as the 1 year inquiry described in *Example 2*, where supervisors worked to reinvent their processes for assessing

student teachers’ progress in schools. Likewise individual teacher educators or small groups may analyze and write about particular aspects of the inquiries of a larger community, as in my own work mentioned in *Example 1*, or the small group of doctoral student facilitators who are now beginning to analyze some of the data gathered during the seminar year, described in *Example 4*. Even in these cases, however, the analyses of an individual or small group is connected to and nested within the larger work of a community of inquiry.

#### 4.4. *Lessons learned: knowledge/subject matter*

There has been enormous attention over the past 15 years to “the knowledge question” in teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2001), or what K-12 teachers ought to know and be able to do. As I have noted, however, there has been much less attention to the knowledge and subject matter appropriate for teacher educators. I have used the four examples above to make the point that one way to conceptualize subject matter for teacher educators is in terms of the work of teacher education itself, the stuff of everyday practice—teaching courses, supervising student teachers, facilitating seminars, revising curriculum, developing assessment systems, preparing accreditation reports, admitting students, and so on. Any and all of these activities, which are part of the larger project of teacher education, can be made problematic and explored from an inquiry stance as the four examples illustrate.

In each of the four examples, a group posed questions on the basis of their everyday work as teacher educators and then explored those questions by collecting data in a systematic way, reading related theory and research, and constructing both local analyses and local practice. In *Example 2*, for instance, the supervisors’ group posed questions about the inconsistency of their assessment procedures and the stated philosophy of the rest of the program. To explore those questions, they read widely—Dewey’s concepts of apprenticeship and laboratory approaches to preparing new teachers, traditional and more authentic assessment systems used in other institutions,

and a range of theoretical perspectives on the documentation and assessment of both children's and teachers' growth and development. At the same time, they documented and critiqued their current practice, making visible and explicit to each other why, how, and what they currently counted as evidence of student teachers' progress.

Over time and collectively, the group constructed both an analysis of their current practice *and* a new assessment system. The subject matter involved was the work of teacher education. In this sense, teacher educators (and other practitioners at all levels of education) learn to be better at their work when they generate what we have called "local knowledge of practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999a; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1992) by working within inquiry communities to theorize and construct their work and to connect it to larger issues. As we have suggested, constructing local knowledge is understood to be a process of building, interrogating, elaborating, and critiquing conceptual frameworks that link action and problem-posing to the immediate context as well as to larger social, cultural, and political issues. The local knowledge we have conceptualized is not the same as the "practical knowledge," which others have described as how, when and where practitioners do things (Fenstermacher, 1994; Richardson, 1999). Rather the idea of local knowledge highlights the processes of knowledge construction as they are integrated with daily life in schools, programs, and classrooms and also connected to larger social and political agendas.

#### 4.5. *Lessons learned: purpose/consequences*

Over the years, I have argued along with many others that in order to alter an educational system that is dysfunctional for particular groups of students based on race, culture, and/or language background, we need teachers who regard teaching as a political activity and embrace social change as part of the job. In other words, I have suggested that we need teachers who enter the profession not expecting to carry on business as usual but prepared to join other educators, parents, and communities in major reforms (Cochran-Smith, 1991, 1995a, 1999). As the

examples in this paper suggest, teacher educators cannot carry on business as usual either. The ways we have traditionally initiated students into the discourses and practices of teaching are not likely to result in an activist's stance on teaching nor meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population of schoolchildren.

What I have tried to suggest is that in order to work for social change, what we need in teacher education are not better generic strategies for teaching but generative ways for prospective teachers, experienced teachers, and teacher educators alike to work together in communities of learners—to explore and reconsider their own assumptions, understand the values and practices of families and cultures that are different from their own, and construct pedagogy that takes these into account in locally appropriate and culturally sensitive ways. The four examples above are intended to make the case that we need communities of teacher educators that foster intellectually vital and socially significant inquiries into the dilemmas of race, culture, and language diversity in teaching, learning to teach, and educating teacher educators. In all four examples above, part of the purpose of the education of teacher educators is to work together for social justice. From the perspective of *inquiry as stance*, the education of teacher educators is associated with uncertainty as well as certainty, with posing problems and dilemmas as much as with solving them, and with the recognition that inquiry both stems from and generates questions that challenge the system. Some of the consequences are unintended and may contribute to greater vulnerabilities and risks for some people, as *Example 3* makes particularly clear. From an inquiry perspective, however, it is understood that these may be the kinds of consequences and purposes that are needed for more democratic schooling and for the formation of a more just society.

In his popular volume, *Change Forces* (1993), Fullan (1993) suggests that "change agency" is essential to the future development of our society and that all educators must be prepared to be effective agents of change. Fullan points out, however, that it will take a new mindset to deal with what is an otherwise insurmountable problem

in educational change—the contradiction of continuous revision demanded by educational reform and innovation, on the one hand, and an educational system that is fundamentally conservative, on the other. Fullan argues that:

As we head toward the twenty-first century . . . teachers' capacities to deal with change, learn from it, and help students learn from it will be critical for the future development of societies. They are not now in a position to play this vital role. We need a new mindset to go deeper. (p. ix)

The way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers results in a system that is more likely to retain the status quo than to change. (p. 3)

Obviously if we are to have teachers who are change agents, we must also have teacher educators who are prepared to be the same. Conceptualizing the education of teacher educators as a process of continual and systematic inquiry wherein participants question their own and others' assumptions and construct local as well as public knowledge appropriate to the changing contexts in which they work provides a way to think about it as a process of change. In this sense, the education of teacher educators from an inquiry stance can be understood as playing a significant part in the future of society.

But, as the title of this article suggests, *unlearning* is also a significant part of the process of inquiry, especially when groups are trying to interrogate their own assumptions about race and racism, social justice, and what it means to succeed or fail as teachers. The word, *unlearning*, signifies both growth and the undoing or reversing of that growth. This contradiction is intentional, chosen to signal not only the potential but also the enormous complexity inherent in the ongoing education of teacher educators.

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