



Future School Services, 'Global Solutions': ESRC Seminar 4 Proceedings

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School of Education
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**FUTURE SCHOOL SERVICES, 'GLOBAL SOLUTIONS':
ESRC SEMINAR 4 PROCEEDINGS**

**Research Paper Editor:
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The integration of services in schools – how education should integrate with other services provided to children and families – is now a topical issue. To explore what children's services integration involves, a group of researchers from the universities of Aberdeen, Birmingham and Ulster, which was successful in 2005 in winning an award in the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Seminar Series competition, has organised a programme of research seminars.

In April 2007, the fourth of these seminars was held at the University of Aberdeen, with the title *Future school services, 'global solutions'*. The Aberdeen seminar built on some of the shared understandings from the first three seminars concerning children's services policy and practice and notions of leadership and management as constructed and conceptualised within disciplines which collaborate in multidisciplinary work. It drew together issues from earlier seminars, exploring narratives of interprofessional identification and considering the necessary institutional conditions for interprofessional learning. Issues of interprofessionalism, interagency working and children's public services integration in schools and children's services in the UK countries were placed within an analysis of the discourses and practices of school workforce modernisation and transformation in South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Examining matters of professional agency, institutional cultures and interprofessional relations in future school services, the seminar questioned whether there are 'global solutions' which could take into full account the existing social and cultural conditions of interprofessional relationships in specific institutional, regional and national contexts.

Modernising and remodelling schools: are there 'global solutions' to transforming the school workforce?

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Mythical spaces and social imaginaries: looking for the global in the local in narratives of (inter)professional identification

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Institutional conditions for inter-professional learning: some thoughts on local and global solutions

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The aim of this seminar series is to bring together practitioners, researchers and policy makers from the various disciplines that inform policy and practice in education, health and social care, together with representatives of voluntary agencies, professional associations and service users, to explore a number of important questions for practitioners and professional groups arising from current moves towards children's services integration. Seminar themes include:

- the changed policy goals and mechanisms for policy-making and delivery;
- new 'bottom up' relationships with service users and user communities;
- issues of governance and the organisation of associative and communal relations in schools;
- the operation of new versions of networked professionalism; and
- practitioners' constructions of new professional identities.

The objectives of this seminar series are to:

- examine the tensions and complementarities in the discourses of inter-professional and interagency working which are drawn upon by the different disciplines and professional groups in relation to the idea of service integration;
- explore other 'global' solutions that might inform education and children's services interprofessional and interagency policy and practice within the UK nations;
- identify opportunities to build collaborative research networks and openings for synergies in theoretical scholarship and empirical research.

The papers from the fourth seminar in the series are now brought together in this collection, *Future school services, 'global solutions'*, published in the *Research Papers* series of the University of Aberdeen, School of Education. In keeping with the seminars, this collection is intended for practitioners, managers and leaders, academics and policy-makers from the fields of education, health and social care.

It is intended that this publication and the other research papers linked to the seminar series, *Service integration in schools: research and policy discourses, practices and future prospects*, present thoughtful and challenging analyses of recent developments in children's services policy across the UK nations, critiquing fundamental issues of children's services restructuring and interprofessional relationships.

Key debates from the first three seminars in the series are published in previous papers in the *Research Papers* series:

The Research and Policy Discourses of Service Integration, Interprofessional and Interagency Working: ESRC Seminar 1 Proceedings (2006). Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.

How Service Integration is Operating in Practice in the Scotland, Northern Ireland and England and Wales Policy Contexts: ESRC Seminar 2 Proceedings (2007). Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.

Leading and Managing Collaborative Practice: the Research. ESRC Seminar 3 Proceedings (2007). Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.

Copies of the reports are available from the seminar series administrator at the School of Education, University of Aberdeen: jennifer.boyd@abdn.ac.uk (£8.00 per copy).

FUTURE SCHOOL SERVICES, 'GLOBAL SOLUTIONS'.

Audrey Hendry
University of Aberdeen

Many studies of service integration in schools are concerned with activities at the personal, organisational and local service delivery levels. Perhaps this is unsurprising when service delivery is normally centred round individuals and the organisation in which they work. Yet, as borne out in the proceedings from previous seminars in this series, it would seem that service integration, both in the challenges it faces and the aims it hopes to achieve, could usefully be more broadly conceived. If integrated service delivery in all of our schools is to improve, current approaches may be insufficient. Looking differently at problems or in different places for solutions may be necessary. Some of the issues raised in the papers which follow may seem a long way from the work of some professionals who are involved in our schools at present. A wider conceptualisation and contextualisation of the issues, however, is likely to provide a clearer perspective on the kind of challenges faced by schools. It may also offer insights into how interprofessional and interagency policy and practice might be adapted to meet the future needs of those involved in service reform.

New Labour's attempts to modernise and remodel the workforce employed in schools are explored in the paper by Graham Butt and Helen Gunter. The paper outlines aspects of how schools have been reconstructed in response to the National Agreement in England which redefined the roles of teachers, non-teaching staff and other professionals in schools. The study presented here looks in detail at how these changes have been experienced by teachers and others and comments on how teachers' work-life balance has been altered as a result of the Agreement. The impact of the National Agreement is contingent on local circumstances, Butt and Gunter observe, but nationally it would seem that there is some evidence of positive change resulting from this remodelling.

Butt and Gunter compare and contrast the situation in England with modernisation and remodelling in other developed countries, finding distinct parallels between systems. They draw on the work of Berkhout in South Africa where successive

administrations have sought to restructure and reculture schools and schooling. In contrast to England where, according to Butt and Gunter, remodelling has taken place largely in response to teacher shortages, workforce changes in South Africa are set against the backdrop of democratisation and structural transformation. Despite these differences, similarities are found between the two settings in the ways in which change has been experienced by teachers.

Drawing on the work of Fitzgerald in New Zealand and Vidovich in Australia the paper goes on to outline the marked similarities in how reform has proceeded in England and in these two settings. While the reforms have taken place at different times and are underpinned to some extent by differing political ideology, the writers suggest that there are lessons to be learned from each about successful reform and the role of the teacher within it. Their findings lead the writers to conclude that the relationship between teachers, reform and teacher morale is complex, contingent and problematic.

The paper by Cate Watson invites us to consider the complexities inherent in global discourses of service integration through an exploration of the local. Watson outlines research conducted in Scotland which explored initial teacher education students' narrative construction of their identities as beginning teachers. The study draws on Laclau and Mouffe's theory of discourse. While the work of Laclau and Mouffe is more usually applied at the macro level, Watson opens her paper with a discussion of the usefulness of this theory of discourse as a way of understanding at the micro level subject positions within current discourses of interprofessional practice. These discourses are, she reminds us, often unstable, contested and competing. Watson proposes that a miniaturisation of Laclau and Mouffe in a critical microanalysis of discourse may reveal possibilities for change. The paper sets out one way of approaching such a miniaturisation through the examination of narratives of practice.

Having argued for this particular methodology, in this piece Watson examines beginner teachers' narratives of 'need' as generated within the current political discourse of social inclusion. She uses a narrative fragment taken from the study and moving back and forth between the global and the local uses the fragment to

illuminate issues central to current educational policy. Like Butt and Gunter, Watson's work uncovers tensions and dilemmas in the ways in which teachers are positioned by discourses. At the local level instability is experienced, while at the global level closure and uniformity appears to be imposed. In closing the piece Watson urges that interprofessional practice may require us to move away from notions of consensus and perfect communication and instead consider alternative ways of dealing with the problematic.

In the final paper Jon Nixon picks up some of the themes introduced by Watson. Nixon presents an argument which asserts that interprofessional practice is not simply a matter of structures or systems but is concerned with the culture of organisations and with the relationships within and across these organisations. Central to the argument is a concern for people and their well-being and the quality of the associations they form. Thus, mutuality and reciprocity between people improve integrated service delivery.

Nixon offers the Aristotelian concept of 'virtuous friendship' as one way in which thinking about how interprofessional relationships might be reconfigured. Nixon advocates that, as a step towards reconfiguring interprofessional relationships, a new vocabulary is needed, one which is able to use terms such as hope, friendship and trust. Interprofessional activity, based on virtuous practice, might then allow practitioners the space and opportunity to think together about the ends and purposes of interprofessional practice and the actions needed to bring it to life.

This paper ends with a series of questions, questions which challenge and extend the themes and issues developed over the four seminars in this series. Nixon asks that as professionals involved in integrated services for children and young people, for families and the community, we examine current practices critically and with humility, placing ourselves in the position of others, valuing others equally and accepting that our understanding of what constitutes knowledge is subject to change. Nixon asks that we consider building locally the conditions needed for change while remaining sensitive to what might be termed global.

MODERNISING AND REMODELLING SCHOOLS: ARE THERE 'GLOBAL SOLUTIONS' TO TRANSFORMING THE SCHOOL WORKFORCE?

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Abstract

The current agenda of modernisation and remodelling of the school workforce, as promoted by New Labour, reflects an attempt to re-structure and re-culture all England's public sector workforces. Here we consider the process of modernisation within education, whilst drawing on the work of colleagues from other countries who have sought to understand the transformation of school workforces within their national contexts. We seek to address whether workforce modernisation, in whatever form, offers a meaningful way forward for the teaching profession in England and in other countries. Connections will be made to the enhanced roles of support staff and teaching assistants within the modernised school, with reference being made to both inter agency and inter professional policy and practice.

Introduction

Since coming to power ten years ago New Labour has been keen to both re-structure and re-culture public sector workforces, including the workforce employed in state schools. Two terms that have come to the fore when describing this process of changing public services are 'modernisation' and 'remodelling' – we will deal with each of these concepts in turn. In this paper we attempt to illustrate how the English experience of modernising schools has distinct parallels elsewhere and explore the extent to which adopting 'global solutions' to transforming the school workforce is sensible. Where pertinent, direct reference is made to inter agency and inter professional policy and practice in different national contexts. There is currently evidence of considerable 'policy borrowing' in education amongst developed countries. We draw upon accounts from South Africa (Sarie Berkhout), New Zealand (Tanya Fitzgerald) and Australia (Lesley Vidovich) to explore the extent to which other countries have pursued similar approaches to modernisation and remodelling in their schools, whilst also seeking to assess whether these developments have resonance with the English experience.

Remodelling of the school workforce was introduced into English schools from September 2003 through the National Agreement (DfES, 2003). In essence this attempted three things: to reduce the current and projected shortage of teachers in schools, to transform the culture of the education workforce, and to change the workload of teachers. With large numbers of teachers choosing not to teach (around 300,000 according to Horne, 2001), and with around one in three teachers expecting to leave the profession in the next five years (Woodward, 2003), the staffing situation in schools could not be ignored. The National Agreement has been forged between the government, employers and unions (except the NUT) and aims to reform the education workforce through:

- defining the work teachers should and should not do;
- removing routine administrative tasks from teachers (the '25 tasks');
- reducing teachers' hours of work;
- providing support staff for teachers (both inside and outside the classroom);
- providing 'new managers' with experience from outside education;
- training headteachers in change management.

The National Agreement has been implemented in English schools in a series of phases (Phase 1 from September 2003, Phase 2 from September 2004, Phase 3 from September 2005) and is supported by a variety of agencies: the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG), the Implementation Review Unit (IRU) and the National Remodelling Team (NRT).

Modernisation.

Modernisation, in the context of English schools, is a word which has been used to cover a variety of new 'things to be done'. The necessity for change has been stressed, within a concept that also encompasses a perceived need for new jobs, new roles, new responsibilities and a new set of values for the workplace. New Labour seems to be closely wedded to the concept of modernisation - often adopting the language of 'new' and 'modern', combining it with an imperative to discover novel ways of doing things through centrally funded 'pathfinder' and 'testbed' projects. Specifically, New Labour has sought to develop a 'third way' with respect to public sector reform, attempting to

bring together two prominent 'drivers' of educational change which have been apparent since the Second World War: firstly, the requirement for generous public funding of education, underpinned by principles of social equality and inclusion; and secondly, the drive to increase private provision of education, with an emphasis on competition and choice. The New Labour 'third way' therefore strives to bring together both the state and market through the involvement of the private sector in state education.

The implications of this are evident in the recent educational policies created by New Labour. Take, for example, the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004a) legislation. There is much here to be commended by the education profession, particularly the focusing of services on the needs of the child. However, the integration of education with other public services (health, police, social services) has not been straightforward - particularly when there are recent suggestions that schools may no longer be led by an educationist (a headteacher, in the traditional sense), but by a Chief Executive (who previously may have had little, or nothing, to do with education).

The reform agenda of modernisation in schools has advanced rapidly over the past decade. The focus for intervention has swung from the curriculum (with a loosening of the National Curriculum and a concentration on numeracy and literacy strategies), to structural change of schools (specialist schools, beacon schools and academies), to workforce remodelling (performance management, leadership training, removal of bureaucracy) and to the support for social inclusion (the 'Excellence in Cities' programme). More is on the horizon: increased choice for parents and children, inter agency and inter professional 'providers' being drawn into the delivery of education, greater independence for headteachers/chief executives and governors, further staff development, and wider partnerships (DfES, 2004b).

Remodelling

Remodelling questions 'who does what' in schools, whether these arrangements are still successful, and how they might be changed for the better.

New Labour faced an immediate dilemma when it entered power in 1997, for the national supply of teachers was not meeting either predicted or existing demand. The imperative

to train more teachers through a variety of different routes, was supplemented by a shift in policy that looked towards the employment of greater numbers of ‘para-professionals’ in educational provision. The traditional teaching workforce was therefore enhanced by a variety of teaching and learning assistants (as well as support staff) who were to take some of the commonly accepted roles of the teacher, thus easing labour supply problems. This has extended, in recent years, to greater links with other agencies and professional groups. This model envisages the future teaching workforce consisting of fewer, higher status, teachers supported by a variety of other staff within a culture of ‘new professionalism’ (DfEE, 1998; DfES, 2002). The expectation is that teachers will be ‘freed to teach’, whilst others will be serving them by taking away non-teaching (largely bureaucratic and administrative) tasks that have traditionally diverted the teachers’ efforts away from the classroom. The allocation of time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) has also, in theory at least, enabled teachers to reduce their workload and strike a better work-life balance. However, there are those who would argue that by removing ‘non-teaching’ roles from teachers one takes away a significant element of their professionalism, commitment and dedication to caring for the whole child. In addition, many teachers are concerned about their *raison d’être* being undermined by a new workforce that is trained on the job, receives lower wages and is of lower status. As such there are a number of important questions that have not yet been appropriately answered about the remodelling of the education workforce. For example, with the increasing employment of para-professionals what effect will this have on the status of teaching as a graduate entry profession?

One major shift has been to ‘upgrade’ the role of teaching assistants (TAs) to support teachers in the classroom - either through the ‘traditional’ TA roles of working with specific children who have particular needs, or by supporting specific teaching, learning and assessment tasks for the whole cohort of children. This has often widened the job of the TA to providing support not only for pupils and teachers, but also for the curriculum and the whole school. The low status, training and pay of TAs has, in part, been addressed through the creation of Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), who are now trained to take on greater responsibility for teaching and learning in the classroom. The overall aim of introducing greater numbers of support staff, both inside and outside the classroom, has been to provide teachers with a more reasonable work-life balance, to

increase their job satisfaction and ultimately to retain them in their jobs. There are parallels within other developed countries where TAs have recently accepted similarly enhanced roles in schools.

Job satisfaction and work-life balance

The government has become increasingly interested in the connections between teacher workload, job satisfaction and work-life balance over the past few years. This interest is perhaps not so much driven by altruism, but rather by the need to recruit and retain teachers in greater numbers than is currently the case. Poor teacher recruitment, loss of high percentages of new teachers in their first years of teaching, and an ageing national teacher population are all major concerns – which will not be solved simply by recruiting more teachers in the short term. The deep-seated issues of teachers’ work-life balance clearly need addressing. Commissioned reports from PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC, 2001) and the School Teachers’ Review Body (STRB, 2004) have each highlighted the need to tackle teachers’ hours of work, but have hinted that the problem is not simply statistical. As the STRB commented, workload reduction and the maintenance of high job satisfaction are ‘of at least equal importance to pay in helping to address problems of recruitment, retention and morale’ (p.25).

Recent research into levels of teachers’ job satisfaction within the modernised and remodelled school environment has produced some interesting findings (Thomas *et al.*, 2004). When teachers have been asked about how they might reduce workload and increase job satisfaction they highlight the negative impact of the non-teaching tasks they regularly undertake (photocopying, filing, money collection, form filling, duplicating information, etc). The second most common reason given for high workload is MARRA (monitoring, assessment, recording, reporting and accountability), whilst third is the time spent in covering for absent colleagues and the subsequent loss of non-contact time. The last two causes of excessive workload are the number of government school initiatives that required implementation and the excessive demands for planning in schools (including target setting, duplication of plans, and planning that is not fit for purpose) (Butt & Lance, 2005). Here the case for increasing the number and roles of administrative staff is viewed positively, as is the greater deployment of teaching assistants. Possibilities of employing staff – or their experience, via consultancies – from

a variety of other professional groups have also presented themselves. Many teachers also commented on their own use of ICT. They felt that gaining access to better training in ICT use – as well as updated hardware, software and networks – would decrease their workload and increase their job satisfaction.

With regard to modernisation and remodelling current research can reveal ‘no systematic relationship between job satisfaction and hours worked – findings which emphasise that job satisfaction is dependent on a more complex set of factors than hours worked’ (Butt & Lance, 2005, p.420). The assertion that people who work long hours do not have high levels of personal job satisfaction is therefore not supported, nor is the opposite the case. Highly motivated people often gain huge satisfaction from their work and choose to work long hours. Therefore many teachers’ sense of job satisfaction is located in a complex set of factors, beliefs and attitudes which are tied up with their commitment to their job, their working relationships with colleagues and children, and the ethos of their school. In part, this may explain why some teachers apparently like working long hours, even when there are possible ways to avoid this; why the increase in classroom-based support has not been welcomed more fully by some teachers; and why there is little realisation that intensive work during term times may not equate to a similar, less intensive, workload spread over an entire year. There is some evidence that teachers may not object to working long hours, as long as they have some control and choice about when they carry out non-teaching duties.

The way forward?

Initial evaluations of the remodelling and modernisation of the education workforce in English schools are revealing (Thomas *et al.*, 2004). Many schools that had ‘bought into’ the remodelling and modernisation agenda *before* the launching of the National Agreement in 2003 have found the transitions relatively straightforward. Some were already moving in the direction of change that is now being suggested by the government. Others have not found transition so easy, getting bogged down in issues of staffing, definition and deployment of tasks, and disputes over ‘who does what’. All schools have had to face up to the problems created by the backdrop of an often contradictory policy and practice regime from the 1980s and 1990s.

Nationally there is some evidence of positive change resulting from modernisation and remodelling. Year-on-year statistics of the number of teachers employed have shown gains – an increase of 3,700 teachers in England in January 2006 (to a total of 435,600) and a decrease of vacancies by 250 (to 2,230). The number of support staff is also rising (up by 22,700 to 287,000), which includes an increase of 6,100 new teaching assistants (DfES, 2006). Locally the picture is more piecemeal – some schools have witnessed revolutions in the composition of their staffing (beyond the traditional employment of teaching and support staff) and the roles they undertake, increased use of ICT in labour saving and educationally supportive ways, and the extension of a more pleasing work-life balance resulting in greater job satisfaction. Others are just beginning to make progress, or are finding the challenge of changing working cultures in their schools very difficult to achieve. It is perhaps ironic that the laudable drive to reduce teachers’ workload has been achieved through the dedicated ‘out of hours’ work of selfless individuals, often from senior management teams, at the expense of their own free time. There is also evidence of headteachers making changes that they do not necessarily believe in, and we need to ask serious questions about what this means for morale and professional judgement.

The experience of modernisation and remodelling in education in other developed countries

Here we draw on the accounts of three international authors who have explored the ways in which modernisation and remodelling are playing out within their own national contexts. Each comments on the effects of ‘policy borrowing’, largely from the English context, and note the extent to which transformation of their school workforces has been successful. Some reference is made, where appropriate, to inter agency and inter professional policy and practice.

Sarie Berkhout (2007) engages with the transformation agenda in South Africa and considers the extent to which policy development in other countries has influenced change in the national context; Tanya Fitzgerald (2007) explores the remodelling of schools and schooling from the perspective of New Zealand, illustrating similarities with the situation currently being experienced in English schools; whilst Lesley Vidovich (2007) uses an analytical lens to look at globalization and how the forces associated with

this have impacted on education in Australia and elsewhere - affecting teachers' professional identity, teaching and learning, and the need for modernisation.

South Africa

Berkhout (2007) describes the 're-making' of teachers in the South African context, played out against the backdrop of democratisation and transformation in the post-apartheid era. The past 12 years have seen a major restructuring of the education system where 'expectations built on notions of an all-powerful apartheid state that constructed an unjust education system were transferred to the new state and its promise to transform society into a more just and equitable system' (p.152). She reports how the transformation agenda has increasingly been influenced by policy development in other countries, as well as by a managerialist discourse. There appears to be a growing disjunction between policy texts and education practice in South Africa, such that the anticipated participatory democratisation of education has found teachers trapped within traditional contexts and power relationships, whilst being viewed by the state as increasingly in need of 're-making'. Berkhout sees this as taking real power away from teachers, who now find themselves at the bottom of a hierarchical system of decision making and reduced to 'acting out their respective roles' (p.149).

South Africa is currently attempting to modernise all its public sector workforces. Within state education teachers are seen as part of a fairly general problem with regard to reform, modernisation and the achievement of policy delivery. The transformation of the education system is viewed by Berkhout as 'very much related to the English restructuring of the 1960s which was underpinned by values of equity and democratic development and aspired to deliver the comprehensive ideal' (p.150). She describes how South African teachers are 'expected to abandon cultures and practices of the past and reform their identities in the image of the modern global citizen' (p.151). A new curriculum, Curriculum 2005, was launched in 1996 and was accompanied by the redeployment and rationalisation of teachers – partly in an attempt to standardise the pupil:teacher ratios in schools. The effect of this was that 'large numbers of teachers, mostly experienced, were retrenched and left the system. Schools located in privileged areas were able to charge school fees that enabled them to employ additional staff, whereas the traditional disadvantaged schools did not gain sufficient numbers of teachers

to realise the expected relief' (p.153). The geographic spread of schools, linked to the history of racial segregation of residential areas, remains the same, perpetuating traditional inequalities. As such, the divide between privileged schools and the rest has become more visible and entrenched.

Similar to the English education system 'wave upon wave of policy change and reform (has) sorely challenged leadership in schools and 2004 saw large-scale investigations into the morale and workload of teachers' (p.154) in South Africa. Teachers are seen as in need of 're-making', or of being equipped with new skills, to enable a modern standardisation of provision. They are considered to be the lynch-pin of transformation, but are generally believed by the government 'to lack capacity and to require "remodelling"' (p.155). Indeed they may be forced to 'develop a strategic mimicry of the policy expectations which are counter-forces to the traditional conceptions of teaching and learning that teachers themselves believe in' (Mattson & Harley, 2002, p.284).

Berkhout concludes that 'contrary to the modernisation project in England, which is very much focussed on the provision of additional support to alleviate the burden of teachers, inequalities in resource provision fundamentally drive the discourse of education transformation. Although the national and provincial structures provide for a major overhaul of the system, they have left the education institutions largely untouched – much as they did during the apartheid era' (p.156). She notes serious dissatisfaction and despondency amongst teachers - issues which she relates to the waves of transformations that do not seem to 'settle', to teacher workload and job satisfaction, to low morale, and to the impact of HIV/Aids on young people. In essence 'South African educational policy is strongly inclined to follow the English examplepolicy development is also strongly influenced by English consultants and civil servants. In this regard "modernisation" is no exception' (p.162).

New Zealand

Fitzgerald (2007) also notes that 'the educational reform agenda and the resultant restructuring of schools in New Zealand has proceeded with marked similarity to England' (p.163). Whilst the language of 'modernisation' and 'remodelling' are largely

omitted from policy rhetoric in New Zealand, their processes have functioned to effect structural changes in schools and contractual changes for teachers that 'have implicitly produced an unambiguous level of workforce reform that has re-formed schools and schooling, teachers and teaching' (p.163). The links with English educational policy making are clear for Fitzgerald when she states 'New Zealand, at the geographical periphery, continues to transport and re-work policies from its ideological centre' (p.163).

Fitzgerald describes workforce reform in New Zealand schools as occurring in two modernisation phases. The first (1989-1995), has aligned schools with the demands of the market through structural changes, whilst remodelling has radically transformed the ways in which schools were led, managed and governed; the second (1996- to date), emphasised the public accountability of teachers within a managed profession. More recently problems of recruitment and retention of teachers have resulted in 'contractual remodelling of teachers' professional work and activities that has the worrying potential to invoke irrevocable changes to the school workforce' (p.164). Teachers have again been constructed as 'the problem' and therefore are subjected to a culture of performance management which increasingly controls and regulates their work.

As Codd (2005) explains, schools have been transformed to compete in an educational marketplace, from local to global, where the community served is re-visioned as 'clients' or 'consumers'. Here education is largely seen as a private product. As with any product, education has a life cycle as a marketable commodity, such that reduced spending on education prompts schools to act in entrepreneurial ways as a means of making themselves more financially viable – hence schools increasing their demand for 'voluntary' parental contributions, looking for corporate sponsorship, accepting curriculum materials made by commercial companies in exchange for advertising rights, conducting international marketing to attract overseas (fee-paying) students, and re-branding themselves (for example Baird's Intermediate School in South Auckland becoming Baird's Mainfreight Intermediate School after accepting sponsorship from a haulage company). Fitzgerald explains how modernisation has also eroded the professional autonomy of teachers, as they have become central to the financial, strategic and entrepreneurial objectives of the school. Teachers have therefore become producers of the 'commodity' of student skills, knowledge and abilities which in turn contribute to

the global economy. Thus 'the modern school and the modern market place share a symbiotic relationship. A modernised school however, requires amongst other things, a modernised workforce' (p.169).

These changes in New Zealand's schools have resulted in a new climate in which teachers work. As a modernised workforce they now experience increased hours of work, larger class sizes, more administrative tasks and greater accountability, whilst sensing a loss of their professional autonomy. Given that these are the problems which modernisation in English schools has tried to *eradicate*, some believe that the New Zealand government will again seek to borrow policy initiatives from England, to solve their problems (Thrupp, 2001, Robertson & Dale, 2002). Political concerns about workload issues, the age of the school workforce and teacher retention are similar to those in English schools, as highlighted by a small scale quantitative study commissioned by the Ministry of Education (2002).

Fitzgerald concludes that remodelling and modernisation of schools and schooling has been continuing in New Zealand since 1989, with further reform based on changing the purposes, structure and function of schools along English lines being on the horizon. However, in the New Zealand context, the 'shift in responsibility for schools and schooling from the State to schools was accompanied by demands for fiscal and organizational efficiency and the re-production of education as a commodity that was subject to the demand of local and global consumers' (p.175). Teachers have also become the objects of reform in terms of their contracts, performance management and introduction of standards.

Australia

Vidovich (2007) looks to the forces of globalization to help explain the growth of modernisation policies in education in Australia. She has witnessed the ways in which the 'global knowledge economy' has moved to centre stage in public policy making, with international economic competitiveness becoming a key driving force behind policy development. This has resulted in the reconstruction of the professional identities of teachers, with implications for the future quality of teaching and learning.

Taking a definition of globalization which essentially locates it within the greater economic interconnectedness of the world, Vidovich focuses on technical and ideological aspects of the globalization process. Here she notes the growth of neo-liberalism, market ideology and principles of competition and the effects these have had on education and policy formation. Indeed, the very acts of policy borrowing and policy convergence across international boundaries have been facilitated by the forces of globalization. Education policy making in Australia, according to Vidovich, has been strongly influenced by that in England, USA, Canada and New Zealand - although the term 'modernisation' is new within Australian educational circles. Nonetheless, teachers have already been highlighted as a key 'policy problem', as they have in other countries.

Australia has witnessed corporatization and privatization of education since the late 1980s. Since the election of the Howard Coalition Government in 1996 unions have not been routinely invited to the policy 'table', whilst the passing of highly controversial Industrial Relations legislation in 2006 has severely limited union power - with individual Australian Workplace Arrangements prevailing over collective agreements. Hence teachers are generally portrayed as having lost their previous powers of negotiation. The problems faced by education are similar to those in England: teacher shortages, poor retention of teachers, low status of the profession and poor teacher supply (particularly in maths, sciences and ICT). Combined with a central drive for greater teacher accountability and a demand for a 'new professionalism' within the teaching workforce, the parallels with English state education are therefore strong.

Many in Australia hoped for significant education policy borrowing from England when New Labour was elected to power in 1997 on a platform of 'education, education, education', but this enthusiasm changed as the English policies played out. Nonetheless, similar education policies have been adopted by parties of significantly different ideological traditions (Labour in England and a Conservative Coalition in Australia). Both governments have favoured centralised control of markets and competition, within a neo-liberal framework, although the Australian government has not attempted the 'third way' coupling of left and right as a driver of policy development. Australian educational policy is generally less unified and less coherent across the whole country, due to Australia's federal political structure, but the state still uses financial levers to steer

policy despite the size and diversity of the education sector fragmenting its centralized control.

Vidovich concludes by noting the marginalisation of teacher voice in policy making in Australia, whilst Sachs (2003) contrasts the idealised position of the teacher with that of the prevailing managerial (economic) discourses which have promoted an individualistic, competitive, controlling, regulative, externally-defined and standards-led identity for teachers. The 'new professionalism' of teachers should reveal a critical and active engagement with policy, which is currently far from the case. With globalization as a common antecedent to modernisation policies across many countries there has been an ideological consistency amongst different policies at different sites. However, Vidovich calls for a clear differentiation between a 'global knowledge society' and a 'global knowledge economy'. There is, in the English and Australian cases, a convergence of education policy goals and discourse, but not within the structures and processes adopted in state schools in each country. Organisations and individuals have negotiated central policies differently, changing the resultant practice within the different school contexts.

Conclusions

Modernisation and remodelling are concerned with the creation of flexible workforces through the challenging of previous conventions of 'who does what' in the workplace. As such they are as much about changing cultures as they are about changing structures (Butt & Gunter, 2007).

New Labour governments in England have argued that globalised economies now require national workforces to be capable of acquiring transferable skills, to be accepting of the need to retrain, and to be flexible in the ways in which they work. They have also introduced the prospect of greater inter agency and inter professional work in schools, within a modernised and remodelled education workforce. Flexibility is increasingly demanded of those who make up the education workforce - where traditional role boundaries are no longer static, but open to question. Within this new reality is a tension concerning who should now be providing the nation's schooling. This can be approached from the macro level – should education be seen as a public good, or a private service? Or from the micro level – should classroom teaching always be carried out by trained

teachers? At the heart of this debate lies the professional identity of teachers, alongside the desire of both parents and students that teaching should still be carried out by fully trained professionals.

Internationally, based on case study evidence from South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, the drive towards modernisation and remodelling of the education workforce continues apace. The influence of the market, neo-liberal economic policy and globalization are seen to have had noticeable impacts on schools and the working lives of teachers. The prospect of greater diversification within the education workforce, through inter agency and inter professional working, are realities within the English state education system and appear in other national contexts. What is perhaps most significant in the pursuit of 'global solutions' to workforce modernisation is the strong and continuing tradition of policy borrowing amongst certain developed countries - from predominantly English sources. At present, there is perhaps only rather limited evidence of inter agency work in schools in the case study countries selected here, although in the future one suspects that a lead may be taken from the English example.

In the international context some observers have commented that attempts at modernising and remodelling education workforces have concentrated more on creating lists of what teachers should *not* be doing, rather than clearly articulating a model of what teachers should expect from their professional practice. The latter approach orientates arguments around whether pedagogy is kept at the forefront of teachers' work (or the work of other para-professionals) and whether the care of students, both academically and pastorally, is still seen as important. There is a danger in approaching remodelling and modernisation from the perspective of the school as an organisation - focussing on its structures and management - rather than from the perspective of teaching, learning and caring. In short, there is an issue about what should now be at the centre of 'modernised education' - structures, or students?

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MYTHICAL SPACES AND SOCIAL IMAGINARIES: LOOKING FOR THE GLOBAL IN THE LOCAL IN NARRATIVES OF (INTER)PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION

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Abstract

In this paper I explore possible worlds in and among narratives, identifications and discourses, searching for the global as constituted in, and enacted through, the local. Taking as my starting point the idea that narratives are performative, constituting the thread that links us to subject positions within discourse, I explore some methodological possibilities for examining the relationships between local personal narratives, global institutional discourses and the professional identifications they give rise to. I draw on a narrative fragment from research conducted with beginning teachers in order to investigate the ways in which institutional identifications are manifested in and through narrative, drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's theory of discourse. I then discuss the implications of this approach to discourse analysis for research into multiprofessional/interdisciplinary working and conclude by looking at the possibilities for the development of a critical methodology with the potential for bringing about institutional change.

Introduction

According to Marchart (1997), 'Social myths and traditions are nothing else than the outcome of repetitive practices of articulation... which lost their contingent origin in the course of this repetition so that now we perceive them as necessary, incontestable, eternal etc.'. In the course of such repetition, myths lose their temporal quality, becoming social imaginaries - limits or horizons structuring fields of intelligibility (Laclau, 1990) through which social practices are conceived and become naturalized. As such, myths and imaginaries can be understood as shaping spaces at all levels of social and institutional organization. John Law (2003) invites us to consider the complexities inherent in these global and local discourses. Is, he asks, the global large and complexly interrelated? Or could it be (also) small and non-coherent? What happens when different myths and imaginaries, and the global and local worlds they give rise to, collide?

This is the theme taken up in this ESRC Seminar Series, *Service integration in schools: research and policy discourses, practices and future prospects*. The aim of the seminars is ‘to explore recent research concerned with discourses which are currently constructing children’s services integration and how professionals and professional groups work together in schools and communities’ (Forbes, 2006, p.1). The barriers surrounding such joined-up aspirations have been discussed at length (see, for example, McConkey, 2006; Shucksmith *et al.*, 2006; Tett & McCulloch, 2006) and centre on differences in professional roles, values and language and in the organizational structures within which different professionals work. So, while at the macroscopic level, as Allan (2006a, p.55) says ‘the language used in policy privileges consensus and creates closure’ (an aspect of the normalising effect of power), focusing in may disclose a rather different picture in which practice is ‘revealed as the source of all kinds of frustrated desires, unstated criticisms, and endlessly deferred confrontations’ (Torfing, 1999, p.123). For example, in a study of interprofessional working to support pupil mental well-being Spratt *et al.* (2006, p.397) describe a situation in which ‘teachers questioned the validity of receiving training or advice from individuals without direct experience of classroom management’. In some instances, teachers resorted to bullying tactics such as subjecting other workers to ‘rites of passage’ rituals, ‘undertaking unsupported whole class teaching, or group work with unsuitably large numbers of disruptive pupils, before they were accepted as colleagues by teachers’. Myths and imaginaries may therefore lead professionals to construct the world in diverse ways and once there to occupy it differently. However, it should be remembered that the mantra of joined-up working in current policy discourse is itself assuming something of a mythic status, recognisable as part of the Western social imaginary of progress, one effect of which is to cast professionals in deficit terms.

In this paper I explore possible worlds in and among narratives, identifications and discourses, searching for the global as constituted in, and enacted through, the local – through our narratives of identification. Taking as my starting point the idea that narratives are performative, constituting the thread that links us to subject positions within discourse (Watson, 2006), I explore some methodological possibilities for

examining the relationships between local personal narratives, global institutional discourses and the professional identifications they give rise to. I draw on a narrative fragment from research conducted with beginning teachers in order to investigate the ways in which institutional identifications are manifested in and through narrative, drawing on Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) theory of discourse. I then discuss the implications of this approach to discourse analysis for research into multiprofessional/interdisciplinary working and conclude by looking at the possibilities for the development of a critical methodology with the potential for bringing about institutional change.

Discourse and the field of identities

Torfing (1999, p.85) defines a discourse as ‘a differential ensemble of signifying sequences in which meaning is constantly renegotiated’. We are always already interpellated or hailed into discourses, as Althusser (1971) would say, as part of more or less stable, socio-culturally and historically situated flows of power in the Foucauldian sense in which,

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980, p.119)

Laclau and Mouffe visualise the social as a discursive field within which are disposed elements of both linguistic and material practice (Howarth, 2000). The identity of these elements is linked by difference in the same sense that language is structured by difference and hence it is the arrangement, or in Laclau and Mouffe’s terms, the articulation of these elements in relation to the discursive field that gives them meaning. Thus Howarth gives as an example a forest, the meaning of which depends on the arrangements of elements within the discursive field. ‘In discourses of economic modernization, trees may be understood as the disposable means for continued economic growth...In environmentalist discourses, by contrast, a forest might represent a viable ecosystem or an object of intrinsic value and beauty’

(Howarth, 2000, p.102); or indeed, in current discourse as a means to offset carbon emissions. Power inheres in the articulation of the elements of the discursive field and provides subject positions for identification.

Since the elements of the discursive field are related by difference, meaning is always unstable and discourses resist closure. A surplus of meaning therefore exists within the discursive field giving rise to 'a field of identities which never manage to be fully fixed' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p.111). As Mouffe (1992, p.2) says,

The social agent is constructed by a diversity of discourses among which there is no necessary relation but a constant movement of overdetermination and displacement. The 'identity' of such a multiple and contradictory subject is therefore always contingent and precarious, temporarily fixed at the intersection of those subject positions and dependent on specific forms of identification.

Laclau and Mouffe's theory provides an understanding of identity as the product of available subject positions within the discursive field. However, they also show how flows of power in the discursive arrangement create exclusionary spaces. If the discursive field contains surplus meanings which are not articulated into discourses, then these elements are excluded from hegemonic discourses and become unsayable.

In Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework, political forces attempt to impose closure and so achieve control, limiting subject positions for identification within discourse. In this way, the effect of power is to establish control in order to articulate the elements of the field in a particular way and hence to fix meaning around a 'nodal point', though this can only ever be partial. In Lacanian terms this nodal point is a *point-de-capiton*, a quilting point, 'a signifier which stops the otherwise endless movement of signification' (Lacan, quoted in Stavrakakis, 1999, p.59). The impossibility of complete closure renders the discursive field open to multiple meanings among competing discourses but hegemony is achieved when forces are able to articulate and stabilise the discursive field through 'articulating as many available elements – floating signifiers – as possible.' (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p.15). One way this can be achieved is through the formation of a 'chain of

equivalence', which dissolves the differences existing between signifying moments of the discursive field in order to create a united front which 'seeks to divide social space by condensing meanings around two antagonistic poles' (*ibid*, p.11). In education, an example of this is given by Qvarsebo's (2004) analysis of the abolition of corporal punishment in Swedish schools in the 1950s. Here he shows how a hegemonic formation aggregated around a nodal point centred on the language of psychology. This articulated two distinct discourses within the discursive field. One, promulgated by the Schools Commission, focused on discipline problems as psychological constructs 'which were viewed as being incompatible with the practice of physical punishment'. The other arising from the 1947 'Commission of Inquiry on School Discipline' centred on 'practical and instrumental language' and argued for the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment as a sanction, except as a last resort, and for more psychological guidance and support in school to provide effective means of discipline. The hegemonic articulation of these two positions within the discursive field occurred in such a way that subject positions for teaching professionals available for identification precluded adherence to corporal punishment. In this way, the nature of teacher professionalism was re-articulated.

In some instances, a relatively stable articulation of elements of the discursive field leads to a naturalisation or sedimentation of meaning, such that 'what is politically constructed is presented as normal or natural, and resistance is constructed as deviant, or unnatural' (Torfing, 1999, p.123). Certain discourses apparent in education are illustrative of this. Thus I have described (Watson, 2007) how ability has come to be viewed as a moral issue in schools: 'bright pupils' are morally acceptable while 'bottom sets' are seen as deviant. This idea is so pervasive that it is not questioned and new entrants to the profession rapidly construct and perform their identities around such practices. As Torfing (1999, p.123) notes, sedimentation of practices in this way conceals their political nature.

Laclau and Mouffe also discuss the concepts of social antagonism and dislocation as the means by which discursive articulations are disrupted and reformed in new ways to give new meanings. This draws on a notion of the positioning of the subject within

the discursive field and hence to notions of agency. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue that subjects both position themselves and are positioned by discourses, they refer to these twin aspects as political subjectivity and subject positioning respectively. Their analysis shows how this arises from the inherent inability of the discursive field to achieve fixity of meaning:

The category of subject is penetrated by the same ambiguous, incomplete and polysemical character which overdetermination assigns to every discursive identity. For this reason, the moment of closure of a discursive totality, which is not given at the 'objective' level of that totality, cannot be established at the level of a "meaning-giving subject", since the subjectivity of the agent is penetrated by the same precariousness and absence of suture apparent at any other point of the discursive totality of which it is part (*ibid*, p.121).

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) this lack of closure is posited as what leads to social antagonisms, seen as arising at the frontiers of discourses and which contest those discourses. However, in later analyses (Laclau, 1990, cited in Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2000) these antagonisms are themselves seen as discursive articulations which rupture hegemonic formations, leading to *dislocation*, a traumatic event in which the subject position identified with is put in crisis. It is this crisis however which makes new identifications possible,

If dislocations disrupt identities and discourses, they also create a lack at the level of meaning that stimulates new discursive constructions, which attempt to suture the dislocated structure. In short, it is the 'failure' of the structure...that 'compels' the subject to act, to assert anew its subjectivity' (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p.13).

Thus, Laclau and Mouffe provide a means for understanding how agency (referring to 'an intentionally acting subject' Torfing, 1999, p.137) can arise within discourse, so countering anxieties aroused by the implications of 'discourse determinism'. The solution to the problem of the relationship between on the one hand a fully determining structure (as posited by Marx) and on the other a fully rational and self-cognizant agent, is provided by the concept of dislocation:

The subject is internal to the structure, but the structure is dislocated by an event which cannot be domesticated by the structure. The dislocation of the discursive structure prevents the full structuration of the structure and also prevents the subject from being determined by the structure (Torfing 1999, p.149).

In this way, as Laclau says, dislocation enables temporality, possibility and freedom (Laclau 1990, p.41).

'Honey, I shrunk the grand theory'

Laclau and Mouffe's theories of discourse are generally applied at the level of political movements – how can they be put to use in analysis at the local level? Since the discursive field is conceived as a topological disposition of elements, highlighting the spatial nature of discourse as its visual metaphor, this creates the potential for examination at a microscopic level. Can we miniaturise Laclau and Mouffe, embarking on a *Fantastic Voyage* (Fleischer, 1966), putting them to work in the service of the local, in effect, looking for the global at the molecular level?

One way of doing this is through an examination of narratives of practice, looking at the meanings attached to concepts and their 'use-value' in terms of genre (Beebee, 1994). Looking for logics of equivalence and difference to see the patterns they make within the discursive field, the antagonistic poles, the points of dislocation. Looking, as Law (2003, p.6) suggests drawing on Leibniz' *Monadology*, for a complexly Baroque world of 'gardens within gardens and ponds within ponds' which 'resist[s] clarity, mastery and the single point of view' (MacLure, 2006, p.731).

In the next part of the paper I draw on these ideas to explore the methodological possibilities for an approach which offers a microanalysis of discourse. Using a narrative fragment taken from a series of interviews with beginning teachers, I build an improbable edifice for researching professional discourses, an edifice which may partially illuminate (i.e. partially obscure) tensions and proximities in interprofessional/interagency working - or rather, through a focusing back and forth

from global to local arriving at a sense of what is illuminated and what is obscured at different levels.

The discourse of 'need'

In this narrative fragment, two student teachers talk about their recent school experience placement. (This is part of a longer extract which is analysed in terms of the narrative construction of teacher identities in Watson, 2007).

Andrea: I'd have had, the first time they did something y'know, called you something I'd have had them out the room down to the support unit because that's just not – far as I'm concerned that's not on'. Um, so I sat through this class watching this lot and just thinking tchh yeah right (laughs) but y'know you can imagine how – y'know I think there's three classes like that that he has – and you can imagine that um that kind of experience could be very wearing um so

Jim: [Is it] inclusion?

Andrea: Well I don't think it was particularly ...that kind of problem I think these boys were doing it because they were being allowed to do it...

The narrative is generated within the current political discourse of social inclusion, itself part of the lingering Western global social imaginary of utopianism. The political discourse of 'social inclusion' has formed a hegemonic articulation, occupying the position of an unquestionable good in which education is seen as playing a central role. Thus, as Edwards *et al.* (2001, p.420) argue, policy on social inclusion suggests that inequality and exclusion can be overcome by 'better governance and service delivery...Such a view contradicts the idea that exclusion and inequality are generated by the economic mode of production'.

In school, a central element in the discourse of inclusion is need or lack and support provides the necessary scaffold to make good this deficit. In Scotland, the language of 'support' has supplanted that of 'special educational needs' as a move towards a more inclusive educational policy. The policy discourse ostensibly constructs children behaving problematically in school as in need of support rather than punishment, and this idea has been widely promulgated through the policy conduit by

means of documents such as *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* (SEED, 2001). The discourse of 'need' and 'support' is therefore a prevalent one in schools forming, under the umbrella of inclusion, a hegemonic articulation such that to be a professional within the current context requires an identification with this subject position within discourse. To adopt a different position would be to have one's identity as professional (partially) negated. But the way in which it is used in this narrative, ambiguously suggestive of a disciplinary measure, is indicative of a point of potential antagonism, which serves to undermine the discursive structure of inclusion in which 'support' is a signifying element. Andrea's narrative is antagonistic, reflecting a subject position for teachers which is at odds with, and potentially threatens rupture of, the hegemonic articulation surrounding inclusion and its attempts to impose closure. In order to extend the hegemonic articulation, the signifier 'support' has to be emptied of meaning, to become a signifier without a signified, in effect signifying a 'totality which is literally impossible' (Laclau, 2006, p.107). This uneasy alliance enables the teacher to enter into the would-be hegemonic discourse and take up a subject position within it, while at the same time introducing an element of instability into the structure, as a point of resistance. There is thus a tension or undecidability between the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence in the two positions, 'which of the two logics gains the upper hand in this hierarchy, and thus manages to assert itself as the predominant logic, depends on the political struggles over hegemony in this area' (Torfing, 1999, p.126).

To examine where this tension is coming from it is necessary to look at the competing discourses that teachers are positioned in and by. Whatever meaning Andrea attaches to the term 'support', it is clear that in the setting she is working in at least, it results in exclusion from class - i.e. support, whether this is constructed as punitive or therapeutic, takes place somewhere else. To this extent, it can be argued that there is a discursive articulation providing a subject position for teachers in which pupils presenting as behaviour problems are regarded as forming a constitutive outside to the discourse of schooling, from which they are thus to be literally excluded. The identity as teacher is negated by the presence of the undesirable other, and so through the relational nature of identity that is constituted in sameness and difference, 'every

identity is dislocated in so far as it depends on an outside which both denies that identity and provides the condition of possibility at the same time' (Laclau 1990, cited in Torfing, 1999, p.131). Pupils with challenging behaviour constitute an antagonistic force which is held responsible for the blockage of the teacher's full identity: 'As a result our political actions will tend to be guided by the illusion that the annihilation of the antagonistic force will permit us to become the fully constituted "we" that we have always sought to be' (Torfing, 1999, p.129). As Stavrakakis (1999, p.101) says, 'it is to the existence of this evil agent, which can easily be localised, that all persisting disorder is attributed'. There is an aporetic relationship between this simultaneous creation and denial of identity. For the teacher, the literal exclusion of the untameable other will result in the removal of the blockage which prevents full identification, yet it is the very presence of the other that determines our identity. This contest creates a mythic space for the development of teacher identity predicated on the ability to 'control' the other.

Within this mythic space support becomes an exclusionary practice, part of an apparatus in which 'pedagogical practices are inventions to make who the child is and is to become' (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2004, p.232). In the new policy discourse of 'additional support needs' and under the aegis of 'social inclusion' the notion of 'support' has been extended to embrace more and more children, giving rise to more and more difference which must be managed leading to 'a constant reiteration of exclusion' (Allan, 2006b, p.126). Paradoxically, the policy of inclusion with its mantra of 'all children' (no child left behind, every child matters, etc.) functions to further exclude those who cannot, in the words of *A Curriculum for Excellence (ACE)* (SEED, 2004), develop the capacity to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, as discursively constructed and defined by the state apparatus. A dark side of utopianism is inscribed in ACE, with its obverse focusing on the exclusion of children and young people who cannot be included in the mantra 'all children'.

At the local level then, the aporetic nature of the global discourse is reproduced in the ambivalent and ambiguous narrative. The instability in the discourse is revealed at

this local level while at the global level an attempt is made to impose closure and consensus. The impossibility of this only becomes apparent at the local level. The problematic construction of 'inclusion' is referenced by Jim's interjection as to whether the evident difficulties in this class stem from the policy of inclusion. Andrea replies that it is 'not that kind of problem'. Inclusion is thus constructed as problematic, at least for pupils seen as having bad behaviour. At the local or molecular level the policy discourse of inclusion is seen not to be about consensus and closure but about available positions – who is or is not worthy of inclusion. Thus, closure and consensus cannot be achieved because of the inherent instability in the discursive construction of 'support'.

Implications and possibilities

This narrative fragment serves to open up the possibilities for an examination of the discursive practices of teachers and the others they work with. The political moment is revealed in the microanalysis of discourse. By examining the ways and the contexts within which elements of the discursive field are used, the extent to which they are moments within the fluid mosaic structure of discourse, it may be possible to elaborate a topological structure in which tensions, overlaps, alliances, resistances can be articulated - in effect, creating a map of mythical spaces. Moreover, such a map may indicate the points at which dislocation of the structure can occur. Hegemonies are hegemonic precisely because they manage to persuade us that they are 'natural', but they cannot hegemonise completely, so this sedimentation is a fantasmatic illusion. There can be a 'de-fixation of meaning', 'the fixed topography vanishes into a fluctuating wave; land becomes liquid' (Marchart, 1997, p.5). We need therefore to examine and redefine the 'mythical spaces of the imaginary geographies of schools' (Hargreaves, 2002, p.196) as a prelude to bringing about change - to create new understandings of what interprofessional working could look like. What if it wasn't the clash of cultures which gives rise to a deficit model of interprofessional collaborative practice in a discourse which privileges consensus – what if discourse itself was recognised as being so inherently unstable as to prevent closure and consensus? Then we would need to construct new imaginaries – not based on a utopian illusion of consensus and perfect communication but on 'contested dissensus'

(Gunder, 2005, p.86) as a more appropriate - grown-up rather than joined-up - model for interprofessional practice. In *Futures* research scenarios have been seen as a way to analyse 'probable, possible and preferable' worlds (Börjeson *et al.*, 2006, p.725); Inayatullah (1998, p.815) suggests 'causal layered analysis' can be used as an approach which combines analysis at horizontal and vertical levels of discourse, in effect moving between the global and the local, in order to 'open up space for the articulation of constitutive discourses, which can then be shaped as scenarios' in order to create alternative futures. Microanalysis of narrative fragments potentially provides a useful means of examining discourse as part of this approach.

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INSTITUTIONAL CONDITIONS FOR INTER-PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: SOME THOUGHTS ON LOCAL AND GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

This ESRC seminar series has focused on service integration. The final seminar in the series addresses issues relating to global solutions. This particular paper is based on two assumptions: (1) service integration is not just a matter of structure and system, but of institutional culture and inter-professional relationship (and therefore of professional agency); (2) global solutions must take into full account the cultural, social and relational factors pertaining within specific national, regional and institutional contexts (and therefore be locally grounded). The argument is concerned primarily, not with the existing conditions of inter-professional relationships, but on hoped-for conditions that would have to be met for inter-professional relationships to aspire to what Aristotle referred to as 'virtuous friendship'. Such relationships, it is argued, constitute the social content of hope in that they look to new perspectives on institutional renewal and professional regeneration. They provide inter-professional spaces of learning within which professionals can begin to realise their functional capabilities. The question then arises as to the conditions necessary for generating and sustaining such relationships within and for a renewed civil society. It is that question which this paper seeks to introduce.

Introduction

Civil society is fragile, and it needs to be extended.
(Hall, 1995, p.27)

Hall was right to assert, in 1995, that civil society needed to be *extended*. It did, and it still does. Ten years later, however, the need to *deepen*, as well as extend, civil society seems equally urgent. Engagement, membership and participation comprise the depth dimension of civil society. This paper, with its emphasis on human relationship as a constitutive element of civil society, is centrally concerned with this dimension: what would institutions look like if they were managed upon the assumption that they are only ever as good as the relationships they sustain? How would we recognise such an institution if we saw it? How would we recognise the

kind of inter-personal and professional relationships that make such an institution possible? Wherein does their goodness lie? The paper addresses these kinds of questions with specific reference to the quality of professional relationships within and across institutions and organisational structures.

The assumption underlying such questions is that institutional well being is dependent not only on organisational structure, but also on the well being of the individuals involved and the quality and sustainability of the associations they form with one another (a point made by Shucksmith *et al.*, 2006, in their contribution to the first seminar in this Seminar Series). *Good* institutions are, from this perspective, constructed around *good* relationships that in turn are based upon the mutual recognition of equal worth and the reciprocity of trust that such recognition generates. Moreover, *good* institutions become *better* institutions through the growth of mutuality and reciprocity at the level of the inter-personal. The quality of civil association in any institution is, therefore, a significant indicator of the well being of the institution as a whole.

This is not an assumption with which many would disagree. Nor, however, is it an assumption that carries much weight among those responsible for the management of corporate institutions. In what Bauman (2001) characterises as these ‘times of disengagement’ (pp. 39-49), one counter assumption at least carries a much heavier punch: namely, that ‘power consists in decision-making and resides with those who make the decisions’ (p.40). Power, in other words, belongs to the managers. It is they who determine the organisational structures, which in turn frame the systems of institutional communication and deliberation, which then circumscribe the culture or ethos of the institution. ‘Persons in relation’, to draw on MacMurray’s (1961) terminology, somehow have to find a niche for themselves and one another in the spaces in between.¹

¹ McCartney (2006), in a paper delivered in the first seminar of this Seminar Series, provides a useful example of the prevalence of this way of thinking. By explicitly arguing for ‘good enough’ models of co-working (i.e. models that are ‘good enough’ relative to whatever structure is in place), she implicitly privileges institutional structure over professional relationship.

The question of terminology, of vocabulary, is crucial. The spaces in between can be imagined only through recourse to a way of talking about professional practice that somehow evades the dominant language of market-management. As McKibbin (2006, p.6), in his recent invective against what he sees as the ‘destruction of the public sphere’, points out:

We are familiar with the way this language has carried all before it. We must sit on the cusp, hope to be in the centre of excellence, dislike producer-dominated industries, wish for a multiplicity of providers, grovel to our line managers, even more to the senior management team, deliver outcomes downstream, provide choice. Our students are now clients, our patients and passengers customers.

This is a theme to which I return explicitly in the concluding paragraphs. However, it is implicit throughout the ensuing argument. The choice of ‘hope’, ‘friendship’ and ‘virtue’ as key terms in the development of that argument is both deliberate and *oppositional*. The paper is in part an attempt to highlight the need for developing an alternative language with which to rethink the quality of professional relationships (see Nixon, 2004a; 2004b) and to reconfigure those relationships within the context of inter-professional ways of working (see Nixon, Walker & Baron, 2002a; 2002b; Nixon, Allan & Mannion, 2001).

The social content of hope

Being good is difficult. The difficulty lies not just in the occasional lassitude of will towards goodness, but in contingent factors: the conditions underlying the well being of the self, of the institutions of which we are members, and of wider society. The moral project is not one which we can undertake alone or in isolation. Because of the nature of goodness – its dependence upon dispositions that can only be acquired in and through practice – we can only grow into goodness through our relationships with others. When those relationships fall apart, or become fraught, our goodness diminishes. We live in a world within which the experience of disintegration – the experience of falling apart, of being fraught – is integral to living. Coping with ‘not

being good' is, in other words, part and parcel of whatever 'becoming better' might mean. This, as Mantel (1990, p.79) puts it, is the *opus contra naturam*:

But everything that is going to be purified must first be corrupted; that is a principle of science and art. Everything that is to be put together must first be taken apart, everything that is to be made whole must first be broken into its constituent parts, its heat, its coldness, its dryness, its moisture... After separation, drying out, moistening, dissolving, coagulating, fermenting, comes purification, re-combination: the creation of substances that the world has until now never beheld. This is the *opus contra naturam*.

In order to set about that 'opus', we have to learn not only how to hope, but how to imbue our individual hopes with a sense of social purposefulness. Halpin (2003, p.60) argues that the notion of 'utopia' is a useful conceptual tool in setting about this task, because, as he puts it, utopianism 'has the potential to enable the personal experience of hopefulness to be interpreted in an explicitly social rather than just an individual way'. Utopianism provides us with the inter-personal, institutional, and social *content* of hope. Utopian thought enables us to imagine interpersonal and institutional structures as they might be. It helps us realise what is as yet emergent or even pre-emergent. In doing so it enables us to think against dominant and residual structures which constitute the blockage: to engage with the *opus contra naturam*.

'Utopia', as Bauman (2002) reminds us, 'refers to *topos* – a *place*'. Utopias were traditionally, as he puts it, 'associated with, and confined to, a clearly defined territory' (p.223). The utopias with which we are here concerned have no such fixity. They are imagined spaces which we have to reclaim and make together. Bauman is deeply pessimistic regarding the possibility of achieving utopia in this 'no-place, no-land, no-territory' of what he calls 'liquid modernity', within which newly emergent global elites pursue private and highly exclusive pathways to happiness (p.234). Counter to that pessimistic strain, this paper argues not only that community is still imaginable, but that imagining new forms of working together for the achievement of a better society is a moral imperative. It renders our claim to professionalism trustworthy and credible.

Conceived in this way, utopianism is not a flight from reality, but a means of radical engagement with reality. 'Hope alone', as Moltmann (1967, p.25) puts it, 'is to be called "realistic", because it alone takes seriously the possibilities with which reality is fraught. It does not take things as they happen to stand or lie, but as progressing, moving things with possibilities of change'. It is precisely because our experience of the world continually brings home to us the sheer contingency and unpredictability of human affairs that hope is essential: 'only as long as the world and the people in it are in a fragmented and experimental state which is not yet resolved, is there any sense in earthly hopes'.

Moltmann's notion of hope was developed within the context of a broader discussion of Christian eschatology, which informed the then still emergent tradition of liberation theology. (See, for example, Gutierrez, 1974.) However, that notion has profound implications for how within a post-metaphysical age we seek to sustain a sense of moral agency. There is, as MacMurray (1957) points out, a complex and crucial relation between our capacity to act in the world and our capacity to know that world; a sense in which, he argues, agency can only be exercised in a world that is unknowable:

In action we presuppose that we determine the world by our actions. The correlative of this freedom is that the world which we determine in action must be indeterminate, capable of being given a structure that it does not already possess. We can only know a determinate world; we can only act in an indeterminate world. Therefore, if we really do act, if our freedom of will is not an illusion, the world in which we act must be unknowable (p.55).

In his elaboration of this seeming paradox, in terms of 'the self as agent' and of 'persons in relation', MacMurray (1957; 1961) does not explicitly employ the concept of 'hope'. Nevertheless, his argument implies that agency, the capacity to act in an indeterminate and therefore unknowable world, is always reliant upon some human capacity that is not dissimilar to what Moltmann (1967) understands by hope. Action, involving as it always does some element of incalculable risk, is an expression of our hope that the risk factors are not entirely insurmountable. To lose that hope is to lose

our agency: either we give up on action, and thereby lose our agency through our inaction, or action gives up on us, in which case our agency dissolves into a generalised sense of fateful alienation.

The notion of 'virtuous friendship'

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle was clear that 'virtuous friendship' is founded on equality of attitude and belief insofar as these constitute the basis of virtue. He also acknowledged, however, that friendships differ in kind and quality. Indeed, Hutter (1978, p.115) goes so far as to suggest that 'what Aristotle seems to be saying is that if we understand the psychodynamics of friendship in the narrow sense, we thereby also understand the nature of other human associations. All human associations are forms of friendship, even if only imperfectly'. Friendship may, for example, be tactical and therefore provisional and conditional: a kind of strategic alliance based upon the mutuality of either self-interest or pleasure. Friendship, in either of these two senses, is a matter of being part of the club, part of the enclave. Pahl (2000, p.21) neatly summarises this set of distinctions in terms of 'friends of utility, friends of pleasure and friends of virtue'.

Much hinges on this set of distinctions, not least the notion of equality. 'Friends of utility' and 'friends of pleasure' are likely to be useful and pleasurable to one another precisely because of their economic and social commonalty: who has access to which influential networks; who can afford to dine out at which fashionable restaurants. However, 'friends of virtue', who may be diversely positioned in terms of their economic and social conditions, may still be useful and pleasurable to one another since the 'virtuous friendship' to which they aspire morally re-orientates 'the useful' and 'the pleasurable' towards 'the good': friendship, 'which has virtue as its base and aim is also pleasant and useful. It combines all three aims, since the good in character, when friends, also find each other's company pleasant and useful' (Hutter, 1978, p.108).

'Virtuous friendship', Aristotle maintained, is between equals who have their own and each others' best moral interests at heart. Such friendship is neither provisional nor instrumental, but unconditional in terms of what is good for oneself and the other: it is both inward-looking and outward-reaching. It is premised on the assumption that we become better people through the reciprocity afforded by our shared aspiration to help one another in doing so. That is why, as Pahl (2000, p.79) puts it, 'friends of virtue' are also 'friends of hope' and 'ultimately friends of communication': 'our friends who stimulate hope and invite change are concerned with deep understanding and knowing'. (See also Vernon, 2005.)

The notion of 'virtuous friendship', as referring to a kind of relationship that privileges the recognition of equal worth, is central to our understanding of the conditions of learning. Such relationships are a precondition not only of the deliberative process whereby we ascertain what constitutes right action for ourselves and others; they are also the means by which such processes endure and enjoy some albeit fragile security. They inform our agency, while at the same time providing us with relational structures within which to recognise the agency of others. Thus, as Stern-Gillet (1995, p.50) puts it, 'friendship plays a unique and crucial role in the noetic actualisation of moral agents'. What Aristotle understood by 'virtuous friendship' becomes a means of rethinking, from the bottom up, what we aspire to in terms of the institutional conditions of learning.

'Virtuous friendship' may, however, require closely guarded formalities to ensure that the principle of 'what is good for the other' is held in supreme regard. There are necessarily asymmetries in the relation between teacher and taught, and indeed between colleagues (with regard to knowledge of the field, breadth of experience, etc.). It is only by acknowledging those asymmetries that the relationship between teacher and taught, and on occasion colleagues, can begin to move towards the common ground that constitutes learning. In the context of any such relationship, 'virtuous friendship' is almost always an aspiration and very rarely an achieved state: what Hutter (1978, pp.104-105) calls 'a theoretical searchlight' or 'a guiding norm'

by which actual relationships can be evaluated.² It is a teleological concept which enables us to grasp, ontologically, the underlying purposefulness of the kind of relationship which Giddens (1993, p.194) characterises as 'pure' in its adherence to 'the imperative of free and open communication'.

Such a perspective suggests that history and narrative are significant components of 'virtuous friendship'; that time, in other words, is a crucial factor in the formation of such relationships. Over time some relationships involve the acquisition of what Hatt (2005, p.672) calls '*pathic* knowledge': knowledge, that is, of life as it presents itself to the other person in terms, not only of 'what is' and 'what has been', but of 'what might be'. 'Pathic understanding', as van Manen & Li (2002, p.219) put it, is 'not primarily gnostic, cognitive, intellectual, technical – but ... relational, situational, corporeal, temporal, actional'.³ 'Virtuous friendship' sustains, and is itself sustained by, that kind of understanding: an understanding of those imagined futures of which the present is always partially composed.⁴

Mediating between capacity and realization

Ricoeur (1992) argues that friendship, as conceived by Aristotle, helps put in place the conditions necessary for individuals to realise their capacities through the mediation of 'the other': 'the question is then whether the mediation of the other is not required along the route from capacity to realization'. It is, he suggests, 'just this

² This normative use of the notion of 'friendship' should perhaps be distinguished from its anthropological usage in studies of, for example, peer group relationships among young people. (See Epstein, 2002.) In both, however, there is a strong emphasis on friendship as *practice* or *activity*, as a way, that is, of *doing* relationship. Being friends is what Hey (2002) refers to as '(identity) work' (p.232) or 'friendship work' (p.234).

³ Hey (2002) 'speculates' that 'empathy is likely to be different for boys and girls. Feminine rapport ... seems always in process, mediated through the intensities of relational work as an ongoing fellow feeling for the other ... In contrast, what this friendship narrative shows is that fellow feeling for boys has a more "finished" quality, that boys at times "sign off". [For boys] friendship seems to result in a much more straightforward pleasure.' (p.236)

⁴ 'Pathic understanding' does not preclude disagreement (even strong disagreement on points of principle) between 'virtuous friends'. The notion of 'dissensus' that Mouffe (2004) sees as central to that of 'democratic citizenship' (and her particular model of 'agonistic' democracy) could also be applied to the notion of 'virtuous friendship'.

mediating role that is celebrated by Aristotle in his treatise on friendship' (p.181). Friendship, 'considered in its *intrinsic goodness and its basic pleasure*' (Ricoeur's emphasis), 'works toward establishing the conditions for the realization of life' (p.186). Another way of putting this, as suggested by 'the capability approach' to human development, is that the quality of our relationships is a major determining factor in enabling us to translate our innate capacities into functioning capabilities. (See Stewart, 2005, on 'groups and capabilities'.)

Sen (1999) links the notion of 'capability' to that of 'freedom': the freedom to exercise agency. Freedom, as he puts it, provides 'the expansion of the "capabilities" of persons to lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value' (p.18). Thus, he argues, while 'income inequality and economic equality are important' (p.108), a broader perspective is required 'on inequality and poverty in terms of capability deprivation' (p.109). Sen has unravelled from this premise a Nobel award-winning corpus focusing upon economic development within relatively disadvantaged localities. His argument, however, also has implications for the ways in which we might conceive of 'capability' at the level of individual and inter-personal development. Indeed, the potential inter-connectivity between the inter-personal and the systemic is one of Sen's major themes.

This line of argument is carried forward by Nussbaum (2000) in her elaboration of what she terms 'functional capabilities' (pp.78-80). Among these 'capabilities', which she sees as essential to human well being, Nussbaum privileges 'practical reason' and 'affiliation'. These two capabilities, she argues, are fundamental to our functioning as human beings:

To plan in one's own life without being able to do so in complex forms of discourse, concerns, and reciprocity with other human beings is ... to behave in an incompletely human way. To take just one example, work, to be a truly human mode of functioning, must involve the availability of both practical reason and affiliation. It must involve being able to behave as a thinking being, not just a cog in a machine; and it must be capable of being done with and toward others in a way that involves mutual recognition of humanity (p.82).

To make of work something other than alienated labour requires, then, the capabilities of 'practical reason' and 'affiliation'. What does this entail? Nussbaum defines 'practical reason' as 'being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's own life' (p.79). Work requires of the worker both a conception of the good and the capacity to apply that conception, through practical reasoning, to particular ends and purposes. So, for example, if I am a medical practitioner, I seek through practical reason to align my practice to the ends and purposes of healing; if I am a lawyer, I seek to align it to those of justice; if I am a teacher, to those of learning. Professional practice, insists Nussbaum, requires a sense of moral purposefulness on behalf of the practitioner. Through practical reason the practitioner meets this moral requirement; the moral requirement, that is, for practice to become morally purposeful and for purposes to be imbued with practical import.

To engage in practical reasoning, then, is to be concerned with both the design of means and the setting of final ends. Moreover, as Carr (2004, p.61) argues, the setting of the latter is inseparable from the design of the former: 'in practical reasoning, "ends" and "means" stand in reciprocal relationship such that reasoning about the "good" which constitutes the "end" of a practice is inseparable from reasoning about the action that constitutes the "means" for its achievement'. He goes on to argue that 'reasoning about "means" and reasoning about "ends" does not therefore involve reasoning "technically" about the former and "theoretically" about the latter'. They are, he concludes, 'two mutually constitutive elements within the single dialectical process of practical reasoning'. The value of each is dependent upon the value of the other.⁵

In defining 'affiliation' Nussbaum draws a distinction between, on the one hand, being 'able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that

⁵ This last point is spelt out by Frankfurt (2004, p.59), who, from a similar neo-Aristotelian perspective to that adopted by Carr, argues 'that final ends are instrumentally valuable just because they are terminally valuable, and that effective means to the attainment of final ends are intrinsically valuable just because of their instrumental value'.

situation; to have the capability for justice and friendship', and, on the other hand, of 'being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others; ... being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers' (pp.79-80). What emerges from this distinction is the importance of reciprocity: the way in which 'the capability for justice and friendship' is crucially dependent upon 'being able to be treated as a dignified human being whose worth is equal to that of others'. My capability for justice and friendship towards others is, in other words, dependent upon the capability of others for justice and friendship towards myself. The capability of 'affiliation', like that of 'practical reason', is fundamental because without it there is no way of ensuring that our other capabilities can become functional.

The distinction between capability and function is central to both Nussbaum's and Sen's argument. Functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve: functionings are more directly related to living conditions, since they are different aspects of living conditions; capabilities, in contrast, denote the opportunities we have regarding the life we may lead. Nussbaum (2000) claims that 'functionings, not simply capabilities, are what render life fully human, in the sense that if there were no functionings of any kind in a life, we could hardly applaud it, no matter what opportunities it contained' (p.87). Nevertheless, she goes on to argue, citizens must be left to determine what they make of the capabilities that are granted them: 'the person with plenty of food may always choose to fast, but there is a great difference between fasting and starving'. Capabilities are 'opportunities for functioning' (p.88), but do not predetermine that functioning. Indeed, the predetermination of function runs the risk of denying the capability of which it purports to be an expression: 'play is not play if it is enforced, love is not love if it is commanded'. Playing, loving and, we might add, learning rely unconditionally upon the agency of those who choose to play, love and learn.

Relationships of virtue depend upon, and at the same time help sustain, the capabilities of 'practical reason' and 'affiliation'. They provide the social space

within which we can think together about ends and purposes and about the practices and organisational structures that carry forward those ends and purposes. If relationships are to have these beneficial effects, however, they must not only foster capability but also ensure that capability leads to functioning; leads, that is, to actions that are benign in respect of the individual and of the institution. In such relationships neither party would assume that he or she knows what's best for the other. The purpose of such relationships would be to help the other make the hard choices as to how best to maximise 'opportunities for functioning' and how best to translate those opportunities, or capabilities, into fully functioning, flourishing lives.

The conditions for 'virtuous friendship'

The development of ourselves as moral agents is premised on specific human capabilities, the denial of which relegates utopia to the 'no-place, no-land, no-territory' of Bauman's (2002) bleak vision of 'liquid modernity'. The 'capabilities approach', as advanced by Nussbaum (2000) and Sen (1999), enables us to be more specific as to what constitutes the necessary core of relevant capabilities and as to how capability relates to function. It brings us a little closer, that is, to understanding how we might give back to utopia a place, a land, a territory, within the deeply stratified institutional contexts within which we work. 'Virtuous friendship' may be an unrealised ideal, but it is an ideal implicit in those working relationships wherein we aspire to virtue through shared professional practice.

Questions then arise as to what professional relationships would look like if they were modelled on the notion of 'virtuous friendship': what, as professionals working within inter-professional contexts, would we *do* if we were serious about attaining the conditions necessary for 'virtuous friendship'? How would we begin to fulfil the conditions necessary for mutuality and reciprocity, for trust and the recognition of equal worth, for a shared sense of purposefulness? How would we redefine our professional identities in the light of these moral imperatives?

1. We might start by acknowledging the deeply corrosive effects of current patterns of work and the unequal distribution of those effects across the workplace. Sennett (1999) shows how the steadily increasing insecurity experienced by workers is making it impossible for many to achieve a sense of moral agency. Moreover, he argues, it is those very elements of the post-Fordist working environment that are deemed to be worker friendly – flexibility, team work, specialisation – that are in fact creating the insecurities. They are doing so, he claims, through their re-engineering of time whereby there is an increasing reliance on, for example, worker mobility, part-time and casual contracts, and entrepreneurialism.
2. We might find ways of becoming more responsive to the differing circumstances of colleagues – within and across professional groups – that render the personal management of time difficult and sometimes chronically crisis-ridden. Pahl (1995) has shown how anxiety is invariably attendant upon success; but the successful very often have the option, or privilege, of living their lives in such a way that the contingent factors that engender anxiety are carefully managed through life style and life choices. The less successful may make other principled choices or simply not have the options open to them: other commitments impinge on the resources of time that the more successful choose – or feel themselves driven – to allocate to work.
3. We would require of ourselves and others that we take responsibility for the positional power invested in us. The 'flatter' organisational structures associated with post-Fordist work regimes render power more diffuse and therefore more difficult to locate. One's own power is thereby that much easier to deny. To deny one's own positional power, however, is to disempower those over whom one ought rightly to be exercising authority. This task becomes that much more difficult when it involves relationships across professional groups whose perceived status may differ significantly. 'Virtuous friendships', in other words, would be equal relationships precisely because

they would involve a shared understanding regarding power differentials and a shared dialogue regarding how those differentials might be put to good use.

4. We would acknowledge that even, or perhaps especially, relationships that aspire to 'virtuous friendship' must respect the competing priorities and pressures acting upon those involved in that relationship. Within the context of 'virtuous friendship' we would acknowledge the agency of the other. We would resist the urge to possess or take over the other, to impose our views on the other, or to make unreasonable claims on the other. With the best of intentions we can sometimes create a culture of dependency, or even oppression, through our failure to recognise and respect boundaries. Without that recognition and respect relationships cannot aspire to 'virtuous friendship'. They remain locked in paternalistic modes of thinking and feeling.
5. Finally, we would acknowledge the diverse professional trajectories to which we are committed and find ways of sustaining one another in pursuing those diverse trajectories. The complex nature of inter-professional practice means that as practitioners we are constantly negotiating a professional identity for ourselves in relation to our specific responsibilities. Becoming a professional involves combining these activities in ways that play to our own strengths and that recognise the priorities of the particular institutions within which we work. Professional identity does not come ready made. It involves the struggle for authenticity and, as such, has to be constructed.

Conclusion

The argument developed in this paper is only one part of a necessary and long overdue response to a broad set of concerns regarding the systematic diminution of the public sphere. This diminution is not an inevitable result of the way things are, but is the outcome of a dominant ideology of market-managerialism. The most powerful weapon of that ideology has been its reductionist language. 'It is a

language', to return to McKibbin (2006, p.6), 'which was first devised in business schools, then broke into government and now infests all institutions'. He continues:

It purports to be neutral: thus all procedures must be 'transparent' and 'robust', everyone 'accountable'. It is hard-nosed but successful because the private sector on which it is based is hard-nosed and successful. It is efficient; it abhors waste; it provides all the answers... The language might be laughable, but it is now the language shared by all those who command, Labour or Conservative, and is one way they wield power.

Implicit in this invective is the need to mine an alternative, and indeed oppositional, language from the cultural and historical resources available: what Taylor (2004) terms 'social imaginaries'. 'Hope', 'friendship', and 'virtue' are some of the linguistic resources that this paper has drawn on to set about that task.⁶ The idea is neither to deny the current ideological impasse, nor necessarily to confront it head on, but to begin to build locally, at precise points and within specific sectors, the institutional conditions necessary for sustaining alternative ways of being together in the world and of working together for better global futures.

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⁶ Allan (2006), in her contribution to the first seminar of this Seminar Series, draws on a different set of linguistic and conceptual resources to set about a not entirely dissimilar task (the task, that is, of finding alternative ways of thinking, talking about, and doing what she terms 'interprofessional practice').

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