Jonathan Livingstone, I Presume: Teaching as a 'High-Flying' Profession.

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ABSTRACT:

This paper points to a new discursive order in teacher education policy and professional development practice which is actively producing teachers as 'corporatising' professionals. The authors note certain rhetoric shifts in Australian teacher education policy which, they argue, constitute quite a radical departure from notions of the professional worker which proliferated less than a decade ago. Drawing on Foucauldian notions of the discursive nature of knowledge and identity formation, they discuss the implications of this rhetorical shift in terms of its impact on the 'professional' identity of the teacher.

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When you reflect on your identity as a teacher, do you ever wonder if you are Ollie the Head-in-the-sand Ostrich or Dan the Drilling Woodpecker or Laura the Look-alike Penguin? Perhaps you think of yourself as transcending all these lowly creatures, a high flyer like Cathy the Carrier Pigeon or even Jonathan Livingstone Seagull? Then again you may find these descriptors trite, patronising and of dubious relevance to the profession of teaching, (and probably written by someone approaching fifty, given the J. L. Seagull's reputation as a somewhat faded hippie). If the latter, then you are not alone. When these descriptors of professional 'types' were read out at a recent seminar for teachers and teacher educators, the reaction from many was disbelief, laughter and derision.

The 'types' are named in *Designing Professional Portfolios for Change* (1997), a cutting-edge professional development manual in which author Kay Burke invites teachers "to become full partners in a continuous improvement process" (Burke, 1997: Forward) of professional development. As a professional development consultant, Kay Burke wants to provide a mode of teacher development that is "personalised, allowing choice and encouraging reflection" (Burke, 1997: 1). The above-named typologies are part of her strategy for facilitating professional teacher development as "self-reflection". In keeping with the thrust of professional development more generally, Burke seeks to move teachers away from the 'wrong sort' of investment in formal study programs and other 'top-down' or imposed activities, towards the 'right sort' of emphasis on investigative strategies and reflective practices enacted in the context of the workplace.

If the 'feathered friend' images appear trite, the aim is nevertheless serious and ambitious - to transform teachers by transforming our way of thinking about the notion of professional development itself:

> Our society can no longer accept the hit-or-miss hiring, the sink-or-swim induction, trial-and-error teaching, and take-it-or-leave-it professional development it has tolerated in the past. (Bradley, cited in Burke, 1997: 2)

Within this broad imperative, Dan, Laura, Cathy, Jonathan and other personified poultry have a key role in the fight against unprofessionalism in all its forms. They are part of a professional self-development agenda we are coming to recognise as 'best practice'.

If best practice is able to be identified as such by consultants, policymakers and bureaucrats, how is it possible that experienced teacher educators did not recognise its presence nor value its contribution to the new and exciting agenda called 'excellence in teaching'? In what follows, we attempt to account for this apparent anomaly, by locating the professional development-meets-teacher educators disjunctive moment within an analysis of teacher education as a set of practices which are being significantly reinvented in recent times. Could it be that teacher educators have fallen behind the times? Or is it perhaps that the Kay Burke model of professional development doesn't get best practice right? Or even that best practice doesn't get *teaching* right?

We suggest that there are more useful ways of proceeding than attempting to answer the questions posed above, given that all of them move us too quickly to a ready-made conspiracy theory on behalf of one set of interests or another. We argue that a more

useful alternative is to understand better the discursive conditions within which *Designing Professional Portfolios is* constituted as a 'proper' professional development agenda for Australian teachers in the late 1990s, by making those very conditions strange or unnatural. To understand the nature of teacher development this way is to think of all 'good' programs as working within a set of discursive rules through which certain propositions come to count as true, rather than working in some more universally ethical way. Despite the promise inherent in the words 'best practice', there is no possibility that 'good teaching' can be a final solution or a point of arrival. As teachers we are free to develop ourselves as professionals but only inasmuch as we draw on ideas which count as true in our historical time and place, and these will continue to change.

In asserting this relativist position, we draw on the theoretical and genealogical work of Michel Foucault. In *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality Volume 2* (1984), Foucault indicates the usefulness of scholarly analyses which treat knowledge practices as "games of truth" rather than a search for truth itself (p. 6). This means that he does not understand human experience as naturally occurring, or as occurring through rational or true fields of learning. Instead, experience is historically constituted out of games of truth and error. This is how we come to believe that "something...can and must be thought" (p. 7). All truth claims are textual in origin, but some are able to become more powerful or resilient or useful than others as they take their place within the "regime of truth"[1] of a society at a particular historical time. As Steven Ward (1996) argues, drawing on Bruno Latour, "a statement must plug into others in order to become true...but one [also] must be plugged in to the network of the truthful" (p. 6).

Our interest, then, is how we have come to think that as teachers we are 'properly'

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[1] Foucault (1980:131) elaborates on the concept of a regime of truth thus:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.

professional when we engage in a continuous improvement process involving personal, choice-making, self-reflecting activities with or without the help of feathered friends. To do this work, we interrogate recent policy imperatives for ‘developing’ teachers as part of a game of truth and error about teaching, noting how the discursive conditions for 'producing' professional teachers have changed in very recent times. Our intention is not to bemoan the passing of an old discursive order, nor to see current change as part of march of progress. Rather, it is to show how manuals like *Designing Professional Portfolios for Change* now fit within the parameters of ‘proper’ teacher training in a way that was unthinkable even a decade ago.

Teaching and Professionalism

To begin, we must acknowledge that efforts to ensure that teachers be ‘professional’, and be regarded as such, are no recent phenomenon. Many postwar initiatives of this type were undertaken by teachers associations hoping to improve the status of teachers *as a profession*. They met with little success, given that, in the broad scheme of things, teachers continued to be unable to claim either the exclusiveness of a self-regulating enclave nor the high remuneration that normally attends such carefully self-governing elites. We do not intend to elaborate here well-rehearsed debates around the ambiguous status of teachers in relation to other capital ‘p’ professions, merely to point out that the lip-service paid to the importance of educating the mental and moral capacities of the young (and not so young) has never seemed to translate into capital of the economic or cultural kind. This is so despite some attempts to create career paths within teaching and a few low-budget public relations initiatives - for example, a batch of bumper stickers that announce: “If you can read this, thank a teacher”. Like nurses and mothers, teachers have claimed to the high moral ground of a civic duty of care, but this has never amounts to anything more than swampland, come pay day.

What we will do in the analysis that follows is explore developments in teaching as a small ‘p’ profession by examining teacher identity as a discursive production - that is, as an identity arising our of particular systems of language use that vary over time. We are arguing here that a different discursive order of language is currently at work to invite teachers to self-shape as professionals in line with current orthodoxies in corporate contexts. This different discursive order is apparent in recent shifts in policy discourse related to the professional development of teachers or what used to be called pre- and inservice teacher education. This discursive order is made apparent not just in documents like *Designing Professional Portfolios for Change* (1997), but in official teacher education policy documentation such as *The Report of the National Standards and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Project—Preparing a Profession* (Australian Council of Deans of Education [ACDE], 1998).

This most recent policy initiative in teacher education, *Preparing a Profession* (ACDE,1998), is a key installment in what has been longer policy story about the professionalisation of teachers in Australian education. While strong traces of this motif in teacher preparation can be seen in particularly federal policy reports as early as the 1960s, it would be a mistake to see this latest policy endeavour as part of a coherent tale in the ‘development’ of teacher professionalism. Some traces of earlier

understandings of ‘professional’ are certainly still present, but it is more fruitful to view the policy history of teacher professionalism as a series of vignettes which owe more to particular historical and disciplinary locations than to some overarching narrative logic. Present policy initiatives constitute a new ‘take’ on the professionalisation of teachers. *Preparing a Profession*, for instance, is qualitatively different from previous policy episodes in that it is about ‘producing’ teachers who can *work on themselves as professionals*.

Federal policy initiatives in the past have worked out of the logic that professional teachers are to be made, and made by governments—an approach that reached its apogee in the workerist discourse of the Ebbeck Report into teacher education in 1990. Within a decade, however, governments have become *buyers* of professional services; they are no longer patrons. As buyers, they are less involved in the process of direct regulation and more interested in what is produced (educational outcomes) when teachers regulate themselves in their students’ interests. Not only is this a less expensive option for any government, but it allows educational decision makers to exercise new options in the educational marketplace.

Perhaps one of the earliest moves by government to ‘make’ the teacher ‘professional’ was the shift in teacher education programs early this century from teacher training schools (and the more infamous pupil-teacher apprenticeship system) to teacher training colleges. The ‘college’ designation, suggestive of higher education, was part of a drive to raise the quality of general education at the time. However, for all its promise, teacher education in the colleges remained vocational in orientation and character, as Hyams (1980, p.251) points out:

> The colleges concentrated much more on the vocational aspects of preparation, and in some cases...even reduced the training course to one year in length. The inevitable result of a myriad of topics in a crowded timetable was superficiality of treatment.

Nevertheless, the persistance of this level of provision of teacher education suggests that it suited, in some key respects, the infrastructural needs of the state before and during the middle decades of this century.

It was not until 1964 that teacher education again received attention—this time from a federal government focused on the quality of teacher education as part of a more general enquiry into higher education in Australia. The Martin Report (Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia [CFTEA], 1964) into the future of tertiary education in Australia represented a watershed moment in higher education, and in the education of teachers. The aim, clearly, was to bring about a qualitative change in teacher education--a change that could be characterised as ‘professional’ in orientation. While the Menzies’ government rejected the federal funding of teachers colleges—thus seeming to dash proposals for their autonomy or for a minimum level credential—it was only a matter of a few years before government and relevant authorities had departed from this decision. By the early 1970s, state government employing authorities were relinquishing direct control over teachers colleges in return for federal funding. Meanwhile, teacher education also was being included in

the programs of newly emerging Colleges of Advanced Education.

In 1973, federal government policy effort once again turned to teacher education, and to shaping a different conception of the teacher, as part of a program to enhance the quality of education more generally. In contemporary terms, the teacher was becoming a more 'professional' entity, in the sense of being a worker in a field that was the focus of much official attention—education. If education was to be more important, so too were its workers. A more educated and autonomous teacher was the policy vision.

One flow-on effect of any heightened interest in 'upgrading' teachers and schooling is heightened criticism of current practices and personnel. The report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission [ICASC], *Schools in Australia* (ICASC, 1973), was concerned about what it saw as serious deficiencies in Australia's schools in the face of social and educational change (p. 139). A "quality of education [which] leaves much to be desired" (ICASC, p. 139) directed the Committee's attention to teacher education at both the preservice and in-service stages. Preservice teachers, the report argues, "have a limited understanding of the relevance of theoretical disciplines by which practical decisions are made" (p.119). Furthermore, in a line reminiscent of the Cat Stevens' song of the period, 'Father and Son', the report suggests that: 'these people [are not] yet aware of the questions to which they need to find answers or of the real world limitations with which idealism must learn to live if it is to have practical outcomes" (p. 119). In-service teacher education, meanwhile, was urged to move beyond employer-sponsored conferences and courses because they were considered:

> too short and insufficiently searching in their theoretical content to increase [the teacher's] capacity to consider rationally alternatives on his own initiative and because they are often someone else's diagnosis of what [the teacher] requires. (p.120).

Within its pages, the report aimed to produce a teacher who was better trained, better inserviced, with a "more sensitive relationship with pupils", one who could "team teach", "share experiences, establish areas of common concern and plan a cooperative attack on problems" (p.119). In short, *Schools in Australia* was attempting to produce a much more autonomous and better educated policy conception of the teacher than previous policy initiatives. The teacher was now to be professionally 'developed' through a broader curriculum built around the notion of the teacher as a "competent practitioner" (p. 120).

It was not until the next federal policy statement on teacher education, the *Report of the National Enquiry into Teacher Education* -- the 'Auchmuty Report' (Auchmuty, 1980) -- that the term 'professional' was used with more purpose, even though, ironically, the production of this professional was more prescriptive, even formulaic. The Auchmuty Report was the first substantial Federal report into teacher education and is as comprehensive as any report in this area to date. Concerned, once again, with the "quality of education" (p.49) and with "questions of quality rather than quantity in teacher education" (p. 2), the report examines, in considerable depth,

preservice teacher education, teacher induction and in-service teacher education as well as teacher educators and their institutions, and research in teacher education more generally. The Report described the ideal teacher as one who 'is in close touch with contemporary thought and action....is socially conscious, alert to and aware of intellectual trends and [who] is capable of flexibility, initiative and creativity' (p.45). It then suggested how this may be achieved through selection and teacher education.

The idea that professionals are not simply to be developed, but developed 'continuously' is an important discursive shift made in Auchmuty. The report stressed that teacher education ought to be viewed as a continuous process of professional development (p. 113). In its examination of the teacher and teaching, it identified ideal personal and professional characteristics of both the teacher and "teacher-to-be" (pp. 49-67). In this way, the report actually sets out a prescription for governments and other authorities to 'make' the professional teacher through 'regulating' professional development. For the report, the government's role in this is as patron: the particular version of the teacher as professional being made here commenced with the report's recommendation of a core curriculum at the preservice level and continue with a specified program of personal and professional development. It is clear that, by the mid-1980s, government was subjecting teacher education to even tighter policy control as concerns with managing the economy became more widespread.

It was not until 1985 that a continuum of positions was suggested for teachers in line with the logic of professionalisation as a process of continuous improvement. The Quality of Education Review Committee (QERC) (1985) argued for the creation of a special promotional position, the "master teacher" (QERC, p.123) which was to emerge a number of years later in its more industrial guise as the 'Advanced Skills Teacher'. Meanwhile, the report argued that the status and reputation of teaching as a career were to be raised by education authorities, governments and even the profession itself (QERC, p.130). Significantly, against the self-regulating logic of *Preparing a Profession* (1998), the report forecast an increasingly interventionist and direct role for government in the making of the new professional:

> The Commonwealth has played little part in shaping the content of pre-service teacher education courses, although if funds all such courses....From the Committee's perspective, pre-service teacher education can undoubtedly be improved and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission should give active leadership forthwith to that end. However, for the next five to ten years, the priority should lie with in-service education. (QERC, p.125)

This logic was maintained throughout the late 1980s[2]. Throughout this period, the

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2 During this time, the release of a specific report into teacher education, *Improving Teacher Education*, by the Joint Review of Teacher Education (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and Commonwealth Schools Commission [CTEC/CSC], 1986), saw Commonwealth priority extended to pre-service and post-experience teacher education as part of a "greater co-ordination of the national effort" (p.63).

entire Australian higher education system was radically restructured from a binary system to a unified national system which saw the reconstitution of the Colleges of Advanced Education as universities. Teacher education had now entered university but proposals for its course were, ironically, becoming as narrow as in the Teachers Colleges of the majority of this century. The professional identity being produced for teachers at this juncture was ‘industrial’ and ‘workerist’ in its form and content yet ‘more professional’ inasmuch as teachers were now university graduates.

It is the 1990 Australian Education Council commissioned report, *Teacher Education in Australia* (Ebbeck, 1990) which can be seen as the strongest and clearest instance of the attempt by government to actively make the teacher as professional worker. The report argued that teachers ‘must be provided with planned opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge within a structured career’ (Ebbeck, 1990: v). Special supervisory positions (p.42), including that of the Advanced Skills Teacher, were advocated in the new hierarchy of teacher work being produced. Importantly, there was a clear attempt to supplant the ‘adversarial relationship between governments and the profession over pay and conditions’ (p.17) with the idea of ‘partnership’. In order to ‘marry’ the idea of partnership and the creation of new hierarchies, much is made of the ‘esteem in which a well-qualified and conscientious teacher is held’ (p.17). What new status is to be accorded the professional teacher would be more likely to be experienced as moral credit than better pay and conditions.

The Ebbeck Report was one of a number of teacher professionalisation policy initiatives which proliferated at the turn of the decade. One such initiative, *The Shape of Teacher Education: Some Proposals* (Ramsey, 1990) attempted compromise with resistant bodies (e.g., Deans of Education faculties) while still retaining government directed professionalisation. National teacher registration and a national professional body for teachers were still on the agenda[3]. As professionals, teachers were to act collectively around national agendas rather than seeing themselves as individuals operating within classroom walls.

In late 1992, the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET)

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3 The outcome was the establishment, by the AEC, of the National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) (1991-1993) which carried out further work in the areas of teacher competencies and a National Teaching Council (later to become the Australian Teaching Council, but now defunct).

released *Teacher Education: A Discussion Paper* (DEET, 1992) to 'encourage teacher educators to reassess the relevance of their preservice and professional development programs' (DEET, 1992, Introduction) in the face of the 'rapidly changing context within which teachers work' (Introduction). A highly provocative document which referred to the ' "over forty" bulge in the age distribution of academic staff'(greater in education faculties) (p.11-12) and the 'obsolescent teaching experience' of teacher educators (p.13), this DEET discussion paper reflected the impatience of a department which had not yet successfully mobilised teachers around its national collective vision. Some four months later, in January 1993, the Employment, Education and Training minister, Kim Beazley, released his Ministerial Statement on Australia's teachers, *Teaching Counts* (Beazley, 1993), which, while more conciliatory in its tone, nevertheless retained the general direction of the DEET discussion paper and, indeed, the direction of teacher education policy for most of the previous decade in terms of the desire of government to be actively involved in making the professional teacher.

From Regulation to Self-regulation

Governments do not simply 'let go' power to regulate the lives of all their citizens, including teachers. Instead, governments may opt to steer at a distance by making new modes of thinking and speaking possible through which individuals can work on themselves. What we are drawing attention to is one example of this, ie, the way recent federal government policy in Australia is forging a new relationship with teachers as professionals through a different discursive organisation of the professional teacher being made available in policy. This new relationship is produced by framing of the professional teacher as personally responsible for developing generic "graduate attributes" (ACDE, 1998) many of which transcend the traditional work of teaching as an occupation. The quality of these attributes is presumed to be implicit in educational outcomes that are available to be purchased by governing bodies. Instead of making the teacher (and being responsible for the quality of schooling across the nation), governments buy teacher services *if and when they are regarded as sufficiently professional*.

As a prelude to the development of this new relationship between government and teacher, a number of initiatives worked as invitations to a new dialogue between policy makers and 'professionals'. These began to rework the logic away from the Karmel-ite question 'What will the government provide?' to the more enterprise-driven issue of 'What are teachers preapred to do for themselves to meet quality standards?' In 1994, for instance, it was the Australian Teaching Council (ATC) which released a paper on teacher education entitled *What do Teachers Think?* (ATC, 1994) while in 1995 the Australian Council of Deans of Education released the *Draft National Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education* (ACDE, 1995). The government, meanwhile, was establishing the 'Chalk Circle Dialogue on Teacher Education' participated in by the ACDE (who provided the chair), the education unions, the ATC, employers and universities.

It is, however, *Preparing a Profession* (ACDE, 1998) which signals the embryonic production of a generic professional identity for teachers to inhabit and to shape for

themselves. While this ‘self-shaping’ still draws on competency discourse, it is increasingly a production of the corporate domain.

Corporate Make-over

The discursive organisation of teaching as articulated in *Preparing a Profession* (1998) has much in common with that evidenced in glossy brochures and ‘professional growth and development’ programs appearing under the rubric of ‘best practice’. According to this corporatising version of the professional pedagogue, teachers now have at their disposal the means to throw off the dreary attire of the unrecognised and unappreciated drudge, and dress themselves instead in the smart livery of the corporate *professional*, newly inspired, as dynamic and enterprising individuals, to implement standards of educational excellence in the *business* of schooling. For example, according to *Preparing a Profession*, it would seem that ‘pre-service teacher education’ is out and “quality induction” (p. 8) is in. ‘Greatness’ is out and “professional endorsed best practice” (p. 2) is in. ‘Occupational work’ is out; “responsibly constructed professional” service (p. 2) is in. ‘Equity’ and ‘social justice’ have been somewhat overtaken by the words “encouraging diversity” (p. 11). The document does not jettison all the traditional vocabularies -- for example, we are still to see value in “integration of theory and practice” (p. 23) and in “critical reflection” (p. 14). However “critical reflection”, like professional development, must now be “on-going” (p. 14) if it is to count as “fully responsible professional practice” (p. 8).

It is clear that a new language sytem is coming to inform teacher education -- one that invites us, indeed wills us, to speak the ‘good teacher’ differently. We want to stress that the new ways of speaking that are becoming apparent in *Preparing a Profession* and similar documents are *bringing a new teacher into being*. A new linguistic order is making it possible to think, speak, and therefore ‘develop’ the teacher as self-regulating professionals, personally responsible for their own “lifelong learning” (p. 9), during and after its “quality induction” phase, and all this is in line with rhetorics that have become quite familiar now in the corporate sector.

As corporatising professionals, teachers are now to focus on enhancing the learning outcomes of students as clients/customers “in a rapidly changing, culturally diverse, ambiguous and perplexing world” (Education Queensland Centre for Teaching Excellence, Website: 1). But they must do more than this. The entrepreneurial imperative that informs corporate strategy worldwide demands that increasing attention be paid to commercial operations, including the patenting and marketing of new educational materials and technology, contract consultancy, devising and running staff and community development programs, measurement and testing, project management, leasing facilities, public relations expertise, and so on. Thus the professional teacher needs “a comprehensive array of qualities” (p. 1) that transcend those of the classroom hack, and all in context of diminishing government funding.

Given this ‘more for less’ professional development agenda, and the power of corporate ideas to mobilise change in the nature of educational work, it is little wonder that we have seen evidence of significant commercial activity in government schools in recent

years[4]. While non-government schools have been "enlisting the services of the big guns in marketing and public relations...in the face of fierce competition in the marketplace" (*Sunday Mail*, 28 November, 1993: 48), "cash-strapped" government schools have been "turning towards corporate sponsors to help make ends meet" (*The Weekend Australian*, Feb 12-13, 1995: 7). Likewise, universities have "adopt(ed) corporate strategy" (Maslen, 1997: 1) as a response to federal government budget cuts and the imperative to prioritise "market-driven responsiveness" (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992: 33) that is so characteristic of enterprising commercial sectors everywhere.

Such developments are in line with a broader imperative to corporatise Western institutions and organisations by means of fostering within them *active,* outward-looking cultural practices. This has seen the reconfiguration of many western institutions "in a period of generalised crisis in relation to all environments of enclosure" (Peters, 1997:17), with the corporate make-over of learning institutions being one manifestation of this imperative. Given that the very notion of foundational knowledge has been undermined by the idea that both education and training are of necessity 'perpetual', and therefore learning must be 'life-long', there can be no compelling rationale for schools or universities to insist that their purposes or clientele should remain traditional.

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[4] According to Simon Marginson (1996), the private school market is becoming normalised as *the* model for all schooling in Australia, and thus public schools are under increasing pressure to take more and more accountability for their own funding. Marginson, expresses his concerns that the trend to privatisation of education could spell the end of resource equality between our Australia's two schooling systems, and, indeed, the end of free education as an ideal. He sees heightened commercialisation, performance measurement and competition in schools as weakening of the scope of system-wide political resistance from teacher unions, parent organisations and other lobby groups.

The industrial school is now being made over. According to Deleuze:

> [J]ust as the corporation replaces the factory, perpetual training tends to replace the school, and continuous control to replace the examination. Which is the surest way of delivering the school over to the corporation. (1992, cited in Peters, 1997: 4-5)

The corporate school demands a new spirit of outreach - of enterprise - from teachers, and offers in return new possibilities for recognition, and in some cases, even better remuneration. Enterprising teachers are characterised by their ability to transcend the boundedness of their classroom and the erstwhile parochialism of the conventional school community, and engage new audiences, including new potential sponsors of educational projects. As corporate professionals, teachers move from their backroom location into new relationships with new publics. At last they can take their rightful place in the shopfront of the educational enterprise! They will have nothing to fear from the increased surveillance this will bring, because they have already taken *professional* responsibility for their own actions. Their capacity for self-scrutiny as pedagogical leaders and managers will be so well developed, and their understanding of ‘quality service’ so much enhanced, that they will welcome all the newcomers that are now packing into the pedagogical shop - parents, community, business people, policymakers - as ‘partners for excellence’, the phrase which, not coincidentally, is the title of the Strategic Plan 1997-2001 for *Education Queensland.*

Teachers at all levels are being hailed to see themselves in this vision of an ideal future for pedagogical work. From pre-school to postgraduate, teachers are now invited to ‘develop’ themselves as professionals through an unprecedented array of policy initiatives, in-service workshops and course offerings, many of which draw more heavily on disciplines, research and practices located outside the traditional educational disciplines. Stress management, budgeting, or physical fitness are becoming just as relevant to the profile of the corporatising teacher as the updating of formal credentials.

In the context of constant and accelerated change, so the logic goes, ‘professional development’ must always an unfinished project, but one in which one is always growing and progressing. There is no possibility here of regress, despite the cautions of those like Shoshona Felman who argue that learning always involves ‘breakthroughs, leaps, discontinuities, regressions, and deferred action’ (Felman, 1982: 27). Learning is framed as always compelling us upward and forward to that new vision of excellence which has come to stand as ‘best practice’ in the logic of our times.

The fact that the entire project is about continuous and unrelenting progress is, of course, good news for the growing army of consultants and entrepreneurs who offer their services to that most abject of individuals, the unreconstructed (and therefore unprofessional) teacher. Clearly, however, ‘professional growth and development’ as a permanent revolution of the Trotsky-ite kind is *not* good news for those who think it enough to have weathered two or more decades in the classroom with some proven success, or at least without significant complaint from students or parents. The idea that one might have accrued sufficient knowledge, skill and judgment after more than three decades of teaching to be absent from the next workshop or seminar becomes a

nonsense. What used to look like self-sufficiency and sagacity comes now to look dangerously like semi-retirement.

Conclusion

It has not been our intention to romanticise former times, including old workerist notions of teaching or the ‘old sage’ in the staffroom. Nor have we sought to demonise the corporatising teacher which is being produced as an effect of official and educational discourse relating to teacher development. Instead we have tried to accomplish two tasks. One is to demonstrate that a new regime of truth is currently at work which is having a corporatising effect on teacher identity. The other is to show how this work is being done in teacher education policy and in non-traditional ‘best practice’ in teacher development, including Johnathan Livingstone Seagull and his feathered friends. For better and worse, this is what is coming to count as *proper* teacher education.

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