

## Constructing the Meaning of Teacher Educator: The Struggle to Learn the Roles

By Karen Guilfoyle

Developing as a teacher educator requires understanding the culture of academia as well as recognizing the roles one assumes within that culture. The process is complex, for it involves learning **many** roles, forming a **variety** of relationships, and understanding **numerous** contexts. With limited experience in academia, beginning teacher educators are unaware of this complexity and often have difficulty “making sense” of the process. Early in our study of this initial experience, the process generated these personal comments:

This is the most stressful job I have ever had...I don't know how I ever made it through [first semester]...I came close to not going back in January. (1/8/91-#4)

What I realize is what a nightmare last fall was [referring to initial year]...I feel just as off-balanced and harried as I did last year. (9/8/90-#1)

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When I think about my first year, several issues come to mind...In the staying sane area...I think I flopped. Except that I called friends for support through the experience. They would bolster me, sometimes simply because they were having similar experiences. (11/8/90-#3)

I am becoming a professor, after continuing to behave like a graduate student for another year and a half, I

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guess. (12/14/90-#2)

The complexity of the culture and its politics, the multiplicity of roles and differences in value given to various roles within academia, and the vastness of the context all contributed to what is here labeled “the struggle.” This paper is my personal interpretation of a struggle I shared with three friends (Mary Lynn Hamilton, Stefinee Pinnegar, and Peggy Placier) who joined me to study the teacher and researcher roles of someone becoming a teacher educator.

### **Studying Learning-Teaching-Researching as a Teacher Educator**

In 1989, the four of us who participated in the study entered academia as beginning teacher educators. Our collaborative study focused on the process of developing as teacher educators through reflections on our roles, actions, and interactions in the culture of academia (see also Clift, Veal, Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Erickson, 1989). We brought a feminist perspective to our qualitative methodology (Lather, 1992) as we generated data through the lenses of our learning, teaching, and researching (Applebee, 1987; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; McNiff, 1988; Whitehead, 1993). We saw this as appropriate and relevant.

Too little of the current research literature in teacher education...has been produced by practicing teacher educators.... Just as the concerns, questions, and voices of teachers have frequently been ignored in research on teaching, so too the perspectives of teacher educators have often been absent from research on teacher education. (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1991)

A major purpose of our study was to understand the tension, issues, and dilemmas that emerged as we interacted with others (students, faculty, and administration) in the context of academia. An underlying purpose was to support each other. As women, we not only valued collaboration but felt it was necessary to survive. That support was needed as “...in the academy, women find themselves inside institutions whose practices and intentions are historically designed to keep them outside its concrete and theoretical frames” (Lewis, 1990, p. 472).

The context included our universities, colleges, departments, and classrooms, as well as settings in public schools. The multi-leveled and multi-dimensional data were generated over a four-year period. Sources included observations; interviews with faculty, graduate/undergraduate students, and/or classroom teachers; student self-assessments and course evaluations; interactive journals with students and colleagues; and field notes in the form of personal critical reflections on practice, academia, and research.

Data from our first year (1989-90) were generated informally over the telephone and through letters as we shared “stories,” sought help in understanding

events, and planned future strategies. In the second year (1990-91), more formal methods of inquiry were used to study our process. Active participant observation (Spradley, 1980; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) served as the primary method. Field notes were recorded and expanded in the form of dialogue journals. Weekly to bi-monthly entries were written, shared, answered, and analyzed by the four participants.

During the next two years (1991 and 1992-93), our focus shifted to intensely examining our own practice through self-study (McNiff, 1988; Whitehead, 1993). Data took the form of entries in personal journals which were shared with the group. These entries often included accounts of our struggle in academia and allowed us to continue study on our transitions as teacher educators.

### **Analysis of Data**

Reflection on our actions and interactions was ongoing and subsequently informed further data generation and analysis. As Woods (1986, p. 121) suggests, our analysis went through several stages: "(1) speculative analysis; (2) classifying and categorizing; (3) concept formation." The task in all these stages was to interpret and make sense of the data, and use this understanding to generate further data. Interpretations of the data were continuously reviewed and reformulated over the four years. Data that initially meant one thing later took on new meaning, changed meaning, or had their meaning extended.

### **Framework for Interpretation**

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument in the study (see Erickson, 1986). With a constructivist perspective of qualitative research, the role also includes constructing data. Tobin (1992, p.6) states:

Data collection is essentially an objectivist idea that implies that data are out there to be gathered up...data are not collected, but are constructed from experience using personal theoretical frameworks that have greatest salience to the goals of conducting the research. Accordingly, researchers ought to identify the beliefs that have most significance for a specific study.

To allow the reader to assess the credibility of qualitative data and construct a framework for interpreting findings, the writer needs to help the reader understand the researcher's experiences, purposes, and context, as well as the methodology which "is the theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework that guides a particular research project" (Harding, 1987, as cited in Lather, 1992, p. 1). Standards for judging the quality of research should "center on the adequacy of data in relation to knowledge claims and the credibility of assertions in the sense that use of the knowledge in given circumstances leads to productive outcomes" (Tobin, 1992, p. 6).

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These standards guide this discussion. Understanding that my history influences this research and that the findings are my interpretations, I weave my history, beliefs, and personal reflections throughout the discussion. My data represent choices I made and I present the data to illustrate my choices. I have adequate data to give credibility to my analysis. I support my findings with other voices, research, and interpretations. In sharing my interpretations, I join the conversation with others who choose to use a form of participatory research (Maguire, 1987) not only to educate but to participate in transforming education, academia, and society.

### **Struggling with the Roles of a Teacher Educator**

Early in the study, analysis made visible the struggle between the roles teacher educators are expected to assume, especially between the roles of teacher and researcher. This struggle, which continued to surface throughout the study, offers a window through which to understand our process and research. It is also an example of an issue where our interpretation shifted over time.

As new faculty members, we soon discovered that our primary role was that of teacher. This was not the role we expected nor was it one we felt prepared to fill. The focus of our graduate program had been on preparing us as researchers. The role of teacher was given little attention; we perceived it as something we “did” until we could “do” research. In addition, we had not observed or interacted with beginning teacher educators in our program, as our professors and mentors had been experienced educators.

After the first year, all four of us were struggling to extend our understanding of the role of teacher at the college level. We wondered why this role did not seem to be valued by the system. It appeared that our institutions (although in differing degrees) viewed research (quantitative) as the primary means to “keep current,” be productive, influence and/or improve the educational process, **and gain tenure**. The dilemma we faced is seen in the following comments:

This choice between teaching and research tears me apart. In the long run, I have to do more research to survive, but my teaching always comes first. (10/25/90-#2)

Does teaching count toward tenure? At my institution most attention and discussion focus on scholarship and publications. The more prestigious the journal, the more points on the scale.... I think it is a curious notion that the School of Education does not value teaching. (1/14/91-#3)

As beginning educators teaching teachers and teachers of teachers, we felt learning the role of teacher should take precedence. We wanted the system to value our decision:

One of the things I’m increasingly sure about is that universities have confused scholarly inquiry or scholarship and research. I think of how much energy it takes if one truly worked to teach a course right and meet the needs of students and give

them the best current ideas available. (1/24/91-#1)

You know I want to research and write because I love to do both.... But, I feel that at this point in my life, learning to teach at the college level is the most important thing to me and **it should be to them too**. (11/1/90-#4)

Based on our experience with research, we felt we could not do both in a quality manner. It was not that we did not value research, but that we had a more urgent need to know more about the role of teacher. In addition, we had recently completed our academic programs and were current in our knowledge of the literature. We had finished a research project and written a major piece of research through the dissertation process. We had demonstrated that we were capable of “doing” research. We thought we needed time to develop as teachers. The struggle had begun.

### **Initial Understanding of Our Development**

During the first two years, our data contained many references to factors we saw contributing to the struggle. The following sections discuss those issues as depicted and analyzed through the lenses of beginning teacher educators with limited experience in academia (see Guilfoyle, 1991; Hamilton, 1991; Pinnegar, 1991; Placier, 1991). Presenting the early interpretations illustrates how beginning teacher educators view and understand academia. The context of our analysis during the first two years was primarily within our classrooms and departments. Along with teaching, interactions/actions with students and other faculty members in our departments were the center of our attention. While contextual and personal influences contributed to our sense of disequilibrium, we found many common factors contributing to “the struggle.”

#### *Time*

As beginning teacher educators, a major contributing factor to the tension between the roles was time. Each of us taught nine to twelve credit hours a semester. We were developing courses, attempting to put current theories into practice, supporting preservice teachers in their learning, performing service, and learning about all that was expected of us as teacher educators. It seemed impossible to “cram” any more into our lives. In response to a 40 percent teaching, 40 percent research, and 20 percent service job description, one participant said, “Right now I figure I must be doing 75 percent teaching (not counting evenings and weekends!). Something has to give” (9/28/90-#2). It appeared that the academy did not understand the support needed by beginning professors or used this approach to “weed out” those “unfit” for academia.

#### *Research on Teaching*

A second factor in our struggle was the limited amount of literature available

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on teaching in Teacher Education at the beginning of our study. While considerable research has been conducted on learning/teaching in the elementary and secondary schools, few had looked at the influence of research on learning and teaching in post-secondary education (Boomer, 1987). With the exception of the work of Bayer (1990), Fox (1990), Short & Burke (1989), and Wilson (1989), the research could do little to support our teaching based on a critical social constructivist view.

#### *Demonstrations*

Our endeavors to become effective teachers and review teaching were also hampered by the limited number of teacher educators we could observe or interact with who were applying current research to their practice. The transmission model was being used in most college classrooms, even though research supports an interactional-transactive model of learning-teaching. We found that instructors “lectured” about process education and the inquiry method. They tested and graded with little attention to the assessment alternatives they cited. They stressed the importance of cooperative learning yet they used competitive systems in their classrooms.

It appeared that while researchers and teacher educators readily describe how to improve teaching in the public schools, this advice was not often turned inward. We found few faculty members putting effort into organizing their practice around current theories. It seemed that teacher educators had “failed to grasp fully the potential of the learning theories and curricular frameworks being explored in public schools for transforming [their] own teacher-education programs and classrooms” (Short & Burke, 1989, p. 194).

#### *Mentoring*

Research confirms that learning to teach is facilitated through mentoring and collaborating with others, but little opportunity was provided for either as we attempted to learn our roles. While professors in our graduate programs talked openly about their research, few shared their teaching experiences. The same was true at the institutions that hired us. In our study, all expressed the need for mentors and colleagues with whom to collaborate. One participant wrote, “It occurred to me that the problem with the first year professorship is that we have no situations on which to reflect and no person to act as mentor” (11/14/90-#3). Another entry read as follows:

Mentors—they are so important but always so busy. At a student/teacher level, I remember how I wanted to interact with\_\_\_\_\_ at the U of A, but everyone was always so busy. Now I find the same at the teacher-teacher level. So little time to help one another. I know how much I needed someone last year. Now this year, I have not given that same support to the next new person. What can we do to change all this for beginning teachers at all levels? (1/23/91-#4)

*Reflective Practitioner*

Another factor in the struggle was the limited attention in teacher education to the role of teacher educator as a critical, reflective practitioner (Richardson, 1989). Preservice teachers were asked to understand and question their beliefs and views of learning-teaching, but the professors we encountered did not seem to reflect on their own. While we needed to converse about paradigms, philosophies, theories, and practice, those around us talked about knowledge base, entrance requirements, number of courses, and length of programs. These were “safe” topics, ones requiring little personal reflection or critical thinking. We hungered for colleagues with whom to enter into a critical conversation (Fine, 1992).

*Politics*

We also learned that the factors contributing to our struggle were embedded in the structure of academia. Many had to do with power, beliefs, and tradition, and held more than one meaning, depending on whose view was given priority. Our understanding of these issues was limited by our unfamiliarity with the politics of the system. Our belief that we could transform the system remained, but we recognized it would be difficult.

During the third year (1991-92), the dilemmas and tensions we faced in assuming our roles continued and new issues emerged (see Guilfoyle, 1992; Hamilton, 1992; Pinnegar, 1992; and Placier, 1992). Our ongoing research was extending our understanding and we were learning how our interactions and actions contributed (knowingly or unknowingly) to our struggle in academia. As new instructors, we had interrupted the status quo. Rather than lecturing, we organized transformative classrooms where knowledge was socially constructed as well as individually situated. We used qualitative methodology to study learning/teaching and, of all things, our own practice at the college level. Instead of trying to publish research from our dissertations, we devoted time to teaching. We were actively involved in policy issues and, in some instances, pushed to create policy disregarding our untenured positions. As new faculty, we often didn’t realize we weren’t “playing by the rules.” At other times, we were well aware that we weren’t conforming.

In our third year, the tension between the roles of teacher and researcher shifted. We learned that it was not the conflict between teaching and researching that created the tension. It was the significance of **becoming a published researcher** that created the problem. It seemed that the system valued publishing above all else.

### **The Three-Year Point in my Personal Journey**

At the end of the third year, our analysis focused on what had led us to our view of the roles of teacher educator. Why did we interpret our interactions as we did? How did the focus of our reflection and shared analysis influence our practice? How

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did this affect our interactions with others? We were learning that lacking an “insider’s view” of the culture of academia was not the only cause of our struggle. Our attempts to create inquiry-oriented classrooms, to use critical pedagogy, to make our research meaningful, and to view the role of teacher educator as that of change agent (see Weiler, 1988) appeared to challenge the system. Data generation in the third year centered more specifically on each participant’s individual journey. Based on this shift, the discussion now moves to my personal journey to address our research questions and illustrates my thinking after three years in academia (Guilfoyle, 1992).

#### *Personal View of Teacher Educator*

As a beginning professor and the first new, tenure-track faculty member to be hired in 12 years, I thought my struggle was caused by my “newness.” As other new faculty were hired in my second year, I realized that “newness” was only a contributing factor. When they both assumed the traditional, lecture-and-test model of college teaching and began focusing on research, I saw that my emphasis on transforming learning-teaching-researching and doing service in the public schools did not match their view of a teacher educator. It became apparent that even though we were all new, my view of a teacher educator differed from theirs. While we all struggled, there were differing degrees of tension and conflict. I recognized that my philosophy, theories, and beliefs were responsible for a part of my struggle.

#### *“Walking the Talk”*

In teacher education, I strongly believe that we should demonstrate what we are “telling students to do.” It is through demonstrations that students are able to experience, question, and analyze the theories presented. They help them understand how theories are implemented. In addition, demonstrations by teacher educators allow preservice students to observe that teaching is a life-long learning process—that one doesn’t eventually become a teacher, but instead moves in understanding teaching/learning through his or her active involvement in the process. Boomer (1987, p. 8) states that “all teachers should be experts in learning so that they can remind all students how to learn.”

Learning to “walk my talk” required considerable time and energy as I continued studying the theories, “mucking around” with the implementation process, and analyzing how my practice reflected my beliefs and theories. “Walking my talk” supported my development but added to my tensions. While it was the process that moved me into the role of teacher researcher, it also moved me away from being a published researcher. There was not enough time to do both and fulfill the other responsibilities of a teacher educator.

#### *Whole Language in Teacher Education*

Another issue in my struggle was the use of a whole language philosophy. I had



studied this philosophy with Kenneth and Yetta Goodman at the University of Arizona. My practice was strongly influenced by whole language and my understanding of Vygotsky's (1978) theories of learning as illustrated in a student's journal entry:

I **really** value and appreciate the respect for individuality and diversity in our class. Coming in as I did, with a fairly strong background, could have made me a lazy member of the community of learners in the class but that wasn't allowed to happen. By pushing me to stretch myself in my learning you have truly **demonstrated** the importance of stretching each student as an individual. (1/29/92-BP)

To "walk my talk," I organized a student-centered, process-orientated, inquiry-based classroom described by Short and Burke (1990) as a transactional view of teaching/learning. My goal was to support the students as critical, reflective thinkers, to actively involve them in their own learning processes, and to guide them in selecting content that was relevant, meaningful, and interesting to them. I believed that their learning would be enhanced if they assumed more responsibility for their own learning and had ownership and choice in what they learned. In organizing the classroom in this manner, I was not prepared for the reactions I received from either the students or other faculty members.

#### *Students' Reactions*

Based on past experience in schooling, students come to classes expecting their instructor to "know how to teach," not make "mistakes," have "the answer," and be ready to **tell** them everything they needed to know. They have learned to "play the game" and they don't want the "rules" changed. My courses fit none of these game plans. A student wrote in her journal:

I have been thrown into a state of disequilibrium from the beginning of this class. I have had many conflicts with what I thought education was all about and now the new shift in education. (10/30/91-CH)

Earlier that month, another wrote:

This class is definitely giving me a challenge. I have never been exposed to this type of teaching in college and it is challenging to write in a learning log and to get used to not having a syllabus. (10/2/91-SS)

These reactions are similar to those recorded by Michel (1991) in exploring her practice. After implementing changes in her classroom, she found:

Right from the beginning there were difficulties—grumbling about lack of course organization and not knowing how to earn the A; dissatisfaction at being asked to think and write about what they were reading and doing in class and to find ways to show what they were learning. (p.2)

Even though I used student voices to rethink my practice and immersed them more

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gently into the structure of my classroom, the struggle continued. One student wrote:

I'm having a very difficult time with this new paradigm of teaching and learning. My time in this class is spent being frustrated and often angry no matter how hard I try to remain calm. I think the biggest reason for this is the huge change in my whole way of thinking that this paradigm is asking me to make. I'm not sure if I believe enough in the theories to make that change. (2/7/1992-JM)

I found that stretching students to reflect and analyze—to be critical thinkers—kept me “on the edge.” I had to address issues that are not often considered in “traditional” classrooms. Students became resistant and withdrew when faced with ideas that were not congruent with their own. The conflicts continually forced me to question my own philosophy and theories. As a student said to me in class one day (April 15, 1992), “You have to be a strong person to teach like you do in this college.” Neither of us recognized that this effort was of limited importance to the system.

#### *Faculty Reaction to my Teaching and Learning*

My actions also influenced my relationships with other faculty members. Once students move in their understanding of the whole language philosophy, they question the lecture/test/one-right-answer mode of teaching. This did not make me popular with some. In addition, my commitment to my theories and beliefs influenced my questions about our program, field experiences, and student teaching. Even small changes are not greeted with “open arms” in academia, let alone challenges that ask people to re-think their own beliefs about learning/teaching. At that time, I did not realize that questioning and challenging could come to “haunt” me in the tenure vote. I still thought that was what we were suppose to do in academia.

### **The Social Process of Developing as a Teacher Educator**

It was obvious to the four of us that we were having similar experiences. We were unable to resolve the tension, but we were making moves to lessen it. The struggle continued. As third year teacher educators, our “voices” became stronger as our understanding of our roles and the culture of academia was extended. We negotiated with administrators about the kinds of support available for the tenure process. We continued to reorganize our classes to more closely match our developing theories and beliefs about learning/teaching. One participant resigned as chair of a “figurehead” committee to work on a portfolio assessment project that she felt would enhance the overall program. She wrote, “I wonder if my resignation was a sounding of a note of warning to everyone here—I have found my voice” (#1-3/13/92).

We were learning the culture of academia and how to interact in the roles of a teacher educator. I don't believe that we were yet aware of the possible consequences of our decisions and actions. For most of us the tenure game was just beginning to become a reality. We still thought our efforts to learn the role of teacher and use our research to improve learning/teaching would be recognized. As the advertisement says, "You've come a long way, baby." Three years of data and analysis showed these patterns, among others, in our experiences:

1. In most instances, the change was a gradual not a major shift, and revealed that developing as a teacher educator is a **process** that takes place over time.
2. Movement was often connected to interactions with other people demonstrating that learning is **social**.
3. **Reading, reflecting, researching, and analyzing** guided, supported, and facilitated the process.

My personal interpretation of our study led me to reject the idea that we were **becoming** teacher educators. We **began** as teachers, learners, and researchers determined to make the best connections possible between theory and practice. As we engaged in various activities and events, we made further connections through reflection and analysis. Rather than acquiring skills to **make** us teacher educators, we were involved in a process of constructing our understanding of the roles. Actions and interactions with others influenced this process of moving and, in turn, these interactions contributed to the "mirror we used to view our practice." This can be seen in my journal entry:

It would not have been possible to come where I am in my journey without the interaction I have had with others—students, colleagues, mentors, teachers in public schools, and my family. Researching my journey has clearly helped me to understand the power of Vygotsky's social theories of learning. It was through using my interactions with others and reflecting on them...and it did not come as a major shift. It was a process. (2/22/92-personal journal)

The value of social interaction in learning is supported by other teachers/learners that I have known. Ken Goodman, a leader in whole language, stated, "Everything I know,...I've learned from kids" (Goodman, 1986, back cover). Students in my college classrooms wrote in their journals about the value of interaction:

Today in our small groups we talked about questions we had about Teacher. It was really interesting to hear everyone's insights, it helped me to see things that I hadn't noticed before. If someone didn't understand something the whole group could help shed some light for that person...(9/30/91-EF)

A fellow teacher educator published a similar statement:

I have also reaffirmed my conviction that learning is a social process in which talk among students is a necessary classroom component; significant learning occurs during peer discussion, peer collaboration, and peer teaching. (Michel, 1991, p. 3)

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Personal reading, researching, reflecting, and analyzing also facilitated our process. Without these activities, learning through interactions would have been limited. The interface between the two can be seen in my journal entry:

This has been an interesting semester so far. I began it vowing to include all that I had learned last semester from my students' journals and evaluations, interactions in class, reflection/analysis of my practice, discussions with colleagues and mentors, attending conferences, working with classroom teachers, and my personal reading. (2/15/92-personal journal)

My students also became more aware of the value of these activities. A journal entry read:

As I read through your responses [in your journal] and listened in class on Wednesday, I was struck with the word "reflection" over and over again. You want me to dig deeper into what I am learning and reflect on how it affects me as a learner and a teacher...I know that the time must be put aside for the reflection process in order for it to be truly useful. And my learning will be much more in-depth because of it. (10/25/91-SM)

The role of **teacher as researcher** also played a major part in our development as teacher educators. Seeing how researching my own process and practice had facilitated my learning, I began to talk more clearly with students about the value of teacher as researcher. I encouraged them to conduct explorations during their field experience in my courses. This exploration helped them extend their perceptions of research as illustrated in the following journal entry:

I hope to be a teacher-researcher. This investigation has shown me that I can learn a lot about the different questions I have by observing other teachers in action and my own class in action. It has also shown me that these answers will not come quickly; that it takes a lot of time and a real commitment. (12/91-TM)

As we completed the fourth year of the study (1992-93), our experiences as teacher educators had broadened and our knowledge had grown. The complexities of being a teacher educator were clearer now. Even with this broader understanding, the struggle was still intense. Our roles were expanding, the expectations were increasing, and the decision about tenure loomed closer. Our context now included the institution as well as our classrooms, departments, and colleges of education. The role of researcher was given additional emphasis, but this only opened new areas of tension.

The rules for teacher educators are changing in many colleges and universities. Teacher educators are being asked to do research and to write for scholarly publications. At the same time, however, they are being asked to reform their teacher education programs, to acquire and use current research on teaching and learning in their courses, and spend more time understanding the needs of surrounding elementary and secondary schools. (Richardson, in press, pp. 1-2)

Other shifts were occurring when we entered academia. Research was changing and we were qualitative researchers. While some recognized qualitative research as a viable and productive framework for study, others did not. It was difficult to understand that even when we emphasized research in our work, the tension continued. Lieberman (1992, p. 11) recognized this dilemma:

Criteria for tenure and promotion of professors who do this kind of work must be developed, through discussions of time frames and time limits...We should question accepted norms that encourage junior professors to write many articles on short-term, manageable problems, sometimes of questionable worth.

We viewed research as critical inquiry: “inquiry that takes into account how our lives are mediated by systems of inequity such as classism, racism, and sexism” (Lather, 1992, p. 1). We worked from a constructivist perspective (Tobin, 1992) influenced by feminist theory. Seeing data as constructed by the researcher and using research to make “us aware that nonhierarchical relationships, caring, compassion, and concern for people are not antithetical to competence” (Lieberman, 1992, p. 11) is not a process that has been fully accepted.

The context for conducting research is also shifting. “The assumption has been—and the reward structure has reflected it—that the highest form of inquiry, the best research, is the product of those in the university removed from the contexts of practice” (Lieberman, 1992, p. 10). Much of our research was action-based self-study, which was not valued or understood across campus or in teacher education generally. As Richardson (in press) stated:

Practical inquiry includes reflective practice, clinical analysis, and action research.... While such inquiry has been heavily advocated for elementary and secondary teachers, it has rarely been examined for teacher educators...many teacher educators are already engaging in such inquiry, although colleges or education traditionally neither support nor reward such activity. (p. 3)

Our work was collaborative. Research and publications produced in collaboration with colleagues are not “weighted” as heavily as single-author pieces. In addition, we were using our own voices to address an audience of practitioners. Our use of story “in contemporary research on teaching and teacher education is grounded in the notion that story represents a way of knowing and thinking that is particularly suited to explicating the issues with which we deal” (Carter, 1993, p. 6). Yet stories are often seen as “unscientific” by those who have not made the shift to a broader view of what counts as research. We wanted to challenge these paradigm issues, but we struggled with the cost. Robin Morgan, editor-in-chief of *Ms* magazine said, “Women get more radical with age.” While we see that being true of ourselves, we do not see it being true of institutions. We are caught in a system where the people in power have been sheltered from the paradigm shifts occurring around them. They appear to have a vested interest in not recognizing the shifts and in maintaining the status quo.

### **Bringing Closure to the Story—For Now**

Our voices have changed over time. At the end of the third year, we thought we were “getting it figured out” and our voices were growing stronger. At the close of the fourth year, our voices seemed weaker. We were all more concerned about publishing and tenure. Participating in the struggle had influenced our teaching and our voices. We are struggling to meet the system’s expectations without compromising what we believe, but we are caught up in the system. We entered as researchers, quickly became teachers, and then shifted to teacher-researchers. Researching extended our understanding of the culture of academia and of the roles of a teacher educator. We do not know if it will help us remain in the culture. As four women, we have learned from these experiences. “Women need to examine what they have experienced and lived in concrete ways” (Weiler, 1991, p. 465). Our examination has made visible our struggle. We hope it will guide other beginning teacher educators. I close with the words of Nel Noddings (1986, p. 510):

Today, women are learning (and modifying) the traditional ways of thinking in the disciplines.... In the realms of ethics and education it may be time to study, express, analyze, and teach a feminine way of being in the world. At the very least, this way of thinking should be used to enliven and deepen the current debate on educational reform.

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### **Comments by Jack Whitehead**

*I have four of Karen's papers in front of me: (1) Learning about teaching/learning as a teacher educator: "I get a lot of help from my friends" (1992), (2) Constructing the meaning of teacher educator: Learning the roles, (3) Finding out more than I want to know: Teacher research and critical pedagogy in teacher education (1994), and (4) Examining the research process: A self-study using participatory/feminist methodology (1994).*

*In Learning about teaching/learning as a teacher educator: "I get a lot of help from my friends," you start with some quotations from your students and say that, "These struggling voices are those of beginning teachers. Entering the world of teaching is sometimes a 'painful' experience. Beginning teachers may become overwhelmed with all the various expectations" (p. 2). Then on the last page of your paper you say that, "These voices support my view of the classroom as a caring community, my need to make connections with my students, and my commitment to teaching/learning. They make 'the struggle' worth the pain. They strengthen my belief that I can make a difference and change will happen."*

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convenes the Action  
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*In Constructing the meaning of teacher educator:  
Learning the roles, you begin with the negative  
statement from your graduate faculty appointment*



### Guilfoyle

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*subcommittee on your application for full membership. Your paper shows an increased attention to the politics of change. Whilst it contains illustrations from your own journals, there is a noticeable lack of dialogue that shows you making connection with your students.*

*In Finding out more than I want to know: Teacher research and critical pedagogy in teacher education, there is a clear commitment to, and propositional understanding of, a feminist perspective and to the legitimization of “other ways of knowing.” In espousing a clear ideological position, I wonder if it has masked your initial central concern that, “These voices support my view of the classroom as a caring community, my need to make connections with my students, and my commitment to teaching/learning” (Guilfoyle, 1992).*

*I can identify a similar tendency in my own work which, from 1973-76, was focused on improving the quality of students’ learning. Following the University’s attempt in 1976 to terminate my employment, my research increasingly focused on the power relations that legitimized particular views of knowledge and truth. It was only in 1991, through the aesthetic power of my student Peggy Kok’s writing, that I refocused on the processes of improving the quality of students’ learning and on integrating my students’ own voices within my accounts of my life as a teacher educator. What I am suggesting is that your enquiry could be helpful to the rest of our enquiries because of your social and feminist analysis, whilst our enquiries are helpful to you through their focus on students’ voice and learning.*