Negotiating Balance between Reforming Teacher Education and Forming Self as Teacher Educator

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Our purpose here is to account for the tension and balance between what colleges of education and teacher educators are and should be, the personal/professional elements of our lives, and how we negotiated our experience in the academy without losing sight of our commitments and beliefs.

In this article we have expanded the role of the reader as interpreter. We have attempted to capture and reveal the conflict and discontinuity of our experience in the form of our text by attempting to

intersperse several of our "voices" within the account. We begin by presenting a traditional analysis of the research on new faculty members and teacher education reform. We interrupt and disrupt this analysis by inserting italicized excerpts of our informal written correspondence across six years. The italicized quotes from our letters or electronic mail to each other sometimes support and sometimes contradict the more formal analysis. What these italicized quotes reveal through our more personal voices is our perspective on the more formal analysis which both precedes and follows the quote. Usually in formal writing like this article the authors would frame the quotes: prepare the reader for the quote, provide the quotes, and then point out from the perspective of the author what the quote means. Instead, in responding to what Denzin and Lincoln (1994) call the fifth moment of qualitative research, we simply interrupt the formal analysis of the review with the italicized quote. The quote represents our private, ambiguous view or experience contrasted with the more formal research voice presented by the review. This interrupted text may be disconcerting to the reader. If so, the reader can follow the more formal, traditional, and connected text by simply skipping over the italicized quotes. The quote may support or it may contradict the more formal analysis, thus providing either our private insight or personal irony.

After this background and literature review, we turn to a more narrative voice which combines the formal analytic tone of the review interwoven with the personal voice of our experience. In this final section we examine particular aspects of our attempts to "walk our talk." This final segment is a presentation of the result of a formal qualitative analysis of our correspondence during our second year as academics (Arizona Group, 1994).

The varied and interdisciplinary nature of the literature we review in the formal review of the research demonstrates the complexity of our struggle to understand the process of entering academia as women in teacher education. The range of sources we sought out suggests our constant search to make sense of what we were experiencing and the lack of support in this struggle.

> *Now after five years, I have found others in my own institution who are helping me. (Their advice is sound but six months before I apply for tenure may be too late.) I have also learned that while I was struggling "out there," so were others. At my institution, there was no system to help us connect or to put us in contact with colleagues who could guide us. I see as a result a system structured around a competitive, individualistic ideal—survival of the fittest. (June, 1994)*

A compelling need to comprehend our own experiences brought us to this literature pen-in-hand. We were soon using qualitative methodology to try to make sense of our experiences as teacher educators. We grappled with understanding our practice, as we examined the literatures which might help us make sense of our experience. Soon we came to believe that educational reform would be better served if teacher educators were more deeply involved in studying, reflecting on, and

questioning their own work as teachers of teachers and if academic institutions provided environments more able to support such work.

> *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. (February, 1992)*

Beginnings

In 1989 we entered academia as teacher educators and began a collaborative exploration through qualitative self-study of our experiences with educational reform, academic socialization, and comprehension of teacher development.

When we entered academia we began generating data on our attempts to understand the culture of the institution, our colleges, and departments; our socialization within these contexts; and the process of developing as teacher educators personally, socially, politically, and academically (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). We felt this was important as the critique of the literature indicates limited attention has been given to teacher educators and their development. In addition, as Tabachnick and Zeichner (1991) suggest, we saw the need for a more powerful representation of the teacher educator's perspectives in research on teacher education.

To examine how and what we learned about being a teacher educator we studied our experience, we collected, analyzed and interpreted data, and wrote about our experiences through the lenses of our own learning, teaching, and researching (Applebee, 1987; Bissex, 1988, Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Our theoretical framework is influenced by each of our personal theories, beliefs, and views of the world. Embedded in these are frames of critical theory, feminist pedagogy, and a social constructivist view of learning, teaching and researching.

> *Another way I have resisted the traditions of the institution is to join groups that are working against them, such as Women's Studies committee and the Multicultural Task Force. These are made up of faculty from outside the college of education, and provide me with an opportunity to meet others who share my political perspective. But I have to remember that they will probably have little influence on my future at the university. (June, 1994)*

At the beginning of our educational careers the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, (1983), *Horace's Compromise*, (1984), and *A Place Called School*, (1984) pushed educational reform if not to the top of the national agenda certainly to the center of critique and analysis in schools of education. As colleges of education moved into the arena of educational reform and researchers struggled to have an impact on public schools, educational researchers and policy makers became more aware of the need for and yet lack of participation in the reform by colleges of education (Goodlad, 1990). The emergence of Goodlad's partnership is one example and the Holmes group is another. This movement from reform of public schools to critique

the role of colleges of education in the reform was an important part of our experience with reform in public schools and in teacher education.

By 1989 *A Nation at Risk* (1983) had spawned numerous waves of educational reform, adapted various labels for students, and generated interesting and exciting new ideas of how best to serve all students. As graduates of a college of education that prided itself on its progressive ideas we were ready for the adventure of academia and prepared to introduce and discuss these ideas—reflection (Schön, 1983), collaboration, and action research (McNiff, 1988), for example. Unfortunately, this was not as easy as it seemed. In our enthusiasm to enact these ideas, we bumped up against the traditional structures and the current practice of our institutions and our colleagues (*e.g.*, Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). We thought we had been hired for our potential for leadership and commitment to reform. Too late we discovered that we had been hired for our traditional strengths: already existent publication records and strong skills in a new methodology (qualitative research).

> *When I heard this story [the demise of the colleague she replaced] shortly after arriving here, I wondered, "Why did they think I would fit?"...Someone let it slip that they were proud they had hired a woman.... Recently one of the members of the search committee that hired me confided that some members of the committee could not comprehend one of the writing samples I had sent.... So it may not have been the quality of my scholarship. Thanks to a research position, I was one of the authors of a recently published book on a "hot" topic.... Why me, then? Why did I not threaten anyone? I had a good scholarly record, but perhaps as a quiet midwestern female I had a better cultural fit with the institution than my predecessor. I am a "nice" person, having been socialized always to be polite. And I do not share my strong political opinions with just anyone. Following Ghandi's dictum to see the humanity in all people, even my political opponents, I do not strike people as aggressive or strident. (June, 1994)*

We had unclear ideas of how we fit in with the traditional expectation for academics in teacher education and of how teacher education fit into the traditions of the academy.

> *It appears, though, that as new professors we are so busy and to some degree so unwilling to collaborate that we isolate. So why was it so painful for us? It is painful because I, for one, did not really want to isolate. I just didn't know how to fit into the crowd. (March, 1993)*

Teacher Educators and Academia

New faculty entering teacher education have layers of tradition with which to interact. Formerly, teacher education may have had status in academia, but probably only in normal schools or land grant colleges whose responsibility and mission was exclusively agriculture and teacher education (Attenbaugh & Underwood, 1990).

> *I think that the histories of institutions are found in the particulars of daily interaction with people. I think things are done in certain ways because, "THAT IS HOW WE DO IT HERE." (June, 1994)*

As the focus of land grant universities moved away from education toward arts and sciences, teacher education declined in status (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). The greater the status of an institution within the higher educational hierarchy, the less likely the institution was to prepare teachers.

> *I sometimes felt that the Research I institutions in our state both held us in some contempt because we began as a normal school and viewed us as their personal property. I often thought of the colonizing image. We provided future graduate students for their programs and jobs for their graduates. But our role was to use [not produce] knowledge [through research] and to do as we were told. (June, 1992)*

Goodlad, *et al* (1990) argues that the elite institutions such as the University of Chicago or Columbia University tended to retain education as a graduate field for the preparation of administrators or academics who were predominately male, in contrast to the less elite institutions who primarily educated female undergraduate students. In fact, if anything, the elite institutions disempowered the teacher by raising the male administrator to the role of "professional" who would tell the teachers, the semi-professionals, what to do (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). Graduates of the Chicago and Columbia programs took administrative and academic positions across the country and implemented bureaucratic reforms that limited the autonomy and, therefore, the status of teachers.

While it makes a difference how a college of education's history entwines with the institution of which it is a part, teacher education was, at the time of its merger with state colleges or universities, in a less-than-respected position and in almost every case its status has not improved. Recently researchers have claimed a scientific knowledge base for teacher education. Yet, arguments about the scientific basis for teacher education have never been accepted by university colleagues, students, or the public. One explanation suggests that since everyone observes teaching for many years as students, it is a commonly held belief that anyone can teach (*e.g.*, Britzman, 1991). In fact, some researchers claim that the gendered nature of the profession weakened claims for its scientific basis.

Nurturing children is not valued on the same scale as agricultural production or engineering feats. Nor does it produce money. Education is publicly funded. In addition, teacher educators historically are not seen as the people who create the scientific knowledge base for teaching. Representatives of the disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, history, and sociology who work in the field of education are considered the creators of the knowledge base. This knowledge is handed to teacher educators, whose responsibility it is to learn and transmit this knowledge to future teachers (Carter, 1984).

> *Being a teacher educator in a U.S. research university does not mean spending*

most of one's time educating teachers. Though that work may be the most socially important work I do, and the work to which I feel the highest moral obligation, it becomes only one isolated piece of my position. It is also not the one that "counts" the most in terms of establishing job security. I seriously question at times whether any teacher education should take place in such an institution, where it will not be taken seriously as a priority. (June, 1994)

New faculty in teacher education, therefore, come into an institution which occupies a stigmatized position in the hierarchy of institutions, and into a faculty role that has the devalued status of working not just with undergraduate students but with undergraduate students (who are predominately female) preparing to be teachers. Often within the institution, these education students are not seen as serious students. In addition, researchers of teaching are often not seen as serious researchers by the arts and sciences faculty at an institution.

The teacher educator as researcher predictably experiences a low status label within the disciplines as well. This pressures the researchers to move their work in less and less applied directions to achieve status (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). In fact, teacher educators may work to be less involved in teacher education and identified more with the educational discipline from which they emerged (Goodlad, 1990a). With little status and even less concern with teaching as a role in academia, teacher educators face a difficult task in attempting to implement any reform which involves cooperation with colleges and departments beyond the college of education.

Teacher Educators as New Faculty

Indeed, the study of the teachers of teachers is a neglected area in educational research. Although many researchers (*e.g*., Ducharme & Agne, 1982; Lanier & Little, 1986; Zeichner & Gore, 1990) have called for studies of teacher educators, little has been written. Howey and Zimpher (1989), in response to their quantitative study of teacher educators, suggest a qualitative examination of faculty experiences ought to be conducted. Yet only in the last few years has attention turned in that direction using traditional research approaches (Wisniewski & Ducharme, 1989; Ducharme, 1993) and innovative perspectives (Diamond, 1988; Yonemura, 1991; Trumball, 1990; Weber, 1990; Arizona Group, 1995; Guilfoyle, 1995; Hamilton, 1995; Placier, 1995; Pinnegar, 1995; Russell; 1995).

Studies of new faculty in schools of education have similar findings to those of faculty in other areas of the university. Whitt (1991), for example, found that new faculty at one school of education were concerned with measures of success, isolation, collegiality, time, research, and tenure. Olsen (1991), in a study of new faculty across the university, concurs on the tenuous sense of collegiality and pretenure issues. Carter (1984) also found a lack of collegial interaction and intellectual stimulation.

More than other of the past years at this institution, I feel lost and out of touch with

> *what goes on here. Some of that comes from not feeling supported by my colleagues, but some of it comes from my own disaffection from the system. I have no refuge, no safe harbor, no person with whom to reflect. And I need that. I am a reflective, interactive thinker who needs to share ideas and think-out-loud. (October, 1992)*

In addition to the Olsen and Carter studies of new faculty across the entire university, Whitt (1991) studied new faculty specifically in colleges of education. Whitt found:

> having to be responsible for their own socialization may have added to the already heavy workload of new faculty. Having to spend time "spinning their wheels" finding out answers to questions—or finding out questions—exacerbated the sense of carrying "a load of bricks." (p. 193)

According to research on new faculty (Fink, 1984; Olsen, 1991), during the first few years new faculty members try to find a fit with their institution, but tacit expectations interfere with the process (Whitt, 1991).

Although teaching is a major focus of academic life, particularly the life of a beginning academic, at both the university level and even within the school of education teaching has low prestige (Gappa & Uehling, 1979). Often the research on new faculty addresses teaching simply as just another aspect of the task of being an academic. New faculty members must get teaching quickly under control so that their attention can be focused more profitably and appropriately on research. At both the university level and even within the school of education teaching has low prestige (Gappa & Uehling, 1979). In fact, this *laissez faire* attitude to the development of teaching is even truer in schools of education. Knowles and Cole (1994) suggest that, in colleges of education particularly, there is less concern with the development of new faculty as teachers because after years of experience in the public schools they are thought to already be experienced and capable teachers.

> *I just realized that I am a complete fool. Here I am slaving away on my lessons when they simply do not count. If I want to receive tenure then what I need to do is not spend any time on my lessons. I need to spend time writing. All of this time we have been wasting our efforts. The only thing that counts is writing and publishing. Lectures, lessons, discussions do not count. I have been so stupid! What's more, I don't think I can save myself and I don't think it will even make a drop in the bucket when I go. They are all so entrenched in tradition here that they will never even notice my passing. Once again I am crusader rabbit swinging at windmills and just getting sore arms. (August, 1992)*

According to Whitt (1991) and Reynolds (1988), while new faculty members do worry that their teaching will suffer, they do not address these concerns nor do they seem to consider them important. Some others do address concerns about teaching (Fink, 1982, 1984; Turner & Boice, 1987). In these cases, new faculty members express concerns about teaching and seek help from colleagues to improve their practice. Again, the focus is usually more on developing sufficient

skill at teaching so that the faculty member can be spend less time in teaching and more time on research in order to insure positive performance reviews.

Institutional Culture Within the College and University

Currently, aspects of the institutional culture are being contested and reform is in the wind, if not an actuality. Higher education budget constraints across the United States have resulted in firings of tenured faculty and law suits resulted in institutions revealing tenure processes. In addition, higher education committees are working on the definition of academic work. Yet, there is a relatively stable culture of academe that requires the beginner to decide: Will I conform, negotiate, subvert, or resist?

The ideal of the university has been faculty governance. One attraction for the new faculty member is the idea of being in an institution where there is the appearance that knowledge will be valued and respected in decisions made about the institution, yet this may be less and less the case. With the movement of higher education institutions toward increased demands for research productivity and top-down mandates for change, there is increasingly less autonomy for department chairs. What were once faculty governance roles are now assumed by administrators with little concern for faculty participation.

Institutions of higher education have complex and often rigid structures of both academic and faculty governance. These structures often have shared decision-making powers but usually exist competitively, not collaboratively. There are presidents, provosts, chancellors, vice-presidents, deans, associate deans, division chairs, department chairs, section or unit chairs. There are rules and policies governing the responsibilities and authority of each of these levels. Although the structure appears hierarchical, in reality different levels often have exclusive control over decision-making.

> *I think somehow universities ought to be like my memory of my childhood—where the president actually knows and communicates with faculty, where faculty know each other across disciplines and care deeply about the training of each other's students and are concerned that fairness prevails—I know, fairy tale stuff. I don't expect this perfection but a minimal approximation would be helpful at times. (September, 1990)*

> *This idealized dream vision of universities trips me up in two ways. I have a world view that expects my colleagues to be willing to sacrifice for the general good and to make short-term sacrifices to support long-term good. I am caught off guard when this becomes blatantly untrue—when colleagues are willing for the institutions to be shredded just to support what the faculty member wants right now. It also trips me up when I have expectations to sacrifice myself for the long term good. This is not good if I want to get tenure and succeed in my own career, for the two goals are often not just in stark contrast but in competition with each other. (June, 1994)*

Professors are supposed to be successful in three areas: research, teaching, and

service. The amount of time and commitment that an individual faculty member gives to each area is supposedly determined by the faculty member within guidelines determined by colleges and departments. Yet, what counts as research, teaching, and service is defined by the institution and there are reward structures attached to the three areas.

> *While swimming in a nuclear reactor, I also attempt to nurture my family and isolate them from the political and cultural pain I experience when running headlong into traditions. It is difficult to serve as the buffer—particularly when I have no community. I have a few colleagues I can call upon at my institution, but they are few. I have no haven from the world and for that I am sorry (June, 1994).*

While some institutions demand a primary focus on one and allow choice about the order of the other two, Goodlad (1990a) indicates a movement across higher education toward an increasing demand that research be a stronger focus. In such institutions, this is usually accompanied by a more limited definition of research: one which focuses on grant-writing and high status publication, and away from a more general definition of scholarship. As a result, in some institutions this means research will be the almost exclusive focus of faculty with minimal concern about teaching and service. In other institutions, this may mean the movement from teaching as the primary focus to research as the primary focus and a reduction in commitment to service (Levine, 1990). In every case, this usually means a reduction in the status of teaching and service at the institution.

The inroad on the commitment to service is especially telling since this has the potential to severely undercut faculty governance. Faculty governance responsibilities are often the central focus of service within the institution. In applied areas like teacher education, this can be even more distressing. Teacher educators have service commitments and responsibilities to public education. Reforms of teacher education have added public school and university partnership structures in which teacher educators are asked to participate as decision-makers with public school teachers, administrators, and parents. This requires additional hours of service.

Although intangible to new faculty members, the key elements of the institutional culture are:

- members should work independently (autonomy);
- the history of the institution, not change, drives the system (tradition);
- publishable work (not teaching) indicates value to the institution (success).

These are reinforced with certain structures, behaviors, procedures, communication practices, norms or values, and expectations of others. Kuh and Whitt (1988) suggest newcomers must learn how to read and respond to the system's values, the history of the institution and how its culture developed, and comprehend information available only to those who have been there. The essential but often tacit assumptions that undergird the institution may remain elusive to newcomers. Thus the new faculty member identity process may cause difficulty.

While some research findings have suggested that the family, the school, the society, or the curriculum are responsible for the instabilities in education today, others have suggested that the problems lie within teacher education itself. Certainly, these accusations can be seen as simplistic finger-pointing or as reticence to acknowledge culpability. Could teacher education and teacher educators really have a role in the perplexing condition of public education? We, as teacher educators with a commitment to the development of the best teachers possible, have explored here the tensions among our commitment to teacher education, our belief in current, best practice for teachers, and the reality of the academic system. We find that maintaining a commitment to our students and to educational reform often demands taking adversarial roles and is not an easy task. Our experiences as novitiates in the role of teacher educator suggest that traditions within the academic institution serve as barriers to rather than promoters of best teacher practices.

> *Politics: Academia is a savage place. It is an institution built by white males who had no familial obligations (because their wives took care of the kids and created relationships—if there were any) and who had endless time to write and write and generate tradition. It is no wonder that tradition flourishes here. If they relinquish tradition, what would they have—nothing more than we do. Or is that true? What about the women who are very successful? What about the women who have created fame for themselves and rightfully so. Does it mean we should devalue ourselves? Are our ideas foolish?... I am learning to say no. I am saying no. I am remembering what they [my academic colleagues at my institution] did not do for me and I am remembering that they were not caring and I don't feel so committed to their tradition. That does not mean that I don't care about colleagues; I do. I am working with the newer professors in the hope that their experiences won't be so bad. But they won't be anyway because they are not so resistant to the system. I think I must have been born angry at tradition. (August, 1992)*

Our own experience reveals how the issues we have discussed emerged in the lives of beginning faculty members. While each of us has responded differently to specific events there were important similarities in our experience.

Walking Our Talk

One of the themes that frame our beginning experiences in academia is "walking our talk." That is, exemplifying in our professional lives what we teach our students. For each of us this takes a different form, but there are common elements as well. We think of this walking our talk theme as our attempt to create in our lives an accurate representation of our commitment to our students, our beliefs about teaching, and our hopes for teacher education. In Clandinin's (1995) terms, it is our own (re)storying of teacher education and teaching in our own particular and idiosyncratic contexts. It involves, as Whitehead (1993) indicates, resolving the "living contradictions" of our lives not merely in retelling our lives but in the living of our lives. In this section, we will revisit quotes from each of our letters

(Arizona Group, 1994) which reveal the theme of our attempts to "walk our talk" and what we learn about the weaving together of all the experience of our lives. When we think of the theme of walking our talk, we think first of "walking." This is the clearest example of that for us:

> *Right now I am just into trying to get my classes organized, be a good teacher, take care of myself, be a friend and wife to M., a daughter to my parents, a sister, and a mother—keeps me busy and then they wonder why I haven't published. You know I want to research and write because I love to do both. But it is almost getting like I don't want to do it just to "dance to their little song."...Since I started teaching last fall, I have been trying to use process-language-rich-learner-centered classroom organization.... I have had some hard times with students not knowing how to react but I have hung in there because I believe it is the best way to teach and learn. The thing that is hard is that while I am putting all this time into trying to learn the process, I also need to learn content as I have content to teach. I will be glad when I get some of that organized. As I mentioned before, I have been here a year and a half and I will have had five new courses to develop. That is hard especially when you don't even have time to go to the library and see what's happening out there. (November, 1990)*

When we think of the stories, letters, experience and example revealed by the author of this quote, we think of doing—walking. Throughout her letters, our colleague who wrote this quote focuses on this struggle—to create in her college classrooms, in teacher education at her university, in her private interactions with graduate and undergraduate students, this kind of interaction. Yet, the quote itself reveals the difficulty of bringing into concert content, process, and relationships. She refers to "hanging in there" with students because she felt it was important for them. She talks about the difficulty of interweaving the content, of expanding and developing a knowledge of her content which must then be integrated and reformulated to be presented through the classroom processes she wants. As she speaks here of the difficulty of getting organized and ready to teach, she immediately erupted with an expression of all the roles that she needed to fill. The titles of these roles represent narratives of experience that needed to be intertwined in her "walking" in the creation of her kind of classroom.

The next idea in the passage we focus on is talking. One of the four of us most specifically reveals this focus in her letters. She often talked about codes, traditions, and finding voice. She spoke about what we know as outsiders and what others know as insiders and the complications of interpretation as a result. We examine one of the passages from her letters that reveals the creation of voice (talk):

> *In order for this description to have the proper impact you have to imagine the scene. Here we are, my class and I, in an oversized room with too many school desks. It is the end of the football season, we are playing our serious rivals. My students mostly look like Barbie and Ken dolls lost in a west-coast daze.... So there they are, arriving in class precisely on time. In front of the room is their teacher.*

> *Me. I look like I have studied the conservative republic book of dress.... Today is our first whole group meeting in weeks.... I begin by asking if anyone has any management miracles from their observations.... Quickly the issues turn to human dignity...just as quickly I begin to talk about revolution in the schools. But, I did not begin the discussion before I, unconsciously, walked over and closed the classroom door...you would have been proud. There I was professing revolution. Their little eyes wide, there was a lot of whispering. I used my favourite quote from the Mohawks in Quebec...today is a good day to die.... I asked them to consider the issues for which they were willing to take a stand. They were mesmerized. I, personally, was scared.... We talked abut this in a backdrop of censorship, first years of teaching, and what freedom a teacher has. I ended the discussion by beginning a reading of "Repent, Harlequin, said the Ticktockman" by Harlan Ellison (1979). It too discusses revolution and how sometimes it may look like your cause is lost, but it isn't. I had some students leave class numb.... One important note, though, I am clear that the students are ready to hear it or I wouldn't be saying it (November, 1990)*

This incident is a celebration of finding voice, of developing the courage to speak the truth we knew and understood to our students. This represents efforts to (re)story teacher education in several ways. It focuses on the themes of revolution, of valuing human beings, and of being willing to continue to work and fight even when it appears to others the cause is lost. While this may seem like a story of classroom triumph, several other things are embedded in the story. One is the understanding—signalled by the closing of the door, admitting being scared, and referring to the students as "Ken and Barbie dolls"—that what the teacher educator has chosen to do brings her in opposition to the traditions and preferred talk of the university. It is there in the mention of the weekend football game as well. We are invited—"you would be proud of me"—to watch her teach as she gives voice to a story which brings into harmony many of the disparate elements of her life: her private life; her public life as teacher; her concern over her students and the community of students her students will teach; a commitment to giving voice to what she knows even though it may cost her points on her own tenure review.

The next element of the theme we focus on is the tension between walking and talking. For us, this tension is represented by our constant concern with promotion, tenure, and the conflicting messages within academia. While we have not represented that concern in the majority of this text, it was a major focus of most of our conversation. This concern represented critical aspects of our academic experience. We hoped to fulfill our commitments and live out our beliefs, without ending our academic experience. "Walking and talking" represent the tension of trying to fit ourselves within academia. We think it is represented well in this passage from one of us who often focused on policy. She said:

> *Our personal histories and away-from-academic lives determine to some extent our responses to, our analyses of our academic work. It is not just our College of Education and the people in it that we are attempting to understand, but ourselves*

> *in relations to that institution and those people. Will we have to change, even do violence to ourselves, to fit in, or do we have the power to change our environment? Would change in ourselves really be "growth"? I alternate between things. I am being too wimpy, too patient, or too critical, or resistant to just buckle under and do what I need to do to make it.... The advice I receive, and maybe you do too, is always about how to fit in, to make it. No one has ever suggested to me that we organize to change the institution.... Our only hope for freedom is to resist, and in order to resist we must first discover how the institutional grip is laid upon our minds. For me, as a newcomer, I have hoped to resist succumbing to the institutional grip in the first place. But maybe it already had me, through my socialization to graduate school.... The "What do I want to do?" question encompasses our whole lives, not just our work lives, and tenure pressures cannot be left at work. (December, 1990)*

Each of us has a story of our lives as teacher educators that we want to tell. As this passage suggests, the theme of the story—the interweaving of not only the experiences in our professional lives but also those in our private lives—is oppositional in many senses. Those around us talk to us about fitting in, but we want to walk our own talk, to represent our words in action. We struggle to both find and create the complex narrative we want to tell. As we do this, we want the narrative to include the acquisition of tenure and associate or full professorship while not abandoning our commitment to our beliefs, our students, and our hopes for teacher education.

The final word in the theme "our" is best represented by the following quote. More than the others, one of us focuses over and over again on the reconciliation of the fragments of life as an academic into a community of wholeness. The following passage from her earlier letters best captures this:

> *I wonder at this time of year especially whether the things my children and husband are missing out on because of the decisions we have made about our academic lives are worth the things they receive because of the decisions we have made.*
>
> *Growing up, Christmas for me...was incredible, magic. And as I look back on those memories it is as if they are drawn from another time—my mother and grandmother and my mother's sisters and my father's mother and his sisters and all of the cousins altogether in the same community. It wasn't all smooth sailing—but the wholeness of life. With grades, and tenure review, and new courses to prepare for and only two weeks break for Christmas here—where is the time to recreate that wholeness for my family. I know that all of us know how to create integrated lives with smooth transitions, but in the pressured world we live in the creation of such integration and elegance costs either energy or money.... But then I think that M and E's pre-Christmas memories will be of coloring in Mom's office while she does grades and of students and faculty popping in to give good Christmas wishes.... I must not be dismayed if what they have is different than what I had. Merry Christmas to new traditions for ourselves and our children. When my children sing DECK THE HALLS they'll think of academic halls and posting grades and I want that to be as beautiful a memory for them as my own memories are for me. (December, 1990)*

What this passage suggests is that in "walking our talk," we do struggle toward the creation of new narrative frames which will allow us to bring into harmony all the disparate and fragmented elements of our lives. Part of the new traditions we want to create includes giving new meaning and sometimes new functions to traditional elements of teacher education programs; sometimes it involves arranging experience in different ways. In every case the reforms we want mean the creation of new traditions. But this is a dream image—it is one hoped and wished for but not one being currently lived. It suggests permanence in a future time when grown up children retell the story of their childhood. It hopes for new traditions for ourselves and all that we work with. We struggle to tell this plot not in distant reflection but in the immediate living it out in our lives, now. In the future it will become the story our students tell of what teacher education is.

Conclusions

We have presented here negotiated text as an analysis of our experience as beginning teacher educators. Through the literature on teacher education reform and the lives of new faculty members in academics generally, and teacher education specifically, we discovered the themes that underlie the day-to-day difficulties, crises, and events we faced. As we confronted tradition, we became more sensitive to the problematics of our own students—now teachers—who struggled to transform the systems where they taught. Our overall experience as beginning teacher educators was indeed a balancing act. Through it we have become convinced that the teaching of teachers is a vital moral endeavor. Our students will be the educators of the universities' future students. Just our understanding of this has impressed on us the need for teacher educators to reflect in their teaching the kinds of teaching they want their own students to learn.

Just as importantly, we have become overwhelmingly aware of the intertwining of the institutional layers with which we must interact. As we make progress in developing communities of teacher educators studying their own practice—we are heartened. As we see our own students growing as teachers, we are heartened. As we begin to have opportunities to lead and shape policy in our own institutions for teacher education reform, we are heartened. But as we do all these same things we are also discouraged. We see some of our valiant students abandoning commitments and dreams they articulated while they were with us as the press of tradition invades their teaching. We feel the institutional grip and the weight of tradition. We experience the power of systems to attempt to reproduce all that we hated. We understand how little we know of the contexts and processes of becoming teachers. The hope, as we see it, is that we are willing to continue to struggle to walk the talk we believe in and value in all aspects of our practice and continue to produce research accounts of our own development and that of our students. As we do this, we find others willing to join the work and begin their own journey as teachers of teachers.

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