Chapter 19
Changing Conceptions of Teaching as a Profession: Personal Reflections

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This chapter provides me with an opportunity to reflect on the concept that has constituted the *leitmotif* of my academic writing: the concept of *profession*. This has been linked throughout with my two other main interests. One is the nature of the school as an organization, and particularly the relationship between teacher autonomy and bureaucratic control. The other is the leadership and management of schools, and particularly the role of school leaders in supporting teachers in their professional task.

In retrospect, my approach has entailed a constant engagement with a series of dilemmas, the fundamental dilemma being rooted in the tension between two modes of organizing work in public sector organizations: the *professional* and the *bureaucratic* (*managerial*). Although I had throughout my writing implicitly adopted a 'dilemmas' approach, I hadn't pondered on the nature of dilemmas until I encountered the following: "Dilemmas are neither problems to be solved nor issues to be faced. Problems are presumed solvable; issues can be negotiated and thus are resolvable. As we use the term in this chapter, we assert that dilemmas reveal deeper, more fundamental dichotomies. They present situation with equally valued alternatives. As a consequence, dilemmas cannot be solved or resolved" (Ogawa et al., 1999: 278).

An acceptance of the endemic nature of dilemmas does not preclude the making of choices or the expression of values. However, it does entail being sensitive to ambiguity, contingency and – clumsy word but important concept – 'satisficing' (March and Simon, 1958). I take the view that one of the defining characteristics of members of a profession is the ability to function effectively in uncertain and indeterminate situations. Some might argue that a sensitivity to ambiguity and contingency marks the beginning of the slippery path to relativism. However, I long ago made peace with myself over the foundationalism-relativism tension. I am unable to take a definitive position on whether or not 'truth' exists beyond consciousness, and from the massive and growing literature on this topic it would seem that many others are in the same boat. I nevertheless believe that it is worthwhile to maintain the Enlightenment position with regard to the search for truth without holding great hopes of a philosophical solution. Finality on this matter is elusive and we must live with ambiguities and dilemmas. Schumpeter (1942) wrote: "To realize the relative validity of one's convictions and evidence and argument and yet to stand for them unflinchingly, is what

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distinguishes the civilized man [sic] from the barbarian". To which Berlin (1969: 170) adds: "To demand more than this is perhaps a deep and incurable metaphysical need, and more dangerous, moral and political immaturity".

Although this chapter, and my writings generally, engage with ultimately irresolvable dilemmas, there is no pretence that they are value-free. And, since values are expressed throughout this chapter, they might as well be made explicit at the outset. They can be summarized as follows: The quality of education is ultimately in the hands of teachers and hence the professionalization and professional development of teachers are central to the improvement of education; moreover the core function of leadership and management in schools is to support teachers in their professional task. Observation of changing conceptions of teaching as a profession over my career has led me to the conclusion that the educational reform movement constituted a salutary corrective to the somewhat romantic – some would argue ideological – 'idea of a profession' which had previously prevailed, but that the response was an overcompensation that led to *managerialism* – management to excess, management as an ideology embodying the view that not only *can* everything be managed but that everything *should* be managed. This excess would appear to have had a deleterious effect on teaching. It has especially had a negative impact on the diffuse role of the teacher – a role that eludes the usual measures of accountability – as well as considerably reducing the work satisfaction of many teachers.

Teaching as a Profession: Key Dilemmas

This section begins with a defence of the viability of the concept of *profession*. Each of the subsequent sections focuses on the dilemmas embedded in the terms: *professionalization*, *professional and professionalism*.

Profession: In Defence of a Concept

It may seem odd to feel the need to defend a concept that has a lengthy history (see Freidson, 1986), remains in widespread use in English, and has its equivalents in other languages. Yet it has to be accepted that *profession* falls into the category of an 'essentially contested concept', thus the 'idea of a profession' as a universal phenomenon on which there is consensus ultimately has to yield to a more relativistic view. Yet this does not detract from its continuing value. There are three reasons for sustaining an academic interest in the word.

There is a strong *semantic* case for persevering with the concept of a profession.

As it remains a term in widespread use in public discourse, it is vital to explore just how the term is deployed. *Profession* represents an aspiration for many occupations and for individual members because it offers psychic rewards and the more tangible rewards of remuneration and congenial work conditions. Thus the word

has a symbolic function connoting the worth of one's occupation and hence one's self. It also has an ideological function since it is deployed as a counter by occupational elites in their quest for enhanced status – and, contrariwise, by those who would seek to thwart such aspirations There is also the issue of the ways in which *profession* can have a denotative meaning. For example, in some countries profession is a legal status with accompanying rights and responsibilities, and in many countries official statistics classify certain occupations as professions (though, of course, it could be argued that this is a social construct).

There is a *heuristic* case for persevering with the concept. It provides access to a particular configuration of educational issues relating to knowledge, skill, power, status, ethics, control, practice, development and leadership thereby enhancing our understanding of them. But, beyond enhancing understanding, the concept generates debates about the future and informs the formulation of policy. *Profession* is not the only way of framing these issues, but it is a powerful one.

Finally there remains a *normative* case for the concept of a profession. Given the essentially contested nature of the term, it may appear as quixotic – not to say philosophically dubious – to retain *profession* as connoting an ideal to which teaching and other public service occupations might aspire. The meanings of profession and professionalism are undoubtedly contingent but it does not follow that one need adopt the position that *profession* is inevitably so relativistic a concept that it retains little value. A universally accepted definition and an agreed set of criteria may be elusive but this would be to apply an impossibly demanding standard.

My own stance towards the concept of profession has been a mixture of the semantic, the heuristic and the normative. From my earliest writings I have taken the view that: "the term 'profession' is not a precise descriptive concept but more an evaluative concept" (Hoyle, 1969a: 80). Despite the fact that much that I have written has been concerned with the semantic and the heuristic it has also been suffused with values and despite my acceptance of many of the arguments of the critics of the idea of a profession, I have always held that, as T. H. Marshall put it: "Professionlism is an idea based on the real character of certain services. It is not a clever invention of selfish minds" (Marshall, 1963: 166).

Engaging with 'profession' entails confronting a number of endemic dilemmas. The following sections address such dilemmas from a heuristic, a semantic and a normative position.

Professionalization

The central dilemma of professionalization is that it has two components which may not always be as tightly linked as is often assumed. This has been of continuing interest since my initial exploration of this dilemma (Hoyle, 1974). I there drew a distinction between these two components. One I would now retrospectively term the *institutional* component of professionalization connoting the collective aspiration of an occupation to meet and sustain certain criteria: strong boundary, academic

credentials, a university connection, a self-governing professional body, practitioner autonomy, a code of ethics and so forth. The other I would now refer to as the *service* component connoting the process whereby the knowledge, skill and commitment of practitioners is continuously enhanced in the interests of clients. Although these two processes are often presented as proceeding *pari passu*, this need not necessarily occur. Their divergence has long been the focus of critics of the teaching profession (e.g.: "It is time that teachers started to demand for themselves, not more money, but higher professional standards. One of the problems with their occupation is that they want the trappings of a profession but not its consequences" [*Spectator* leader: 22 April 1995]).

The paradigm professions of medicine and law established such institutions over a lengthy period of time. With 'the rise of professional society' (Perkin, 1989) from the late nineteenth century, many other occupations, including teaching, aspired to professional status not least because of the benefits that such recognition appeared to offer. The professionalization project of these aspirant occupations took the alleged criteria of a profession – theoretical knowledge, academic credentials, professional body, code of ethics, etc. – as the benchmarks of their aspirations. The implicit, and frequently explicit, claim was that meeting these criteria was to the benefit of clients as well as to the benefit of practitioners.

The rhetoric of bodies representing the professions was accorded academic legitimacy by the functionalist theory of the professions developed by sociologists in the United States. The basis of this theory was that the professions performed a distinctive social function in the exercise of which judgements concerning the interests of clients often had to be made in conditions of uncertainty. The autonomy necessary to make these judgements had the sanction of academic credentials and lengthy training and was guaranteed by a professional body consisting of members of the profession. There had long existed a more sceptical view of the professions – *vide* George Bernard Shaw's famous aphorism that a profession is "a conspiracy against the laity" – but it was only in the 1960s that there emerged a systematic critique of the professions. Briefly the argument was that professionalization was driven by an self-interested ideology which exaggerated the knowledge claims of the professions, promoted autonomy as a means of avoiding accountability, and proclaimed a code of ethics that was more concerned with the interests of practitioners rather than the interests of clients (see Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988).

However, the subsequent 'reform' of the professions stemmed less from this academic critique than from a political critique centring on the growing costs of public services, the fact that the organized professions had become perceived as constituting a constraint on market forces, and that provider interests were prevailing over client (consumer) interests. This generated an accountability movement designed to reduce the power of the professions. In terms of the dilemma which is the focus of this section, the *institutional* dimension of professionalization was considered to have overwhelmed the *service* dimension. The accountability movement had the purpose of redressing this balance. What ensued has been differently interpreted as de-professionalization (Hoyle, 1980) or 'the new professionalism', an issue to be discussed further below.

The professionalization trajectory of the teaching profession in Britain followed the general pattern of seeking to meet the benchmarks derived from the established professions. However, the characteristics of these professions – self-employed, autonomous practitioners remunerated on a fee basis – could only function to a limited degree as a model for an occupation such as teaching whose members worked in organizations and whose salaries were largely out of public funds, Occupations in the second wave of professionalization confronted the choice between two major strategies: essentially the 'professional body' strategy and the 'trade union' strategy. Although during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries several attempts were made to establish a professional body for teachers these foundered and advancement depended largely on a 'union' strategy combined with a 'professional' rhetoric. Thus there was a tendency on the part of government and local education authorities to make an initial presumption of self-interest in teacher union proposals to enhance quality but they accepted the professional rhetoric of teacher unions when it was politically expedient to do so (see Gosden, 1972; Lawn,1987; Dale, 1989; Grace, 1987). For an account of recent relationships between teachers and the state see McCulloch et al. (2000).

Nevertheless, the organized teaching profession in England and Wales can be judged to have been reasonably successful in terms of advancing the *institutional* dimension of the professionalization project. By the late 1960s, which marked the apotheosis the professionalization project of many occupations, teaching had achieved a strong boundary around those with a licence to teach, four year programmes of education and training, an all-graduate profession, a growing body of research, a relatively high degree of teacher autonomy, and a powerful voice in the shaping of educational policy (Manzer, 1970) – but no self-regulating professional body – at least in England – until 2000. The apotheosis of the institutional dimension of teacher professionalization was reached in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The accountability movement, later termed the educational reform movement, emerged in the late 1970s and proceeded apace under Conservative and New Labour Governments. From an *institutional* perspective, the changes brought about by the educational reform movement can be viewed as de-professionalization: reduced teacher autonomy, the marginalization of teacher associations, the weakening of the links with the academy in terms of initial training and continuous professional development and so forth. The reform movement represented a massive shift in the locus of accountability from self-regulating professional bodies to a mixture of managerial and market forms.

The reform movement was the outcome of a growing discontent with schooling. The basic problem was that the high level of school and teacher autonomy facilitated a shift in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in a direction that confused and alienated many politicians, parents and some teachers, and generated a concern about standards. This shift can be summarized in the metaphor of 'open-ness'. Existing boundaries – between school subjects, between teacher and taught, between categories of pupil, between teacher roles, between components of the school day, between school and community and even, in the case of new 'open plan' schools, between the physical components of the school – were eroded or

became more permeable. These changes denoted a radical shift in the nature of schooling towards what would later be termed constructionism. However, their implementation depended on new patterns of school leadership and new forms of professionalism amongst teachers. These meta-changes proved to be difficult to achieve in the short term and problems inevitably ensued. Moreover these changes in schooling were predicated upon quite fundamental changes in society as captured in the title of a prescient article by Bernstein (1967): 'Open schools, open society?' The interrogative was settled by the reform movement: radical change was indeed to occur but it took a different direction.

The effect of the reform movement has been to reinforce in terms of policy and practice the conceptual distinction between the *institutional* and the *service* dimensions of professionalization. It can be argued that deprofessionalization has occurred on the institutional dimension but one can be less categorical in relation to the service dimension. It is perhaps paradoxical that teachers have increasingly engaged in professional development activities that, though they may have enhanced their skills and thus been of benefit to pupils, have been at odds with traditional criteria of a profession, particularly those relating to academic knowledge (see Hoyle, 1982a; Hoyle and John (1995)). There can be little doubt that institutional professionalization has more or less run its course in Britain and there is little opportunity for the organized teaching profession to make further progress on this dimension, in fact, it is in retreat. The current emphasis on the service dimension of professionalization has entailed improving the skills and competence of teachers in the direction of ensuring that they become more 'professional'. This shift was perhaps timely but, of course, much turns on the changing connotations of *professional* and this will be discussed later in this chapter. This changing emphasis has been labelled, 'the new professionalism' which is used variously and by no means consistently (see Sykes, 1999 for a review) The main issue on which connotations vary is the degree to which the new professionalism interpenetrates with the new managerialism.

Professional

Protagonists of the reform movement argue that as a result of the reforms teachers have become more 'professional'. This apparent paradox arises because of the changing use of the term *professional* as both noun and adjective. There has in recent years occurred a semantic shift whereby the term has now acquired connotations of 'efficiency', 'competence', 'detachment' and even 'ruthlessness'. In the process of the reform movement 'professional' has become uncoupled from the concept of a 'profession' and has assumed a confluence of two modes of organizing work: the bureaucratic and the professional. In the process of this confluence management has become the more powerful stream and 'professionalism' has to a degree become assimilated into managerialism. I sought to capture this changed conception of *professional* as both as a noun and an adjective by noting a number of dimensions of change (Hoyle, 1995) I summarized these as follows:

> *…to be professional is to have acquired a set of skills through competency-based training which enables a practitioner to deliver, according to contract, a customer-led service in compliance with accountability procedures collaboratively implemented and managerially assured.*
>
> (Hoyle, 1995: 60 amended)

This is clearly something of a caricature and in the original paper I conceded that it was deliberately 'overstated'. Nevertheless there remains a tension which is caught in the conflicting connotations of *professional*: with politicians associating the term with efficiency and teachers associating the term with autonomy. This is not to suggest that teachers are unconcerned with efficiency. The likelihood is that teachers attach different meanings to what it is to be considered *professional*. At one level to be professional is to conform to the basic expectations of the teacher's role in relation to, for example, punctuality, marking work, completing reports, dealing with pupils and dealing with colleagues. Violation of such norms is dubbed 'unprofessional'. At another level to be professional is to exercise autonomy in making judgements in relation to clients. At a third level, *to be a professional* is to command the deference that is considered due to a member of a socially-important occupation. Professional workplace studies have suggested that teachers are not too preoccupied with 'being a professional' in terms of the traditional discourse of profession but are focussed more on 'acting professionally' (Helsby, 1999).

Professionalism

This section provides an opportunity for me to reflect upon a dilemma which I first explored more than thirty years ago and which still intrigues me. I hypothesized a distinction between *restricted* and *extended professionality* (Hoyle, 1974). A *restricted professional* was construed as a teacher for whom teaching was an intuitive activity, whose perspective was restricted to the classroom, who engaged little with wider professional reading or activities, relied on experience as a guide to success, and greatly valued classroom autonomy. An *extended professional* was construed as a teacher for whom teaching was a rational activity, who sought to improve practice through reading and through engaging in continuous professional development, who was happily collegial, and who located classroom practice within a larger social framework.

Many innovations in curriculum, pedagogy, grouping and assessment in the 1960s and early 1970s were predicated upon the enhancement of the professionality of teachers in the direction of *extended professionality* and this was my own value preference. However, some retrospective comments on the original formulation are appropriate.

There are clearly many problems associated with this formulation. The use of the term *professionality* was unfortunate. It was used in contradistinction to *professionalism* – a term used to connote the strategies used by teachers' organizations to enhance status. However, the only people who sustained this terminology were myself and some of my students! I have therefore now reverted to the single term *professionalism*.

The use of the term *restricted* was also unfortunate since it carried an negative connotation yet restricted professionals may well be classroom practitioners of the highest professional skill; it was only the *scope* of professionalism that was restricted. It was not made clear whether the two kinds of professionalism were to be treated as ends of a continuum or whether they constituted different 'factors'. This ambiguity has implications for the policy question of whether extended professionalism can be achieved without undermining classroom skills. Nor was it made clear whether the terms referred to behaviour, perceptions, expectations, or prescriptions. Finally, at the time, the concepts were not empirically validated, though subsequent studies have attested to their validity.

In view of the above problems it is highly surprising that the distinction has remained in use for over thirty years, referred to in passing in many publications but also incorporated in empirical studies (see, e.g. Nias, 1989; Evans, 1998; Evans et al., 1994; Jogmans et al., 1998; Osborn et al., 2000; van Veen et al., 2001. This suggests that whatever weakness the formulation might have, it has retained a resonance for many subsequent students of the teaching profession.

The policy implication of the original formulation was the extension of teacher professionalism without detriment to classroom skills. Initially, the initiative for extending the professionalism of teachers lay with heads and teachers themselves supported by HMI and the local advisory service with the expectation that teachers would both enhance their skills and broaden their perspectives. However, as with so much else, this aspiration was overtaken by the changes ushered in by the reform movement. Ironically, the reform movement not only encouraged extended professionalism, but *required* it. Equally ironical was the requirement of what might be termed *extended-but-constrained* professionalism. This ostensibly entailed teachers specifically relating classroom activity to the school charter or mission statement, conforming to appraisal procedures, reading a plethora of policy and curriculum documents, and participating in school-based professional development.

This brings out the paradox of the 'restricted' nature of the new 'extended professionalism'. One must again emphasize that it was probably too optimistic to assume that the great majority of teachers would choose to transform themselves into extended professionals. At least the reform movement has ensured that it has become difficult for a teacher to ignore the wider aspects of the role; as van Veen et al. (2001) demonstrate, it is now difficult to identify *any* restricted professionals in teaching as originally conceptualized. Ironically the changes in the provision of professional development as an element of the reform movement, particularly its problem-solving focus, is congruent with the proposals advanced for extending professionalism in the 1960s and 1970s but, as so often has been the case, the scope for teacher agency has been reduced resulting in an excessive swing towards one pole of the endemic dilemma whereby 'extended professionalism' is marked by the *expansion* of the teacher's role (the requirement that teachers will engage in many more activities related to accountability) and by the *intensification* of the role (the requirement that teachers will devote increased amounts of time and energy to prescribed tasks). There is thus a case for conceptualising a bifurcation *within* the category of extended professionalism, one branch of which might be termed *constrained*

professionalism and the other *enabled professionalism* (see John in Chapter 1 of this volume).

Professionals in Organizations

In this section I outline the influences on my perspective on educational organizations and outline its implications for this core dilemma arising from the two major modes of organizing work

Loose and Tight Coupling

Organization theory is concerned with such social units as schools, universities, prisons, hospitals, factories and so forth. I have had an interest in the school as organization since the early 1960s (Hoyle, 1965). The term *organization* can be misleading since it can be taken to connote the ontological priority of structure. However, I have always assumed that organization theory does not preclude a perspective that embraces the *emergent* properties of organizations, particularly the view that structures can emerge from practice. I have also assumed that organization theory can embrace a number of frames, for example the structural, human relations, political and symbolic frames proposed by Bolman and Deal (1984).

An endemic dilemma characterizes organizations staffed by professionals. This stems from the interpenetration of professional and bureaucratic (managerial) ways of organizing work. Configurations resulting from the interaction between the these two principles varies according to organizational type, contextual factors and leadership style. The shifting nature of these configurations has been the focus of many studies of schools as organizations. In an influential review Bidwell (1965) noted the ‘structural looseness’ of the school and Lortie (1969) noted ‘the balance between control and autonomy’ in the school’, but probably best-known is Weick’s (1976) metaphor of *loosely coupled system*. Typically, the headteacher undertook the task of co-ordination, determined the general direction of the school and maintained relationships with the community. There was limited teacher involvement in these tasks. On the other hand, teachers enjoyed a relatively high degree of autonomy in matters of curriculum and method.

I was wholly committed neither to the system paradigm nor to the phenomenological paradigm – elaborated in relation to educational administration by Greenfield (1975). In organizational terms this meant a commitment to a bureaucratic component which was sufficiently robust to provide structure and support for teachers yet provided sufficient space for the exercise of agency in conditions of relative autonomy. I explored this largely through a micropolitical frame (Hoyle, 1982b, 1986, 1999), a frame that has generally remained underdeveloped both theoretically and empirically.

In relation to the structure-autonomy dilemma I perhaps hardly need repeat at this point my view that the constructionist trend in the 1960s and early 1970s led to excesses – which high profile events such as the case of William Tyndale primary school (Auld, 1976) came to symbolize. But that the excesses of rebalancing were based upon an over-rationalistic conception of the nature of schools and of what they might become.

Ambiguity

I could be very wrong but I believe that there are inherent limits to managerialism in schools and that the movement will recede, though it is likely leave a strong residue of management with an emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. Relentless managerialism is based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of organizations in general and in the nature of the school in particular. My initial reading in the field of organizational theory in the early 1960s led to me to the work of James March which has remained an important influence. In *Organizations*, March and Simon (1958) explored the limits to rational decision-making in organizations without throwing rationality out the window. But I became very much taken by his notion of *ambiguity* (See March, 1999; March and Olsen, 1976).March writes:

> *ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity or consistency in reality, causality or intentionality. Ambiguous situations are situations that cannot be coded precisely into mutually exhaustive and exclusive categories. Ambiguous purposes are intentions that cannot be specified clearly. Ambiguous identities are identities whose rules or occasions for application are imprecise or contradictory. Ambiguous outcomes are outcomes whose characteristics or implications are fuzzy.*
>
> (March, 1994: 178)

In relation to educational organizations March has explored the ambiguities in the relationship between goals, structures, technology and outcomes. His explorations of how organizations actually work forces us, through the use of some telling metaphors, to question many deeply held assumptions. He writes of organizations as 'running backwards" in the sense that rationality is imposed *post factum* on features that have emerged from a complex set of interactions. Thus decisions often not 'made' but 'happen' and solutions often precede problems, His famous *garbage can* metaphor draws our attention to the fact that problems, solutions, participants, and choice opportunities are all in the mix together than being rationally sequenced and that universities are *organized hierarchies* in which order emerges from activities.

This approach is so counter to linear approaches to the management of organizations that it is initially difficult to accept and, despite its importance for *understanding* organizations, its contribution to the skills of *managing* organizations comes, if at all, only through deep reflection. Introducing these counter-intuitive ideas to students of management is initially confusing. However, in terms of understanding organizations it seriously questions managerialism. A latent function of the reform movement has been the reduction of ambiguity, particularly the ambiguities that stemmed from the constructionist approach to curriculum, pedagogy and organiza-

tion that occurred in the 1960s and early 1970s, hence the emphasis on objectives, targets, measured outcomes, etc. But unless education is to be reduced to a narrow and specific set of outcomes, the diverse and diffuse goals of schools will continue to create ambiguity and hence, in my view, call to the fore the professional judgement of teachers.

Samizdat Professionalism

Mike Wallace and I have argued (Hoyle and Wallace, 2005, 2007. See also Chapter 19 by Wallace in this volume) that a fundamental irony of these educational times is that many national policies have been saved from unintended consequences through teachers exercising what we have termed '*samizdat* professionalism' in the interests of pupils in contingent contexts. There is no empirical evidence that directly supports the existence of this form of 'underground' professionalism. However, we have inferred its presence from a number of case studies (e.g. Helsby, 1999; Moore et al., 2002; Osborn et al., 2000; Pollard et al., 1994; Woods, 1995; Woods et al., 1997) conducted in the era of reform. These studies suggest that many heads and teachers develop strategies of adaptation whereby they 'work round' the requirements of policy and management and do their best by their pupils based on their professional judgement of contingent conditions – what we have termed *ironies of adaptation*. We have also inferred that many heads and teachers have succeeded in this through what we have termed *ironies of presentation*, strategies whereby they ostensibly appear to meet the demands of accountability but allow themselves space in which to make judgements in what they see as the best interest of pupils. Such heads and teachers thereby keep alive some of the traditional aspects of professionalism in unpropitious circumstances.

It would be unwise, however, to over-romanticise *samizdat* professionalism. There is no valid evidence of the incidence of such professionalism and there can be little doubt that there are many teachers who do not act in this way. Nor can it be assumed that the professionalism of teachers is all of the same kind, nor that the judgements made by teachers on what is best for pupils in contingent circumstances is sound. One is saying no more than it would appear that many teachers are striving to sustain a client-centred professionalism despite a shift towards a system-centred managerialism. If such is the case it gives hope for the future development of teacher professionalism.

Teaching: Careers, Status and Satisfaction

The confluence of the principles of professionalism and managerialism has had an impact on occupational identities. The tension between professional and managerial identities was felt long before the reform movement as promotion took practitioners into administrative roles and away from front-line professional practice. But this tension has been greatly exacerbated in recent years with the increasing pressure on

individuals at almost every level of a profession to adopt a managerial identity. Coping with this tension is an individual matter but political trends are leading to an emphasis on the rewards of managerial identities. There are undoubtedly increased material rewards for managerialism but this may be at the heavy const of psychic rewards. This section briefly explores some of the implications of managerialism for career, status and satisfaction.

The Lure of Entrepreneurial Careers

As late as the mid-1950s there was a very limited career structure in teaching and little teacher turnover resulting from promotion. Teachers tended to remain in the same school for many years, often for a professional lifetime. This changed with the Burnham pay agreement of 1956 which introduced a range of salary differentials and thus an extended career hierarchy. I subsequently argued that the stratification of teaching was likely to increase work dissatisfaction (Hoyle, 1969b). At the time these changes generated discussion about the irony arising from the fact that a successful teaching career almost inevitably led a teacher out of teaching. I later made a distinction between two forms of career 'success': success in the task of teaching and success in terms of career advancement (Hoyle, 1981) and noted that the increasing salience of career advancement could re-shape the professionalism of the teacher.

With the reform movement a successful career in education has increasingly become signified by perceived success as a manager. This applies not only to managerial positions but also to professional roles which have become increasingly specialized. In some areas this has led to the phenomenon of 'a solution in search of a problem': if one is trained and credentialled to engage with a particular set of problems then one will be tempted to 'find' such problems. The reform movement has generated many new roles in the accountability and surveillance areas. The old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" must now be replaced by the adage: "If it ain't broke, fix it anyway!"

There is doubt about the motivation provided by career enhancement. Very few professionals will be indifferent to career advancement but there is a need to be aware of the costs, and perhaps it is this awareness that is leading to an alleged reluctance of many teachers to seek promotion to a headship. Teachers need to be aware of the chimera of enhanced status.

Status

The professionalization project has been very much a matter of attaining, retaining and enhancing status. It has long suited governments to hold out the possibility of enhanced status in their negotiations with teachers. Sagging morale and the need to

recruit and retain teachers has led to increased attention being paid to the status of teachers, at least in terms of rhetoric. Thus in 1999 the then Prime Minister spoke of the need 'to improve the status and morale of teachers' (Tony Blair the *Guardian* 19 January 1999). However, *status* is a complex term with different connotations and I have taken the view that an appreciation of the possibility of teachers enhancing their status requires distinctions to be made *within* the overall category of status. I have hypothesized a distinction between three dimensions of status: *occupational prestige, status* – used in a specific rather than a general sense, and *esteem* (see Hoyle, 2001 for a full discussion).

Occupational prestige is used to denote the relative rank accorded an occupation in a hierarchy if occupations. The most common method for determining this rank is to have members of the population rank a number of occupational titles according to some criterion of 'higher' or 'lower'. A large number of studies of prestige have been undertaken in countries with different political systems and at different levels of economic development. These studies, despite some individual variations, show a surprisingly high level of inter-correlation (typically +0.93) between prestige scales. Although there are intra-professional differences within teaching, the profession as such is typically at the lower end of the upper quartile of the range of occupations – therefore not 'low' in any general sense but lower than the occupations generally taken as a reference group of aspiration: medicine, law, architecture, etc. The relatively invariant character of prestige suggests that the possibility of teaching enhancing its relative prestige is remote.

Occupational status is the global term for social standing. However, it is here used in the limited sense of official recognition, in this context the formal recognition of the status of teaching as a profession. Status can be denoted in a number of ways. For example, in some systems *profession* is a legal status having certain rights and responsibilities and teaching has been accorded such a status Another indicator is the allocation of teaching to the various categories of 'profession' in official statistics. There is perhaps some – limited – scope for the enhancement of the status of teaching in this sense. What is perhaps of more significance to teachers is the semantic issue: whether their occupation is conventionally referred to as a profession by politicians, commentators and the general public. This is very difficult to determine since the term *profession* is used symbolically or ideologically to claim – or withhold – status.

Occupational esteem is here used to denote the regard in which on occupation is held by the public by virtue of the qualities that members bring to their task. In the case of teachers these could be grouped into the categories of dedication, care and competence. Esteem is complicated by the fact that it is determined not only by the direct experience of clients but also by the representation of the occupation in various media and as directly experienced by the public. This can often result in the esteem accorded to teachers on the basis of experience being more positive than media representations.

These three dimensions of 'status' in the global sense can vary independently. *Prestige* is the most intractable and teaching would always struggle to enhance its prestige because of factors endemic in the teacher's work. There is the long-term possibility of enhancing the *status* of teaching, perhaps more so in developing

than developed countries. The enhancement of the *esteem* of teachers is a possibility and very much depends on the enhancement of client-centred professionalism by teachers themselves. But enhanced esteem does not necessarily lead to enhanced prestige: in some Asian and African countries high esteem is bestowed on the teaching role but prestige rankings in those countries conform to the usual hierarchy.

It is sometimes suggested that the status – in the general sense – of teachers would be enhanced to the degree that they take on managerial roles. Perhaps some teachers believe this to be the case and this would account for the apparent fondness for managerial-sounding titles. But it is highly unlikely that managerialism would constitute a basis for improved prestige since the status of management as a profession is ambiguous. *Management* does not, perhaps, have the same aura as *profession* – and to invoke the highly diffuse term *leadership* does not help. By re-badging themselves as managers, educators are unlikely to enhance their prestige, status or esteem. Parents are much more likely to accord esteem to teachers as teachers and not as managers, and even headteachers are much more likely to be accorded esteem on the basis of perceptions of professional commitment to pupils and their parents rather than on their display of managerial efficiency.

Satisfaction

This is not the place for a review of the extensive literature on the work motivation and job satisfaction of teachers (see Evans, 1998, for a discussion). I want only to claim the continuing relevance of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959). This theory has generated a substantial literature, some it critical. Nevertheless the basic notion that the factors that generate work satisfaction are relatively independent of the factors that generate work dissatisfaction is an important one. The majority of studies of teachers make clear that by far their greatest source of satisfaction derives from *teaching*. The two major sources of teacher dissatisfaction are pupil indiscipline and managerialism.

Professional Leadership

This phrase has two connotations which point to a key dilemma. Professional leadership can refer to the professionalism of leaders; it can also refer to the process of leading other professionals. It might be assumed that the two processes are so intertwined that there is little point in making this distinction. Not so. An irony of policy is that just as teaching was being deprofessionalized, school management was actually being professionalized. The process of professionalizing school leaders and managers has followed the familiar trajectory: knowledge base, credentials, a technical language, and professional associations – which had in to a degree preceded the reform movement. However, there were limits to this institutional

professionalization. Although the restraints which emanated from local education authorities were largely removed, and headteachers thereby enjoyed increased autonomy as leaders of 'self-managing schools', in practice this autonomy was limited by the accountability procedures emanating from central government reflecting the dominant strategy of change of central decision-making and local implementation. There was pressure on headteachers to demonstrate their 'professional managerialism' if the were to advance their careers.

The relationship between 'management' and 'leadership' has been the focus of interminable conceptual analysis that needn't be rehearsed here yet again. However it is worthwhile noting a shift in the metaphors of management (Hoyle and Wallace, 2006). The early years of the reform movement saw the incorporation into educational discourse of a range of managerialist metaphors such as *efficiency*, *objectives*, *resource allocation*, *performance monitoring*, *accountability* (metaphors taken from a single sentence in Coopers and Lybrand, 1988). However, from the mid-1980s the metaphors of management were 'gentled' by an overlay of the metaphors of 'leadership', 'culture' 'vision', 'mission' and so forth. School leadership was depicted as 'transformational' notwithstanding the fact that heads had very little scope for 'transforming' schools outside the parameters set by policy and constrained by accountability measures. There is little doubt that there has been inspirational leadership in schools in difficult circumstances but this has largely been concerned with doing the basic things better rather than transforming the goals of the school. It has also depended upon building on the professional leadership acts of teachers that emerge from practice. In short, it has entailed fostering the unobtrusive professionalism of teachers rather than seeking to convert them into manage-ment professionals.

The value of this approach to leadership has been captured by the protagonists of 'distributed leadership' (e.g. Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2004) Mike Wallace and myself (Hoyle and Wallace, 2005) have used the metaphor of *temperate leadership* to capture the pattern of leadership that is most likely to support teachers as professionals. This would be characterized by a reduction of managerial activity, supporting teachers by taking the strain and absorbing the stress, and by focussing on local, incremental improvements. This unheroic approach to leadership is less likely to stir the blood than an appeal to transformational leadership. There is a certain incongruity in unfurling a standard bearing the slogan: "Moderates of the world, unite!" But this approach to an improvement in the quality of education through increasing teacher professionalism is congruent with the nature of education as a social institution that has its basic, relatively unchanging 'grammar' and, as we have seen time and again, is not amenable to rapid large scale change.

Conclusion: Possibilities

This reflection on forty years engagement with the idea of teaching as a profession suggests that there is an endemic dilemma entailed in the relationship between two modes of organizing teachers' work: the bureaucratic (managerial) and the

professional. At the heart of this is the balance between autonomy and control. Through institutional professionalization from the late nineteenth century until the early 1970s teaching had been moving towards the 'professional' pole of the dilemma, particularly in terms of autonomy. However, this came to be seen by politicians and others as inimical to the interests of clients (consumers) leading to the initiation of a movement towards greater accountability – the educational reform movement. However, my view is that this movement, by initiating managerialism – management to excess – has had deleterious consequences, not least for the creativity and work satisfaction of teachers. As the quality of education is ultimately a matter of quality teaching this is not insignificant. The current problem turns on whether there can be a return to a new professionalism that does not equate to the new managerialism.

It is unlikely that there will be a return to the days of high teacher autonomy. Nevertheless, although there are few solid indications of a deceleration in the reform movement, there are straws in the wind that might presage a shift in perspective that will provide scope for the further development of teacher professionalism. All the indicators show that there are high levels of teacher dissatisfaction with the continuing policy frenzy and the managerialism that accompanies this. This has not led thus far to any great a problem of recruitment and retention because, it would appear, teachers still derive satisfaction from teaching itself and, I would suggest, from the scope that is still offered for *samizdat* professionalism. Politicians are conscious of the level of teacher dissatisfaction but tend to treat this as resolvable by reducing teachers' workload – though the irony is that that solutions to the workload problem appear to have generated new kinds of workload.

A second possibility is that the economic cost of accountability and surveillance will become prohibitive. Despite the much greater levels of investment in education and other social services, polls indicate that members of the general public appear not to perceive any substantial improvement in the system, although they appear to be reasonably satisfied with the service they receive directly from professionals. It is most unlikely that there will be a complete *demarche* from the accountability measures that have been put in place, nor should there be a complete abandonment as they have enhanced important aspects of what it means to be *professional*. There are limits to accountability in teaching and the distinction between *accountability* and *responsibility* (Hoyle and John, 1995) remains valid: professional responsibility reaching the areas that are to diffuse to be accessible to measures of accountability. But responsibility is predicated on *trust*. Perhaps the most challenging issue for politicians and professionals at the present time is how to resuscitate *trust*, an issue that is currently generating an important literature (see, e.g. O'Neill, 2002; Bottery, 2003).

A third possibility is that there may be a slow movement in public opinion which brings back into favour an earlier conception of schooling. At the present time the dominant concerns of parents centre on the labyrinthine complexities of school choice and test and exam scores. But there is perhaps a recessive concern about the loss of the wider goals of schooling and the diffuse nature of the teacher role in the face of increasing instrumentalism There is at the moment the lack of any widely-accepted metaphors to capture this aspiration. Some have suggested *community* as a preferable

metaphor to *organization* and certainly that is central to headteachers' talk about their schools. But, of course, *community* is itself is a hyper-referential concept.

Given that the institutions governing professional practice are now dominated by the state, the locus of professionalization is now the school. I have suggested that at the present time, to an unknown degree, this currently takes the form of *samizdat* professionalism. But teachers can go beyond this defensive stance. I am impressed by the approach that not only identifies the potential for advances in school-based professionalism, particularly the development of communities of professional practice (see Stoll and Louis, 2007) However, this school-based approach is not without its limitations. One is the ever-present tendency in these managerialist times to stifle emergent professionalism through the sequence: support leading to accountability leading to routinization. Another is the potential threat to teacher autonomy of 'collaboration', 'collegiality' or 'participation'. One of the enduring dilemmas of the teaching profession lies in the endemic tension between the two desirable principles of autonomy and collaboration. This was identified long ago by Lortie (1964) and has been explored by Little (1990) and Hargreaves (1994) amongst others. A third problem is that developments in professional practice may bloom and die in small communities of practice without making a contribution the professionalization of teachers more generally.

The current focus of work on teaching as a profession is, rightly, on the service aspects of professionalism. But there remains a need to engage with the future of the teaching profession as an institution. This is the focus of a number of chapters in this collection and others who are making distinctive contributions to this work include Sachs (2003), Bottery (1998), Eraut (1994), Whitty (1996), Darling-Hammond (1990), and Ginsburg (1997). In the light of the fact that there appears little scope for the teaching profession as an institution recovering its pre-accountability levels of power, influence and autonomy, perhaps the central question turns on the role of the profession in relation to the state on the one hand and in relation to families on the other hand. Of course, politicians would argue that the interests of the state and the interests of families are identical. This is dubious. Contrariwise there are those who argue for a coalition of the teaching profession and 'community' in opposition to the state. This, too, is dubious. The particularistic concerns of families with their own members may be at odds with the teaching profession's universalistic concern with all pupils. Notwithstanding the undoubted value of parent-teacher collaboration at the individual level, at the general level there remains a distinction between the lay and the professional.

Despite all the problems attaching to the concept, it is becoming even more vital to sustain the *idea of a profession*. The effect of the 'reform' project in politics is to replace professionalism by managerialism. Whether this is a conscious act of policy or a by-product of policy is a matter of current debate. Nevertheless, it is affecting all the professions. In my view, there remains the need for a principled defence of the idea of a profession. Elliott Freidson, the doyen of writers on the professions, has made a call for such in defence (Freidson, 2001):

> *It is aggressive in joining the attack on the pathologies that stem from material self-interest in the market place, and from the reduction of work and its products to formal procedure*

in bureaucracy. But it can no less aggressive in joining the attack on the practices or professionals that compromise the integrity of the model. Only by maintaining its own integrity can it leave no doubt of its superiority over the atomistic play of self-interest or the iron cage of formal rationality.

It is a call that resonates even more strongly today.

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