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ABSTRACT

Competing norms for justifying actions and decisions in teaching and their effects on the curriculum and teacher learning are discussed. Interpreting teaching as a moral action, this paper argues that a personal orientation (personal practice, feeling, or beliefs) removes teacher action and decisions from the realm of objective and professional criteria for judging appropriateness. Personal reasons carry little weight in considering the wisdom of teacher actions and decisions. In teaching, appropriate actions or decisions are tied to the public realm, constrained by both facts and collective norms. Role orientation can be defined as endorsing and using collective criteria or justifying teacher actions and decisions by reference to larger contexts--colleagues, curriculum, accountability, and teacher ideas of effective practice that recognize publicly accepted criteria. Excerpts from interviews with 20 elementary school teachers are analyzed to identify teacher orientations (personal versus role) and justifications (emphasis on the teacher, the student, or the curriculum). Studies are reviewed that show the problematic effects of a personal orientation in teaching on the curriculum and teacher learning. It is suggested that a personal orientation cuts teaching off from its moral roots, affecting both teacher and student learning adversely. (Author/JD)

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Abstract

This paper discusses competing norms for justifying actions and decisions in teaching and their effects on the enscted curriculum and teacher learning. It draws on philosophical analyses of justification and an interpretation of teaching as moral action to argue that a personal orientation (centering on personal practice, feeling, or beliefs) removes teacher action and decisions from the realm of criteria for judging appropriatenesa. Personal reaaons have explanatory value; they can be useful when understanding a given action is at issue. But personal reasons carry little weight in considering the wisdom of teacher actions and decisions. In teaching, appropriate actions or decisions are tied to the public realm where they are constrained by both facts and collective norms. Role orientation can be defined as endorsing and using collective criteria or justifying teacher actions and decisions by reference to a context beyond the teacher's own activities. Examples of such larger contexts are colleagues, the curriculum, accountability, and, importantly, teacher ideas of effective practice that recognize public, accepted criteria (e.g., student learning, adequate content coverage, equity). For purposes of illustrating the significance of competing norms in teaching, excerpts from interviews with 20 elementary school teachers are analyzed to identify teacher orientations (personal versus role) and justifications (emphasis on the teacher, the student, or the curriculum). Empirical studies are reviewed that show the problematic effects of a personal orientation in teaching on the enacted curriculum (secondary and elementary) and on teacher learning (teacher preparation, development, and adoption of innovations). These studies and philosophical arguments suggest that a personal orientation in teaching cuts teaching off from its moral roots, affecting both teacher and student learning adversely. Using the work of Thelen and Schwab, the paper examines how role

orientation may be related to productivity and legitimacy in teaching and explores the idea of the profession of teaching as a moral and learning community.

ROLE OVER PERSON:
JUSTIFYING TEACHER ACTION AND DECISIONS

Margret Buchmann[1]

What teachers do is neither natural nor necessary but based on choice. Since choice may harden into custom or dissipate into whim, we require justification; it is a way of assuring that practice will periodically pass muster. In justifying action or belief, people give reasons. The relevance of justifications depends on context. Personal reasons can be appropriate when understanding a given action is at issue, but they carry little weight in considering the wisdom of an action or decision.

Teaching is a context in which personal justifications are out of place because "teacher" is a role word. Roles embody some of our highest aspirations and provide social mechanisms for shaping action in their light. They are parts people play in society and do not describe individuals. Teacher obligations--those behaviors and dispositions that people have a right to expect--have, in fact, three important aspects that have *no* personal reference or connection. First, these obligations do not depend on any particular individuals (teachers or students). Second, they apply regardless of personal feelings, likes or dislikes. The third impersonal aspect of teaching relates to what is taught and learned. In schools, teachers are supposed to help students participate in "the community of subject matter" (Hawkins, 1974). These objective contents of thought and experience--systems, theories, ideas--are impersonal because they are distinct from the people who learn about or debate them (Polyani, 1962).

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[1]Margret Buchmann is coordinator of the IRT's Conceptual-Analytic Project and an MSU assistant professor of teacher education. She wishes to acknowledge and thank Jere E. Brophy, Robert E. Floden, and John R. Schwille for valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper. She also wishes to thank Mary Mowry for her assistance in manuscript preparation.

Role words indicate the obligations an individual has toward the collective (e.g., the teaching profession). In a more immediate sense, the teacher has obligations toward the collective body of students and their progress, for instance, in basal readers. The view of students as learners underlies the distinctive obligations of teachers; and role orientation by definition means taking an interest in student learning. Thus, insofar as teachers are not social workers, career counselors, or simply adults who care for children, their work centers on the curriculum and requires content knowledge. Teachers who never explain or demonstrate anything, who neither answer questions nor question answers, may be engaged in some useful activity, but they do not teach. If we lose sight of student learning, we lose sight of the specific point of having teachers at all (Wilson, 1977).

The teaching role hence presupposes a shift of concern from self to other that comes more from saying "This is the kind of work I am doing," than from stating, "This is how I feel," or "This is how I do things." Subjective reasons refer to personal characteristics and preferences. They are permissive rather than stringent, variable rather than uniform. Yet it is not that personal concerns and preferences must necessarily be selfish or mislead, but that--where such criteria rule--other and more legitimate concerns may become secondary (see Lortie, 1975). Moreover, subjective reasons have an air of finality: they close off development and debate.

Everyone knows that when people say, "This is the kind of person I am," they mean to close an issue and put an end to debate, whatever its state of resolution. An emphasis on the self blocks the flow of speculation, conversation, and reflection by which people shape habits of action and mind as they affect others *or* the self; it means cutting oneself off from some of the most precious human resources. People speculate on the course of events after the

fact, offer comments n a plan, discussing its value and that of available evidence, because the outcome of action matters, and feedback from data is rarely clear (Buchmann, 1983). Imperviousness and finality--whether of attitude, belief, or habit--interfere with learning and with getting better at helping others learn (Brophy & Good, 1974).

Justification is tied to reasonableness, to reason and susceptibility to reason. Appropriate actions and decisions are tied to the public realm where they are constrained by both facts and norms. Thus people need not be creative to be reasonable. Rather, they must be willing to act in accordance with rules, submit to impersonal judgment, and be open to change. To call an action or person reasonable still is praise, for reasonable people are neither inconsiderate nor rash, and their actions are unlikely to be futile or foolish (Black, 1972).

Part of reasonableness is giving due weight to evidence and the arguments of others who may offer new data or alternative explanations. Here it can be argued that--even more important than current effectiveness--is the degree to which teachers are susceptible to data and ideas of objective standing based on student behavior, the advice of colleagues, teacher educators and researchers, the evolving standards of the field, and policy recommendations. There is, however, a difference between reasoning that leads to appropriate action and reasoning that leads to the truth of conclusions. The difference is that practice is no mode of contemplative knowing, but is rooted instead in wanting things and making them happen (Anscombe, 1979). In action, thinga can turn out variously; this fact and the quality of wanting make reasonableness in teachi ; imperative. For, given unpredictability, prudence is a virtue, and teachers are no exception to the rule that not everything people want ia good.

Teaching is difficult, lonely work. In the profession of teaching, controls are weak and standards low, rewards uncertainly related to achievement, and achievements themselves uncertain, often elusive (Lortie, 1975). Tenure and salary are based on years of service rather than competence or commitment. Yet an active interest in student learning does not come with teaching experience. To the contrary, teaching seems to have a calcifying effect on teachers (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978; Waller, 1932/1961). In such a scenario, role orientation as a disposition becomes crucial. It can steady teachers in their pursuits, calling to mind what their job is about and who is to benefit from the work of teaching.

An understanding of teacher orientations and justifications and their effects seems particularly important now when there is a strong press to set policy that will improve American education. It is well recognized that teachers often play the role of street-level bureaucrats and hence have the final word on exactly what will be done in the classroom and how, for instance, curriculum policies will be implemented (for a review, see Brophy, 1982). This implies that making good policy requires knowing how teachers are likely to act in answer to policy initiatives and why (Wise, 1979). It requires, furthermore, thinking about those competencies and dispositions that appear desirable in teachers (Kerr, 1982; Sykes, 1982).

This paper is an analysis of teacher orientations and justifications in support of an argument that calls for role orientation in teaching. It is illustrated with excerpts from interviews but does not aim at portrayals of the 20 interviewed teachers. Neither is it an evaluation of these teachers. It does, however, assume that the ideas and practices of teachers are not all equally right, and actual justifications not all equally tenable. Emphasizing impersonal obligations and the concept of role, I make no claim to staying

within a participsnt perspective. But I will use the language of teachers to look at their pursuits and concerns in unaccustomed ways.

The paper considers to what extent role orientation seems demonstrated in the data, and then looks at teacher justificstions. It reviews empirical studies which show that a personal orientation in teaching has problematic effects on the enacted curriculum and teacher learning. An aim is to ask questions about teacher thinking and to identify differences that may be significant for teaching as productive, legitimate work.

The Data: Their Source, Characteristics, and Analysis

In a study of teacher decision-making,[2] researchers interviewed 20 elementary school teachers about the materials they used in reading and language arts and the ways in which they organized subject matter in teaching. They also asked teachers about their training and background. Other sections of the interview concerned teacher thinking about instruction. In this context, teachers were asked to respond to the following statement about tesching: "Teaching depends on dividing the school day into chunks of time for each separate subject-matter area." Teacher responses to this item are the focus of this analysis.

Teachers were interviewed by educational researchers and collaborating research interns. The interviews followed a formal schedule and took place under conditions of privacy. The statement about teaching was read to teachers, who then read and considered it themselves. Researchers asked, "What do you think about the following statement?" In responding, teachers were

[2]The interview study is part of the work of the Language Arts Project, Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University. Project work has been reported, for instance, in Roehler, Schmidt, & Buchmann, 1979.

encouraged to think out loud. The interview concluded with simulated tasks that involved instructional planning and choosing materials.

Participating teachers were volunteers with 5 to 29 years teaching experience (averaging about 12 years). They taught grades one to six in urban, suburban, small town, and rural elementary schools in the mid-Michigan area. Table 1 shows at what levels teachers in the study taught and how many years of experience they had.

Table 1

Teacher	Grade Level	Teaching Experience(yrs.)
Doreen[a]	4/5	6.5
Paul	2	5
Margaret	3	6
Pat	2	7
George	5	29
Rita	1	26[b]
Barbara	3/4	9
Diane	4/5	7
Linda	3	15
Gladys	6	7
Mick	3	16
Len	4/5	10
Donna	2	7
Helen	3	11.5
Betty	5	25
Peggy	1	8
Kate	1	17
Judy	5	15
Mary	3	14
Martha	5	9

[a]All teacher names are same-sex code names.

[b]Rita's 26 years of teaching experience include five years as a substitute teacher.

The Categorical Statement and Its Functions

Researchers were curious to find out how teachers would react if we put it to them that teaching as their work and the school day as its occasion could be conceptualized in terms of subject areas and their organization. The statement was thus exploratory in intent and formulated with a view toward stimulating thought in teachers. In effect, most teachers (14 out of 20) disagreed with it, a number of them emphatically. Six teachers responded along the lines of "it depends;" only one teacher felt that he taught in accordance with the statement. Teachers typically provided considerable elaboration for their answers (modal response length was between one and two double-spaced typed pages; with six responses being between two and seven pages, and six responses being up to one page long). Most responses had both detail and depth and allowed insight into cognitive and evaluative meanings.

In trying to understand the effects of the item, researchers came to see that the statement expresses a way of thinking and point of view on teaching likely to conflict with teacher views. Consider the *form* of the statement: it asserts something positively, without qualifications, and reflects the logic of cause and conditions. With regard to its *content*, the statement is abstract and limited in what it covers. For instance, it does not refer to the activities of teaching, only to supposed preconditions. Nor does it mention the people who encounter each other in classrooms (i.e., teachers and students). The statement implies a principle of organization that is rigid and fragmented in time, and so on. I do not suggest that teachers explicitly recognized all these characteristics and implications but that they sensed

some clash of views which, in turn, led them to put forward and defend their own ways of thinking and acting.[3]

The analysis of responses to the statement about teaching identifies teacher orientations and sources of justification. Associated categories of analysis are introduced below and documented in the section that follows.

Source of Justification

Schwab's (1978) commonplaces of education--student, curriculum, teacher, milieu--carve up the domain of teaching into its constitutive parts and function as sources of justification. Justifications can refer to the external context of teaching ("milieu"), or to the social, institutional, and policy constraints and directives that affect the classroom. Reasons offered to explain practice may also invoke the needs and interests of teachers themselves, then the source of justification is "teacher." Curriculum-centered justifications can be distinguished by an emphasis on basic skills (e.g., spelling, reading, computation) or subject areas (e.g., science, mathematics, art). Subcategories for student-centered justifications are "learning and development" and "needs and interests" (Bussis, Chittenden, & Amarel, 1976). While thinking about learning and development seizes on the notion of desirable change, concern for children's needs and interests takes its cue more from their present states.[4]

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[3]This is consistent with the general relation between confrontation and justification: When confronted, people will explain themselves. In fact, Bok (1978) quotes Rawls as saying, "Justification *presumes* a clash of views between persons or within one person, and seeks to convince others, or ourselves, of the principles upon which our claims and judgments are founded" (p. 59; emphasis added).

[4]A question is whether these present states of individuals are relevant for the purposes of school learning or best suited to advance them (see Dearden, 1972; Oakeshott, 1972; Peters, 1978). This question needs also to be examined where teacher needs and interests are concerned (see discussion of literature on the enacted curriculum and teacher learning).

To determine the source of justification, the major area of teacher concern was identified for each response. Most responses involved justifications related to these areas (exceptions were those of Betty, Donna, and Doreen). A few teachers said things like, "This is why I do it." Most responses however implied sources of justification by phrases such as "I have to try to balance how much time I spend on subjects over time," "I am not that kind of person," or "kids need bigger blocks of time to work in." Such phrases provided clues that were interpreted in the context of the whole response. For Betty, Donna, and Doreen, other parts of the interview were consulted to determine sources of justification.

Teacher Orientations

The distinction between role and personal orientation focuses on the presence or absence of public and accepted criteria in teacher responses. It is based on the distinction between role and personal context in interview data made by Merton, Fiske, and Kendall (1956). Presence or role orientation can be defined as endorsing and using collective criteria or as justifying teacher actions and decisions by reference to an empirical or conceptual context beyond that of the teacher's own activities and capable of *legitimating* them (see Thelen, 1973). Examples of such larger contexts are colleagues, the curriculum, accountability, and, importantly, teacher ideas about effective practice that recognize public, accepted criteria (e.g., equity, adequate content coverage, student learning).

Teacher responses that showed no opening to a context beyond the teacher's own activities but centered, instead, on personal practice, feeling, and belief or flouted accepted criteria such as equity or adequate content coverage were classified under personal orientation. (Accordingly, responses with an

almost exclusive emphasis on description of classroom practice were included in this category.) A personal orientation in effect removes teacher action and decision from the realm of criteria for judging appropriateness.

In a personal frame of reference, the teacher's self may dominate ("self-orientation"). But as I will show below, a personal orientation may also be present where teachers invoke children's needs without appearing open to change or public criteria (see Cusick, 1982).

Personal or Role Orientation?

In this group of teachers, about half (11 out of 20) showed variations of role orientation; neither years of teaching experience nor grade level taught related to the presence of role versus personal orientation in their responses. On the average, though, teachers whose responses demonstrated some form of role orientation were less experienced (10 versus 15.5 years) than teachers who assumed a personal context in their responses. It may be worth noting that all the five teachers who taught in rural schools spoke out of a personal frame of reference, whereas six of the seven teachers who taught in suburban schools showed some role orientation in responding to the categorical statement about teaching.

Thus Peggy[5] made the following comments:

> I don't think the day should be divided into chunks and say, "Well, now, it's time to do this or that." There are times when I've run out of time in the school year. I can think of an example right now. I'm not going to get to a math topic that we have left. One more book left. *And I have to try to get across the concepts* that are covered in that book without going through the book. So I have to try to include that in

[5]All teacher names are same-sex code names. Excerpts from the responses are unedited, except for the deletion of repetitions and "uh's." I have highlighted key terms and phrases and structured long excerpts from interview protocols by introducing paragraphs.

> other areas of what I am doing. *I don't feel comfortable not teaching it and having the second-grade teacher expect that it was covered.* (interview protocols, pp. 21-22)

This teacher thought of the teacher next in line and felt an obligation to do her part in assuring continuity in content coverage from grade to grade. She felt that acting on what the interview item calls for (i.e., upholding subject-matter and time boundaries) would conflict with getting to everything that has to be covered and thus interfere with what needs to be done.

George was more sympathetic to the categorical statement about teaching, but showed a similar concern for covering content in his classroom:

> I think you literally *try* to put [the day] into chunks and *intend to do* something that you can label English in that chunk. Do some science in that space of time--but you have other needs, you've compressed certain things, you expand certain things, and *you hope that you are doing a job so you eventually balance it out, so that every area gets adequate coverage.* (interview protocols, p. 50)

In teaching, George implied, you respond to the here and now. Still, time allocated to different areas needs to balance out: It will not do to favor or neglect any. Reflecting on classroom action in light of this principle of adequate or balanced coverage, one can infer, is a cognitive extra that is helpful for doing the job of teaching.

Paul was one teacher who felt the categorical statement characterized his practice. As I will show, he favored a structured approach to teaching because of its benefits for learners. Yet Paul saw that his way of doing things was not the only way:

> I guess that I don't think that teaching depends on that, but I think that is a *way* of teaching the children during the course of a day. *But teaching could be carried on in a variety of other ways. . . .* So I don't think that teaching should depend on that type of set-up. Well--the way I teach in the classrooms is, basically, I do have my day divided up like that. (interview protocols, pp. 26-27)

Pat, finally, believed she could speak for most teachers when she described how student engagement can affect teacher plans:

> And if I get to a point and the kids are excited, I say "Forget it." You know, the next thing goes out the window. *I think most teachers kind of go on that basis. . . .* I think, you know, *a greater amount of teaching* goes on if you can integrate and *make it kind of flow, where you hit many subject areas and control the similarities and differences throughout the day. Now math, I still haven't been able to do that.* (interview protocols, p. 34)

Pat's ideas about effective practice presupposed a belief that "a lot of teaching" should go on in the classroom. She implied that instructional flow likely to advance this goal requires the teacher's conceptual control of subject areas. Pat used these criteria in looking at her own practice in mathematics: The final note is one of striving.

Among the teachers who showed some form of role orientation in their responses there was a sense of obligation, of considered action and intention. In their comments on practice, these teachers looked beyond the self and immediate reality. Teachers who had a personal orientation in their responses had a more limited frame of reference, even where their speech was imaginative and rich. Classroom happenings or the teacher's actions and feelings filled out their responses. Neither reflective distance to self or action nor a sense of professional community or diversity were apparent. These responses afford a glimpse "behind classroom doors," but ordinarily these doors seemed closed. Thus Kate explained her reaction to the interview item by saying:

> *I don't like this "divided up into different chunks."* If something is really--if it's flowing and it's going good, I don't want to stop that chunk and say, "All right kids, we've got to put this away. So you don't have your address on it. I'm sorry, it's 9:05 and we've got to go to something else." *No, if that's flowing good, go on to that. Maybe tomorrow we'll be into the math and something will really be going good* there and I don't want to stop that and go on to social studies. . . . You have to feel that if things are flowing, and you have to know when to stop it. *Say, hey, it's out of hand and let's go to something else and flow into that.* I think Jim Goodwin[6] did a real neat thing when he taught

[6]This is a pseudonym for the teacher educator referred to in this response.

> me to use those transitions and flow into something else. And really fantastic uses. (interview protocols, p. 26)

What comes through here is a notion of classroom life as a natural event colored by affect: Things happen, moods change. The secret of teaching is to go with the flow: whatever is "going good" is the thing to do.

Rita responded in a similar vein; she started out by putting forward her own categorical statement about teaching, perhaps even reality:

> Everything hinges on everything else. *It ain't no fun to isolate everything. It's much more funner to put it all together. It really is.* (interview protocols, p. 22)

As she elaborated her response, one could get a vivid sense of life in Rita's classroom, and also of herself.

> I'm thinking too of a game . . . there is a book, easy reading book. Fonsil puts it out. It's called Piggle. And we love to play Piggle. It's a rhyming game. And when you catch on to it, you can make up any words you want to. All nonsense words or really truly words. And the idea is just to change the initial consonant, for instance, Barbara, larbara, marbara, carbara.
>
> *And just have a real bang up time with it. You are getting to listen to the sounds, you are getting to transpose the name,* which is also what I do wi'' the children everytime I introduce their names, which is also what I do with the children everytime I introduce a new letter.
>
> If your name is Barbara you get to be special for today because our letter is B and that's Bobby Bubblesby. We all get to chew bubble gum and make big bubbles and make Bobby Bubble and reinforce that "B" sound. . . . So the kids become very conscious very early how they can change words. And that came about by using Piggle. . . . *I just threw this out.* (interview protocols, p. 22)

This response can be seen in more than one way. Rita did bring up learning goals (e.g., reinforce that "B" sound; become conscious early of how words can be changed). However, the overall sense of purpose in this response is almost absorbed into the idea of having a good time. The response's very spontaneity supports this notion. More to the point, the idea of having fun is stressed in explaining the rejection of the statement about teaching offered for consideration and is a unifying theme in Rita's instructional example. In fact,

the response assumes that the understandable liking of having a good time and a personal philosophy ("everything hinges on everything else") can justify ways of going about teaching. For these reasons, the response was classified under personal orientation.

As a final example of personal orientation in this section, I will quote from Mick's response. In elaborating his response to the statement about teaching, he recounted things that had happened in his classroom:

> It can be helpful but I don't feel you have to stick to something like that. And so there's ways of getting that, too, as far as you may say, "Hey, today we're gonna do this one project type of thing."
>
> Such as this spring, we did our play. I had a couple of things I wanted to make sure we did those days. We did 'em. And at ten o'clock, we started play practice the rest of the day. First of all, we went through and made sure we made costumes for it. Then we went ahead and started practicing our lines. Then we went and rehearsed it once. And then we put the costumes on and went through a dress rehearsal. . . . And after a while, you only want to practice your lines so long before you want to do something with 'em. And you're not gonna want to sit there and paint your costume all day. (interview protocols, pp. 115-116)

This detailed, serial narrative continued on. It shows no opening toward a larger context that involved colleagues, the curriculum, accountability, or teacher ideas of effective practice involving public, accepted criteria. The impression is that there is little room to ask what is happening and why.

I will continue discussing this example in the following section, which focuses on sources of justification: teacher, students, and curriculum. "External milieu" is notable only for its absence as a source of justification in the responses of these 20 teachers.

Sources of Justification

Teacher-Centered Justifications

Mick explained how acting on the categorical statement, "Teaching depends on dividing the school day into chunks of time for each separate subject-matter area," can help the teacher when his work pales on him:

> And it helps the teacher to insure--to keep ya--what you might say--on a line and not getting off on a tangent somewhere and losing your way completely. It gives you a path to follow or where you need to go back to. *It gives you--helps you go along, because doing the same subjects every day, five days a week for the number of weeks we do it, things can get stale,* you know what I mean? You need to have something on the day that when you come in and are feeling lousy and the kids are feeling lousy and everything's going miserable. (p. 115)

Though losing one's way might conceivably refer to such things as covering content or following a plan, and there is a reference to kids in this response, the teacher--his needs, his feelings in experiencing what Jackson (1968) calls the "daily grind"--stands at its center.

Martha also offered a teacher-centered justification in response to the interview item which clearly did not appeal to her:

> *I don't like the idea of chunks of time.* That's saying that, you know, nine to five, you teach math. And at nine-thirty, you close the math. And then you open up the social studies book. *My day fluctuated.* I didn't keep a regular schedule. *I guess maybe for some kids, it might blow their mind that I didn't. But, I found that whatever seemed to come up at that time.*
>
> If we were working on a big social studies project that we were doing--a lot of times I'd work everything around that, rather than say that every day we had to do a certain thing for a certain time. *So everything kinda just flowed and what came came naturally or what seemed to follow.* If I had reading where we were working on a particular story, then in language I may go in the book to a particular page that went with that. You know, the kind of thing. I, you know, I, *I'm not a chunk-of-time person.* (p. 23)

This teacher justified her spontaneous approach to teaching ("whatever seemed to come up at that time") in personal terms: things happen in my classroom

the way they do because I am the kind of person I am. Thus days may fluctuate--that is, vary irregularly, be unpredictable or unstable--although it is acknowledged that this might "blow the minds" of some kids.

Helen, finally, reacted to the statement about teaching by asserting,

> *In my situation, I don't have to do that because I'm in a self-contained classroom.* I think if children are moving from group to group, you are almost forced into this type of thing. . . . But if I run over or--we're talking about something. *If I think it's important, then I just keep on going.* That day we'll do something else. *I'm not set up to a time schedule where I think I need so many minutes* and if I don't get so many minutes, then I'm, you know . . . (interview protocols, pp. 76-77)

Again, this response assumes that personal dispositions or beliefs, ("I'm not set up to a time schedule," "If I think it's important then I just keep on going") suffice for justifying teacher action and decision. There is no s nse of other relevant criteria that might call into question, possibly override, the penchants of the teacher.

I will now turn to responses that implied other sources of justifications, namely, learners and the curriculum.

Child-Centered Justifications

In considering the interview item, Diane reviewed her classroom practice and its effects on children; I will quote her response almost in full:

> Well, in general I would disagree. I suppose it would depend on how many chunks. Because like when--like what I consider is my morning, because of the nature of it. I have what I call language arts in the morning, which is reading and any of the language arts type things. If I need, I do large-group directions. Those are good to do at the beginning. And then during the rest of the morning it works out pretty good where they work on different assignments that they have, whether it is in language arts, whether it is in the reading texts, and then they can get to the different centers and work on that. Okay. So then I suppose that would be a big chunks of my morning. Then I have another chunk that I do, we do math together. But my groups in math change frequently. *The reason I've got math as a chunk is because the kids weren't finishing enough math and they said they didn't have enough time. It was hard for them to structure their morning.* So we all do math now at the same time.

> Then after lunch is when I do my total group activities and I see more chunking done, like when we have science and social studies. But a lot of times what would happen is that we would just have a long social studies one day and then science on the next day. Because, once you get everything out it is kind of hard to stop in the middle and put everything away. So I can see where I get very frustrated: When I chunk up the time so much where the kids just get started and I say, "Put it away and get out this book and put it away and get out that book." And when I did the chunking type thing, I couldn't work the centers in that easily. *There would be some kids that would always finish up and have a lot of minutes left and other kids who are never done with the assignment. So for me I found that the chunking didn't work.*
>
> But, I do need to have certain chunks. And also what I did, like on the board--like especially for this big area, because this is quite a bit, I'll put down what needs to be done. *For some kids they can do it.* It depends on the order. Okay. This is when I call up groups too. So then I might have to stop something and come back to the group. *But then for other kids who have a hard time even with this bit of a time, kids need more chunks.* I do this, this, and this. I get with them and write this down.
>
> But it is very difficult, I think, because at the end of the day you sort of look and say, "Hold it, what did I miss getting in?" *If you chunk it you can be sure--you can say you've got to everything, but not much might have settled in. The kids might not have a real sense of accomplishing something and have a finish on it.* I think it is important for kids, for if they start something, finish it, or at least know where they can get it, and then stop and go on. (interview protocols, pp. 10-11)

Saying that something "didn't work for the teacher" sums up here observed effects of classroom strategies on learning opportunities (e.g., kids are done early or never get done; centers are difficult to work in). Diane also considered individual differences in the need for structure. She conceded that "chunking" can do something for the teacher--in the sense of satisfying her that everything gets covered. Yet content coverage ("getting it in") is not the same as student learning ("settling in"). In the last analysis, this teacher asked, "What have children actually learned?"

As mentioned earlier, Paul was the only teacher who felt that he taught by dividing up the school day into chunks of time for subject areas; he explained his choice as follows:

> *Well, I think the main reason that I do it is because I think the kids need the organization.* I guess that comes from the background --*maybe they're not getting that in their background, the organization and planning*, and maybe they are. But, I think that the kids need to know what's going to be going on, and how long it's going to last, and what's going to be next. So I guess in that respect, that's why I do it. And I think it might not work with some kids, because there might be a group of kids that would rather operate more independently than that. (interview protocols, pp. 28-29)

and he concluded by stating:

> *It teaches them organization, right.* And it also gives them all the information that they'll need for the day. *They can even operate from the schedule that you give the kids without your having to say, "Well, okay, stop doing this and we're going to start doing something else."* If I can see that there are some kids engrossed in something, I might even let him or her just keep going on that. So it's not a real rigid time slot, but it does give them a slot to operate on, *especially those that need it.* (interview protocols, p. 29)

Paul believed that students who need it should be taught skills requisite for learning ("organization and planning"). Other students, he argued, may also profit from a clearly structured school day in that they can work more independently. In both cases, there would be learning and development.

The following example of child-centered justification illustrates the fact that bringing up children's needs does not imply the presence of role orientation in teaching. Role orientation may be absent, for example, if legitimate societal expectations (e.g., considering the needs of all children and especially of those who demonstrably require help and guidance) are disregarded or dismissed. The following response suggests a case in point:

> After reading the interview item Linda stated:
>
> *I don't do that.* I use blocks not chunks. I don't do that. If you have fifty minutes here and fifty minutes there . . . *the child will simply become frustrated.* . . . (interview protocol, p. 41)

She said, furthermore:

> When you say chunks . . . *I guess I don't like the word chunk.* Because you have a little dip and a dip and a dip. And I guess if you are saying that there are some children who cannot work [with blocks], then I would say he could move into

> something else. I would have something else to do within that block of time. *But I still wouldn't say time out for, time up, we have to move on to math. . . . But I would not . . . I just don't like the word chunks. And I would still do the same thing, even if I had some youngsters in here who don't function at that top level like society expects them to do.* (interview protocols, p. 42)

Like Diane and Paul, Linda commented on her classroom practice in considering the statement about teaching. But while these teachers took their bearings from children's learning and development--paying attention to differences among students and attempting to adjust instructional strategies accordingly--Linda stressed what she would or would not do, almost regardless.

It is true that she did not want to parse up time too much because it might bring frustration to (some) children and that she made reference to special provisions for others. Still, this teacher seemed on the whole prepared to treat the needs of certain students as of little importance and consequence, when compared to that of her own way of working and dislike of the word "chunk."

Curriculum-Centered Justifications

Curriculum-centered justifications focused (with one exception) on the subject areas or on instructional content beyond the three R's. In other words, teaching and learning the basics were not central to teacher justifications. All teachers who treated the subject areas as a source of justification demonstrated some form of role orientation in their responses. But teaching experience or the levels at which the 20 teachers taught appeared not related to curriculum-centered justification.

George, for example, held his content goals steady, expecting students to rise to his vocabulary level. He explained his intentional use of difficult words in instruction as follows:

> I might immediately, in italics [at the blackboard], use another meaning of the word which might be more familiar. But other than that, I try to use my own vocabulary and have them rise to it, *pointing out that, "I could have said this other--but I'd like you to know."* We always start the year with the word "truculent." That always grabs them, *because I want them to know what truculent is, and want them to love words.* (interview protocols, p. 54)

George wanted students to know and entertain a great regard for words. Len likewise aimed to increase student knowledge and understanding, to give students what he called "true education." He responded to the categorical statement about teaching as follows:

> First of all, [teaching] doesn't depend on that. And I think that--the more we can do away with that feeling of chopping up the day, the better we're going to educate even down on this level. (interview protocols, p. 48)

Then he explained,

> We're forced to use the ax in a day with all the things that are part of the curriculum. I think that's part of our--the reason for our ineffectiveness in elementary is, they keep loading the curriculum and cutting down on time. *And so I--we're going to have to teach the curriculum all the time--* without any specific time for this subject, this subject, this subject. And I think *the more we can do that, I think the greater progress a kid is going to make in true education, getting those things.* (interview protocols, p. 49)

Justification and the External Milieu

Len's statement is characteristic of the way in which the external milieu entered into teacher responses to the interview item. The external milieu or policy context was mentioned by four teachers (Helen, George, Doreen, Len) but never functioned as a source of justification for teacher action and decision. In effect, all teacher justifications were *absolute*, that is, based on inherently and subjectively compelling belief, rather than *relative*, or dependent on structural contingencies and external constraints or directives.

(For a discussion of this distinction see Scheffler, 1977.)[7] The four teachers who brought up the external milieu in their responses to the statement about teaching did so mostly to stress their own autonomy and the interference of external factors with ways of going about teaching they believed to be effective.

Table 2

Response Contexts and Justifying Concepts

		Curriculum		Children		
	Teacher	Basic Skills	Subj. Areas	Learn & Dev.	Needs & Int.	External Milieu
Personal Context	Martha Helen Mick	Betty[a]		Kate Rita	Margaret Mary Linda	
Role Context			George Len Donna[a] Gladys Peggy Barbara	Paul Judy Diane	Doreen[a] Pat	

[a]For Betty, Donna and Doreen other parts of the interviews were considered for this analysis.

[7]The absence of external or relative justifications may stem from the fact that teachers interpreted the interview item in terms of time policies and from the fact that districts in general do little to direct the way teachers budget their instructional time. (This surprising lack of attention to time policies has been documented by a survey reported by Irwin, Floden, Porter, Alford, Freeman, Schmidt & Schwille, 1983.)

Summary: Teacher Orientations and Justifications

In this study, most of the teachers who showed an awareness of impersonal obligations or the professional reference group relied on either the subject areas of the curriculum (six) or the learning and development of children (three) in justification. Two of the teachers who demonstrated role orientation in their responses invoked children's needs and interests, but not one of them focused on the teacher in justification.

Role Orientation

What united the responses of role-oriented teachers was the fact that they placed themselves within a larger picture in which colleagues, the curriculum, and accountability figured in some fashion. These teachers looked outward rather than inward. That is not to say that they had no personal interests or beliefs that influenced what they taught and how they taught it. But they still felt bound to obligations; the personal element in their responses was framed by a sense of the collective and of striving.

Detachment from the self, habitual practices, and immediate realities created a space in which they could ask questions, see alternatives, and consider action in the light of obligation, intention, and effectiveness. One could say that role-oriented teachers implicitly distinguished explanation and justification, recognizing that the "justification of an act of teaching lies, not in the act itself, but in the desired ends we intend to achieve by it" (Reid, 1979, p. 192).

Personal Orientation

Teachers with personal orientations did not place themselves within a larger picture in which colleagues, the curriculum, and accountability were

prominent. Most of these teachers (six out of nine) explained action and decision by reference to themselves as persons--what they felt, what they did--or the needs and interests of children. The responses of teachers with personal orientations thus tended toward the *proximate*: affinity to self, immediate experience, the present characteristics of children.

These teachers paired action with inclination and habit, thus insulating it from new facts or alternative ideas. The "language of caprice" (Lortie, 1975, p. 212) pervaded several of their responses. In cases where they recognized that the needs of some children might not be met by their approach to teaching, these teachers would still explain what they thought and did by reference to personal inclination or habitual ways of working.

Teachers Need Education

The points in the preceding summary have both conceptual and empirical aspects. That is, while role orientation in teaching is by definition taking an interest in student learning, this conceptual connection may neither be perceived nor acted on. It has to be lodged in someone's head and be accepted as binding to become operative. Likewise, the distinction between explanation and justification--more things can be understood than can be accounted reasonable or just--is conceptual as well as practical. Once grasped, it can shape thinking and behavior in teaching by calling into question, for instance, the weight of personal inclination and preference in justifying classroom practice.

The significance of these data therefore lies not so much in the documentation of associations between teacher orientations and justifications for these 20 teachers, or the relative frequency of role and personal orientation in these responses, but in drawing attention to the practical

significance of conceptual and ethical understanding--and hence of education--for teachers.

What is close to people is always important to them; the personal will take care of itself. But community, reflective action, and flexible understanding of subject matter and pedagogy must be learned. Tendencies in teacher education to stress individualism, affect, and the personal--even idiosyncratic--element in teaching are therefore questionable practice. This would be true in any case. But such practice becomes utterly senseless when one considers Lortie's (1975) argument that, in American education, structural features (e.g., recruitment, induction, rewards) and the ethos of the profession already converge in conservatism, presentism, and individualism in teaching.

Autonomy and self-realization are indisputably personal goods. Schools, however, are for children, and children's autonomy and self-realization depends in part on what they learn in schools. Thus, self-realization in the context of teaching is not a good in itself, but only insofar as pursuing self-realization leads to more atudent learning. Consider examples from other professions. The idea of a surgeon keen on self-realization at the operating table is macabre. A nurse who brings up personality and preference in explaining why he changed standard procedures in dealing with a seizure would not get very far. There is no reason why such things should be more acceptable in teaching. The fact that we may have come to accept them more is certainly no justification.

An emphasis on the personal in teaching will confuse action by putting it on a false scent. The effects of personal orientation on the enacted curriculum and teacher learning are at issue in what follows.

Teacher Beliefs and Interests and the Enacted Curriculum

At the elementary level, Schmidt and Buchmann (in press) show that allocation of time to aubjects in six elementary classrooms was associated with teachers' peraonal beliefs and attitudes concerning reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Briefly, average daily time allocations went up and down in accordance with (1) teacher judgments on the degree of emphasis aubjects should receive and (2) indications (aelf-reports) of the extent to which teachers enjoyed teaching these curricular areas. When projected over the entire school year, differences in time allocations aaaociated with teacher attitudes aud beliefs amounted to, for example, 45 hours mcre or leas of mathematics inatruction, 70 hours in the case of social atudiea, and 100 hours of science instruction.[8]

Researchers also asked teachers to indicate how difficult they found teaching the five areas of the elementary school curriculum. Findings here were mixed and thought-provoking. For instance, in the area of reading, the six teachers studied did not seem to spend leas time on reading just because they found it difficult to teach. But some such tendency could be observed in language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science. However, even here the results were less than clear. The mean differences between the teachers who found it difficult to teach social studies or mathematics and who found either subject easy to teach, for example, were small. The authors conjecture

[8]The report is based on two sources of data collected about the same teachers: a study of how elementary teachers allocate time to curricular subjects that involved classroom observations and teacher logs, and questionnaires in which teachers were asked, for example, how much emphasis they felt should be given to each of five subjects and to indicate their enjoyment in teaching these subjects, uaing a four-point scale.

that difficulty experienced in teaching a subject may be counterbalanced by a sense of what is an appropriate emphasis on this subject.

Cusick (1982) studied two large secondary schools, one predominantly white and suburban, the other racially mixed and located in the central part of a smaller industrial region. An entrepreneurial approach to teaching and curriculum was typical in both schools, resulting, for instance, in an English class in which a teacher "played Bach, the Beatles, the Beach Boys, black street poets, and all the music he liked" (p. 13). Similarly, a biology class taught by an avid outdoorsman became a class devoted to stream and wildlife ecology, and an American history class with a teacher who had served in World War II became a class on that European war. A class on speech and forensics became a forum in which the teacher encouraged students (mostly black) to talk about the seamier side of their personal lives. A premium was put on "getting along with kids," and this orientation combined with isolation from colleagues, lack of scrutiny, and an open elective system turned these schools into places where teachers (and students) did what felt comfortable and personally rewarding.

Cusick (1982) concludes that these secondary teachers constructed "egocentric fields": they treated their job as an extension of self. The putative needs of students accounted for most justifications of teaching practice ("this is the way to teach these kids," "this is what they relate to," or "I'm getting them ready for life"). However, teacher beliefs about student needs were never subjected to discussion. This raises at least two important problems. First, though the freedom that teachers enjoy may bring high effort in some, other teachers can get by with doing little; second, while able students with firm adult guidance may still learn worthwhile things, others may pass

through secondary school without getting an education (see Cusick, 1982, pp. 34-35).

These studies indicate that the disposition of teachers to follow personal beliefs and interests has implications for what is taught and learned. The second study, in particular, highlights the problematic effects of a rhetoric of student needs on students for whom schooling is a major resource for learning. A personal orientation in teaching leads to an enacted curriculum incapable of delivering equal educational opportunity. This disposition furthermore inhibits teacher learning.

Personal Concerns and Teacher Learning

In examining the process of learning to teach, teacher development, and the adoption of innovations in schools, researchers and educators have identified a shift from personal to "impact" concerns--how is my action or innovation affecting my students?--as crucial (for an analysis of that literature, see Feiman & Floden, 1980; Feiman, 1983). Jackson's (1968) study shows that teachers judged as superior feel rewarded when "kids catch on"; for them, the sign of work success is the light of understanding. But among the teachers, for instance, who do *not* use innovations are those most concerned with the implications of change for themselves personally (Hall & George, 1978). Thus Fuller (1969) sees the emergence of concern for pupil progress as a culminating point in teacher development.

Yet recently (Feiman & Floden, 1980; Zeichner & Teitelbaum, 1982), Fuller's concept of personalized teacher education has been questioned, even though this approach addresses the felt needs of teachers in training (e.g., concerns about discipline) in order to help more mature concerns emerge. As Feiman & Floden (1980) point out, "the assumption that earlier concerns must

be resolved before later ones can emerge tends to confuse readiness and motivstion" (p. 132). Just because some concerns carry more personal and affective charge, it does not follow that other concerns--less immediate, more important--cannot be thought about. These considerations also apply to the work of Hall and his associates (e.g., Hall, Loucks, Rutherford & Newlove, 1975; Hall & Loucks, 1978), who use knowledge of teacher concerns to determine the content of interventions in staff development.

Zeichner and Teitelbaum (1982) draw attention to the political attitudes that a personalized, concerns-bsed approach to teacher preparation may promote.

> By advocating the postponement of complex educational questions to a point beyond preservice training and by focusing attention primarily on meeting the survival-oriented and technical concerns of student teachers, this spproach (while it may make students more comfortable) serves to promote uncritical acceptance of existing distributions of power and resources. (p. 101)

One form of conservatism is to take the given and rest--an attitude that bypasses an important source of learning and change, namely, to take the given and *ask*. At any rate, in stressing the immediate and personal in educating teachers, we do not give them suitable training for their work but reinforce, instead, dispositions many of them bring to their preparation and thst teaching experience alone is unlikely to correct.

The Case for Role Orientation in Teaching

To conclude I will briefly discuss three propositions that summarize and further develop the case for role orientation in teaching.

The Root of Teaching is Thought

Reason gives teaching its character. The immediacy, "a here and now urgency and spontaneous quality" (Jackson, 1968, p. 119) that characterizea

outstanding teachers refers to action, not thought.[9] Reflection--or the relative time at which some thoughtful process, for example, deliberation as the entertainment of alternatives, is undertaken--will have to wait upon decisions made and actions that are already part of the past (Buchmann, 1981). But people who live by action or feeling alone may never ask what is happening, and thus cannot improve upon opportunity.

Caprice and habit both cut off teaching from thought, specifically, from "its ethical, political and moral roocs" (Zeichner & Teitelbaum, 1982, p. 96) which are collective in nature. In cause and origin, caprice is inherently self-contained; it contrasts with cultivation, or improvement by education, training, or attentive labor. Habit is the opposite of impulse, and it confines in a different way. Yet caprice and habit are alike in that they both allow for action without adequate reason.

Everyone likes to be comfortable, free of pain and bother. But the perspectives of psychology and profession are not the same. Things charged with personal meaning can lead nowhere in teaching. Even the integrity of self dependa in part on suspending impulse. Furthermore, the immediacy of teachers' concerns can lead to false insight (e.g., seeing problems of teaching as problems of student discipline) reinforced by further unanalyzed experience and hard to set right. Thus, an emphasis on the immediate and personal in

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[9]Stephen's (1976) "spontaneous theory of teaching" invokes "ancient beneficient tendencies" (p. 114) in teachers and plays down the idea of teacher responsibility for student learning, using a biological metaphor: The "crop once planted, may undergo some development even while the farmer sleeps and loafs" (p. 11). This may be true for students also, but offers little consolation for those who fail (except, maybe, that they should not have expected to do any better). Furthermore, though teachers may generally do what they believe to be good for children, this does not mean that they cannot be wrong or that classroom action could not be changed to *better* further the practical ends of teaching (see also Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1981).

teacher education and teaching is a mistake. It invites a confusion of doing what one likes and believes in with being a good teacher, a confusion of personal inclination and professional work.

Being oneself in teaching is nice, yet what teachers do needs to be legitimate and productive in the first place.

In Teaching, Self-Realization is Moral

It is a plain moral fact that the self people aim to realize is "not this or that feeling, or any series of particular feelings" (Bradley, 1876/1952, p. 160). People realize themselves *morally*:

> So that not only what ought to be is in the world, but I am what I ought to be, and so find my contentment and satisfaction. (Bradley, 1876/1952, p. 181)

Of course, teachers are persons. But being oneself in teaching is not enough. Authenticity must be paired with *legitimacy* as opposed to impulse and inflexible habit, and with *productivity* or a reasoned sense of purpose and consequences (Thelen, 1973). Thelen placed authenticity in the context of action (authentic activities makes teachers feel alive and challenged) and gave legitimacy and productivity the accent of thought:

> An activity is *legitimated by reason*, as distinguished from capricious-seeming teacher demand, acting out impulse, mere availability, or impenetrable habit. An activity may be legitimated by group purposes, disciplines of knowledge, career demands, test objectives, requirements, societal issues, laws, or *by any other larger, organized context that enables the activity to go beyond its own particulars*. . . .
>
> An activity is productive to the extent that it is effective for some purpose . . . *It is awareness of purpose* that makes means-ends thinking possible, allows consciousness and self-direction, tests self-concepts against reality, and *makes practice add up to capability*. (p. 213; emphasis added).

Legitimacy and productivity are intertwined, capturing social expectations and ideals central to the activities of teaching and also to getting better at teaching over time. One's ordinary conception of morality describes this interplay between ideals and the rule requirements of social organizations (Strawson, 1974). To the extent that roles have moral content, their impersonality is not inhuman or uninspired. Nor is thoughtful action only dependent on openmindedness and responsibility: Wholeheartedness is also part of it (Dewey, 1933/1971). Yet the heart has a peculiar place in teaching as a form of *moral* action; it is at once subdued and vital as a source of courage, spirit, kindliness. In Bradley's (1876/1952) words, "My heart I am not to think of, except to tell by my work whether it is in my work" (p. 183).

Profession Requires Community

What is characteristically moral furthermore presupposes community, both on conceptual and pragmatic grounds.

> The possibility of the pursuit of an ideal form of life quite pragmatically requires membership of a moral community or of moral communities; for it is extremely unlikely in fact that the minimal social conditions for the pursuit of any social ideal which anyone is likely to entertain would in practice be fulfilled except through membership in such communities. (Strawson, 1974, p. 41; see also Schwab [1976])

In calling for professionalism in teaching, Thelen (1973) made it clear that "the reality of a profession is a lot of people thinking, speculating, and being concerned together" (p. 212). Membership is realized in conversations about teaching that can be carried on internally, or in concert with others:

> A profession is composed of people who think they are professionals and who seek through the practical inquiry of their lives, both alone and together, to clarify and *live up to* what they mean by being a professional. (pp. 200-201)

Such conversations presuppose norms of collegiality and experimentation, that is, a shared belief that practice cau always be better than it is.[10]

Norms of collegiality and experimentation are moral demands with intellectual substance. They are not "simply matters for individual preference," but based, instead, "on shared knowledge of the behavior--the talk and the action--that is appropriately part of being a teacher" (Little, 1981, p. 24, footnote). These norms require detachment from personal practice. The thing done is not talked about as part of oneself but as something *other*--it becomes a potential exemplar of good (or not so good) ways of working. As Little (1981) puts this, norms of collegiality and experimentation imply the "view that persons' practices are neither private nor sacred but are rather the tools of profession and open to judgments of worth and relevance" (p. 45).

Community provides not only constraints and guidance but succor. Collegiality, however, also depends on the degree to which another person is deserving and one's equal in deserts; it is not just loyalty and mutual help, but the enjoyment of competence in other people.[11] Essential to collegiality in teaching is the degree to which practitioners are good at talking with one

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[10]That moral communities can exist in schools and what they may look like has been illustrated by the work of Little (1981, 1982). Little's one-year study of six urban, desegregated schools (elementary and secondary) indicates that workplace conditions of school success (i.e., high faculty morale, student achievement, adaptability to change and receptivity to staff development) depend on norms of collegiality and experimentation.

In schools where students learned more (measured by aggregate standardized achievement scores over a three-year period in reading, language arts, and mathematics), teachers did not take practice for granted. Instead, they pursued the connections between teaching and learning with curiosity and vigor, engaging in "critical practice," or the discussion, observation, shared planning, and continual revision of teaching.

[11]This point has been derived from Schwab's (1976) essay on learning community in which he distinguishes three senses of friendship progressively more dependent on competence and equality in deserts.

another about their work and can be confident about their own ability, and that of others', as teachers and partners in the exploration of teaching. Without mental, social, and role competence, norms of collegiality and experimentation cannot take hold. There are some uncomfortable questions that need to be confronted here:

> What effect does the relative exclusion of ordinary teachers from the wider governance of education, their restricted access to educational theory and other kinds of school practice, and the consequent overwhelming centrality of classroom practicalities to teachers, have on the kinds of *contributions* they make to staff discussion? (Hargreaves, 1982, pp. 263-64, emphasis in original)

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