CHAPTER FIVE

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS Whose REFLECTION SHOWED LITTLE CHANGE

I don't think it hurts to reflect but I think that we are expected to do too much of it ... It's ridiculous! ... We've got other things to do! We've got assignments to do!   (Erica, 8/11/96, 294)

This chapter draws on the data collected from the 1:1 interviews and other data sources reported in the previous chapter to develop profiles of the eight student teachers whose reflection seemed to change little during their enrolment in Guided Practice. Despite the individuality of their views about teaching and their approaches to learning to teach, some commonalities between some of these student teachers emerged. These included a lack of commitment to teaching and/or reflection, an epistemological perspective of received knowledge, and a perception of an unsupportive learning environment. While there tended to be considerable interplay between these factors, the following profiles highlight arguably the most instrumental factor for each student teacher.

LACK OF COMMITMENT TO TEACHING: KEL AND ERICA
An apparent lack of commitment to teaching seemed to hinder the development of reflection for four of the eight student teachers profiled in this chapter. It appeared particularly significant, however, for Kel and Erica whose profiles are presented below.

Kel And Erica: An Overview
Kel and Erica shared some similarities. Both came from economically and socially advantaged Anglo-Australian backgrounds and both entered the program as school leavers. Neither had intended to become early childhood teachers but their Tertiary Entrance Rankings (TERs) were insufficient to gain entry to primary teacher education, their first choice of University program. Yet, in many respects, their differences overshadowed their similarities.

Kel had lived overseas with her family for some years and had welcomed the opportunity to experience different lifestyles and values. As such, she regarded herself as different from most of the other student teachers in the program whom she considered rarely questioned what she saw as their
traditional middle class lifestyles and values. Dressed habitually in black, and with her nose-ring and dreadlocks, Kel was much less conventional in appearance than her peers and enjoyed an alternative inner city lifestyle. She rejected the option of undertaking her first practicum in the middle class suburb in which her family now lived, commenting: "What's the use? I know about this. I've experienced this" (30/3/93, 42). Instead, hoping for new experiences, she requested a placement in a culturally diverse inner city preschool.

Unlike Kel, Erica lived with her family in the high socio-economic suburb in which she had grown up and was ambivalent about venturing beyond her accustomed circle. She commented:

*I don't want to sound snobbish ... but circulating in the same sort of group that I have all my life ... makes it a lot easier (13/9/93, 22) ... I'm not saying that there aren't great places out there, but there is more of a risk that there won't be.* (25/10/93, 282)

She saw herself as "pretty uncomplicated - what you see is what you get" (May, 1993), and an active person who needed "to be busy all the time" (2/6/93, 215), much preferring to "run around a football field" (17/3/95, 338) than to sit and read.

Erica worked part time as a swimming instructor, a job which she described as immensely rewarding: "It's unreal! I get the biggest buzz out of teaching swimming” (2/6/93, 68). After she failed to gain entry to any of her four preferred choices of University programs, she decided to become a teacher, mainly because of her enjoyment of teaching swimming. She was not entirely comfortable with this decision, though, for as she explained: "All my friends are doing high flying things like tourism and law and physiotherapy and medicine and art. It's not easy saying that I'm doing teaching” (2/6/93, 186). She would have much rather "done something more glamorous" (8/11/96, 74) and was adamant that she would not follow what she saw as a conventional teaching career path. As she put it: "I don't want to be someone who does their degree, goes into teaching, gets married, has children, stops teaching for a while, then goes back to it. NO!!!" (2/6/93, 363). Rather, she would look for opportunities "to do something that really grabs me - something that is go! go! go! the whole time" (2/6/93, 312). These mixed feelings about teaching were to dominate Erica's experience of the program.
Initially, Kel was more positive about teaching than Erica. She chose to become a teacher because she considered that "schooling is very important" (30/3/93, 70) and envisaged that teaching would contribute to her "personal and emotional growth" (30/3/93, 25). She elaborated: "Teachers see so many different values and beliefs ... This makes them think about their own lives a lot more - about what they have achieved, and what they don't know, and how they feel about certain things" (30/3/93, 28). Yet, like Erica, she had reservations, explaining: "I'm really sick of being in the educational system as a student. I just want to get out and join the work force" (30/3/93, 59). She, too, became preoccupied with doubts about her career choice.

"Not Ready To Teach"

Although Kel considered teaching an important role, she did not elaborate on the reasons for her belief, or how she intended fulfilling this role. There are several possible explanations. First, she might have been influenced by Colin (introduced later in this chapter) whom she admired, without necessarily understanding his well developed ideology of teaching. Second, she might not have had the capacity to reflect on this belief in relation to her development as a teacher. Third, her uncertainty about whether she wanted to teach might have overwhelmed any tendency to reflect in broader terms on the importance of education and her potential contribution as a teacher. It is difficult to determine the relative importance of these factors, particularly as Kel participated in the study for only three semesters.

More certain was Kel's realisation that she was not ready to teach. Unlike Erica, who always knew the reasons for her doubts, Kel seemed to experience sudden flashes of insight. Midway through her second semester, for example, she noted:

> I was sitting in a child development lecture, thinking 'This is interesting. I'm enjoying learning about this. So what is it? What am I so unhappy about?' I knew that there was something wrong, but I hadn't worked out what it was. Then suddenly it really hit me. I don't like communicating on an immature intellectual basis. But the thing is, that's a really important part [of early childhood teaching] - because that's what you're there to do. I like learning about it, but I don't like practising it. So then I wondered, is this really what I should be doing? (9/9/93, 74)

Similarly, the following year, while explaining her dislike of practicum, she remarked:
I didn't realise it until just then. But it just struck me as I was explaining it to you. I prefer to know and then go out to prac., rather than go out to prac. and then come back and learn. I know that it's important to have a practical situation so that you can apply theories, but at the moment, I'm not ready to connect all the theories.  
(13/5/94, 159)

She experienced another sudden insight during a conversation with her University practicum adviser, explaining:

All of a sudden I realised that I had never 'reviewed' prac. within myself.  
I'd never thought about what I was supposed to be getting out of it, and what I was supposed to be giving. I'd never asked myself 'Well, what's happening here?' And then I realised that it was all about giving.  
(13/5/94, 52)

Soon afterwards, she concluded that "teaching is a really giving profession ... and I just don't want to deal with that responsibility" (13/5/94, 257). Midway through her second year, Kel discontinued her enrolment to undertake an extended overseas working holiday.

Interestingly, Kel's comments in relation to these insights were by far the most reflective she made during her involvement in the study. Although she described flashes of understanding, it could be argued that her disquiet about becoming a teacher provided a medium for their incubation (Holman 1994; Wheeler-Brownlee, 1985; Noddings & Shore, 1984). In two instances, they were triggered by discussion with a critical friend (Hatton & Smith, 1995) able to offer a "sympathetic ear" (13/5/94, 27). While Kel demonstrated an ability to reflect about the reasons for her ambivalence about teaching, in turn, her ambivalence seemed to constitute a barrier to reflection about teaching. It is interesting to speculate about whether she would have become more reflective about teaching had she continued in the program. Erica's experience, below, suggests not.

"Getting It Over And Done With"
Kel spoke little about her developing image of herself as a teacher, and her ideas seemed vague and unformed. In contrast, perhaps because of her success in teaching swimming, Erica had a clear image of herself as a teacher. She noted: "I'm more of a tough teacher than a soft teacher ... I like the respect that you get from children. I like the fact that ... they learn something from my lessons" (13/9/93, 218). Her image of teaching as discipline and transfer of knowledge seemed to change little during her enrolment. As she entered the program very confident of her ability to teach - "I could teach now; no worries, as
far as I'm concerned! (25/10/93, 192) - perhaps she saw little need to reconsider her ideas.

During much of her first semester Erica reported feeling "so bored ... a lot of it was just common sense" (2/6/93, 196), although as assignment pressures mounted, she became more "stimulated and pushed. It's rush, rush, rush the whole time. I suppose I really haven't got time to think about whether I'm bored because I'm doing so much work" (2/6/93, 205). She enjoyed her first practicum for similar reasons, remarking: "You were on the go all the time ... the days absolutely flew ... That was lucky because otherwise, God it would have been boring!" (25/10/93, 12).

By the end of her first year she was almost certain that she did not want to teach, but given family pressures - "Mum is hell bent on me getting a degree" (2/6/93, 225) - she decided to "stay and get it over and done with" (2/6/93, 232). Completing the program, however, proved more challenging than she had envisaged, possibly because the difficulties she experienced were not counterbalanced by the desire to teach. The most daunting of these challenges are outlined below.

Given her expertise in teaching swimming, Erica was extremely frustrated by what she saw as an overemphasis on theoretical understanding. She complained: "I don't like the theory ... I don't like learning it ... I don't like being tested ... I hate being marked on assignments ... It's not my strong point" (25/10/93, 200). Indeed, she found the theoretical aspects of the program difficult and described how: "I'm working so hard, but I've already failed one course. I don't understand what I'm doing wrong. It's just like I'm beating my head against a brick wall" (25/10/93, 248). Although she appreciated the opportunity to learn new skills - "It's important that they teach us better ways of attacking situations" (13/9/93, 202) - she was disconcerted to find herself questioning what she had previously taken for granted. She elaborated:

Since I've been taught all these things (communication skills), I'm questioning the way I interact with children. I always thought that I communicated with children really well (and I know that I do), but now I say to myself 'Is that right? Would I be doing something wrong by saying to that child what I was going to say?' ... I don't like the fact that I'm questioning myself so much at the moment. I feel uncomfortable about it all, because I don't know what's right or what's wrong a lot of the time. (13/9/93, 214)

Her comments, reporting reflection of a dialogic nature (Hatton & Smith, 1995), suggest that her discomfort was compounded by her apparent reliance on received knowledge.
These frustrations plagued Erica throughout her enrolment in the program. She continued to struggle against boredom for, in her words: "Working with children is just so boring sometimes. I get frustrated because so many people have such interesting lives and do such interesting things. I don't want to be stuck indoors looking after somebody else's children all day long" (17/3/95, B37). She remained unconvinced by the value of much of the theoretical input, commenting: "Sometimes the lecturers get caught up with so much rubbish! I mean, they are just children! Give them the activities and don’t get all psychological about it!" (17/3/95, B17). Moreover, she remained "revolted by the stress of the assignments, and that cycle of cramming and passing or failing" (15/6/94, 171) and, particularly in relation to assignments, continued to depend on received knowledge. As she put it:

Why fail somebody if there is not enough depth in the assignment? If you do all the sections you should get a pass. Then for the extra stuff you put in, you should get extra marks. Why weren’t we told what they expected?

In Unit X, she basically told us what to do, so we couldn’t go wrong.

(12/10/95, 32)

In addition, she still found reflection on her own practice difficult. This became especially evident during her third practicum.

Erica’s cooperating teacher and University adviser for this practicum were concerned that she did not use sufficient positive reinforcement with the Kindergarten children with whom she was working. Erica reported that during a visit from her adviser "Ezekihaal really played up" (19/9/95, 181) and that consequently Erica "got really angry" (19/9/95, 182). Subsequently, her adviser: told me things about my teaching which no-one has ever told me before.

And I know that they weren’t true. It was just that it was a bad day, and it looked really bad ... It was so annoying. I felt like saying ‘But I never do that!’

(19/9/95, 178)

Her dismissal of these concerns as pertaining only to an isolated incident was interesting given my concerns about Erica’s response to Ezekihaal during an observation visit some days later (see Appendix 7).

As well as seeming not to reflect on the appropriateness of her own practice, Erica appeared disinclined to question established practices. When asked whether, in hindsight, she would have approached a traditional handwriting lesson for these kindergarten children differently, she replied:
No, not really, because they did it well. There are other ways of learning to write the letter 'K'. That was a fairly boring, structured way. But unfortunately, in a school system, kids are going to have to learn to do that sort of work. And it's important that they do! That's just the structure of school ... School is school, and I don't think that it's ever going to change. (19/9/95, 74)

Her response shows no sign of the reforming zeal of many of the more reflective student teachers.

Yet Erica was not unaware of the dilemmas and complexity of teaching. She showed some evidence of technical, and possibly practical, reflection (Van Manen, 1977). Referring again to the Kindergarten class, she commented:

*There were so many different types of kids in that class. And you really have to think, right down to the kid who can't even hold a pen for five minutes, all the way up to those kids who are really ready for first class ... When you see kids not concentrating, it's not that they are stupid, it's just that they are bored with what they are doing.* (12/10/95, 112)

Her previous comment about the handwriting lesson, however, suggests that this awareness did not prompt a reconsideration of her own and others' practices. Nor did she seem to sense any tension between these two statements. This apparent lack of awareness is intriguing, given her relatively reflective comments about teaching swimming.

"You Sort Of Know It All"

Indeed, in many respects, Erica seemed considerably more reflective as a swimming instructor than as a student teacher. Note, for example, her following comment about a problem solving situation. She recalled:

*I was teaching a stroke correction class. One man had a problem - he couldn't float. I couldn't understand it. I had to think to myself 'Now hang on, this person has no idea what I'm talking about - no idea of the concept. I have to work out how I can teach it'. And I did! I know that when I'm swimming my diaphragm is concave because my lungs are filled with air. I feel like I'm pushing up in my diaphragm. So I told him to push up in his diaphragm, and because his lungs were full, he could float!* (2/6/93, 55)

Erica considered that she had learnt a lot about teaching through experiences like this and commented: "I'm learning and growing and changing the whole time I am teaching swimming. I'm always trying new approaches because what works well with one adult or child or baby won't work with another" (29/6/93, 67). Why was Erica able to reflect about teaching swimming, but apparently much less able to reflect about teaching in more conventional contexts? A number of possible reasons emerge.
First, Erica's ability to draw on her personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) while teaching swimming, suggests that she may have found it easier to reflect in situations in which she had considerable practical experience (Calderhead & Gates, 1993). Second, her difficulties with the theoretical components of the early childhood program might have led her to adopt a mode of received knowing (Belenky et al., 1986). From this epistemological perspective, reflection would appear much more difficult. Her reliance on the voices of experts, for instance, might have dissuaded her from embarking on her own search for meaning. Only when she was confident that she had the necessary knowledge might she have then felt empowered to construct her own meaning. The following extract from an interview towards the end of Erica's final year, in which she explains that she is beginning to find reflective writing more worthwhile, supports this possibility. She commented:

*I suppose that now I'm four years down the track - you sort of know it all, don't you? Well, you're supposed to, and you're supposed to be able to think about it... I think that it [reflective writing] is easier now, because you've got all the knowledge... You think 'Well, that's where that happens, and that's where that comes in'.* (11/9/96, 145)

This excerpt suggests that there is a possibility that she might have become more reflective had she continued to move more towards constructed knowing (Belenky et al., 1986).

For this to happen, though, Erica would have needed to place more value on reflection. At the time she was about to complete her final Guided Practice unit she did not appear to especially value reflection as a learning strategy and had little interest in broadening her range of reflective strategies. She resented, for example, the requirement student teachers return to the campus for one day each week during their final two practicums to reflect on issues arising in their placements. She complained:

*At first, it wasn't too bad, but basically... after a week of prac..., it's just too much... It would be better to be given the day to do assignments. It's beneficial in that we talk to each other and solve our problems but, other than that, it doesn't seem relevant... They ask us to write about where we are up to now in prac. and how we feel about things. Blah! Blah! Blah! It was okay at first. But you don't change from one week to the next. And it's not marked. So who's going to care?* (11/9/96, 232)

Furthermore, although earlier she had commented that she was beginning to find reflective writing helpful, she decided not to continue with it. Instead, to fulfil the practicum requirements, she "photocopied it [reflective writing] from my
last prac. and changed the names because I didn't have time to write" (4/11/96, 238). She explained: "I've just got so much on! I'm still teaching swimming and working in the gym. I just couldn't get it done ... And I couldn't think of anything to write, so I thought 'Oh bugger it! Who's going to know?' "(4/11/96, 240). Her comments suggest that a number of factors contributed to her disinclination to reflect. Given Organ's (1975) observation that "activity is an opiate which deadens ... awareness" (p.35), Erica's frequently mentioned need for activity may have been one such factor.

Third, it could be argued that teaching swimming, in comparison to other teaching, involves working towards a more clearly defined and unambiguous goal. Obstacles to achieving this goal are likely to be relatively easily overcome by using the type of problem solving approach Erica referred to previously. Those encountered while teaching in other contexts, because of greater inherent complexities, might be less amenable to this type of problem solving. Take, for example, the issue of anti-bias practices. Referring to a recent tutorial discussion, Erica commented:

What got me was the question 'How do you react to dirty or smelly children?' I had never thought about that. But now, it's my job to solve it. So, wipe the nose, get rid of the snot, and it's done. The child is clean again, and you don't have that yucky feeling about them. Because it's not their fault. If their nappy stinks, well it's not very nice, but you can change it and give them a cuddle, and it's over. (11/9/96, 159)

Her technical problem solving approach, which seemed to be her preferred reflective strategy, appeared inadequate in providing insight into the broader socio-cultural issues underlying this scenario. In this sense, her limited understanding of the complex interconnections inherent in teaching seemed to preclude critical and other wide ranging reflection.

Finally, and arguably most importantly, despite her enthusiasm for teaching swimming, Erica had little commitment to teaching generally. Since the end of her first year in the program, she had little intention of teaching. Thus, it is highly likely that she would have seen little point in investing a great deal in a search for meaning about what it might mean to be a teacher. The following extract from the final interview, in which Erica discusses her representation of herself as teacher supports this view:

**Jennifer:** Tell me about your representation.

**Erica:** Well, the first thought that came to mind was that I have no idea how I see myself as a teacher (laughs).

**Jennifer:** Are you joking?

**Erica:** Well, sort of. I just haven't thought about it. (8/11/96, 6)
Likewise, her comment:

*I'm really glad that I've stuck to this ... I'll have a degree by the age of 22 ... But I want to learn something different now ... I'm ready to go out and start making something of my life, maybe in human resource management, or advertising, or marketing.* (11/9/96, 106)

effectively sums up her lack of commitment to teaching and her lack of interest in developing further as a teacher.

In summary, a number of factors seemed to hinder the development of Erica's reflection. Yet, as with Kel, a lack of commitment to teaching appeared particularly instrumental. To a considerable extent, it also seemed to explain why Marina and Pamela failed to become more reflective. In their case, though, an epistemological perspective of received knowing appeared an even greater barrier.

**AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF RECEIVED KNOWLEDGE: MARINA AND PAMELA**

According to Belenky et al. (1986), from an epistemological perspective of received knowledge, learning is perceived as a process of transferral, rather than construction. Correspondingly, knowledge is seen as an entity originating outside of self and achieved by absorbing what others have to say. As Belenky et al. explain, received knowers value clarity and predictability (for they simplify the transferral process) and find ambiguity difficult to tolerate. In this sense, Marina and Pamela, whose profiles are developed below, were typical of received knowers.

**Marina And Pamela: An Overview**

Like Kel and Erica, Marina and Pamela entered the program as school leavers from professional Anglo-Australian backgrounds. Neither had much experience with children prior to entering the program, nor did they have a strong commitment to teaching. Pamela was tired of the intense study she had done for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and wanted to enrol in what she hoped would be a relatively undemanding University course. Several people had commented that she would be "good with kids" (14/9/93, 32) and she thought that "compared to the HSC, teaching would be a breeze" (14/9/93, 92). Marina's decision to become an early childhood teacher because "there wasn't anything else that I really wanted to do" (14/9/93, 85) seemed to show a similar lack of commitment.
Both Pamela and Marina appeared to enter the program with a subjective epistemological perspective (Belenky et al., 1986). They tended to see knowledge as tacit, and hence difficult to articulate beyond "It feels right" or "I just know". For this reason, they were also inclined to resist alternative views which did not coincide with "gut feelings". Marina, for example, initially dismissed the theoretical component of the program, commenting:

Piaget, Froebel, Rousseau, Montessori ... I just think there's no point to it. I suppose it's good to have a background knowledge, but there is no way I'm going to relate to it and follow it. You work out your own theory.

(14/9/93, 400)

She did not elaborate, however, on how she might do this, or what her theory might be.

Similarly, Pamela seemed to see teaching and learning to teach as an intuitive process stemming from an inherent ability, which some people had and others did not. She considered that the teacher with whom she worked in her first practicum had this ability. She described her as: "a really kind person and so sensitive to the children ...The parents loved her! The children loved her! Everybody loved her! ... She's just naturally got it!" (14/9/93, 76). Pamela also thought that her friend Sarah (introduced in Chapter Seven) whose mother was a teacher had a similarly innate ability. "I think that when it's in your family", Pamela commented, "it comes a bit more naturally" (21.7.94,79). At first, she felt confident that she, too, would have this same ability and, unlike many of her peers, experienced little anxiety. She commented, for example: "Some people were borrowing books from the library on how to plan but I didn't think that was necessary. I felt that it would come with experience ... it's fairly much common sense" (3/11/93, 169). As Pamela became more aware of the qualities, skills and knowledge base expected of student teachers, however, her confidence began to waiver and she became increasingly concerned about her capacity to cope with the complexities of teaching.

"We Are Not Shown What To Do"

Having decided by the end of her first year that she did not, after all, "have" an innate ability to be a good teacher, Pamela assumed that she could only become a good teacher by being "given" the strategies and solutions she needed. As she moved more and more towards a perspective of received knowing, she became increasingly resentful that her lecturers and cooperating teachers would or could not give her the definitive answers she sought. She complained: "I need ideas for what to do ... You never get enough
ideas from the courses ... Maybe if we were given lots of ideas, I could do it ..." (21/7/94, 510). Her anxiety escalated during practicum. She explained: "I feel so dumb when I go to prac. We are given all the theory, but we are not shown what to do (21/7/94, 520). In her second practicum, particularly, she was perturbed to find her cooperating teacher using "a lot of my strategies, which I thought was quite strange. I'd see things that I'd done popping up in her teaching" (13/5/94, 74). To Pamela, the idea that teachers might learn from her as well as she from them was almost inconceivable, and certainly not reaffirming. In her opinion: "I was the one who was meant to be picking things up! I wanted to see some original ideas rather than have her take my ideas!" (13/5/94, 99). As she became even more entrenched in this perspective of received knowing, her feelings of frustration intensified.

Marina seemed to undergo a similar epistemological shift, at least in relation to practicum. Like Pamela, she relied heavily on received knowledge and resented cooperating teachers who did not provide this type of support. She complained: "I am the one who is supposed to be learning, and she [cooperating teacher] is supposed to ... give me ideas about how to do different things (26/10/95, 73). The approach she used on previous practicums - "I just sort of 'went along'. I did things which made my teacher pleased. " (14/6/94, 19) - proved increasingly ineffective and she became equally frustrated.

Neither student teacher appeared to value reflection as a means of working through their frustration. Indeed, given their craving for clarity, predicability and clear cut solutions and their lack of tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, they resented the emphasis placed on reflection. "We were expected to do too much reflecting (21/7/94, 292), complained Pamela who considered that her needs as a learner were not taken into account. She elaborated: 'I can't cope with people saying 'Well, you could do this, although the research says that you might be able to do that'. To me, you're either right or you're wrong!' (13/5/94, 312). She frequently responded by "making up things" (21/7/94, 386) to include in her reflective writing required during practicum.

Ironically, she demonstrated considerable mastery of a reflective writing genre (Hatton & Smith, 1995) with some of her reflective episodes suggesting evidence of wide ranging reflection, including critical reflection (Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Van Manen, 1977). During her first practicum, for example,
undertaken in a preschool with a large enrolment of Asian children, she wrote:

How will I ensure that I don't pass on my own stereotypes and prejudices to the children I teach? How will I acknowledge and act respectfully to different cultures' customs and taboos? What will I do if the customs and beliefs of different cultures are conflicting?

(October, 1993)

The discrepancy between her mastery of the genre and her lack of commitment to reflection support Hatton & Smith's (1995) claim that the ability to use a reflective writing genre is not necessarily evidence of reflection.

Marina, too, saw little point in reflective writing. During her first practicum, she commented: "Some of the things we had to write were unnecessary ... I didn't see why I had to write them down - especially as Rhonda [cooperating teacher] hardly ever looked at my folder" (10/11/93, 61). An almost identical comment two years later suggested little change in her views. She noted:

Susan [cooperating teacher] hasn't looked in one other section of my folder, apart from my plans. So what's the point of doing it, if she's not even going to look at it?... The whole idea of my folder is that my teacher should look at it everyday.

(18/9/95, 203)

Unlike Pamela, she showed little evidence of mastering a reflective writing genre. In the following extract from reflective episodes written during her third practicum, she refers to behaviour management, an issue of considerable concern. She wrote:

I have tried to use positive reinforcement, instead of negative reinforcement. This includes mentioning the children who are behaving beautifully rather than the children who are behaving badly. This shows that I am concentrating on the well-behaved children and not always putting down the misbehaving children. This would hopefully make the misbehaving children take notice.

(October, 1995)

Typical of her reflective episodes, it showed little attempt to analyse or consider broader educational issues. Nor did it convey her sense of powerlessness as she struggled to implement effective behaviour management strategies, very evident during my practicum observation visit.

The following extract from an interview during the same practicum conveys much more effectively the emotional intensity of Marina's struggle. She recalled:
My cooperating teacher asked if I wanted to read them a story and I thought ‘Why not?’. She gave me this terrible book to read. It’s really hard to read a story that I’d never seen before to a large group of children. It was all about the Jewish New Year holiday. [NB. Marina is Jewish]. There were lots of Hebrew words in the story that I didn’t know how to pronounce. The kids were bored. I didn’t know what to do - and she [cooperating teacher] walked out of the room and left me! ... I tried to separate the three boys who caused a lot of the trouble, but they made their bodies into dead weights, so I couldn’t move them because they were too heavy. I just didn’t know what to do. I tried everything, but I couldn’t do anything! ... I got so frustrated and upset!

(18/9/95, 153)

Yet the intensity of her powerlessness did not prompt her to consider her own role in this situation. Instead, she focused on the perceived lack support from her cooperating teacher. She commented: "And I’m thinking ‘Why don’t you help me?’ That’s what you are supposed to do. You are getting paid for this...so why don’t you do your job?” (18/9/95, 370). She seemed to show little understanding of how she might have contributed to her difficulties, or how she might attempt to overcome them. As such, she exemplified the external orientation to learning that Korthagen & Wubbels (1995) claim characterises less reflective student teachers.

Given the mismatch between their epistemological perspective and the program’s expectations, it is not surprising that Marina and Pamela eventually decided to discontinue their enrolment. Interestingly, in explaining their decision, they showed more evidence of reflection than at any other time. Pamela’s sudden realisation that she should withdraw from the program was reminiscent of Kel’s equally sudden insights referred to previously. Pamela explained:

It just came like a bang. I was talking to Sarah and I said ‘I’d love to study part-time and get a job in a department store, or something like that, but getting a job in a [preschool or long day care] centre is the last thing I’d want to do!’ Then I knew that I had to get out of the course. (21/7/94, 97)

In order to justify her decision to others, she subsequently identified a number of contributing factors. She referred to her lack of career planning, noting: "Looking back, I don’t think I was ever really keen ... I couldn’t think of anything else so I picked teaching ... I didn’t know my options well enough” (21/7/94, 181). As well, she acknowledged her lack of tolerance for the ambiguities and uncertainties of teaching, admitting: “I think I am much more suited to a more ‘yes’ or ‘no’ course. I need to know that I’m either right or wrong” (21/7/94, B58). Marina arrived at the same decision more deliberately. She explained: "I decided that I really had to be honest with myself. I knew that I’d been kidding myself.
I sat down and thought about what I was going to do for a long time" (26/10/95, 39). The following year, she enrolled in speech pathology; Pamela in occupational therapy.

Pamela's parting words - "In occupational therapy there will only be a right or a wrong way to put a splint on some-one!" (21/7/94, B70) - summed up the difficulties she and Marina encountered in their attempt to make sense of what it means to be a teacher from an epistemological perspective of received knowledge. Her comment also highlighted their difficulty in accepting the complex and problematic nature of teaching. Given their lack of commitment to teaching, the challenges posed by the inherent uncertainties of teaching eventually became overwhelming.

LACK OF COMMITMENT TO REFLECTION: HEATHER AND KATHLEEN

Like Pamela and Marina, Kathleen (profiled below) also encountered many challenges as a student teacher but was sustained by her growing commitment to teaching and a developing sense of personal and professional efficacy. She attributed her achievements and her development as a teacher mainly to persistence. Although she claimed to value reflection, it did not appear her preferred strategy for dealing with the difficulties she experienced. There seemed a similar discrepancy between Heather's espoused and actual commitment to reflection. These student teachers' apparent lack of a strong commitment to reflection, to a large extent, appears to explain why there was relatively little consistent change in their reflection during their enrolment in Guided Practice.

Heather And Kathleen : An Overview

Heather and Kathleen, too, came from financially and socially advantaged Anglo-Australian backgrounds. The previous year, as a school leaver, Heather had enrolled in a science degree intending to major in psychology but failed several units. The following year she enrolled in the early childhood program mainly because she enjoyed young children and was attracted by teachers' working conditions. She elaborated: "I would be able to be there for my children in the holidays. My mum was teacher and she was always there for us" (9/9/93, 253). In her view, she was "not terribly career-oriented ..." (16/3/95, B89) but had "always known that I wanted to get married and have a family" (16/3/95, B91). Although somewhat daunted to realise that "teaching is
going to be a lot of work" (16/3/95, B108), she decided that she was willing "to put in the hours" (16/3/95, 107) needed to become an effective teacher.

Kathleen, who entered the program as a school leaver, also enjoyed children's company and, indeed, saw herself as child-like. As she explained: "I think that I have a lot in common with little kids. When I'm with them, I almost regress to being a little kid" (30/3/93, 72). She envisaged that teaching would provide a relatively stress-free working environment. This was important to her, for as she elaborated:

*I have to be in a peaceful environment, otherwise I get very anxious. I can't be around people like me. I have to be around calm, passive people who have a good effect on me. I think that kids would have that good effect on me, and that I would feel more relaxed when I was around them.*

(30/3/93, 145)

When she entered the program, she described herself as "constantly muddled and disorganised ... That's how I am and I don't think that I could change that. I do try not to be, but sometimes I get myself into more confusion by trying not to get into confusion" (30/3/93, 44). These difficulties had emerged as a child and consequently she had been "labelled as having a learning difficulty" (22/11/95, 215). She had unhappy memories of these years, recalling: "There used to be a merit badge in primary school. I very rarely got it, which made me feel very small and very unimportant. I can remember coming home from school crying and thinking that I was very dumb" (15/3/94, 335). During her first practicum she began to reassess her perception of herself as vulnerable and her assumption that teaching would provide a haven.

In this practicum Kathleen worked closely with a child with special needs and "realised that I could make an impact. That gave me a lot more confidence. I didn't feel muddled and silly any more. I felt like that I could do something! I felt that I had underestimated my ability" (8/12/93, 268). As a result, she commented: "I came out of the prac. feeling much stronger within myself than I did going into it" (8/12/93, 128). Teaching no longer seemed a retreat, but rather an opportunity to contribute, especially to children with special needs. To her surprise, she found that "I can achieve more with children with special needs. I feel that I've got to do something. I feel that I've got to make a difference" (11/5/94, 93). She began to realise, though, that learning to teach would present many challenges.

Heather appeared much more self confident than Kathleen and was unperturbed that her strongly held beliefs about young children did not
necessarily coincide with those to which she was exposed in the program. She remained adamant, for example, that "young children should be at home with their parents" (10/11/93, 222) because she considered that a home environment provided higher quality care. Yet at the same time, she objected to what she perceived as the program's overemphasis on the vulnerability of young children as "ridiculous" (10/11/93, 296). She explained: "I don't like this 'We've got to be so careful attitude'... You shouldn't treat children as if they are very fragile. They are very resilient. They bounce back" (10/11/93, 282). Unaware of a possible contradiction between her views, in the early stages of the program she seemed to rely more on conviction in her ideas than strong supporting arguments.

Nevertheless, Heather demonstrated early mastery of an analytical reflective writing genre (Hatton & Smith, 1995). In the month prior to her comments reported in the preceding paragraph, for example, she wrote:

While the teacher presented many and varied art experiences, she did not seem to give the children much scope for creativity. She always seemed to give very definite instructions about which colours and what methods they should use. I understand that she was trying to teach the children techniques, but she did not seem to allow the children choice of how they might apply these techniques. On the few occasions that the children were left room for creative input, some of them seemed less able to complete the task.

(October, 1993)

This led her to question: "Where should the teacher draw the line between teaching new techniques and allowing for creativity" (October, 1993). The apparent depth of reflection in her writing contrasted oddly with her responses during initial interviews. This discrepancy seemed to disappear during the middle semesters of the program.

"You Had To Stop And Think About It"

As Heather progressed through the Guided Practice sequence, she began to make more use of supporting arguments to justify her views. During her third practicum, for example, she decided to focus on "things that have happened on this prac... that have reaffirmed or made me question what I wrote in my philosophy [of teaching] essay last semester" (20/9/94, 216). She considered this important, explaining: "When I wrote the essay, I wasn't sure whether I really thought like that, or whether that's just what I had been taught to think" (20/9/94, 217). It was time, she thought, to determine her "real opinion" (20/9/94, 218). Reflection seemed integral to this process, as the following extract illustrates:
I noticed something during prac. that really supported what I believed. It reinforced the importance of a developmentally appropriate environment. Alex (cooperating teacher) likes to have a 'pretty' room. She has lots of attractive little trinkets around the room, and at first, I thought that it seemed really nice. But the children aren't allowed to touch them even though they are really interested in them. Why have things in the room that children aren't allowed to touch? It's their environment, too! And most of the children are there for longer than Alex. (October, 1994)

Here, Heather shows considerably more awareness of the importance of congruence between beliefs and practices than she did 12 months previously. Her oral reflection, too, now seems far more consistent with her reflective writing.

Heather's interest in developing arguments to support her views continued the following semester when she enrolled in two literacy units with fundamentally different philosophies. She referred frequently to the impact of these units, commenting, for example, in her final interview:

> They had such a big impact because they were presenting almost opposite points of view ... So I had to do a lot of thinking about literacy and about education in general. I'd recommend that combination of units to anyone because it really makes you sit down and think about it. It was different from doing a unit that said 'This is how you do it'. You couldn't just say 'Well, okay, fine'. The ideas that they were presenting were conflicting ... so you had to stop and think about them. (22/11/96, 108)

Likewise, she continued to focus on competing arguments in her reflective writing.

The following excerpt from what was to have been her final semester of Guided Practice suggests that she had become more prepared to reconsider her ideas than when she entered the program. She seemed to be beginning to engage in critical reflection (Van Manen, 1977) when she wrote:

> As part of the afternoon indoor activities, the staff brought out Barbie dolls as part of an activity to promote dramatic play. My initial reaction was negative. Barbie, and the stereotype that she represents, are contradictory to an anti-bias curriculum. They do not present a realistic image of women and do not suggest that individual differences exist between people. They are limited to representing adults from an Anglo-Australian background. (September, 1996)

She then qualified her concern, arguing that as both boys and girls used these dolls in play activities which extended their fine motor and social skills, the use of Barbie dolls was defensible under these circumstances. In conjunction with her interview data, her mastery of a reflective writing genre demonstrates her growing capacity to reflect.
There was less evidence, however, of sustained willingness to reflect. Heather rarely referred to instances of incidental reflection, for example, although her second and third practicums were noticeable exceptions. In her second practicum she reported that "when something didn't work, I had to stop and think about it" (16/5/94, 155). While most of her reflection during this practicum was about "really common-sense things" (16/5/94, 142), she "also found myself thinking about what the effects of what I was planning to do might be" (16/5/94, 148) which suggested that she was beginning to reflect about more than technical concerns. She also reported sudden flashes of understanding, noting: "Sometimes I would have insights. I would be aware that something wasn't really working, but didn't know how to fix it. Then sometimes, I'd realise 'Aha! That's what I should have done before!'" (16/5/94, 197). In addition, she frequently engaged in "self talk" during practice akin to reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983; 1987), as illustrated below:

> Alex and Tina tended to repeatedly warn children who were doing something wrong, and then they would tend to 'blow their tops'. I noticed that I was starting to pick up on that and I'd find myself becoming almost aggressive with the children. I had to keep saying to myself 'Stop! This is a bad habit to get into! Stop it right now!' (13/10/94, 64)

Her relative lack of reference to reflection in other practicums could simply indicate that she did not see this as a noteworthy topic for discussion. On the other hand, it could suggest a tendency not to reflect unless specifically required. When asked about this in the final interview, she replied: "I do reflect and I'm doing it constantly. It's part of my nature now, so I'm not so aware that I'm doing it. It wasn't second nature earlier, but it is now" (22/11/96,B45). Yet her response to her final two practicums suggests otherwise.

"I'm Burnt Out ... It's Hard To Keep Going"

During these practicums, against her University advisers' and cooperating teachers' advice, Heather worked long hours as a shop assistant to fund her forthcoming European holiday. Consequently, she found it difficult to devote adequate time to daily preparation and, apparently, to reflection. During the first of her final practicums, when asked to reflect about a science activity investigating the root functions of plants, for example, she commented: "I would have liked to have used some celery, so that they could watch the dye being absorbed - but I didn't have time to go to the supermarket, so I couldn't" (10/9/96, 37). Similarly, when asked what she had learnt from the practicum she replied: "Mmm ... I don't know, really. Ideas, I suppose" (10/9/96, 229) and did not
elaborate. There seemed little evidence in these responses of the constant reflection to which Heather referred. Ironically, according to Van Manen's criteria, Heather's reflective writing (as, for example, in the Barbie doll episode) attained a higher level than in any previous practicum.

Heather found the second of her final practicums more rewarding. She attributed this to "an instant rapport with Diana [cooperating teacher]" (5/11/96, 18), adding "My problems with my last prac. were the people" (5/11/96, 113). Like Marina, she showed little understanding that her minimal effort in her previous practicum had contributed to the difficulties she had experienced. She also considered that she had learnt more during her final practicum, mostly "about behaviour management - little tricks, like lowering the pitch of my voice ... Diana has given me lots of tips" (5/11/96, 123). Again, her response demonstrated surprisingly little evidence of reflection.

Interestingly, Heather seemed content to adopt her cooperating teacher's strategies even though they conflicted with many of the more child-centred views she espoused in other contexts. When asked to reflect about a maths activity, for example, she replied: "Ideally, I'd love to have them work in small groups. But I have to do it as a whole class because I just don't have the resources to do small groups" (5/11/96, 41). As the activity had involved measuring standard classroom furniture and equipment using parts of the body as informal units of measure, her reasoning seemed unconvincing.

There might have been other constraints which Heather did not mention at the time. In her final interview, for example, she commented: "When you're on prac., you've really got to do what your teacher wants you to do and what your adviser wants you to do" (22/11/96, 323). Given her rapport with her cooperating teacher and her adviser's encouragement to attempt less formal activities, though, it seems likely that she would have had more scope for experimentation than she perceived. In any case, it could be argued that while others' expectations might impede action, they need not impede reflection.

Lack of time seemed a more severe constraint. As Heather commented: "When you're on prac., you're so much on the go that you don't really have time to stop and think about things" (22/11/96, 443). Furthermore, because of her heavy work schedule, she found it difficult to find time for reflection outside of school.
hours. For this reason, she decided not to "do things that I don't absolutely have to do" (5/11/96, 323) and discontinued her reflective writing. Exhaustion, too, seemed a related factor, with Heather feeling "burnt out ... [and finding] it hard to keep going ... it's really exhausting having a job and not being able to take time off" (5/11/96, B8). Finding the time and energy for reflection appeared difficult.

In different circumstances, Heather might have been more reflective. It is possible, for example, that her excitement about the future - "I really can't wait until I graduate! ... I'm dying to get into the real world and to start teaching (5/11/96, B7) - might generate renewed energy for reflection once she began teaching. In less stressful periods, though, she had not shown a particularly strong commitment to reflection, evident from her comment: "Every holidays I think I'm going to rewrite my philosophy - just in note form - as a way of getting ready for the next semester. But I never get around to it" (22/11/96, 73). Such procrastination may not be unusual but suggests that in a situation of conflicting interests where she was "really torn between wanting to go on my holiday and my University work - which has really suffered" (22/11/96, 462), reflection was likely to be a low priority for her. Perhaps not surprisingly, she eventually failed her final Guided Practice unit.

In short, Heather's tendency to become more reflective in the middle stages of the Guided Practice sequence did not continue. Indeed, a noticeable gap emerged between her espoused commitment to reflection and the extent to which she appeared to engage in reflection. Her commitment to reflection seemed insufficient to generate consistent change. Kathleen, too, lacked a strong commitment to reflection, but in her case it was because it was not her preferred strategy for dealing with the challenges she encountered in learning to teach.

"I Don't Give Up, I Just Keep Going"

Instead, Kathleen relied more on persistence. During her first practicum, for example, when she became aware of the difficulties of working with a child with special needs, she thought: "I can't go on! I can't do this! I can't teach this problem child! I'm going to fail!" (8/12/93, 128). Eventually, "there was a breakthrough" (8/12/93, 267), which she did not explain further, leading her to conclude that "if I could get through that, then I must be able to get through a lot more" (8/12/93, 130). This theme of "persistence" resurfaced frequently. She represented her third practicum, for instance, by writing, in large capital
letters, "PERSISTENCE" (8/12/93). She commented: "That sums me up. I don't give up! I just keep going! Although I was going through all of that turmoil ... I just kept going!" (21/10/94). Similarly, during her next practicum, which she also found difficult, she thought: "Well, I've been through all this before, so I know that I can get through it now (22/11/95, 178). Her comment: "I just go along with it. I braved it really, I suppose" (5/10/95, 17) again showed persistence as her preferred strategy. Likewise, she attributed her failure of her fourth practicum (on the basis of an assignment she was required to complete) to having temporarily "lost the will" (5/9/96, 7).

Mostly, Kathleen managed to maintain her persistence. She established a "routine for coping" (5/10/95, 175), which mainly involved talking with her family. She explained: "They've got persistent natures, too, and they kept saying 'Keep going! Keep going! You can do it! That's another day gone - you've almost finished!" (21/10/94). During her most difficult practicum, she also found meditation helpful. As she put it: "I felt as if I was doing something. I felt a bit more empowered" (5/10/95, 181). Reflection was not part of her routine because she found that:

It wasn't helpful when I got home to think about all the bad things that were happening. I knew what they were. It was too upsetting to think about them when I got home. I couldn't change my cooperating teacher, so there didn't seem to be any point. (13/10/95)

Her entries in her reflective journal were cursory, as the following extract shows: "Ann was angry and shouted at the children today. I'm upset about this but feel powerless to raise the issue with Ann. I'm glad that I'm going back to Uni. tomorrow" (August, 1995). Moreover, as Kathleen pointed out, her journal entries were written only to fulfil the practicum requirements.

"I Saw A Lot Of Myself In Alexander Brown"

Although reflection was not Kathleen's preferred strategy, this is not to imply that she did not reflect. Her sensitivity and empathy for children with special needs were particularly apparent. They appeared the primary medium for her reflection which, as the following excerpts show, included some evidence of all of Van Manen's (1977) levels. During an early group interview, for instance, she responded to a comment about children with learning difficulties by suggesting a technical solution. She elaborated:

I would prefer to put them in so-called 'normal' classes - a few in each class, and give them special attention. They would be in a better environment. If they were all in the one class, they'd all be distracting each other. (28/3/93, 196)
After her first practicum she commented: "Although Nick didn't appear to be concentrating or taking anything in, I think that he actually learnt a great deal. He just expresses his learning in a different way, and I had to learn to accept and respect that" (8/12/93, 64). By beginning to question what constitutes evidence of learning, she appeared, here, to be engaging in practical reflection. During her next practicum she focused on issues of equity arising from differential treatment of children with special needs, suggesting that she might have been beginning to reflect in a more critical manner. She commented:

I saw a lot of myself in Alexander ... What affected me so deeply today was the realisation that although the children single him out so blatantly, it goes unnoticed by the staff. Even they always call him 'Alexander Brown', even though there are no other children at the centre called Alexander, and all the other children are always called only by their first names. (April, 1994)

She showed stronger evidence of some movement towards critical reflection the following year, when concerned about moral and ethical implications of inequitable practices, she noted:

Ann would always work with the children of high academic ability. I found that students of lesser ability were very frustrated because of the lack of interaction with their teacher. I think that they were suffering emotionally and academically by being excluded. (5/10/95, 98)

These comments exemplified the main focus of her reflection but highlighted the diversity of the nature of her reflection within this focus. They also suggested that she drew heavily on her own childhood experiences.

A secondary medium for Kathleen's reflection was her belief that, as a teacher, she should be actively involved in children's play. The following incident, during her second practicum, led to what Hatton & Smith (1995) refer to as dialogic reflective writing. Here, Kathleen mulled over her beliefs and their implications when she wrote:

As the children climbed up the rope ladder to the cubby house, I thought to myself 'Hey, I'm bored standing around here with the other teachers. I want to join in the fun'. So I climbed the rope ladder, as well. Soon, there was a stampede of children to the cubby house! ... I thought that this was significant because I could see (as an outsider, and a visitor to the centre) aspects of staff's behaviour that would go unnoticed by them. I could see that by standing there 'monitoring', they had automatically isolated themselves and put up a barrier which prevented full interaction with the children. The teachers were statues amongst a field of dynamic children. Why can't teachers be dynamic, too? I'm sick of conforming and being static, like a statue with children. (May, 1994)
For the most part, however, she seemed not to pursue further the questions which she raised. In this sense, her reflection differed from that of the student teachers referred to in the following chapters.

Basically, reflection seemed to offer Kathleen less support than it provided the student teachers referred to later. Two likely reasons emerge. First, she seemed able to reflect only about situations with which she could personally identify. This tendency was highlighted during her third practicum, where for the first time, she worked with children from a low socio-economic background. She considered that they "nearly all had behavioural problems" (21/10/94, 20) and concluded: "I think it stemmed from where they lived and that sort of background. They lived in Housing Commission places and a great majority of the parents were single parents" (21/10/94, 21). She seemed unaware of the questionable assumptions underpinning this statement.

Second, she found it difficult to reflect in situations which were not particularly supportive or positive, as illustrated by the following extracts from an interview during her third practicum. The first concerns her perceived lack of support from Fiona, her cooperating teacher. She recalled:

**Kathleen:** Yesterday, I was in the classroom with the children for two and a half hours without a teacher.
**Jennifer:** Why was that?
**Kathleen:** Fiona is doing the 10 am shift this week and I'm doing the 7.30 am shift. We should be on the same shift because she is my cooperating teacher.
**Jennifer:** Couldn't that be arranged?...
**Kathleen:** Yes, but I don't have a car and it's easier for mum to get me here at 7.30 am than 10 am because she works.
**Jennifer:** There is probably a bus that you could get.
**Kathleen:** Yes, there could be but I don't know where. I'd have to find out the bus routes.
**Jennifer:** There seems to be a train station nearby.
**Kathleen:** Is there? (13/9/94, 204-250)

Kathleen's lack of awareness that she might have contributed to the difficulties which she experienced in this practicum suggested that she found reflection in this context difficult.

The second extract refers to a less than successful story reading session which had taken place immediately prior to the interview (see Appendix 14).
Jennifer: I wonder why the children were so unsettled?
Kathleen: I don't know. I watch Fiona with the class and I don't think she manages them very well. I do the best I can.
Jennifer: Were you trying to use any particular strategy when you were reading the story?
Kathleen: No. I was just trying to settle them.
Jennifer: By using the finger play?
Kathleen: Yeah.
Jennifer: Were you using other strategies to try to settle them?
Kathleen: My adviser said to use strategies like [telling the children to] 'Look at the ceiling; look at the floor; look at the window'. But I tried that, and it didn't work.
Jennifer: Have you thought of any other strategies to use that might help to make it easier for you?
Kathleen: Not really. I just don't know what to do (weeping). (13/9/94, 19-45)

Her distress might have hindered her ability to reflect on this incident immediately after it had occurred. A month later, however, when asked whether anything stood out to her in the transcript of the above interview, she replied: "Only that it was an upsetting three weeks. I'm glad it's all over now" (21/10/94). Again, there was little evidence of reflection.

Two years later, after reading the description of the story reading session included in Appendix 14, she laughed and commented:

Well, I think, now ... that I would have just stopped it, got everyone to pack away the equipment, done a transition activity to settle them down, and read the story. But there were a few unfortunate things, like the plane, which were out of my control. As a teacher, you've got to work on that and learn to say 'Well, I can't do that now. Things have changed'. So I should have just stopped it because all the children were so restless, and it was raining. Perhaps it was completely inappropriate to have done that activity at that time. I'd try it again later. (5/9/96, 182)

This comment is interesting in that it again highlights her emphasis on persistence in the face of difficulties. As well, it suggests that her additional experience enabled her to identify reasons for her difficulties, which had previously eluded her. It could also suggest that reflection about a distressing incident becomes easier with the passing of time, especially when given the opportunity to revisit and respond to a written record of an earlier reaction. As such, it supports Hatton & Smith's (1995) emphasis on the value of rereading and responding to previous reflective writing.

Kathleen appeared at her most reflective in situations which she perceived as supportive. During her second practicum, for example, she reported frequently "stepping back and asking: 'Now, what am I doing here? Is it right, or is it wrong? All
of those questions going on constantly..." (11/5/94, 136). This suggests that she engaged in considerable reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983;1987). She noted:

Evaluating my teaching skills and myself as a teacher was important to me. I constantly asked myself questions! 'Am I doing the right thing? Is this what my teacher wants of me? What am I portraying as a teacher?'...

When I was reading a story for example, when a child was talking, I'd ask myself what I should do when a child wasn't participating. 'Should I say the child's name, or should I tap her on the head?'. I knew that I didn't want to ask the child to stand up in front of other children, because I felt that was wrong. I wanted to make it as unobtrusive as possible.

I didn't know what the effect of different strategies would be. (11/5/94, 63)

A supportive environment appeared to encourage, but not guarantee, reflection, as the following extract from an interview during her final practicum seems to suggest:

**Jennifer:** What's it been like doing the prac. again?
**Kathleen:** (Sighs) It kind of feels like 'Oh, I've already done all of this' ...
**Jennifer:** Do you find that you've learnt anything?
**Kathleen:** Well, I've learnt some strategies for getting children's attention, and some transition activities. When I first came, I found it hard to get their attention ...

**Jennifer:** What's made the difference?
**Kathleen:** Beth [cooperating teacher] and I went through some strategies ... so I have learnt things like that.
**Jennifer:** And have you learnt other things?
**Kathleen:** No, that's about it. (5/9/96, 11-124)

Her comments contrast to those of the student teachers referred to in later chapters who were more likely to see all practicum placements offering opportunities for continual development.

Kathleen considered discussion the most helpful strategy for promoting reflection. She commented that she had "learnt to reflect" (22/11/95, 296) through discussion in Guided Practice tutorials. She found it difficult, though, to explore issues by herself, explaining: "In my mind, it floats around, and sometimes gets worse. I find it best to express it and get it out, rather than bottle it up" (5/10/95, 293). In contrast, talking "helped put everything back into perspective" (22/11/95, 310), enabled her become "more adaptive and resilient" (22/11/95, 295), and assisted her to develop more "strategies for coping" (22/11/95, 297). Again, her reference to persistence is noticeable. Her comments also suggest that she valued discussions for the reassurance they offered, rather than their potential to challenge. As such, it could be argued that they served mainly to fuel her persistence, rather than to foster reflection.
In summary, Kathleen presented as a caring and increasingly committed student teacher. Although she encountered many challenges in her development as a teacher, persistence rather than reflection appeared her preferred strategy for dealing with these challenges. For this reason, it could be argued that, like Heather, she was not strongly committed to reflection and that, consequently, there was little consistent change in her reflection during her enrolment in Guided Practice.

PERCEPTION OF AN UNSUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT: JOSEPHINE AND COLIN

Like Kathleen, Josephine and Colin were caring and committed student teachers. Although both showed a considerable capacity for reflection, they are included in this cluster of student teachers, because their reflection showed surprisingly little sign of consistent development during their enrolment in Guided Practice. While Josephine and Colin were strikingly dissimilar in most respects, both perceived the learning environment of the program to be unsupportive of their development as teachers. As the following profiles show, this perception seemed to play a major role in hindering the development of their reflection.

Josephine And Colin: An Overview

Although Josephine was from a Greek-Australian background, English was her first language. She entered the program as a school leaver after having been unsuccessful in gaining entry into physiotherapy, her first choice of University program. In retrospect, she was relieved as she considered herself fairly shy and non-assertive and doubted that she would feel comfortable working with people in a physically intimate way.

Josephine made the decision to become an early childhood teacher in close consultation with her parents. "It mattered to me what my parents thought" (9/5/94, 339), she explained. Initially, her parents advised against early childhood teaching because "I'd done well in the HSC and the course was easy to get into. My parents said that I would be wasting my marks" (9/5/94, 341). Josephine, on the other hand, thought that "it would be an advantage to have those extra marks" (9/5/94, 344). Had she enrolled in physiotherapy, she "would have had to have worked a lot harder, and I wouldn't have liked that" (9/5/94, 345). She had always been "fascinated by little kids" (9/5/94, 319), and looked forward to children of her own. "Having a family and being at home with them is really important to me"
(9/5/94, 335), she emphasised and early childhood teaching would allow her to "work part-time once I've got children" (9/5/94, 334).

Josephine's parents warmed to the idea when they heard "about the good employment prospects" (9/5/94, 360) for graduates. She elaborated: "They especially liked the idea that I could open my own centre. They liked the idea of me being able to be my own boss, and that there could be money involved" (9/5/94, 269). Laughing, she explained that her father, an architect, "has already drawn up plans for a centre at the back of our house" (9/5/94, 270). Eventually, Josephine and her parents decided that "early childhood [teaching] would be a good thing" (9/5/94, 359) and she enrolled in the program.

Colin, a 23 year old from a professional Anglo-Australian background, had very different aspirations from Josephine. Since leaving school, he had sought opportunities to put into practice his strong commitment to tolerance and social justice. He was eligible for entry to a wide range of University programs and initially enrolled in a law degree but became discouraged by its "conservatism" (29/3/93, 65). Attracted to education because "it's so incredibly important to society" (29/3/93, 76), he decided to enrol in a secondary teacher education program. He was confident that teaching would enable him to work towards achieving his ideals of greater tolerance and social justice.

After two years in the secondary program, though, he explained that he had become:

increasingly cynical about secondary education ... I felt there had to be more to it than just churning kids through the system. I was supposed to be the boss, and they were just the kids. That didn't sit comfortably with me.  

(1/11/93, B133)

As well as disliking the atmosphere of power and control he had found during his secondary school practicums, he was disappointed to discover that "the glimmer of excitement about finding out about the world" (1/9/93, 179) which he had noticed in primary school children "had been completely extinguished by high school" (1/9/93, 180). Anticipating that younger children "wouldn't just have that glimmer - their eyes would be alight with it" (1/9/93, 181), he decided to transfer to the early childhood program.

"I'm Someone Who Will Always Ask Questions"

Colin envisaged that working with young children would provide an opportunity to create a more egalitarian, liberal and empowering learning
environment. To him, education was ultimately about empowerment. As he explained: "I truly believe that being a teacher means being in a position to empower children. I believe there is no point in teaching if you are not going to empower children. To me, that is paramount" (1/11/93, 239). He described himself as an idealist and hoped that he "would be able to get out there and really make a difference" (1/9/93, 42). Driven by a passionate creed or "mission to accomplish" through his teaching (LaBoskey, 1994, p.90), his reasons for entering the program were very different from those of the other students profiled in this chapter.

Colin attributed his strong beliefs about education to his unhappy early school experiences. He described the atmosphere of the school he had attended as a child as "extremely judgmental and very narrow minded" (29/3/93, 240). He found this restrictive atmosphere difficult to accept, recalling: "I always wanted to question things, but you were not supposed to question, so I was always getting into trouble for asking questions" (29/3/93, 266). Throughout his childhood he had questioned what he was told by those in authority, commenting: "When I was growing up I would question what is right and what is wrong ... I felt that I had to work out for myself what was right and what was wrong" (29/3/93, 268). The importance of questioning remained an important personal theme and he considered that "I'm someone who will always ask questions" (1/11/93, B266). It was through questioning that he intended to make sense of becoming a teacher.

"The Knowledge Is There Somewhere"

Josephine, in contrast, regarded learning to teach as primarily about "defining your role" (9/5/94, 7) and developing the necessary skills to fulfil that role. She became increasingly aware of what she referred to as the many dilemmas faced by early childhood teachers, as shown by the following example of dialogic reflective writing (Hatton & Smith, 1995). She wrote:

There are dilemmas. What if a child comes through unnoticed? What if a child is wrongly labelled? What is the difference between 'slow progress' and 'being at-risk'? It is the fine line between these last questions that makes it so difficult. At what point should a child's development be a cause for concern? How long should you leave everything to try to resolve itself before you step in? (September, 1995)

Rather than acting as a springboard for wide ranging practical or critical reflection, though, her awareness of these dilemmas tended to lead to a rather narrow technical outlook. By the end of the program, she was confident that she had solutions for them. She wrote:
Knowing the answers to all other early childhood questions, I have the feeling that the answers are the same for these questions, too. It would be up to the individual child and the individual situation - what the risk is, what the family wants, and what resources are available. (September, 1995)

Indeed, in her final interview, to represent her image of herself as teacher, Josephine drew herself holding a bag of skills (see Photograph 1). As she explained: "I feel that I have a lot of skills and teaching is one of them ... Now I have the confidence to go into a centre and say 'I've got these skills. I can do it too' " (20/11/95, 95). That her bag of skills, as well as teaching also included driving a car, further highlighted her technical approach.

PHOTOGRAPH 1: Josephine's Bag of Skills

Like several student teachers referred to previously, Josephine entered the program with an epistemological perspective of received knowing (Belenky et al., 1986). She recalled feelings of panic in her first year "because no-one had given me a booklet which set out what I had to do. I remember thinking 'When are you going to tell me what to do? What are you teaching me?' " (20/11/95, 348). For this reason, she wished that she had gone to a vocationally orientated Technical and Further Education (TAFE) College before enrolling at University. In her
opinion: "People who go to TAFE get all the resources, and then they come to Uni. and get all the theory" (9/5/94, 380). She elaborated:

I think that I had a very activity-based approach. I think that I had come to Uni. expecting to be taught how to set up the blocks and where to set out the puzzles - the actual things that we were going to do, rather than the theory behind it. I was still struggling with the fact that there were no set guidelines ... that was what first year was about. (20/11/95, 289)

Gradually, she realised that she needed to take a more active role in learning to teach. As she commented: "After two and a half years of study, I am convinced that the knowledge is there somewhere. I just have to find it and put it together in a way that gives me maximum results" (August, 1995). She also reported moving away from the absolute position which characterises received knowing towards a position of constructed knowing. "I think that I can see things more holistically. Things are not black and white. And I can see continually that there are different arguments" (20/11/95, 335), she explained.

Initially, there seemed to be a corresponding change in her reflection, which in her early practicums, was mainly technical (Van Manen, 1977) in nature. She referred, for example, to:

thinking all the time about the right way to respond to the children. It wasn’t that I didn’t know how to respond- we’d been taught how to respond at Uni.
- but I was trying to practice what we had learnt. (9/5/94, 33)

During her third practicum, however, where she worked with children from culturally diverse, low income and often dysfunctional backgrounds, her reflection extended beyond a narrow technical focus to include broader educational issues.

Behaviour management was a major issue for Josephine during this practicum, but rather than focus only on technical strategies, she reflected on underlying causes and possibilities for long term action. After witnessing the children fight over classroom materials, for example, she commented:

It was a real shock to me to realise that they weren’t able to handle materials on their own ... I guess that I had assumed too much ... The reason that they started fighting was that they hadn’t learnt to be more independent. It was linked to their lack of social skills, but they’d never really been given opportunities to take responsibility or make decisions.
I realised then that I had to start by keeping lots of control, but gradually handing more and more control over to the children. (14/10/94, 322)

Essentially, she considered that the pre-determined curriculum and traditional classroom environment failed to meet these children’s needs and was, therefore, inappropriate. She elaborated:
If I could, I probably would have scrapped most of the curriculum. I would have had lots of games that would have helped them to see that they were worthy people - because a lot of kids didn’t - and that in the classroom they were safe - that we could all share and be friends. They were told that school was a safe place, but it wasn’t, because they knocked each other around. (14/10/94, 180)

In these examples of practical reflection, she concluded that this mismatch between the curriculum and children’s needs, exacerbated by teachers adopting inappropriate practices, contributed greatly to the children’s behaviour.

This practicum provided many opportunities for critical reflection (Van Manen, 1977). Indeed, in the preceding paragraph Josephine seemed about to question the moral and ethical implications of a curriculum and teaching practices which failed so miserably to meet these children’s needs. Yet she did not question her assumptions about the impact of the children’s backgrounds on their behaviour. As she put it:

There were two extremes. Either the kids did anything they wanted too because the parents were too busy fighting with each other or you had kids who got away with everything because mum would want the kid to be happy, otherwise dad would have something to pick on. (14/10/94, 56)

Her comment showed little consideration or understanding of the economic-socio-political circumstances which might have had an impact on these children’s backgrounds and contributed to the difficulties they experienced within the school environment.

On the other hand, Josephine demonstrated an ability to see situations from other than her own perspective, or as Dewey (1933) would say, the prerequisite openmindedness for reflection. She vehemently disagreed with her cooperating teacher’s approach, recalling: "Sometimes when she talked to the children, I’d think 'This is unbearable. I can feel my heart breaking just listening to you say that' ” (14/10/94, 230). Yet she empathised with her predicament, explaining:

I could sympathise with the teacher though, because I could see the stress that she was under. It must have been very difficult for her. She told me that she still had to get through 20 units of maths before the end of the year so that the kids could go into Year 2 but that she knew that she wouldn’t be able to because the kids still couldn’t do the simpler work. So what is she going to do? (14/10/94, 232)
She later commented that "learning to put myself in someone else's position and to think about why people think what they do (20/11/95, 335) was one of the most important skills she had developed during her enrolment in Guided Practice.

This notion of recognising and balancing different perspectives was also evident in her representation below of the many "dilemmas and debates" (14/10/94, 28) which characterised this practicum (see Photograph 2). She explained:

I am balancing everything from the outside and filtering it through to the kids ... Things from the outside include the local community and what they see as valuable learning and what should be taught. Then you've got the other teachers' attitudes, and then you've got the school's expectations. If they don't like your lessons, you're in trouble!. Then you've got the parents ... you really have to respect that it's their child, not yours! But at the same time, you're trying to help this child learn and become a decent person.
That's a debate I spent a lot of time on prac. (14/10/94, 38)

PHOTOGRAPH 2: Josephine Filtering Influences Affecting Children

Here, Josephine seemed very aware of her moral and ethical obligations as a teacher, and in many respects, this practicum at the end of her second year of Guided Practice could be seen as the pinnacle of her reflection because of the complexity and diversity of the connections she was making. Given her
ability to reflect, her growing commitment to teaching, and her shift towards a more empowered epistemological perspective, why did she not become more reflective as she progressed through the program?

Perhaps it was simply that Josephine, like Kathleen and Heather, was not strongly committed to reflection as a learning strategy. As she expressed it:

_I think that in positive situations, you think about things less because everything is going so well. You are just going through the motions and you’re thinking ‘Yes, this is good. This is working’. Whereas in negative situations, you have to work harder, especially if you’ve got to prove it to someone, so you’re looking for what works and what doesn’t. In a good situation, you fall into the trap of getting a bit lazy, in a way._

(20/11/95, 246)

It seemed more likely, however, that Josephine’s deep distrust of her learning environment, to some extent evident in the above excerpts was more instrumental in hindering the development of her reflection.

"Maybe I'm Just Paranoid"

Josephine referred frequently to this distrust, often asking herself: "Why is it that no matter how friendly and supportive my cooperating teacher and adviser are, I still can’t shake the feeling that someone is going to complain? Maybe I am just paranoid" (August, 1995). What she termed her "paranoia" seemed to stem from her acute awareness of the power of those in authority. She recalled:

_In every prac., there was always that uncertainty. I suppose that sometimes I’m paranoid about it, but even when people are telling me nice things, I worry that they are not telling the truth ... I’m one of those people who need to see it on paper. Once they’ve ticked all the boxes [on the assessment form] then it’s fine._

(20/11/95, 169)

She considered that:

_You go to prac. to learn, but you’d be lying if you didn’t admit that basically you’re aiming to get a tick in the right box. That’s what prac. is like! And that’s what university is like. You’re just trying to get results. You are learning and you want to be a good teacher, but prac. is so artificial because basically you are ‘just kissing up’ to the right people. You don’t want to upset your cooperating teacher, because if you do, where are you then?_

(20/11/95, 148)

Essentially, her aim was to please people in powerful positions. She attributed her difficulties during practicum to inconsistencies in their expectations:
The difficulties that I have on prac. come down to the difficulties negotiating between Uni. and the centre. There are always two completely different sets of expectations and you’re trying to make both parties happy... Because in the end, it all boils down to that elusive tick. It puts you in a really awkward position. I think that’s where I’ve always had a problem - with that conflict. (17/11/95, 137)

The strategic negotiation of this maze of expectations appeared, in general, to leave little opportunity for reflection.

All the same, Josephine considered herself, by nature, a reflective person. As the following excerpt shows, she equated reflection with self-criticism. She explained:

Everyone has always said that I am very critical of myself and that I don’t gloss over things and that I will think about alternatives. I think that you can walk away from any experience and think 'This is what should have happened. This is what could happen next time'. (20/11/95, 240)

She also equated reflection with protection, noting: "As long as I can justify myself, then I'm safe. If you have a quick answer to justify what you're doing, then I don't think that anyone can argue with you" (20/11/95, 138). It seemed that Josephine perceived reflection (or self criticism) as a defence against a hostile environment. By self criticism she might be able to forestall others’ criticism of her. In this sense, she seemed to see reflection less as a search for meaning than a tool for deflecting possible criticism.

Indeed, in Josephine’s final interview (when presumably she would have no longer perceived any need to create a favourable impression), she confided that, in most of her practicums, her reflective writing had been tokenistic. She elaborated:

I’d see something and I’d think ‘Oh, that would make a nice reflective episode’. They were just something more to be done. They were honest, and I did them with the intent of thinking about what had happened, but there wasn’t the feeling that I was really working through something as I was doing them. It was like ‘Well, I’ve typed a page, so that’s enough’. (20/11/95, 218)

She found reflective writing more valuable in her final practicum, explaining:

I’ve never found this before, but actually, writing reflective episodes is quite therapeutic. I usually just write them thinking 'I've got to get this done', but this prac. as I sit there writing them, I feel as if I'm getting it all out and I feel a sense of relief once I've written it down, it seems to relieve the pressure building up inside. (7/11/95, 16)

Nevertheless, an element of protection remained. She "chose to write them so that they became a type of affirmation" (20/11/95, 194) to help her realise that "the
prac. wasn't as bad as it seemed, and that I wasn't as bad as she [cooperating teacher] thought" (20/11/95, 196). While she considered the reflective episodes from her final practicum more meaningful than those from earlier practicums, by Van Manen’s (1977) standards they compared unfavourably with those from her earlier practicums. This is evident in the following extract from her final practicum which refers to difficulties with behaviour management. She wrote:

I was quite devastated by the music time on Tuesday, but to keep it in perspective, I had only been at the centre for five days; it was only the second music time that I had taken; and most of the children hadn’t been the previous time. I feel that as long as I realise the problems with these periods, and continue to work on and refine my skills, they can only improve. (October, 1995)

Here her descriptive reflective writing (Hatton & Smith, 1995) appears less insightful than above extracts from her third practicum which were also concerned with behaviour management. This discrepancy adds weight to Hatton & Smith’s (1995) argument that conformity to a reflective writing genre need not correspond to the authenticity of the reflection.

Given these apparent contradictions, it is difficult to draw conclusions about Josephine's reflection. In many respects, she appeared more aware of dilemmas than the student teachers referred to previously, and more able to consider them from a range of perspectives. Her commitment to reflection, though, seemed less certain than her ability to reflect, but not because she did not value reflection. Rather, she seemed so consumed by her distrust of authority figures and so determined to satisfy them, that she used her remaining energy for public, and possibly tokenistic, rather than personally meaningful reflection. Her third practicum was an exception, perhaps because the emotional intensity of her response to this practicum created more incentive (and energy) to reflect on the dilemmas she encountered.

In summary, Josephine seemed to see reflection more as a defence against what she saw as an unsupportive, even hostile, learning environment than a tool for inquiry. In this sense, she seemed to have a somewhat distorted perception of the value of reflection. On the rare occasions she perceived her environment to be supportive, she commented that she became less inclined to reflect. Again, this suggests that she valued reflection as a means of protection rather than growth, and explains why her reflection did not develop in a way which was more consistent with her shift in epistemological
perspective. As such, her perception of an unsupportive learning environment seemed to hinder the development of her reflection.

"My Ideals Aren’t Valued"
Colin also perceived the learning environment of the early childhood preservice program to be unsupportive, albeit for very different reasons. Ultimately, however, the effect was similar in that there was less development evident in his reflection during the two semesters he was enrolled in Guided Practice than might have been expected.

Initially, Colin was very positive about the early childhood program and particularly excited by its underpinning philosophy. He commented: "I find the whole philosophy behind early childhood education absolutely wonderful and inspirational" (1/9/93, B35). It coincided with his own views about education and gave him confidence that he could put his ideals into practice. He admired what he considered the passion, dedication, achievements and expertise of the lecturers and tutors and looked forward to their support in helping him achieve his ideals. These positive first impressions of the program were soon overshadowed, however, as he began to feel increasingly isolated, socially and intellectually.

Socially, Colin missed the camaraderie he had found in his secondary teacher education program. He recalled: "I was friends with all the people I was studying with. We had a sense of common unity and a sense of common direction" (1/11/93, 59). In contrast, in the early childhood program he had "met only two or three people with whom I would want to continue a friendship and that makes me sad" (1/11/93, 90). His social isolation stemmed, in part, from ideological differences. He found it disappointing and frustrating that few of his fellow early childhood student teachers shared his ideals. As he expressed it: "It’s difficult to find somebody with whom I can sit down and discuss something a little deeper than nightclubs" (1/9/93, 52). From his perspective, it seemed that most student teachers "rather than being movers and shakers and really getting out there and making a difference, just want to go to middle class preschools where they will never be confronted with anything alien" (1/11/93, B49). He confided: "I get really angry with some students because of their attitudes" (29/3/93, 275).

Colin also felt isolated and overwhelmed by the gender imbalance. Only 10 of approximately 1,000 students enrolled in the program were male. As the great
majority of teacher educators as well as student teachers were female, it seemed to Colin that he found himself in "a female bastion of academia" (1/11/93, 215). In some ways, he reported, he found this positive: "I actually prefer working with women". Yet, in other ways, it contributed to his isolation. As he pointed out: "At times the fact that there are only four males in first year is almost too much too handle, especially as it seems to be expected that because we are males we will automatically have a lot in common" (1/9/93, 44). The combination of gender imbalance and ideological differences often made him feel as if he had unexpectedly found himself "in a finishing school for private school girls" (1/9/93, 50).

Social isolation from other students may have mattered less to Colin had he been able to develop with teacher educators the type of relationship he had valued in the secondary teacher education program. He recalled how, in the secondary program, he had enjoyed "sitting down and arguing with my tutors" (1/11/93, B99) and noted that "they enjoyed it too" (1/11/93, B100). He was disappointed, therefore, that he was unable to develop a similar relationship with early childhood academics. Indeed, it seemed to Colin that many viewed him with some suspicion. He gained the impression that some questioned his commitment to becoming an early childhood educator and described how in one tutorial, "when we explained what we had done before we came here the tutor just looked at me and sniffed" (1/9/93, B76). He was furious at the implication "that my chequered University career signifies that I don’t stick at anything" (1/9/93, B77). On the contrary, he argued, it indicated the extent of his commitment to his ideals of social justice and tolerance and his determination to find a way to put these ideals into practice.

Colin felt saddened and frustrated that his ideals seemed not to be understood or appreciated by teacher educators. In his words: "Sometimes I think that the academics should focus more on people who really have ideals and encourage them to share their ideals ... I guess I feel that my ideals aren't valued here" (1/11/93, B88). He wondered whether he should have heeded friends' advice when they:

> warned me that I was going into the wrong area and that I'd be wasted and demoralised; that I would come up against brick walls; that they don't actually like people like me in education, because we might rock the boat. (1/9/93, B45)

He became more and more troubled by the thought that perhaps his friends had been right.
Feelings of social and ideological isolation were exacerbated by feelings of intellectual isolation. Colin continually questioned aspects of the program because to him, questioning was the foundation for learning. Firmly believing that "as students we should question what we are being taught" (1/9/93, B266), he was concerned that most students seemed to "fall into the trap of believing everything they are told by academics" (1/9/93, 100). He considered unquestioning acceptance "dangerous" (1/9/93, 101) but sensed that his questioning was neither welcomed nor valued. He noted that theorists who did not conform to the program's philosophy "were spoken of in fairly derogatory terms and quickly brushed aside" (1/9/93, 113) and described much of the lecture content as "institutionalised propaganda" (26/5/93, 95). As well, he was disturbed by an incident in which "my tutor had been absolutely damning about Montessori" (1/9/93, 110). To Colin, it seemed that although "Montessori doesn't fit into the ideology of the program, surely as someone who has made such a huge impact on early childhood education, she deserves some sort of reflection on what she imparted to the field" (1/9/93, 113). He found it "outrageous" (1/9/93, 111) that his tutor was not prepared to discuss Montessori's philosophy further.

This apparent tendency to limit student teachers' exposure to dissenting theorists and unwillingness to have them question accepted orthodoxies disillusioned Colin. Moreover, it hindered his learning which he saw as a process of making connections. He had a clear visual image of these connections, commenting: "I see them in my mind, almost like a concept map, with my beliefs in the middle" (1/9/93, 39). He relied on questioning to establish these connections, explaining: "If there is an aspect I have questions about, then I'll read different views about that issue ... That's the way I work" (1/9/93, 52). Because, to him, the program appeared to discourage questioning, in effect, it disempowered him. Consequently, the confidence with which he entered the program ebbed rapidly and he became "more and more scared that I may not be capable of becoming an early childhood teacher" (1/11/93, 82). At the end of his first year in the program he concluded that "the reasons for changing my degree from secondary to early childhood no longer seem logical ... I've made a terrible mistake in coming here!" (1/11/93, 75) and decided not to re-enrol the following year.

Colin's self doubts seemed groundless, given his perceptiveness and sensitivity to children illustrated in the following sequence of reflective
writing. Here, he discusses his cooperating teacher's intense dislike of a child, who reminded him very much of himself at that age. He wrote:

She openly admitted that she did not like Karl, the child, whom I had chosen to observe. He struck me as an articulate, well spoken, and somewhat intense child... On all my observation days, the majority of the attention Karl received was negative, and this was obviously affecting his self-esteem. He was never disciplined, he was punished, and the punishment always came without explanation, or a chance for him to explain... Karl's plight was personally painful... He may be damaged by his first year at school, and this first year may negate all of the good experiences in his earlier education... This situation served only to reinforce my own passion for the nurturing and respect of children...
I am determined not to make the same errors as my cooperating teacher.
(October, 1993)

Much more so than Kathleen, Colin was able to use this sense of identification as a springboard for reflection of broader educational, ethical and moral considerations. He elaborated:

Her justification was that Karl suffers from ADD - it's sort of like hyperactivity. I think that it must be the 1990's version of hyperactivity... It's an adult's way of explaining away their responsibility to give children attention and treat them with respect by saying 'Oh, well, it's okay to treat them like this because they've got that wrong with them'.
(1/9/93, 213)

As well, he was able, to take a much longer term perspective than Kathleen. This was evident when he continued:

Her way of teaching might seem feasible at the moment because it keeps Karl and the class under control. But how feasible will it seem in five years time when Karl has become totally withdrawn and has lost, say, two years of learning because he's been totally isolated from the rest of the class?
(1/9/93, 244)

Given the depth of his reflection and the connections he draws, why is Colin included in this cluster of student teachers who showed little consistent evidence of development in their reflection?

Unlike the other student teachers profiled in this chapter, Colin entered the program having demonstrated considerable evidence of past reflection. Indeed, it could be argued that without reflection, he would not have been able to develop, justify, and sustain the ideals which he articulated so clearly. During his enrolment in the program, however, his reflection appeared to show little further development. The above excerpt about Karl was one of the few instances in the interviews conducted with Colin where he focused on issues related to teaching or his development as a teacher, rather than on his own frustration and unhappiness. Indeed, Colin's interviews were repetitious
and although he constantly revisited the reasons for his distress, he seemingly failed to develop further insights into his situation. Moreover, he did not appear to question the validity of his views and seemed unaware of some inconsistencies in them. He frequently referred to the "transfer of knowledge" (26/5/93, 80), for example, commenting that "a good teacher is someone who cares about knowledge being transmitted" (26/5/93) although this contradicted his espoused views about learning.

In summary, while Colin had an obvious ability to reflect, and demonstrated considerable evidence of past reflection, his reflection appeared not to develop further. That this study found little evidence of further development, however, does not necessarily mean that there was none. Possibly, he chose to use the interviews to unleash his frustration, and to reflect on his development as a teacher in other contexts. Nevertheless, there seems considerable evidence to suggest that Colin’s perception that the learning environment was unsupportive had an adverse impact on his reflection.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This chapter has presented profiles of the eight student teachers whose reflection seemed to show little evidence of consistent development during their enrolment in Guided Practice. A number of factors appeared to hinder the development of their reflection. These included a lack of commitment to reflection and/or teaching; an epistemological perspective of received knowing and a technical view of teaching; and a perception of an unsupportive learning environment.

Kel and Erica, for example, had little commitment to teaching and, therefore, little incentive to reflect on their development as teachers. While Pamela and Marina also had little commitment to teaching, their epistemological perspective of received knowing seemed to hinder reflection even more because it made the search for meaning so discomforting. Moreover, because their perspective of received knowing led them to see teaching as an essentially technical process, they found it difficult to accept its inherent complexities and ambiguities. Heather and Kathleen, on the other hand, were committed to teaching, but not to reflection. While Josephine became increasingly committed to teaching and moved some way towards constructed knowing, her distrust of her learning environment led her to focus more on strategic responses than meaning. Finally, although Colin entered the
program as a reflective and empowered learner with a strong commitment to teaching, his reflection showed little sign of further development. He, too, perceived the learning environment of the early childhood program to be unsupportive of his search for meaning. The importance of these factors is illustrated further in the following two chapters which focus on those student teachers whose reflection showed consistent change during their enrolment in Guided Practice.