Introductory Essay

Transformations:
Tale of Education, Teacher Education and a Journal

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Shallow: ... And is Jane Nightwork alive?
Falstaff: She lives, Master Shallow ...
Shallow: ... Doth she hold her own well?
Falstaff: Old, old, Master Shallow.
Shallow: Nay, she must be old: she cannot choose but be old; certain she's old.

Shakespeare: Henry IV, Part 2; III, (ii)

Introduction

It is a matter of both honour and coincidence that I am contributing this paper to Change: Transformations in Education, the latest incarnation of the long-surviving journal, the Forum of Education. The honour comes with the invitation to submit. The coincidence arises from the historical accident that my first published article appeared in the Forum of Education in 1971—almost three decades ago.

The journal, the study of education, and of course my own concerns and interests, have all undergone considerable transformations since the time of my first article. This present essay focuses on and considers just some of the transformations that have occurred, although not, eventually, for the mere sake of looking backwards. A more positive purpose will emerge a little further down the track.

Transformations are movements in time and space, the ever-changing flow of a river, where nothing stands still and nothing remains as it was. Heraclitus has told us that we can never dip a toe into the same river twice. He might have added (and perhaps he did imply) that we can never dip the same toe twice into a river, for as the river is constantly a new river so too are we constantly a new person. There are dangers in looking back to describe what the river once looked like, for it was a different river distantly remembered as it was experienced by a different person.

This is not a rejection of history. It is, rather, a warning against nostalgia, and a recognition of the (paradoxically) idiosyncratic yet multi-subjective nature of recollection and description, and especially recollection of a river's flow over a period of three decades—half a human lifetime. Still, some things can be recalled that will be less contestable than others. Let me look, then, at the Forum of Education as it was in 1971, along with what I wrote for it then.

At the beginning of the 1970s the Forum of Education already had a long-standing history, with the 1971 numbers making up Volume 30. Only the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), founded in 1930, seems to have been around longer in the field, and in 1971 the far more prestigious Australian Journal of Education was only up to

1 I wish to thank my colleague, Dr Donna Gibbs, whose sensitive reading and wise advice made this a better paper than it otherwise would have been.
Volume 15. But along with its longevity, the Forum had also become a parochial affair— in geographical terms an ‘old river’, or to be more honest something approaching a stagnant billabong. It was subtitled ‘An Australian Journal of Teacher Education’, and it announced that it was published by Sydney Teachers College. It listed an editor, and something resembling a managing or editorial board. It also indicated that it was published with the cooperation of seven named but unidentified people. What it did not state publicly, although all this was commonly known, was that the editor, Dr Dunstan Kemp, was principal of Sydney Teachers College, and that the unnamed cooperateurs were the principals of the other teachers colleges in New South Wales—a point that I shall return to. It further went unstated that usually Dunstan Kemp alone chose what was to go into each issue, and thus the journal was technically not refereed. In addition to this, preference, if not patronage, was given to Sydney Teachers College staff to publish in the Forum. Quality did not count for everything, which is not to say that it was not occasionally present. In an environment that included far fewer educational journals than today, some excellent papers, albeit hardly ever a radical or fundamentally critical one, appeared scattered among the volumes of the Forum.

My first excursion into print has little claim to excellence. Today I do not even list it on my CV, and looking back I am pretty sure that it was accepted for publication largely because at the time I was a lecturer in education at Sydney Teachers College. The paper now seems to me to lack a measure of academic merit and rigour, and it is with a little embarrassment that I bring it to light again. I do so largely because it is placed at, and itself places a number of marker points from which transformations can be observed and charted.

The article in question was entitled ‘The Study of Education at a Teachers College’. At the time it was written, almost all primary and junior secondary teachers, and a fair percentage of senior secondary teachers in NSW were trained (I use the word deliberately) in their craft or vocation (another deliberate choice of words) at teachers colleges. Only a small proportion of teachers experienced university life and study, and those who did normally studied their ‘teaching subjects’, among others, at university, and then, as the expression was, ‘went down’ to a teachers college for their professional training year. This metaphorical placing was a literal reality at the University of Sydney, where the teachers college building (Sydney Teachers College) stood at the bottom of a hill at the lowest point on the western side of the campus,2 and although physically on campus it was distinguished from the University even by Australia Post which allocated the college building a different postcode.

My article, drawing heavily on my own simultaneous experience as a postgraduate student at the free autonomous university and as a lecturer in the highly controlled State Government run, staffed and monitored environment of the Teachers College3, contrasted a perceived instrumental and shallow orientation of educational studies at teachers colleges with the perceived rigour of educational studies at universities. It then argued that if teachers colleges were to seriously engage in teacher education rather than teacher training, and if they were to produce critical, reflective professional teachers rather than mere efficient functionaries, then they needed to ‘up the ante’ as far as rigour and scholarship

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2 There is an important historical reason for the College being on the University campus, which I won’t go into here. Suffice it to say that, earlier in the century, the University and the College were more closely associated, with the Professor of Education at the University also being, de facto, Principal of the College.

3 The University, for instance, hired its own staff following public advertisement. College staff were appointed by the State Government’s Public Service Board, almost invariably from among teachers in NSW schools.
went in their courses. This, I argued, might best be done by applying a critical philosophical approach and orientation to educational studies, so that future teachers might learn to think about teaching and about the role of schooling, rather than simply take their place uncritically, and without a sense of historical context, in the school system.

It is, of course, the case that, since I wrote that article, one of its particular foci has been carried away by the flow of change, in that there are no longer teachers colleges of the above sort in which one might possibly undertake the study of education.

Teachers colleges have metamorphosed twice. First, they became Colleges of Advanced Education or parts of Colleges of Advanced Education, and then following Dawkins’s unification of the national system of higher education in Australia, they became totally assimilated into universities. So today there is no such thing as a teachers college (of the sort I experienced) in Australia, and thus no such thing as ‘the study of education at a teachers college’. But there remains, of course, the study of education as part of initial teacher education, and this, too, has undergone transformation. It is now study at university under university conditions complying with university standards. Given this transformation, rigour and critical orientation should no longer be at issue, and it might seem that I should be well satisfied.

We shall see. I shall come back to the journal, the article, and teacher education later. Before doing that, let me turn to more personal and potentially more contentious recollections and interpretations of other relevant transformations between 1971 and today.

Three decades of transformations

In the body of this article I want to identify and examine what I take to be major relevant transformations in teacher education and the study of education from 1971 to the present. I undertake this task with some trepidation, being aware both of the dangers of nostalgia and of the trap of believing that ‘the year my voice broke’ just happened to be the turning point in everybody else’s lives, if not in history itself. Any time can, of course, be singled out as being important in the flow of history, and the distinction of any year can be determined often by what it is that one is looking at, or looking for. So, granted that the river constantly flows, and that what appears to be a significant point in its movement might have as much to do with the observer as with the river, let me still mark things from 1971, not just because it was the date of my first publication, but because, just as 1939 is commonly recognised as a big year for Hollywood movies, 1971 is also commonly recognised a big year with regard to issues this paper is concerned with. I shall focus on five of these before concluding.

1. Educational studies have changed

Notwithstanding the dangers of nostalgia, or the common phenomenon of recognising in one’s past an age of innocence, I think it would be fair to say that my 1971 excursion into publishing was an act of naïve innocence in an age more naïve and innocent than the present one. A look at what passed for educational studies can make the point.

Educational studies at universities in Sydney, Australia in 1971 were dominated by a psychological approach to human learning and development. A standard text was Henry W. Maier’s Three theories of child development which introduced students, uncritically, to the contemporary ‘flavours of the month’—Erikson, Piaget and Sears. Sociology of education tended to move little more broadly than Weberian theory and the work of Talcott Parsons and, in terms of the local scene, tended to focus narrowly on things such as the latest
empiricist study by Professor W.F. Connell et al. on Australian youth. In this context, class
text theory contented itself with ‘lower’, ‘middle’ and ‘upper’ categorisations (although some
seemingly more sophisticated theorists included the sub-classes ‘upper middle’ and ‘lower
middle’), while authors such as Musgrave (Society and the teacher’s role) and Musgrave
and Taylor (The family, education and society) were chosen to provide the theoretical and
empirical overview that students were to confront and master. History and theory of
education were commonly no more than a matter of memorising what Curates and
Boulntwood had generously and precisely identified as the creative ideas produced by the
leading theorists of each age in their seductively titled A short history of educational ideas,
and/or a jaunt through selected moments of educational relevance in the developing white
colonisation of Australia, dressed up as the history of Australian education. Philosophy of
education, given Bill Andersen and Anna Hogg’s return to Australia from their excursions
at the University of London Institute of Education’s Philosophy of Education Department,
had just been put on the agenda (interestingly, initially at the teachers college where they
both taught, and then at the university following Andersen’s move uphill), but strictly in a
linguistic analytic form. Major forums for debate and interchange of ideas, such as the
Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) were not yet in existence—at its
forerunner, SPATE, was operational but as yet had no journal and was still in the process
of organising its first Annual Conference—while the Australian Association for Educational
Research (AARE) and the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasian (PESA) were
both newly established and were each busily planning only their second Annual
Conferences. It seems odd to me now that at the time I found what was being offered as
‘the study of education at a university’ rigorous and worthy of emulating.

Many, many things were missing, but some were only just round the corner. In the
Americas people such as Jules Henry, Paul Goodman, Herbert Kohl, Jonathan Kozol, Neil
Postman, Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer and Paulo Freire, along with Silberman, Jackson, Berg
and others, had levelled crushing attacks on taken-for-granted assumptions about the
neutrality and universal benevolence of schooling and educational systems. Penguin Books,
with their ‘Penguin education specials’ largely launched in 1971 and 1972, suddenly made
these available, all at once, in Australia. Christopher Jencks’ 1972 compendium, Inequality,
was also just about to hit, as was the early work of Martin Carnoy and James O’Connor.
Elsewhere in the Americas, Samuel Bowles and Herb Gintis were collecting the data and
penning the articles that were reaching Australia sporadically in journals and which would
roll in as one large snowball in 1976 as Schooling in capitalist America. At the University
of London Institute of Education, in a building metres down the road from the Philosophy
of Education Department which was driving the hegemonic influence of linguistic analysis,
a new approach to sociology was being hammered out, to be publicly launched as the ‘new
sociology’ with Michael Young’s 1971 edited volume, Knowledge and control. This was
quickly followed by similarly themed work by Geoff Whitty, Douglas Holly, Robin
Blackburn, Trevor Pateman and others in the UK. In France Louis Althusser had
undertaken a major re-representation of the works of Karl Marx, translations of which
began to flow readily into the English speaking world in 1971 (his famous ‘Ideology and
ideological state apparatuses’ paper was completed in 1970 and published in English in
1971), while Ralph Milliband, Tom Bottomore, Nicos Poulantzas, Anthony Giddens and
many others were placing both Marxism and critical sociology not just on the social and
political agenda, but on the educational agenda as well.

Suddenly, what had quietly been established over a long period as educational orthodoxy
and wisdom, was to come under intense challenge and threat in one of those rare
identifiable times when a serious and demonstrably overt form of intellectual (and in places, physical) revolution was about. Such was the strength of the new flow of ideas and practices that even the combined best efforts of the majority of lecturers at Sydney Teachers College at the time could not ensure that their students remained safely sheltered. It was not just that students were openly reading Postman and Weingartner's *Teaching as a subversive activity* in defiance of some of the lecturers' directives. Given that this was a time of radically new consciousness and experience—a time in which the generation making up the student body had vicariously experienced the civil rights movement in the USA, Woodstock in 1969, and the student riots which had closed universities in the UK, France and Japan; and given that this was the student body that had directly experienced marches which helped bring about the American troop withdrawal from Vietnam in the period from 1969 to 1973, which had so recently undertaken unprecedented action against the 1971 rugby tour from the then apartheid-driven South Africa, and whose votes were soon to help bring down the Conservative parties which had held power in Canberra since the late 1940s—the whole thing very quickly went much further than a dilettantish flirt with counter-cultural literature. Student and staff activism infected and infiltrated the study of education. Trevor Pateman had published *Countercourse* in 1972 and was offering his own prototype at Sussex University, and in the same year Michael Matthews was offering an Alternative Diploma in Education—at Sydney Teachers College—which was attended by numbers greater than the rooms could accommodate, notwithstanding that none of it counted for any official credit whatsoever when the final results were determined. It was a time when the study of education would no longer go quiet, and it was to take nearly two decades and a severe bout of economic rationalism before the spirit was finally reigned in and sufficiently broken within the dross university of the present.

2. Philosophy of education has changed

A key substantive point of my 1971 paper was to champion a particular philosophical approach, namely linguistic analysis, as a necessary prelude to and ongoing underlying basis for, the study of education. It had to be that form, for there was no real alternative available within philosophy of education at the time other than the American-style Deweyan studies which the linguistic analysts had systematically delegitimated. In what I proposed, everything started with linguistic or conceptual analysis, and then moved to include ethics, logic, epistemology and metaphysics. But philosophy, too, never stays still, and philosophy of education has undergone its own changes and transformations since those days.

One critical moment in the historical development of philosophy of education (and philosophy itself) was the recognition that linguistic analysis was neither the saviour many of us originally hoped it would be, nor was it necessarily the neutral arbiter that many of its proponents thought it to be. As emerging literature (including the journal *Radical philosophy* which was launched in early 1972) began to highlight and stress the political and ideological nature of both education and philosophy, the limits and constraints of conceptual analysis became increasingly recognised and consequently philosophical approaches to educational issues broadened. Neo-Marxism had a heyday, and if nothing else left a legacy of better quality social and political philosophy. Quinean pragmatism had its resurgence, resulting in many places in the application of new logical rigour to the study of education. Habermas (whose earliest serious writings date from around 1970, with *Knowledge and human interests* appearing in English translation in 1972), and the critical theorists commonly known as the Frankfurt School, were seen to have their particular relevance to educational issues. Dewey was drawn back up to new heights from the depths
to which Richard Peters (1966, p.68) had buried him as ‘obscure’, seemingly mistaken, and even as the alleged final obfuscator of issues (Peters 1964, p.142). Foucault was also beginning to come strongly into the picture with The order of things, madness and civilisation, The archaeology of knowledge, and The birth of the clinic appearing in English translations in 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973 respectively; and valuable feminist philosophy began to be treated with the seriousness it deserved following unignorable, if popularist, challenges issued by those such as Germaine Greer and Simone de Beauvoir. An ultimately sterile philosophy of education (and this notwithstanding the best of intentions and motives of the original proponents) has now been transformed into a multi-faceted vital discipline in which fields such as materialism, pragmatism, feminism and postmodernism are ignored or downplayed at the philosopher’s peril. This is so clearly reflected in the leading mainstream journals such as Educational theory, Studies in philosophy and education, Educational philosophy and theory, and the Journal of philosophy of education, that the journal founded primarily to provide an alternative voice in the area, namely Access, has now moved to encompass far broader issues, and boasts a new subtitle ‘Critical perspectives on cultural and policy studies in education’.

I have no doubt that what passes now in philosophy of education would far better benefit students of education than the rather narrow and circumscribed course and content that I originally championed. The sad irony is that, while far richer philosophical fruits are now available to students, far fewer students pursuing initial teacher education have far less opportunity to feast upon them. I will comment on that unfortunate situation continually in passing.

3. Universities have changed

I noted earlier the danger for the skater on nostalgic ice of falling into the trap of recalling a perceived age of innocence. Similarly dangerous, and common, is the tendency to look back and see a golden age, and in the contemporary situation in which universities are being battered into an instrumentalist transformation by economic rationalist principles it is tempting to see more glistening in the past than there might have been. Given the current situation, and it is well enough known and closely enough experienced by those who are likely to read this paper for me not to have to rehearse it yet again (those who might have missed the story and experience can check out the last decade’s numbers of The Australian universities’ review for starters), it is reasonable to believe that there was a better past where critical scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge were valued above narrow economic instrumental imperatives. But if we go back half-a-century we find R.M. Hutchins (1936) lamenting that ‘The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is being rapidly obscured in universities and may soon be extinguished’, while two decades earlier still D.H. Lawrence wrote in The Rainbow (1915) that ‘the university pretends to exist by the religious virtue of knowledge. But the religious virtue of knowledge has become a flunkie to the god of material success.’ This theme, or lament, could possibly be chased back through history with depressing results, just as Raymond Williams chases back the notion of an ‘organic community’, showing that in every age its demise is both reported and lamented: ‘it has always gone’ (Williams 1963, p.253). So I shall not guess at the past, or rely too heavily on my mistily-coated recollections of earlier days. Rather, I shall stick to something quite uncontentious.

Universities have changed. How clearly and how brightly universities shone as sites for rigorous critical scholarship in the past is not really at issue. The point is that they are not such sites now. Regardless of what, if anything, glistened in the past, not much glistens
today. There is a clear, uncontroversible empirical case that universities, with their rationalised personal and physical resources, with their domination by economic rationalist imperatives, with their staff morale sinking, with student services shrinking to the extent that every night is ‘early closing night’, are far drossier places than they were in 1971. In the early 1970s universities were still riding the tails of post-World War II expansion. Constructions began in earnest in the mid-1970s, and were felt particularly in the UK. There the experience became dominated by ‘closures’, first at the college level, and as the colleges closed and the universities were shrunk, academics took redundancy offers they couldn’t refuse, and the move to a leaner, ‘relevant’, cost-effective outcome-based model accelerated. Australia followed, as it is wont to do, and in the early 1980s the Hawke Labor Government entrusted John Dawkins to undertake a Thatcherite approach to the higher education sector. Instead of ‘closures’ the discourse and practice here concentrated first on ‘amalgamations’, and after amalgamations had produced the Unified National System then the ideological and political pressure came on to trim the system in terms of a cost-efficiency outputs model. For instance, to take an example near to where this paper has some geographic and institutional focus, Sydney Teachers College became Sydney College of Advanced Education (at which time Australia Post gave it another postcode, but again different from the University’s). Then Sydney College of Advanced Education was amalgamated with the University of Sydney. And this resulted in, or produced, one institution with two faculties of education—something easily identifiable as duplication, now ideologically rationalised not as healthy competition (as it might have been) but as irrational and irrationalist expenditure of taxpayers’ money, with courses and staff not just ripe for cutting, but for cutting along certain lines—of which colleagues at Deakin University, Melbourne University and the University of New South Wales can inform us, if we do not already know. A book being launched as I write this, Peter Coldrake and Lawrence Stedman’s significantly titled On the brink: Australian universities confront their future, makes public the new reality that we in universities live daily—that if some study, some pursuit of knowledge, doesn’t pay its way or generate surplus dollars for the university, then, regardless of its intellectual, cultural and academic value, it will have difficulty securing its place in the university’s program. Predictions made earlier in the decade that universities will have to pay special attention to the standard of on-campus golf courses offered to high paying overseas students (Nugent 1990) have not been laughed off by administrators, notwithstanding the current Asian fiscal crisis and its potential effect on attracting full-fee-paying students who, Asian or otherwise, quite reasonably might expect to achieve job qualifications rather than skills in critical reflection in return for their financial outlay.

The new economic rationalist paring of universities has had immediate implications for education faculties—departments, and for the study of education. Given the application of an efficiency model measured by outputs defined in terms of tangible measurable indicators, it is only to be expected that this would result in a trend towards instrumentalism and away from less-easily-measurable critical reflection, with the intellectually and socially critical sub-disciplines of policy studies and philosophy and sociology of education—the things that really got going in the early 1970s—now suffering devaluation, and consequently desertion. There was sadness, but no surprise, in overhearing a colleague this week advising a new student compiling a program thus: ‘Do you want to get a job in the education system, or do you want to learn how to be critical of it?’ The sadness arises not from the unabashed instrumentalist attitude, but from the fact that the question could be posed as a legitimate dichotomy.
And yet, there is a strange irony about all of this. It would appear that, with the critical and radical spirit of the 1970s now quite literally a thing of the past, this might be an ideal time and situation in which to immerse universities with an instrumentalist teacher education function, and in some cases this is certainly happening. But it is also the very time that teacher education is being taken out of the universities into which it has taken so many centuries to get into. Teacher education is now heading perilously and rapidly towards the past.

4. Teacher education has changed

When I noted above that the study of education for virtually all intending teachers is now study at university under university conditions and complying with university standards, I also stated that ‘given this transformation, rigour and critical orientation should no longer be at issue’. Unfortunately, and due in no small part to growing economic rationalist tendencies, in some places and under some growing circumstances, rigour and critical study are still very much out of place in teacher education, even within universities. Two counteracting trends can be noted.

On the one hand, the incorporation of teacher education into universities, either in the first or the second stage of metamorphosis, was not always and everywhere a full incorporation. Many university faculties or departments of education went to an internal education courses, subjects or units strictly to service teacher education. These were not always equivalent in academic rigour to what tended to be referred to as the ‘academic education program’, and they also tended to fill up the students’ loads so fully that there was little if any room for sampling anything, rich or bland, elsewhere. Thus, although students were taken into the university setting, they were often prevented from experiencing much of it, and they were often given courses and subjects that were not always regarded favourably, or equally, by others who had a more traditional view of what counts as university study. That students can earn the same number of credit points towards a degree for studying either ED123 Dance and movement in primary school or HIS456 Advanced studies in Egyptology, does not sit well with everybody.

On the other hand, the move to incorporate teacher education within universities was followed quickly, even immediately and simultaneously, by moves (of a whole number of kinds) to get it, or a large part of it, back out. There were, and are, a number of players and reasons behind these moves. I shall mention just three. First, there was, and is, the belief among some, both teacher educators and traditional academic dons, that teacher education simply does not belong in universities. Secondly, there was, and is, the more worrying view held by some that, notwithstanding the incredible resilience and immunity that operates whereby many ITE (Initial Teacher Education) students seem to emerge from university untouched and unviolated by the experience, future teachers still run the risk of being corrupted by university influence and university study, especially by such subjects as sociology and philosophy which might make them critical rather than compliant servants of the state and its education systems, which they are to serve. (Interestingly, many holding this view still want to have a bit each way: they like the idea of teachers having degree qualifications, just as long as these teachers don’t experience certain aspects of the traditional range of university offerings, such as the richer fruits of philosophy, or that they don’t really go to university.) This view was particularly strongly put in the UK during the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the influential if hysterical works of Sheila Lawlor show (the title of her 1990 book, Teachers mistaught: Training in theories or education in subjects, says it all). And thirdly, there is the problem or matter of control. The employing state had
much greater control of its teachers through training them at its colleges, control lost to some degree through letting them loose at autonomous universities. But with a unified system of higher education and no more teachers colleges, and with no more bond system to partly secure the loyalty of trainees for the profession who knew they had to stick at teaching for at least a designated number of years, how could future teachers be prised out of universities and away from university influence and, if necessary, back into the more direct control of government departments of education? The answer, which also had considerable appeal to the recently economically-rationalised universities, was to move to forms of school-based initial teacher education. This was to be more than the unquestionably valuable ‘school experience’ sections of initial teacher education programs.

I do not intend to chart the complex history of the changes to teacher education, particularly those relating to the increase in school-base here. That has been done more than thoroughly elsewhere. What I shall do is highlight one feature of this change, then focus on one moment in the debate, and finally consider some of the implications this has had for teacher education and for teachers.

The feature I wish to highlight is the way the notion of ‘partnership’ has become naturalised, and the effect it is having in the changing practice of initial teacher education. From a general acceptance that future teachers ought have both tertiary knowledge and experience of the subjects they are going to teach, along with ‘on the ground’ experience of schools and teaching (the latter especially having been provided by the colleges, both in the UK and Australia), and from the perennial recognition of the wisdom and need to link theory and practice in teachers’ initial professional development, there evolved the prima facie sensible notion that the tertiary institutions and the schools could be partners in the production of future teachers. This probably had as many proposed models as there were training institutions (see Whiting et al. 1996), but two general tendencies emerged. First, there was the naturalisation of the notion and practice of ‘partnership’ and, secondly, there was a practical linking of the staffs of the tertiary institutions and the schools in the partnerships that developed. But for all the good that might have come out of these processes, it has turned out that something extremely valuable and central to teacher professional development became, or is becoming, lost: something very tightly interlinked with contemporary changes in universities and in teacher education.

The naturalisation of the concept and practice of ‘partnerships’, and a notion of the problem I am alluding to, can be seen clearly in two documents which have emanated from an institution I have been continually referring to in this paper, the University of London Institute of Education. The first document is Initial teacher education, a booklet off-printed from the Institute’s Prospectus, dated July 1993 and intended to cover the 1993–94 and 1994–95 academic years. There it is stated (my emphasis):

In common with the rest of the education service, the initial training of teachers is going through radical change. The direction of that change is towards new partnerships between schools and higher education in which an

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4 Although there is little direct hard evidence for this point, it is recognised that the bond system itself kept many teachers in teaching long after their bonded period had passed. While some learnt to love teaching, others reckoned they were too old to start again at a new profession after the years taken up by pre-service training and the bonded years of teaching.

5 There is a wealth of material available. A quick introduction can be found in Barrie (1992) and in the Bibliography to that piece. Wilkin (1992), McIntyre et al. (1993), and the Special Issue of the Cambridge Journal of Education (Vol. 22, No. 3, 1992) fill in much of the emerging picture. Whiting et al. (1996) provides the definitive overview of the situation in the UK.
increasing proportion of student time is spent in school or college, working
with practising teachers and lecturers there ... So far as the PGCE is
concerned, the final form of the partnership between schools and colleges
and the Institute remains to be settled ...

We see that, although ‘radical change’ is heralded, the nature of that change is taken as
read. ‘Partnerships’ are accepted uncritically and unproblematically. In the ‘introduction’ to
the Institute’s booklet Professor Eric Bolton, Chair of the Initial Courses Board, states:

The Institute’s partnership with schools and colleges is designed to provide
beginning teachers and lecturers with the confidence, competence and
understanding necessary to function satisfactorily in class and lecture rooms,
while providing for future professional development.

But this totally acquiescent approach to ‘partnerships’ (and instrumentality?) was not the
only one being voiced within the Institute. Eight months later, the March 1994 issue of
Teacher education, a broadsheet produced by the Institute’s local association of the AUT,
announced, under the heading: ‘Victorian apprentice teachers are model for future’, that
the UK government was attempting to construct a ‘new 100% school-based PGCE’. The
broadsheet calls for ‘maximum support possible against 100% school-based courses’, and it
displays a motion, passed unanimously at the branch level, to be put to the next National
Conference, namely:

This local association affirms its support for balanced partnership courses,
which recognise the equally vital roles of both schools and higher education
institutions in initial teacher education.

However, it believes that a move to 100% school-based initial teacher
training (ITT) is a threat to both the quality of teacher education and the
security of those staff in higher education involved in teacher education. We
therefore call upon the national executive of the AUT to ballot members
involved in ITT with a view to a boycott of all ITT courses which are 100%
school-based.

We see here that the Union also unproblematically accepts the idea and practice of
partnership (and it is of note that both parties speak of initial teacher training). The Union
is reacting to a limiting position, in 1994 already raised as a serious and distinct possibility,
which will affect its members’ working conditions. But thankfully the Union’s concerns do
not stop at that. The broadsheet continues:

If government proposals for the reform of teacher education go ahead, they
will inevitably put more of a burden on schools and give the green light to
those who are more interested in training for crowd control than in
developing professionals with the ability and the skills necessary to make
informed decisions about the educational needs of students in their care.

Although overstated, as a broadsheet piece often tends to be, the Union has noted what
appears to have escaped the Chair of the Initial Courses Board—that ‘partnership’ and
school-based initial teacher education may have a deleterious effect on the professional
preparation and development of teachers. This, too, is my concern—the concern I alluded
to when I claimed that teacher education is now heading perilously and rapidly back to the past—if not the ‘Victorian apprentice’ model, then to something like the old teachers college model where teachers were trained by teachers and ex-teachers in schools and/or school-type circumstances.

I noted earlier that my 1971 paper was concerned with the instrumentalist nature of studies at teachers colleges, and that it called for a more rigorous and critically engaging study of education in order to produce critically reflective professional teachers. I have the same concern now, but in a slightly different context—namely, that under ‘partnership’ models, and increasingly so as the proportion of the school-based component of initial teacher education is increased, we shall again see a growing instrumentality and decreasing intellectual and critical rigour in teacher education, which, because of the partnership relation, will also have a detrimental effect on the type of study of education that will be available at universities.

This is not an argument against teachers having considerable school-based experience in their pre-service education, and it is certainly not an argument against melding theory and practice in teacher education. It is, rather, expression of deep concern about mixing and confusing the roles of teachers, academics and students in a manner detrimental to all of them. I fear that once the school-based aspect of teacher education goes beyond a practicum designed to initiate future professionals into the day-to-day practices of teaching, and once academics put aside their traditional role in order to engage more and more in school-based activities (which virtually all ‘partnership’ models entail), three dangers loom.

Firstly, as stated above, we invite a return to the teachers college days, where the largest part of teacher education was undertaken in schools and provided by teachers and ex-teachers who, for all their merits, were generally not well placed to be critically reflective of the system they were deeply involved in. Those were also the days when the Forum of education: An Australian journal of teacher education was, for all intents and purposes, largely under the control of the principals of those colleges.

Secondly, we accelerate the devaluation of critical academic studies of education. It is now the case that under ‘partnership’ models many academics in education have found their role so radically changed that they spend a large amount of their working time not in postgraduate teaching or research, but in travelling around the country to schools, sitting in lessons and discussing them with students they might otherwise have taught other richer things (the Institute’s Prospectus puts it up-front that Institute lecturers will work in schools). Such a change might, at first glance, seem intolerable to universities, but recall that universities have changed. In the new instrumental university of the present it can quite suit administrators to have the staff still left in education faculties, and they are dramatically decreasing in number, undertaking instrumental tasks until voluntary retirement packages become too attractive to resist. ‘Partnership’, so strongly supported by many relatively new to university education faculties when the binary system dissolved and the amalgamations took place, has had its part to play in the ideological naturalisation of a significantly changing role of the academic in education.

Thirdly, we have the irony alluded to before that, notwithstanding the newly economically-rationalised nature of universities, while far richer fruits are available to students who now undertake their initial teacher education as university students, both the increase in the school-based component of teacher education and the instrumentalisation of the studies these students are encouraged to follow at universities (not to mention the changing increasingly-practical input required from education academics), together result in them having increasingly less opportunity to feast upon what is still left on offer.
Interestingly, and not insignificantly, all three dangers listed above can be seen as part of a process of returning control over teachers, via the school, to the state.

This is a return to the days of the teachers college, and to the study of education at a teachers college. Teacher education, by changing direction so markedly and rapidly, may give the impression of flowing forward, but in fact it has turned on itself, and now, looking backwards, it faces stagnation as the opportunities and desire for detached critical intellectual input diminish. There is a message here both for teacher education and also for this journal.

5. I have changed

Fear not, patient reader who knows as well as I the trivial truth that everybody changes over a period of 30 years: I have no intention whatsoever of regaling you with my personal history. Not only might that be boring, but it could also be romanticised, selective and inaccurate. So, rather than parade some of my self-perceived changes here, let me take the opposite tack and look at something that seems not to have changed all that much.

My 1971 paper, which I had long forgotten about until I was invited to write this one, ended with an extended statement of faith about those who had undergone the sort of study of education I was advocating. I wrote (1971, p.110-111):

I would hope that...students would have the necessary equipment to cope with the challenging situation they will become part of. I would hope that they might be able to think critically and rationally about matters of educational importance, see such matters in a wide perspective, and be able to discuss them meaningfully. I would hope that they would have gained attitudes which would give a real meaning to their function and their work in the classroom, and I would hope that as teachers, and as educated people, they might come to initiate the children they teach, not only into the particular subjects they profess, but into the ways of inquiry which can give meaning and point and quality to the lives these children will lead.

OK, there’s something young and pretentious about that, and there is a whiff of a platitude around. And yet I’m not sure I’d want to change all that much of it today. The above piece was written by a person I can only recall and recognise in photographs, in times I view distantly through the filters of ages. But I do not reject it. In fact, I would be proud to write it (perhaps a little better) today.

It would appear that not everything about me or of me has changed, nor would I have wanted it to. There are things about me c. 1971 that I would want to hold onto, just as there are things about the study of education, philosophy, universities, and teacher education about 1971 that I think are worth maintaining. Yes, the pre-1971 days did look pretty dreary and hidebound, and the immediate post-1971 years did seem exciting, vibrant and ‘right-on’. But no age, and no person’s view of an age, has a monopoly on wisdom—or on foolishness. The river flows sometimes fast, sometimes slowly, sometimes one way, sometimes another, but it has neither a single right direction, no one wrong direction, nor is there any single proper privileged place from which to observe and judge it. As practitioners and commentators we have only perspectives, which might be arranged for us,
which might be accepted slavishly, or which can be determined, sharpened and honed through free critical discourse within the present, and between the present and the past.\footnote{There is at least a sixth change that deserves exploring, but which the demands of space forbid me from attending to; namely, that teaching itself has changed.}

**Conclusion**

Early in this paper I introduced a geographical metaphor in speaking about the *Forum of Education* at one past stage. I shall now widen the use of that metaphor twice, and suggest that just as there are young rivers and old rivers, so too, there might be young and old journals reporting and recording intellectual and practical endeavour. In this latest incarnation of the *Forum of Education*, like the study of education, and like teacher education itself, is temporally old, but it can be 'geographically' young. What was once 'An Australian journal of teacher education' now has the opportunity to be critical of current practices in teacher education and, rather than help naturalise them and legitimate them, it can function as a rigorous academic leader in its field—as a young river remaining fresh, alert, fast-flowing and critical—avoiding the stagnation of patronage as much as the torrents of fashion—always carving out its own direction rather than, with the cooperation of significant chosen people, operating in control mode as the formal voice of institutional policy.

A swiftly flowing young journal might well emulate Shakespeare's Hal who undertook and completed the transformation which made him King Henry V—a transformation announced with the words 'Presume not that I am the thing I was'—by rejecting the past Falstaff's who enabled and shaped his early growth. The journal too must transcend its past and those who helped dig its channels and guide its flow. But at the same time it should be ever-conscious of its past, not only to build on what was of value there, or to be able to constantly prove itself increasingly more worthy than it was, but also to guard against the shackles of the past, perhaps dressed up in some new manner, keeping too much of a hold on it. There is point in recognising that Shakespeare closes his vast canvas of *Henry IV* not with a neat static conclusion, not with future directions irrevocably marked out, but rather in a mighty swirl of tension-filled transformations. Hal, now a new Henry, calls out: 'Set on!'. But Falstaff's return is promised by the epilogue.\footnote{Shakespearian scholars will be aware that, when Shakespeare does 'continue the story' in *Henry V*, the promise is not kept. Falstaff does not re-appear until *The merry wives of Windsor*, but that is not to the point here.} And Jane Nightwork, though she cannot choose but be old, still lives.

**REFERENCES**


