A Progressive Approach to the Education of Teachers: Some Principles from Bank Street College of Education

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Edna Shapiro and I began this manuscript four years ago in response to a request from Jon Snyder, Dean of the Graduate School at Bank Street College, to take on a new project. Our earlier analysis of Bank Street's approach to education resulted in an edited volume, *Revisiting a progressive pedagogy: The developmental-interaction approach*, published by SUNY Press in 2000. Jon asked us to now focus on a developmental-interaction approach to teacher education.

As we immersed ourselves in the contentious debates engulfing teacher education, our definition of the task emerged. We would describe enduring principles that had sustained and informed Bank Street's approach over time. Over our period of writing, we took many missteps. We found ourselves expanding beyond the focus of our project; struggling to balance descriptions of principles with classroom enactments of these principles. Making those connections without codifying the approach proved delicate.

Our project languished. Its complexity, competing work demands, and illness all conspired. Facing her final illness, Edna regretted that we had not completed this paper and I promised that we would. We engaged with the manuscript once again. Among Edna's great gifts was her capacity to collaborate—to generously share her ideas, to listen carefully, to take pleasure in a colleague, and to be a loving friend—even in the face of catastrophic illness.

It has taken me a year since Edna's death in 2005 to return to this project, during which time my thinking about teacher education continued to evolve. The core structure and content of the manuscript represent work that Edna and I completed together which I have edited for clarity and to capture new understandings. In my mind, Edna remains a cherished collaborator, urging me on to make it "good, better, best." While I would not claim that it is now "best," I do think the paper achieves its goal. It is satisfying to offer some principles for the education of teachers and capture for analysis and examination the framework of teacher education at Bank Street College. I am also pleased that the paper provides not only a set of principles but also attempts to bring these abstract notions to life through classroom examples.

I appreciate Jonathan Silin's repeated gentle requests that I complete this manuscript for Bank Street's *Occasional Paper* series and Virginia Casper's careful reading. I also value Jon Snyder's consistent support and encouragement.

And so, I am glad to finish this manuscript with and for Edna. In the words of Woody Allen, "You may be deceased but don't be discouraged." We have finished the paper.

Nancy Nager
September 2006

A PROGRESSIVE APPROACH TO THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS:
SOME PRINCIPLES FROM BANK STREET COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Nancy Nager and Edna K. Shapiro

A vision of good teaching must inform decisions about how to prepare teachers to meet the needs of children in schools. Bank Street College of Education's enduring progressive response to the education of children and teachers offers a historically grounded perspective that has withstood cyclical changes in views of teaching and learning and is recognized as extraordinarily effective in meeting the needs of diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Chung, Frelow, & Fisher, 2002). Ironically, programs of teacher education rarely specify underlying ideas, assumptions, and practices even though exemplary programs are characterized by a clear vision of good teaching and a coherent point of view (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Howey, 1996; Schwartz, 1996).

In this paper we present Bank Street's approach as represented in a set of five inter-related principles. We begin by briefly describing the origins and rationale of teacher education at Bank Street. From this description we generate principles that emerge from Bank Street's history and practice, linking each principle to classroom images of teaching and learning. Enactment of these principles can and must vary in response to changing circumstances, needs, and mandates. In our view, this necessary variation highlights the guiding function of an explicit set of principles to govern and ensure the consonance, validity, and legitimacy of new practices.

A RATIONALE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The education of teachers has long been central to the work of Bank Street College, although it was not part of the College's initial mission. Rather, it began as a direct response to the documented need for teachers to learn how to enact progressive pedagogy. Lucy Sprague Mitchell founded the College in 1916 as the Bureau of Educational Experiments. The Bureau began as a program of research and a small experimental nursery school, focusing its early efforts on the education and study of young children and supporting progressive experiments in education. Although progressivism comprised many different points of view and addressed a range of social issues, it can be broadly characterized as an effort to effect societal change toward greater equity and democratic participation. A fervent belief in experimentation and gathering evidence, also reflected in the then emerging social sciences, helped shape a vision of a better world which could be achieved through education.

Mitchell was convinced that understanding the ways in which children learn and develop was fundamental to devising a better educational program for them, a novel idea in her time. The staff of the Bureau functioned in the dual role of teacher and researcher, teaching and collecting extensive observational records of children that served as a basis for curriculum development. With compatible directors and teachers, they exchanged observations, insights and ideas about these new ways of teaching and learning (see Winsor, 1973).

As Mitchell later phrased it: "Always came the question, 'Where can we get teachers who understand what we are trying to do?' In 1930 in answer to this pressing question we started the Cooperative School for Teachers…so called because 'cooperating schools' worked with us on an experimental curriculum in teacher education and took our students into their classrooms for practical experience with children" (1950, p. xvi).

In a 1931 editorial in *Progressive Education*, W.C. Ryan lamented that teacher training institutions of the era were not providing the kinds of knowledge and skills needed in the new experimental schools. Citing the efforts of the Bureau, he called for a widespread systematic program of teacher preparation.

The Bureau's one year intensive course of study began with a group of liberal arts graduates who were teaching in the cooperating experimental nursery and elementary schools. The goals of this new program were originally articulated in 1931:

> Our aim is to turn out teachers whose attitude toward their work and toward life is scientific. To us, this means an attitude of eager, alert observation; a constant questioning of old procedure in the light of new observations; a use of the world, as well as of books, as source material; an experimental open-mindedness, and an effort to keep as reliable records as the situation permits, in order to base the future upon accurate knowledge of what has been done. Our aim is equally to turn out students whose attitude toward their work and towards life is that of the artist. To us, this means an attitude of relish, of emotional drive, a genuine participation in some creative phase of work, and a sense that joy and beauty are legitimate possessions of all human beings, young and old. If we can produce teachers with an experimental, critical, and ardent approach to their work, we are ready to leave the future of education to them. (Mitchell, p. 251)

Reading this passage today, the hopefulness, enthusiasm, and expansiveness of this view of teaching and teacher education is striking. Mitchell and her network of progressive educators were passionately immersed in the enterprise of designing and working in new kinds of educational settings. Just as these schools emphasized the development of the "whole child," the new teacher preparation program emphasized the development of a multi-faceted teaching person. Learning and growing, for children and teachers, is a complex integration of processes of thinking, feeling, doing, and reflecting. Mitchell represents "the quintessential embodiment of a progressive response to the preparation of teachers" (Perrone, 1989, p. 134).

This conceptualization, now known as *developmental-interaction*, has informed both the education of children and the adults who teach them, although its theoretical underpinnings and practical applications have been more fully

elaborated in relation to young children (see, for example, Biber, 1981; Biber, 1984; Biber, Shapiro, & Wickens, 1971; Cenedella, 1996; Cuffaro, Nager, & Shapiro, 2005; Goffin, 1994; Mitchell & David, 1992; Shapiro & Biber, 1972). *Development* refers to the changing patterns of growth, understanding, and response that characterize children and adults as they develop. Equally important is an emphasis on the *interaction* between cognitive and affective domains and on engagement with the environment of people, materials, and ideas (Shapiro & Nager, 2000). Although some use the term the *Bank Street Approach*, we prefer to use *developmental-interaction*. Admittedly more cumbersome, it nonetheless specifies key features of the approach and also removes it from its geographically specific site of origin. Many schools for children as well as teacher education programs consider themselves exemplars of this approach to teaching and learning, although Bank Street College of Education claims the longest consistent association with this way of thinking about and practicing education.

The breadth of Mitchell's synthesis, her capacity to inspire others with her vision, and the heuristic framework she helped shape may be at least partly responsible for the remarkable durability of key ideas. Although early insights need to be understood in their social and historical context (for a discussion of the social construction of Bank Street's approach, see Nager & Shapiro, 2000), identifying the principles that emerge from this framework can deepen their power and extend their relevance to contemporary concerns. As Mitchell stated in 1931, "We are not interested in perpetuating any school of thought. Rather, we are interested in imbuing teachers with an experimental, critical, and ardent approach to their work" (p. 251). The intention then, as now, is to provide a way of thinking about teaching, learning, and schooling rather than a prescriptive codified set of methods. The program, as a whole, remains consonant with how Biber and Winsor put it in 1967: "the student is exposed to a convinced society…[She] moves in an atmosphere of great dedication to a clear system of values…The conviction is strongest as to goals and ideals, but more open as to methods of achieving them" (pp. 115-117).

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE TEACHING OF TEACHERS

Five fundamental principles provide an integrative framework for conceptualizing and enacting teacher education.

1. Education is a vehicle for creating and promoting social justice and encouraging participation in democratic processes.
2. The teacher has a deep knowledge of subject matter areas and is actively engaged in learning through formal study, direct observation, and participation.
3. Understanding children's learning and development in the context of family, community, and culture is needed for teaching.
4. The teacher continues to grow as a person and as a professional.
5. Teaching requires a philosophy of education—a view of learning and the learner, knowledge and knowing—which informs all elements of teaching.

These principles are interrelated and overlapping, each having equal power. Thus, for example, a curriculum designed to further social justice must be based on a view of learning and the learner; deep knowledge of subject matter; principles of learning; and a sound knowledge of children, their families, and the sociocultural context of the school. Each principle is enriched by its necessary connection with the others. In this sense, the principles form an integrative whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

We present each principle, discuss its place in the education of teachers, and provide examples of how this vision of good teaching comes to life in schools and classrooms. Each example illustrates the saliency of one principle as well as its vital relationship to others.

PRINCIPLE 1:
EDUCATION IS A VEHICLE FOR CREATING AND PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES.

Fundamental to the developmental-interaction approach is the conviction that education must be a vehicle for social justice, a route to a more equitable and participatory democracy. Mitchell strongly believed that "what a teacher offers to children is connected to how he experiences, understands, and acts on pressing social issues of the time" (Vascellaro, 2000a, p. 118; see also Mitchell, 2000/1935). The teacher needs to be knowledgeable about the children she is teaching and the communities in which they live, and to have convictions about what the world we live in could become. She must also have a critical awareness of the role of the school as a social institution in American culture and possess a willingness to question authoritarian and anti-democratic practices. The teacher, therefore, is not simply transmitting knowledge and skills; rather, she is working to encourage thoughtful and reflective participation in democratic process.

The term "social justice" has an ideological resonance that may seem more appropriate to educating mature students who are acquiring knowledge of social systems and political arrangements. Indeed, many thoughtful and provocative writings focus primarily on higher education; often they do not specify the educational level they are discussing (see, for example, Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Giroux & McLaren, 1986). Further, the discussion is often abstract, with little indication of how to implement issues of social justice at the classroom level. It is therefore especially important to emphasize the relevance of the idea of social justice to all stages of life and all social arrangements and to particularize what social justice can mean in educational practice with students of any age. "In any curriculum there are commitments regarding the kind of people we want students to be and become: how they will act with others, form their identities, shoulder social responsibilities, and exercise and act on their own choices" (Beyer & Liston, 1992, p. 191).

The concept of social justice is also invoked to underscore that children often are systematically discriminated against by the structure of school districts, the allocation of fiscal and personnel resources, and in subtle (or not so subtle) ways in many classrooms. Teachers may have little familiarity with children or adults from backgrounds different from their own and are likely to be unaware that their assumptions about the children's family and customs may be at odds with the children's actual experiences and expectations. In the words of the anti-bias curriculum developed by Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force (1989) "…it is not sufficient to be non-biased (and also highly unlikely), nor is it sufficient to be an observer. It is necessary for each individual to actively intervene, to challenge and counter the personal and institutional behaviors that perpetuate oppression" (p. 3). Vivian Paley's (2000/1979) description of her journey as a white teacher of a racially mixed kindergarten illuminates this challenge. By systematically examining her previously unacknowledged attitudes and assumptions about people from different racial backgrounds, she comes to learn new ways of relating to the children she teaches and their families.

Delpit (1993) makes a persuasive case that teachers tend not to realize that what seems natural to them is, in fact, shaped by culture. Some basic misunderstandings between teachers and children are rooted in cultural differences and can have powerful educational ramifications (see also, Wasow, 2000). For example, communication styles vary with cultural background and are more or less easily understood by those who share a similar background. She writes of a culture of power: "Those with power are frequently least aware of—or least willing to acknowledge—its existence. Those with less power are often most aware of its existence" (p. 122).

There are abuses of power and instances in which children exclude others that teachers need to understand and intervene in to achieve parity (see, for example, Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stangor, 2002; Paley, 1992). Children can be intolerant, can like or dislike another child for idiosyncratic reasons or to punish real or imagined slights. Children can be ostracized because they are different—the child who has lost her hair in chemotherapy, the nonathletic boy, the child with two mothers.

Another interpretation of social justice is a form of social activism generating classroom humanitarian endeavors such as collecting contributions for victims of disasters or writing letters to protest perceived injustice. Bank Street also encourages such efforts but takes a broader view, emphasizing that social justice must be embedded in the very fabric of children's everyday school life.

Biber (1984) describes the impetus to translate concepts of social justice, participatory democracy, and equity into the daily practice and routines of school. Looking back on the early years of Bank Street, she writes:

> When John Dewey turned to revolutionizing educational experience as a channel toward reconstructing society, he provided for many of us who were young in those early decades of the century a means of transforming general ideals for social change into the reality of revolutionizing a potent social instrument—the school system…if education was ultimately to effect social change, we had to bring the reality of how the world functions into the classroom curriculum; if we expected children to become awakened to the advantages of a democratic society, we had to provide the experience of living democratically in the social setting of the schoolroom, of being part of a cooperative structure characterized by egalitarian interpersonal relations. (p. 309)

Biber eloquently sets forth the charge to make these issues a central aspect of teaching strategy. Classroom routines and school structure have direct implications for how children of any age experience issues of fairness, opportunity, and the sense of being a person who matters. " 'The process of mental development,' Dewey contends, 'is essentially a social process, a process of participation,' and the children in the [Dewey] school learned not only skills and facts but also how to work as members of a community of cooperative inquiry" (Westbrook, 1991, p. 106).

Sylvester (1994) offers a carefully reasoned and comprehensive illustration. He describes a "curriculum for urban transformation" that he developed with his third grade class of poor (93 percent on public assistance) African-American and Latino children in Philadelphia. The curriculum exemplifies Bank Street's commitment to social studies as the integrative core of curriculum.

His goal was to fuse progressive principles, critical pedagogy, and the realities of the students' lives into a curriculum that would engage the children and also meet the standards of the public school system. The centerpiece is a classroom economy—a variety of classroom jobs and economic enterprises that led to "real" wages and costs—that realistically reflected life in the community. The development of the curriculum depended on repeated trips into the neighborhood to interview shopkeepers, and invitations to important persons such as the mayor to visit the classroom, enabling the students to conduct a social study of their community by gathering and making sense of real data about economic and political life.

Not all of the students responded with enthusiasm to the events of what they named "Sweet Cakes Town"; but for many it was an opportunity to learn, to try on different roles, and to use their information, skills, and imagination in a vivid setting whose structure they had helped to create. They willingly used and improved their arithmetic skills to calculate expenses, prices, profits, and loss; they made signs and posters, wrote letters and compiled documents relevant to their "Sweet Cakes" business enterprises. Their work had meaning because it was part of what became a true classroom community.

Sylvester's work counters the abstract and even pessimistic tone of much writing about issues of justice and inequality in American education today and reminds us of the reformist progressives of an earlier era who sought to create schools to transform rather than reproduce society. Work like this makes it seem just possible that "…the template for the society of the future need not be what the students have seen, but what they can imagine" (p. 329).

In summary, the concept of social justice is embedded in necessary understandings of cultural difference as well as in the structure and content of everyday school life. Helping teachers understand the social context of children's lives helps them construct curricula that can provide meaningful opportunities for children to make sense of their experience as well as imagining a transformed society.

PRINCIPLE 2:
THE TEACHER HAS A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER AREAS AND IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN LEARNING THROUGH FORMAL STUDY, DIRECT OBSERVATION, AND PARTICIPATION.

Bringing her deep understanding of the subject matter together with her understanding of each individual learner, the teacher guides children's learning and the growth of knowledge by asking meaningful questions and selecting learning opportunities such as trips, activities, books, and other materials and resources. The assumption underlying this principle is that children learn from their experience when they engage directly and actively with the environment and pursue questions that emerge from their observations, interests, and curiosity within a framework of connected opportunities that the teacher provides. The teacher is the key person, guiding children's inquiry, making connections to academic fields of study, and providing continuity in experiences to facilitate and enable learning.

Mitchell was convinced that both adults and children need opportunities to interact directly with ideas, people, and materials, leading to a program in which "we tried in all fields to give first hand experiences (in studio, laboratory, and field work) to supplement 'book learning' " (Mitchell, 1953, p. 471). Formal study provides an opportunity to engage deeply with subject matter content and reflect upon and assess experience and prior understandings.

Mitchell's appreciation of the demands on the teacher as a thinker enabled her to express understandings often posed as dualities of complementary dispositions: that teachers must embody both scientific and artistic ways of thinking. Her view of science focuses on the importance of an open, questioning attitude and the collection of data in classroom settings rather than formal laboratory experimentation (Mitchell, 1953; see also Antler, 1982). In highlighting the teacher as artist, Mitchell's emphasis was on the importance of the aesthetic dimension, not only the appreciation but also the expression of creative impulse. Her descriptions of the teacher are peppered with visceral language: ardent, zeal, zest, ardor. The teacher was not simply learning technique; she was embracing a sense of possibili-

ties. Teachers need to have lively intellectual interests that they pursue avidly. Dewey describes this concept as the "teacher as scholar," a person whose ideas and practice are informed by knowledge gained through constant questioning and learning (Perrone, 1989).

All areas of curriculum require that the teacher have deep subject matter knowledge as well as a repertoire of content specific pedagogy relevant to the ages of the children she is teaching. But what is subject matter and how does knowing it relate to teaching it? For teachers in American preschools and most elementary schools, there is no single subject. There may be "special" teachers for music, art, or technology but by and large the teacher teaches all subjects. This means that to know her subject matter, the teacher needs a deep understanding of the liberal arts—language arts, science and math, social science. When joined with a repertoire of pedagogic techniques, liberal arts understandings become working knowledge.

This approach is aligned with constructivism, although its initial conceptualization predates the use of the term. Piaget (1973, 1977) identified the construction of knowledge as consisting of complementary processes of assimilation, using an existing framework to organize and understand new information; and accommodation, the process of creating a higher-order understanding to resolve the necessary conflict that emerges when new information does not fit the older framework. Knowledge consists of and builds on past efforts to make sense of the world; learning is a process of discovery and invention. "The learner must have experiences with hypothesizing and predicting, manipulating objects, posing questions, researching answers, imagining, investigating and inventing, in order for new constructions to be developed…The learner must construct the knowledge; the teacher serves as a creative mediator in the process" (Fosnot, 1989, p. 20). Meaningful learning therefore requires reflection and resolution of cognitive conflict. Participating in a learning community of peers and skilled teachers is crucial to adult learning (see also, Brown, 1997; Bruner, 1996; Fosnot, 1996; Lave & Wegner, 1991). Becoming a teacher requires multiple additional supportive experiences in the role to achieve mastery.

For those learning about teaching and learning, materials that are tangible, tactile, and manipulatable are essential. Cuffaro (1991) refers to materials as the "texts of early childhood"; they are also one of the texts of teacher education as candidates experience first-hand the excitement of discovery, invention, and mastery. This is the rationale for many workshops in which students paint, model clay, make collages, build with blocks, make musical instruments, work with manipulative math materials, stretch, leap, and dance. Another activity that grows directly out of one of Mitchell's abiding interests, the study of what she termed "human geography," is making maps and dioramas (Mitchell, 1991/1934). Students are encouraged to collaborate, enabling them both to devise large-scale projects and to share work responsibility. The key to all such activities is that they involve sensory learning, a powerful mediator in the consolidation of understanding (Shapiro & Nager, 1996). They invite the learner, adult or child, to take an active role, to participate in processes involving aesthetic choice and an understanding of the structure of the discipline. The fundamental assumption is that such learning leads to deeper and more lasting comprehension than passive learning. It is critical to remember, however, John Dewey's caution, "everything depends on the quality of the experience" (1938, p. 27).

The principle of active engagement is also expressed in taking trips, a novel curricular innovation of progressive educators in the 1930s and an essential feature of the teacher education program from its inception. Trips for student teachers were viewed as more than a rehearsal for the trips the teacher would later take with children; rather, the trips were planned to be valuable for the teacher's growth and development, providing opportunities for enlarging knowledge of the world and challenging assumptions (see Mitchell, 1991/1934, 2000/1935; Vascellaro, 2000a,b). These social studies for teachers were paradigmatic for constructing social studies curricula for and with children.

Mitchell (1946; 2000/1935) asserts that the adult learner must be involved in the study of her world, gathering information through direct experiences and having opportunities both to reflect on and creatively express her understanding. Trips must be organically connected to what is being studied. Then as now there is a need to understand the rationale for trips for teachers and for children because

school administrators and parents may see them either as frivolous or serving only enrichment functions, not an essential part of curriculum. When, however, trips are taken in conjunction with the curriculum and serve as additional sources of information, their value becomes more evident.

Planning the trip is an important part of the process, as is the post-trip discussion. Mitchell expresses the essentials of learning as *intake* and *outgo*. Intake results from any intellectual stimulation—reading a book, observing children at play, participating in a discussion. Outgo is what the person does to connect the learning to his functional knowledge, to make it his own. Thus, learning requires not only the opportunity for an experience but also opportunities to reflect on the experience and re-present understanding in verbal, visual, or dramatic form.

A powerful example of the value of trips is the Long Trip, initiated by Mitchell at the Bureau of Educational Experiments and conducted from 1935 to 1951 (except for the years of World War II). The reform ethos of the thirties called for a curriculum that would provide students an opportunity to experience progressive principles and pedagogy through direct engagement with the world.

Vascellaro (2000b) documents the Long Trip, assessing its impact through interview and questionnaire responses from surviving "graduates" now in their 60s and older. Each year in the late spring the entire class of students, 25 or 30 mostly young women, traveled together on a rented bus for about a week. They went to regions of the country none had previously seen—the coal mines of Scotts Run, West Virginia; and coal towns and steel mills of Pennsylvania; in Tennessee, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Highlander Folk School. The students met community leaders, parents, and workers and were able to get a view of a way of life that opened new vistas for them. Vascellaro shows that after 45 to 60 years participants remembered many aspects of the trip in vivid detail and spoke about how it had affected their thinking over the decades. For many it was a transforming experience.

Although the Long Trip is no longer part of the curriculum, candidates participate in short local trips to learn directly from experience in a context of shared camaraderie. Exploring different locales and talking to people on site provides an opportunity to learn about unusual phenomena or to uncover

assumptions about everyday life. Vascellaro (2000b) describes taking students in his graduate course in curriculum to the Boat Basin at 79th Street on Manhattan's Upper West Side. He researched the trip by visiting and talking to people living there to be sure they would be receptive to a visit and interviews by members of the class. After the trip, the students' reflective papers reported their emotional responses to discovering a small and vibrant culture of which they had not been aware, an enclave right around the corner from the well-traveled path to the College. (See also, Apelman's (1991) description of working as a consultant in Boulder, Colorado, enabling experienced teachers to learn to take field trips that became a source of learning and pleasure for both the teachers and the children.)

To provide practical images of the principle of social justice, we described Sylvester's (1994) classroom economy curriculum with its trips into the local community. These trips also demonstrate a necessary connection with the principle that teaching must illustrate a deep knowledge of subject matter and opportunities for active engagement in learning.

In summary, the principle of deep knowledge of subject matter and active engagement in learning underlies opportunities to read, write, explore, discover, reflect, invent, and become engaged with the world. The teacher learns in and becomes comfortable with a range of modalities. She is expected to master subject matter content and pedagogy relevant to her work with children and their families and to expand her conception of learning and teaching.

PRINCIPLE 3:
UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND CULTURE IS NEEDED FOR TEACHING.

The teacher must construct a fundamental point of view about children and their needs, an idea that has remained bedrock to the approach (see Biber, 1984; Cohen, 1972; Cohen, Stern, & Balaban, 1997; Lewis & Winsor, 1959; Mitchell, 1946). In recent years it has become increasingly clear that knowing children and knowing about children depends on much more than familiarity with developmental milestones, cognitive stages, and individual variation in approaches to learning. Psychologists and educators used to place greater reliance on stages of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development, although not without cautionary statements about the dangers of overly rigid use of stage theories (see, for example, Biber, Murphy, Woodcock, & Black, 1952/1942; Shapiro & Wallace, 1981).

We recognize that in earlier eras few questioned that studies of white middle class children constituted the primary knowledge base for child development research (see also, Graham, 1992). With increased awareness of the cultural biases inherent in this research, some are eager to move away from development as a foundation source of knowledge for teachers (see, for example, Cannella, 1998; Kessler & Swadener, 1992; Lubeck, 1994; Mallory & New, 1994). In our view, they tend to ignore the fact that children take in information and make sense of phenomena in ways that are significantly different from each other as well as from adults. Understanding how a child makes sense of the world requires attention to multiple dimensions such as age, gender, ways of processing information, the characteristics of previous experience, special learning needs, as well as cultural expectations. Practice informed by developmental concepts need not be prescriptive. Teaching responsively requires knowledge of significant landmarks of children's development so that the teacher can try to anticipate and interpret confusion and error. Stage theory offers a significant though not exclusive rubric for interacting with young people. As we have said elsewhere, "While the generalized child of developmental research is not a template for understanding individual

children, it does provide an essential frame of reference" (Shapiro & Nager, 2000, p. 31).

Development cannot be viewed as a rigid and linear set of rules. Heinz Werner's (1948, 1957) thinking about development has provided an important heuristic for the developmental-interaction approach. "His concept that development is not fixed but rather reveals a range of capacity emphasizes that behavior will vary dependent on the interactions among person, situation, and developmental maturity. Further, the distinction he makes between process and achievement guided thinking about the teacher's role in planning for and evaluating children's learning" (Shapiro & Nager, 2000, p. 21).

The teacher must continue to expand his knowledge of children through formal study of children's development as well as direct observation. He furthers his understanding of how individual children make meaning of their experience and uses that knowledge as a way to not only assess children's learning but also to assess theory in relation to practice.

Studying children was Mitchell's fundamental route to designing educational environments, a crucial step in planning curriculum and all aspects of life in school. As often noted, teachers in the early days of the Bureau were close observers of children, always carrying a notepad and pencil, ever on the lookout for a telling comment or action, recording moments of understanding, confusion, conflict, and collaboration (see, for example, Johnson, 1972/1928; Marot, 1973/1922; Pratt, 1948). This concept is analogous to what Dewey calls "teacher as naturalist" (Perrone, 1989). It is on the basis of the teacher's knowledge and understanding of each of the children that she chooses curricular strategies, content, and areas of focus. Close observation also provides the data for her assessment of the children's mastery of content as well as their strengths and needs. Haberman (2000) provides a vivid example of a candidate's observation of a math lesson, counting colored tiles, as an opportunity to consider children's confusion or error as a source of information about teaching and learning mathematical concepts:

Most of the other kindergartners also had difficulty with this problem. I definitely think it was too big a chunk to give them. . .the problem was not necessarily too complex for Molly—I think she understood the underlying concept: that if you add up all the reds, yellows, blues and greens and then add all *those* together, you get the total number of tiles. I do think, however, that there were too many tiles. When the numbers get that high it is so easy to lose track and get confused…The underlying concept would have struck her more consciously with a smaller number of tiles. Instead she got lost in the crazy mechanics of counting. (p. 211)

Over the years, Bank Street's insistence on the importance of studying children in their school setting has been expressed in a wide range of studies: dramatic play (Biber, 1951; Johnson, 1972/1928); children in specific grades and settings (Biber, Murphy, Woodcock, & Black, 1942; Leacock, 1969; Minuchin, Biber, Shapiro, & Zimiles, 1969; Shapiro, 1971; Woodcock, 1941) and papers concerning appropriate and inappropriate modes of assessment (Shapiro, 1973, 1977; Zimiles, 1992). Many research projects used as primary data observations of children in naturalistic settings, augmented by studying individual children in controlled situations. In some instances, the observation of children in classrooms used coding systems (see, for example, Stern, 1974; Ross, Zimiles, & Gerstein, 1976), but the preferred mode was narrative recording (running records with general guidelines highlighting behaviors and activities of particular interest). Careful observation and assessment of children's work products provide indices not only of mastery of the task at hand but also of the child's approach to work.

An important vehicle for observing children's learning, social and emotional expression, and narration is dramatic play. Franklin (2000) notes:

children's play activities, particularly the development of dramatic scenarios, have been a central focus of developmental interaction thinking for many decades…In this tradition, play was seen as a mode of learning, not only for preschoolers but for children in the elementary years (Biber, 1984; Johnson, 1972/1928). Therefore, play activities assumed a central place in the pre-

school curriculum and were developed in relation to social studies in the early elementary years. (p. 47). [Although children's pretend play is spontaneous]…to maximize play as an arena for the child's learning requires the teacher's participation." (p. 51)

Although narrative data provides a rich source of information for teaching, it is not the only kind of data that the teacher should rely upon. Knowledge of group norms and the information provided by standardized tests contribute to a differentiated picture of the child's functioning. The teacher is enjoined to use multiple sources of information to understand and assess children and make choices about teaching. In the contemporary climate of high stakes standardized testing, this point is particularly relevant.

Gathering information about children in all domains of their school experience is a basis for assessment and instruction as well as communication with families. children's learning and development must be understood in the context of family, community, and culture. Many Bank Street writings emphasize the need for consistency between home and school and for collaboration between teachers and parents (see, for example, Shapiro & Biber, 1972). However, the role of the school vis-a-vis the home has changed over the years and varies notably from culture to culture. Tobin, Wu, & Davidson (1989) point out in their analysis of preschool in three cultures: "We heard about the need for consistency between home and school much more frequently from parents, teachers and administrators in the United States than in China where preschools are expected to correct parents' mistakes, or in Japan where preschools are expected to provide experiences children cannot get at home" (p. 184).

As Wasow (2000) observes, even when the cultural background of the children in the class is uniform, there will invariably be differences in the way the parents of the children prefer to interact with the teacher. When the child's culture is different from the teacher's, it is the teacher's responsibility to find appropriate ways of connecting (see, for example, Lippman, 2000). This is not an easy task; at the least it requires an understanding of long-held attitudes and beliefs about others. Teachers and parents most likely share the goal of wanting the child to suc-

ceed in school; however, definitions of success may vary widely across cultures. "Acknowledging…differences is but a first step. If schools and families are to develop effective partnerships to support children's academic achievement, then they must do more than raise their consciousness levels about the 'isms' that challenge us daily" (p. 283).

The principle is clear; school learning should not be divorced from the child's out-of-school life. In Dewey's words (1916), "The learning in school should be continuous with that out of school. There should be a free interplay between the two. This is possible only when there are numerous points of contact between the social interests of the one and of the other" (p. 358). More recently Moll and Greenberg (1990) suggest that the child's and family's "funds of knowledge" should be used as resources for the classroom. Some may think that because many children's lives are fraught with instability and violence, the school should not be concerned with making connections but should offer respite. We, however, agree with Silin (2000): "Despite the discomforting childhoods faced by many, I continue to believe that educators must use children's experiences, no matter how painful, to promote learning in the classroom. The successful curriculum builds on rather than competes with children's lives" (p. 258).

Patricia Lent (2002), a third grade teacher at P.S. 234 in New York City, eloquently narrates the course of the school year for herself and her twenty-five third graders in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, a few blocks from their school. She describes the day and initial responses as she and the children relocate to a new school. As they settle in to their temporary classroom, she wonders:

> What about the curriculum? Shouldn't I take responsibility for getting my program back on track? Shouldn't I be concerned about these third graders falling behind? Shouldn't I start insisting that they do their best work? Perhaps I should have, but I didn't. None of us had gotten back to normal. None of us could handle a lot of pressure. None of us remembered what our best work looked like…I did believe, while we were at school, that it was important for the children to be busy, it was important for them to work

together, and it was important for all of us to accomplish something. It was
also important that they knew I was there to listen and respond to the ideas
and feelings they were expressing through writing, drawing, and talking.
And it was essential that I be as kind and patient and honest as possible, and
that I help them to do the same.

Lent realized that she needed to "pare down her curriculum." They read,
sang, played math games, worked on cursive writing, and continued to meet and
talk. Unlike many teachers and principals throughout the New York area who
thought it best not to discuss September 11 with the children, Lent knew that she
had to help her students make sense of their experience through play, art, writing,
and meetings to talk about what had happened and was continuing to happen.

In early February they returned to P.S. 234 and plunged into an engaging
and demanding social studies investigation of Eastern Woodland Native
Americans. Lent and the children were ready to focus wholeheartedly on a differ-
ent curriculum but she also wisely knew that they needed to make ongoing sense
of September 11. They continued their "discussion throughout the year, as the
children continued to tell and retell and revise and revisit their stories" (p. 4).

In summary, teachers must have a thorough understanding of the ways in
which the outside world influences children's lives. While the events of September
11 were dramatic and traumatic, the social and cultural variation of daily life con-
sistently weaves into the fabric of family's values and children's growth. Teachers
need to understand the realities of children's lives outside of school in tandem
with a working knowledge of developmental growth, individual variation in
approaches to learning, and multiple modes of assessment. Such understanding
makes it possible to accommodate the needs of children and youth, relate to fami-
lies from familiar and unfamiliar backgrounds, and provide teaching and learning
opportunities that connect with children's lives in meaningful ways.

PRINCIPLE 4:
THE TEACHER CONTINUES TO GROW
AS A PERSON AND AS A PROFESSIONAL.

True to a central tenet of progressive thinking that education must address the "whole child," the teacher is regarded as a whole person, achieving an integration of personal and professional identity. The Bureau's goals for teachers were far reaching. The aim of the teacher education program was to provide a rich array of opportunities and an atmosphere that promoted discussion, reflection, and personal as well as intellectual growth. In this sense, the curriculum for teachers was designed as an analog to that for children. Biber (1973) later described it as a "…hidden curriculum. We have assumed for many years that, beyond the structured curriculum that is provided, the students internalize the pervasive qualities of the learning environment we try to create for them, that the qualitative characteristics of their own teaching styles will reflect, later, the qualities of their own personal experience in learning to become teachers" (p. 3).

Consistent with this holistic vision of teacher preparation, Shapiro (1991) emphasized that teachers need to continue learning and developing: "One of the fundamental premises of a program of teacher education must be that it cannot be complete. Students should know that graduation does not confer expertise, that they should expect to fumble and make mistakes, that they will and must keep on learning and trying and reexamining their experiences" (p. 17).

Individual development is tied to social processes. There is an essential connection between the teacher's self and the learning climate as the teacher brings critical dimensions of her personality and interests into classroom life. Mitchell (1931) describes the importance of the teacher coming to know her own power as a thinker, doer, and person connected to children as well as the wider world. Biber (1973) elaborates the idea that the competent teacher brings depth to the learning environment through her personal qualities, such as self-understanding, maturity, resilience, and capacity for meaningful communication and relationship with both children and adults.

Many early Bank Street writings analyze qualities of good teaching and draw upon psychodynamic theories of development to present a sophisticated picture of the complexity of both adult development and the teaching role (see, for example, Biber, Gilkeson, & Winsor, 1959; Biber & Snyder, 2002/1948; Lewis & Winsor, 1959; Mitchell, 1946). In learning to teach and care for children, the becoming teacher continues to grow as a person and as a professional. Neither sense of identity is one-dimensional. Personal identity includes race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, culture, and class. Professional identity for a teacher includes establishing a role and identity in relation to children, families, the local community, administrators, colleagues, and the wider profession. Indeed, these connections sustain teachers and significantly contribute to their remaining in the profession (see, for example, Cochran-Smith, 2006).

Identity formation is both a personal and a social process. Erik Erikson (1963/1950; 1980/1959) describes a growing mutuality between one's self and others in which an inner sense of continuity and sameness is matched by solidarity with and recognition by one's group or society. Arnett (2000) describes this period as a stage of "emerging adulthood" characterized by profound exploration and change at the end of which most people make enduring life choices in love, work, and worldview. More mature adults who enter teaching as a career change appear to renegotiate similar developmental issues of identity and also seem more keenly aware of their workplace needs (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990, 1992). Therefore, professional preparation programs have an important role to play in helping candidates consolidate a sense of identity which helps them express their commitment to creating opportunities for children and their learning.

The personal and professional identity formation at the core of adult development is vitally informed by the socialization opportunities shaping the individual to the profession. Lortie's (1975) classic study, *Schoolteacher*, points to three factors influencing induction into teaching: formal schooling, mediated entry in the form of practice teaching, and learning while doing (that is, on the job professional development). In perhaps his most cited finding, he reports that all beginning teachers share an "apprenticeship-of-observation." Teachers come to their professional preparation with a vision of good teaching that was formed prior to any analytic ability to assess that teaching.

In the years since Lortie's book, numerous commentators have decried the inadequacies of teacher preparation and induction programs, noting the paucity of able mentors and the dearth of opportunity for beginning teachers to observe and practice in schools deemed to offer exemplary teaching and learning experiences (see, for example, Borko & Putnam, 1996; Brooks, 1987; Feiman-Nemser, Schille, Carver, & Yusko, 1999). A growing consensus indicates that teachers require continuing support to achieve expertise and remain in education (Cochran-Smith, 2006, Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Kegan (1982) focuses on the nature of the support that is needed by the growing person at different stages of development. Like Erikson, he points to the evolving mutuality between the developing person and her environment. Kegan draws upon Winnicott's (1965) notion that the infant is embedded in a relationship with the caregiver who provides a "holding environment," a psychosocial context in which and from which the child grows. Kegan expands Winnicott's concept to encompass the succession of holding environments the "evolving self" is attached to and differentiates herself from. He looks to work and school as examples of potential holding environments and asks of each context of development:

> Does [it] acknowledge and support the person's exercises of psychological self-definition; does it confirm the person's gathering sense of himself as the origin of his meanings and purposes; does it recognize her as a player in a public arena in which she can exercise her personal powers, need for achievement and self-enhancement; does it give him work that allows him to exercise influence, wield power, assume responsibility? (p. 259)

Kegan's questions provide a vision of an optimal context for the tasks involved in consolidating a coherent personal and professional identity. Responding to the ongoing personal and professional needs of teachers represents an effort to realize that ideal. Teachers need opportunities to master the knowledge and skills they require to develop expertise in meeting the complex needs of the children they are teaching.

Learning and growth must occur in the context of relationships and community—with faculty mentors, peers, school personnel, children, and families; the process of becoming a teacher can only occur in a social context. Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning as a socially mediated process and his concept of the zone of proximal development as the "distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development…under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, p. 86) add significantly to our understanding of the construction of knowledge. Goldstein (1999) elaborates the implications of the zone of proximal development, noting that the literature on the social construction of knowledge has emphasized cognitive growth and minimized or neglected the role of relationships in that growth. Her thesis has the power of the obvious—teaching involves a unique relationship between teacher and student in which affect and connection play key roles. She weds Vygotsky's views to Noddings' (1984, 1992) ethic of care, suggesting that encounters in the zone of proximal development create "opportunities for intellectual growth and personal transformation" (p. 662).

Balaban (2003) provides a moving description of what can happen when a kindergarten teacher learns to see the children and her own teaching in a way that brings these issues to the fore. Balaban, along with a team of Bank Street faculty, participated in a long-term school restructuring project in the Newark, New Jersey public school system (Silin & Lippman, 2003). She describes in detail the ways in which an experienced teacher used to "keeping order" and giving direct lessons was able to change her way of working to give the children choices and a voice in the classroom. Over a three-year period working with Balaban, the teacher was able to create an educational environment with a genuinely democratic structure. The teacher reflected to Balaban, "I still confront the same behavior problems, but it doesn't affect me in the same way. I don't need to tell them what to do, now I talk to them. When you and I talk, you listen to everything I say. I said to myself, 'I have to listen to the children' " (p. 87). She understood that Balaban provided a different kind of learning experience than she was accustomed to, enabling her to see her practices and goals in a new light. She internalized important dimensions of the way in which she was taught and developed the ability to provide opportu-

nities for children to experience being heard and respected. Her ability to change grew out of her trust in Balaban and her growing awareness that if she could trust the children, they could come to trust her. Yonemura (1986) writes "child empowerment is an outcome of teacher empowerment…Teachers free to be themselves are not threatened by children; they move with, not against, the energy released when children find their own answers" (p. 475).

The ability to trust children assumes a basic sense of security in oneself and one's ability to cope with the unanticipated. This has implications not only for the individual teacher or child but also for the overall classroom community. A good deal of classroom management is designed to prevent any unscheduled event. Erickson (1987) points out "learning requires risk taking, since learning involves functioning at the edge of one's competence…If the teacher is not trustworthy, the student cannot count on effective assistance from the teacher; there is a high risk of being revealed (to self and others) as incompetent" (p. 344). Although Erickson is talking about children, the idea is equally applicable to teachers.

In summary, teachers must achieve a sophisticated integration of personal and professional identity. Becoming a teacher requires coming to understand one's self and developing the expertise needed to grow as a professional in the wider community. Teacher educators must provide supportive environments to facilitate the growth of these skills and understandings.

PRINCIPLE 5:
TEACHING REQUIRES A PHILOSPHY OF EDUCATION—A VIEW OF LEARNING AND THE LEARNER, KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWING—WHICH INFORMS ALL ELEMENTS OF TEACHING.

A point of view about teaching and learning implies a perspective on knowledge and ways of knowing. Although not always explicit, theories of knowledge inform and guide how teachers provide opportunities for children's learning (see also, Howard, McGee, & Schwartz, 2000). "Becoming a competent teacher is tied not only to information but to the ways in which the teacher experiences, internalizes, and constructs her growing knowledge and sense of self as a maker of meaning. [This] is a process of epistemological development in which the teacher comes to value her own voice, self, and mind, enabling her to create opportunities for children to achieve similar processes of discovery and invention" (Cuffaro, Nager, & Shapiro, 2005, p. 291; see also Nager, 1987).

Perry (1999/1970) elaborates the important insight that changes in epistemological position are central to intellectual and ethical development in adulthood. Interviewing Harvard male undergraduates, he discovered a pattern of regular changes in the way students conceptualize knowledge, education, values, and themselves. Students tend to move from a belief in knowledge as simple, certain, and handed down to a view of themselves as active makers of meaning in a world of relativism and uncertainty.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) influential work, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, proposes a model of epistemological perspectives which is informed not only by Perry but also by studies of moral development in women (see, for example, Gilligan, 1982). They describe a process of building a new sense of self in concert with beliefs about authority and knowledge. Because the vast majority of teaching candidates are women, *Women's Ways of Knowing* is of special interest to teacher educators, showing that the development of mind is mutually involved with the capacity for dialogue. Relationships are critical in this process.

Epistemological growth is inextricably linked to views of knowing and knowledge and is fundamental to becoming a teacher. Teaching in a traditional

manner is associated with the teacher's belief in herself as the authority who transmits knowledge and solves others' problems. Teaching within the developmental-interaction approach, however, is aligned with a distinctly different set of assumptions about teaching and learning, emphasizing an interactive learning environment with opportunities for students' discovery, problem solving, insight, and reflection. These assumptions may not be readily compatible with the belief system held by the teaching candidate. Moreover, the epistemic belief system of the student's culture may differ from that of the school. For example, groups who value interdependence and group achievement over independence and individual achievement may emphasize a more observational approach to learning (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993; Schommer, 1994; Wasow, 2000). Or, those who have learned to view authority as located in the person rather than in the role may favor the use of more explicit direct assertions of authority (Delpit, 1995). The deep roots of candidates' belief systems hold important implications for the complex and essential task of helping teachers achieve a sophisticated understanding of the construction of knowledge and themselves as knowers.

Through their choices about curriculum and teaching, teacher educators demonstrate that learning is an active personal construction of knowledge and allow teaching candidates opportunities to generate their own knowledge. Schommer (1994) emphasizes that learning involves seeing the connections among ideas, a thought directly parallel to Mitchell's (1991/1934) concept of relationship thinking. It is likely—and necessary—that in this process, students will uncover disparities and experience discord (see also, Duckworth, 1987, 2001). Resolution of such conflict can enhance growth.

An important goal of teacher preparation is that candidates internalize the epistemological features and value orientation of their professional education, developing a philosophy of education that enables them to involve their students in comparable experiences. Franklin (2001) vividly depicts her point of view about learning and learners in co-constructing with her eighth-grade students a compelling study of American government that involved creating a senate in which the students interacted with each other as legislators. Central to this curriculum, developed by Sam Brian of Bank Street's School for Children, is the conviction

that one way students can learn about American government is by enacting it. This was not a "classroom study about the legislative branch of government [rather it was] a more experiential, situation-based focus in which the classroom became the senate" (p. 77). Although this curriculum unit took place in the spring, preparations for it began early in the school year, with Franklin structuring the daily schedule to provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for running a meeting and building a community in which they interacted responsibly to support peer leadership.

As the American government curriculum began to focus on the legislative branch, each student took on the role of a senator and actively participated in legislative processes. Classroom activities included researching the voting record and constituencies of individual senators, committee meetings, political caucuses, election of party leadership, hearings on proposed bills, votes on pending legislation, and newsletters to constituents. The students also raised money for a field trip to Washington D.C., which gave them the opportunity to observe Congress in session and interview a legislator. Throughout, Franklin provided assignments to help students step out of role and more dispassionately consider the complexity of the legislative process they were living. When in role, however, she was careful to minimize her intervention in students' proceedings, communicating her belief in their problem-solving abilities and stepping in as a "political consultant" only when the group needed help to facilitate their work.

The curriculum deepened students' understanding not only of American government and the political process, but also of themselves as individuals and a community. They learned new ways of communicating, collaborating, and negotiating, and gained meaningful insight into the ways in which human interactions shape crucial decisions. The teacher's guiding framework integrated a thorough knowledge of American government, a demonstrated commitment to democratic process, active engagement in learning, and a sophisticated understanding of children's cognitive, social, and emotional needs and her own role in helping children achieve a set of skills and understandings.

In summary, a philosophy of education provides a synthesizing framework for teaching. Underlying decisions about all aspects of curriculum is a point of

view about the nature of knowledge and knowing, teaching and learning, and a vision of what children should know and be able to do, what kinds of people teachers and children can become, and what kind of society is possible.

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In every era, education and educators are subject to a new range of pressures as teachers are called upon to know more and do more. Rapid changes in technology, demographics, mandates, and standards, along with research about teaching and learning, all exert strong influence on teachers' sense-making and professional practice. Being prepared to consider, question, and act upon new research and new challenges requires that teachers have a conceptually coherent point of view in which underlying ideas, assumptions, and practices are made explicit. The principles we identify provide a foundation to help teachers develop and enact a reasoned point of view. Like all formulations, this framework must be open to new thinking and evidence. We hope that some 70 years later, Mitchell's (1931) prescient call for "a critical, ardent and experimental approach" continues to guide the teaching of teachers.

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