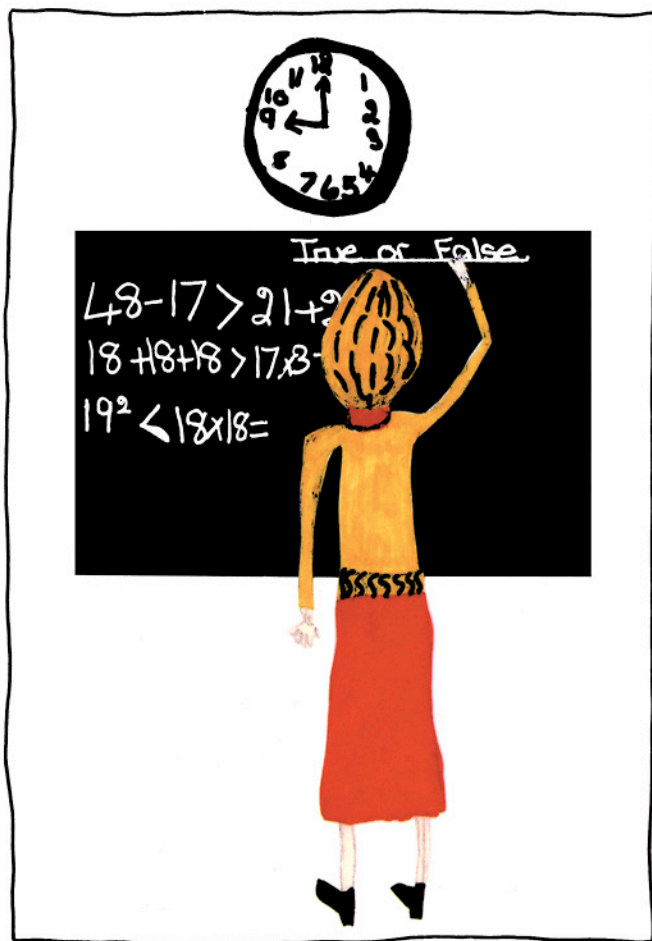


# TEACHERS' LIVES AND CAREERS



*Edited by*  
*Stephen J Ball and Ivor F Goodson*

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# TEACHERS' LIVES AND CAREERS

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# Teachers' Lives and Careers

*Edited By*

Stephen J. Ball

and

Ivor F. Goodson



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## *Introduction*

The papers in this volume are a selection from those given at the conference on 'Teachers' Lives and Teachers' Careers' at St Hilda's College, Oxford in September 1983. The editors are very grateful to the givers of other papers and participants at the conference whose contributions made the pulling together of a coherent collection from the proceedings so much easier. Colin Lacey, Martin Lawn, Margaret Bowen, Phil Carspecken and Henry Miller, Brian Davies and John Evans, Delscey Burns and Geoff Walford gave papers, and Bob Moon, Peter Woods, Sheila Riddell, Harry Osser, Peter Medway, Douglas Barnes, Bill Greer, Andy Hargreaves, Andrew Pollard and June Purvis also attended. This conference was one in a series that have been held at St Hilda's College over a number of years, bringing together educational researchers committed to ethnographic and interactionist methods for the study of educational institutions and processes. Collections of papers drawn from previous conferences have already been published *Teacher Strategies and Pupil Strategies* (Editor: Peter Woods, Croom Helm, 1980), *The Ethnography of Schooling* (Editor: Martyn Hammersley, Nafferton, 1983), *Curriculum Practice* (Editors: Martyn Hammersley and Andrew Hargreaves, Falmer Press, 1983), *Defining the Curriculum* (Editors: Ivor Goodson and Stephen Ball, Falmer Press, 1984).

## *Understanding Teachers: Concepts and Contexts*

*Stephen J. Ball and Ivor F. Goodson*

I have arrived home for good at last. There will never again be a morning now when I shall say to myself here: 'Tomorrow the guillotine descends. Tomorrow I must return to London and to my job as a teacher'. Until I die, or until I am kept in bed by a serious illness, I shall be able every day after breakfast to come into this pleasant white and yellow room which is still called the 'drawing-room' both by me and Elsie just as it was by my parents before us and my grandparents before them; I shall be able to look through the large panes of the French window at the verandah and the lawn and the flint wall beneath the holly tree where on fine days an oblong of sunlight is reflected as now from one of the other windows of this house, or to sit out on the verandah in spring and autumn when the weather is neither too cool nor too warm; and every day I shall be free to write poetry. But in spite of my having retired from teaching more than a month ago I still can't easily believe that the life I have always wanted to live has become fully possible for me at last. I don't seem even to have convinced myself absolutely that I am not due back in London for the beginning of the Easter term. At nights I still dream fairly often that I am in school, though the type of nightmare I've had recently hasn't been quite as bad as the type I recurrently had during my years of teaching: then, long after I'd 'matured' as a teacher and did not have serious 'disciplinary' difficulties any more, I used to dream I was standing powerless in the middle of a crowd of boys who had got out-rageously out of control; whereas during the past few weeks I've dreamt three or four times that I am hurriedly going up a concrete staircase to take a class I am disgracefully late for, and when I eventually reach the classroom I find there are no boys in it—or only a few, who drift out as soon as I begin to speak to them. Perhaps I must expect such lesser nightmares for a while yet after more than thirty years in a job which, however honourable and necessary it may be, cannot in present conditions be without heavy strain even for teachers far more capable than I ever was. Let me try to dissolve from my mind all disagreeable residues of my working years by remembering often how, as I walked out of the school building for the last time, I imagined myself arriving home here and saying to my mother and father: 'It has been a bad patch, but it's all finished with now'. I had forgotten for an instant that they were both dead and that this patch had covered more than half of my life so far, but my mood was the right one.

Let me revive it. Those years are done with for ever and for ever, and I am free.

Edward Upward *No Home But the Struggle*, London, Quartet Books, pp. 9–10.

### **The Political, Social and Economic Contexts of Teachers' Work**

Any attempt to portray the contemporary situation of teachers' work and teachers' careers must inevitably begin by recognizing the changing context within which this work is undertaken and careers constructed. Changes in the financing of education, in the degree of political intervention into school matters, and in the views of and general level of esteem for teachers held within the public at large, have, and are having, profound effects upon the ways that teachers experience their jobs.

From the late 1960s we have moved from a situation of teacher shortage and apparently infinite possibilities for the expansion of educational provision to, in the 1980s, a situation of teacher unemployment and contraction in provision, with one or two exceptions, across the system as a whole.

The contemporary situation in which teachers find themselves is one where there is an overall decline in demand for their services. At the same time there is increasing demand for control over the nature of their work by outside agencies. Both of these forces, therefore, point to a future in which the considerable freedom and independence in a variety of areas enjoyed by teachers is likely to be challenged. Moreover, this challenge will have important implications for the nature of the teaching profession and for the conditions of service under which teachers work. (Whiteside and Bernbaum, 1979)

Redundancy, redeployment and early retirement are real possibilities being faced by many established teachers as local authorities plan cuts in educational expenditure.<sup>1</sup> The number of teachers on temporary, fixed-term contracts is increasing (they are used, for example, in Liverpool, Hampshire and Solihull). In many cases these contracts include waiver clauses which dispense with rights to unfair dismissal protection. Probationary periods for Headteachers have been proposed by Keith Joseph (speech, 27 February, 1984), ancillary and clerical staff have been drastically cut, minority subjects (so-called) are disappearing entirely from some schools and at least one local authority has proposed the use of ability tests to select teachers for compulsory redundancy (*The Teacher*, 10 February 1984). For those new entrants who do obtain permanent posts the prospect is of a long period in a scale one post with little opportunity to move between schools. For those in mid-career also the chances of promotion will be few and far between.<sup>2</sup>

The whole conception of a career in teaching has been radically altered by these changes in conditions of work and employment but it is not only the objective, financial context that has changed drastically. There has also been a profound political and social shift in the status and public perception of teachers. Since the publication of the first collection of *Black Papers* in 1969, teachers have, from one direction or another, been



under attack. They have been portrayed by commentators and critics from a variety of political persuasions as having failed to recognize or service the changing needs of society (the declining status of teachers is discussed in particular by Webb, in this volume).

For the Black Paper writers this failure is represented in three main themes which ran through their critiques of teachers. First, teachers have been overly influenced by progressive theories of education and the advocates of innovations like integration of subjects, mixed ability teaching, discovery learning methods. This has resulted in a neglect of the teaching of basic skills and a concomitant decline in standards of pupil achievement. And the attack on progressive methods was given further impetus by the research of Bennett (1976) which was reported as showing that formal teaching methods produced better pupil performance in tests of various kinds, although 'mixed' methods, used by experienced teachers appeared to be most successful of all. (The apparent clarity of Bennett's findings has however been clouded by subsequent statistical reworking).

Secondly, in a similar way liberal thinking by teachers and the use of child-centred methods were related to declining standards of discipline in schools and increases in pupil misbehaviour and classroom violence. Several horror stories in the newspapers, most recently the accounts of St. Saviour's in Toxteth, have fuelled the belief that schools have become dangerous places for both pupils and teachers (Denscombe, 1984). Lack of formal discipline also came to be identified with declining academic standards. Again widely publicised research gave support for this line of argument, the study *Fifteen Thousand Hours* (Rutter *et al.*, 1980) associated aspects of pupil performance with overall standards of discipline in schools and with the somewhat elusive notion of school 'ethos'.

Thirdly, the previous areas of criticism have in many instances been associated with accusations of the political bias and radical political motivations, of some teachers at least, who were involved with the introduction of more liberal or progressive methods and forms of education. Some progressive innovations were thereby labelled as attempts to politically indoctrinate pupils. (The assumption always being that existing forms of teaching were politically neutral.) Thus, in the early 1970s, even the normally sedate *Times* wrote of the need to tame 'the wild men of the classroom'. The primary focus of these concerns was provided in the case of William Tyndale Primary School which in 1976 became the subject of a public enquiry, when:

an increasing number of parents (put) pressure on the school managers to modify the educational policies of the headmaster and certain members of his staff. The parents were dissatisfied with the mainly non-directive open-ended teaching methods pursued, with the attempt to modify the conventional curriculum in the direction of pupils' independent choices and with the absence of traditional mechanisms for controlling pupils' behaviour. (Whiteside and Bernbaum, 1979, p. 103)

Significantly many of the initial criticisms levelled at the William Tyndale teachers came from two directions. On the one hand from a teacher in the school who maintained a correspondence with Rhodes Boyson (editor of the later *Black Papers*) and, on the other, members of the local Labour Party who used their contacts in County Hall and in the

mass media to draw attention to what they saw as the ideologically motivated teaching methods employed in the school. The Tyndale affair focussed public attention on the accountability of teachers, and pointed to the increasing power of parental choice in a situation of falling rolls. In the subsequent public inquiry the view of the headmaster of William Tyndale that 'ultimately the teacher must decide how best to teach the children regardless of the views of the parents' was thoroughly rejected.

The claims of political bias in the schools have been continued in the 1980s, for example through allegations about teachers' sympathies for the CND. The mantle of the Black Papers has been taken on by the National Council for Academic Standards, the Centre for Policy Studies and the Social Affairs Unit. The involvement of the local Labour Party in the William Tyndale affair foreshadowed in certain respects the subsequent initiation by Prime Minister James Callaghan of the 'Great Education Debate'. In retrospect this may be seen both as the Labour Party's response to the apparent growth of public disillusion with the condition of education in Britain and as an attempt to wrest the political initiative in this area from the Conservative critics of the comprehensive school. Four main areas of concern were outlined in Callaghan's Ruskin College speech and the subsequent Green Paper issued by Secretary of State, Shirley Williams:

- 1 the need for clearer links between school and industry;
- 2 the need for greater public accountability of schools;
- 3 the need for a common curriculum in the secondary school;
- 4 the need for some kind of political education in schools.

It is the first two of these that made the greatest public impact and had the most significant consequences for teachers, and which have been picked up subsequently by Conservative governments. The general thesis underlying the Great Debate was that teachers had failed to adapt the school curriculum to, or prepare pupils for, the changing needs of British industry. The condemnation was fulsome:

Boys and girls are not sufficiently aware of the importance of industry to our society, and they are not taught much about it. In some schools the curriculum has been overloaded, so that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the building blocks of education, have been neglected. A small minority of schools have simply failed to provide an adequate education by modern standards. More frequently, schools have been over-ambitious ...without making sure that teachers understood what they were teaching or whether it was appropriate to the pupils' capacities for the needs of their future employers. (DES, 1977)

In some senses teachers were being blamed for the economic recession. The human capital theory of education to which the Labour Party had committed themselves in the 1960s (along with most other governments in the developed and less developed areas of the world) a theory which argued that increased educational participation would result in increased economic development, was apparently shown to be false.

One outcome of the debate was that attempts were made to make schools and teachers more responsive to and more accountable to the needs of industry and the personal

concerns of parents. The force of the latter entered into law through the Education Act of 1981, which required schools to publish their examination results and gave parents the right to choose the school that they wished to send their children to. In other words, schools were to be subject to market forces. The weak would go to the wall.

The Great Education Debate, and the public chastisement of the teaching profession, together with the 'slack' in the system brought about by the onset of falling rolls (a result of declining birth rate) provided powerful legitimation for the financial cuts in education spending initiated by Labour and pursued with enthusiasm by the Conservative Government since 1979. We have already noted the objective consequences of these cuts for teachers' careers, the subjective consequences are evident in a marked decline in teacher morale. This was noted in Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) Report on the effects on the education service in England of local authority expenditure policies 1980–81:

In their visits to institutions the HMIs strong impression is of professional commitment and resourcefulness. Nevertheless there is evidence that teachers' morale has been adversely affected in many schools. Its weakening, if it became widespread, would pose a major problem in the efforts to maintain present standards, let alone an improvement. (DES, 1981, p. 13)

This decline marks both a loss of professional self-respect among teachers and a shift in public esteem for the teaching profession. Webb (in this volume describing a similar situation in the USA) reports that 'teachers we interviewed were aware of the flagging image in the community and were disturbed that the public didn't understand the problems teachers face or appreciate what they took to be the real accomplishments of public education'.

Alongside this very public process of 'teacher-bashing', and drawing legitimation from it, there has been a subtle and continuing process of state intervention into the conduct of schooling and teachers' classroom work. There has been a clear intention by both Labour and Conservative governments to stride into 'the secret garden of the curriculum'. This is evidenced in a whole variety of ways both direct and indirect. Since the mid-seventies, the HMI has become far more active than previously in initiating and engaging in debates about good practice, in particular through the publication of *Surveys*, *Matters for Discussion*, and, most recently, inspection reports. However, it must be said that the views of the HMI do not always coincide with those of the Secretary of State for Education. The current Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, has been forthright in his own attempts to influence or intervene in educational practice. The White Paper on teacher training, *Teacher Quality*, is already having widespread impact on the organization of courses, it has reinforced the subject specialist basis of secondary training and effectively proscribed certain subjects, like sociology. In addition, the 1981 Education Act has given the Secretary of State powers to veto the public criteria for the latest versions of a common 16+ examination. He has made use of these powers to express his dissatisfaction with certain inclusions and omissions in several of the subject areas presented to him. Such strategies for intervention go beyond attempts to specify curricula content towards actually seeking to influence the *form* which the curriculum

takes. This is most starkly evident in the recent activities of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), which is not an agency of the Department of Education and Science (DES) but of the Department of Industry (DOI). In offering financial support to schools for vocational training schemes for 14 to 18 year olds the MSC may be staking a claim for the future to dictate aspects of the school curriculum. Generally, more and more of the financing of education is being centralized and more and more of this financing is being attached to specific schemes or payments which effectively remove the control from the school level, and thus away from teachers. (By 1985 the DES will be centrally administering £46 million intended for innovations and improvements in education; this is money withdrawn from the amount payable to local education authorities through the rate support grant).

Britain is moving steadily closer to a form of centralized control over the curriculum which would bring it into line with some of its European neighbours. It is important, however, to recognize that the feelings of loss and betrayal felt by British teachers make sense only within the almost unique fifty year period of relative autonomy granted to them by the withdrawal of the Board of Education from direct oversight of the school curriculum in the late 1920s. Previous attempts to wrest control of the curriculum away from the teachers, in the early 1960s for instance, met with stubborn and to a great extent successful resistance from the teacher unions. In the 1980s those same unions find themselves virtually powerless to resist claims from the present Secretary of State that are more fundamental and far reaching.

### **Researching the Teacher**

Research into teaching and teachers' careers over the past two decades can be seen to have moved through several distinct phases which reflect the social, political and economic changes outlined above. In the 1960s teachers were shadowy figures on the educational landscape mainly known, or unknown, through large scale surveys (Cortis, 1975), or historical analyses of their position in society (Tropp, 1957), the key concept in apprehending the practice of teaching was that of role (Wilson, 1962). The relationship between teachers' work in the classroom and their 'products', the pupils, was rarely explored or analyzed. British educational researchers certainly never took up the concern with the measurement of educational efficiency which periodically swept through the United States (Callahan, 1962). Teachers were represented in aggregate through imprecise statistics or were viewed as individuals only as formal role incumbents mechanistically and unproblematically responding to the powerful expectations of their role set. Researchers were preoccupied with varieties of ways of explaining differences in school performances which involved 'blaming the pupils', forms of cultural deprivation and social pathology theories dominated.

At the end of the 1960s the dominance of these approaches was eroded when case-study researchers (notably Lacey, 1970 and Hargreaves, 1967) broke into the 'black box' of the school and began to examine the ways in which the school (in the person of its teachers) 'processed' pupils. Labelling and typification became key concepts in understanding the mechanisms via which teachers categorized and differentiated their pupils and thus channelled and imposed limits upon their careers at school and life

chances beyond. Research thus shifted from 'blaming the pupil' to 'blaming the teacher' (Sharp and Green, 1975; Ball, 1981a; Woods, 1979). Teachers were implicated centrally not only in constructing differences in pupil performance but also in the maintenance and reproduction of gender stereotypes (Delamont, 1980). Hence the sympathies of the researchers lay primarily with the pupils, working class and female pupils in particular, who were the 'under dogs' in the classroom, teachers were the villains of the piece.

In the later seventies however, the research terrain shifted once again. Attention began to be directed to the constraints within which teachers work (neo-marxists in particular began to stress the field of determinants within which the teachers operated). Teachers were transformed from villains to 'victims' and, in some cases, 'dupes' of the system within which they were required to operate. As Riseborough (1983, p. 8) puts it, in the structural marxist paradigm 'teachers and pupils become mere passive cyphers ideologically subjugated by factors outside themselves playing on and through them. That the demiurgic proclivities of teachers and pupils become denied for intentionality is *un*-intended because it is *super*-intended by the deep structures of capitalism'. These marxist analysts tended to stress the societal and economic determinants of education and portray teachers as puppets of the capitalist state, helpless agents in the reproduction of the relations of production. In contrast, the interactionist perspective emphasized the more immediate problems involved in resolving the dual demands of instruction and control in the classroom. The limitations imposed by class size, class composition, classroom ecology and collegial and pupil expectation (Denscombe, 1980) were drawn together into a complex matrix of framing factors (Lundgren, 1972; Ball, 1981b; Evans, 1982). The teacher's essential problem was that of survival (Woods, 1979). The importance of socialization and the norms and values of subject sub-cultures (Lacey, 1977; Ball and Lacey, 1980; Goodson, 1983; 1984a; 1984b) were analyzed and added to the list of constraints. As the limitations inherent in both macro-marxist and interactionist approaches were recognized a more productive and dialectical conception of teachers' work has begun to emerge. The teacher is seen as involved in the development of creative, strategic responses to societal and situational constraints (Hargreaves, 1977; and Pollard, 1982) or as resolving ever present dilemmas (Berlack and Berlack, 1982) through and within their interaction with pupils.

Alongside this recognition of the complexity of the teachers' task and the importance of the interplay between initiating and responsive acts in the classroom greater attention has been directed to teachers as human beings, as rounded social actors with their own problems and perspectives, making careers, struggling to achieve their ideals or just struggling to 'survive'. In several respects then teachers have themselves become 'under dogs', very much on the defensive in an education system which is contracting and where *accountability* is now being stressed over and against autonomy. The school must now be viewed also as a *teaching-processing* institution. Researchers have begun to focus on the careers (subjective and objective) of teachers (Lortie, 1975; Woods, 1981; Lyons, 1981) and to examine more closely their motivations, experiences and strategies as workers in the education system. Some analyses present a conception of teachers' careers in purely materialistic terms, teachers are seen as individual agents competing for personal advancement and promotion, as Lyons' (1981) work suggests, others trade on an 'idealist' view, seeing all teachers as altruistic missionaries, neither is adequate.

This volume is intended to contribute in a constructive way to the existing body of research on teachers' careers both in substantive terms providing data on neglected and under-researched aspects of teachers' work *and* by attempting some conceptual development, which may improve the ways in which we conceive of and understand careers in teaching. In particular, we are hoping to emphasize the need to view teachers' careers and teachers' work in relation to and in the context of their lives as a whole.

### **The Bureaucratization and Proletarianization of Teaching**

Taken together recent changes in the context of teaching and alterations in the basis of teachers' conditions of employment and the ways that schools are organized have begun to affect the teachers' work experience. In particular, teaching in the comprehensive school has become more highly bureaucratized and stratified, compared with the smaller grammar and secondary modern schools.

Even after falling rolls, today's average secondary school is twice the size of the grammar or secondary modern of twenty years ago, and organizational complexity is clearly related to size. In fact, complexity in terms of the number of combinations of internal organizational arrangements or in terms of the number of inevitable human interfaces, increases at both a faster rate and in greater proportion than the arithmetic increase in the overall number of pupils. However, the complexity is not solely a matter of size and logistics; catering for the comprehensive range of pupil abilities under the same roof brings with it considerable technical complexity with the sheer range of curriculum options, syllabuses and pastoral support policies that must be determined. (Morgan, Hall and MacKay, 1983, p. 11)

Comprehensive schools are denoted by a highly complex division of labour. Scale points which are allocated for posts of responsibility also create specialist positions and duties. Some duties which had previously been carried out by class tutors or class teachers are now separated off as the responsibility of specialists. This is particularly true in the case of pastoral care work; many schools now have sophisticated pastoral structures with year tutors and assistant year tutors, heads of school, community liaison officers etc. These specialist positions are now well supported and further institutionalized by a range of in-service and award bearing courses in colleges and universities. The result, increasing specialization and complexity is in turn increasing bureaucratization in school procedures—form-filling, record-keeping—and in teacher-pupil relations. Woods (1979), in his study of Lowfield secondary modern, distinguishes between teacher-bureaucrats and teacher-persons:

The former are more bound by institutional forms and processes and more geared to the formal definition of the teacher role. They are more likely to show a high degree of rule consciousness, exert their authority, and foster formal and depersonalized relationships. They are categorized by pupils in

this study as ‘too strict’, ‘full of moans’, ‘won’t laugh’, ‘treat you like kids’. Teacher persons capitalize on humour and togetherness. They are ‘more natural’, ‘more like a friend than a teacher’, ‘have a laugh with you’, ‘talk to you like real people’. They are still in control of the institution, using it for their own ends. Teacher bureaucrats however, are governed by it. (p. 244)

As Weber (1968) points out:

Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly the more it is ‘dehumanized’, the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business, love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation, (p. 975)

If then pupils are now dealt with in an increasingly rational and impersonal fashion in school, this may equally well be the case for teachers. Certainly it can be argued that the perpetuation of a strongly classified subject-based curriculum contributes to bureaucratization in large schools.

The knowledge is organized and distributed through a series of well-insulated subject hierarchies. Such a structure points to oligarchic control of the institution, through formal and informal meetings of heads of department with the head or principal of the institution. Thus, senior staff will have strong horizontal work relationships (that is, with their peers in other subject hierarchies) and strong vertical work relationships within their own department. However, junior staff are likely to have only vertical (within the subject hierarchy) allegiances and work relationships. (Bernstein, 1971, p. 61)

Another facet of the increased complexity of the organization and administration of large schools and a further manifestation of the oligarchic control referred to by Bernstein, is apparent in the phenomenon of the *senior management team*. These teams, normally made up of the Headteacher, Deputy Heads and Senior Teachers, are distinctly separate from the classroom teaching workforce of the school. (Although deputies normally have some teaching responsibilities). And it is in this area that most major policy discussions in schools are now held. The application of management terminology to school government is in itself significant.

The concept of management is drawn from the methods of organization, administration and control employed in industry and it contains a set of assumptions which derived from the work of F.W. ‘Speedy’ Taylor. Taylor argued that wherever possible planning should be separated from execution and should be the exclusive province of management. Work tasks should be carefully prescribed, and these prescriptions should lay down standards that will facilitate the precise measurement of work output. One of the fundamental tenets of this method is thus ‘the increasing control over the work and the workforce...concentrated in management hands’ (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980, p. 91). Indeed, Taylor advocated authoritarian methods of management,

and was judged to have 'offered the most thorough dehumanization of work ever seen under capitalism' (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980. p. 91). If not all the details of Taylor's scientific management are recognizable in our schools, the trends are unmistakable. In recent years management training courses for incumbent or aspiring heads and deputies have proliferated; in 1983 the DES allocated six million pounds for this purpose, of which £350,000 has gone to the University of Bristol to establish a national education management centre. It may not be too far-fetched to relate this enthusiasm for the management training of school administrators to the increased level of intervention of the political centre in matters of school curriculum and the need to deal efficiently with technical and managerial problems thrown up by falling rolls and cuts in educational expenditure. It may be that management control over teachers' classroom work is extended much further in the near future as the introduction of graded testing allows for more direct and immediate forms of quality control. This is certainly the trend in the United States:

Management ideology focussed sharply on measurable educational 'outputs' in relation to society 'inputs' by introducing educational schemes which fit the terminology of the ideology: competence based education (CBE), performance based education (PBE), competency based teacher education (CBTE), behavioural objectives, mastery learning, learner verification, assessment systems (federal, state and local), and criterion-reference testing. (Wirth, 1983, p. 116)

And it is perhaps worth noting that a major factor in Japanese management styles that are beginning to be imported is the concept of 'total quality control'.

While in many respects there is nothing at all wrong with efficiency as an organizational goal, management itself is not simply a neutral administrative technology. It is one form of organizational control, based on executive control of labour, but not necessarily the only available one. Participative procedures are one alternative which few schools have attempted (Watts, 1977; Scrimshaw, 1975). Salaman (1978) argues that the importance of management training courses lies in the way in which they influence the attitudes and motivation of their participants:

The function of these courses is to adjust organizational members to organizational demands and realities; to encourage members to gain 'insight' into themselves, their colleagues and the organization (insight of a rather limited sort, usually); to inform members about the organization, and to develop new skills. They achieve insidious control, (p. 203)

Wallace, Miller and Ginsburg (1983) describe such effects at work in one local education authority (LEA) which they studied:

...the LEA increasingly followed the principles of hierarchical authority ...in their ideological rhetoric. Thus, heads were encouraged to see themselves in schools as managers and were required to 'manage' with appropriate authority. This could place heads and deputies (who were the



mediators between County directives and staff complaints) at the point of conflict making them less able to deal effectively with teachers' problems.

Management theories are concerned primarily with organizing and controlling workers rather than dealing with them as people (Ball, 1984). Their application to a person-centred enterprise such as education is deeply problematic.

### **Objective and Subjective Careers in Teaching**

It is against the background of factors outlined above that any contemporary research on teachers must be set. But it would be conceptually misleading either to assume that all teachers share the same subjective experiences of these factors or that concentration on the immediate contexts of teaching will provide an adequate framework for the analysis of such careers.

The concept of career must take into account both the objective and subjective aspects of the incumbent's experience. By definition individual careers are socially constructed and individually experienced over time. They are subjective trajectories through historical periods and at the same time contain their own organizing principles and distinct phases. However, there are important ways in which individual careers can be tied to wider political and economic events. In some cases particular historical 'moments' or periods assume special significance in the construction of or experience of a career. Three such 'moments' crop up regularly in this volume in the experiences and career perceptions of teachers quoted:

- 1 the economic depression of the 1930s and the stultifying effect that this had on the teaching profession and teachers' perspectives;
- 2 the period of educational expansion and progressive consensus in the mid-to-late 1960s and the diverse flowering of radical innovations that this allowed;
- 3 the current context of economic cuts and falling rolls which, as noted already, is inhibiting career development for new entrants and producing low morale in the profession as a whole.

The possibilities and constraints experienced in these periods seem to imprint themselves on the views and attitudes of the teachers involved and in the case of the first two at least, have long term implications for the career patterns and progress of those individuals. Over and above the impact of these external influences there are also ways in which work in teaching and teachers' careers are marked by and may be divided into a set of commonly understood stages linked to the process of ageing. This may be understood in particular in terms of teachers' changing relations with pupils and their conceptions of themselves in role. Life history and career history methods and longitudinal studies of entrants into teaching provide different ways of eliciting both these objective and subjective aspects of careers in teaching.

The first life histories were collected by anthropologists at the beginning of the century, notably in the form of autobiographies of American Indian chiefs. The major landmark in the development of sociological life histories came with the publication of Thomas and Znaniecki's (1921) pioneering study *The Polish Peasant in Europe and*

*America*. From this point on life history methods were adopted as an important research device in the work being undertaken in the University of Chicago Sociology Department. With the arrival of Robert Park in the department in 1916 the life history method became established as a central part of the research apparatus employed by sociologists working there. A range of studies of city life completed under Park such as *The Gang*, *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, *The Hobo* and *The Ghetto* all employed the life history method. Life history studies reached their peak in the 1930s with publications such as Clifford Shaw's (1930) study of a mugger in *The Jackroller* and Edwin Sutherland's (1937) study of *The Professional Thief*.

Becker (1966) has since written about the decline of the life history method and develops some hypotheses as to why this has happened. But also in his essay he develops the arguments about life history by seeking to show why Shaw's study of *The Jackroller* is so exemplary. He notes that by:

putting ourselves inside Stanley's (the Jackroller's) skin we can feel and become aware of the deep biases about such people that ordinarily permeate our thinking and shape the kind of problems we investigate. By truly entering into Stanley's life we can begin to see what we take for granted (and ought not to) in deciding our research—what kinds of assumptions about delinquents, slums and Poles are embedded in the way we set the questions we study. (p. 71)

More recently educational researchers have been exploring the possibilities of rehabilitating the life history method for their own work. Goodson (1981; 1983) has pursued this exhortation with some examples of how studies of the life history of key personnel can illuminate our understanding of curriculum change. In particular, he argued that most interactionist and ethnomethodological studies on schooling have generated a predominant but implausible model of the teacher 'largely interchangeable, subject to timeless problems and employing a variety of standard but apparently spontaneously developed strategies':

Whilst not wishing to argue that teachers do not have important characteristics in common, we argue that there are important distinctions in attitude, performance and strategies which can be identified in different teachers in different times. To understand the degree of importance of these distinctions we have to reconnect our studies of schooling with investigations of personal biography and historical background: above all we are arguing for the reintegration of situational with biographical and historical analysis. Through such a reintegration we might move away from studies where the human actor is located and studied in a manner contrivably divorced from the previous history of both the actor and the situation. (Goodson, 1981, p. 69)

This leads on to a number of investigative assumptions. First, that the teachers' previous career and life experience shapes their view of teaching and the way he or she sets about it. Secondly, that teachers' lives outside school, their latent identities and cultures, have

an important impact on their work as teachers. This relates to 'central life interest' and commitments. And thirdly, that we must, following Bogdan and Taylor (1970), seek to locate the life history of the individual within 'the history of his time'. Clearly there are limits to this aspiration with regard to schooling. But life histories of schools, subjects and the teaching profession would provide vital contextual information.

Since these exhortations the move towards life history work in the study of schooling has been substantially strengthened by the methodological ammunition provided in the collection edited by Bertaux (1981). This has allowed researchers like Beynon (in this volume) to explore the use of life history methods in an ethnographic study. Beynon has studied 'Lower School', a large urban comprehensive in South Wales. The life history data was gathered over an eighteen month period of ethnographic fieldwork. In his summary Beynon points towards the potential for life history work 'filling in the gaps in our knowledge of schooling':

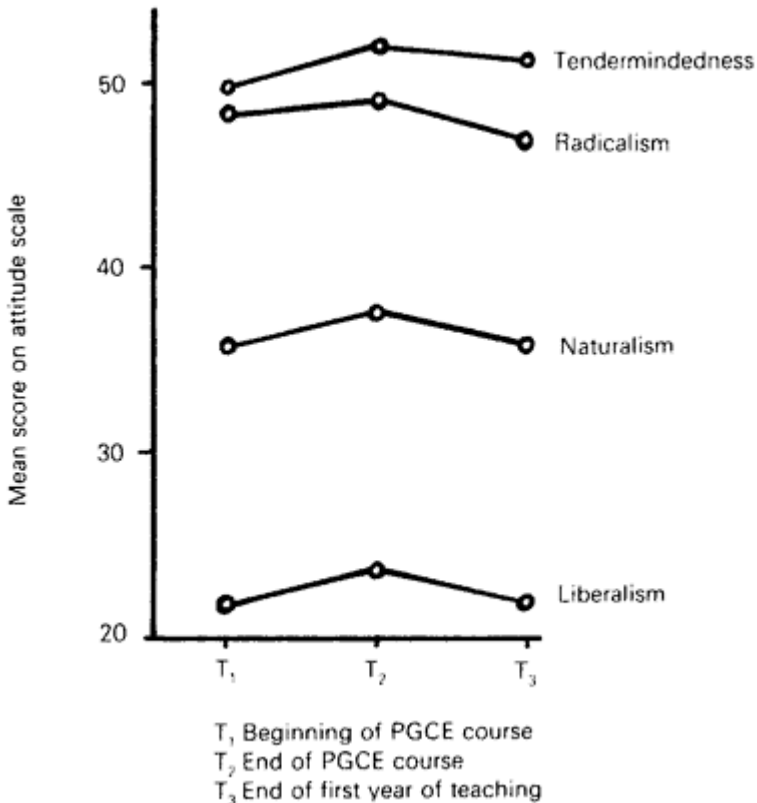
More needs to be known about how, for example, teachers' lives outside classes influence their teaching and the crucial episodes and watersheds that mark shifts in attitudes in their careers. Ethnographers are becoming more sensitive to the multi-dimensionality of teachers' (and pupils'/students') lives and are now less likely to treat them as unidimensional which has, to date, often been the case. Teachers are not...cardboard cut-outs: behind their teaching lies a range of motives and emotions...they are influenced by past, as well as contemporary, events and more attention should be paid to how critical incidents in an institution's history affect its teachers.

Such methods provide ways of opening up for study the sealed boxes within which teachers work and survive. They serve to identify aspects of common experience and to isolate some of those factors which separate and differentiate teachers; factors like age, subject, level of specialization (primary, secondary, sixth form etc.). These methods tap into the lived experiences of teachers in schools, their successes and failures, their relationships with 'the hierarchy', their conditions of work, their responses to change.

The paper by Sikes in this volume provides another example of the uses of career history data this time in revealing the process of ageing as it particularly and peculiarly affects teachers. In contrast with most other forms of employment teaching embodies within it the constant reflection of the ageing process, for while teachers get older pupils inevitably stay the same age.

In existing research on teaching it is the first phase of the teaching career and its attendant stresses that has received most attention. Apparently old teachers just fade away. However it is in the first few years of teaching that survival is most problematic. Research has tended to focus on both the newly qualified teachers' adaptation to the school in the broader organizational sense and the problems of achieving a working relationship with pupils in the classroom. In both cases there has been particular interest in the problems of and 'fate' of radical teachers. Attitudinal surveys have tended to stress the decline in radical orientation among newly qualified teachers once they are faced with the realities of teaching. Such changes are evidenced in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Four attitude scales plotted at T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, and T<sub>3</sub>—Sussex PGCE



Source: Lacey 1977 p. 130.

On all four indicators there is a marked increase in scores from the beginning to the end of the PGCE course and a marked decline from the end of the PGCE course to the end of the first year of teaching. When questioned at the end of their first teaching year many of the respondents in this study described their reactions as representing a major change in their views (Lacey, 1977, p. 134). Both the responses of pupils and the power of collegiate expectations are implicated in bringing about these reorientations of attitude and belief. Indeed, in some cases overt pressures are placed upon the new entrant to conform to the institutional conventions and conceptions of 'good practice'.

I found it difficult to talk to the other staff because I thought they all knew what a hash I was making of it. There was a lot of noise coming from my classroom and it shouldn't have been. This is partly because it is a new school designed for open-plan teaching, with no doors between the classrooms, and yet old-fashioned teaching methods are being used; and so anything that went on in my classroom I felt could be heard in the next

classroom. We always knew when we'd been making a dreadful din—I had a very awkward teacher at one time next to me who used to come up when there was the slightest noise and say 'I can't hear myself talk down there, could you shut your class up?' and I couldn't always shut my class up, so it was creating rather an awful situation. She never showed me how to do it. I had some friendly tips, I suppose, but they seemed to take it terribly lightheartedly and make jokes about it. Perhaps they didn't really understand how badly I felt about it. But I think it was awkward for the teachers too, because they don't like to approach us and say 'Do you want some help? Can I help you?' They think they might be interfering. I really don't know why. Something to do with the professionalism...you don't want to tell a teacher how to...you don't want to admit your failures by approaching them. (Jean Musgrove, junior school teacher, quoted in Hannam *et al.* (1976, p. 141)).

However, adaptation is not necessarily always a simple one way process. Building on Becker's work Lacey (1977) has suggested a tripartite schema for analyzing the processes of adaptation involved in becoming a teacher. He says 'the school has now become the arena for competing pressures. On the one hand there is the need to become effective and accepted within the school; on the other hand the desire to make the school more like the place in which the teacher would like to teach' (p. 136). Lacey's three categories of adaptation are:

- 1 strategic compliance, in which the individual complies with the authority figure's definition of the situation and the constraints of the situation but retains private reservations about them. He is merely seen to be good.
- 2 Internalized adjustment, in which the individual complies with the constraints and believes that the constraints of the situation are for the best. He really is good. (p. 72)
- 3 'Strategic redefinition of the situation' which 'implies that change is brought about by individuals who do not possess the formal power to do so. They achieve change by causing or enabling those with formal power to change their interpretation of what is happening in the situation' (p. 73).

From this perspective the new entrant to teaching is to be seen not simply as a naive subject responding unthinkingly to outside pressures and constraints but rather, as Lacey indicates, as the initiator of 'action-idea systems that are innovative within situations and change them' (p. 72). This approach to the analysis of teachers' careers has been extended further by Woods (1981) who, using case studies of the careers of two 'radical' teachers, separates *pragmatic* from *paradigmatic* types of strategic orientation. The former combines partial redefinition with situational adjustment and the 'privatization' of educational problems; the latter allows for no compromise, and involves the undisguised pursuit of 'how teaching ought to be'. Tom, the teacher who represents the pragmatic orientation, was content to acquire power within the existing structures of school organization and was well aware of 'what is or is not possible in given circumstances'. He survived and to an extent flourished within the system, carving a niche for himself on the margins of his school where his personal views were tolerated and which made life, for him, tolerable. Dick, on the other hand, the paradigmatic, was frequently in open

conflict with his superiors and indeed he appeared to court public confrontations. Rather than work within the structure of his schools he attempted to take them on head on and to reform them, he resigned from or was eased out of three schools in as many years and then left teaching altogether, unwilling to adapt his principles to the demands of the system.

Sikes' paper in this volume highlights the pressures towards accommodation and adaptation that the tyro faces in the early years of teaching. But, in different ways, Nias and Bennett (also in this volume) provide accounts of the ways in which initial idealism and 'deviant' identities can be maintained despite these pressures. Nias's primary teachers sought out, by moving school if necessary, like-minded teachers to reinforce their own strongly-held beliefs and conceptions of the work of teaching. Many carried with them a missionary commitment to teaching which was not necessarily dimmed by the passing of time although some did drop out, literally or figuratively, when faced with adverse circumstances or when unable to find reference group support for their particular self concept as teachers. Those who stayed employed impression management and forms of strategic compliance in order to get things done in their schools. Bennett's art teachers, working on the periphery of the school world, were granted 'normative licence' by their more orthodox colleagues, as well as maintaining a strong counter-cultural value system of their own.

Whatever the influence of colleagues on the new teacher it emerges from the studies reported here that the early days in the classroom contain, for virtually all teachers, periods of stress and moments of interpersonal conflict with pupils that are fundamental in making or breaking a career in teaching. This kind of rite of passage experience, the baptism of fire in the classroom, is clearly embedded in the way in which teachers make sense, retrospectively, of their own development. It is part of the folklore of teaching and, as Measor describes in this volume, such *critical incidents* are crucial in the ways in which teachers account for the very process of becoming a teacher. Establishing oneself in the classroom, becoming a teacher, is clearly a two-way process. The teacher may be taming the pupils, as they see it, but in their proactive strategies the pupils are profoundly shaping and directing the teacher's self-concept and moral career. For those who fail in the baptism of fire, who are by definition unrepresented in the analyses presented here, the pupils may be decisive in forcing them out of teaching, or as in the case of Mr Smith, described by Measor, may force them to seek to pursue their struggle to survive and develop as teachers in other schools. The psychological stress and the critical significance of these experiences are clear in the symbolic power and delivery of the stories which the teachers tell.

Several writers (Werthman, 1963; Rosser and Harre, 1976; Woods, 1979) have emphasized the ways in which pupils seek to establish some control over the activities of their teachers and subvert and colonize teachers' intentions and practices. Werthman's American high school gang members had a particular concern with the ways in which their teachers assigned grades, what grades and on what criteria. If the gang felt that the criteria being used were illegitimate, taking into account student demeanour and behaviour rather than effort and ability, then sanctions were applied, like coming late, ignoring the teachers' attempts to teach and a carefully judged insubordinate demeanour referred to as 'looking cool'. The British pupils investigated by Rosser and Harre also judged their teachers by a set of rules of conduct, if their teachers broke these rules then

principles of retribution were brought into play either in the form of reciprocity, paying back in kind, or equilibration, which involved tactics to offset any loss of self-esteem or personal indignity which may have resulted from the teachers' offence, an insult or slap or unfair punishment. In the process of action and reaction, offence and retribution pupils are involved in educating or re-educating their teachers, although like some pupils teachers do not seem to learn their lessons well. Riseborough's paper in this volume takes this analysis one step further by stressing the often underestimated symbiotic relationship between teacher and pupil. He argues that pupils can be seen as 'critical reality definers' in the classroom, acting in a competent and knowledgeable way to 'process' their teachers. In doing so, they critically affect the teacher's health and survival and the degree of stress that the teacher experiences. Those who do survive become 'hardened' on the chalk face, 'they become what they become'. They learn from pupils, they learn what is possible and what is not. They respond, retreat, and rethink. Teacher and pupils are each determined by and determine the others in the interaction. Pupils subvert the teachers' conceptions of their substantive self. Teachers type, channel and direct pupils' careers and may affect their life changes beyond school.

In less dramatic fashion pupils also shape and constrain the teachers' pedagogy and may engage in a resistance of or negotiation over matters of content. Measor (1984) found that pupil perceptions of subject status played a significant part in the degree of cooperation that they were willing to extend to teachers, Spradbery (1976) reported similar findings in the case of pupil resistance to teacher attempts to introduce maths for the majority work for the less able. This was regarded by pupils as 'not proper maths'. Clearly, however, for some teachers and perhaps in some subject areas in particular there are 'gaps' and possibilities within the educational system which allow for the development and maintenance of radical orientations to teaching. And on occasion there are circumstances or 'moments' which provide a focus for such radicalism either in a straightforward educational sense or in a wider political sense.

Smith, Kleine, Dwyer and Prunty (in this volume) indicate the ways in which radical moments and experiences fit into and have an impact upon the lives of those involved. They isolate several factors which recur in perspectives and subsequent career of teachers involved in innovative schooling in the 1960s. This experience made a long term impact on working lives and personal lives of these teachers in profound ways.

In a somewhat different way the shadow of the 1960s looms large in the career histories and perspectives of some of the teachers attracted to work in Croxteth Community School (Carspecken and Miller, 1983). People with experience of political movements at college or university, who had experimented with alternative lifestyles and new religions, who had journeyed, literally and figuratively, in search of personal fulfilment were attracted by the combination of direct action, community politics and cooperative involvement that Croxteth offered. They brought their commitment and their experience and found the satisfactions and frustrations of putting political and personal theories into practice. For others, some of those people from the Croxteth Community who became involved in teaching or others working at the school, this experience provided a new beginning, a significant change of life course, a new sense of meaning and purpose against a background of alienation and aimlessness. The long term implications for these people will remain to be seen but Smith *et al's* Kensington study provides some pointers as to likely directions.

## Identity, Commitment and Allegiance

The ways in which teachers achieve, maintain, and develop their identity, their sense of self, in and through a career, are of vital significance in understanding the actions and commitments of teachers in their work. Identity is also a key to apprehending the divisions between teachers. Ball (1972) suggests a useful separation of the *situated* from the *substantive* identity, a separation that is between a malleable presentation of self that differs and alters according to the specific definition of the situation and a more stable, core self perception that is fundamental to the ways that individuals think about themselves. Analyses of teaching and the folk wisdom of practitioners often stress the peculiar necessities of impression management in the dynamics of classroom interaction. Teachers often talk of the usefulness of feigning anger 'going in hard and easing off later', 'not letting them see that you are nervous', all of which highlight the need to achieve particular presentations of self in particular contexts. The staffroom may provide another context in which such presentations are required, as Cole argues in his paper in this volume. The separation is between teacher and person. Student teachers frequently complain about being unable to be 'themselves' in the classroom. As initiates into teaching they are acutely aware of this dichotomy of the self. For some a career in teaching becomes an odyssey in search of forms of teaching work where this dichotomy can be abandoned or reduced. Bennett's art teachers are one group which come closer than many others, to achieving this. Many of Nias' primary teachers are clearly in search of such a closing. Kensington and Croxeth provided institutional occasions within which resolutions were, for a time, possible. Furthermore, over time, identity becomes invested in particular aspects or facets of the teaching role. For many secondary teachers their subject specialism plays a crucial role. They see themselves as scientists, geographers, historians, mathematicians, etc. This is not surprising in that teacher training in the broadest sense tends to prepare and socialize aspirants for separate and ideologically distinct social and institutional roles. As Lacey (1977) puts it, professional induction to teaching is not single stranded 'but a multi-stranded process in which student teachers are moving towards a profession which is itself still striving towards common understandings in vital areas of its professional practice' (p. 76). In the secondary sector this separation and distinctiveness of subjects is maintained by the strong classification of the school curriculum. Not only does the teacher in preparation acquire identity but also, in many cases, a subject specific set of norms and values. They are invested in subject sub-cultures. We can see the evidence of this in Bennett's account of the perspectives and training of art teachers. The importance of subject sub-cultures has led a number of researchers towards the study of the historical development of school subjects (Goodson, 1983). Historical analysis can uncover the range of conflicts and influences which have played their part in defining subjects in particular ways. These definitions channel and constrain the sorts of identity available to the subject teacher.

In relation to identity vested interests develop in maintaining and reinforcing particular aspects of role and particular self confirming ways of existing in teaching. For some therefore innovations or reforms in teaching or school organization can represent a threat to identity or the possibility of humiliations associated with a spoilt identity. Riseborough (1981) has highlighted this in the case of secondary modern teachers caught up in the reorganization of Phoenix Comprehensive. The experiences of seventeen teachers from



the secondary modern school, upon which a new comprehensive was based, all long serving, many two-year trained, all but one non-graduates, are documented in detail by Riseborough. With the appointment of a new Headteacher and the influx of new, younger, university-trained staff these 'old' staff found their careers brought to a complete halt. Indeed as posts of responsibility were shared out in the new school they found themselves demoted in the status hierarchy and dispossessed of previous positions and duties (their salaries were protected). Further, the new Headteacher quickly made it clear that he saw no future for them in what was now 'his' school.

The Head's idea of a good teacher is everything I'm not. Just look at the ones he's appointed. That's what he thinks a good teacher is. Their rating is really on academic qualifications and examination record. This man has a tremendous fear that he has to show results. From the beginning I realised the writing was on the wall. (Ex-secondary modern teacher aged 56, p. 359)

The old staff found themselves effectively barred from top set teaching and allocated instead to 'dirty work' among the bottom stream groups. The system of streaming pupils in the school came to be paralleled by a system of streaming the teachers. Like the bottom stream groups they taught these teachers began to develop an anti-school culture.

The 'old' staff's orientation to work is thus centred around an utter personal antipathy to the head; to teaching and to the school as defined by him; and to any kind of conception of comprehensive education. They define their role in opposition to the head's expectation, (p. 363)

Among the many strengths of Riseborough's study is that it puts the concept of career into the context of a particular institution which has its own ideological structure and micro-politics. It demonstrates the role of the headteacher as 'critical reality definer' and gatekeeper of teachers' careers whose 'strategic choices constructs and sustains through interaction the professional identities of teaching staff' (p. 367).

In a similar case study approach to the examination of careers Ball (1985) found grammar school teachers experiencing a loss of prized aspects of teaching work and a devalued sense of self when faced with comprehensive reorganization and the subsequent possibility of the loss of the school sixth form. However, in contrast to the secondary modern teachers at Phoenix, these grammar school teachers continued to offer skills and capabilities (especially with examination classes) which were valued by the new Headmaster. They were able to use their influence in the school to defend many traditional practices and to oppose some at least of the innovations they saw as undesirable. And significantly those grammar school teachers who at the point of reorganization suffered status demotion were able over a period of time to recover and resume their vertical and horizontal career progress.

Fundamental to the establishment of identity in teaching is, as Nias argues in her paper in this volume, *the reference group*. For those sixth form college teachers described by Burke in this volume their reference groups clearly lay in the university disciplines for which they prepared pupils and to which some at least aspired personally. Their

commitments to and the satisfactions received from preparing students for university led to willing acceptance of heavy teaching loads, long hours of preparation and marking, as well as attempts to keep up with the recent developments in research in their subject area. Not all teachers display this kind of intense personal involvement with their work, indeed Lortie (1975) suggests that the occupation of teaching is geared to 'recruitment rather than retention and low rather than high involvement' (p. 99). And Woods (1981) argues that the degree of strength and commitment among teachers can be considered in terms of three primary types of commitment, which he refers to as *vocational*, *professional*, and *career continuance*. The vocational type we have met already among Nias primary teachers. This is usually based on a broad personal commitment to a set of ideals and beliefs related to 'service' and helping and or changing society for the better. Lacey (1977) found this sort of commitment well represented among his sample of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) students, and at this stage it bears many similarities to the ideal doctor commitment evidenced among the beginning medical students studied by Becker *et al.* (1961). As we have seen already in the case of radical teachers, this idealism may be fragile when tested against the exigencies of classroom life and can be compromised away by the adoption of short term survival strategies. This kind of commitment may also come under pressure from the expectations of colleagues about what constitutes good practice. Nias' idealists were notably tenacious, stubborn and successful in their own classes but they were also acutely aware of the difference between themselves and many of their colleagues. In the broadest sense the vocationally committed are educators rather than scholars. They see their interests as primarily with caring for the pupils and encouraging their intellectual development. In contrast professionally committed teachers are much more likely to see themselves as subject specialists and to see their subjects as providing an avenue for advancement as well as a source of personal satisfaction. They are in general terms academics who wish to teach their subject and, perhaps as a result, see their role relationship with pupils more narrowly. Lacey (1977) found that students of this type in his PGCE sample tended to rate their teaching ability very highly as well as having a long term career perspective. It is presumably within this group that Lyons (1981) found his 'map makers', those cue seeking teachers who established for themselves a career map or a career timetable by which to guide and measure their progress over time, who sought out 'sponsors' and cultivated an awareness of appropriate 'benchmarks' and 'gatekeepers'. These two groups may be said to have, in different ways, a positive commitment to teaching (we must be aware that these are ideal types; not all teachers can be neatly fitted in to these categories and individual teachers' motives may be mixed, or one person may change the nature of their commitment over time). They have normally made a firm and decisive choice to enter teaching, although the vocationally committed teacher may also see the possibility of pursuing their mission outside of school. For many entrants into teaching however, the decision to become a teacher is best described as a negative decision or a series of non decisions. For some, a teacher training institution is a second best alternative to university or a way of marking time while searching for a positive interest elsewhere. Once in college the inertia of continuance commitment carries the unsure, and even the alienated, along and leaves them with a non-negotiable qualification. Even entry into teaching may be made on similar grounds—the outcome of a combination of inertia and a lack of viable alternatives. To this group may be added a number of university

graduates uncertain of how to make positive use of their degree or who postpone their career decision by embarking on a PGCE course. Cole's study of college of education students in this volume, contains both negatively and non-committed teachers of this kind and they represent an important counterpoint to the radicals described above and to Nias' idealist teachers. Clearly, while some of these waverers drift out of teaching, perhaps failing to survive when their commitment is tested by critical incidents in the classroom, others become trapped by the side bets made over time into a teaching identity. Some undoubtedly acquire a more positive orientation to their role as they find satisfactions in new challenges or new aspects of their work or in relationships with colleagues. But our knowledge of this group is particularly limited and teachers themselves have a vested interest in not betraying these kind of reluctant commitments. The ideology of professional work stresses the altruistic and missionary aspects of commitment over and against the utilitarian or pecuniary or alienated.

Sikes, Bennett and Nias all point to examples of teachers who find more substantial commitments and identity reinforcement outside of the normal work of teaching and outside of the school. Some develop concurrent careers which provide forms of status or economic recovery or provide a channel for psychological withdrawal from the travails of teaching. For some of Bennett's art teachers it was possible to cash in their training in commercial art work or to attain personal satisfaction and reinforcement of substantive identities as artists by exhibiting and selling their personal work. Beynon describes a teacher whose local reputation and personal satisfactions derived from his historical writing and research. Nias also points out that for some women teachers a career as mother may provide an alternative to a career as teacher and pregnancy may be a deliberate means of escape from teaching work.

Certainly the concept of career as used in common parlance to describe a commitment to promotion and professional development through work over a long timescale is not relevant to all teachers, or all groups of teachers. Lyons (1981) found that not all the teachers he interviewed held a clearly conceived 'career map' and that many work towards short-term objectives, be it getting through to the end of term or capturing a scale post of responsibility. Others judge their careers in terms of long-term stages and did not expect rapid movement from one benchmark to another. They felt that they might in the long term hope to become a head of department or a year tutor, but they did not necessarily measure their progress towards these goals against timetable norms set by contemporaries and did not see themselves in any sort of direct competition with their colleagues for scarce promotion possibilities. It will be interesting to see to what extent these perspectives are altered in the current context of 'cuts' and falling rolls.

Bennett's art teachers certainly do not identify themselves with the norms of promotional striving which they see in other subject groups. Indeed the norms of their own subject subculture discourage such striving. Although we must also recognize that the status of art in the hierarchy of school subjects tends to preclude art teachers (as well as other teachers in areas like craft design and technology, physical education, domestic science and needlework) from the normal routes of promotion to senior management positions in schools. Neither did Nias' primary school teachers normally talk about or see themselves embarked on a career in teaching *per se*. They may have been discouraged from this both by factors related to gender biases in promotion and the absence of a highly developed system of scales and posts of responsibility. And it would be unusual to

find radical teachers committing themselves to teaching in terms of a career. Indeed, such a notion may be antithetical to their sense of personal development and social equality.

The concept of a career in teaching, as commonly understood, is problematic for many individuals and groups. This may be particularly true in the case of women teachers. For many women teachers careers are constructed, in both objective and subjective senses, in radically different ways from those of male careers. And these 'deviant' constructions often severely disadvantage the women in the competition for promotion in schools. Marland (1983) has recently collated the striking pattern of under-representation of women teachers in senior positions across all the sectors of education. The extent of awareness among women of these inequalities and the extent to which individuals feel themselves to be disadvantaged is of course itself problematic. Clearly, some women do see teaching simply as a means of providing a second income and, like many men, are committed only in calculative terms to their work. However, recent financial cuts in spending in education have had a disproportionate impact on women in one area in particular. In many schools faced with financial restrictions and/or falling rolls part-time posts have often been the first to be cut. The vast majority of part-time teachers in schools are women. Apart from such obvious inequities women 'career' teachers may find themselves further disadvantaged when compared with men who are part of what Acker (1980) refers to as joint-career families. As a result of their different patterns of career both in relation to things like maternity leave and child-bearing and reduced promotional prospects many women are likely to experience the phases of the teaching career, as Sikes represents them, in rather a different way from men. And it is important to recognize that even those women who follow a 'normal' career pattern will experience their careers differently from men. One aspect of difference relates especially to those women who are successful in gaining promotion to senior posts in schools and this is discussed by Kanter (1977) in a study of the working lives of women in an American industrial corporation, namely the numerical distribution of men and women in such positions:

The numerical distribution of men and women at the upper reaches created a strikingly different interaction context for women and for men. At local and regional meetings, training programmes, task forces, casual out-of-the-office lunches with colleagues, and career review or planning sessions with managers, men were overwhelmingly likely to find themselves with a predominance of people of their own type—other men...the culture of corporate administration and the experiences of men in it were influenced by this fact of numerical domination, by the fact that men were the *many*. (p. 206)

This question of numbers had its impact in a whole variety of ways on the personal experiences and likely success of *the few*, the women. They were often highly visible as a result of their minority, which could have its advantages in terms of being noticed for promotion but disadvantages in terms of the additional pressures it brought for those who had 'only women' status and who 'become tokens: symbols of how-women-can-do, stand-ins for all women' (p. 207). Some found themselves cast as outsiders, unable to enter the culture of an alien social world, constantly left out or ignored. This can lead to a

*fear of visibility* and attempts to play down differences. Women in these positions may hide or minimize traits or behaviours that they see as distinctly feminine. Or specific women's roles may be carved out for the token few which embody various stereotypes of female behaviour and male-female relationships; Kanter (1977) suggests mother, seductress, pet and iron maiden. Clearly, we have as yet little research evidence on these sorts of issues as they affect women in teaching but there are certainly hints in the available literature that these processes and problems do exist for women in teaching. We need only think of the contradictions inherent in the common role in comprehensive schools of third deputy head responsible for girls discipline and matters of staff welfare.

In the first section of this chapter we have argued that research into teachers lives and careers has substantially reflected the political and ideological climates in which those lives are embedded. We have also argued that the career must be studied in the context of the whole life (and that life histories can help in exploring this relationship). Account must be taken of the increasing numbers of teachers who say things like 'recently, I've been thinking more about life and less about career' or 'you don't understand my centre of gravity is no longer here' (ie. in the classroom). When the climate of schooling is changing as rapidly as at the moment we need methodologies and concepts which sensitize us to these changes of gravity in teachers' lives. For much of the impact of those who currently seek to 'cut' education can only be assessed by methods which map the teachers' changing perception of their work; the delicate balance of commitment between teaching and life.

### Notes

- 1 Some recent examples of plans for such cuts and their effects on jobs are: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, cuts of £1.7 million including 180 teaching jobs and 100 non-teaching jobs; Devon, cuts of £1.4 million including 134 teaching jobs; Doncaster, cuts of £1.8 million including 138 teaching jobs; Leicestershire threaten to cut 357 teaching jobs including making 75 teachers on fixed-term contracts redundant; Warwickshire propose to axe 200 teaching jobs; Hertfordshire have cut 482 secondary teaching posts since 1979 and 52 per cent of ancillary and clerical posts have disappeared in this period; Ealing plans to cut 40 middle school posts; Harrow plans to cut 15 teaching posts.
- 2 At the time of going to press attempts are being made to restructure salary scales, with a two year entry grade and a main professional grade with higher levels of pay for those with particular, substantial responsibilities.
- 3 However, this may be less true in the sixth form colleges; see Burke in this volume.

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