THE MORAL DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING

John I. Goodlad
Roger Soder
Kenneth A. Sirotnik
Editors

The Moral Dimensions of Teaching

Jossey-Bass Publishers
San Francisco • Oxford • 1991

THE MORAL DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING
by John I. Goodlad, Roger Soder, and Kenneth A. Sirotnik, Editors

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Moral dimensions of teaching
John I. Goodlad, Roger Soder, Kenneth A. Sirotnik, editors.—1st ed.
p. cm.—(The Jossey-Bass education series) (The Jossey-Bass higher education series)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 1-55542-199-7 (alk. paper)
1. Teachers—Professional ethics—United States. 2. Moral education—United States. I. Goodlad, John I. II. Soder, Roger, date. III. Sirotnik, Kenneth A. IV. Series. V. Series: The Jossey-Bass higher education series.
LB1779.M67 1990
174'.9372—dc20 89-28755
CIP

Manufactured in the United States of America

The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources.

JACKET DESIGN BY WILLI BAUM

FIRST EDITION
First printing: January 1990
Second printing: November 1990
Third printing: April 1991
Code 9001

A joint publication in
The Jossey-Bass Education Series
and
The Jossey-Bass
Higher Education Series

Preface

What are public schools for in a democratic society? What *should* they be for, and for whom? Whose interests are served and whose *should* be served in a system of compulsory education? What is the nature of the relationship between the interests of the individual, the family, the community, the state, and society? Are there reasoned answers to these and like questions, or is there just an assortment of value positions, each as "good" as the other? Or, to put it another way, are there not fundamental normative positions derived from moral and ethical argument that serve to ground appropriate answers to crucial educational questions such as these?

These questions and more are the subject of inquiry in *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*. The chapter authors are all agreed that the answer to the last question is yes, and their arguments, taken as a whole, spin a web of normative intrigue from the reconceptualization and reconstruction of professionalism in teaching, to the proper role and function of American public education, to the inherent moral and ethical relationship between those who teach and those who are taught.

But why a book of this nature at this time? Questions about virtue and moral character—not only of individuals but of institutions—were perhaps more central to academic and public conversation several decades ago than they are now. When it comes to institutions of higher education, there appears to be an increasing tendency to label such matters "purely philosophical" and relegate them to esoteric niches in the graduate curriculum. Many educators and much of the community generally have come to eschew discussion of all matters moral and ethical concerning public schooling,

preferring to focus instead on literacy and numeracy (as if such decisions did not rely on normative argument).

Teaching the young has moral dimensions, however, simply because education—a deliberate effort to develop values and sensibilities as well as skills—is a moral endeavor. The teacher's first responsibilities are to those being taught.

And teaching the young in schools adds dimensions to this moral responsibility, which teachers share with parents. All cultures seek to ensure that the young will learn whatever values, rituals, skills, and modes of behavior are deemed to be in the best interests of the group or the whole. Various formal, informal, and nonformal educative means are established to effect this enculturation. In the United States, this is done primarily through a system of compulsory schooling that most children enter at the age of five or six. Until the twentieth century, the goals set for this system had far more to do with educating the young for economic and civic responsibility than with educating them for personal development and freedom.

This charge to schools, in a system of compulsory attendance, enormously compounds the moral responsibilities of teachers, as the chapters of this book reveal. The lives of public school teachers, in particular, would be simplified if the fit between parents' expectations and state directives to schools were neat. Schools and the people in them are caught up in a host of contradictions and the inevitable conflicts between individual and group interests and well-being. One would hope that teachers and administrators are well prepared to deal with these contradictions and conflicts in steadfastly fulfilling their educational mission. Unfortunately, they are not.

Background

This book grew out of a comprehensive study of conditions and circumstances pertaining to the education of educators in the United States. In 1985, the book's editors created the Center for Educational Renewal in the College of Education at the University of Washington, with the aim of bringing about renewal in both schools and the programs that prepare teachers for them. Although

extensive research into schools had already provided ample evidence of their problems and shortcomings, there was no comparable body of data about the education of teachers and school principals. We set out to ameliorate this situation through the Study of the Education of Educators.

Part of our work involved us in an examination of the education of workers in professions such as law, medicine, architecture, and public health. At the same time, there was increasing interest among major actors in the educational reform movement in ensuring professional status for teachers and teaching. We noted that this interest focused almost exclusively on the special knowledge and technical skills likely to characterize "professionals"—and the successful demonstration of these on tests. Largely missing from the dialogue and from major reports was any reference to the moral dimensions of teaching and a profession of teaching. Simultaneously, both scholarly books and articles and popular media were revealing growing, deep concern over widespread moral decay in every aspect and at every level of our society. A rhetoric of educational reform centering almost exclusively on the instrumental role of schools in creating jobs and on the technical competence of teachers appeared to us to be at best shortsighted and at worst off the mark.

Initially, we viewed the moral imperatives of education and schooling as one of four major themes on which to build a teaching profession and from which to derive the components of teacher education programs. Then we came to see that moral imperatives pervade the whole. Recognized and taken into account, they provide greater strength to the several themes. If these imperatives are neglected and ignored, the whole is weakened to such a degree that teaching becomes an occupation recognized at most for its technical expertise but not granted the public esteem that professional status requires.

In the questions to be addressed in our surveys and interviews, we included several designed to reveal the degree of awareness and commitment to these moral responsibilities in colleges and universities preparing teachers. Our fears were confirmed. First of all, teaching in our elementary and secondary schools is demeaned because it is held in low regard on university campuses and, indeed,

in many schools and colleges of education. Relatively few teacher education programs offer courses addressing the role of the schools in a democratic society, the moral process of becoming humane, and some of the conflicts involved in squaring the educational needs of students with the special interests of the larger community. Few such programs are infused with a sense of moral mission. Further, only in a few of the settings we visited was there any structure designed to promote the inquiry that such a mission entails.

Given the general absence of the development of moral character as a goal of teacher education and the dominance of a behavioristic and technical approach to formal and informal socialization processes for those about to enter teaching, one would be surprised to find in schools ongoing dialogue and decision making in the moral domain.

Our discussions with students, faculty members, supervisors of student teachers, and others convinced us that our earlier decision to go ahead with this book was a good one. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations resulting from our study are soon to be reported in another volume, which will not include extensive explanation of what we mean by the moral dimensions of teaching. Yet these discussions revealed the necessity for elaboration. As Hugh Sockett points out in Chapter Seven, we lack the necessary vocabulary for moral discourse. *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*, along with a few other recently published works, is designed to provide educators and future educators with part of that vocabulary and particularly with a feeling of need and a desire to participate with colleagues in the necessary dialogue.

While first drafts of chapters were being completed, two of the editors of this volume had a unique opportunity to engage in a year-long moral dialogue with a group of prospective school principals in the context of a seminar. In planning the program, the faculty agreed on the moral dimensions of the principalship as a theme not only to integrate the whole but also to be addressed specifically and directly. Subsequent discussion in the seminar focused on the different chapters of this book as each became available.

Sockett's observation regarding the lack of a vocabulary for moral discourse was confirmed early on with this group of carefully

selected, experienced practitioners. At the outset, they found the issues to be intriguing and new—even somewhat foreign. Although they seemed to sense the significance and meaning of what they read, they had varying degrees of difficulty in expressing reactions to what the authors had written. Classes were organized according to the principle of distributed practice—that is, participants in the seminar had plenty of time to complete the readings over the two to three weeks between sessions. We were into the fourth session—that is, into the third month of the seminar—before a few members of the group began to contribute to the dialogue freely, comfortably, and with some passion. By the seventh month, almost all were connecting the readings and the discussions to situations that they were encountering in their apprenticeship roles in schools. While several still found the concepts to be awkward and not easy to convey in their own words, there was general agreement that the theme had been powerfully integrative.

The editors, all of whom took part in the visits and interviews at the teacher education settings, believe that what this group of experienced educators went through over a year should have begun in their initial teacher preparation programs. For them to have come so late to rigorous discourse about the moral dimensions of their work and profession is a serious indictment of the teacher education enterprise. In another volume, we will make recommendations designed to rectify this failing, discussing moral imperatives ranging from the responsibilities faced by a college or university in educating teachers to the responsibilities that must be assumed by the teacher education faculty. We hope that the ten chapters included in this book will prove useful, particularly to those educators who take our recommendations seriously.

Overview of the Contents

Chapters One through Four center on notions of profession and professionalization as applied to the occupation and act of teaching. John I. Goodlad opens the discussion in Chapter One with a consideration of the historical and political context in which we might view teaching as a moral matter, the multilayered nature of the teaching act, and the efforts to professionalize teaching. In

Chapter Two, Roger Soder decries the rhetorical grounding claimed by teachers in their professionalization attempts; he argues that claims based on the moral imperatives of teaching would be more accurate and more telling.

In Chapter Three, Barry L. Bull focuses on the relationships between teacher autonomy, licensing, freedom, and teaching as a public profession; he argues that freedom to teach the young is potentially self-defeating and risk-laden and that the office of the schoolteacher may thus legitimately be limited to those holding licenses, but he also argues that full professionalization of teaching is not justified. Gary D Fenstermacher, in Chapter Four, examines the basis for teacher professionalization claims and concludes that teaching is indeed a moral endeavor; he argues that teaching should avoid the hierarchical differentiation and distance from clients that characterize other professions.

The next five chapters shift the focus to the school and the classroom. In Chapter Five, Walter Feinberg addresses the moral responsibility of public schools from a historical and philosophical perspective and evaluates recent works that attempt to recapture a sense of the moral mission of American education. Kenneth A. Strike, in Chapter Six, directs our attention to the legal and moral responsibilities of teachers; in his discussion of the ethics of teaching, he addresses critically the central claims of the advocates of values clarification, as well as those of Lawrence Kohlberg and Nel Noddings. Hugh Sockett, in Chapter Seven, focuses on professional accountability, pointing up the tension between the need for public control and the need for professional autonomy; he suggests that such accountability be conceptualized as contingent on trust, public and professional partnership, and recognition of the moral agency of the teacher.

In Chapter Eight, Christopher M. Clark asks us to consider the relationship between the teacher and the taught in the classroom. He provides case descriptions to illuminate how decisions and actions with serious moral implications look and feel in context. Following along similar lines, Bruce R. Thomas, in Chapter Nine, discusses the moral universe of teaching through a presentation of three individual case studies and a consideration of the

meaning of the Eight-Year Study; ultimately, Thomas tells us, schools depend on the moral agency of the individual teacher.

In the final chapter, Chapter Ten, Kenneth A. Sirotnik posits that teaching has five ethical roots: inquiry; knowledge; competence; caring; and freedom, well-being, and social justice. Drawing on the previous nine chapters, as well as on findings from the Study of the Education of Educators, he reflects on the meaning and implications of the moral dimensions for schooling, teaching, and preparing to teach.

Seattle, Washington
December 1989

John I. Goodlad
Roger Soder
Kenneth A. Sirotnik

Acknowledgments

When it became apparent to us that the moral dimensions of teaching were to enter significantly into the design of a study of the education of educators, we sought the counsel of our colleague Donna H. Kerr. After deciding that the concepts warranted elaboration far beyond what would be possible in a report on the research, we drew up an outline of the major topics, themes, and perspectives to be included in this elaboration. Again we sought Kerr's advice—this time for the names of authors qualified to write chapters in a book on the subject. To her we extend our gratitude and appreciation. Our only regret is that her duties as vice-provost and director of planning for branch campuses (combined with other professorial responsibilities) at the University of Washington prevented her from preparing the chapter we wanted her to write.

All of the authors of the chapters in this volume were extraordinarily receptive to our suggestions regarding first drafts, some of which resulted in substantial rewriting. Best of all, they met the deadlines set for each stage of production. We express to them all our deep gratitude.

The contributing authors probably would have accepted our invitation with considerable enthusiasm even had there been no financial inducements. However, we did not have to put them to this test. We are grateful to the MacArthur Foundation for the grant that covered all costs and to Peter Gerber of the foundation for his recognition and support of this undertaking.

James I. Doi, now dean emeritus of the College of Education at the University of Washington, and Richard L. Andrews, then head of policy, governance, and administration of the college (now dean of the College of Education at the University of Wyoming),

vastly eased the process of creating the Center for Educational Renewal and steadfastly supported its work. To them and to our hard-working, congenial colleagues in the center who have contributed in various ways to this book, we express thanks and appreciation. Special thanks go to Paula McMannon, who worked closely with the authors in keeping the work on schedule, and to Jordis Young for her superb editing of the final manuscript.

J.I.G.
R.S.
K.A.S.

The Editors

John I. Goodlad is professor of education and director of the Center for Educational Renewal, University of Washington. Born in Canada, he has taught at all levels, from kindergarten through graduate school. He served from 1967 to 1983 as dean of the Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles. He holds a B.A. degree (1945) in history and an M.A. degree (1946) in history and education, both from the University of British Columbia; a Ph.D. degree (1949) from the University of Chicago in education; and honorary degrees from nine universities in Canada and the United States.

Goodlad's research interests are in educational change and improvement and have been reported in more than twenty books and hundreds of other publications. An extensive study of schooling resulted in *A Place Called School* (1984). A subsequent comprehensive study of the education of educators is in press.

Roger Soder is senior researcher, Center for Educational Renewal, University of Washington. He attended the University of Chicago and did graduate work at the University of Washington. His sustained inquiry into an array of professions has brought to the center's work a useful perspective on the education of educators. Soder's research interests continue to focus on the ethics and politics of rhetoric.

Kenneth A. Sirotnik is professor and chair of the Area of Policy, Governance, and Administration, College of Education, University of Washington. Previously, he spent a number of years as senior research associate in the Graduate School of Education at the

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), teaching, writing, and participating in many educational research studies. Sirotnik's interests and publications range from topics in measurement, statistics, evaluation, and technology to issues of educational policy and local school improvement and change.

Sirotnik received his B.A. degree (1964) in mathematics, M.A. degrees (1966 and 1967) in measurement and statistics—the first in the field of education and the second in psychology—and his Ph.D. degree (1969) in education measurement, statistics, and evaluation, all from UCLA.

The Contributors

Barry L. Bull is associate professor of philosophy of education at the University of Minnesota. He received both his B.A. degree (1969) from Yale University and his M.A. degree (1970) from the University of Virginia in English, his M.A.T. degree (1972) from the University of Idaho in education, and his Ph.D. degree (1979) from Cornell University in philosophy of education. He has also worked in state government and as an education policy consultant. His articles have appeared in such journals as *Teachers College Record, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis,* and *Educational Theory.* His current research interests are in the ethics of teaching, teacher education, and multicultural education.

Christopher M. Clark is professor of education in the department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education at Michigan State University. His professional interests and publications include research on teacher thinking, teacher professional development, and the relationship between research and practice. He is the recipient of the Palmer O. Johnson Award for empirical research (1979) and the Interpretive Scholarship Award (1987), both from the American Educational Research Association, and of a Spencer Fellowship from the National Academy of Education (1979–1984). He received his B.S. degree (1963) from Villanova University in social studies and his M.A. (1972) and Ph.D. (1976) degrees from Stanford University in psychological studies in education.

Walter Feinberg is professor of philosophy of education and educational policy studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana. He

received his B.A. (1960), M.A. (1962), and Ph.D. (1966) degrees from Boston University in philosophy.

Feinberg's main interest is the relationship between school and society. His books include *Reason and Rhetoric: The Intellectual Foundations of Twentieth Century Educational Reform* (1974), *Knowledge and Values in Social and Educational Research* (1982, with Eric Bredo), *Understanding Education* (1983), and *Schools and Society* (1983, with Jonas Soltis).

Feinberg has served as the president of both the American Educational Studies Association (1978) and the Philosophy of Education Society (1988–89).

Gary D Fenstermacher is dean of the College of Education at the University of Arizona and professor of educational foundations. He received his B.A. degree (1961) in political science and his Ph.D. degree (1969) in philosophy and education, both from Cornell University. From 1968 to 1977, he served as head of the program in history and philosophy of education at the UCLA Graduate School of Education; from 1977 to 1985, he served as professor of educational foundations at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. His research interests include the philosophy of research on teaching, teacher education, and educational policy analysis.

Hugh Sockett is research professor and director of the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education at George Mason University. His main research activities are in the philosophical aspects of accountability and professionalism, in institutional development, and in moral education. He received his B.A. degree (1959) from University of Oxford in modern history and his M.A. (1967) and Ph.D. (1974) degrees from the University of London in philosophy of education.

Kenneth A. Strike is professor of philosophy of education at Cornell University. He holds a B.A. degree (1965) from Wheaton College in philosophy, an M.A. degree (1967) from Northwestern University in philosophy, and a Ph.D. degree (1968) from Northwestern University in philosophy of education.