



Sticks, Stones, and Ideology: The Discourse of Reform in Teacher Education

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Many highly politicized debates about reforming teacher education are embedded within two larger national agendas: the agenda to professionalize teaching and teacher education, which is linked to the K–12 standards movement, and the movement to deregulate teacher preparation, which aims to dismantle teacher education institutions and break up the monopoly of the profession. In this article, the authors analyze how these two agendas are publicly constructed, critiqued, and debated, drawing on public documents from each side and using the language and arguments of the advocates themselves. The authors argue that, despite very different agendas, the discourse of both deregulation and professionalization revolves rhetorically around the establishment of three interrelated warrants, which legitimize certain policies and undermine others. Taken together, what Cochran-Smith and Fries label “the evidentiary warrant,” “the political warrant,” and “the accountability warrant,” are intended by advocates of competing agendas to add up to “common sense” about how to improve the quality of the nation’s teachers. The authors conclude that in order to understand the politics of teacher education and the complexities of competing reform agendas, their underlying ideals, ideologies, and values must be debated along with and in relation to “the evidence” about teacher quality.

Public critiques of teachers and teacher education are not new on the educational scene, nor are scholarly debates within the profession. Arguably, however, there have never before been such blistering media commentaries and such highly politicized battles about teacher education as those that have dominated the public discourse and fueled legislative reforms at the state and federal levels during the last five years or so. Many aspects of these debates can be understood as part of two much larger debates about school reform, particularly two larger national agendas, which are overlapping in certain ways but simultaneously competing and even contradictory in many others (Apple, 2000, 2001; Cochran-Smith, 2001a, 2001b; Earley, 2000).

The agenda to *professionalize* teaching and teacher education, which is linked to the K–12 curriculum standards movement, has been spear-headed by Linda Darling-Hammond and the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) and forwarded through the joint efforts of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Na-

tional Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) (Gallagher & Bailey, 2000). These projects reflect a broad-based effort to develop a consistent approach to teacher education nationwide based on high standards for the initial preparation, licensing, and certification of teachers. Supported by foundations including the Carnegie Corporation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Ford Foundation, and the DeWitt Wallace Reader’s Digest Fund, proponents of professionalization advocate standards-based teacher preparation and professional development as well as teacher assessments based on performance across the professional lifespan. In direct opposition to the professionalization agenda, however, is the well-publicized movement to *deregulate* teacher preparation by dismantling teacher education institutions and breaking up the monopoly that the profession has “too long” enjoyed. Supported by conservative political groups and private foundations including the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, the Heritage Foundation, the Pioneer Institute, and the Manhattan Institute, the deregulation agenda begins with the premise that the requirements of state licensing agencies and schools of education are unnecessary hurdles that keep bright young people out of teaching and focus on social goals rather than academic achievement. Advocates of deregulation push for alternate routes into teaching and high stakes teacher tests as the major gatekeeper for the profession.

In this paper we look closely at how the discourse of these two competing agendas is being publicly constructed, critiqued, and debated. Our intention here is not to determine which agenda is “right” or to reveal the “true” underlying motives of the proponents of either one.¹ Rather, we offer an analysis of the way each constructs its own arguments as well as how each critiques the positions of the other side, using the language of these groups themselves and quoting from published articles and papers as well as other public documents. We argue that sorting out contradictory assertions will not be accomplished simply through “unbiased” evaluations of “the evidence,” although efforts to do so are important and useful.² Instead, we suggest that it is also necessary to unpack the values and politics in which these viewpoints are embedded including their differing notions of evidence, fairness, results, progress, public benefit, the American way, and other key ideas. We suggest that although proponents of each agenda use “ideology” and other value-laden terms as pejoratives to critique the other, both agendas are themselves ideological in the sense that they are driven by ideas, ideals, values, and assumptions about the purposes of schooling, the social and economic future of the nation, and the role of public education in a democratic society. We caution that unless underlying ideologies

and values are debated along with and in relation to “the evidence” about teacher quality, we will make little progress in understanding the discourse of reform and the competing agendas that currently dominate the politics of teacher education.

Common Sense about Teacher Education Reform: Three Warrants for Action

Discourse analysis is often used to examine how “different versions of the world” are produced through texts and talk (Silverman, 2000, p. 826). To prepare this analysis, we gathered a group of public policy documents, scholarly articles, and transcriptions of public talk in order to analyze how the discourse of two national agendas for teacher education is being constructed and debated, some of which are listed in Table 1.³ We concluded that the discourse revolves around three major warrants.

The term “warrant” is derived from the Germanic verb, *war-jan* or *werjan*, meaning to protect or defend but also to trust. In Old German, the word was used to refer to a commission or written document that gave one person or group the authority to do something, especially to pay another person, but also authorized the latter to receive money or other consideration. We use “warrant” in this paper in the more general sense to signify justifica-

tion, authority, or “reasonable grounds,” particularly those that are established for some act, course of action, statement, or belief. We suggest that the discourse of both professionalization and deregulation of teacher education revolves around the establishment of three warrants that legitimize a particular set of policy implications and at the same time undermine competing policies: *the evidentiary warrant*, *the political warrant*, and *the accountability warrant*. Taken together, these three warrants are used to add up to “common sense” about what should be done to improve the quality of the nation’s teachers (See Figure 1).

The Evidentiary Warrant: Empirical Versus Ideological Positions

The professionalization-deregulation debate has been carried on in scholarly journals as well as in the media and in many policy and professional arenas. In the scholarly literature, the focus has been primarily on “what the evidence actually says” about teacher education based on meta-analyses and/or syntheses of previous and current empirical work. The point is to make policy recommendations that, when implemented, will yield value-added investments of state and/or federal resources. In most of the scholarly debates, the emphasis is on establishing *the evidentiary*

Table 1. Some Key Documents That Speak to Each Agenda for Reforming Teacher Education

The Professionalization Agenda			The De-Regulation Agenda		
Author	Copyright Date	Title	Author	Copyright Date	Title
NCTAF	1996	What matters most: Teaching for America’s future	Goldhaber & Brewer	1996	Evaluating the effect of teacher degree level on educational performance
NCTAF	1997	Doing what matters most	Farkas & Johnson	1997	Different drummers
Wise	1998	Assuring quality for the nation’s teachers	Ballou & Podgursky	1997	Reforming teacher training and recruitment
Darling-Hammond	2000	Teacher quality and student achievement	Ballou & Podgursky	1999	Teacher training and licensure: A layman’s guide
NCATE	1999	ETS study shows NCATE makes a difference	Finn, Kanstoroom, & Petrilli	1999	The quest for better teachers: Grading the states
Wise	1999	Standards or no standards? Teacher quality in the 21st century	Fordham Foundation	1999	The teachers we need and how to get more of them
Darling-Hammond & Sykes	1999	Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice	Kanstoroom	1999	Boosting teacher quality: A common-sense proposal
Wise & Leibbrand	2000	Standards and teacher quality: Entering the new millennium	Stotsky	1999	Losing our language
Earlye	2000	Finding the culprit	Wilcox & Finn	1999	Board games
Schalock & Imig	2000	Shulman’s union of insufficiencies +7	Kanstoroom & Finn	1999	Better teachers, better schools
Darling-Hammond	2000	Reforming teacher preparation and licensing: Debating the evidence	Ballou & Podgursky	2000	Reforming teacher preparation and licensing: What is the evidence?
			Finn & Petrilli	2000	The state of state standards 2000



FIGURE 1. *Three warrants that have shaped the debate about teacher education reform.*

warrant, a term often used in qualitative research to refer to the validity of analyses based on repeated testing of confirming and disconfirming evidence (Erickson, 1986). We use the term here more generally to refer to the set of justifications and grounds that are offered for conclusions and policy recommendations based “entirely” (or at least purported to rest entirely) on empirical data, evidence, and facts.

Emblematic of the debate between those who favor professionalization and those who favor deregulation is the ongoing controversy about the impact of teacher quality on the learning of K–12 students. Speaking for NCTAF, for example, Darling-Hammond (1998) has argued that a growing body of research “appears to confirm” that teacher knowledge and teacher expertise are significant influences on student learning. In fact, Darling-Hammond, the NCTAF, and other proponents of increased professionalism for teachers and teacher educators assert that the evidence suggests that teacher education “matters most” in educational reform (Darling-Hammond, 2000b; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; NCTAF, 1996, 1997):

The findings of both the qualitative and quantitative analyses suggest that policy investments in the quality of teachers may be related to improvements in student performance. Quantitative analyses indicate that measures of teacher preparation and certification are by far the strongest correlates of student achievement in reading and mathematics, both before and after controlling for student poverty and language status. . . . This analysis suggests that policies adopted by states regarding teacher education, licensing, hiring, and professional development may make an important difference in the qualifications and capacities that teachers bring to their work. (Darling-Hammond, 2000b, p. 1)

On the other hand, Dale Ballou and Michael Podgursky, economists whose analysis appears in the Fordham Foundation’s

monograph (Kanstaroom & Finn, 1999) on how to produce better teachers and better schools, conclude that teacher education doesn’t matter much at all:

[T]eacher ability appears to be much more a function of innate talents than the quality of education courses. Teachers themselves tell us that this is so. We come to similar conclusions when we examine the determinants of scores on teacher licensing examinations. Finally, teachers who enter through alternative certification programs seem to be at least as effective as those who completed traditional training, suggesting that training does not contribute very much to teaching performance, at least by comparison with other factors. (Ballou & Podgursky, 1999, p. 57)

The introduction to the Fordham Foundation’s monograph (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999) reiterates Ballou and Podgursky’s conclusion in no uncertain terms:

We are struck by the paucity of evidence linking inputs [courses taken, requirements met, time spent, and activities engaged in] with actual teacher effectiveness. In a meta-analysis of close to four hundred studies of the effect of various school resources on pupil achievement, very little connection was found between the degrees teachers had earned or the experience they possessed and how much their students learned. (p. 18)

Again it is useful to contrast this conclusion with Linda Darling-Hammond’s conclusion in NCTAF’s second report, *Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching* (1997):

Reviews of more than two hundred studies contradict the long-standing myths that ‘anyone can teach’ and that ‘teachers are born and not made.’ . . . [T]eachers who are fully prepared and certified in both their discipline and in education are more highly rated and are more successful with the students than are teachers without preparation, and those with greater training . . . are more effective than those with less. (p. 10)

Nowhere is the battle for the evidentiary warrant more clear than in the recent *Teachers College Record* exchange between Ballou and Podgursky and Darling-Hammond.⁴ In this blunt exchange, both parties go to some lengths to cast their own positions as “strictly” empirical and at the same time to question the empirical validity of the other’s position. Ballou and Podgursky (2000) directly attack the findings of NCTAF by asserting:

The commission overstates policy implications, ignoring critical limitations of the research. In many instances, the commission flatly misreports and misrepresents what these studies show. . . . Like its 1997 predecessor, the NCTAF’s latest report contains numerous errors and misrepresentations of the evidence. (p. 8)

[T]he commission’s statement that teacher qualifications account for 40% of the measured variance in student scores is flatly incorrect; indeed, it is a statistical solecism. (pp. 13–14)

Speaking for NCTAF, Darling-Hammond (2000a) emphatically refutes Ballou and Podgursky’s use of evidence as well as their conclusions. She claims:

In this volume of the *Teachers College Record*, Ballou and Podgursky go further to charge, falsely in each instance, that the Commission has misrepresented research data and findings. In the course of their argument, their critique itself misreports data, misrepresents the

Commission's statements and recommendations, and variously ignores and misconstrues the research evidence presented in support of the report's key findings. (p. 29)

In this contest to establish the evidentiary warrant, the point is to focus on facts established through standard quantitative research conventions for data collection and analysis. Each side endeavors to construct its own warrant but also to undermine the warrant of the other by pointing out in explicit detail where methodological errors have been made, where the data reported are incorrect or incomplete, and/or where faulty logic or reasoning have led to inaccuracies and errors about the nature or size of effects.

In this way, each side constructs its own case as if it were neutral, a-political, and value-free, based solely on the empirical and certified facts of the matter and not embedded within or related to a particular agenda that is political or ideological. In fact, it is clear from the discourse that neither side can afford to be cast as ideological. Each therefore implicitly (or explicitly) eschews the notion that there *is* an ideological basis to its position and uses the term as an epithet to cast aspersions on, undermine, and ultimately dismiss the position of the other. James Gee (1996) makes an intriguing argument along these lines in his volume on social linguistics and literacies, which is sub-titled "ideology in discourses." Gee points out that what he labels "Napoleon's move" was one of the great moments in the history of the term "ideology," a move that has become a classic rhetorical strategy for attacking views one does not like. Gee explains:

The Enlightenment philosophers had derived their views of what laws and governments ought to look like on the basis of a social theory of the mind, knowledge, and human beings. In attacking these philosophers, Napoleon used 'ideology' as a term of abuse for a social policy which was in part or in whole derived from a social theory in a conscious way. Napoleon disliked the Enlightenment philosophers' social theory and its conclusions because they conflicted with his interests and his pursuit of power. Rather than arguing against this theory by arguing for a rival theory of his own, he castigates it as abstract, impractical, and fanatical. In its place he substitutes, not another theory, but 'knowledge of the human heart and . . . the lessons of history' . . . which it just so happens Napoleon is in a position to know better than others and which just happens to support his policies. (p. 3)

As Gee points out, this move has been used ever since Napoleon to attack and dismiss social theories that conflict with one's own will to power and to suggest that one's opponent is an ideologue, operating within a closed system and unwilling to consider other points of view. Our analysis indicates that this strategy is evident in discussions—on both sides—of current policies related to teacher education.

We want to make it a point to note here that in our reading of the documents, the deregulationists are more likely to make Napoleon's move in their critiques of the professionalization agenda than vice versa. In our view, they are also more likely to be inflammatory in their remarks, casting aspersions not only on the positions they oppose but also on the professional integrity of their opponents. We believe this may be the case because the deregulation agenda for teacher education reform was presented oppositionally from the start, positioned to challenge the profes-

sionalization agenda and the likelihood that new professional "regulations" for teacher education would secure federal funds. In the written statements of the deregulationists, for example, a great deal of space is devoted to refuting the arguments of those who advocate professionalization relative to the space utilized to presenting the deregulation viewpoint. Despite these differences, however, debaters on both sides use Napoleon's move in order to cast their opponents' positions as ideological and their own as empirical.

Linda Darling-Hammond (2000a), for example, concludes that Ballou and Podgursky's "one-sided treatment of the Commission's proposals reflects the ideological lens they apply to their work" (p. 29). She comments on Ballou and Podgursky's critique of her use of NAEP data, which includes a discussion of whole language and phonics, with these words: "The teaching of reading should not be treated as an ideological question with one 'side' trying to debunk the other" (p. 41). And, finally, she attempts to capture the empirical warrant for her position by reiterating the veracity of her own analyses and dismissing the so-called empirical challenges Ballou and Podgursky pose by labeling them as political and ideological in the first place:

Charges of deliberate misrepresentation of data are very serious. Making such charges without ascertainment of sources and accurate rendering of claims may be acceptable in the political realm, but it violates the ethical norms of the research community. (p. 42)

On the other hand, in nearly all of their discussions of NCTAF's recommendations, Ballou and Podgursky assert that NCTAF's claims are ideologically rather than empirically driven. They are especially critical of the teaching methods taught in schools of education in the name of high standards, asserting that there is no knowledge base for pedagogical practice that is even remotely comparable to those of other professions, a situation that leads to large-scale practice based on poor ideas rather than evidence:

Poor ideas secure a following in part because the scientific foundation for pedagogical prescriptions is weak. However, ideology also plays a large role in shaping the views of educators, as shown by the influence of the constructivist theory of learning on the teaching practices endorsed by leading schools of education. . . . [T]eacher educators espouse pedagogical practices for ideological reasons rather than because the evidence indicates they best promote student learning. (Ballou & Podgursky, 1999, p. 40)

In statements like these intended to persuade the public (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999a, 1999b), the deregulationists repeatedly use Napoleon's move to dismiss the idea of professionalization.

One of the most provocative applications of Napoleon's move to dismiss a position *because* it was ideological occurred recently in an evaluation of teacher education programs in Colorado, as reported in the news media in the Denver area. As is true in many states across the country, Colorado has new and tighter regulations for teacher preparation, and all teacher education programs were required to be recertified by June, 2001, or else be shut down. Denver newspapers recently revealed that a report by the conservative "watchdog" organization, the National Association of Scholars (NAS), was commissioned by the Colorado Commission on

Higher Education to aid in these evaluations. The report's conclusions about teacher education at the University of Colorado at Boulder made headlines across the state. Note that Napoleon's move is front and center in this critique:

There are problems here that are so significant that a mere 'revision' is unlikely to correct them. Nothing short of a miraculous transformation can reverse the patently overt ideological proselytizing that goes on in the name of teacher education at CU [Boulder]. More than any other reviewed institution, CU's teacher education programs are the most politically correct and stridently committed to the social justice model. (Curtin, 2001)

The NAS report, authored by David Saxe, who was an original signer of the Fordham Foundation's manifesto, asserted explicitly that teacher education programs should be based on "objective" standards and "core knowledge" rather than on ideology. The Colorado brouhaha over this excoriating critique had partly to do with the fact that the existence of the NAS document was denied until newspapers uncovered it. Our point in this article, however, is that the critique used "ideology" as a damning pejorative in and of itself, in order to discredit the work of certain teacher education institutions and conclude that they should be shut down. The fact that David Saxe and other NAS members were signers of the Fordham's Foundation manifesto, which explicitly advocates deregulation in the first place, was not mentioned in newspaper accounts (Curtin, 2001; Langeland, 2001).

There is no question in the above examples that the evidentiary warrant is what is being contested. The battle is over which side will capture the right to be termed "empirical," while at the same time avoiding the deprecatory description, "ideological." As we have shown in some detail, the major players in the professionalization-deregulation debate jockey to establish the *evidentiary warrant* through three key strategies:

- providing convincing empirical evidence about the impact of teacher education,
- discrediting the evidence of the other side through methodological and/or logical critique of procedures for data collection and analysis,
- casting the other side as "simply" ideological and therefore readily able to be dismissed and/or ignored.

Interlocking with the evidentiary warrant is the *accountability warrant*, to which we turn in the next section.

The Accountability Warrant: Outcomes Versus Inputs

We use the term *accountability warrant* to mean a set of "reasonable grounds" for action based on outcomes, results, and outputs. Accountability is surely one of the most used (and over-used) terms in public discussions about schools and schooling. In the media, in public policy debates, and within the profession of teaching/teacher education itself, there is unprecedented emphasis on accountability, responsibility, and even liability for outcomes. In fact, we have argued elsewhere (Cochran-Smith, 2001a, 2001b) that "the outcomes question in teacher education" is currently driving the field and is, to a great extent, influencing policy and practice. In this paper, we use *the accountability warrant* to refer to the arguments posed on both sides of the professionalization-deregulation debate in order to demonstrate that recommended policies are justifiable and justified by the outcomes and results they produce.

The outcomes emphasis of the deregulation agenda is most clear in "The Teachers We Need and How to Get More of Them," a major statement of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation (1999a) presided over by Chester Finn and also connected to the Heritage Foundation, the Pioneer Institute, and the Manhattan Institute through interlocking boards of directors and senior associates. These groups are widely known for their government lobbies and their support of the privatization of education, including school reform strategies such as school choice, vouchers, and heavy reliance on high stakes testing for students and teachers. "The Teachers We Need" is the Fordham Foundation's "manifesto," a term used to announce explicitly a public statement of motives and goals. The document is signed by William Bennett, E.D. Hirsch, Diane Ravitch, James Peyser, and others, a veritable who's who of outspoken and conservative critics of education. The focus on accountability is crystal clear throughout:

The good news is that America is beginning to adopt a powerful, commonsensical strategy for school reform. It is the same approach that almost every successful modern enterprise has adopted to boost performance and productivity: set high standards for results to be achieved, identify clear indicators to measure progress towards those results, and be flexible and pluralistic about the means for reaching those results. This strategy in education is sometimes called 'standards-and-accountability'.

The bad news is that states and policy makers have turned away from this commonsensical approach when trying to increase the pool of well-qualified teachers. Instead of encouraging a results-oriented approach, many states and policy makers are demanding ever more regulation of inputs and processes. Other modern organizations have recognized that regulation of inputs and processes is ineffectual and often destructive. There is no reason to believe that it will be anything other than ineffectual as a strategy for addressing the teacher quality problem.

A better solution to the teacher quality problem is to simplify the entry and hiring process. Get rid of most hoops and hurdles. Instead of requiring a long list of courses and degrees, test future teachers for their knowledge and skills. Allow principals to hire the teachers they need. Focus *relentlessly on results*, on whether students are learning. (pp. 1–2, emphasis added)

In their manifesto, the Fordham Foundation does not simply "focus relentlessly" on results. It also focuses relentlessly on discrediting the concept of professionalization by suggesting that it does *not* focus on results, but instead emphasizes inputs, or what Fordham calls "hoops and hurdles" in the form of courses, degrees, and certification requirements to the exclusion of results and accountability. Positioning deregulation in opposition to professionalization vis-a-vis the outcomes issue is a repeated rhetorical move in Fordham Foundation and related documents, as this excerpt indicates:

Today, in response to widening concern about teacher quality, most states are tightening the regulatory vise, making it harder to enter teaching by piling on new requirements for certification. On the advice of some highly visible education groups such as the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, these states are also attempting to 'professionalize' teacher preparation by raising admissions criteria for training programs and ensuring that these programs are all accredited by the National Council for the Ac-

creditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). That organization is currently toughening its own standards to make accredited programs longer, more demanding, and more focused on avant-garde education ideas and social and political concerns. (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999a, p. 4)

Contrary to the way they are characterized by the deregulationists, however, those who favor professionalization as a strategy for educational reform *do* claim to be concerned about accountability and outcomes. They take a very different tack, however, by defining outcomes in terms of quality of teaching, high standards for teacher development, and producing teachers who are able to teach so all students learn to high standards. This perspective is very clear in Gary Sykes's introduction to *Teaching as the Learning Profession: Handbook of Policy and Practice* (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999), the chapters of which were solicited as background analyses for NCTAF's initial work. Sykes's introduction illustrates how proponents of professionalization construct the accountability warrant:

This book is based on a deceptively simple premise coupled with a hypothesis. The premise is that the improvement of American education relies centrally on the development of a highly qualified teacher workforce imbued with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to encourage exceptional learning in all the nation's students. The related hypothesis is that the key to producing well-qualified teachers is to greatly enhance their professional learning across the continuum of a career in the classroom. We underline this hypothesis in the book's title. Teaching par excellence must become the learning profession in order to stimulate greater learning among students. (p. xv)

Interestingly those who advocate professionalization are making a claim for accountability that is not unlike the claim made by the deregulationists, at least not on the surface. For example, Arthur Wise and other NCATE representatives tout their new standards as squarely outcomes-based. In fact, in recent articles and symposia, NCATE 2000 standards were described as a "paradigm shift from inputs to outputs" (Imig et al., 2000), a "bold . . . and daring . . . plunge into the world of performance assessment and performance standards" (Schalock & Imig, 2000, p. 4), and a "major shift from curriculum-oriented standards to performance-based standards that focus on what teacher candidates know and are able to do" (Wise, 1999, p. 5).

NCATE's former standards were described by critics—especially the deregulationists—as merely "counting courses" or focusing on curriculum content instead of paying attention to results. Wise (1999) points out that NCATE's new system will require schools of education to provide performance evidence of candidate competence, including state licensing examination results as well as summarized and sampled performance evidence of candidates' knowledge and skill. The rationale for the first major section of the new NCATE standards, "Candidate Performance," makes this clear:

The public expects that teachers of their children have sufficient knowledge of content to help all students meet standards for P-12 education. The teaching profession itself believes that student learning is the goal of teaching. NCATE's Standard 1 reinforces the importance of this goal by requiring that teacher candidates know their content or subject matter, can teach, and can help all students

learn . . . Candidates for all professional education roles are expected to demonstrate positive effects on student learning. Teachers and teacher candidates should have student learning as the focus of their work. . . . Primary documentation for this standard will be candidates' performance data prepared for national and/or state review . . . [including] performance assessment data collected internally by the unit and external data such as results on state licensing tests and other assessments. (NCATE, 1999, pp. 7-9)

The new NCATE standards are in keeping with recent developments in specialized accreditation organizations more generally, where the emphasis has shifted from inputs to outcomes measures (Dill, 1998). As Murray (2000) and others have pointed out, this is part of a larger trend in higher education, what Graham, Lyman, and Trow (1995) refer to as an "increasing clamor to apply quantitative measures of academic outcomes to guarantee educational quality for consumers" (p. 7).

It is not surprising that proponents of both deregulation and professionalization are preoccupied with outcomes. This is a seductive idea that has captured public sentiment, and politicians have seized on it in election after election. The power of the outcomes idea, of course, is its "common sense." Who would deny that the public has a right to expect clear connections and links among how teachers are prepared, how teachers teach, and what students learn? Closer examination of the discourse, however, reveals that although parties on both sides of the debate use the language of outcomes and results to establish the accountability warrant, they actually mean quite different things by these words.

Spokespersons for the deregulation agenda mean "outcomes" in a narrow sense: students' scores on mandatory high-stakes standardized tests. In their published materials, they frequently refer to value-added assessments, such as the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (Sanders & Horn, 1994, 1998), because they allow for the direct incorporation of outcomes data (student achievement test scores) into evaluations of individual teachers and schools. The deregulationists' single-minded focus on results is crystal clear in Marci Kanstoroom's (1999) testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. In this testimony, Kanstoroom, Research Director at the Fordham Foundation and Research Fellow at the Manhattan Institute, makes the outcomes point at the same time that she discredits the "inputs" focus of professionalization:

[F]ocusing on retooling existing teachers through professional development is itself an inadequate strategy for addressing the teacher quality problem. So too is focusing on pre-service training of future teachers in colleges of education. . . . Increasing training in schools of education and professional development workshops . . . [is] unlikely to make much of a dent in today's dual crisis of teacher quality and quantity.

What principles might guide the Congress in seeking to ensure that every child in America has outstanding teachers? Start by focusing on the one vital result, student achievement. Insist that anything you do for teachers have a payoff in student learning, and insist that states focus their teacher quality policies on this as well, at least insofar as federal dollars are involved.

Your most valuable role in this ESEA cycle might well be to foster an atmosphere of responsible experimentation while insisting

that everything supported with federal funds be judged by evidence that it yields higher pupil achievement. (pp. 1–2)

Likewise, in a critique of the work of the NBPTS, Wilcox and Finn (1999) zero in on results of standardized tests and at the same time discredit teachers' learning as an outcome worthy of attention:

The [NBPTS] professional teaching standards are, at bottom, unconnected to hard evidence that they correlate with successful teaching. The Board's enchantment with today's regnant educational orthodoxies has left it with vague, therapeutic standards and a subjective assessment process that do not inspire confidence in its imprimatur.

Board certification focuses on input measures that are inconsistent with [states'] emphases on student and school results . . . teachers whose students show the most improvement on the test should be the ones rewarded, not the National Board certified teachers since there is no evidence that their students do better academically. The Board has made little effort to link its credentialing process to gains in pupil achievement—the holy grail of educational reform. (pp. 181, 188)

Language like “the holy grail” of educational reform and a “relentless focus on results” is intended to signal to the public and to policy makers that the deregulation agenda is a “get tough” approach based on measurable outcomes that are clear and precise while the professionalization agenda is soft and subjective. Although deregulationists are interested in accountability systems that are more complex than mere test scores, these are clearly the linchpin in such systems: “The proper incentives are created by results-based accountability systems in which states independently measure student achievement, issue public report cards on schools, reward successful schools, and intervene in or use sanctions against failing schools” (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999, p. 8).

As we have mentioned above, however, it is important to note that spokespersons for the professionalization approach to educational reform *do* emphasize outcomes. Their notion of outcomes, however, stands in stark opposition to the test-score approach of the deregulationists. From the perspective of professionalization, outcomes are defined primarily in terms of teachers' professional performance, including the alignment of teaching practice with curriculum standards, with teachers' ability to have a positive impact on students' learning, and with teachers' skill at reflecting on and learning from their own work. Constructing teacher education outcomes in terms of the professional performances of teachers and teacher candidates begins with the highly-contested premise that there *is* a knowledge base in teaching and teacher education based on rigorous research and professional consensus about what it is that teachers and teacher candidates should know and be able to do (Yinger, 1999). The notion of professional performance as outcome is a central facet of partnerships among accrediting, licensing, and certification agencies across states and the nation (Wise, 1996). Performance as outcome is also behind the move in some states to require teacher education institutions to seek national certification and/or certification by new state level professional practices boards.

The notion of professional performance as outcome is particularly clear in “NCATE, INTASC, and National Board Standards,”

one of the appendices of *Doing What Matters Most*, NCTAF's (1997) second report:

Until recently, teaching has not had a coherent set of standards created by the profession to guide education, entry into the field, and ongoing practice. In the last ten years, such standards have been created by three bodies working together to improve teaching. . . . These standards are aligned with one another and with new standards for student learning in the disciplines, and they are tied to performance-based assessments of teacher knowledge and skill. The assessments look at evidence of teaching ability (videotapes of teaching, lesson plans, student work, analyses of curriculum) in the context of real teaching. States are just beginning to incorporate these standards into their policies governing teaching. (p. 63)

All three sets of standards (NCATE, INTASC, and NBPTS) stress the idea that teachers must have knowledge of subject matter as well as pedagogy and also be able to teach so that all children can achieve high learning standards in all the subject areas. Although the latter is consistent with the outcomes focus of the deregulationists, advocates of professionalization also stress the importance of teachers' working with diverse learners, meeting the special learning needs of students, providing positive learning environments, collaborating with parents and colleagues, thinking systematically and critically about practice, and functioning as members of learning communities. This accountability warrant is based on outcomes defined in part as professional performance, which is very different from the bottom-line approach of the deregulationists who see the production of “well-prepared” teachers as an intermediate outcome at best, not important in and of itself, but only if it functions as a means to produce student performance outcomes. Those who advocate the professionalization agenda oppose high stakes tests as the sole measure of learning. Instead, they focus on relationships between student learning and teacher learning, with outcomes defined as teaching performance that supports student learning (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999).

As we have said, part of the way both deregulationists and advocates of professionalization construct the accountability warrant is to discredit the approach of the other side. In her debate with Chester Finn, for example, Linda Darling-Hammond (ECS, 2000) comments explicitly on why the deregulationist approach—with accountability defined solely in terms of student test scores and after the fact (i.e., firing ineffective teachers who don't boost test scores)—is simply untenable, while, from her perspective, the approach of the NCTAF is actually more directly focused on accountability:

[NCTAF] aims at professional accountability—trying to figure out how to hold the system and teachers accountable for getting and using knowledge about what works. . . . The Fordham approach . . . doesn't have a strategy for dealing with the big misassignment problems that occur across the country. The Fordham approach also relies on people's good instincts about teaching and looks for evidence of quality based on student test score gains after hiring. . . . There is the idea of just leaving it up to school districts who the best-qualified candidates are. . . . The other issue is that poor and minority children get the least qualified teachers in virtually every context.

These excerpts suggest that proponents of professionalization construct accountability as quality of teaching, teacher qualifications, and systematic teacher development in line with high

standards for curriculum and pedagogy reached through research and professional consensus. Such well-qualified and developed teachers are to be available to *all* students including those who attend the most poor and neglected schools.

The examples in the preceding section make it clear that the accountability warrant is highly contested. The battle is over which side gets to call itself the most accountable, reasonable, and attentive to responsible outcomes. A close look at the discourse reveals that the rhetorical strategies employed in the debate about accountability—on both sides—are similar to those used in debating the evidence:

- using the language of outcomes, results, responsibility, and accountability (even though defined differently),
- suggesting that the other side is really *not* about outcomes but is instead *either* about inputs (the deregulationists' characterization of the professionalization agenda) *or* about outcomes defined so narrowly that they are dysfunctional (the profession's characterization of the deregulation agenda),
- casting the other negatively, *either* as favoring rigidity, lock-step procedures, and standardization (the deregulationists' characterization of professionalization) *or* favoring loopholes and leaving good teaching to chance rather than to professional knowledge and qualifications (the profession's characterization of deregulation).

The *political warrant*, which we describe next, interacts and in a sense interlocks with both the *evidentiary warrant* and the *accountability warrant*.

The Political Warrant: Public Good Versus Private Good

In this article, we use the term, *political warrant*, to refer to the ways proponents of competing policies in teacher education justify their positions in terms of service to the citizenry and of larger conceptions about the purposes of schools and schooling in modern American society. Once again what is most intriguing here is that proponents of both deregulation and professionalization use some of the same language and, at least on the surface, claim some of the same things. They argue, assert, and endeavor to persuade others that they are in favor of an inclusive agenda intended to promote a civil society and serve the good of the public *writ large*. At the same time, they discredit their opponents because they advocate a private agenda for the good of a privileged few. Of course the way in which the two sides construe “public good” and “private good” is diametrically opposed.

The “public good” emphasis of the deregulationists is clear in Chester Finn's comments in the Finn–Darling–Hammond (ECS, 2000) debate:

[A] better way to get good teachers . . . is in fact to open the doors and welcome lots more people into American public schools through lots more pathways. . . . I think what this subject [quality teaching] needs today, and some of you may think this uncharacteristic of me, is humility, open-mindedness, pluralism, and experimentalism. . . . This is not an undertaking that is ripe for dogmatism, certainty, monopoly, or ‘one size fits all’ policies. . . . This is a plea for freedom, devolution, pluralism, and diversity, all centered on the concept of school accountability.

This last comment makes it clear how the political warrant—with its highly evocative language of freedom, pluralism, and open-mindedness—is linked rhetorically to the accountability

warrant with its emphasis on the bottom line of students' test scores. The Fordham Foundation's manifesto (1999a) is even clearer on this point:

The teaching profession should be deregulated. Entry into it should be widened, and personnel decisions should be decentralized to the school level, the teachers' actual workplace. Freeing up those decisions only makes sense, however[,] when schools are held accountable for their performance. . . . In private schools today—and in most charter school programs—schools are held accountable by the marketplace while hiring decisions are made at the building level. Public schools, too, should be accountable in this manner.

For principals (or other education leaders) to manage their personnel in such a way as to shoulder accountability for school results, but not only be free to select from a wide range of candidates, they must also have the flexibility to compensate those they hire according to marketplace conditions (and individual performance), and they must be able to remove those who do not produce satisfactory results. (pp. 8–9)

The argument is basically this: In order to improve teaching and quality of life for the public *writ large*, what schools need more than anything else is the freedom and flexibility to open their doors and thus recruit, hire, and keep all teachers who can “up” students' test scores regardless of their credentials (or lack thereof). From this perspective, the “free market” represents the ultimate “freedom” for American society. Choice, flexibility, pluralism, innovation, and experimentation are the results of educational reform when market forces are allowed to prevail. Charter schools and private schools are the exemplars for reform in public schools. This rhetoric of the deregulationists is intended to persuade the public that disciplining teacher education (and schooling in general) according to the forces of the free market is the best way to serve the American citizenry and produce the greatest good for a civil society, including the production of better teachers.

What is also clear in the public discourse of the deregulationists is their simultaneous effort to construct proponents of the professionalization agenda as members of a private club. In Wilcox's critique of the National Board (Wilcox & Finn, 1999), for example, as in other Fordham Foundation documents that begin with background information about the NCTAF and its affiliates, the point is repeatedly made that NCTAF was funded by the Carnegie Corporation, the Dewitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund, the Ford Foundation, and the Pew Charitable Trusts, all private foundations. Ballou and Podgursky consistently characterize the commission as a “private body” with representatives from “various educational interest groups” (including the AFT, NEA, NCATE, and others), all of whom they paint with the same brush: “Regulatory authority empowers these organizations to act in ways that serve private rather than public interests, a significant public policy problem that students of regulation have long recognized” (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000, p. 7). Professionalization is portrayed as an ill-advised narrow approach to educational reform, designed to provide tighter “vice-like” controls that limit and “yoke” individual school leaders who, if freed up, could use their best innovative strategies and approaches to reach high learning standards for all students.

Another strategy of the deregulationists is to portray proponents of professionalization as motivated by private interests out of touch and out of sync with the views of “the public.” A dramatic example is found in The Public Agenda’s *Different Drummers: How Teachers of Teachers View Public Education* (Farkas & Johnson, 1997), a survey of some 900 professors of education. Although the Public Agenda is described as a “nonpartisan public opinion research and citizens’ education organization” (Public Agenda, 2001), the preparation and publication of *Different Drummers* was in fact funded by the Fordham Foundation. The report finds that teacher educators have an enduring commitment to public education as an “almost sacred democratic institution” (Farkas & Johnson, 1997, p. 24) intended to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population and necessary for civic participation in a democratic society. The report concludes that teacher education professors have a liberal education agenda that de-emphasizes teaching as the direct transmission of knowledge, de-emphasizes the “canon” of western knowledge, and de-emphasizes memorization and right answers. Instead, the report finds that teacher educators believe that enabling all students to be “life-long learners” is the “absolutely essential” (p. 9) goal of teacher education. They question standardized tests as the conclusive indicator of achievement, place a low priority on order and discipline, and want prospective teachers to foster communities of learners where diverse groups of students explore questions rather than reproduce rote information.

Teacher educators’ vision of education, the Public Agenda report concludes, is fundamentally out of touch with the views of “the public” and of “public school teachers” whose priorities are discipline and order, punctuality and politeness, and learning basic factual material within a well-managed environment. In short, the report suggests that teacher educators are “idealists” who pay scant attention to the agenda of “real” parents and “real” teachers. What is perhaps even worse, the report suggests, is that teacher educators stand by their commitment to public education even in the face of their own admitted uncertainty about how to remedy the situation.

Sandra Stotsky, a Fordham Foundation standards reviewer as well as an original signatory of its manifesto, is the author of *Losing Our Language: How Multicultural Classroom Instruction Is Undermining Our Children’s Ability to Read, Write, and Reason* (1999), a book with themes similar to those mentioned above. In it, Stotsky asserts that elementary school instructional reading materials have been drastically altered over the last thirty years as part of “an approach to curriculum development called multiculturalism,” which, she claims, has “a clear race-based political agenda, one that is anti-civic and anti-Western in its orientation” (p. 7). Stotsky suggests that although inclusion and diversity are the goals that advocates of multicultural education present publicly, their more subtle and insidious agenda is anti-White, anti-capitalistic, and anti-intellectual:

Schools of education loudly broadcast to their students a definition of diversity that excludes European ethnic groups, a new purpose for a multicultural education, and the reasons why this purpose should guide the shape and content of the curriculum. (p. 9)

Stotsky concludes that teacher education is a “progressive” force that is harming the interests of the public and ultimately undermining students’ achievement.

Like the deregulationists, proponents of the professionalization agenda also construct *the political warrant* in terms of the public good and greater service to all members of the citizenry. The surface similarity of their terms, however, is the only similarity along these lines. The fundamental position of professionalization is that every child in America ought to have a well-qualified, fully prepared, and committed teacher. This approach, which stands in stark contrast to the approach of the deregulationists, is crystal clear in all of NCTAF’s major documents, including *What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future* (1996):

This report offers what we believe is the single most important strategy for achieving America’s educational goals: A blueprint for recruiting, preparing, and supporting excellent teachers in all of America’s schools . . . A caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education reform and, we believe, the most frequently overlooked. (p. 3)

Tens of thousands of people not educated for these demands have been unable to make a successful transition into the new economy. A growing underclass and a threatened middle class include disadvantaged young people who live in high-poverty communities as well as working-class youth and adults whose levels of education and skills were sufficient for the jobs of the past but not for those of today and tomorrow. Those who succeed and those who fail are increasingly divided by their opportunities to learn. . . .

In this knowledge-based society, the United States urgently needs to reaffirm a consensus about the role and purposes of public education in a democracy—and the prime importance of learning in meeting those purposes. The challenge extends far beyond preparing students for the world of work. It includes building an American future that is just and humane as well as productive, that is as socially vibrant and civil in its pluralism as it is competitive. . . . [T]he central concepts that define America, ideas about justice, tolerance, and opportunity are being battered. We must reclaim the soul of America. (p. 11)

These excerpts from the NCTAF report illustrate how the political warrant—with, once again, the highly-evocative language of justice, freedom, pluralism, civility—is linked rhetorically to the accountability warrant with its bottom line of teachers who know how to teach so that everybody learns. NCTAF’s executive summary (1996) carries the now very familiar and often quoted lines that link the two:

We propose an audacious goal for America’s future. Within a decade—by the year 2006—we will provide every student in America with what should be his or her educational birthright: access to competent, caring, qualified teaching in schools organized for success. This is a challenging goal to put before the nation and its educational leaders. But if the goal is challenging and requires unprecedented effort, it does not require unprecedented new theory. Common sense suffices: American students are entitled to teachers who know their subjects, understand their students and what they need, and have developed the skills required to make learning come alive. (p. vi)

The argument of those who advocate professionalization is basically this: In order to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the public *writ large*, schools need, more than anything else, teachers who are fully qualified and know how to teach all students in this increasingly diverse society. From this

perspective, equal access to good teachers with rich opportunities to learn for all students represents the true path to a citizenry educated for democracy in American society.

It is also part of the rhetoric of professionalization to point out that the deregulation agenda is far removed from the best interests of the public in a democratic society. In the debate with Finn, Darling-Hammond (ECS, 2000) pointed out more than once that the market approach of the Fordham Foundation did not address the realities of hiring practices in school systems with large populations of poor and minority children:

Poor and minority children get the least qualified teachers in virtually every context across states and across districts. You can see that in California . . . where the Fordham Foundation experiment is already being enacted. High-minority schools are nine or ten times more likely to have unqualified teachers than low-minority schools. High-poverty schools are several times more likely to have unqualified teachers. So when the market operates, it does not always operate to provide all children with the best-qualified teachers.

This position is stated more fully in Darling-Hammond's (2000c) summation of NCTAF and its status several years after the initial report:

It is perhaps a testament to the power of the commission's agenda and the constituencies it has mobilized that a well-funded, right-wing backlash has formed against the commission, against university-based teacher education, and against national standards for teacher licensing, certification, and accreditation. (pp. 172–173)

Advocates for a free-market approach to teacher hiring and teacher education ignore the extensive evidence demonstrating the significant effects of teacher education and certification on student learning . . . Unfortunately, all the evidence that currently exists suggests that the end result of their arguments will be the continuation of the grossly unequal system we currently operate, in which the profession has few means for infusing knowledge into preparation and training; meanwhile the schools that serve the most advantaged students insist on well-trained teachers, whereas those that serve poor and minority students get what is left over from a system that has no engine for quality and no basis for distributing it equitably. (p. 176)

This statement provides a telling overview of how proponents of professionalization interlock the three warrants to make their case for educational reform.

Penelope Earley, Vice President of the American Association for Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and David Labaree, Professor of Teacher Education at Michigan State University, each point out that a market approach fundamentally misunderstands the nature of teachers' work, which they characterize as primarily a public enterprise for the common good, in contrast with market approaches to educational reform, which they suggest are about individual competition for what Labaree (1997) calls "private goods." Earley (2000) points to some of the basic contradictions implicit in the 1998 Higher Education Act as evidence of the mismatch between teachers' work, which she characterizes as fundamentally democratic, and market-driven reforms, which she sees as fundamentally competitive and individualistic:

A market policy lens is based on competition, choice, winners and losers, and finding culprits. Yet teachers must assume that all children can learn, so there cannot be winners and losers. Market poli-

cies applied to public education are at odds with collaboration and cooperative approaches to teaching and learning. . . . Paradoxically the Higher Education Act Title II categorical programs encourage institutions of higher education to form collaborative partnerships across academic disciplines and with K–12 schools for the purpose of preparing new teachers and offering professional development for career educators. However, under the market approach being used in educational policy and reflected in the accountability sections of the same law, teachers and those who design and administer their preparation programs must have as a primary concern competition, being a winner, not a loser, and certainly not being cast as a culprit. The consequence of these pressures is the domestication of teachers,⁵ perpetuating their role as semiskilled workers . . . and frustrating efforts for teaching to be truly professional work. (pp. 36–37)

Proponents of professionalization suggest that market approaches to education reform legitimize the dominance of "private goods" and undermine the view that public education is an enterprise for the public good in a democratic society.

The excerpts we have used above make it clear that *the political warrant* is a contested issue. The contest is fundamentally about which side gets to claim that it is most committed to the public good and to the fundamental premises upon which American society was founded. Again, the rhetorical strategies are similar to those used to establish the first two warrants:

- using the language of public interest, civil society, pluralism, and freedom,
- suggesting that the other side is really not about the public good, but is instead about its own private agenda,
- casting the other side negatively, *either* favoring regulatory strategies that protect private monopolies (the deregulationists' characterization of the professional agenda) *or* favoring status-quo strategies that protect the already advantaged and deny educational opportunities to poor and minority communities (the professionalists' characterization of deregulation).

Conclusion: The High Ground of Common Sense

In a recent historical sketch of performance assessment, Madaus and O'Dwyer (1999) suggest that today's emphasis on performance assessment in K–12 education is part of a larger change in educational measurement that has "captured the linguistic high ground, just as the term 'minimum competency testing' did in the 1970s" (p. 688). In the conclusion of this article, we want to suggest that taken together, the three warrants we have been describing—the *evidentiary warrant*, the *accountability warrant*, and the *political warrant*—are being used by advocates of opposing agendas to try to capture "the linguistic high ground" of common sense about reforming teacher education and improving teacher quality. In other words, given the way each has constructed "the problem" of teacher education, each side is attempting to persuade others that the "solution" is obvious and logical, based on simple common sense and clearly intended for the common good of the public and of American society.

It is not at all surprising that this rhetorical strategy is used on both sides of the debate, even though the solutions advocated—either to deregulate teacher education, on one side, or to professionalize teaching and teacher education, on the other—are diametrically opposed. It is only common sense, after all, to want educational policies based on empirical evidence and facts rather

than “ideology” in Napoleon’s sense of a closed system of ideas put forward by ideologues who are preoccupied with idle theory rather than with data and real experience. Along these same lines, it is only common sense to want state and federal policies regarding teacher quality and teacher education that require educators to be accountable for students’ learning and be responsible for their own actions rather than permitting them to be romantic about ideas that don’t really work or ignorant of the fact that narrow ideas are actually dysfunctional in the real world. And finally, it is only common sense—not to mention patriotic and true to the American spirit—to want reform policies that are devoted to taking care of the people and of the public good *writ large* in our society, rather than dedicated to the private interests of a certain privileged few.

One problem with the “high ground” of common sense is that it sometimes obscures the lower ground all around it, not to mention hiding what is underneath the visible surfaces or only partially exposed in the high ground itself. This makes it difficult to sort out rhetorical moves from substantive arguments and political maneuvering from innovative policies and practices. When advocates of two very different agendas each stake out the high ground, it is doubly difficult to remember also that the warrants each side uses to make its case are tied to their positions within institutional structures and connected in complicated ways to larger viewpoints on society and social relationships within society, viewpoints that go well beyond schools and schooling.

It is also not surprising that it is the evidentiary warrant that has most captured the interest of academics and other researchers, some of whom have been perplexed and troubled by the publication and announcement of opposing conclusions about the empirical evidence concerning the impact on teacher quality of various strategies for educational reform. Along these lines, there are a number of initiatives sponsored by organizations such as AERA, OERI, ETS, NRC, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching⁶ that have recently been completed or are currently underway. Although they come at the task from different perspectives and with different audiences and purposes, each of these is intended to sort out some of the competing claims about teacher education and teacher quality and to establish rigorous and objective analyses of various bodies of evidence in these areas. We see these initiatives as important, and we ourselves are involved in some of these. We also believe, however, that it is imperative that the participants in these initiatives sort out the various political and accountability warrants that are implicit in and related to the evidentiary warrants they seek to establish. This includes being explicit about the assumptions and motivations that underlie the establishment of different initiatives in the first place as well as the values and political purposes attached to them.

In conclusion, then, we would caution that the most important open questions about how best to reform teacher education and provide quality teachers for America’s schools will not be resolved solely by evaluating the evidentiary warrant. Rather, we would argue here that the accountability warrant and the political warrant must also be considered as well as how these two are braided together with one another and with the evidentiary warrant. Earley (2000) has commented on the value-laden nature of educational research and its easy use by policy makers to further

their own, sometimes quite different agendas. She suggests that “data and evidence used in the policy process will have several levels of bias: that embedded in the data or evidence itself, bias associated with analysis, and the biases of those in the policy world who use the information” (p. 35). And we ourselves have argued elsewhere (Cochran-Smith, 2001b) that the way “the problem of teacher education” is conceptualized in the first place has a great deal to do with the conclusions that are drawn about the empirical evidence suggesting what policies are the best solutions for reforming teacher education.

Thus we close this article with the same caution with which we began. Unless underlying ideals, ideologies, and values are debated along with and in relation to “the evidence” about teacher quality, and unless we examine the discourse of teacher education policy reform, we will make little progress in understanding the politics of teacher education and the nuances and complexities of the various reform agendas that are currently in competition with one another.

NOTES

¹ It is not our intention to bolster unnecessary dichotomies between these two agendas. Along these lines, the Education Commission of the States (ECS, 2000) has published a side-by-side analysis of the arguments of Chester Finn and Linda Darling-Hammond based on their recent debate about reforming teacher education in order to demonstrate that some of their positions are indeed more similar than might be expected. We see the wisdom in cautions against dichotomous thinking (Shulman, 1988) and in the conciliatory efforts of ECS. However, since so much of the debate about teacher education is constructed—and interpreted by others—in terms that are oppositional, we believe it is important to unpack the assumptions and values in which the opposition is grounded.

² Along these lines, we do not pretend that our own stance about teacher education reform is neutral or a-political. As teacher education scholars and practitioners, we have long been involved in efforts to prepare new and experienced teachers to educate an increasingly diverse population and respond to the changing economic, social, and political contexts of our time. However, the analysis we offer here is intended to be as even-handed as possible, unpacking some of the important values and politics underlying the arguments for both professionalization and deregulation.

³ Other documents were consulted but in the interest of space are not listed in Table 1 (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2000d; Darling-Hammond et al., 1999).

⁴ Gary Natriello, Editor of *Teachers College Record*, has provided a very helpful set of links on the web-based version of the journal that allows readers to move directly to the empirical studies about which the two sides disagree.

⁵ Earley attributes this phrase to Diane Waff, a teacher in the School District of Philadelphia.

⁶ It is not within the scope of this article to describe these projects here, although some information about them is contained in news bulletins and reports from AACTE, ATE, AERA, ETS, and OERI, in recent or forthcoming presentations at AERA’s and AACTE’s annual meetings, and in a brief editorial by Cochran-Smith (in press).

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