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How to cite:

Jeffrey, Bob and Troman, Geoff (2010). Institutional embrace and the postmodern professional. In: European Conference of Educational Research, 25-28 Aug 2010, Helsinki.

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Version: Accepted Manuscript

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## **Institutional embrace and the postmodern professional**

Bob Jeffrey\* and Geoff Troman\*\*

The Open University\* and Roehampton University\*\*

### **Abstract**

The post-modern teacher is one that has been fashioned over the last 20 year. S/he belongs to a 'greedy institution' in which teachers embrace its values and reproduce them as well as adding value by contributing to a continuous reinvention of it. Their professional identity is now one that is isomorphic with the school, one in which status and professional expertise are bound up with the image of the institution in the glo-na-cal environment of global, national and local. Web sites proclaim the character of the school but also celebrate their local status while national league tables pin point their level of achievement locally and nationally. Their global responsibility is mirrored in their commitment to raising achievement for the labour market and the national economy.

The post-modern professional teacher is now a total teacher taking on everything and anything that policy demands as well as their own interests and values, for example contrasting performative and creative pedagogies. The commitment of the postmodern professional has been gained through the development of team work and collaboration, the necessity to improve performative targets and the survival of their institution in a market orientated environment. Economic imperatives drive education policy and they now include creative and entrepreneurialist market approaches, team cultures and a discourse of performativity. The Total Teacher has to ensure the raising of achievement by reaching targets based on external testing, support the institution in maintaining its market position and status, use team strategies and develop creative

learners. This paper examines the life of the total professional who plays a major role in the development of the embracing institution.

## **Context**

Andy Hargreaves (Hargreaves 2000) identifies four ages of professionalism, the pre professional, the age of autonomy, the collegial and the post professional age or postmodern. The first is one in which students were treated as collective, stratified groups and practices in which traditional repetitive pedagogies dominated learnt from one's experience of it. The second, the age of autonomy was one where the profession was established and pedagogic theories took hold. Teacher professionalism was at its height and government took little interest in the curriculum or assessment procedures. The third age of collegiality followed the development of pedagogy and its support by locally interested teacher groups and Local Authorities who provided a professional career ladder for classroom teachers to become pedagogic and curriculum advisors and local inspectors. At the same time schools began to become more managerial drawing together teachers in each school to develop school policies with teachers being encouraged to work together on developing curriculum and pedagogy. It was in this context in primary schools that the new government intervention into professional activity became more prominent with attacks on professionals who were not in tune with ideological or pragmatic government policies beginning with the Thatcher led conservative party but initiated by an ex Labour leader James Callaghan in 1976. The Education Reform Act of 1989 began a major push for schools and teaching and learning to become a central focus of government policy.

The period from 1990 to the present day has been characterised in terms of primary schools as one in which there has been a drastic loss of autonomy and professional collegiality has been replaced with school managerial team work (Menter, Muschamp et al. 1997) to implement government directed centrally devised and controlled policies, practice and performance. The term 'post professional' age is a possible distinction but nailing down definitions of professional are extremely difficult (Hammersley 2005) and we have seen many examples of teachers and schools adapting their work and practice into new reconstructed forms such as managerial professionalism (Jeffrey 1999). The term postmodern professional has more currency in that the world primary teachers occupy in which control of teaching and learning is dependent on events on a global scale and the speed of innovation and change is a

constant constraint on the establishment of a professional, collegial, theory or practice led professional role and identity. Fast business, whereby the global market forces firms to 'live in a permanent state of emergency, always bordering on the edge of chaos' (Thrift 2000) (p.674) as they rush to keep up with the competition has been translated into schools and education as fast policy and practice, always being expected to innovate and incorporate new initiatives. This results in a more anti statist and anti professional discourse where the voice of the people is more valued as consumers (Newman and Clarke 2005). However, this general analysis fails to recognise that schools and teachers locally may also value the perspectives of the 'consumers of education' for many of them are those same parental consumers and that schools and teachers also value the raising of achievement as a laudable aim of social justice. However, teachers and their professional organisations have been regarded as obstacles to marketisation and too expensive 'so they have been weakened through legislative changes of union membership; restricting the scope of their decision making; prescribing centralised curricula; shifting them towards more temporary contracts and generally lowering their status through 'discourse of derision' (Ball 1990) that repeatedly hold them accountable for the alleged ills of public or state education' (ibid. p.168). How they manage these conflicting imperatives and the effects upon them is the subject matter of this paper.

In the early stages of post professionalism teachers had become deliverers (Winch and Foreman-Peck 2005), although the 'mediators' often adopted a principled infidelity, not fully adhering to the principles underlying the reforms and maintaining some of their own educational values (Wallace 2005). Exhortations to be more flexible, less rigid, more inventive and less timid were difficult to hear when grappling with the more dominant noise of accountability (Moss 2005). Dispositions such as truthfulness, mutual respect, authenticity, courage and compassion were under threat by the values of the market place (Nixon 2005) and there has been a radical shift to an emphasis on generic models of knowledge production such as key and core skills, thinking skills, problem solving and teamwork (Young 2005) reflecting a wider instrumentalist turn where trainability is arguably replacing understanding and criticism as the primary pedagogical objective of our educational system (Bernstein cited in Young). Knowledge seen as commodified content (Beach and Dovemark 2007) leads to the belief that successful acquisition can be measured and the sense of

learning as personal growth and self actualisation is lost. Learning is no longer seen as lighting fires (Hodgkinson and Hodgkinson 2005). While these perspectives are powerful analyses this paper studies how a small number of primary schools and teachers appropriate (Woods 1995) and develop current discourses – in this case the performativity and creative - and how the major development of market approaches has affected the reconstruction of their professional lives.

There are now diverse versions of the post modern professional. Firstly, a restricted, bureau-professional form of professionalism where teachers are expected to function as experts in their own classrooms but to “work within bureaucratic frameworks laid down by their local authorities and administered by their headteachers (Reeves 2005); a managerial form of professionalism in which teachers are constructed as closely supervised, rule following operatives and a new professionalism based on the notions of collaboration, knowledge sharing and problem solving seeing themselves as part of professional learning communities (PLP) to expand capacity, act innovatively, to appreciate being valued, enjoying collective well being, assisting aspirations and learning how to learn (Webb and Vulliamy 2009).

These new managerial roles teachers are different to the previous professional identities of autonomy and professional collegiality, so new managerial identities have been constructed focused on institutional change and effectiveness which contrasts with democratic professionalism (Clarke 2004). Primary teachers are involved in managing retrospective and prospective identities (Bernstein 1996) indicative of a post modern situation where synthesis, integration and action is involved in integrating various statuses and roles as well as experiences in a coherent image of self (Epstein 1978 in (Sachs 2001).

However teachers are not passive in these processes of ethical drift just as they are not victims of policy shifts more generally. They are active ethical agents who continually have to negotiate the extremely dilemmatic terrain of contemporary educational practice, who have to reconcile conflicting ethical commitments, for example, commitments to inter-institutional collegiality and the survival of the particular institution in which they work (Gerwitz, Cribb et al. 2006). As Cribb (Cribb 2005) puts it

These dilemmas are chronic and serious because...there is no simple translation between institutional obligations and ethical obligations, between “doing my job” and “doing the right thing”.

## **Theoretical Frame**

Foucault’s description of the complex processes of governmentalisation (Foucault 1979) which involves the emergence and development of new technologies of power on individuals and populations, accounts for the construction of different forms of social beliefs and values. However, although Foucault provides a lens through which to understand the technologies of repression and violence employed by the State he doesn’t provide a logic of power within a context of political economy so there are restrictions as to his usefulness (Delissovoy and McLaren 2003), no theoretical framing is possible for there is only explanation and no answers (Vidovich 2007). There is evidence that a growing number of theorists are more positive about the potential of hybridizing different theoretical perspectives, moving beyond the dualism of mutually exclusive categories of modernism and postmodern/post structuralism such as Peters (Peters 2003) who argues that post-structuralism is not anti-structuralist or anti-marxist. Olssen (Olssen 2006) suggests that explanation of how new forms of power shape and govern the individual, involves supplementing, in Barry Smart’s (Smart 1986) words;

‘the state/civil society dichotomy by an analytic focus upon the governmentalisation of power relations, that is the development of individualising techniques and practices which are reducible neither to force nor to consent techniques and practices which is transformed by political conflict and struggle through the constitution of new forms of social cohesion’ (Smart 1986), p.162]

This research is concerned with governmentality, the conduct of conduct and particularly with how teachers and learners seek to control their own conduct (Gillies 2008). It appears to show an example of social cohesion at the institutional level, rather than at the wider professional level but a cohesion that is both developed and appreciated by teachers in an institutional embrace. The educational policy arena is a complex fluctuating disarray of policy strategies, (Ball 1998) eg: demanding performativity and at the same time encouraging creativity and flexibility enabling

schools and teachers to act positively in the space between contrasting policies, but at the same time maintaining policy development through internalising these contradictions. Teachers also use these spaces to develop their own interests and careers, a complex professional life. Performativity works in three ways: through a disciplinary system of judgements, classifications and targets towards which schools and teachers must strive and against and through which they are evaluated; second it provides sign systems which represent education in a self-referential and reified form for consumption; and thirdly it resides in the pragmatics of language (Ball 1998).

Ball's (2009) 'governance turn' identifies four sets of related changes are taking place: in forms of government (structures and agencies); the form and nature of the participants in the processes of governance; the prevailing discourses within governance and a change in the governing of and production of new kinds of 'willing' subjects 'panoptic performativity (Perryman 2006). Our research found examples of all four: the development of a powerful institutional culture is underpinned by the change to a market approach to schools; the development of powerful institutional professional identities has marginalised professional collegiality; government support for contrasting creative discourses to encourage teacher commitment alongside the maintenance of a performative discourse is a new development and a powerful team approach which reflects a change to a new governance of teacher commitment to government policies.

A major vehicle for governmentality is policy discourse (Ball 1998). Central government educational policy texts have dominated schools in recent times from the National Curriculum, national assessment testing, inspection reports, QCA guidelines, national reports and the publication of school standards. These texts are written documents but they also contain values through language and beliefs about the role of education in society and the economy. As Ball (Ball 2008) notes, policy discourses privilege certain ideas and topics and speakers and exclude others, organise their own specific rationalities, making particular sets of ideas obvious, common sense and 'true' (p. 5). They mobilise truth claims and constitute rather than simply reflect social reality, 'Language is deployed in the attempt to produce certain meanings and effects' (Edwards, Nicoll et al. 1999), p. 620). Policies are very specific and practical regimes of truth and value and the ways in which policies are spoken about, their vocabularies, are part of the creation of their acceptance and enactment.

These discourses bring objects into being, they form the object of which they speak (Ball 1993), such as policy texts, and they construct particular types of social relation through the relative strength of the practices they determine. The recognition of policy texts as discourses opens up greater possibilities of interpretation and action.

Although the possibility for agency is contained in Foucault's theories via the perspectives of Gramsci (Olssen 2006), a synthesis of Foucault, Strauss and Goffman provides us with a more useful interactionist basis for examining the way power secures the willing compliance of subjects to be governed. A dramaturgical deployment through symbolic interactionism leads to what Scott (Scott 2010) calls 'performative regulation', a conceptual synergy of Foucault's disciplinary power (Foucault 1977), Strauss's negotiated order (Strauss 1978) and Goffman's interaction order (Goffman 1983).

Symbolic Interactionism retains the idea that there is an actor behind the character(s) in one's repertoire behind the postmodern professional. Dramaturgical 'performance' differs from poststructuralist identity 'performativity' in this regard, but there are also similarities – indeed, as Scott notes Butler herself has been criticized for 'reinventing' Goffman's wheel (Green 2007). Most notably, the mutability of the self is apparent in Goffman's moral career as a progression of identities, and in actors' propensity to vacillate between different lines of self-presentation. Additionally, both theories suggest that performances rely on audiences for their interpretation and validation, and are oriented towards this evaluative context. This is a relevant frame for studying the development of a postmodern institutionally based professional identities.

## **Methodology**

As indicated an interactionist perspective has been employed but one that includes a Foucauldian view of how discourses affect micro situations and how they in turn are affected by the action of those engaging in discursive practices.

This research was funded by the ESRC (RES-000-23-1281) and employed

- An ethnographic approach assisted the process of examining policy discourses through research into how primary teachers experienced the revitalisation of a creativity discourse in a context dominated by performativity by using:
- life/career histories;

- a range of relevant personnel as possible from our research sites, eg: school governors, managers, teachers, teaching assistants, learners past and present, parents and community connections;
- immersion in the research sites over time to record and examine these policy trajectories and the way in which people respond to them in different temporal phases and different situations.

The research took cognisance of the structural influences in situations and the dilemmas, tensions and constraints under which people work and live and the way they manage and cope with their situations. To understand the complexities of what is happening we needed to employ a qualitative approach, which ‘captures and records the voices of lived experience...contextualises experience...goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances...presents details, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another’ (Denzin 1989), p. 83). Data needed to be collected within the school context, since experiences, perspectives and identities are strongly shaped by their context (Rosenholtz 1989). Our ethnographic approach of spending time in the field using three different time modes - compressed, selective intermittent and recurrent (Jeffrey 1999; Jeffrey and Troman 2004) - ensured that we took into account the broad experience of teaching, learning and parenting and obtained a complex, rich analysis of how the creativity and performativity discourse interacted with the lives of those in schools.

Our theory of knowledge is a sociological approach that derives from empirically studies related to social theories and personal realities. We try to get to know the sub-culture of the classroom and school and take the view that people’s personal realities and beliefs are embodied in speech and behaviours. The observations and analysis of the micro, we believe, is linked to macro discourses, policies and structures. We follow an interactionist sociology in which we see people carving out space despite the lack of formal power. In our studies of teachers we asked: What problems do they face? How are they experienced? What meanings are given to them? What feelings are generated? Ethnography respects the empirical world penetrates layers of meaning and facilitates taking the role of the other by the researcher, an empathetic understanding, defining situations, and grasping the sense of process (Woods 1996). We see ethnography is a relevant and appropriate methodology to support our Foucauldian theoretical frame.

This research analysed the thick policy environments through our ethnographic methodology which is predominantly qualitative. Data collection was intended to be over one school year for each of six schools enabling us to follow annual assessment periods and the critical creative events within the school year. The research was based in six primary schools across five Local Education Authorities. We judged this the maximum possible given the depth of fine detail we sought but large enough to afford a comparative basis for research and to ensure some significant contrast between the research schools (inner city, rural) in terms of size and socio-economic status. We ensured a balance of learner age range and teacher experience in terms of career status, positions, and roles.

The research was carried out by four researchers to a greater or lesser extent and as we began some progressive focusing, one school (City) became the focus for intense long term ethnographic enquiry. The data we managed to obtain was more limited than expected due to researcher illness but it included 52 days observational fieldnotes, 54 recorded conversations with teachers and other significant adults and 32 recorded conversations with learners. We transcribed all recorded conversations with management, teachers, pupils and parents that we saw as being of theoretical significance.

The conversations probed areas such as:

- Perceived tensions between the creativity and performativity policies and the dilemmas and opportunities this creates for teachers, pupils and parents.
- Coping strategies used to ameliorate these tensions and dilemmas
- The educational identities being constructed in the context of the two policy imperatives.

Our analysis is in its early stages due to the lack of researcher activity but the methodology proceeded in the sequence: data collection – analysis - data collection – analysis. The process provided ‘spiralling insights’ (Lacey 1976) as it sought to generate theory from the data using the method of ‘constant comparisons’ (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Data storage, retrieval and analysis was supported by the use of the qualitative data analysis computer package Atlas Ti.

## **The Institutional Embrace**

The first of Ball's characteristics of the governance turn – changes in the form of structures and agencies are encapsulated in the ways in which schools have had to respond to the market approach of government policy.

The Embracing Institution is not a Total institution (Goffman 1961) in which the inmates (teachers) were cowed in the face of the management and acted out resistances but more akin to the Greedy institution (Coser 1974) which demands considerable commitment and one in which coercion was more subtle, for example aligning teacher commitment to raising standards with government policies although teachers disputed the means used by government to meet commitments. The Greedy institution expected members to weaken ties with other social groups and give the institution their undivided loyalty, creating symbolic boundaries between insiders and outsiders, that is, as equally powerful as the physical boundaries of the Total Institution - disciplinary mechanisms (Scott 2010). However, the Greedy Institution focussed on getting members to cut all ties with outside communities whereas the Embracing Institution has different objectives. They are to create commitment to assist the institution's survival and development in a market place, to release members from innovative constraint for the benefit of the institution while retaining their enthusiasm for the institution's performative and creative objectives in the local environment. The Embracing Institution encourages teachers to take on more managerial roles, supervise each other, take responsible for various parts of the school organisation and curriculum often without extra pay or designated seniority. In this way the institution is continually reinvented with the collaboration and support of the inmates for institutional development and at the same time benefits individuals as they develop careers and the institution. The embracing institution looks to embrace not only its members but the local community in order to maintain its market position and to that end, unlike the Greedy Institution, it develops an open culture.

## **Open Cultures**

The embracing institution works to develop open, collective, inclusive cultures in which there appear to be few centres of power but where power circulates freely by binding people together to develop the institution and its inhabitants. Central to the development of an institution in which everyone is embraced and each individual

embraces the institutional discourses is openness, similar to Foucault's notion of freedom (Foucault 1977)

The six primary schools, in our study, had an openness that has burgeoned in the last few years. The performance of the teacher was a daily public affair, unlike the closed classrooms of the professional autonomous phase and its qualitative nature had changed.

Yeah it's more open door. We don't have our door shut and we don't teach like that so much. We're a bigger team than it used to be when you were on your own in the classroom from 9-3. It's not like that anymore is it? It's much more open and we encourage teachers to show us what they can do (Carolyn-C-Yr.2).

This kind of open performance made the teacher more conscious of their public image, how they presented themselves (Goffman 1959).

In my last school I came in for a meeting with external visitors in a suit and they were surprised and when you think about it what does that mean, that meetings require different clothes. So I asked the teachers about it and they said that I meet with important people that's why I wear a suit but when you meet with us you don't wear a suit because we're not important. Well after that, I wore a suit every single day I taught the kids and I didn't wear a suit when I went to meetings 'cos I wanted to turn it on it's head (Camile-C-HT)

Teachers had to accept an array of visitors into their schools and classrooms and actually invited strangers in at a moment's notice. Parents and the community were invited into the school more often and visitors, including parents, saw more of the school's work and the way teachers teach as the classrooms were more open.

Some parents come in and look at the work in progress. This was announced this morning in assembly. Some Y6 pupils are in charge of welcoming the parents, meeting them at the entrance and taking them to the room where their child is working. The parents have not been met by or talked to a teacher yet, it's all been led by the Y6 pupils (FN-H-23/2/07)

Teaching had become a public affair. Even the private reports to parents were now virtually open with every parent knowing the school statistics on its SATs performance, Ofsted assessments and children and parents talked openly with each

other about the child's 'level' both in and outside the staffroom, the classroom and the school grounds,

We had an afternoon where we invited parents to look at SATs papers to encourage them to help their children' (Carole – City-Yr.5).

Meetings often took place in public, not in the head's office, which in one of our schools was only used to house her two dogs, with the door open of course. One such meeting we noted was in the school café and included a DfES person and another meeting constituted six local headteachers.

The school was not just willing to share information, but positively eager to share it.

It was not only the space that seemed open.

On my second and third visits, I am left alone in the Head's office so that I can browse the curriculum and school policy folders. The Head welcomes the policy aspect of our research project; they have many visits from other schools, who are sceptical that this school's curriculum flow approach could work for them. She hopes that our project will serve to convince other schools of the viability of the curriculum flow approach, eg: Beacon Role – Leading Practice, see PNS – Excellence and Enjoyment – networking and sharing of good practice (FN-H-8//1/07)

Schools were also open to the community and at the same time they established the school as an important community institution that was worthwhile supporting and developing and embracing,

The Children's Centre in the school has picked up and is running the family therapy groups, PCAMS, the primary child mental health group, they're providing parenting through the family links programme. It's beginning to have an impact but it will slow, it will be slow. But it does fundamentally change things and certainly more schools are like us. When I appoint people the first thing I do is put them on the family links training. (HT-City)

Breaking down barriers and creating a sense of community was not just related to formal programmes; they included more informal structures such as the school/community café, which was open all day, and breakfast clubs. Members of the

community, often parents, assisted in classrooms voluntarily helping with maths or science in groups and reading.

Internally professional psychologists, welfare workers and inspectors or advisors and even researchers often sat at the back of a class making notes about what was going on. There had been a sharp rise in the number of teaching assistants working in schools, many of whom were parents, who carry out supervised teaching roles and worked in the classroom all day; another adult in the classroom (Garland and Garland 2009). Teachers were regularly formally observed by senior staff who monitored some aspect of the teacher's work and in some schools teachers observed each other in a form of professional reciprocity. There was more collaboration between teachers who often worked together planning a term's work for the same age group and joint activities often take place with two teachers working in the same room or the whole school worked on one project for anything from one week to six in which teaching ideas and strategies were shared and displayed. This open culture made hierarchical power less visible and appeared to show how horizontal power operated by focusing on the institution and less on hierarchical positions. Everyone was embraced and everyone embraced the development of the institution.

### **Aspiring cultures**

A second vital element in creating support for the institution and a collective culture was the highlighting of aspiration. The schools demonstrated an aspiring culture in which members held personal aspirations for career, for the learners, for their school and community and the values underpinning these aspirations were at the same time meritocratic, egalitarian and humanist. Our schools were littered with cultural and educational homilies exhorting members to think and act positively, to see learning as a comfortable but challenging journey made easier through self assessment and through co-operation with others, identifying mistakes as learning points and generally celebrating the joy of learning and education and downplaying authoritative power relations. These homilies were for adults as well, some of them placed in staff toilets. An aspirational culture was prominent throughout with a celebration of continual improvement as each member arrived at a station on the never ending journey through professional and personal life.

Professional life was hard but the new aspirational culture had its satisfiers (Ref),

I don't want to paint a false picture and say we're always happy because that's not true. There are days when I'm quite tired, especially towards the end of the term and you think 'oh goodness' but the majority of the time I think we are very positive and I think we're always willing to try new things and I think that's the key. We are a fairly young staff who have that energy and we feel comfortable with change. If you haven't been teaching as long then maybe you're willing to change (Carolyn-C-Yr.2)

New initiatives developed by the schools themselves were part of the branding of the school as they sought to enhance teacher's careers and interests, create innovative programmes that developed a public school identity.

The Head she gave me the opportunity to go to Uganda and then it was nice to be able to come back to school with something new because I felt nobody else knows it like I know it because I've actually been and it was an exciting new thing to bring to the school. It was really exciting last year especially to see that develop and to see the children starting to talk about it and we won an international school award at the end of last year for all the work that we did. (Cecile-C-Yr.2)

Promotion and challenges were daunting but welcome in this new 'can do' culture.

It is a big job and it is a responsible thing to do. There are downsides to it but I think quite positive. Perhaps it's me in my innocence or my ignorance, I don't know. It's a big responsibility but I think it's one that I'm quite happy to take on. And I think I would do it very well. So that's just how I look at it really (Vicky-V-DH)

Gillies (Gillies 2008) found that Foucault refers to government differently in different places. He adopted a working definition of government as the disposition of things arranged as to lead to a convenient end and in another place as techniques and procedures for directing human behaviour and yet another as the 'conduct of conduct' meaning that to govern is to structure the possible field of action of others. He goes onto show that this last phrase is a play on two French verbs – 'conduire' meaning to lead, direct or drive and 'se conduire' meaning to behave or conduct oneself (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). Continuous improvement and a belief in the possibility of success was an example of how the conduct of conduct pervaded the school culture.

The fact that Ofsted could drop in anytime means you have to always have it in place and always have to be motivated and keep things going and if you started some new initiative you need them to know that you can continue with it and if you've said on your school development plan and your school improvement plan that you're going to do it then it needs to be monitored and needs to be checked that we are doing it. I think those things are all good really. I think it's good to have the thought that Ofsted could be round the corner or could be checking up on you. I don't particularly like it when they're in (laughs) but but no it doesn't worry me. I don't think it worries the school either personally because I think we know what we're doing and I think we know where we want to get to, we know what we want to achieve and we've got our school improvement plan and we know what's on it so I think it's fine (Cloe-C-Yr.2)

Ensuring success was part of a professional identity, being organised to satisfy the auditors and being open meant reflecting the auditors expectations.

I don't feel pressurised by them, I just am a very perfectionist person I've never failed anything, I've always done well, so I am the sort of person who will be harder on myself, if we don't get 100%. I'll see that as failing but I think it is the importance of having such a strong leader as well. Dawn is a fantastic Head Teacher and it's making sure every body else is prepared and that's what I try to do as well because when people are trying to plan their lessons it's you as a leader staying calm, supporting others and making sure everybody is comfortable with it. Our OFSTED was a bit out of the blue. (Hester-H-DH)

Working in schools in deprived areas was seen as a challenge,

I think there's a real buzz working in these schools, you know you're up against the edge, much more than if I worked in more affluent areas where I live, because it makes them quite a lot more interesting (Camile-C-HT)

Challenges were a central part of the aspiring school cultures,

I think targets for the school give people a bit of ambition, it does for me anyway, just to say you need to achieve this in this time, it's a bit more of a business psychology I think...The moment it feels like you're on a treadmill

it's time to change and to set yourself some targets to know where you want to get to and if you're ambitious enough, targets for head-teacher or advanced skills teacher or a SENCO', (Christopher-C-Yr.3)

Being placed in special measures proved to be a challenge, 'to come in and have that clear mandate to change a school in special measures was very exciting. And a clear understanding that it really did need to change' (Camile-C-HT) as did wider challenges.

We have 12 schools in the Excellence in Cities programme, 2 secondary and 10 primary and all in this area, because this is the hot spot of deprivation. You are looking at drivers for me, the intellectual challenge of knowing what to do and I like to stay with things so I can see the things I've done and see that impact. I like to reap what I've sown'. But at the same time this is also about social justice. We can't have people moving in to these areas building a career and moving on, you have to have a sense of commitment to an area like this, build up relationships and make some change for the better. (Camile-C-HT).

A commitment to social justice strengthened the power of the institution and of those individuals who embraced these principles. Their commitment was not just to maintain their league table position but to improve children's opportunities,

Actually I want the test results improved as well so a child going on to secondary school can read and write. Actually we're genuinely worried about test results not because I care about where I am on the league table. If I can get my kids reading and writing, fantastic, I do all the old stuff. If I want to break this cycle of deprivation, one of the ways is to teach them to read and write so they can engage with other kids, so I worry about that (Victor-V-HT).

Their aspirations were tied closely to the children's education although they accepted that the methodology was not perfect for all children. The discourse of improvement and challenge pervaded the whole culture, a postmodern form of governmentality..

In fact one of the kids last week at Breakfast Club gave me the best feedback I have ever had. I want it written on my tombstone. I think it sums up best what you need to do and you do on a good day. She said, "I think you're like the Wizard of Oz Mrs Herbert because you educate our brains, you're kind but you give us courage". And I thought well, there you go there's a pretty good

leg up that you need to give to your staff too as well. Give them the courage, give them the stamina but also give them a challenge. We musn't see them as problems but give them the challenge and give them the support (Camile-C-HT)

The discourse of improvement, challenge and aspiration seeped into the life of all, including the students.

Innovative policies were often the result of an aspiring culture,

The Boiler Room café on the school premises was opened by Raymond Blanc and uses fresh vegetables from local children's allotment. It acts as a community café for the school and was the school's old boiler room. They use some organic suppliers, do not sell fizzy drinks and use fair trade products and they have an espresso machine of which I make a great deal of use. A display included photos of the opening with staff drinking wine (FN-C-1/3/07)

Added this we identified an educational entrepreneurialism (Woods 2007), an energy to be innovative, to drive along new initiatives and to develop original strategies and activities particularly in areas of deprivation. Acting as commissioners of services schools focused on a variety of funding streams to develop their institutions, to engage in local partnerships, to raise the quality of training for everyone to develop skills and enterprise.

I prepared a programme that was short and hard hitting, but it was about our chance to seize education to re-look at what is education, why do we have schools, to start looking at that. It worked through modelling in the Excellence in Cities programme. It's given us the freedom now, we've got much more freedom around workforce than when I first became a Head. Now we've got much more freedom, we can do anything now with funding or I believe we can or I choose to believe I can. I was saying to our governors the other day, if we want an ESW and if it's not supported and if it's a supportive role then we buy one in, you don't have to be given your staffing or told what it is. If I feel I want a blacksmith in my school I can have one (Camille-C-HT).

It is in this context of a culture of openness underpinned by a market discourse and of aspiration, a discourse that promotes the possibility of universal improvement and

success through effort and a positive approach in which teacher's professionalism was being forged through the institutional governmentality, which included a perception of freedom (Foucault 1977).

### **The Post-modern professional**

Empirical research during the early stages of postmodern professionalism in the mid 1990s (Woods, Jeffrey et al. 1997) generally supported Hargreaves 'ages' (2000) approach concluding that the situated autonomy of a primary teacher's professional life in the 1960s, in which dilemmas (Berlak, Berlak et al. 1976) were a positive aspect of pedagogic freedom had been marginalised by the reforms of the 1990s and tensions developed between primary teachers, educational values and professional expertise and the managerial approaches of central government. The research found that later in this age as post professionalism took hold, in the late 1990s primary teachers felt they were working under structural constraint and that these overt tensions had been driven underground into the identity of the person as the imperative to contribute to school team performance increased (Woods 1996) as performativity led to performances (Clarke 2004; Newman and Clarke 2005).

This resulted in a care-full commitment (Troman 2008). Teachers liked the extra help in classrooms, felt uplifted by good results, enjoyed opportunities for promotion, the new planning and preparation time, supportive head teachers, challenges and the current levels of pay. However, they resented fast policy, constant and changing imperatives, inappropriate national target setting, inappropriate testing and found problems finding time to implement IPP and personalised learning, and resented poor school atmospheres, parental pressure and behavioural issues.

Balls (2009) second characteristic of the governance turn – changes to the form and nature of the participants in the processes of governance - is exemplified in the development of institutional identities rather than broader value based professional identities. Resentment had turned to embracement as the success and fate of the institution impacted more heavily on professional status, well being and self interests. Moral trajectories are mediated by an interaction context and narratives of change are collectively negotiated. In dramaturgical terms, mutual surveillance involves performances of obedience and role embracement: members seek to demonstrate the

sincerity of their commitment to the institution, and manage the impressions they communicate to fellow staff (Scott 2010)

Performative regulation, a feature of the Reinventive Institution, (Scott 2010) which aims to provide a space for reinventing identities, also applied to the 'Embracing Institution'; the RI inmate is both an actor who performs and a subject position defined by the sum of these performances. S/he is both agentically performative and constrained by the discipline of interaction.

### **Team Professional**

Belonging to a team, the opposite of the lone professional of Lortie's (Lortie 1975) 1975 study or those in Jennifer Nias's 1990 study (Nias 1989), is the major way in which a primary teacher's identity is now constructed (Jeffrey 2002). Today's professional primary school teacher is a team player belonging to a team that is in open competition with other local school teams but also part of a team that needs to present itself as a unified, creative, inclusive and effective managerial organisation, 'doing member' (Garfinkel 1967).

Also being part of a team, getting to know adults as well is rewarding. It was very lonely when previously I was with just children all the time and then going home and having my own life. I've got a bit of a responsibility now for myself as an individual as well. I've got my own job. I like that. I like my own responsibility. I also like the people that I've met and I'm getting to know even more. It's like a community here. I know, as you are aware, that it is in the middle of an estate or whatever, but you know that is actually quite good. It is, part of the community, yeah, and that's what I've enjoyed. Learning more for myself as well. Lots and lots (Wanda-W-Yr.6)

Teachers in our research it involved having more of a team role in the organisation of the school and using one's creativity to develop the institution. In dealing with technologies of the self Foucault talks about how the self is governed, how we seek to control our own conduct so as to 'transform' ourselves (Foucault 2000). Professional cohesion and good professional relations were essential to the development of the team approach.

I find, in the staffroom, a display board entitled 'Staff Achievement Board', with some displayed certificates on which some members of staff have been

commended for certain actions or for just starting a new role. All staff are encouraged to download a copy and to fill it in for someone they think worthy. All 10 of them are dated this term - Jan/Feb so it is probably a new idea. It's all part of the team approach used in the school. The head has indicated that this is crucial and that staff are encouraged to do kind things for one another, such as get them a cup of tea, and not to make it that obvious. The TEAM approach 'Together Everyone Achieves More' is written in large letters above the main notice board and outside at least one classroom (FN-C-26/02/07)

A dynamism existed in all our schools irrespective of SES status and often the low SES schools were the most dynamic and innovative attempting to make a difference.

Everything, children, background, curriculum, the way it's taught, the sort of input from teachers here, there's much more of a cohesive team in this school than in any I've known, secondary or primary. That's a big part, that's what we're all striving for the same thing in this school, for the welfare and the education of the children, everybody from the people who serve the dinners to the cleaners who sweeps the floors and sort out the leaks in the boilers to the office staff to the teachers. It doesn't seem that there is a big hierarchy here of being a superior because you're the Head teacher or inferiority because you're a dinner-lady (Christopher-C-Yr.3)

The team approach was manifest in the usual portrayal of photographs of all the school staff including support staff, kitchen and cleaning staff. These corporate teams reflect the modern commercial organisation in which everyone plays a part in the development and promotion of the cultural institution (Peters and Waterman).

### **Nurturing Careers**

The most significant aspect of the embracing institution is the care it exhibits towards its members bringing them close to the institution's cultural life and development.

We also have a lot of support, we do a lot of professional development so you know we have the courses and we have the resources to support us with changes of things which I think helps. We have specialists in to motivate us and I think that really does keep you going. We try to nurture each other and help each other and we're all very hot on family links and we do that with the

class but we also try to do that with each other and support each other and have networks and have teams (Carolyn-C-Yr.2)

And developing their careers was closely tied to institutional development,

There are so many high spots actually - the buzz you get from seeing people learn and grow. New teachers coming in and managing new exciting things. Seeing a lesson in which you see kids growing and learning. Parents and carers have got OCM accredited courses now so I've just seen some parents and carers getting their first ever certificate. That was fantastic - it was fabulous. When people grow and that I have a tiny influence on that (Camille-C-HT)

This approach promoted

an ownership of the school and it's policies and it's beliefs right through and it's engrained in staff as soon as you come in. It happens through the family nurturing programmes and the family links that they do in this school. You get a huge amount of support as I've had in my NQT year and particularly appreciated given the social and economic difficulties that the children live with here. If you didn't get it would be a disaster. That for me is the single biggest factor of teaching in this school and making it easier to teach in this school in a different way (Christopher-C-Yr.3).

It was an effective programme of induction and appeared to be in contrast to governmental policies and rhetoric that promised the weeding out of teachers for incompetence (Balls-Secretary of State for Education July08).

Headteachers clearly played a major role in promoting professional teams but also specific school and team values,

Schools should be positive learning experiences for everyone involved. That's always been my belief and should involve everybody, the stakeholders. I came from a village in Blackburn where the whole community was involved in the school. That was just how I've always worked. My core values are unchanged and they are shared by people here. It's very hard but they are shared. When we had our 'Investors in People' award reviewed - the thing which I loved about it was the assessor said, 'the core values of the school are articulated by everyone from people in the school canteen to TAs, the deputy, the people in

the office, the caretaker - they can articulate what the core values are'. I think that was good (Camile-C-HT)

The wider team discourse of culture of business and commerce can be seen in the language used to portray primary school cultures and professional identities, such as stakeholders, Investors in People, core values is the way governmentality works,

I don't do many of the things I should do as a Head, I don't take many assemblies, I never cover classes, I don't do very much paper work. I've got brilliant people in the office and brilliant people in the leadership team. I don't do that, what I do is influence. I influence children; I influence parents and carers (Camile-C-HT)

The headteachers were not seen as overtly as decision makers but as people who frame and influence the conduct of conduct – the culture of the institution. This approach is a clear example of the fourth of Ball's (2009) characteristics of 'governance' - change to the governing and production of new kinds of willing subjects - and these post modern school cultures of the embracing institution has affected the values, aims, practice and professional or identities. The global interest in harnessing intellectual and creative labour through cultural processes is as prevalent for teacher identities in today's schools as it is in corporate institutions (ref).

Why do I stay? Because it is a nice school. I've got a Head who's very supportive, who allows me to do a lot of different things that maybe I wouldn't be able to do in another school, all the extra curricular things. I'm very keen on the health of the children and he is very supportive. If I want to do something to do with that he'll let me. So it's a combination of a nice school, lots of change happening in it all the time, lots of things going on and the supportiveness of the Head and the Deputy, because we've got a new Deputy now, who's excellent. She's always there with the door open and I think that matters (Imogen-I-Yr.5)

One major aspect of the cultural development of the institution is the positive relationship between career guidance and counselling and flexibility of employees and their ability to function in flexible organisations. There is

a clear relationship between the employee's perception of being valued by the organization on the one hand, and job performance, motivation, self-esteem

and innovative behaviour on the other hand. The main reason for these positive effects is a social exchange process: 'When the organization is good for me, I am good for the organisation'. These results suggest that career guidance and counselling for teachers can provide a promising platform for personal sense-making in relation to actual developments and changes that are taking place in schools (Geijsel and Meijers 2005) 427)

### **Distributed leadership**

Flattened hierarchies have been more prevalent in primary schools since the late 1980s (Nias, Southworth et al. 1989) through forms of distributed leadership (Woods 2004) in which teachers have taken specific responsibility for curriculum areas or other specific responsibilities and some of our teachers relished these new opportunities to become part of the management of the institution,

I had a vague idea that I wanted to be more involved in the decision making processes and to get more of an overview of the school structure, how it works with the governors and self evaluation processes and those kinds of things that you always hear in paperwork. I also want to understand a bit more about school curriculum plans and that kind of things because I knew that I was doing interesting things in my classroom. I was would sit in my staff meeting and say something about whatever the school evaluation thing was and then I'd hear it again 3 weeks later having it told to me and I thought I'd just said that 3 weeks ago, I was getting really fed up with that and I thought I want to be one of the people that's saying it first instead of just hearing it said back to me (Mary-MM-Yr.2)

However, more recently, those remunerated responsibilities have become tied to a particular school or team interest, reducing the possibility of teacher's developing a subject career expertise such as literacy or maths over many years, so drawing people into the embrace of the institution.

It's the way they've changed the pay structure so that individual schools now have to form their own management criteria and responsibilities and determine how they delegate to those teachers. If a teacher is given a management point, that management point also comes with accountability, responsibility and accountability and because there is a pay range that the school decides as a

collective, so everybody, all staff members know if this member of staff is getting this pay point that they are responsible and accountable and this is the amount they will receive. But it's not going to be uniform across the borough or across London. Every school will make their own decision about what responsibilities and how much money that responsibility is given. So if you resign or go to another school that point is not going to go with you and it can be taken away during your time at the school (Wilma-W-Yr.2)

Performative regulation (Scott 2010) occurs where groups of people submit themselves to the authority of an institution, internalise its values and enact through them mutual surveillance in an inmate culture. Power operates horizontally as well as vertically, as members monitor each other's conduct, sanction deviance and evaluate their own progress in relative terms. The disciplinary gaze is not merely transmitted but reticulated: dispersed and refracted through an agentic network. Power is not only discursively constitutive but also interactively productive of new identities. The rituals of peer group interaction are central to this process and can be as important as the formal instruction they receive in motivating people to commit to an institution (Scott 2010) instead of going it alone.

Distributed leadership drew teachers into the management of the organisation where their ownership could be seen through their commitment to it.

I've learnt a lot from fast track about leadership. It's a programme with lots of new ideas in it that looks at things like distributive leaderships so you find out what's people's strengths are, find out what where the areas of development are, their weaknesses, help them to build up their weaknesses and play to their strengths. So it's a much more intrusive way of working rather than having a clear hierarchal structure where headteachers actually does this and everyone knows their own little box and they stay in it. It's a way of thinking about leadership much more of a network which I think is very positive (Mary-MM-Yr.2).

Taking up management posts sometimes relieved the burden of modern teaching,

Mm some days not very much. I do - I do actually enjoy not having a class teaching commitment. The difference in quality of life not having to be in at 7.30 a.m. every morning. Not having to mark endless work. Not having to plan

- it's huge. I mean it's life changing, literally for me. I don't actually at 3.15 p.m. feel absolutely wrung out and exhausted. So that's a huge kind of change in policy of life really. So that's a definite plus (Wendy-W-DH)

Being a manager was felt to be valued, creative and enhancing professional identity,

I've just started this year, as a Manager, and I'm really enjoying it. I was a bit worried before I started because I'm relatively new and I didn't know how the older people would take me. I don't ever tell anyone what to do but everyone's been brilliant, everyone comes to me and wants my advice and is happy to talk to me, so I'm really enjoying that. I sometimes wish I knew a bit more than I do know and I'd like to have a bit more confidence in what I'm saying through what I've been taught but I'm doing it as I go. I have had no training. I'm making it up as I go along, going with what I feel is the sensible thing and there's always the deputy or the head to go to if I don't know how to handle it but I would like some more training to be able to do the role properly (Vera-V-Yr.4)

A school or organisational culture that promises some relief from the intensification of professional practice is likely to have volunteers taking up managerial courses and being creative about developing the school in order to gain managerial promotional posts. Networking and support for each other was a crucial element in the development of the postmodern professional identity of the modern primary school teacher.

Trust was another a central element that was generated through the nurturing and distributive leadership approaches and again ensured that teachers become identified with the institution,

It is and the amount of trust she puts in me and she lets us make our own decisions because she trusts us, she knows that what decisions we make will be right and if it's something really important we will talk with her about that (Hester-H-DH).

The reticulation – dispersal and refraction of the disciplinary gaze involves the incorporation of a managerial identity. Contemporary primary school teacher identities involved both a teaching and a management commitment,

I enjoy classroom teaching. I really, really enjoy it and I've been here for sort of 5 years. I find I have less time in the classroom because of my other responsibilities which I also enjoy but I often feel, I'm taken out the classroom quite a lot. But I'm ready for that side of it. I particularly enjoy managing staff and managing the TAs. I'm TA co-ordinator and I'm also the NQT mentor. We have two NQTs in the school and I mentor them. And I really enjoy that side of it. I've always given it my best. I am also a PE Co-ordinator and now I have an Assistant Head role which is very new. I'm shadowing our deputy at the moment (Carolyn-C-Yr2)

Performativity in its Lyotard (Lyotard 1984) form of meeting targets is embraced in a supportive and collegial relationship. Team work and distributive leadership played a major role in constructing the new primary teacher professional identity which exploited talent and energy for the institution and enhanced commitment and dedication.

My school as you've probably worked out has been almost entirely staffed by very young teachers. High numbers of NQTs and those who aren't NQTs have only been teaching for two years, three years - the most senior teacher, the deputy you are about to interview next, has been teaching eight years. It's exploitation actually. But, having said that, there is a huge sense of goodwill and the dedication and commitment in the school is quite remarkable (Camille-C-HT).

The team approach and distributed management enables class teachers to assist other teacher's professional practice, specifically in performative practices,

I sit with the Yr. 5 teacher and we look at areas where there is a dip and we look at different strategies, with writing for example, looking at how the children can set their own manageable writing targets so that they understand in 'children speak' whereas in the past it might have been in language they might not fully understand, to help in formulating check lists on their own so they're taking ownership of their own check lists so they can write better and sending home different practice things for homework so we are constantly looking at how you can help those children and giving them more support in those areas (Harriet-H-Yr.6)

Performative regulation advances the poststructuralist notion of performativity by showing that while identities can be modified, adapted or reinvented, actors' performative repertoires may be constrained by the dramaturgical deployment of an institutional rhetoric, which defines both the actor reinventor and his/her array of possible selves. This suggests that both TIs and RIs involve a mixture of coercion and voluntarism, but that the relative balance has been reversed: whereas TI inmates were not simply docile bodies but potential rebels, RI members find their performative autonomy compromised by the discipline of interaction order (Scott 2010).

An recent additional discourse based on a concept of learning communities (ref) is that of the Professional Learning Community in which professionals establish professional values through a professional community that crosses institutional boundaries. Teachers have, according to some, become creative learners, a form of learning based on warm communication (mutual trust) that allows teachers as well as learners to express their feelings and emotions (Law, Meijers et al. 2002). It is argued that creating strong school learning environments has consequences for the structure and culture of schools and it is argued that school leaders also have to become creative learners to sustain this community of practice (Geijsel 2006). Further that the development of professional learning communities (PLC) requires identity learning (Webb and Vulliamy 2009). Central to the development of PLC is the idea that teacher commitment can be built on the basis of personal identification with the goals and purposes of the school. The role of the principal or headteacher is considered in this cultural approach to organisational change as essentially inspirational and facilitative in nature.

Within this PLC approach, learning is conceptualized as a dynamical and cyclical process. The links between conditions for learning, learning communities and school improvement are described as recursive relationships. Participation, leadership, dialogue, and the like, can be an input, throughput or outcome of learning processes. They become *productive* when it concerns social constructions that make sense to those involved, for instance, to teachers during their work with students and during their sharing with colleagues. So, the group is the unit of analysis, not the individual nor internal cognitive processes; social interactions and the community of users. (Geijsel 2006). Teacher identities are not so much based in personal beliefs but more pragmatically in the process of practical knowledge building characterised by an

ongoing integration of what is individually and collectively seen as relevant to teaching (Beijaard, Meijer et al. 2004). In the current climate of focusing on ‘what works’ this approach is just as relevant as pedagogical values and beliefs and in institutions where it is now crucial to be part of the reinventive institution this more pragmatic approach to professional identity carries some legitimacy.

This form of identity development is framed clearly within a symbolic interactionist perspective for professional identity becomes the way the institutional collective wants to see their teachers and so teacher’s professional commitment becomes the institution’s values but these identities are also framed by the discourse of performativity and creativity as teachers contribute to developing their PLC which at the same time gives them emotional succour (Hargreaves).

### **Dilemmas, Tensions and Constraints of the Total Teacher**

The third of Ball’s (2009) characteristics of change to the prevailing discourses in governance is exemplified in the support given by government in the 2000s to creative pedagogies after realising that this support would ensure teachers continued to strive to manage the imperative of performativity so long as they could engage creatively from time to time. (See Jeffrey and T for more details) (Jeffrey and Troman 2009).

The constraints we identified in the mid 1990s were concerned with central imposition of a National Curriculum, specific pedagogies examined by Ofsted, a prescriptive literacy and numeracy programme and the beginning of the influence of SATs. The current research shows a continuation of some of those constraints, eg: tightly focused curriculum guidelines with detailed assessment criteria attached, the continuation of Ofsted inspections, albeit more frequent but less exacting and the extension of the influence on teaching and learning of SATs testing. At the same time we noted a loosening of the constraints on the literacy and numeracy programmes, a more welcoming or tolerance of Ofsted inspections as useful checks on school’s accountability and progress, an acceptance of a progression narrative for assessment contained in the curriculum guidelines which assisted teachers in knowing what to do and where to go next constructing the total postmodern professional in the embracing institution. Even annual or twice annual testing has been generally accepted as a form of check on learner progress and indicating priorities for school and teacher targeting.

The dilemmas, tensions and constraints we identified as specific aspects of earlier phases of professional life (Woods 1997) were now compacted all together in the everyday experience of post modern professionalism in the embrace of the institution and in becoming the Total Teacher.

Primary teacher practice was experienced within a context of an open inclusive, caring, aspiring and entrepreneurial culture, fast teaching, a climate where creative endeavour was valued as was a plethora of partnerships and networks, where performativity and progress, targets and tracking were a permanent activity and team work was both essential and supportive. There were pressures and relief from pressure,

It's busy in a different type of way, not so much the type of work or the work the children are doing, it's busy with fun things, specially the last few weeks coming up to the summer, every one's in a quite good mood because it's the end of term and you do more fun stuff, you go on outings and it's a bit more fun it's nicer but you still have to teach and plan but it's slightly less pressure because you know it's near the end but obviously Yr. 6 at the moment, they'll be finding this time of year very pressure-ising I'm sure there's more pressure on them but once their SAT's are done they don't have as much to do because the pressure's not there so much (Wynn-W-Yr.6)

There was external pressure to test the whole school every year to ensure they got higher in the league tables, 'it's not something that the head or I, or anyone particularly wants but unfortunately it's the way it has to be' (Stephanie-W-DH), constructing organisational professionals (professionalism from above) as opposed to occupational professionals (from within the profession) (Evetts 2005). The testing culture was a part of a primary teacher's expertise and regular practice, whether they liked it or not,

I think it's a good idea to use standardised tests, that you've some data that you can use and compare them with the teacher assessments. I think that's great but the way they use them by publishing them on the Net and using league tables puts so much pressure on teachers. It means that I'm teaching to a test for half the year and it means there's no time for all the other things that I'd like to teach, for laying the foundations and building optimistic and

resilient kids, all the programmes that cater for that. Instead it's focused on "you will achieve this, this and this maths outcome for if you don't you will not meet your targets in your SATs", I've had to change my whole teaching style. I think it's a great idea to do the actual test, but not to change the way I teach for six months of the year, I don't think that's beneficial at all (Witney-W-Yr.6)

However, Yr.6 work was not all bad,

I really like teaching Year 6 and helping the kids move onto secondary school and doing all the transition type stuff, making links with other schools like the primary schools or secondary schools and that's what we've been doing and I do enjoy that part, but as far as testing goes it's not the most enjoyable time and the kids get bored by SATs revision papers, they hate them. The last six weeks we've been doing project based work, they planned a 28 day trip around the UK and they have to work out their fuel costs, how far they went and they absolutely loved it and they could link it to a real life experience, for kids who have trouble working in a group, they did such a good job, they're just so relieved not to be doing another practice paper (Witney-W-Yr.6)

Nevertheless, the imprint of targets and levels was ubiquitous (MacBeath 2005) and teachers struggled to develop cross curricula projects and more creative teaching,

As I say I try where I can to integrate curriculum and I constantly try where I can. I'm always trying to alter my planning to bring that in but it's hard because like today's literacy lesson they have to be able to answer questions on the story in the manner of the SATs style. How do you make that creative and they have to be able to do it. I'm not helping them if I don't give them the skills or teach them the skills to be able to do that effectively (Indra-I-Yr.6)

Boundary experiences related to the concept of self are a crucial site for identity development and happen where 'a person is trying to participate more fully (centrally) in a social practice, encounters a situation in which one is unable to function adequately because one cannot fully identify with the new situation and its exigencies, such a significant event causes 'existential insecurity', forcing the individual to see themselves— and often others too—in a different perspective' (Geijsel 2006 p. 424). This happened to many primary teachers in the early postmodern phase of the 1990s

(Osborn, McNess et al. 2000) and is again taking place as they see some light in the revival of a creativity agenda for teaching and learning emerging alongside the new situation of developing collaborative institutional identities and the raising of professional esteem through PLCs.

However, to integrate imperatives, exemplified by, in our case, that of the creative and performative policies, was very difficult,

I felt a lot of pressure last year to maintain the SATs results at a higher attaining level but also to take on this creative curriculum that was being embedded in the school, linking and planning between subjects and making it enlivening and engaging as possible, but I think its been done really successfully here. I feel a lot more confident this year having had one year of successful SATs results under my belt. Now I feel that I'm not going to have to answer too many questions. However, I don't think I can do it together I can't teach creatively and maintain high attainment for the results. It is difficult to keep the two things running in parallel (Indra-I-Yr.6).

It was often a case of balance rather than integration, which created more dilemmas, tensions and constraints all at once. Living a balanced postmodern professional life was full of risks, with some imperatives gaining ascendancy over others, creating a fragmented existence (Ball 2000). An integrated professionalism was one in which pedagogies were constructed to achieve multiple aims and objectives and with an integrated curriculum, multiple experiences of learning and knowledge. Balancing contrasting and competing imperatives such as performative and creative pedagogies created dissonance.

I think we are introducing the QCA tests twice a year so that children are tested at the beginning of the year and then half way through the year to ensure their progress and using the PAT analysis, the new PAT analysis system to analyse a class's progress. So I think these things are working alongside the creativity. We had a creativity day and maths problem solving skills last term. So that's linking in the curricular targets and creativity. Problem solving skills in itself is a creative start to invite children to think outside their usual kind of maths (Indra-I-Yr.6)

In spite of the support given in most schools the fast pace and extensive demands to meet externally set targets were sometimes debilitating,

Yes, I had one low point this year. It was really low. It was a couple of months ago when suddenly loads of things got on top of me. I'd done SATs and I was determined not to find stressful but in actual fact I found quite stressful. There were a lot of expectations on you and I didn't quite realise how much. There was one point in the school year when my Head was very nice and he said go home and I went home for the day. I had had a couple of issues with children in my class whose behaviour is quite severe and the other major contributing factor was the Fast Track Government scheme, which is appalling, and I had spent my half term filling in their stupid endless pages of application forms only to be told that I had to fill in another twelve page application form because when I only got a 2.2 and they actually wanted a 2.1. So that, on top of all my school work, the succession of events going was the final thing (Violet-V-Yr.6)

Any failures were internalised, even if there was no heavy duty accountability (Jeffrey and Woods 1998),

The 75% target is a measure of how much progression the children in my class have made this year and I'm not going to get that. 75% of them haven't got the national average, so I feel I haven't got them there It's not like we look at it in the staff meetings and say 'Oh these teachers didn't get them to this target so you must be a rubbish teacher' so it doesn't feel it personally in public but I do feel personally responsible for it. However, I think it helps to feel personally responsible for the progression, and it focuses you more on the children that could do with a lot of help (Celina-C-Yr2),

Perversely, the support of the team culture appeared to protect them from this personal criticism but the responsibility was nevertheless felt acutely. However, it was also accepted as part of the role to reach these targets so the post modern professional had incorporated these responsibilities.

They accepted the situation and sought to manage living with tension,

Obviously we have targets for all children in the school that's how it is, not that I always agree with these things but you do have targets and children are

assessed to a certain level of a target and at the start of the year you have the previous years targets and you are expected to move them up. I have to bear in mind that you are not going to get every single child up to those targets and I have to know that as a teacher that that's not a failing. I have to accept that because I'm quite hard on myself. I have to accept that I'm not going to move every single child to that level and you have to know their limitations as well as your own. I think you need to know that performance is being assessed because we have performance and appraisals and we have to reflect on our practice and we need to know that what we are doing is working (Harriet-H-Yr.6)

We saw how testing and targets alongside external auditing were accepted by teachers as part of their role, more of a craft role ensuring everything was effective and striving for improvement. Nevertheless, the striving for continuous improvement created feelings of failure (Perryman 2006),

It was only a short inspection but yes, everyone quite feels it, you have to make sure everything's in order and that's where the organisation comes into it and if it's not, it's extra work for yourself and pressure. Another thing about teaching and inspections is that no matter how hard you think you're trying, you never feel you're doing well enough and that's why inspections make you feel even worse about what you're trying to do. I know there have been cases in the past that schools were getting away with this and that and not being monitored, which is of course not how it should be, but I think sometimes it can go too much the other way (Wynn-W-Yr.4)

The demanding Greedy institution always wants more of its members and teacher commitment to the institution ensures it gets more but the negative aspects of institutional life are internalised and marginalised by the necessity to embrace a culture of openness and aspiration, improvement and collaboration. The feelings of continuous failure in meeting targets and improvement has added to the feelings of failure to manage the intensification of work,

We need to revise work with them, go over and know what they know. Push them along. Find out who to target, those who we think are going to get level 4 etc., so I need to concentrate on the core subjects. But by law we must teach

PE and RE so they come in as well. And reading of course, I try and get the reading in. But even with only the three core subjects plus the RE and the PE I am still finding it difficult to get through the timetable (Wanda-W-Yr.6)

Managing the demands of fast teaching may seem surreal at times,

The whole school are doing Borough reading tests and also the whole school are moderating writing. We were doing dragons this week but I couldn't find any resources. I don't think it was resourced very well. It was called Dragon Week and apparently we were supposed to go in this dark room and read the story but nobody knew whether they were supposed to read the story, write the story or where the books were. There weren't any resources, so I was disappointed with that because I can't afford to go out and buy resources. I haven't time to go to another library because I've been here till 6.00 every night and I've got my own home life so I think if they're going to do a project then it should be resourced better. The Head Teacher and the deputy made a lovely dragon to encourage them to write a story and I'm sure it's beautiful but it all went wrong. We were left sitting in the dark. Now the children are saying, 'when are we going to see the dragon' but the project finished yesterday. It all went wrong and that's where my stress was this week, with the dragon! However, I've caught up now and they've written their stories and I've levelled them and I'm quite pleased, given I didn't have any resources and it was a timed activity to see what level they're actually at so not too bad (Wanda-W-Yr.6)

Testing and targeted teaching and learning brought instantaneous satisfaction and the more you work with the system or make it work for you the easier it is to survive,

People seem to find a way to deal with things, you've just got to find a way haven't you? Because you have to work with the system, there are certain things that are in a system. You work with government, you've got power within a system, you have to work the system or you have to make the system work for you too, otherwise you end up banging your head against a brick wall (Pat-W-Yr.2).

Fast moving curriculum experiences from subject to subject and the continual swaying backwards and forwards between a variety of pedagogic experience that

often pervades primary schools currently chimes with liquid modernity (Bauman) in that the roots of an education experienced as knowledge gathering has rotted away, become disembedded and as with the liquid modern society educational anchors are regularly dropped only to be raised frequently as teachers and learners pass onto another unconnected learning activity. Teachers don't talk of pedagogy anymore, only of forms, relationships and outcomes (Comber and Nixon 2009).

The experience of the liquid modern society differs from the school experience only in that in the former, there are no people to cultivate, no nation building but only people to seduce. In schools there is also little emphasis on the cultivation of people and cultural building but the main emphasis is not so much on seducing learners as ensuring they become imbued with performative identities, marginalising the value of knowledge for itself but to produce competitive, choice based persons who can live the liquid modern life of eternally consuming and discarding. Once the subject matter of a project has been tested it can be discarded in order to move onto the next assessment which determines one's social status and identity. In the pre postmodern professional phase knowledge was valued as a faithful representation of the modern world – *bildung* – and it was assumed a world existed so teachers transmitted this world to students and they had the confidence to mould students but now the world is no longer immutable. Bauman argues that memory is useless, knowledge is sought and then evaporates as one moves on and knowledge is at the same time reconstituted, for example in the Wiki process.

The liquid modern world is more of a threat of disengagement than to surveillance for the relationship between those with power and those with less power has changed from that operating in the Total Institution. In the Greedy institution and the Reinventive Institution individuals make themselves more appealing to those in power, while at the same time those in power wish to seduce those with less power as in liquid modernity. A mutual game of seduction is at play in the embracing institution. Self regulation is a matter of developing team characteristics, conviviality and communicative skills to enhance one's position, to monitor oneself, to stay approved. One of the consequences is that the post modern professional see saws between each new initiative or recurring imperative, living a professional life of highs and lows (Troman and Raggl 2008), gaining psychic rewards and suffering psychic downturns.

Modern professional identities are imbued with emotions (Jeffrey and Woods 1997; Hargreaves 1998) concerning success and failure, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, of well being and dejection,

You just have to do it. You get frustrated, you do it and then you feel frustrated and then the results come out and you find that we got really good results and initially you go, “yay”, and then you think “well, no, that’s not really why I’m a teacher”. I’m not overly excited. I’m excited because the school has obviously done really well and certainly won’t be put into special measures or anything, they’ll probably get a pat on the back for their results. The improvements were really good and they mean a lot to me (Witney-W-Yr.6).

These internal tensions are ever present and came to the surface regularly either through expressing details on how they cope with the situation or by polarising them as they did in the first tranche of inspections in the 1990s (TT),

She leaves to go home, and I sit in the staffroom for a bit. A female teacher comes up to me and says: “This is what I get sent every week, without fail.” It’s an educational book catalogue and she points out all the SAT revision and practice books. Then she picks up a leaflet on medieval history “Ah, that’s more like it!” (FN-MM-Yr.2-24/1/07)

Primary teachers are now jugglers in this fast postmodern profession where the dominant culture is that anything is possible and everything has to be done,

Once you start taking on other subjects to manage - it’s a constant juggling act. That’s the problem and I think that you have to realise early on as a teacher that you’ll never - you’ll never finish everything. You have to reach a point where you prioritise and you’ve done the things that needed doing that day. And I often find myself thinking right, this week I’m going to do dah, dah, dah and you only achieve one of those things because there’s so many other things to take on (Cecile-C-Yr.2)

Primary teaching has, postwar, been taken up by mothers because it enabled parents to manage both childcare and a career and this still exists today although these are currently more likely to be from other careers (Troman 2008). The intensified nature of the post modern primary teacher is more likely to cause parents to choose between

the two, rather than in the 1970's integrating the two (Nias), opting for a cautious commitment (Troman, Jeffrey et al. 2007).

Well I'm quite pleased with how much I've developed in my career in just 3 years and that's a plus point with this school for Gill is very good at giving you a chance lead and help you develop. But certainly I would like to get married. I'd like to have my own children but I can't imagine for one second being able to do this and have my own children. I'm sure people do but I certainly wouldn't be able to work in a school like this where the children need a lot of my emotional side of me. I'm not sure if I could do that and have my own children (Cecile-C-Yr.2)

The predominance of the parent-teacher in primary schools is dwindling as turnover increases and the identity of the primary teacher shifts towards the total role, expected by the institution and taken up by individuals,

I suppose there comes a point where you can't work in a school like this endlessly. I have changed since I've been working here for 3 years. I experience a stress in my life that I've never had before. I'm not saying that wouldn't come in another school or even in another job because it's the only real job I've ever had really I suppose. But it wouldn't be something that I could sustain whilst having other priorities. I would very much have to put this as my priority (Cecile-C-Yr.2).

## **Conclusion**

Our conclusion from our research is that a primary teacher's life, is now one in which dilemmas are less pedagogic but relate to decisions about the extent to which they commit themselves and their identities to being a person-teacher in the mould explicated in the 1980s (Nias 1989). Another professional dilemma is one concerned with the use of creative pedagogies within soft performative practices (classroom target setting and assessment) and the extent to which they can employ creative policies and practices in the face of both soft and hard performative imperatives. At the same time there are still personal tensions being faced alongside constraints so the postmodern professional lives a teaching life of policy dilemmas, tensions and constraints.

Their professionalism has been extended rather than restricted to areas of expertise (Hoyle 1980), made more total, in which direct accountability to government via their school performance widened their focus of professional engagement and with the incorporation of managerial approaches, which now permeate teacher activity they now experience a professionally ambiguous role (Evans 1994) or post-modern professionalism. This ambiguity is very different to that of the autonomy phase of professionalism when primary teachers' main issues were to do with classroom dilemmas focused on control, curriculum and societal issues. These were professional dilemmas faced by primary teachers in classes in which their professional judgment was paramount. The ambiguity faced by the teachers in our research concerned their interests in playing their full part in the survival and development of the institution of which they are a member in the local environment and developing a creative pedagogy. The situation was a complex one for both performative and creative policies have government support. Teachers' tensions over how to manage this situation is one that is replicated at a global level, where economic interests demand both creative and performative outcomes from institutions. Teachers private lives at the micro level have internalised the tensions of macro public policies (Mills 1959). Governmentality works at the micro level through examining local discourses, the kinds of power relations established and the emergence of agency through the strategic practices that Foucault (1979) maintains dominate local situations as Thrift (Thrift 2000) notes, 'To govern human beings is not to crush their capacity to act, but to acknowledge it and to utilise it for one's own objectives' (Rose 2000) p.4). In this sense our research shows clearly the workings of governmentality.

Each of the postmodern professional identities - the managerial teacher, the creative teacher and the performing teacher - is a challenge to the self, to maintain and develop the former and to meet the challenges faced by external demands and the progression of their learners. They are both embraced by the institution, and they return this warmth by embracing the institution's values and imperatives while, to some extent, depleting the self, just as the teacher's of the Nias era (1989) depleted the self through their personal commitment. The post modern professional is both invigorated by and depleted by their institutional commitment. There are professional debilitating tensions and mixed emotions about their role of teaching, their passion for creative pedagogy and their commitment to improve the lot of their learners. There is some

private performative anxiety in the face of performative failure and this affects their interest in professional care and educational development.

However, they have also developed a professional ease with their situation, an acceptance of their lot but a desire to maintain some control over it, a professional pride at any resulting performative progress and they maintain an interest in any professional progress and at the same they value the solidarity of values and professional aims in today's collective enterprises. They are imbued with the discourses of the day as they replicate the language and aims of the policy discourses, both performative and creative but they seek to manage any conflicts between them as best they can and at the same time act creatively to overlay them as the flexible opportunities present themselves. The amount of work and the desire to achieve difficult crossings are wearisome but challenging. They accept the fast moving situations and use their energy and commitment to manage them replicating the fast moving policy and economic global scene. Fast teachers for fast times – the Total Teacher.

However, it is also argued that the situation regarding institutional dominance over professionalism is not new in that education organisations provide the *raison d'être* for educational professionalism (Vanderstraeten 2007) and to some extent this is true for there has always been an element of institutional bias which overwhelms new teachers fresh from any training based in the educational disciplinary knowledge and progressive pedagogies; the institution enables and delimits educational interaction. In this scenario the profession has an outspoken interest in reforming its organisational structure again, again and again (Vanderstraeten 2007). However, this perspective assumes that the interests of the teacher professional is in conflict with the organisation's bureaucracy and our research appears to show now that the power of the current discourses of openness, aspiration, team work, performativity and creativity, underpinned by institutional competitiveness ensures a much closer connection between the construction of professional values through institutional values – the postmodern total professional.

We are seeing the institutionalisation of disposition where organisational policies determine the nature of professionalism (Søreide 2007) as being flexible and totally supporting the survival and development of the institution to which the teacher belongs as the priority to determine professional aims and values. If the values of the

institution coincide with teacher imported values such as social justice the morphology is united, if not then the teacher is bound to alter their disposition and identity to ensure their professional responsibility becomes reciprocal with that of the institution's development.

However, at the same time a Foucauldian perspective suggests that the existence of conflicting and contradictory discourses creates space for agency (Davies 1990) and provides teachers with a way of reconstructing a value based professionalism, marginalising the technocratic aspects many endured in the period of constraint, a professional role that includes creative values, progression and achievement values and holistic educational values. For one of our privileged schools this indeed the case, in which creative teaching and learning became a major underpinning of their curriculum and pedagogic policies.

Nevertheless, ensuring that the development of creative teaching and learning becomes a dominant discourse in primary schools is mostly very difficult for it fights for space with other policy priorities such as learning to learn, personalised learning and assessment for learning but it has a legitimate foothold and legitimacy never before achieved both in practice and policy. It is on track to develop a stable tension with performativity priorities whilst at the same time fighting to show how crude instrumental and hard performative (national testing) strategies may be less effective and generally debilitating. We may now be in a period where creative performances in the service of the institution is being demanded of the postmodern professional and although these may be filled with tensions both positive and debilitating a space has been created to continue the development of creative teaching and learning.

The Foucauldian approach of genealogy is criticised as leading to reformism due to the complexity of the power situation and it is argued that these situations need research to be political, to engage in imaginative foresight concerning the possibilities of change. It is not enough just to reveal the circulation of power but to search in Gramscian terms for opportunities for agency (Olssen 2006). The development of the creativity discourse has been an opportunity for teachers to develop curriculum and pedagogies that run counter to the performativity discourse (Troman, Jeffrey et al. 2007) and in some rare cases to integrate the two as in 'smart teaching' (Jeffrey and Troman 2009). Being embraced by the institution and embracing its policies does not

prevent teachers acting agentially to influence the institution's policies, a significant part of the post modern professional activity.

The development of free schools appears to enhance the power of the institution over professional values but at the same time the possibility of teachers and others attached to the free schools influencing curriculum and pedagogy. This development would complete the fragmentation of the educational professional as individual values would be tied to the values of the institution.

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