Introduction

What This Book Is About

The idea for editing and contributing to a book on community building in teacher education grew out of long discussions between the two editors when Helen was among the resource persons invited to participate in an International Seminar on English Language Teaching, at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (Rama's institution) in Hyderabad, India. After several false starts over a two-year period, we discussed a possible outline for the book and contacted potential contributors when Rama spent a semester in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina, Canada (Helen's institution).

Community building among partners in teacher education is not a new idea. Indeed, the teacher education literature over the past decade or so contains many stories of successful and not so successful partnerships (See for instance, Christiansen, Goulet, Krentz, and Maeers 1997; Clandinin and Connelly 1995; Johnston 1997). There is not much in the literature, however, about partnerships between and among faculty in teacher education programs. What are we doing in our faculties to build community among ourselves? What are some of the daily challenges we face as professional faculties within the academy? What does collaboration mean to who we are, and to what we do as teacher educators and as persons?

Key questions and issues with regard to community building in

faculties of education or teacher training institutions vary from one country to another, and even from one faculty to another. Wherever we are, our cultures and histories have shaped, and continue to shape us. Yet the fact that we are all involved in teacher education, and as such are part of a university culture, means we have issues in common. The differences among us, on the other hand, provide us with opportunities for greater understandings of the process of educating teachers as we continue to educate ourselves.

The book is divided into four parts or sections, all of which explore some aspect of community building and collaboration among teacher educators. Each chapter was written by colleagues who work, or have worked in the same institution for a short or longer time. Some continue to be close colleagues (i.e., work in the same physical environment), others are like the editors, meeting virtually (through e-mail), at conferences, and in one another's institutions whenever possible, sometimes even co-teaching a course or part of a course.

People, paradigms, and programs form an integral part of any scholarly discussion about community building in teacher education. Some would argue that opening a book with a section focused on paradigms would have provided readers with a theoretical framework right from the beginning. The editors, however, believe that community begins with each individual, and so chose to focus on people as community builders first, then to focus on paradigms for community building, and finally to return to a focus on people within programs. A "strong" theme throughout the book is community as lived experience. These are stories of individuals interacting with one another in communities.

Part One, in which individuals reflect on their efforts at community building, begins with a chapter co-authored by the editors. The purpose of chapter 1 is to open the conversation by pondering possible definitions for community, a concept understood by all, but not necessarily in the same way or ways. To give the discussion a context we also share our stories of community as lived in our institutions—a midsized university on the Canadian prairies, and a nationally recognized postgraduate training institute in South Central India. In chapter 2, Mary Beattie reminds us that a practice of community starts with each of us, and with the question: Who am I in community with others? For Beattie, community takes place within responsible, reciprocal relationships. In chapter 3, Katie Flockhart and Vera Woloshyn discuss such relationships as they tell their story of mutual mentoring when teaching two sections of the same course.

In Part Two, contributors use different paradigmatic lenses to share their stories of community building. In chapter 4, Lorraine Ling,

Eva Burman, and Maxine Cooper argue that the meaning of the word *community* has probably changed, suggesting that in the postmodern era one has a sense of belonging to multiple communities. In chapter 5, Hans Smits and David Friesen link community and identity, using hermeneutics as a theoretical tool in order to reflect on their experience of planning and teaching a generic course in teacher education at their university. Sometimes a paradigm can be a powerful force in creating community by bringing together likeminded persons. This is at the heart of the discussion in chapter 6. In it, Florence Samson and her colleagues at the University of Toronto explore ways in which the community at the Centre for Teacher Development shapes and is being shaped by narrative inquiry. The community story these educators tell is one that is still emerging out of the shared physical and intellectual space at the Centre. Sometimes a community can reach inside itself and toward others at the same time. This is the story Carol Mullen and Patrick Diamond tell about arts-based inquiry in collaborative communities in the final chapter in this section, chapter 7. These educators suggest that communities can be thought of as entities "stitched together" in a kind of patchwork quilt or montage.

Part Three focuses on links between community building and program development in the United States, Australia, and Israel. Chapter 8 breaks new ground as it discusses the process of creating communities online. This raises an interesting question: Do people need to have face to face contact (F2F) in order to build community? In chapter 9, Robyn Ewing and David Smith describe the new Master of Teaching Degree program at the University of Sydney. Here there is a lot of "F2F" as education students and faculty, teachers and administrators work together in school and university classrooms. What about partnerships? How do these enrich the lives of teacher educators? This is an underlying question in chapter 10, which explores the different kinds of partnerships initiated by the Victoria University of Technology.

The final chapter in Part Three focuses on community building within the framework of a professional specialization program at the MOFET Institute in Israel. In chapter 11, Miriam Ben-Peretz and Moshe Silberstein provide a theoretical framework for their study of community building as they explore the implications of two polar opposites: *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society). Thomas Sergiovanni suggests that schools "possess characteristics of both" and that "as *gesellschaft strengthens, gemeinschaft* weakens" leading to "a loss of community with all of its negative consequences" (1994, 13, author's emphasis). This leads us to ponder the implications of Sergiovanni's suggestion for faculties of education. Are the latter more like a univer-

sity (which may or may not be more like an organization) or more like a school? It could be argued that more than most of the other university units, a faculty of education's principal mandate is to serve the public through educating its future teachers. And so, both teachers and teacher educators are part of the same educational community. Unlike teachers in schools, however, an important part of the communities teacher educators serve are outside of the actual physical space in which they work. Their offices and classrooms are in the university, but a large part of a teacher educator's other responsibilities pertain to supervision and co-ordination of student teaching practica in schools. More often than not, a significant part of teacher education research also takes part in schools. And so, teacher educators are typically involved in creating communities of inquiry with teachers and administrators.

Like teachers, teacher educators work across communities. Like teachers, an important part of their community building is not with peers. Like their colleagues in schools, teacher educators work at building community with their students. With the increasing enrollments of "mature" students in university classes, and especially in graduate level courses, it is even possible for a teacher educator to teach with a former student as happened with Flockhart and Woloshyn. Moreover, teacher educators often encounter former education students in the schools now in the role of mentors or cooperating teachers.

Part Four contains a single chapter written by the editors. Contributors' stories provide evidence to suggest there are a lot of similarities from one teacher education faculty to another—from one country to another. There are common threads because all the contributors are engaged in some way or another, in the practice of teacher education. The purpose of chapter 12 is to pull together these threads. The book closes with an Epilogue.