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Challenging Student Satisfaction through the Education of Desires

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Abstract: This article challenges the practice of encouraging teacher educators to strive and raise the levels of student satisfaction in their classes as if such a criterion provides a measure of good *teaching. Such a practice involves what Giroux describes as 'corporate pedagogy' which conforms to the neoliberal inclination to meet the demands of the customer in the market. However it is argued in this paper that* educative *teaching, as especially described by Dewey, ought to challenge and re-evaluate the expectations and desires that students bring with them to class. Rather than aiming to satisfy customer expectations, teacher educators ought to lead the tertiary sector by challenging the notion of good quality teaching through educating the desires of students. Perhaps this may involve educators aiming to 'dissatisfy' students as per Mill's 'dissatisfied Socrates'.*

Introduction

Levels of student satisfaction gained through surveys are being given increasing importance in the tertiary sector as they are assumed to be able to measure the quality of teaching (Denson *et al*., 2010). This approach promotes a sense of market competition where students, as customers, can 'choose' what is perceived to be the best quality (Hursh, 2005; Olssen & Peters, 2005). Consequently in Darwinian fashion teachers and their institutions which provide high quality thrive due to increasing amounts of customers while poor quality teachers either adopt and conform to satisfying market demands, or become extinct.

It is contended here that teacher educators ought to be the ones who are able to resist this bureaucratic pressure by instead demonstrating other sorts of *good* teaching which *educate* rather than just 'teach' because presumably we are the ones whose expertise is located in the practice of education. According to Peters (1970, p. 40) not all teaching educates and so we realise that 'good teaching' is a contested concept and can be understood differently by management driven with a corporate agenda compared with educators who actually educate. Managers who accept the corporate value of 'choice' consider good teaching to be satisfying market demands in order to secure funding while educators consider good teaching as challenging and re-evaluating the actual desires that students bring with them to class. It might be possible that these two agendas can co-exist but it is contended here that when the satisfying of student expectations is pursued by management this may actually have a detrimental effect on the capacity of teachers to actually teach well and to educate.

In the current climate of accountability, corporatisation, neoliberalism, and performativity which Sahlberg (2011, p. 100) identifies as characteristic of the GERM (Global Education Reform Movement) which has adversely infected our capacity to educate, academic teachers are being encouraged to adopt what Giroux (2012) describes as 'corporate pedagogy'. Aiming to satisfy student expectations is considered a virtue of corporate pedagogy where the students, as customers, are considered to be appropriate in providing the

reference point for determining 'good' teaching. However little attention is ever given as to whether such 'good' teaching is educative or not. Indeed Nicole and Harrison (2003, p. 24) argue that much of what is understood as 'good teaching' in higher education in the UK is "theoretically impoverished ...[and] fails to match up to the complexity and diversity of the everyday work of teachers." Good teaching which educates is quite different to corporate pedagogy because it does not seek to satisfy the expectations of students but instead aims to challenge, re-evaluate and even transform them and it is teacher educators who ought to lead this alternative approach.

The importance which is being given to levels of student satisfaction for the purpose of evaluating teaching stands in direct contrast to educators such as John Dewey (1929, p. 260) who has argued "that finding satisfaction in a thing may be a warning". This paper seeks to challenge the assumed value of student satisfaction surveys for the purpose of measuring teaching quality and through doing so will argue that the promotion of such surveys demonstrates a lack of understanding about *education*. Not all teaching is educative. Some sorts of teaching are *mis*educative as Dewey was very clear about, and some sorts of teaching are indoctrinatory. It is important that those who are responsible for the teaching of units and courses in the higher *education* sector are able to distinguish between the sorts of 'good' teaching which educates from the sorts of teaching which do not. It is suggested here that such educative teaching might in fact involve students becoming 'dissatisfied' in a Socratic sense rather than being satisfied, and this shall be explained later in the paper.

According to Biesta (2010, p. 54) it is through "economic language" that we have inherited the orientation to "satisfy" expectations and he warns us as educators that this approach "should not be conflated with democracy, which is about public deliberation and contestation about the common good..." This is because he identifies that neoliberal organisations and "the state no longer represent the common good" but they become mere regulators and quality controllers of offerings in the marketplace (Biesta, 2010, pp. 100-1). Consequently critical and democratic approaches to pedagogical practices in education are actively discouraged (Hursh, 2005; Webster, 2009) and compliance to best practice are increasingly required. This creates a tension which has been described by Biesta (2006; 2010), Blake *et al*. (2000) and Pring (2004) as a clash between the concerns which are intrinsic to the discourse of education compared with the concerns of efficiency and effectiveness which are characteristic of corporate pedagogy. This can present individual teacher educators with a dilemma regarding their teaching which is either to comply with the mandated teaching approach which primarily seeks to satisfy student expectations, or alternatively to sometimes 'dissatisfy' students in the sense of a Socratic or Nietzschean style which can 'sting' or 'wound' students for their own 'good' in an effort to encourage them to think more deeply and more critically than they may otherwise be inclined – as we would associate with an educative experience.

The Perceived Value of Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is to be understood as one aspect of the overall concern for *quality* in higher education. Mertova *et al*., (2010) clearly locate that the emergence of 'quality' as a concern of management in higher education has its origins in the British manufacturing industry where there was a focus upon the needs for standardization. This then developed through the business and into the public sectors where we currently have been experiencing it in higher education over recent years. Katiliūtė and Kazlauskienė (2010, p. 582) acknowledge that defining quality in the context of higher education is more difficult that in the manufacturing and service industries and in reviewing much of the literature on

this topic they conclude that "the indicators of educational quality are often the satisfaction of students..." and other stakeholders. They identify that there is often a pursuit of the perceptions of students as 'customers' as to how they perceive the 'goodness' of what universities provide for them in terms of what they were already expecting and that these perceptions involving satisfaction provide a major indicator by which management might place their confidence in to conclude that quality has been measured.

A major problem with using 'quality' and 'satisfaction' as dimensions for measuring teaching performances is that they are indefinable terms, just like the word 'good' (Murdoch, 1971, p. 3). For example, Lomas *et al*., (2010, p. 76) begin with a quote by Ellis stating "quality refers to the standards that must be met to achieve specified purposes to the satisfaction of customers" and then proceed to explain how this plays out in both the accountability and the enhancement approaches to quality management in higher education. Quite clearly the privileging of a "customer perspective" requires teacher educators to be compliant and accountable to meeting student desires but never is there any effort made on the part of management to make explicit what the criteria of students actually are and upon which students make their judgements (Harvey & Green, 1993, p. 9).

This active avoidance for making criteria explicit for evaluating teaching is characteristic of the corporate and neoliberal perspectives. This is recognised by Peters and Waterman (1984, p. 173) who argued that the fast-food business McDonalds have identified that 'quality' is very important to them "because quality is what customers enjoy each time they visit a McDonald's restaurant." However they don't actually define what they mean by 'quality' but simply assume it to exist *because* customer expectations are apparently satisfied as demonstrated by their willingness to keep returning for the same standard of dependable services and products. The success of McDonalds, as a corporation, is evidenced in customer satisfaction which is considered to be the reward for their efficient and effective performance. Once the products and services have been identified as desirable by the customer, McDonalds managerial concerns can just focus on the means of providing these without any need for critically deliberating as to how 'good' the end products might be or how 'good' and worthwhile the expectations and desires of the customers are. However, it is contended here that such an orientation is not valuable for institutions of human services and especially for education and indeed actively work *against* education. Not all food is good for us irrespective of what we might desire, and this also holds true for teaching.

It is important to recognise what is of greatest concern here – not the inherent goodness or otherwise of the product or service but rather the satisfying of the expectations of customers – irrespective of whether such expectations can be legitimated as appropriate for a democracy rather than a capitalistic culture. Having such an orientation to satisfy customer expectations is described by MacIntyre (1992) as enabling management not to concern itself with critically challenging the actual end *telos* – or end purposes – of the product or service of the organisation, but rather in just attending to the efficient and effective means by which such end purposes are attained. Quite clearly this practice assumes a means-end dichotomy where the attention of practitioners are encouraged to see only one part of this relationship (usually the means) and consequently fail to grasp that both ends and means are inextricably involved with each other.

Problematic Nature of Student Satisfaction

There are two main concerns for conducting student evaluation surveys in the higher education sector. The first is for 'quality assurance' which aims to provide feedback to stakeholders about the quality and effectiveness of practices. The second concern addresses the on-going improvement that is expected of academics as professionals. Regarding the first of these – quality assurance – the surveys which seek student satisfaction provide some of the data upon which strategic decisions can be based. Management seek to find what courses attract and retain students and which do not. Questions in student surveys are typically vague regarding what actual criteria the students may employ to judge what is 'high quality'. For example exactly how much work is comfortably manageable in the question 'The workload in this unit was manageable'? If a full-time student happens to consider that amongst her many commitments each week that it reasonable and manageable to give two hours of her time to studying each unit, therefore any demands by the lecturer upon her time which exceeds these two hours she will judge in her student evaluation survey to be "too much work". However this criterion of a two hour limit is kept hidden in the survey data and yet her low satisfaction is recorded without any acknowledgement that she simply did not 'like' having to do more than two hours of reading each week.

It can be recognised that levels of student satisfaction may well serve as an indicator of future applications to study courses but it is not a valid predictor (Richardson, 2005). At this level of concern the marketing teams at universities are understandably interested in the levels of satisfaction for particular programs which are offered, rather than how satisfied students are with individual units or even teachers. However we are witnessing a great deal of focus by university management to assess levels of student satisfaction for individual teachers and for the units they teach – and this is motivated by the second concern other than the marketability of particular programs, and one which is contended here to threaten education itself.

The second main interest for why student satisfaction surveys are conducted is to improve and renew the quality of teaching practices. Typical question items are often structured along the following format:

- This unit was well taught;
- The teaching staff gave me useful feedback;
- This unit was intellectually stimulating and challenged me to learn;

Academic staff can sometimes receive an overall rating for their effectiveness at meeting student expectations. In this regard some typical statements in the questionnaires given to students include:

- I was satisfied with the quality of teaching from this teacher in this unit.
- Overall I was satisfied with the quality of the unit.

Degrees of student satisfaction are employed to identify 'weak' and 'strong' units as well as how effective individual teachers are. While the labels of 'strong' and 'weak' are readily embedded in the assumed evidence that the data provide, these terms offer little in the way of a valid assessment of the *educative* value offered by such teachers. Clearly the rhetoric surrounding 'diagnosing' potential weakness of unit offerings only addresses the *effectiveness* of appealing to student expectations and not to how such expectations themselves might be valuable. Performance reviews of teachers by managers can put pressure to constantly 'improve' the satisfaction of students and it is contended that as teacher educators who are embedded in education ought to offer a resistance to such practices.

These two concerns of accountability and on-going improvement are based upon contrasting agenda's, so much so that Trow (1996) argues that the two are in conflict. Padró (2010, p. 45) summarises this conflict by identifying that "accountability focuses on what is

happening and does not necessarily focus on improvement" and to do so requires that there needs to be some engagement with *value adding*. This is the sort of understanding of quality in higher education that UNESCO promotes in its literature. For example, promoting "critical thinking and active citizenship" is argued what ought to be cultivated in students (Colclough, 2005; UNESCO, 2009, pp. 2 & 4). However Davies (2011, p. 255) reports that "disturbingly, despite our best intentions, it appears we may be teaching very little of it [i.e. critical thinking]". It is claimed here that pursuing to satisfy student expectations may well be contributing to this problem of a lack of critical thought and indeed to the loss of an understanding of public education itself (Giroux, 2007; Taubman, 2009).

While it is readily recognised that using levels of student satisfaction to measure quality teaching is invalid (Denson *et al*., 2010; Green, 1994, p. 17) it is claimed here that when we as teacher educators promote critical thinking this can actually work *against* student satisfaction results. This is not just a concern from the teacher's perspective during performance reviews with management but is also recognised by some students too. Recently in response to my own efforts to promote critical thinking in a teacher education program one of my undergraduate students wrote,

> In case I don't meet up with you again Scott, I sincerely thank you for the lectures, authors, concepts, existential dilemmas and philosophical ambiguities which you have opened up for us. It's been a truly wonderful part of the journey; never easy, never straightforward, always engaging - in short, what I hoped for from my uni experience…

This student clearly appreciates the sort of critical thinking that many educators are trying to encourage in their classes and is appreciative when such experiences are provided. However he is also well aware that his expectations/desires positions him in the minority of the students studying teacher education as he also stated that,

> As with all the units/tutors who push, poke, provoke and force reflection and questioning, I fear for you in the SETU [Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units] bitchfest. But I am without doubt that the teachers who will be still teaching happily in 15 years time will be the ones whose lives you touched.

Here he understands that many of his fellow students treat this satisfaction survey like a 'bitchfest' rather than as a valid form of evaluation. A similar perception is shared by another one of my past students who recently wrote to me. He states,

> you have no idea how much your provocative lessons are missed (by the minority of 'classy' students, the rest are probably glad they don't have someone trying to make them think in a lecture anymore... Plato's simile of the cave anyone?)

Again we see this student identify himself in the minority (with a tongue-in-cheek description of being 'classy') who appreciates having his expectations challenged and yet simultaneously understands that the majority of his colleagues are not so appreciative and indeed can become quite resentful. The potential implications upon our graduates who enter the teaching profession is quite profound.

The particular surveys used by management to obtain levels of student satisfaction are not valid measures of 'good' teaching, where 'good' is understood here as the sort that is *educative*. In order for a survey of 'good' or 'quality' teaching to have any claim to validity there must first be credible and clear criteria employed and understood by the respondents and which are clearly educative in value – not just efficient and effective. Not all teaching *educates*. Some teaching simply instructs and 'delivers' skills and information as is typical of *training* programmes where knowledge is treated as a commodity. Being able to

discriminate between different sorts of teaching is a core issue for us and our graduate students as educators (Hockings *et al*., 2009) – but not necessarily of concern for managers of tertiary institutions who adopt corporate and neoliberal perspectives. The satisfaction of student expectations is *not* a criterion for educative teaching to aim for.

The Problem with Satisfaction from an Educational Perspective

It is argued here that student satisfaction is not only an invalid indicator of teaching quality but the pursuit of it may actually be *mis*educative. To make this case we need to recognise that the phenomenon of 'satisfaction' has two main dimensions which include a felt or mental desire for something that is lacking and secondly an actual physical event which meets the expectation produced by the desire. This was recognised by Dewey who also explained that,

> Because of the subjectivistic interpretation of end, need, and satisfaction, the verbally correct statement that valuation is a relation between a personal attitude and extra-personal things ...is so construed as to involve separation of means and end, of appraisal and prizing. (Dewey, 1988, p. 223)

Here he identified that fundamentally we are *not* to focus upon only ends such as desires and expectations, or only upon the means involving the extra-personal things such as 'pedagogies of best practice' because to do so would be to create a false dichotomy between means and ends. Instead he argued that we ought to focus upon relations. This means that there is the *one* phenomenon of a relational interaction between educative teaching and the expectations (desires) of students in the *one* experience where both the elements of pedagogy *and* desires are to be enacted and evaluated with each other. So just as the 'means' of the activity – such as pedagogy for example – can be evaluated and possibly changed, so too can 'ends' be evaluated and possibly changed – which in this case includes the desires and expectations of our students.

Educators must take into account both the processes of their pedagogies *and* the expectations and desires of students simultaneously in the *one* relation. This has direct implications for teachers as it clearly distinguishes between educational work compared with servicing customers because as educators we necessarily have an ontological concern regarding the sort of persons our students are becoming. This has serious import for education as demonstrated through Dewey's warning when he stated,

> To say that something satisfies is to report something as an isolated finality …How shall the satisfaction be rated? Is it a value or is it not? Is it something to be prized and cherished, to be enjoyed? Not stern moralists alone but everyday experience informs us that finding satisfaction in a thing may be a warning, a summons to be on the lookout for consequences. (Dewey, 1929, p. 260)

Dewey very clearly indicated that the satisfaction of desires cannot be assumed to be valuable nor is it to be regarded as self-evident to simply gratify a 'need'. Where value is uncovered is to inquire into the longer-term consequences of having such desires in the first place and how pursuing their satisfaction affects others and the rest of the environment. This is why Dewey challenges us as educators to distinguish between desires which are simply dominated "by impulse, chance, blind habit and self-interest" with

> The formation of a cultivated and effectively operative good judgement or taste with respect to what is esthetically admirable, intellectually acceptable and morally approvable [which] is the

> supreme task set to human beings by the incidents of experience.
> (Dewey, 1929, p. 262)

As teacher educators who are not going to assume a false means/end dichotomy, we are equally interested in the pedagogies which we employ in our craft of teaching *and* we are simultaneously interested in the sorts of persons our students are becoming – including what desires are being cultivated in their lives and their capacities to make good judgements which we would trust would be exercised for the greater public good rather than only for private self-interest.

In our work of *education* we cannot simply pander to the desires of students and seek to satisfy them as if they were customers who have every right to be led by any whimsical self-interested desire they might choose. As educators we have a responsibility to seriously engage with the interests and desires of our students to help enable them to improve their capacity for making wise judgments. This involves fostering such habits as critical thinking in order to become 'better' people who are able to live more meaningful and socially responsible lives. This is not a new idea for education but has been clearly demonstrated by educators of the ancient world such as Plato's Socrates which shall be the subject of the next section.

Education as Potentially 'Dissatisfying'

To 'satisfy' customers – or indeed students – is not a virtue of education. This is made explicitly clear through the example of Plato's Socrates. In his *Gorgias*, Plato contrasts the educative approach of his teacher Socrates with that of the orator Gorgias. Gorgias taught oratory to students who were willing to pay him for his efforts and therefore it was in his interest to provide for customer satisfaction to these students who were financially able to pay for the lessons he taught. We can see in this work that Gorgias wanted to please his students by satisfying their expectations for attaining something of use to their career aspirations. Pandering is a term used to describe such an orientation of delivering what the customer/voter/student wants and this is clearly applied to the teaching approach of Gorgias where we hear from Socrates that, "oratory… The generic name which I should give it is pandering" (Plato, 2004, pp. 30 & 96) which simply and rather vulgarly aims "to give pleasure without any regard for what is better or worse". In contrast we read that Socrates who was also a teacher – although according to Plato he did his teaching not for wage or profit – had a different approach in which he explained "what I say on any occasion is not designed to please, and because I aim not at what is most agreeable but at what is best, and will not employ those 'niceties'" (Plato, 2004, p. 128).

To sum up this contrast we can see how Gorgias's main motive was to pander to the 'private good' of the self interests of his students who were willing to pay him because they were satisfied with how his teaching was going to meet their desires for attaining personal profit and power. Socrates on the other hand was an *educator*, and so he was motivated quite differently. He primarily had an interest in the 'public good' and in the long-term good of individual souls. At times this put him at odds with the ruling elite – indeed they condemned him to death because of his approach which involved being like a horse-fly or sting-ray by provoking the conscience of his listeners – which he claimed was nevertheless for their own good. This is summed up in the words of the translator Dodd (in Plato, 1959, p. 225) who described the teaching of Gorgias as an activity which "panders to public taste instead of trying to educate it" while Socrates quite differently, attempted to educate public taste by critically challenging a re-evaluation of taken-for-granted norms, desires and expectations of the public at large.

To fast forward to our current corporate world we can conclude that Gorgais would probably score extremely well in his student feedback evaluations, where he clearly endeavoured to satisfy the expectations of his listeners. Socrates however would not be expected to do so well in our current universities due to students being disturbed and provoked into *thinking* – which is difficult work and takes a lot of effort. The managerial supervisors of Socrates performance reviews may be unlikely to invite him to take of the hyssop but they would probably advise him to consider a career change. Quite clearly his 'failure' in student evaluation surveys would not be because his teaching didn't have educative value but because there would be fear in management that his units would not attract fee-paying customers in the future. It is probably too tough a call to make that a class with Socrates, while being challenging and difficult, ought to be a core experience for all university students, irrespective if they found that it satisfied their desires or not – but because it actually did them and the rest of society some good.

In recognition of the experience of being 'stung' into thinking, rather than pursue satisfaction it is suggested here that being 'dissatisfied' might actually have some educative value. It was J. S. Mill (1971, p. 20) who famously declared that "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied that a pig satisfied, better to be a Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." Here Mill advanced the notion of moral character rather than promote the pleasure principle found in Bentham's Utilitarianism which was simply to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number without ever evaluating the 'good' of such happiness. Mill argued instead for the development of the capacity to make better judgments because one is better enabled in understanding and so he recognised the need to have one's desires critically appraised.

To become a dissatisfied Socrates, students should be transformed and become different regarding how they know, think and feel, as well as what they actually desire and expect. On this Dewey (2008, p.244-5) quotes Mill's statement that "I regard any considerable increase of human happiness, through mere changes in outward circumstances, unaccompanied by changes in the state of desires, as hopeless" to draw attention to the importance that educators must address "factors internal to the self in creating a *worthy* happiness" [my emphasis]. The meeting or satisfying of desires and expectations is not valuable in terms of education. Rather the desires and expectations of students must be critically re-evaluated in terms of what is 'good' and worthwhile for others – not just pleasurable. He argued that "Education should create an interest in all persons in furthering the general good, so that they will find their own happiness realized in what they can do to improve the conditions of others" (Dewey, 2008, p. 243). Reference to the need to transcend personal interest to engage with the public good is most important for Dewey as he recognised the significance that this has for democracy.

This means that for our classes in education studies, *if* they are to be educative, cannot only involve students acquiring skills, knowledge and behaviours in the sense of being *trained* or simply providing what they as clients desire for their own personal and private gains. Rather *educative* experiences must also seriously engage with the sense of meanings that students give to their learning including what they know as well as what they feel, think and desire and how these contribute to the public good. This latter aspect of educating desires is crucial as Dewey (2008, p. 247) explained that while desire points to some object aimed for – such as a skill or commodity like knowledge to be obtained, what needs to be considered is "would the action which achieves it further the well-being of all concerned?" Here Dewey argued that discriminating "which kind of happiness is truly moral" is an inescapably important aspect of educating students. All education is a moral education and consequently the satisfaction of any desires is not necessarily good unless the whole relation between teaching and the evaluation of student desires is considered. Therefore Dewey

(2008, p. 248) concludes that the student who is becoming educated "gets a personal satisfaction or happiness because his desire is fulfilled, but his desire has first been made after a definite pattern."

In order to provide educative learning experiences for students, we must be mindful that they are *being* educated – not just *having* an education. That is, their way-of-being, their character is being enhanced in addition to them gaining knowledge and skills. This holistic and *qualitative* understanding of educative learning was described by Dewey as inquiry which involves genuine problematic situations for students in which they are genuinely interested. He stated that his notion of inquiry involves providing challenging learning which can even involve experiencing being "disturbed, troubled, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, etc." (Dewey, 1938, p. 109).

Such educative experiences which are characterised by critical and significant thinking can evoke feelings of dissatisfaction in the sense that students of education have to grapple with complexities and uncertainties without being assured that there is an answer, solution or method to relieve them of such thinking. Such environments involving inquiry are described by Shulman (2004, p. 494) as being "inherently uncertain, complex and demanding". However he also recognises that this is not a common sort of experience provided for students in teacher education programs, reporting that we often pay lip service only to the likes of Dewey when it comes to education but in fact "we have prepared generations of teachers who are very uncomfortable with uncertainty, and who are intolerant of uncertainty" (Shulman, 2004, p. 497).

Garrison (2010, p. 88, 107) has recognised that Dewey's approach to inquiry centres upon *eros* which is inclusive of the interests and desires of students, because clearly "those who do not care do not inquire." He argues that "It is a mistake to think that inquiry begins in something so precise as a stated cognitive problem. It begins in an ineffably vague qualitative situation" and so holistically and existentially it is understood as "*problematic* situations" which are felt as much as they are known (Garrison, 2010, p. 104).

Dewey described a person being educated as one who is disciplined enough so as to be able to handle questions and problems in an open and critical way rather than one who feels secure due to an accumulation of facts, answers and solutions. He claimed that "a person who has gained the power of reflective attention, the power to hold problems, questions, before the mind, is, in so far, intellectually speaking, *educated*." (Dewey, 1977a, p. 202). Elsewhere he referred to such reflective attention as reflective thinking which he explained requires one to be,

> Willing to endure suspense and undergo the trouble of searching. To many persons both suspense of judgment and intellectual search are disagreeable; they want to get them ended as soon as possible. They cultivate an over-positive and dogmatic habit of mind …To be genuinely thoughtful, we must be willing to sustain and protract that state of doubt which is stimulus to thorough inquiry… (Dewey, 1989, p. 124)

This view of Dewey's is similar to Heidegger's who also warned of the problem of 'answers' in the form of knowledge is potentially problematic because to 'have' these is to do away with questions and therefore eliminate the need to think. Thinking is difficult and so is significant learning (Biesta, 2006) and Dewey recognised that as humans we have a tendency to be intellectually lazy and avoid challenging thinking whenever we can. This is why he argued that it is important for us to go beyond just focussing on motivating students and instead we ought to engage with their very interests and desires.

In order for an experience to be educative Dewey argued that we ought to focus on the thoughts, purposes and ideas by which students conduct their lives. He described that this

'interest' of students is the interplay between their actions and their desires and ideas which lead them to make such actions. He claimed that

> The business of the educator – whether parent or teacher – is to see to it that the greatest possible number of ideas acquired by children and youth are acquired in such a vital way that they become moving ideas, motive-forces in the guidance of conduct. (Dewey, 1977b, p. 267)

This emphasis of Dewey's to transcend the limited notion of 'knowledge' and instead to include interests and moving ideas, is argued by Garrison (2010, p. 142) what ought to be the focus for educators as he states that "Motivation is never a problem. The problem is how to educate the human eros to take an interest in truly valuable things." He explains that our actions are intentional and goal-directed desires for a purpose, what Dewey (1988, p. 237) refers to as "ends-in-view".

According to Dewey, educating the interests, desires and expectations of our students as well as their ends-in-view or purposes and goals, is central for educative experiences and this must simultaneously accompany the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Garrison (2010, pp.x iii, xvi) highlights the significance of this for the notion of personhood when he states that "we become what we love. Our destiny is in our desires..." and as a consequence of this the role of education should enable students to determine "the difference between desires" and their consequences in order that "those that are genuinely desirable" can be embodied in a better way of life. Such an orientation to education clearly confronts the value of simply pandering to meet the desires of students unchallenged.

Conclusion

Good teaching is a contested concept and the literature on teaching makes it evident that 'quality' is a very vague term that is able to be easily manipulated by corporate and managerial interests. However rather than view good teaching through the lens of market demands as evidenced through student satisfaction, we as teacher educators instead understand good teaching as being primarily *educative*. Pandering to satisfy student desires is valuable for corporate interests in a capitalist market but it is *not* valuable for education, which seeks instead to challenge and cultivate the desires of students through critical thinking and giving consideration to the public good. Therefore rather than managers desiring to pursue the corporate agenda of seeking to satisfy students as if they were only clients, perhaps Ramsden's (2003, p. 239) advice might be appropriate at this point as he argued "We need to educate all academic managers about the qualities of good teaching, help them develop an understanding of how to recognise and reward it… Perhaps deans and heads of departments could start with A. N. Whitehead's splendid *Aims of Education and other Essays*". Looking into this work of Whitehead we read that he regarded learning which is specific to *education* to involve critical thinking and "anxious inquiry". This was because his aim for education was upon life and not just a matter of learning how to live or how to earn a living but rather how to pursue a *good* life in a public sense.

This approach is similarly described by Richard Pring's (2004) notion of 'moral seriousness' which he argues is intrinsic to education but not to training. Educative learning does not simply deal with impersonal information and skills but rather becomes personally significant. Pring argues that,

> It is a matter of seriousness in thinking about what is worth living for, what is worth pursuing in the arts or the leisure time, what relationships are worth entering into, what kinds of activities should

> be avoided, what obligations are to be considered sacred. (Pring, 2004, p. 38)

This dimension of education, described here by Pring as being serious, requires us as teacher educators to value the experiences we provide through our teaching by involving the interests and desires of the students. Consequently through becoming educated our students will become transformed "in some small measure" in a "valuable way" (Pring, 1988, p. 42) so as to be understood as having "changed for the better" because they care for things that matter (Peters, 1970, p. 25, 37). This sort of good teaching might be characterised by each student becoming what Mill described as a 'dissatisfied Socrates' whose way-of-being or character is oriented by the cultivated desire to constantly seek to improve one's life and the life of society in general.

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