3. Erosion of Trust in Education: Accountability and Teacher Professionalism

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Summary: This paper builds on Trudy Govier's extensive work on trust by relating it to teachers' professional relationships, with particular attention to the damaging effects of contemporary accountability-driven "audit culture." Two related policy developments affect teachers' professional trust relationships: standardized testing and curriculum; and surveillance-based professional regulation. Govier's ideas about trust allude to ways in which these policy developments mediate and, in some cases, erode aspects of trust necessary for effective education.

1. Introduction

Trudy Govier advances conceptions of trust in relation to many aspects of life, arguing that trust is an essential part of being human and operating in democracy. "Without trust," she writes, "personal and social life would be impossible" (Dilemmas, 205). She points out that trust is implicit to various streams of the literature on education, but rarely overtly referenced. Trust is a necessary condition of the education process, operating in many configurations. It occurs between teachers and parents (who entrust teachers to care for their children), between teachers and students, between administrators and teachers; and between policy makers and all those formally and informally involved in schooling. Educational goals certainly cannot be achieved if trust is lacking among these education actors and stakeholders.

This paper examines the effects of pervasive, accountability-driven education policies on trust. I limit my discussion to trust between parents and teachers and

between students and teachers, though I acknowledge that trust operates in a complex web involving many, many more stakeholders. My aim in this paper is to explore the ways in which education's current audit culture and preoccupation with regulation, both of which rely on increasingly prescriptive measures, affect trust. In doing so, I extend Govier's (Social, 92-194) account of the professions and trust, particularly her elucidation of special problems associated with the issue of trusting professionals in *Social Trust and Human Communities*.

I begin by describing the role of trust in education and schooling. Next, I outline the rise and nature of accountability in contemporary education policy reforms, with specific attention the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. I then explore the ways in which accountability-driven professional regulation has compromised trust in favour of confidence, leading to problematic surveillance and resulting in less than ideal responses to systemic conditions. Finally, I will discuss the implications of those policies and human responses for professional trust in education as it relates to teachers.

2. Trust in education

Govier describes trust as "an attitude based on beliefs and feelings, and implying expectations and dispositions" (Social, 4) with two dimensions: motivation (the intention to act well and to avoid harm), and competence (Dilemmas). She explains that trust is relative to contexts and situations – for instance, we might trust a person to do one thing (deliver a parcel) but not another (care for our children) (Social).

Central to this paper is Govier's conception of professional trust as a form of social trust. Social trust is one of two forms that Govier identifies, the other being interpersonal. The logic and structure of social trust centres on positive expectations about what the other is

likely to do, based on a sense of competence and motivation, a willingness to allow oneself to be vulnerable, and a disposition to interpret what the other person says and does in a positive way. Unlike interpersonal trust, professional trust exists towards strangers based on social role. "To know someone as a teacher, waiter or mechanic," Govier explains, "is something quite different from knowing her as a neighbour, parent, friend or citizen" (Social, 78). Govier cites three features essential to being a professional: specialized knowledge; considerable autonomy; and a high level of fiduciary[18] responsibility to serve the ends of clients. In Govier's view, fiduciary responsibility is related to trust because professionals "must not use their special position to serve their own interests." By using their professional status for their own personal gain, the interests of others whom the professionals are supposed to serve can be jeopardized (Social).

Though all professions require trust to function, the public service includes a civic responsibility to which other professions (e.g., lawyers, engineers, etc.) are generally not subject. With the first treatment of public service and philosophy of education appearing in the *Republic*, Plato defined the desirability of submitting to the ruling class, the literal meaning of "public *servant*" (Bullough, Gitlin, and Goldstein 1984). In contemporary life, the idea that public servants ought to be selfless, disinterested, unambitious, virtuous, hard-working, and obedient persists. In fact, various public service professional standards (e.g., the Ontario Public Service

[18] Though often associated with legal and financial trusts, the term "fiduciary" describes any relationship in which one person or party relies on another's judgment or counsel (Holtman 2001). It applies to formal arrangements undertaken as part of a professional obligation (for example, medical doctors, teachers), as well as informal and fluid relationships that involve an ethical component (Holtman 2001).

Oath and the Ontario College of Teachers [19] [OCT] "Standards for the Teaching Profession") emphasize the virtues of selflessness and obedient service to this day.

While all professionals in the public service are, in principle, subject to the values just described, the special goals and risks associated with caring for children and helping them develop intellectually and socially set teachers apart from other professions. In all relationships between professionals and those they serve, power and knowledge imbalances make the people involved vulnerable (Social). "In submitting her projects, interests and needs to a professional," Govier (Social, 82) explains, a parent is vulnerable in relation to a teacher, having to depend on the teacher to act on her behalf. "We need professionals and we are vulnerable to their power, hence we need to trust them" (Social, 82). Parents, therefore, need to view the teacher-as-professional as "trustworthy" in matters of care and teaching of their children, and students need to trust the teacher in order to take the risks needed to learn in classrooms.

When children are entrusted into teachers' care, the nature of risk is different from more calculable risks in other professions. Internationally, the legal doctrine of *in loco parentis* is commonly applied to teachers in judicial systems to address some of those risks and professional responsibilities. *In loco parentis* requires the teacher to act "in place of the parent" – and is known as a "duty of care." Legal doctrine governing education takes this idea a step further, demanding a "standard of care" in which the teacher is expected to act as a judicious and caring parent would (Johnson 2010). The moral and legal

[19] Established in 1996, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) is responsible for licensing, governing and regulating the Ontario teaching profession. In addition to setting Standards for the profession, it also investigates allegations of misconduct, carries out disciplinary hearings, and can exercise various levels of disciplinary consequences to members of the profession.

responsibilities of acting in place of a parent demand a degree of trust atypical of other professions.

Together, the duty and standard of care convey the nature of the trust that parents and children must place in teachers. At the same time, the duty and standard of care reflect the highly subjective and moral nature of teachers' professional responsibilities. To act in place of a parent means that a teacher must apply professional judgment that reflects a strong *ethic of care* to ensure the "*best interest of the child*" is paramount in all workplace decisions (Shapiro and Stefkovich 2001). Govier (1992) emphasizes that trust is a prerequisite of caring – and that caring is essential to schooling. The ethic of care pertains to students' personal safety, but also to their intellectual and social development (Applebaum 1995; Govier 1992; Shapiro and Stefkovich 2001).

As a consequence, relying on teachers as merely technical or subject-matter experts is insufficient. Teachers must inspire students to engage in learning for their social and emotional development beyond the subject-matter transmission in ways that require a strong dialogical relationship. Paulo Freire (1970) outlined three conditions necessary for that kind of dialogue in education: trust, hope and critical thinking. He observed that trust is absent in what he terms the "banking" method of education in which the teacher merely transmits knowledge to the student. Freire describes the banking model as one in which the teacher "deposits" hegemonic knowledge into the student as if she were a "bank," and relies on memorization and rote learning, with topics and curricula driven exclusively by the teacher. By contrast, Freire argues that trust can only be built through problem-posing in which education becomes a horizontal experience of collaborative problem solving for students and teachers. The problem-posing model relies on teachers to trust students to identify relevant problems, and further builds trust through collaborative, active strategies to solve those problems. An example of a culture of *distrust* resulting

from banking models of education is the historical failure of education for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in Canada. Canadian education systems and teachers within those systems imposed colonial and hegemonic practices and curricula with the intent of "civilizing" learners to integrate into Eurocentric society with no regard for Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous Epistemology. Culturally and physically violent residential schooling continued into the 1990s. The result is a long-standing lack of trust that will take generations to overcome. Presently, advocates of post-colonial education (e.g., Battiste 2013; Brayboy 2005) continue to struggle with ways in which non-Indigenous educators might respect, trust, and re-centre Indigenous knowledge and epistemologies, while First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learners continue to question the degree that they can trust institutions and teachers to provide culturally sustainable schooling in their individual and communities' best interests.

All professionals must decide how to apply professional knowledge in unique situations they face, and matters of "character and morality" are central to those trust relationships (Social, 89). In addition to attending to students' physical well-being, teaching requires "a nurturing role intended to foster the learning and growth of students" (Social, 87). Thus, education is fraught with "*inescapable risks*" because it entails "an emancipation from traditional custodianships and intellectual sensibility and is a pathway to human flourishing, both personal and social" (Smyers and Hogan 2005, 119). What is "at stake is nothing less than *what we become as human beings* as a consequence of what we experience as learners" (Smyers and Hogan 2005, 115, emphasis in original). For teachers, risks include having their knowledge scrutinized and found wanting, failing despite efforts on behalf of students, and exerting influence in ways that have unforeseen consequences. Students experience different kinds of risks, including failing in their studies, being rejected or embarrassed by teachers or peers, and "enduring less-than-

inspiring teachers" (Smyers and Hogan 2005, 115). In classrooms, students need trust to deal with these special risks, making it "a lubricant for knowledge creation: people share and act on ideas when they trust one another" (Avis 2003, 321).

Govier (Social, 88-89) elucidates the crucial role of student-teacher trust in post-secondary legal education. The competitive nature of legal professions often results in adversarial stances by law professors who come to regard students as opponents, even occasionally perceiving themselves as needing protection from students. She describes potentially harmful consequences of aggressive and hostile behaviour between student and teacher, leading to insecurity and, as a response to that insecurity, restriction and rigid control in the classroom, which are equally applicable to other educational settings. Philosopher Antonia Darder (2002) describes how this type of unhealthy dynamic played out in her own classroom in a high school. Early in her career, Darder wanted to make examples of misbehaving students in order to achieve discipline in her classroom. One day, a student got up to leave her classroom with a book bag in hand. Fearing he was planning to leave campus, she told him to leave the bag. The student refused and continued to exit. As he walked past, she grabbed the student's bag and again instructed him to leave it behind. She described her realization this way: "I suddenly became horrified with what I was doing. I let go and the student took the bag with him" (Darder 2002, 190). At that moment, she realized her self-described obsession with control, surveillance, and punishment – which she thought would be salvation – was in fact "dehumanizing." This highlights a failure to trust students – part of what Govier describes as the "vicious circle" (Social, 88) of struggles between students and educators. Each group makes the other worse when students distrust teachers for their "toughness" and teachers struggle against students. "Once in effect, the ethos of distrust seems to be self-perpetuating, generating

a need for itself" (Social, 88). In addition, self-perpetuating distrust also exists with respect to the failures of schooling for Canadian First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people described earlier.

The examples just described highlight trust's reciprocal nature. In "Responses to Professional Dilemmas of Distrust," Govier (Social) explains that reciprocity in professional trust means that teachers must be able to trust those they serve. While she acknowledges those served bear some responsibility to be "'alert consumers,' this does not go so far that it removes responsibility from professionals themselves" (Social, 100). Apart from being inefficient in achieving goals, the absence of trust in professional relationships makes for "less than pleasant dealings" (Social, 89), such as the vignette related by Darder (2002).

Certainly, the presence of trust does not guarantee improved educational performance, but its absence signals failure (Sahlberg 2010). Empirical educational research has primarily focused on the relationship between trust and "student achievement" – a fashionable term alluding to student performance on standardized tests. Researchers have concluded that higher levels of student-teacher trust correlate to higher achievement (see, for example, Kensler, Caskie, Barber and White 2009; Bryk and Schneider 2002; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy 2001). A few studies have examined teacher-student trust with respect to discipline and behavioural compliance in the classroom (see Gregory and Ripsky 2008; Daly 2009), concluding students and teachers report feeling less threatened when trust is present. Research has also explored teacher-administrator trust, focusing on the effects of such trust on "school effectiveness," another educational buzzword that refers to policy compliance and reform implementation (Kensler et al. 1995; Louis 2007). Other research has looked at trust in relation to issues of teacher professionalism, collaboration and learning (see, for example, Tschannen-Moran 2004). Finally, several studies

outside of the field of education proper have attempted to quantify levels of trust among students and teachers.[20] As a whole, the research just described provides a limited view of the nature and role of trust. Quantitative instruments tend to reduce trust to a variable tied to narrowly-defined ends (i.e., trust to ensure control and compliance). Rather, Govier, like other philosophers, offers a richer and more nuanced conception of trust that extends beyond the measurable achievement and behavioural indicators just described.

While it may be difficult to pinpoint the degree to which professional trust with respect to teachers is on the decline, Govier (Social, 92) cites Barber's (1983) observation that professional trust (in general) had been declining into the 1980s for three reasons: (1) more power and professional knowledge; (2) a more competent and educated public; and (3) increasingly egalitarian values. Govier argues that in recent decades, highly-publicized media reports of professionals (doctors, lawyers, teachers, professors, etc.) who have not acted in client interests have tarnished professional reputations, contributing to declines of professional distrust. Kumashiro (2014) offers a similar explanation for the perceived decline in trust towards teachers: public scapegoating of teachers has been widely used in neoliberal reform arguments since the 1990s to attribute educational problems to individual ("bad") teachers, something I will explore in more detail later in this paper.

[20] In the United States, trends over the past 30 years show that today's youth are less likely than earlier cohorts to have faith in humanity, to feel that ''people in general'' can be trusted. (Flanagan and Stout 2010, 749) The Canadian Education Association's study on youth confidence found that self-reported levels of "trust" varied – from a relatively low 40% trust in media and people in the community. Less than half reported that they trusted "most of the people" in their community; 49% reported they had someone to discuss personal problems at school. The study authors conclude that "a low sense of trust in others may signal that community cohesion and social networks are weak" (Freiler 2013, 42).

3. The rise of accountability-driven 'audit culture' in education policy

Policy always prescribes; but in current education systems, policy is increasingly detailed and prescriptive in ways that decrease the scope for professional judgment under the guise of accountability. In recent years, accountability measures have become central features of large-scale education reform (Apple 2005; Ball 2003; Biesta 2004). Neoliberal ideologies have driven these reform policies since the 1990s worldwide, most notably in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Pinto 2012). Corresponding neoliberal accountability agendas feature standardization in curriculum and testing, and new governing institutions that monitor and regulate the teaching profession (Apple 2005). My intention in this section is to describe the nature of accountability in contemporary education policy as it relates to trust.

In a general sense, accountability poses two sorts of questions: *accountable to whom?* and *accountable for what?* The answers to these questions – and the very scope and meaning of accountability – extend in numerous directions in the education literature. Conceptions range from accountability as being called to account for one's actions, to institutional control of individuals, to outcomes stemming from those behaviours. Biesta (2004) offers two distinguishable conceptions of accountability: (1) a technical-managerial conception that depends on measurement; and (2) a more general conception that defines accountability as a form of responsibility that carries with it connotations of answerability (Biesta 2004). That is, responsibility has to do with being answerable for something or someone, and is non-reciprocal, since A is *responsible for* B, and this responsibility is based on what B *wants* or *needs* (Biesta 2004). However, the contemporary education reforms tend to over-represent

technical-managerial account-ability, while compromising responsibility and trust (Biesta 2004, 236).

A number of scholars have explored the effects of technical-managerial accountability policy on professionalism and trust outside of education. David Carless asked whether managerialism becomes a substitute for trust – has accountability become "a source rather than a remedy for distrust?" (Carless 2013, 79). Ellen Kuhlman asks whether accountability and regulation policies compromise models of trust within "contradictory developments between seeking trust and demanding control" (Kuhlman 2006, 608). She questions whether professionals can earn and sustain trust when their autonomy to apply professional judgment is limited by policy, and professionals' actions are highly scrutinized in public forums. In healthcare, she observes, trust relationships between practitioners and clients have been *replaced by* regulation, managerialism, target-setting accountability, and market reforms (Kuhlman 2006, 528). While these questions address other professional fields, they are certainly pertinent to the current educational landscape.

Audit culture (Apple 2005, Pinto 2012), a common feature of contemporary accountability agendas, relies on business-derived concepts of supervision and measurement to evaluate the performance of public servants. Audit culture emerged as techniques from financial accounting were applied to societal and political matters. Audit-based accountability measures have become instruments "to make institutions at least formally accountable to their stakeholders" (Hoecht 2006, 543). The result is an attempt to provide an "impression of certainty and control in a world where risks are increasing" in an environment where the public is "skeptical about the role of experts and professionals and their advice and judgment" (Hoecht 2006, 544).

At its worst, audit-driven accountability displaces "trust with various criteria of performance and indicators

for review and accounting" (Svensson and Evetts 2003, 9). In education, audit culture marks a shift away from accountability based on the idea of professionalism, where a teacher has autonomy to exercise professional judgment consistent with the standard of care, towards accountability based on measurement: rules and surveillance use quantitative indicators to audit professional performance and even competence. Audits are often tied to punitive measures designed to control performance, such as student performance impacting teacher salaries or school funding (Apple 2005). Rose goes so far as to argue that audit replaces the trust once accorded to professions: "the constant demands for audit both witness to, and contribute to, the erosion of trust," establishing new relations of control between political centres and public goods (Rose 1993, 295). That emphasis on control (over trust) underscores how audit culture is not, in Govier's conception, a reasonable response to vulnerability in education because it undermines the very forms of trust that are necessary for effective education.

Govier (Social) posited that professional trust can certainly coexist alongside regulation, but the degree to which trust is maintained depends on the nature of the regulatory policies themselves. Well-intentioned regulatory policy certainly has potentially positive aspects, though they are accompanied by dangers (Carless 2013). Certain types of regulation are absolutely necessary to protect children. Teachers work with vulnerable populations, and there is no question that conduct endangering students necessitates professional regulation. Extreme cases – including student-teacher sexual relationships, abuse of students and the like – unquestionably call for discipline and removal of teacher certification. Govier provides a number of examples of publicized reports of professionals (doctors, lawyers, teachers, professors, and so on) failing to act in the interest of those they serve – including fraud and collusion (Social). These examples all deal with actions directly

related to "on the job" activity, and the misconduct is typically dealt with under criminal law. Professional regulation, in these cases, falls back on the judicial system: that is, law over policy is used to remedy serious cases of misconduct.

Policy, if designed well and enacted as policymakers intended, can have benefits in classrooms. It can encourage promising or evidence-informed practice among professionals, and it can attempt to limit or prevent misconduct or damaging actions. It can create time and provide material resources to support professional learning and development. Standardization of curriculum holds a promise of equality of opportunity for students, and test scores attempt to pinpoint and remedy deficiencies in teachers and schools. Yet, each measure a policy prescribes detracts from an aspect of professional autonomy. The professional loses a degree of her ability to exercise professional judgment – an important aspect of parent-teacher and student-teacher trust relationships.

Contemporary accountability policy in education, however, disproportionately relies on the technical-managerial conception, focusing almost exclusively on test score measures as success indicators (Darder 2004). In the United States, the accountability agenda defined by the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act* and *Race to the Top (RTTT)* uses student testing as the principle measure of success. In Ontario, standardized testing of students is carried under the *Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Act*. Under this legislation, third parties administer standardized tests to measure student achievement.[21] In these and other jurisdictions, test results are shared not only with schools, but with the general public. Test scores affect school-based funding, and in some states are linked to teacher performance appraisal. This has important educational consequences, since

[21] The emphasis on "achievement" ignores learning and change in performance.

performance scores are not used to help students learn, instead linked to punitive consequences such as school rankings, teacher pay and performance appraisals, and even property values.[22]

The accountability systems just described leave the relationship between student and teacher undernourished because the teacher's responsibility to the government is prioritized through audit, taking precedence over her responsibility to the learner. The "responsibility to" questions of accountability become distorted whenever teachers are controlled by external performance measures tied to punitive consequences. *NCLB*, *RTTT* and *EQAO* measure performance in the form of one-time student "achievement" scores as the only things counted. In such systems, teachers' responsibility (at least in part) shifts away from responsibility to the student, to the goal of fulfilling government requirements. Ontario teachers overwhelmingly claim that provincial tests are not designed to provide the detailed information necessary for meaningful diagnostic decisions about individual students (Klinger and Rogers 2011). Instead, the high stakes exacerbate the emphasis on performance: teachers need to focus on scores to secure their livelihoods, while school and district administrators have an interest in the financial implications of test performance. School systems lose sight of broader purposes of education and teachers become engrossed in standardized test preparation, test execution, and curriculum mandates (Sahlberg 2010).

Darder refers to this as a "closed system of accountability" that ignores any exploration of social conditions, unexamined assumptions, and other effects on schooling. These important issues are "deemed irrelevant

[22] Realtors often misuse rankings based on test scores to attract homebuyers to the extent that ranking affects neighbourhood housing price to the consequence parents 'have pressured schools to achieve high test results in order to keep their property values high' (Ohemeng and McCall-Thomas 2013, 470; also see Koretz 2008).

or scientifically irrational," when not captured by standardized scores and are subsequently left out of educational debates (Darder 2004, 208). The resulting shift in focus from the quality of teaching from "best interest of the child" central to an ethic of care to "quality control" reduces education to "teaching to the test" (Darder 2004, 208). Hargreaves (2008) observes that this form of accountability and the standardization within it leaves little room for professional judgment and interpretation in practice.

Coupled with high-stakes[23] audits is an increasingly prescriptive curriculum. In the United States, the introduction of the national *Common Core State Standards* (*CCSS*) has led to highly prescriptive curricula. Likewise, Canada's K-12 provincial curriculum policy documents are highly prescriptive (Pinto 2012). In some places, this has led to scripted lessons, where mandated scripts supersede a teacher's ability to apply professional judgment to meet students' needs (Milner 2013). Darder observes that monitoring teachers' curriculum compliance through audited script use eliminates teachers' ability to stray from standardized curricula, reducing classroom practice to "dispensing packaged fragments of information" (Darder 2004, 87) at the expense of richer learning experiences designed for the individuals in their classes in the spirit of the ethic of care which would demand adaptation of classroom activity that would be in the best interest of the child.

If, as Govier argues throughout her work, trust exists between people, teachers ought to be trusted to act based

[23] The term "high-stakes" is used in the educational literature to refer to policy that ties outcomes of standardized measurement tools (usually, but not exclusively, standardized test scores) to decisions that impact individuals and schools. Those decisions affect students (e.g., whether they may graduate based on performance on a standardized tests); educators (e.g., pay tied to standardized performance measures); and schools, and districts (e.g., school closures or changes to funding based on standardized outcomes) (Au 2007).

on their professional judgment in applying professional expertise (that is, making curricular and assessment choices) and in other decisions about what is in the best interest of students. By standardizing and externalizing professional activities – tests, curriculum, scripted lessons – a teacher's job is reduced to technical compliance, with accountability to policy-makers trumping responsibility to students and parents. This redefinition of the teacher's job eliminates the very types of actions that can instill trust. The profession is "unmade" by such policy: autonomy and judgment are questioned; internal criteria are replaced by external criteria (Svensson 2006).

4. Seeking trust while demanding control: Regulation, surveillance, performativity

The effects of the types of accountability policy I just described are exacerbated by a related set of policies designed to regulate and control teachers. According to Govier, "trust in a professional has two aspects: respect for the credentials and self-regulation of the profession and a sense of trust based on the individual encounter" (Social, 102). In North America and the United Kingdom, teacher credentials are established by central governments and other regulatory bodies, who also issue certification and licensure. My focus here is on how professional regulation operates, and how policy aimed at *confidence* via surveillance negatively affects *trust*.

Trust must not be confused with confidence in the profession and the institution. Confidence governs everyday interactions where role expectations, norms, expert knowledge, regulation, and law are clearly defined and shape professional action (Harrison and Smith 2004). Trust, on the other hand, is necessary where there is vulnerability or uncertainty (Harrison and Smith 2004). Despite an obvious need for regulation, not all cases of unprofessional conduct involve criminal activity. Govier

acknowledges that less severe professional behaviour is often dealt with institutionally, through ombudsmen and "ethics codes." While codes of ethics "can be useful in addressing the image problems" of a profession, they only work when members take them seriously *and* the public believes that they do.

Too much emphasis on such confidence in institutions instead of trust in people obscures the essential uncertainty associated with professional judgment. That uncertainty, especially when working with vulnerable populations, requires trust (Harrison and Smith 2004). Harrison and Smith (2004) refer to the "dysfunctional consequences" of reliance on confidence over trust in professionals. While the policies that govern professions (including teaching) are usually filled with morally loaded imperatives, basing confidence on policies diminishes the role of morality in the relationship between professionals and those they serve. Confidence alone cannot provide answers to the morally difficult dilemmas that characterize the work of teachers. Moreover, increased surveillance to measure compliance may deter teachers' moral motivation to act beyond policy compliance (Harrison and Smith 2004).

A growing movement under the guise of accountability is centralized professional regulation of teachers in ways that are more prescriptive and result in extreme forms of audit. Centralized performance appraisal schemes in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom tie teacher evaluation to observable "look fors" that aim to quantify policy compliance (Page 2013; Pinto, Portelli, Rottman, Pashby, Barrett and Mujawamariya 2012), resulting in institutional confidence (at best) over professional trust. Yet, confidence alone cannot provide answers to the morally difficult dilemmas teachers face every day.

What makes teachers' professional conduct especially unique is regulation that extends to conduct in their personal lives. Govier makes a point of distinguishing between the public (professional) and private roles of

individuals. "A person in a particular social or occupational role is not quite the person as such. Although people in roles are not necessarily inauthentic, neither are they always able to act according to their individual wishes. Social and occupational roles carry with them expectations and demands, ranging from the general and open-ended expectations of a 'friend,' to the specific requirements of a judge or counsellor" (Social, 78).

The OCT and its magazine, *Professionally Speaking*, attempt to instill public confidence through regulation, but they are far from vehicles that build trust. Disciplinary decisions are published monthly in a *Professionally Speaking* section titled "The Blue Pages," transforming teacher discipline into a spectacle involving "public flogging for offenses that critically damage the public trust that teachers are bound to uphold" (Page 2013, 237). The inclusion of decisions on minor or questionable misconduct in summaries of disciplinary action skews statistics, and does so in an attempt to "promulgate the image of a government that is decisive in tackling problem teachers" (Page 2013, 237), thus reinforcing institutional confidence over trust. Even if a teacher conducts herself with utmost professionalism, she may be subject to false or inappropriate allegations from anyone – a disgruntled student or parent or co-worker. In other situations, teachers may engage in conduct they deem ethical, yet face disciplinary action that is reported out of context.[24] This fear of surveillance, at best, adds stress to daily work. At

[24] For example, "The Blue Pages" regularly reports instances of misconduct in which Ontario teachers fail to adequately follow standardized test preparation instructions (e.g., providing homework questions similar to those which will appear on a future test). Yet, in-depth research by Childs and Umezawa (2009) reveals that Ontario teachers claim that in cases where they perceive test instructions to be unreasonable, they do not view violations as unethical, since they believe their actions are in the best interest of students. Those teachers are disciplined for what they view as asking in the best interest of the student and in the spirit of an ethic of care, rather than blind compliance with procedures outlined in policy.

worst, it can result in extremely unpleasant consequences associated with (sometimes severe) disciplinary action. James Avis argues that this creates a "blame culture" punctuated with tight surveillance and limits teacher risk-taking for fear of repercussions (Avis 2003, 328).

The prescriptive regulatory policies that allow public floggings over private conduct leave teachers caught between their professional responsibilities during work time, and their rights as citizens to engage in perfectly legal behavior on their own time. Beyond shaming within the institutions themselves, the media amplifies the floggings when incidents (especially minor ones) make headlines or spread virally through social media. Headlines featuring teachers disciplined over private, off-work behavior abound as educators find themselves under a "morality microscope" (Turley 2012). A Georgia teacher was forced to resign after the school principal found vacation photos of her on Facebook holding what appears to be beer because the photo "promoted alcohol use," and a Pennsylvania teacher was suspended after a third party posted a Facebook photo of her at a bridal shower with a male stripper (Turley 2012). In the United Kingdom, "having pupils as your Facebook friend," failing to report an absence properly, and encouraging students to create get well cards to a prisoner warranted formal discipline from Ofsted (Page 2013). [25] Ontario teachers face discipline for legal and appropriate off-time actions (giving a student a ride home, writing a letter of reference) under a regulation that allows for broad interpretation of "conduct unbecoming to a member." [26] Teacher unions have advised teachers not to use email or any other electronic means (including class or course websites) to

[25] Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) is the body responsible for inspecting and regulating services and professions that care for children and youth in the United Kingdom.

[26] This appears in *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, 1996 - O., Regulation 437/97: Professional Misconduct.

communicate for fear that those emails could lead to misunderstandings that launch OCT investigations. When the media report cases like those just mentioned, the public floggings carried out by governments, employers and professional regulatory bodies call attention to teacher misconduct; discouraging parents', students', and members of the public's trust in teachers. The floggings support the positions of Govier (Totalitarianism) and Kumashiro (2014) pertaining to the role of public shaming as a contributing factor to the erosion of trust. Ironically, as accountability "provides parents and politicians with more information, it also builds suspicion, low morale, and professional cynicism" (Sahlberg 2010, 57).[27] This is especially the case when teacher misconduct makes headlines, and media consumers may (mistakenly) arrive at the conclusion that many teachers are involved in transgressive behaviour based on one salacious example. While Govier (Social) reminds us that the best way to "*seem* trustworthy is to *be* trustworthy" (102), fallacious conclusions or extra-polation of isolated cases that make headlines compromise trust, underscoring how external audit and surveillance amount to unreasonable responses to the issue of trust.

The practices just described rely on surveillance to "catch" teachers in allegedly unprofessional acts. Ball (2003), Avis (2003), Page (2013), and Govier (Totalitarianism) all discuss the role of surveillance in relation to trust. Govier's account has to do with totalitarian regimes, which are characterized by a lack of safety and distrust of others who could, at any time, report a person to the state. This situation ruptures relationships and destroys trust. Watch out, she warns, because you never know who is watching (Totalitarianism). With the

[27] It is interesting to note that empirically, the publication of NCLB test scores actually erodes support of schools (Jacobsen, Saultz, and Snyder 2013). Moreover, validity of interferences made in the media about teacher and school quality based on NCLB test scores are unwarranted (Linn 2006).

professional accountability policies in place described here, the teacher never knows who might be listening or who might make a complaint against her. This, paralleling Govier's account of totalitarian regimes, leaves the teacher potentially distrustful of others, including students, parents and colleagues.

A consequence of surveillance-based regulation and audit just described is performativity[28] in which a policy exists in a dual form of culture and mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons and displays (such as public floggings) as a means of incentive or control with corresponding rewards or sanctions (Ball 2003, 216). By focusing on measurable indicators, performativity takes the shape of individual and organizational *performances* that attempt to display measures of "quality." Ball argues that what it means to be a teacher has "subtly and decisively changed" as teachers act to avoid punitive sanctions. At times, this leads teachers to perform inauthentic professional identities that make them *appear to* be complying with policies or achieving high-stakes indicators (Ball 2003, 218).

Performativity can manifest itself in situations in which teachers and principals "game the system" in order to manipulate outcomes under the pressure to meet criteria. Such behaviour most certainly fails to engender professional trust. For example, a former student of mine who now teaches in the United Kingdom recently explained in a personal email, "in order to maintain my school's national reputation of nearly all sixth-form graduates getting into the university of their choice, school administrators actually cannot wait to push out students

[28] While Ball (2003) acknowledges Butler's (1990) seminal work on performativity as a basis for his conception, Ball (2003) is not concerned with gender performance. Rather, his conception specific to policy focuses on the ways in which policy (as a "technology") shapes and defines professional identity, and how teachers as individual objects of that policy respond to the identities imposed upon them by policy mandates.

[from the school] who are not performing well." Similarly, an Ontario educator observed how principals assigned "weak teachers" (his words, referring to those whose classes tend to have low scores) to early phases of school improvement initiatives then move different teachers into those very classrooms to pull aggregate scores up (Pinto 2015).

Bait-and-switch tactics like the two examples just described typify "gamesmanship" (Ball 2003, 218). Teachers and principals feel they must play "games" of compliance to make it appear as though they are "measuring up" to external benchmarks. In this process, management control models of audit replace models of trust between management and professionals (Svensson 2006), between teachers and students when the former feels she must place external accountability (*to* governments, *for* benchmarks, *in place of* responsibility to the student), and between teachers and parents. The example above illustrates how, to meet external criteria, educators act in ways that may not be in the best interest of students who find themselves "pushed out" of educational opportunities just for the sake of national standings.

While Ball does not directly address the issue of trust, inauthentic identities arising out of performativity most certainly compromise reciprocal trust. Earlier in this paper I detailed the ways in which potentially well-intentioned policies designed to instill institutional confidence or shape education systems for the better have been enacted to such extremes that they constitute unreasonable responses to issues of trust on the part of policy-makers. Yet, the various forms of performativity in response to policy that educators view as unreasonable fail to instill trust in educators – to repeat Govier's (Social) point referenced earlier in this paper, the best way to "*seem* trustworthy is to *be* trustworthy" (102). Certainly, trust is broken when a parent or student discovers that a teacher has engaged in a "game" to beat the system in a

performative act – even if that action was in the best interest of the student. That gamesmanship begs the question, if the teacher cannot be trusted to carry out mandated policy, then can she be trusted to care for students? This dilemma of trust, rooted in potentially unreasonable responses to audit culture, will continue to vex the profession so long as policy attempts to mediate confidence and trust through standardization.

5. Conclusion

I began this paper by laying out Trudy Govier's conception of professional trust, and exploring how it is compromised against a backdrop of policy that features narrow accountability agendas. A pervasive audit culture characterized by heavy reliance on standardized testing, prescriptive policy, and punitive forms of regulation affects trust in two ways. First, it shifts teacher responsibility from students to government. Second, trust relationships are replaced by regulation, exacerbating audit while leaving teachers potentially fearful in a manner similar to Govier's (Totalitarianism) account of totalitarian regimes. Teachers "never know who is watching," thus compromising trust towards students. Similarly, confidence measures in the form of discipline and data may compromise parent-teacher trust relationships. The result is a "trust dilemma" rooted in the problem that "trust relationships that are not embedded in personal relations cannot be solved by installing guardians of impersonal trust" (Hoecht 2004, 544). That is, the policies and their corresponding enforcement technologies (amounting to confidence at most) displace trust between the teacher and student, and teacher and parent. Whereas "quality control" used to be in the form of education and induction (i.e., acquiring academic credentials to teach) before licensure (i.e., being granted a license to teach in a jurisdiction), the pre-practice controls (i.e.,

accomplishments acquired prior to licensure) are increasingly replaced by controlling the outcomes of practicing professionals (Svensson 2006).

In this paper, I have taken issue with features in education policy, not the existence of policy itself. I have attempted to make clear my agreement with Govier that professional trust can certainly coexist alongside professional regulation, but its success depends on the nature of the policies themselves. There is no question that accountability has a place in education, but the prevalent technical-managerial accountability has dire consequences for professional trust in education settings when that form of policy remains an unreasonable response to issues of teacher trust. In spite of policies that exist, trust remains critical for addressing the vulnerability inherent in educational pursuits.

Can educational policy be designed to promote trust in relation to educational contexts? Sahlberg (2010, 2011) and Hargreaves (2008) call attention to alternative education policy regimes that contain explicit features to promote professional trust, rather than damage it. In Finland, a nation lauded for exceptional educational outcomes including top performance on international tests such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), external accountability is noticeably absent from its national education policy (Chung 2015; Hargreaves 2008; Sahlberg 2010, 2011). Rather, Finnish policy emphasizes building professional responsibility over external accountability. One of the four strategic principles upon which education policy is founded includes "strengthening professionalism of and trust in teachers" (Sahlberg 2010, 56). Finnish educational policy emphasizes specific strategies for building trust, including raising the professional status of teachers, decentralizing leadership to allow for professional judgment without prescription, and devoting significant time each day to

professional learning communities in schools (Sahlberg 2010).[29]

Transforming the problematic policies described in this paper in order to strengthen trust requires a fundamental change to the ideologies that underpin contemporary, accountability-driven education policy. Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom tend to politicize educational policy, relying on punitive, high-stakes consequences as quick fixes to purported educational problems (Pinto 2012). Conversely, Finland has taken a more leisurely approach to developing and enacting education policy grounded in long-term thinking (Chung 2015). Loosening central control of education systems, especially tempering or eliminating prescriptive and punitive accountability structures, would require immense political will and abandoning the desire for "quick results" associated with the short political tenure of contemporary election cycles (Pinto 2012).

Given current political and policy environments in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, teachers will continue to face punitive accountability measures and audit cultures that compromise trust for the foreseeable future. Teachers must strive to reclaim their responsibility as professionals and bring back a closer "proximity" to teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships (Biesta

[29] While a full discussion of Finland's education policy climate is beyond the scope of this paper, several details may be of interest to readers since the policies differ from those in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. Finland's education reforms began in 1971 in an effort to improve schooling that featured class size reductions, substantial teacher salary increases, and a requirement that all teachers complete a Masters degree within 5 years of joining the profession (Chung 2015; Sahlberg 2010, 2011). Finnish students spend less time in direct instruction than their international counterparts and do not participate in any standardized testing, while teachers have dedicated time for professional dialogue and learning each day (Hargreaves 2008; Sahlberg 2010, 2011).

2004, 245).[30] If professional trust is to be strengthened, policy-makers, teachers, parents, and students must revisit the core questions of accountability: *accountable to whom? Accountable for what?* The answers to these questions must be asked of policy and regulation. . In the absence of a strong foundation of professional trust in the spirit of Govier's conception, educational pursuits cannot flourish.

[30] Biesta's (2004) elaboration of a Levinasian idea of proximity refers to a suppression of distance between the teacher and student and the teacher and parent through emphasis of relationships between individuals. By emphasizing proximity, relationships are strengthened and humanized – reducing or even eliminating the need for mediation of trust through policy and audit.