Combined Credential Programs:
Pedagogic, Practical, and Ideological Concerns

By Kathryn S. Young

Introduction

The number of teacher education programs combining general and special education teacher certification is growing. In spite of this increase, we know relatively little about how these programs impact preservice teachers' (PSTs) developing professional identities. Combined credential programs claim to address the needs of stakeholders in special education—children, parents, and policy makers— and to recognize the increased need for better-trained teachers in both general education and special education (Keefe, Rossi, de Valenzuela, & Howarth, 2000; Utley, 2009). Supporters also suggest that combined programs offer an ideological shift away from the false, but common, distinction between "typical" and "atypical" children.

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Combined credential programs respond to these concerns by providing PSTs with twice—or nearly twice—the content as people who seek only one credential. They also address concerns by many general educators who feel they are not well prepared to teach students with disabilities (California State University, 2006; Goodlad & Field, 1993; Welch, 1996; Wolery, Brookfield, Huffman, et. al., 1997). Furthermore, they help respond to the ever-present crisis of a lack of special educators in our nations' schools. Graduates that complete a combined credential program will find many more jobs available in special education than in general education classrooms across the nation.

In addition to adding skills to a new teacher's repertoire, combined credential programs purport to create the possibility of ideological shifts by those who participate in them. The literature links negative attitudes of general educators (who have not had added training) towards students with disabilities (Lambe & Bones, 2007; Shippen, Crites, Houchins, et al., 2005) to negative student outcomes (Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, 2005; van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, et al., 2010). Those who hope for such an ideological shift believe combined credential programs hold the possibility for bridging the intellectual and pedagogic gap between general and special education (Young, 2010). Combined credential programs have the possibility of addressing a teaching shortage, of increasing teachers' skills, and of changing teachers' views about students with disabilities.

This article uses a case study of one newly implemented combined credential program at a large, urban, public university in California to examine how PSTs experience the professional socialization of becoming a general *and* a special education teacher in relation to their perceptions about disability and typicality. Typicality is a term brought out from interview and observational data. It comes from references to "the typical student" often said by professors and PSTs. Typicality is a norm against which students with disabilities are measured. If disability refers to the social effects of physical, emotional, or mental impairment then typicality refers to the social effects of not having a labeled impairment (Young, 2008a).

This study examines societal, institutional, and personal factors that influence PSTs' understandings about general and special education teachers. It examines factors that influence their decisions about what type of teachers they want to become. It also examines the factors that influence their perceptions of disability and typicality. It considers the relationship between socializing agents (such as past experiences, public perception, and the teacher education program itself) in relation to PSTs' desires to become general or special educators. It also relates their professional decisions to the norms and values espoused within this new programmatic framework. Framed within the professional socialization and teacher identity literature, this study delves into the nuances of a combined credential program. These nuances are teased apart through the research questions.

Three central questions guide this research:

1. What factors influence professional socialization in a combined credential program?

2. What type of teacher identity develops from a combined credential program?

3. What norms and values are associated with a combined credential program?

Literature Review

Many studies have explored how PSTs develop a professional teacher identity. Research points to the major effects of teachers' prior beliefs on choosing classroom practices and on developing a teacher identity (e.g., Knowles, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Olsen, 2008a). Kagan (1992) documents the stability and inflexibility of prior beliefs. Lortie's (1975) apprenticeship of observation explains how PSTs come to teacher education thinking they know how to teach because they have spent years observing teachers from the vantage point of being a student. Costello (2006) explores a similar phenomenon—one that happens before students take their first course at the university—that of preprofessional socialization. She attributes the term preprofessional socialization to David Brown (1991) who conducted a study about people who became substance abuse counselors after being counseled for substance abuse. The counselors adopted the language and values of the profession before they entered their counseling program because of experiences as substance abuse clients. Costello explains that many factors prior to entry into a profession instill the language, values, and commitment characteristics of the profession (Costello, 2006). Prospective teachers bring with them images of good teachers (Lortie, 1975); of themselves as teachers (Bullough, 1991); memories of their childhood teachers (Lacey, 1977); and memories of themselves as learners (Hollingsworth, 1989). They may assume students have the same learning styles, interests, desires, and abilities as they do and may judge their students accordingly.

Special educators develop identities grounded in the desire to improve their students' lives, and to work in a highly specialized field. Jones (2004) analyses teacher identity from the perspective of the role identity plays in supporting special education teachers' ideas of being separate and different from their teaching colleagues in mainstream education. She argues that the separation reinforces and is reinforced by a separate teacher identity. Garner (1994) studies special education teachers who teach in special education schools. The teachers view themselves in relation to how they imagine mainstream, general educators perceive them. And they create identities in opposition to those perceived negative views; high value is placed on specialized knowledge, attention to individual needs, and a level of professional benevolence towards students (Young & Mintz, 2008). Jones (2004) suggests that a "profession within a profession" develops that reinforces a continued separation between special and general education in schools (p. 164).

Identity development is an ongoing, dynamic, and fluid process which requires reinterpreting one's own understandings and experiences in many different contexts (Assuncaõ-Flores & Day, 2006; Galman, 2009; Olsen, 2008a). Maclure (1993) describes it as "something that they (teachers) use, to justify, explain, and make sense of themselves in relation to other people, and to the contexts in which they operate" (p. 312). Olsen (2008b) broadens the discussion of teacher identity from a personal experience to a socio-cultural experience (see also Florio-Ruane & Williams, 2008)—this is the perspective of teacher identity used in this article. It

develops through self-evaluation and interactions with others (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Cooper & Olson, 1996; Olsen, 2008c). Teacher candidates struggle with the uncertainty of how to become the teachers they want to be, given the varied pressures and tensions they face in schools (Levine-Rasky, 1998).

Learning to teach necessitates interplay between different, and sometimes conflicting, perspectives, beliefs, and practices (Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008; Volkman & Anderson, 1998). Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt (1999) believe teachers face moral, social, and emotional dilemmas in their teaching. These dilemmas occur between the "authoritative discourse" of schools and schools of education and the "internally persuasive discourse" of past experiences and beliefs (Britzman, 2003, p. 42). Levine-Rasky (1998) argues these tensions exist because of PSTs' "biographies, beliefs and values, their responses to their socialization, the faculty of education/practica placement interface, and social context broadly constructed" (p. 98). PSTs are in a continuous process of understanding, accepting, and confronting these tensions and "developing a rationale for them despite incongruences and consequences" (pp. 105-106). These tensions and dilemmas are often "invisible and seamless" due to their "normative and normalized cultural practices" (Levine-Rasky, 1998, p. 107), making them much more complex to capture, analyze, and understand.

One way to address these tensions and dilemmas is to normalize certain teaching practices and ways of being in a school. Normalization of teaching practices occurs through professional socialization that incorporates the norms and values found in schools and in schools of education (Young, 2008b). Schools of education seek to inculcate their students with professional values, a specific technical language, a shared vocabulary, and a preference for particular pedagogic practices (Merton, Reader, & Kendall, 1957). Once people become teachers in schools, the schools also have their own sets of norms and values; these are sometimes at odds with the norms and values of university programs. Norms and values are a relevant part of teachers' professional thoughts (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000) and lead to specific ways of working with students (Nias, 1989; Reynolds, 1996). Reynolds (1996) describes schools as workplaces where teachers' identities are informed by cultural scripts which stipulate what they think and do.

The limited number of teacher scripts limits teacher choices in their classrooms and often forces them to revert to thinking and teaching in traditional ways. Nias (1989) argues that teachers feel threatened when they experience disruptions to their self-image. To manage the disruptions, they develop strategies to maintain their self-image rather than work to see themselves—and to teach—in different ways. Teachers' professional thoughts relate to how they work with students in classrooms. Traditional thoughts give way to standardized curriculum and assessments; homogeneous student grouping within classes and within schools; separate systems of schooling for students with and without disabilities; and the practice of placing responsibility for disabled[1] students on special educators (Florian & Rouse, 2010).

Norms and values within a school are also influenced by broader institutional

and societal norms and values (Freedman & Appleman, 2008; Sexton, 2008; Wenger, 1998). Levine-Rasky (1998) analyzes interactions between PSTs and power relations, structural constraints, and school and personal culture. She finds that PSTs are socialized into the status quo of a school and that "teacher education implies an identity formation and a moral regulation" that hinders them in teaching students of color (p. 89).

Professional socialization and teacher identity development are complex processes that involve many different factors. These factors include societal norms and values: some acquired in teaching and in teacher education, others associated with prior beliefs and experiences. These factors work in tandem (though not equally, nor always simultaneously) to socialize PSTs into becoming general or special education teachers. Research points to the role societal, institutional, and personal factors play in influencing PSTs' ability to develop new ways of thinking about and working with students with disabilities. There is a gap in the literature about what factors influence professional socialization in combined credential programs; what type(s) of identity develops from this type of formation; and what norms and values are associated with dual certification.

Methods

Setting

The combined credential program in this study is offered at a large, urban, public university in California. Although it is one of many credential programs offered by the university, it is one of only a few that is federally funded. The combined credential offers students who complete it an elementary and a special education credential. As part of elementary and special education information sessions, staff was supposed to mention the possibility of this new program to interested students. According to students who attended the meetings, staff did not mention the new program unless specifically asked in either meeting. Instead, the program assistant called students at a later date and asked if they would be interested in participating in the combined credential program. Interested students applied to both the elementary and special education departments and, when accepted, received tuition and fee waivers for the program. For students, the enticement of free tuition may have superseded their desire for a different program, and influenced the results of this study.

The combined credential program is spread over two years in general and special education coursework, with field experiences in each setting. The majority of coursework is in general education. Three out of four field experiences are in general education settings, though those settings do have some students with disabilities included in them.

Participants

PSTs completed the combined credential program as a cohort of 20, with

people aged from 23 to 50. There were 18 women and two men in the program in the year under study. Of the females, 13 self-define as European American, five as Asian American, and three as Latina. Several women self-define as coming from multi-ethnic/racial backgrounds. Both males are Caucasian.

Data Collection

The major data sources for this study are a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The researcher collected all questionnaires and held interviews at the end of the first year of the program to assure similarity in coursework experiences across candidates. All participants agreed to complete the questionnaire and to be interviewed. In the end, 17 of the 20 completed the questionnaire, and because of scheduling conflicts, 18 (17 women and one man) agreed to be interviewed. The questionnaire asked candidates the type of teaching positions for which their program prepared them; what teaching positions they wanted upon completion of the program; and where they wanted to teach and at which grade level. It also asked about their experiences with people with disabilities, as well as personal demographic information. Interviews consisted of semi-structured questions that included their personal background, experiences with people with disabilities, and reasons for becoming teachers. Candidates were also asked about their course work and field experiences, and plans for the future. Interviewees were interviewed in a location of their choosing and were asked if they would like to talk alone or in pairs. Eight decided to be interviewed alone; 10 in pairs. Each interview lasted between one and two hours. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and reviewed. The interview data were enriched by field notes taken immediately after each interview and copious field notes taken over 300 hours of observed coursework.

Analysis of the Data

The questionnaire results were tabulated using frequency counts. The interviews were analyzed using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Grounded theory methodology allowed themes to rise from the data in order to see what topics and ideas were important to participants. The first pass at the data garnished large descriptive bins of over 30 codes (*public perception*, *prior experiences*, *labels*, *field experiences*, etc). These descriptive codes led to code refinement in Excel (McIntyre, 1998; Swallow, Newton, & Van Lottum, 2003). Excel afforded the opportunity to view a large amount of data side by side for cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Code development occurred both from information related to professional socialization and identity development, and through recurrent themes arising from the data. Code refinement based on the literature included current and past student placements and experiences, teaching philosophy, personal background, and university coursework. Codes from the data included perceived reasons for the combined program, public perception

of teaching, public perception of teaching in special education, and a personal history with disability (self or close family or friends).

Additional analysis of coded data consisted of creating composites of each individual from their interview responses. Creating a composite of each participant provided fruitful evidence of individual's experiences, understandings, and personal identity development but did not provide a holistic picture of socializing agents or of developing professional identities across PSTs in the combined credential program.

Across analysis procedures, an overwhelming adherence to shared understandings of disability and typicality emerged, as well as shared understandings of placement locations and other factors related to professional socialization and identity development. These shared understandings led to the development of theoretical codes. The theoretical codes divided into three broad categories: societal, institutional, and personal influences. Societal influences included public perception about disability and about those who teach students with disabilities: disability is negative, special educators are saints, and it is important to change public opinion. Institutional influences included PSTs' responses to the creation of the combined credential program and having one's own classroom. Personal influences included reasons for becoming a teacher, and candidates' childhood memories and views of special education and/or disabled students.

Findings

The results are organized from macro to micro influences of disability and special education in PSTs' lives. This section attributes longer comments to individual PSTs and leaves shorter comments unnamed because they, or other similar comments, appear in the grand majority of narratives. Some comments have been paraphrased.

Societal Influences

There is unanimity across PST interviews about the public's perception of special education, and it is not positive. Violent or trouble-making students pervade interview responses about public perception of special education. PSTs describe images of "People throwing, kicking you, hitting you" (Andy). Alternatively, public perception demonstrates disability as pitiable: "weak," "retarded," and "in a wheelchair"— all presented as negative qualities. Before entering into the program, PSTs were a part of the public they describe. Only a few PSTs reveal that they thought similar to the rest of the public before entrance into the program. Others may have had negative associations with disability but did not feel comfortable disclosing this information.

PSTs also share images of who their friends and families think receive special education services. The images all have to do with people with very obvious dis-

abilities: "deaf and blind or, you know, other health impairments" (Rebecca), "they see Down syndrome, they see, uh, you know, kids in wheelchairs" (Julia).

The PSTs agree that perceptions of disability are related to public awareness of certain disabilities. Lisa brings up the rise of media attention around autism, "Autism kinda gets thrown in it because it's [autism] kinda gone mainstream a lot right now." Lisa goes on to mention that she is angry that the image of special education is a kid in a wheelchair because most of the students she has worked with are not in wheelchairs. She feels this image keeps fear and pity at the forefront of public perception of special education.

Not only does the public have a vision of special education, it also has one of special educators. PSTs who tell others they are receiving a special education credential receive one of two basic responses: benevolence or incredulity. Friends and family say PSTs are "patient," "good people," "have a hard, tough job," and "have to work harder with those kids." Two PSTs are called saints. A few PSTs mention responses of disbelief from friends and families in reference to becoming special educators.

Some PSTs agree with the public perception of special educators as saints. Jean, after completing a semester in a Resource Specialist Program (RSP) room, states, "I would tip my hat to the person that could do special education because that's a hard job." She thinks general education is where she wants to teach when she finishes with the program.

Exposure to special education classrooms changes some PSTs' opinions about teaching students with disabilities. Some PSTs in this study refuse to own visions of themselves as benevolent caretakers. Carla states:

> I think what they [her friends and family] don't understand is that both [general and special education] take a lot of patience and special ed doesn't necessarily take *more* patience—just different. Both require patience.

Andy agrees:

> People always tell me, "Oh, you're in special ed? You're a really—you're a good person for doing that." I'm like, "They're just kids like anyone else."

Carla goes on to explain why she believes it is important to change public perception about special education:

> It matters in terms of the public's perception of the kids, and that matters because the public perception means they're willing to look at a certain issue and decide if it's valid to do something about. So, I think it does matter. I think it matters a great deal. I think it's partly, maybe there will be students in special education and awareness…I don't know, but I think it has to matter. Because if a whole group of people are absent to you, then you can't make any decision about them, you're not even thinking about them. So it does matter.

PSTs hear what their friends, family, and others have to say about becoming a

special educator. Experiences in the combined credential program influence their emerging identities too.

Institutional Influences

The combined credential appears at a time when inclusion as a practice is becoming more prevalent in schools (Sharpe, 2005). Its prevalence is acknowledged by faculty and by PSTs. When asked the rationale behind creating a combined credential program at their university, eight PSTs cite inclusion as the primary reason. Adele says, "Because full inclusion is there, and it's there to stay. It's been the law and people are doing it." Marina calls it a "push for inclusion." Carla says, "Your general education teachers are going to be teaching students with special needs and it makes sense for those teachers to have knowledge." They are aware that inclusion is happening in schools and believe everyone needs to be ready for the changing school population. At the same time some PSTs fear that inclusion will not succeed. Andy, a PST who received special education services in her youth, thinks that inclusion is the ideal setting for all children but worries that it will remain unrealized for many children. She says, "Well, the thing is, that I don't know if that's necessarily going to really happen." Andy is concerned that even though there is a push for inclusion, it may not be sustainable because of future changes—such as high stakes testing and other accountability measures—to the educational system.

PSTs articulate the need for inclusion, and the need for additional training for teachers in order for inclusion to be more fully realized. This acknowledgement does not take into consideration the necessary changes to classroom configurations and teaching positions to facilitate the increase of inclusion.

PSTs in this study visualize teachers as professionals who work in classrooms of their own. When interviewed about what teaching positions PSTs wanted to hold at the completion of the combined credential program, 10 PSTs initially wanted general education, four wanted special education, and three knew they wanted both credentials. Their priorities change when many realize that they want their own classrooms more than they want specific teaching positions. One year into the program, many PSTs shift from wanting to be a general or special education teacher to wanting their own classrooms. When asked on the questionnaire to check in which setting(s) they want to teach (general education, Special Day Class (SDC), RSP, inclusion), the people who previously chose general education made check marks for many different positions (see Table 1). All people who wanted special education beforehand still want special education, but are clearer as to the positions they aspire to hold—special day class teacher, resource room teacher, etc. Two of the three PSTs who initially wanted both credentials now want special education; one now wants general education. The results presented in the table seem quite random until the frame of reference for understanding the table changes from wanting general or special education to wanting a classroom (see Table 1). General

education, inclusion, and SDC all give teachers a classroom, RSP does not. Twelve of the eighteen surveyed PSTs want their own classroom regardless of a general or a special education position, a surprising finding from an inclusion perspective, but a finding that makes sense from a teacher identity perspective: teachers have their own classrooms. Five of the 12 PSTs prefer a general education classroom or an SDC. These settings are the most and least restrictive in a school.

Inclusive program goals influence PSTs, but that influence breaks down when thinking about their own desired teaching positions. At the individual teacher level, many PSTs choose classrooms over philosophic adherence to inclusive education. Past personal experiences related to teaching and to special education also influence PSTs. For example, one PST wants to become a resource room teacher because her brother received special education services in a resource room while in school and she thinks the services worked well for him.

Personal

PSTs provide several reasons why they want to become teachers. As with other

Table 1:
PSTs' Desired Teaching Positions

	Before CCP	*One Year into CCP*
Samantha	general education	general education/sdc**
Mark	no interview	sped (did not specify)
*Amy	general education	no survey
*Marina	general education	sdc**
Adele	special education	rsp/inc
Nancy	special education	inc**
Sharon	general education	general education/inc/sdc**
Lisa	ccp	sdc/inc**
Tina	general education	inc**
Rebecca	general education	general education/inc/sdc**
Caryn	no interview	sdc**
Julie	general education	general education/inc**
Angelica	speial education	rsp
Carla	general education	no survey
Marsha	general education	inc**
*Andy	general education	no survey
*Diana	ccp	rsp**
Jean	general education	general education/inc**
Ellen	both	general education**
John	special education	rsp/sdc/inc

* indicates self or family member with disabilities
ccp—combined credential program
** choosing a classroom

studies (Assuncaõ Flores & Day, 2006; Schepens, Aelterman, & Vlerick, 2009), interview findings demonstrate that nine of the eighteen wanted to be a teacher since at least high school, even if some of them detoured to other professions. Four approach teaching through positive volunteer experiences in schools. Five did not want to become teachers early in life. Of those, two describe rebelling against a parent who was a teacher; two were undecided and fell into teaching; and one wants a fulfilling career and had not found it in her previous employment.

Long before people want to become teachers they experience disability and disabled people to varying degrees. When PSTs are asked to remember people with disabilities in their school years, they respond in one of four ways: they remember no one; they remember students in a class down the hall; they remember some students with disabilities coming into class; or remember family members or close friends with disabilities.

Some PSTs remember students with disabilities from their school days. For example, John remembers being able to peek into "that classroom" and "see teddy bears." Many PSTs knew where "that classroom" was but never interacted with anyone from it. Nancy bluntly states her feelings about the separation of students with and without disabilities. "That class, those kids," she says, "And I remember being hassled by one of those kids and being really upset by it, and you just didn't want to be around those kids. I think that's sorta just the general thing."

Several PSTs recall the "special ed students" coming into their classrooms or remember a few special education students who were included in their classrooms. Jean and Julia each remembered a boy with Down Syndrome being in class with them and that people were nice to him. Students treated disabled peers kindly according to PSTs but no one befriended peers with disabilities (Julia, Lisa, Samantha). Lisa remembers, "No one was really his friend, but everyone knew him. It's that, kind of that token person." In one case two schools had a close partnership where students at the regular school could volunteer at the disabled school (Tina). Tina feels that helping students with disabilities reduced her fear and apprehension around "those" kids.

Several PSTs have family members with disabilities. These PSTs feel as though they "see disability differently" from other PSTs. They watch their families struggle with school systems and learn from those experiences. Marina recalls the following incident:

> My mom moved him (her brother) around the schools a lot. He was mostly in high school and middle school, going through this and he had a really hard time with that and, he, my mom, was very— cause my mom, he had to graduate, she went with him to school and made sure he was— But just being around that is… I could feel frustrated. Like my mom or with my dad, trying to get him help and they couldn't find him teachers who wanted to be more, give him more help or to give him what he needed to have more esteem in school and he felt like stupid and it was really, even—it's hard with him.

Other people also remember their family members struggling. Diana worries about

her son's ADHD even though he wants to keep it a secret. Amy's brother and dad have disabilities which she feels they "overcame" by being treated like the rest of the family. All three acknowledge academic and social struggles associated with their family members' impairments but also see their brothers, sons, and fathers as full, integral parts of their families and not as people to be shunned in society or in school.

In almost every case when a PST remembers a person with a disability outside their family it is a person with an "obvious" disability like autism or Down syndrome. Only four PSTs refer to students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and three of those people are family members.

Questions about their past are not easy for the PSTs. Many PSTs were not aware of people with disabilities in their youth and take false starts and pause often when recollecting, trying to remember someone. In general, this question provokes reflection about the role or lack of role of disabilities and disabled individuals in their lives. Most PSTs give responses like this:

> *Carla*: Mm…I had a neighbor across the street that was mentally retarded. But I don't remember any…There was a girl that was blind who went to school with me all through school but different grade. She was older than me, but that's it. Yeah. That's it. With a public school, yeah. I haven't even thought about that. Those people who went to school with me my whole life. What does that mean? God, now I have to think about it.

There is consensus that the absence of students with disabilities in classrooms was due to past policies when students with disabilities were less included in mainstream schools.

Three PSTs remember no one with disabilities in their pasts and do not even remember a separate classroom for disabled students. Two PSTs think the absence is because they were educated in affluent, selective settings (one private, one public) with "very homogenous, um, school culture(s)" (Sharon), or because the families who have disabled children must use their income to pay for medical costs rather than pay for tuition at private schools (Angelica).

Jean has an alternative theory about private schools and disabled children. In her community, most of the students with disabilities did not attend public school. They attended her private, parochial school. She feels they were welcomed and included at her school. One older PST acknowledges that there were no disabled students because schools were "academically segregated" (Adele) and there was no understanding of things like learning disabilities—a student with learning disabilities was "just some dumb kid" (Adele).

The findings demonstrate evidence of public and private factors influencing PSTs' decisions to become general or special education teachers. Societal norms perceive disability as negative, educational norms indicate a teacher has a classroom, and norms associated with where children with disabilities are educated in a school all influence what type of teacher PSTs want to become.

The following discussion section responds to the research questions. It then extends the analysis to explore if introduction of a combined credential program transforms the embedded norms of becoming a general or a special education teacher. It also explores the relationship between the combined credential program and associated concepts of disability and typicality.

Discussion

The research questions in this study examine social, institutional, and personal factors related to professional socialization, identity development, and norms and values associated with the combined credential program.

1. What factors influence professional socialization in a combined credential program?

Similar to existing literature in the field, societal, institutional, and personal factors influence PSTs' professional socialization in this combined credential. The media, their friends and families see disability as a negative and see people who choose to work with disabled individuals as courageous saints. Some PSTs agree with these accounts; others want to change public perception about students with disabilities. Institutional goals of the combined credential program influence the PSTs. They know there is a push for inclusion in schools, and acknowledge that Schools of Education need to prepare teachers for this new reality in schools. Their past and current beliefs that teachers have their own classroom—both in their childhood classrooms and through their professional field experiences—influence PSTs. The questionnaire results indicate more people want a classroom than care if they are a special or a general education teacher. Lastly, private experiences with disability and with special education, whether these experiences include students with disabilities or devoid of them influence PSTs too.

Images of special educators and of students with disabilities pervade the PSTs' understandings of their developing professional identities. Images of students with "severe" disabilities dominate public perception of special education. These images reinforce historical associations of fear and pity with disability. Fear and pity translate into an image of people who teach "these" students as incredibly patient people with saintly qualities (Lane, 1992; Noll & Trent, 2004). It is no wonder that even among this group, six still aspire to have a general education classroom and seven want an SDC.

2. What type of teacher identity develops from a combined credential program?

This study sought to determine if people who complete a combined credential program develop into general or special educators, or into a new type of teacher. The results leave this question unanswered in many ways. Those who entered the

program wanting to be special educators finish the first year still wanting to be special educators. Those who entered wanting to be general educators shift their stance in many ways by agreeing to teach in inclusive or SDC settings. Four want to be in an RSP as one possible teaching position. Having one's own classroom plays a greater role in responses than becoming a general or a special educator. For example, five PSTs prefer a general education classroom or an SDC but not RSP, moves which assure them a classroom. This choice leads to the finding that these five are not choosing to be general or special educators, but teachers who have classrooms. The settings of SDC and general education classroom are diametrically opposed philosophically and spatially—one the least restrictive and the other the most. If one reconsiders these choices given the information that having a classroom equates with a teacher identity, then one can better understand PSTs' professional choices. Their choices reinforce traditional classroom designs and interactions—often maintaining separation between general and special education.

3. What norms and values are associated with a combined credential program?

For those who hope a combined credential program will change PSTs' perceptions about students with disabilities, the findings suggest that past experiences—private and public—play an overwhelmingly powerful role in PST's views of becoming a teacher. In fact, these experiences often trump experiences in the combined credential program.

PSTs do not exist in a vacuum. They have been bombarded with images of disability in books and on television their whole lives. These images influence their conceptions of disability and typicality and of themselves as teachers. Since most PSTs have not had close relationships with people with disabilities they rely on more stereotypic images for their understandings of disability. They have been assailed with images of "teacher" and "special ed teacher." These images impact how they see themselves and their future profession. For some PSTs field placements are the first chance for images of disability and teachers of disabled students to change. The absence of students with disabilities in their past reinforces dominant paradigms of separation as inherent to understanding the socialization of combined credential candidates. The socialization for separation sheds light on why PSTs might choose general education or an SDC without philosophical unease. For those who were exposed to students with disabilities, the interaction was not one of equals, therefore the exposure creates an example of who helps who in this society—recreating a dependency paradigm.

Even when PSTs question dichotomies of disability and typicality, their friends, families, and others sometimes reinforce dominant negative and/or benevolent perceptions of disability in our society. PSTs must continually battle these perceptions to emerge with different norms and values related to teaching students with disabilities.

Some PSTs develop heightened awareness of disability-related issues after one year in the program. They work with a variety of students in a variety of settings and reframe their stereotypic images of disabled students. This is evidenced in the amount of time it takes to remember students with disabilities in the past. This lag time sends a message about prior socialization—one of separation and isolation for students with disabilities from everyone else. It evokes questions about how these PSTs will undertake their future roles as general or special educators.

Implications

The combined credential program hopes to prepare PSTs for two types of employment: general and special education. Currently many schools function with teachers who formally possess only one of those two skill sets. This cohort with conceivably double the skills will be required to choose to be general or special educators. They have been exposed to different pedagogic frames from which to view students than people who pursue a single credential but will still be slotted into existing teacher roles.

Their decision to become general or special educators is imbued with many factors. PSTs acknowledge that bureaucracy plays a role in making their decisions. The bureaucracy includes paying attention to the desires of the parents, the teacher, the principal's stance towards students with disabilities and inclusion, and if the school has inclusion services or not. What setting the PSTs will teach in (and want to teach in) also depends on resources, ability of teachers to collaborate, the severity of a student's disability, and often—unfortunately—students' race, ethnicity, language background, and income (Young, 2008a). Job location and availability also influence PSTs' decisions (Sexton, 2008).

Beyond the very important questions about how to encourage enough PSTs into special education and how to improve teachers' skills with a greater variety of students lie deep ideological concerns about what these PSTs believe about disability, typicality, and the students they teach.

The educational bureaucracy requires categorical distinctions between different types of students and different types of teachers. Teachers primarily teach either disabled or non-disabled ('typical') students. By choosing one route over another, PSTs will be socialized into an educational philosophy that stresses either the "needs of the many" or "the needs of the few." Few opportunities exist to be socialized towards the needs of *all* students in inclusive spaces (Utley, 2009).

As PSTs develop teacher identities, questions about how their prior experiences will influence their pedagogy, placement, and intervention decisions remain. If they are like the majority of teachers, their current decisions will be heavily influenced by their past and will reinforce the status quo about disability and typicality rather than dismantle it (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Olsen, 2008c).

It is important to understand the norms, values, and expectations PSTs bring about inclusion and about becoming a teacher. These norms, values, and expectations impact classroom organization and ways of working with other adults that ultimately impact inclusion. When one reevaluates the combined credential program in light of a professional socialization that prioritizes traditional norms and values of schooling like having a classroom it makes sense that inclusion will continue to be a struggle in schools. It will be extremely difficult for PSTs to develop alternate identities that do not reinforce the status quo of separation.

Some evidence supports positive changes due to the combined credential program. Eleven PSTs wanted to be general education teachers before the program, but one year into it, most are willing to become special educators. This finding might help solve the teacher shortage question but does little to solve the ideological and pedagogical divisions of general and special education (Young, 2010).

The increase of combined credential programs is heralded as a solution to many problems at once: they will increase the number of special educators, they will make better prepared teachers, and they will combat ideological bifurcation about disability and typicality. Although all these changes are possible, the realities of socialization and identity formation might counteract these positive pedagogic, practical, and ideological prospects.

It will take more than combined credential programs to produce ideological shifts away from how general and special education are currently organized in schools. Credential programs will have to speak openly about socializing factors and will have to work to integrate coursework more effectively. Schools and expectations for general and special education teaching positions will have to change as well. PSTs need to experience truly integrated schools as models for practice. School districts will need to explore different student arrangements and teacher job descriptions as well. State Departments of Education will have to reconsider credential requirements and designations. This shift requires changes to every level of the educational bureaucracy and changes to reified notions of disability and typicality. These changes ask a lot of schools and Schools of Education, but not making the changes reinscribes the educational status quo of a poor education for students with disabilities.

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Note

[1] The terms ‘people with disabilities’ and ‘disabled people’ are used interchangeably throughout this article. Many disability rights activists believe that the term ‘people with disabilities’ puts the person first without undue focus on their physical (or psychological)

condition. Other disabled individuals, particularly in the United Kingdom, assert that 'disabled person' should be used to highlight the salience of disability oppression. The use of both terms is meant to recognize and support both perspectives" (borrowed from Ostrove, 2006, Endnote 2).

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