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CONGRATULATIONS

Each year the Canadian Educational Researchers' Association (CERA) selects the outstanding English-language article published in an issue of the *Canadian Journal of Education* during the previous year. Congratulations to this year's winner.

R.W.B. Jackson Award 2003

Jane Gaskell. The "Public" in Public Schools: A School Board Debate. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 26, 19–36.

FÉLICITATIONS

Chaque année, l'Association canadienne des chersheurs en éducation (ACCÉ) choisit le meilleur article paru au cours de l'année précédente dans un numéro de la Revue canadienne de l'éducation. Félicitations à la lauréate de cette année.

R.W.B. Jackson Award 2003

Jane Gaskell. The "Public" in Public Schools: A School Board Debate. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 26, 19–36.

EDITORIAL

With the publication of this issue , we say farewell to Dr. Aline Giroux, who leaves her position as rédactrice for the *Canadian Journal of Education*.

Dr. Giroux is a full professor in the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, in ethics and philosophy of education, where her scholarship includes the philosophical foundations of education, theoretical research methods, and foundations of research methods.

Dr. Giroux has served for two terms as editor of CJE. In the absence of an English language editor in 2000–2001, Dr. Giroux assumed the editorial duties for both English and French components of the journal.

Throughout her term as editor, Dr. Giroux has reinforced CJE's framework for research and scholarly work. She has insisted on a high level of scholarship. All who read the Journal have benefited from her care and diligence and her insistence on rigour and integrity.

The Canadian Society for the Study of Education extends thanks to Dr. Giroux for her meritorious contribution to CJE and acknowledges her exemplary leadership: a legacy that will undoubtedly continue.

— Sam Robinson
October, 2003

ÉDITORIAL

Avec la publication de ce numéro, nous devons faire nos adieux au P[re] Aline Giroux, à titre de rédactrice de la Revue canadienne de l'éducation.

Mme Giroux est professeure titulaire de philosophie à la Faculté d'éducation de l'Université d'Ottawa ou elle mène des recherches sur les fondements philosophiques de l'éducation et en éthique.

La P[re] Giroux a rempli deux mandats à la du RCE. En 2000–2001, en l'absence d'un rédacteur anglophone, elle a assumé les fonctions de direction et en rédaction en anglais et en françis.

Comme rédactrice la P[re] Giroux a peaufiné le cadre de travail s'appliquant aux recherches. Très méticuleuse, elle a cherché la rigueur et l'intégrité dans la quête du savoir, ce qu'ont pu très certainmement remarquer les lecteurs de la *Revue*.

La Société canadienne pur l'étude de l'éducation remercie vivement la P[re] Giroux de sa contribution méritoire à la RCE / au CJE.

— Sam Robinson
Octobre 2003

Unlikely Allies: Hilda Neatby, Michel Foucault, and the Critique of Progressive Education

James M. Pitsula

Hilda Neatby, the author of *So Little for the Mind*, which stirred up a national debate about education in the 1950s, finds an unlikely ally in Michel Foucault. Both believe that progressive education, grounded in scientific pedagogy, is a means of domination rather than liberation. Both trace its roots to the 18th-century Age of Reason, which, according to Foucault, gave birth to the "disciplinary society" and, in Neatby's view, destabilized the balance between faith and reason. Although they are philosophically far apart (Foucault, a Nietzschean; Neatby, a Christian), they have a startlingly similar appraisal of the progressive school.

Hilda Neatby, l'auteure de *So Little for the Mind*, qui a suscité un débat national au sujet de l'éducation dans les années cinquante, trouve un allié inattendu en la personne de Michel Foucault. Les deux croient que l'éducation progressive, fondée sur la pédagogie scientifique, est un moyen de domination plutôt que de libération. Ils la font tous les deux remonter au Siècle des lumières qui, selon Foucault, a donné naissance à la « société disciplinaire » et, selon Neatby, a rompu l'équilibre entre la foi et la raison. Bien que qu'ils soient de deux écoles de pensée fort éloignées (Foucault, un nietzschéen, et Neatby, une chrétienne), leur évaluation de l'éducation progressive est étrangement semblable.

At first glance, the intellectual partnering of Hilda Neatby with Michel Foucault seems improbable, if not perverse. At the time of his death in 1984, Foucault was one of the most famous intellectuals in the world. His books, notably *Madness and Civilization* (1965), *The Order of Things* (1973), *Discipline and Punish* (1979), and *The History of Sexuality* (1980), translated into 16 languages, made an enormous impact on the work of scholars. His influence continues to be felt in a wide range of disciplines — sociology, history, psychology, philosophy, politics, linguistics, cultural studies, literary theory, and education, to name a few. Hilda Neatby, on the other hand, has a reputation confined mainly to Canada. Her chief claims to fame were membership on the Massey Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences (*The Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences*, 1951) and authorship of *So Little for the Mind* (Neatby, 1953), a polemic against progressive trends in education that stirred up a controversy when it was published; it sold

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about 15,000 copies by 1975, the year Neatby died (Hayden, 1983, p. 34). While Foucault's fame continued to grow after his death, Neatby's reputation faded. Even in their professional and personal lives, the two individuals could scarcely have been more different from one another. Foucault was a distinguished member of the Collège de France, Neatby a professor in the History Department at the University of Saskatchewan; Foucault, a sexual adventurer who died of AIDS, Neatby a devout Presbyterian spinster who expressed amazement at the sexual practices mentioned in Mary McCarthy's novel *The Group* (Hayden, 1983, p. 5).

Despite these disparities, there are startling convergences in their thought. Both are skeptical about the claims of modernity and call into question the allegedly "liberating," "humanitarian," and "democratizing" benefits of the 18th-century Age of Reason. Both view progressive education, based on the principles of psychology and scientific pedagogy, as essentially an instrument of power and domination, rather than emancipation and enlightenment. Foucault is content to trace the effects of power and describe its operations; he makes no moral judgments because he believes such statements are meaningless. He sees power and knowledge as two sides of the same coin, inseparable from one another. There is no such thing as disinterested knowledge that can be used to call power to account. His critique of Western civilization is relentless and complete. Neatby, by contrast, wants to save Western civilization from itself by restoring a proper balance between reason and faith. She believes that we have strayed from the true path and need to find our way back. For Foucault, there never was a path; the categories of reason and faith are artificial constructs that bear no relationship to truth.

Comparing Neatby and Foucault deepens our understanding of the meaning of progressive education and throws new light on the place of *So Little for the Mind* in the history of Canadian educational thought. Pigeonholed as a conservative, "back-to-the-basics" critic of new trends in education, Neatby emerges as a thinker who anticipated certain postmodernist themes and applied them to an analysis of the philosophy and practice of education. Seen in this perspective, her thought acquires a depth and sophistication that it has not always been accorded. *So Little for the Mind* can be read as an extended commentary on the idea, later developed in Foucault's work, that what looks like progress in the social sciences and pedagogy is really "an insidious new form of social control" (Miller, 1993, p. 113).

Foucault (1979) presents a revisionist interpretation of the penal reforms of the 18th and 19th centuries in *Discipline and Punish*, the book closest to Neatby's concerns. The banning of torture and public executions in favour

of gentler punishments is usually interpreted as evidence of the advancement of civilization, signifying a more humanitarian approach to the treatment of criminals. Foucault calls attention to the displacement that occurred in the object of the punitive operation — no longer the body, but the soul. Punishment now acted "in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations" (Foucault, 1979, p. 16). It was "intended not to punish the offence, but to supervise the individual, to neutralize his dangerous state of mind, to alter his criminal tendencies . . ." (p. 18). The punishment bore with it "an assessment of normality and a technical prescription for a possible normalization" (p. 21). Moreover, "humane" penal procedures became entangled with a new corpus of knowledge, a science of penology, whose purpose was the "management of the depths of the human soul" (Rose, 1990, p. 7).

Foucault extends the argument from the prison to other prison-like institutions where discipline is administered: the insane asylum, barracks, factory, and school. "The workshop, the school, the army were subject to a whole micro-penality of time (lateness, absences, interruption of tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of behavior (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body ('incorrect' attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency)" (Foucault, 1979, p. 178). Of central importance to the disciplinary regime was the examination, a technique that combines surveillance with normalizing judgment. The procedure became standard practice in everything from psychiatry and the diagnosis of disease to the hiring of labour. It made possible the science of pedagogy by placing schoolchildren in a "field of surveillance" and "engag[ing] them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them" (p. 189). The individual is transformed into a "case," who may be "described, judged, measured, compared with others" and who has to be "trained or corrected, classified, normalized, excluded, etc." (p. 191). Foucault asserts that these disciplinary techniques created something new in human history. Previously, ordinary individuality, "the everyday individuality of everybody . . . [had] remained below the threshold of description." Now "the threshold of describable individuality" had been lowered, and this description was used as "a means of control and a method of domination" (p. 191).

Foucault finds in the *Panopticon*, Jeremy Bentham's 19th-century architectural design for the ideal prison, an apt metaphor for the disciplinary society:

> . . . at the periphery, an annular building; at the center, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open into the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided

> into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. By the effect of backlighting, one can observe from the tower, standing out precisely against the light, the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery. They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible. (Foucault, 1979, p. 200)

The inhabitant of the cell can be seen by the supervisor, but the side walls prevent communication with other prisoners. The inmate does not know whether he is being observed at any given moment, but he is always sure that he may be so. The person who is constantly fixed in the gaze of the supervisor begins to internalize the mechanism of power to which he is subjected. He becomes his own jailer.

The Panopticon is also a laboratory. It can be used to carry out experiments, modify behaviour, and correct undesirable attributes. Those in the tower (metaphorically speaking) can experiment with medicines, try out different punishments, employ various techniques, and conduct research. "The Panopticon is a privileged place for experiments on men, and for analyzing with complete certainty the transformations that may be obtained from them" (Foucault, 1979, p. 204), the very model of the human sciences. The Panopticon must be understood, not as a "dream building," but as "the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form" (p. 205). It has diverse applications: reform of prisoners, treatment of patients, instruction of schoolchildren, confinement of the insane, supervision of workers, and rehabilitation of the unemployed. The aim is not to repress, censor, or put down; it is to "strengthen the social forces — to increase production, to develop the economy, spread education, raise the level of public morality . . ." (p. 208).

Foucault (1979) suggests that the mechanisms of discipline extended more widely in the modern period to the point that Western society was penetrated through and through with disciplinary methods. The growth in the number of institutions, such as prisons, asylums, and schools, testified to this, as did the increase in the level of surveillance and supervision beyond the walls of institutions. Schools were not content to train docile children, but had also "to supervise the parents, to gain information as to their way of life, their resources, their piety, their morals" (Foucault, 1979, p. 211). The Panoptic gaze fixed on adults in their own homes, detecting "whether they know their catechism and the prayers, whether they are determined to root out the vices of their children, how many beds there are in the house and what the sleeping

arrangements are" (p. 211).

Foucault (1979) speaks of the emergence of a "disciplinary society" (p. 209), an "indefinitely generalizable mechanism of 'panopticism' " (p. 216). "Much more than architectural ingenuity, it was an event in the 'history of the human mind' " (p. 216). This conclusion leads him to a reinterpretation of the Enlightenment. The 18th century saw the establishment of formally egalitarian legal and political frameworks, embodying the concept of the "rights of man," expressed, for example, in the French Revolution and the American Revolution. But, for Foucault, the development and extension of disciplinary mechanisms constituted the dark side of the process, establishing a regime that took away freedom, rather than extending it. "The general juridical form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle was supported by these tiny, everyday, physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micro-power that are essentially non-egalitarian and asymmetrical that we call the disciplines. . . . The 'Enlightenment,' which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines" (p. 222).

The word "discipline" is used here in two senses, referring both to punishment and to an organized body of knowledge. Foucault contends that that the two meanings cannot be separated from one another, that they are two aspects of the same thing. Thus, the human sciences are heavily implicated in the disciplinary society. "The formation of knowledge and the increase of power regularly reinforce one another in a circular process" (Foucault, 1979, p. 224). The power exercised over inmates in prisons, patients in hospitals, pupils in schools, or workers in factories makes possible the disciplines of clinical medicine, psychiatry, child psychology, educational psychology, and personnel management. The knowledge gained thereby is then applied to prisoners, patients, schoolchildren, and workers to refine and multiply the effects of power, a process that in turn leads to further advancements in the various fields of knowledge. The end result is not more freedom, but an ever-more penetrating and pervasive control over the human mind, body, and soul.

> And, although the universal juridicism of modern society seems to fix limits on the exercise of power, its universally widespread panopticism enables it to operate, on the underside of the law, a machinery that is both immense and minute, which supports, reinforces, multiplies the asymmetry of power and undermines the limits that are traced around the law. (Foucault, 1979, p. 223)

From this perspective, the pre-Enlightenment, inhumane punishments — beatings, torture, dismemberment of bodies, hangings — were less invasive. They inflicted horrible pain on the body, but left the mind and

soul alone. Modernity, the human sciences, and progress brought with them the indefinite discipline of "interrogation without end," "a file that was never closed, the calculated leniency of a penalty that would be interlaced with the ruthless curiosity of an examination, a procedure that would be at the same time the permanent measure of a gap in relation to an inaccessible norm . . ." (Foucault, 1979, p. 227). With respect to education, the methods of the old-fashioned school — strapping, detention, forced memorization, and relentless drill — at least were not presented as being something they were not. Power relations were naked and obvious. As Foucault points out, the educational psychology that was supposed to correct the rigors of the traditional school does no such thing. "We must not be misled," he writes, "these techniques merely refer individuals from one disciplinary authority to another, and they reproduce, in a concentrated or formalized form, the scheme of power-knowledge proper to each discipline . . ." (pp. 226–227).

Although Foucault gives little attention to the specifics of pedagogy and schooling, other scholars have taken up the task of applying his ideas to the education system. Indeed, the project has given rise to a minor academic industry. A leading practitioner, Thomas Popkewitz, has written and edited a small library of books devoted to elaborating the Foucaultian idea that "particular systems of pedagogical ideas and rules of reasoning" are "the effects of power in schools" (Popkewitz, 1998, p. 32; see also Ball, 1990; Popkewitz, 1991; Popkewitz, 1993; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998; Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999; Popkewitz, Franklin, & Pereyra, 2001). Much of this material, not only that of Popkewitz but of others working in the same vineyard, is so clogged with jargon that it is almost impossible to read. With due diligence, however, the patient reader can extract bits of information and detect the flow of the argument.

Of particular value for the purpose of this discussion is the application of Foucault's theories to early-20th-century discourse about childhood, the state, and schooling. The pedagogical science of the day, influenced greatly by the ideas of American philosopher/psychologist John Dewey, aimed to create self-disciplined, self-motivated individuals capable of participating effectively and co-operatively in democratic society. Popkewitz (2001) maintains that these pedagogical discourses "connected the scope and aspirations of public powers with the personal and subjective capabilities of individuals" (p. 314). Social progress required the development of a "New Man," a new secular citizen who "would shed the dispositions of religious and inherited social order and replace them with a subjectivity [how one thinks, feels, and acts] that embodied the obligations, responsibilities, and personal discipline embodied in liberal

democratic ideals. The school was a central institution in this form of governance" (p. 318). The state targeted the "self" as a "site of administration" (p. 318), and the social sciences, especially psychology, were enlisted to carry out the project by "giving focus to the micro-processes by which individuals become self-motivated, self-responsible, and 'reasonable'" (p. 321). "Developmental and learning theories opened the child's behavior, attitudes, and beliefs to scrutiny, such that they could be acted upon to effect cognition and affect" (p. 323). The key point is that progressive schooling constituted a power relation — the social administration of the soul.

Popkewitz draws a parallel between Dewey, who wanted to mould children so that they were fit to live in a democracy, and Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist and contemporary of Dewey, who tried to devise a pedagogy to instill in Soviet children the attitudes proper to a Communist society. Dewey visited Russia in the 1920s at a time when many Soviet intellectuals considered his philosophy of pragmatism (the notion that assertions are to be evaluated by their practical consequences and bearing on human interests) of some value in advancing the revolution (Popkewitz, 2001, pp. 315–316). The argument here is not that the Soviet Union is the same as the United States, but rather that disciplinary mechanisms were implicit in the pedagogies of both Dewey and Vygotsky. Both employed psychological techniques to measure, classify, guide, direct, and control the individual. Whether the exercise of power was good or bad is open for debate, but in both cases power was deployed. The individual was viewed as an object of "moral orthopaedics" (Foucault, 1979, p. 10) in need of being normalized and made into a well-adjusted, productive unit of society. Moreover, the power of progressive educators, whether of the American or Soviet variety, was rooted in "objective" science and was, therefore, of a totalizing nature that had a tendency to drive out alternative claims to authority based on religion, tradition or parental wisdom. The child was at the mercy of the educational experts; they knew best.

Hilda Neatby attacks this state of affairs with deft sarcasm and sharp logic. "Progressive education in Canada," she writes, "is not liberation; it is indoctrination both intellectual and moral" (Neatby, 1953, p. 42). "Experts talk constantly of training for leadership, but their whole system is one of conditioning for servitude" (p. 236). In support of her bold assertion, she cites chapter and verse from curriculum guides, programs of study, and pronouncements of professional educators. She does a better job of applying Foucault to progressive education than does Popkewitz, even though there is no evidence that she read Foucault or had heard of him (*Discipline and Punish* was first published in French the year she died.)

A good deal of the commentary on *So Little for the Mind* focuses on particular aspects of her critique: the failure to teach the three Rs; automatic promotion of pupils from one grade to the next; inordinate attention given to extra-curricular activities; lack of liberal learning among professional educators; the breakdown of discipline in the classroom; time-wasting activities in teacher-training colleges. Commentators tend to shy away from her main and seemingly most outrageous charge: progressive schools are *totalitarian* in nature; they condition students for *servitude*. She means what she says, and Foucault helps her make her case.

Neatby objects strongly to the unconcealed ambition of the progressive school to intervene in all aspects of the life of the child. This tendency was an outgrowth of Dewey's pronouncement: "education as life and as growth" (Neatby, 1953, p. 55), and the "whole child goes to school" (p. 8). Neatby agrees that, of course, "education is life," but that doesn't mean the school should do everything. She worries that parents are shoved aside or treated in a patronizing manner. School officials in pursuit of information intrude upon the privacy of the family. The role of parents, it would seem, is "to produce the child, provide him with food, clothing and shelter, and then furnish the guidance officer, voluntarily or involuntarily, with such information as he needs for making his decision" (p. 211).

Neatby quotes with dismay from the British Columbia *Programme of Studies for Junior High Schools*, 1948:

> When difficulties arise it is the underlying cause that should be discovered and treated rather than the outward symptoms. In other words, the treatment should fit the pupil and not his act alone. The same misdemeanour may have an entirely different significance when committed by two different persons. This is why it is so futile to adopt fixed rules for dealing with specific faults. Successful treatment depends upon thorough knowledge of the case. Teachers should derive a lesson from established clinical practice and make a thorough study of the pupil, his background and history, before deciding upon any course of treatment. In the more difficult cases this will mean studying the home conditions and consulting the parents and others in the school and outside it who have knowledge of the pupil which might prove important. Ordinarily it is the part of wisdom to postpone conference with the pupil until . . . there has been time for careful consideration of the available facts and a reasoned decision as to the most promising kind of treatment. Careful notes should be kept of all the data secured and also of the course of treatment and its results. (Neatby, 1953, pp. 211–212)

This is what Foucault labels the "penitentiary" approach, a method that substitutes for the convicted offender, the "delinquent" (Miller, 1993, p. 230). It is not so much the delinquent's act as his or her life that is subject to discipline and correction. The point of concern is not the offence as such, but rather the deviation of a personality from the norm. Foucault

contends that over the course of the 19th century prisons transformed punitive procedures into a "penitentiary technique," which then "haunted the school, the court, the asylum" as well as the prison (Foucault, 1979, p. 299). Neatby has an intuitive understanding of the process, for immediately following the long passage quoted above, she writes,

> The procedure is undoubtedly appropriate for the inmate of a lunatic asylum or a specially organized penal institution. In a school, however, where the children are given the freedom properly accorded to rational individuals, justice demands that each one be equally responsible for his overt acts and that from each be exacted approximately equal penalties, if penalties are needed. (Neatby, 1953, p. 212)

The importation of the penitentiary technique into the school offends her sense of respect for children as moral beings with minds of their own.

Another aspect of the totalizing agenda of the progressive school that Neatby abhors is the effort to teach children correct "attitudes." They are subjected to relentless pressure to accept the approved values of "democracy," "social living," or "effective living." The "social attitudes" to be "constantly nurtured," states the Saskatchewan *Programme of Studies for the High School*, 1950, are "cooperation and social concern; spirituality; honesty and integrity; appreciation of . . . the finer aspects of life" (cited in Neatby, 1953, p. 49, truncation in original). Teachers are not so much teaching English literature, natural science, or history as they are "condition[ing] little boys and girls so that they will grow up to be orderly, well-adjusted, but progressive and forward-looking citizens . . ." (p. 119).

The teacher arranges the facts so that they lead to the politically correct result. Neatby cites the Ontario high school curriculum guide for world geography, which requires pupils to gain "a sympathetic understanding of other peoples," and then she asks, "Are the teachers to tell them nothing that might detract from this sympathy?" (Neatby, 1953, p. 167) The Ontario social studies course (grades 7 to 10), a mishmash of anthropology, sociology, economics, and history, has as one of its chief aims to show that democracy is the crowning achievement of civilization. Neatby remarks that such a mangled approach to history does no real good to the cause of democracy. "If all that is desired is to say that democracy is good and absolute rule is bad, why not just say so in winning tones, and leave the history out? After all, in spite of generous assumptions, history offers no logical proof of anything . . ." (p. 168). She defends the right of the teacher to teach without being told what the students are expected to believe at the end of the course (p. 171).

Dewey recommends that students participate in group projects, the better to absorb the spirit of democracy and co-operative endeavour. He

puts forward the principle that children learn best when they solve a problem of their own devising and when the project involves manual activity (Neatby, 1953, p. 172). While the teacher may inspire the project, the children must accept it as "theirs." The Quebec *Handbook for Teachers*, 1951, advises, "The skillful teacher will set the stage as it were, in such a way that the pupils will accept the purposes and aims as their own" (cited in Neatby, 1953). "In short," Neatby observes, "their aims better look a lot like the teacher's" (p. 182), or in the words of "a perceptive child who had been exposed to the 'newer school practices': 'Cooperation means you gotta' "(p. 183). Neatby considers the manipulation and trickery practised in the progressive classroom an insult to the intelligence of the students. Dictatorship masquerades under the cloak of democracy, giving the latter a bad name.

She makes the same point about the progressive injunction that the teacher must constantly attend to the pupils' motivation, and at all costs refrain from forcing them to learn material they are not interested in. Dewey assumes that children are naturally curious about subject matter that is directly relevant to their day-to-day lives, but that abstract knowledge or information remote from their immediate environment is of much less interest or value to them. Thus, teachers are expected to employ various stratagems to awaken curiosity by showing pupils how school lessons relate to life outside the classroom. The Saskatchewan *Elementary School Curriculum*, 1945, suggests that the study of electricity should arise out of a "situation," such as the burning out of a fuse plug. Neatby (1953) writes:

> It would not do merely to ask, "What is known about the nature of electricity? How it is produced and transmitted?" That would not "interest" Grade VII and VIII pupils. Instead the teacher must begin by surreptitiously shorting a circuit so as to blow out a fuse, and then exclaim: "Well, well, isn't that interesting? A fuse has blown! Doesn't it make you want to study electricity? Wouldn't you like to learn all about it, so that we can produce a play about the life of Edison?" What would happen if the pupils were honest and courageous enough to say, "No, not particularly," we are not told. (p. 193)

Neatby is repelled by the phoniness, the insincerity, and the attempt to conceal the exercise of power. Moreover, she is sure that students are canny enough to see through the elaborate ruses. The traditionalist teacher who required pupils to learn something and rebuked or punished them when they failed to do so, "showed a truer respect for them than those who regard them only as inert wax to be moulded with patience and skill" (Neatby, 1953, p. 201). The whole point of the modern school, as far as Neatby can see, is to assure that children do what they want to do or want to do what they are doing — the perfect image of a suffocating totalitarian

regime (p. 203). Neatby distrusts the progressives' repudiation of externally imposed discipline because she regards the alternative — contrived spontaneity and socially engineered conformity — as fraudulent and dangerous. Slick human relations management practised on the young is, in her opinion, a far more serious threat to democracy than the old-fashioned system of rules and punishments.

The progressive school insists that pupils feel good about themselves and that they never fail or fall short of meeting an absolute standard. The goal is to make school life as pleasant as possible, which, according to Neatby, leads to a uniformly low standard, easily obtainable by almost all. Progressive educators promote the lie that all children are equal, or almost equal, in ability. Democracy demands that this be true. Neatby states that children know full well that their capacities are not the same "and, if they were not so indifferent, would doubtless be highly diverted at this elaborate adult conspiracy to conceal the facts of life" (Neatby, 1953, p. 332).

And what of the children who fail to absorb the correct democratic and co-operative attitudes, the ones who are incompletely socialized? The Saskatchewan *Elementary School Curriculum Guide,* 1952, recommends that the teacher keep a record of the pupil's progress.

> Anecdotal notes are possibly the most reliable. The teacher observes the behavior of the students in the classroom, on the playground, and in places away from the school. She records behavior incidents which she believes are indicative of the pupils' attitudes, interests, and appreciations. These anecdotes are collected from time to time, and are usually written into the cumulative record of the students. From these notes the teacher makes estimates of progress. (cited in Neatby, 1953, p. 221)

Here we have, Neatby says, "the vision of the coming police state." The Panopticon comes to the playground. She avows that no self-respecting teacher would consent to this type of surveillance of his or her pupils. Those who do might as well "hire out their work to an eager little band of spies and *agents provocateurs*" (p. 221).

Neatby's accuses educational experts of having "magnified . . . [their] office" (Neatby, 1953, p. 55) to the point where they become totalitarian in their approach to schooling. The remedy is for schools and teachers to "back off," to give up their mission of socializing the whole child, and to try to do one thing really well: feed the child's mind. This would open up some space, give the pupil relief from the unrelenting gaze of the school, and make room for the home, church, and other organizations to exercise influence over the child's development. Neatby does not consider the possibility that these agencies, too, can be taken over by social-science-driven disciplinary mechanisms. This is Foucault's nightmare — there is

no escaping Panopticisim. Neatby's vision is not as dark.

She holds that intellectual training is liberating in a way that "socializing" is not. The child who learns the basic skills of reading and writing is empowered; he has more freedom than the one trapped in illiteracy or semi-literacy. Progressive educators continually make excuses as to why, after 12 years, a high school graduate cannot write a sentence, much less a paragraph. It is impossible to teach such skills, they say, because now everybody goes to school, not just the elite as in the old days. Or it is not important because grammar and spelling are overrated as "life skills." Or it is actually being done; the evidence to the contrary is anecdotal or based on shoddy research. Neatby's point is that schools might do a better job of the three Rs if they stopped trying to do everything and focused on giving pupils the basic tools required for self-education.

Secondly, she asks that children be expected to master a well-defined and systematically organized body of knowledge — the despised "facts." She rejects what she calls the false antithesis between learning facts and thinking about them, between content and process. How can a child think without facts to think about? One might as well say, she writes, "The important thing is not to consume food, but to digest it" (Neatby, 1953, pp. 44–45). Facts, even those learned by memory work or the rote method, provide material for thought and a starting point for critical thinking. Moreover, the mastery of a field of knowledge is intrinsically empowering. It gives students the confidence that they know something and that they have the ability to refute statements, if only inwardly, they know to be false. They have a foundation for standing up to the teacher, who must bow to the facts, if only in the child's mind. When the facts are disdained and replaced with vague understandings, cloudy generalities, and correct "attitudes," the teacher must always be right.

Neatby states repeatedly that the progressive educator's fascination with process at the expense of content does children a terrible disservice by depriving them of a rich, full, and intellectually rewarding curriculum. They are cut off from "any real enjoyment or understanding of the inheritance of western civilization" (Neatby, 1953, p. 16). "The material which would enable the individual to work out his salvation [what Foucault would call alternative discourses, 'the best of our civilization in literature, science, history, art'] is practically withheld in order that he may be made more receptive to the ready-made solutions that are handed out" (p. 59). Neatby demands that the teacher not have exclusive control over the flow of information and not pre-select the facts so that they lead to the right conclusion, however laudable it might be ("democracy," "tolerance," "the importance of sharing"). The central purpose of formal education is "to

dispel the ignorance that leaves one helpless" and "to train the mind for control and power" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 12). By giving students access to the intellectual and cultural heritage of Western civilization, obliging them to master a coherent body of knowledge, and making sure that they can obtain meaning from the printed page and express themselves clearly and effectively, the teacher confers power on the student. Education is liberation, not therapy. Education interpreted as conditioning leaves the young "weak from lack of nourishment and blind from want of vision" (Neatby, 1953, p. 125).

Neatby offers one other suggestion to promote the power and freedom of the individual — the curtailment of Dewey's cherished group work and shared activities. Some group activity is fine, but it should be kept within strict bounds. "In the enthusiasm for joint activity, how easy it is to forget that thinking, if it is done at all, must be done alone! All real mental training is an individual process. There is common ground on which rational minds can meet, but each must find its own path there" (Neatby, 1983, p. 234). She admires those individuals, who without denying their membership in society, stand alone — "the genius, the martyr, or perhaps just the eccentric or the crank" — all those who endure solitude "in order to witness to what they thought they saw" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 47).

In the last chapter of *So Little for the Mind*, Neatby asks the question: Why and how did the sorry state of affairs embodied in the progressive school come to pass? She knows it is not all John Dewey's fault. He is but a symptom of a deeper ailment. Like Foucault, she locates the root of the problem in the 18th-century Enlightenment. Foucault argues that the supposedly humane and progressive character of the Age of Reason masked a dark side that gave rise to the "disciplinary society." Neatby posits that the Enlightenment's too-exclusive "worship of reason" produced disastrous consequences. "As a result," she writes, "in the twentieth century some two hundred years after the 'enlightenment' we encounter the new barbarism" (Neatby, 1953, p. 316). "What is needed is a renewal of faith and a renunciation of the false rationalism which implicitly denies the power of faith for good or evil in human society" (p. 324). This statement correlates with her repeated insistence that one of the main purposes of education is to bring students into contact with the heritage of Western civilization, which she describes as a product of Judaic morality, Christian love, Greek philosophy, Roman law, and modern humanism. The problem is that undue emphasis has been placed on the last term in the list. Modern humanism, taken by itself, is *not* liberating; the unfettered human sciences lead not to freedom, but to enslavement.

On this point, she is in agreement with Foucault, but then they part

company. Foucault merely describes and dissects power relations; he makes no comment as to whether the exercise of power in any particular case is good, bad, or indifferent. His presentation of the Panopticon as a metaphor for the disciplinary society is brilliant, but his philosophy, which is essentially Nietzchean, does not permit him to criticize it on rational grounds. He does not think there is any such thing as reason and truth in any fixed, absolute sense. Nor does he think, for that matter, that there is any such thing as "humanity" in any fixed, absolute sense. In his conclusion to *The Order of Things* he predicts that the normative ideal of "man" will soon be "effaced," "like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea" (Foucault, 1973, p. 387). His rejection of the foundations of Western civilization is complete and profound. It is almost comical to see educational experts attempting to extract some kind of progressive lesson from Foucault. Apparently they do not understand how subversive he is. As far as Foucault is concerned, those who are subordinated or oppressed may deploy power against the power being exercised upon them, but they have no good or rational basis either to do so or not to do so.

This is very far from the intellectual world of Hilda Neatby. She affirms the worth of Western civilization taken as a whole and seeks to rescue it from the distortion that has occurred because of the importance given to one aspect of it. It seems doubtful that she can make her case on rational grounds alone. In a letter to Frank Underhill written shortly after the publication of *So Little For the Mind*, she said that she thought she could, but that "it seemed to me insincere to write seriously about the most serious of subjects without making clear my own convictions. At the same time I was most anxious to make a purely rational case" (Hayden, 1983, p. 34). She may have been anxious to, but she did not. In her other essays, it is evident that as soon as the argument "hits the wall," that is, each time she comes to define the irreducible essence of education, she invokes the transcendental. In "The Group and the Herd," she borrows Matthew Arnold's formulation that the social motive for education is "to make reason and the will of God prevail" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 41). In *The Debt of Our Reason*, she quotes Sir Thomas Browne to the effect that man in exploring the wonders of the world is "paying the 'Debt of our Reason we owe unto God, the homage we pay for not being Beasts'" (Neatby, 1954a, p. 3). The God she is talking about is not necessarily the Christian God. She allows some latitude on this point, averring that it is difficult to conceive of humanity in other than a degraded state "apart from reason . . .; or even apart from the will of God if only in the sense of the power of the mystery of human destiny" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 46). It is her conviction that if God is dead, so is man.

She defines education in one passage as "the discovery that the world is more interesting than oneself," (Neatby, 1953, p. 232) and elsewhere as "the gaining of a humble conception of the greatness of human nature and human society, and of the vastness and complexity of the universe in which its place is set. . . . It is learning the love of, and the pursuit of, perfection" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 37–38). Neatby displays an unmistakable reverence for knowledge that cannot be dissociated from reverence for God and His creation. She says that a teacher needs only two things: to love his subject and to love his students. All the rest will follow. This explains her criticism of Dewey's narrow understanding of self-realization. The beginning of wisdom and freedom is to realize that the world is more interesting than you are, and to submit humbly to the greatness of God. The teacher is privileged to lead students "into the company of the great in history, in literature, and the arts; and into the mystery and the beauty of the world in which they live. Self-realization comes most surely by losing oneself for a time in the contemplation of something greater than and beyond oneself" (p. 25).

Neatby makes it clear that humility must not be confused with servility, docility, or passivity. Life is arduous, a struggle, nothing comes easily, and intellectual attainment is hard won. It demands "the intellectual equivalents of worship and dedication, the complete and disinterested devotion to an exacting discipline" (Neatby, 1954a, p. 21). This is one of her main objections to progressive education, which is too easy, too soft, too accommodating, allowing neither confrontation with failure nor challenge to greatness. "Happiness," she writes in one of her most revealing passages, "is a by-product of effort and achievement. The purest happiness may be quite inseparable from pain" (Neatby, 1954b, p. 24). But at least pain is real. She writes to her sister that "Christianity is not very comfortable. It creates as many problems as it solves, but it has that quality of being alive which it is impossible to help associating with the truth" (Hayden, 1983, p. 20).

Hayden (1983) observes that it is too early to make a judgment about the originality of Neatby's ideas because the intellectual history of her generation has not been written (p. 320). Dewar (1990) argues that her views were "not unusual in university circles of the post-war era" (p. 37). Ross's (1989) doctoral dissertation places her writings in the context of educational debates occurring in the United States in the 1950s, as well as in the context of the conservative philosophical tradition in Canada. He suggests that her contribution was a "major re-statement" of the conservative position (p. 251), a statement executed with enough panache to spark a vigorous, though short-lived, national debate. This assessment understates Neatby's achievement. Although it would be going too far to

say that she anticipates post-modernism in its entirety and delivers a pre-emptive strike, her work displays an acute understanding of what Foucault (1979) calls "the disciplinary society" (Foucault, p. 209). She criticizes the social sciences, especially psychology, at a time when most of her contemporaries in academia were uncritical enthusiasts (see Owram, 1986). Her openly expressed religious faith, far from being a quirky "add-on" detracting from her reputation as a rigorous intellectual, is revealed as integral to her argument. She understood better that did most Canadian academics the gravity of the attack on Western civilization, and she mounted a vigorous, thorough defence.

Neatby's depiction of the product of the progressive school — "morally flabby, intellectually cloudy, and creatively sterile" (Neatby, 1953, p. 131) — bears a passing resemblance to Nietzsche's "last man." In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* the philosopher wrote: "'What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?' thus asks the last man, and he blinks" (Nietzsche, 1966, p. 17). Nietzsche turns his back on Western philosophy and Christianity, which he blames for enshrining a moral code fit only for slaves. To "become what one is" under such circumstances was no easy task. It necessitates a "will to power," a rediscovery of the chaos, violence, and cruelty buried within oneself. Nietzsche's "new man" or "super-man" is a creature of destructive creativity, a figure beyond good and evil, "uninhibited by the yearning of ordinary mortals for happiness, justice or pity" (Miller, 1993, p. 174).

Biographer James Miller (1993) portrays Michel Foucault as a man deeply under the influence of Nietzsche. The philosopher both provided intellectual inspiration and gave direction to Foucault's personal life, one that was consumed by the search for the Nietzschean "limit-experience" (p. 117). Miller gives an account of Foucault's fascination with the ecstatic mingling of pain and pleasure, his obsession with the sado-masochistic eroticism of the San Francisco leather scene of the 1970s and early 1980s, his deliberate flouting of AIDS warnings, and, finally, his death from the disease in 1984. Miller discovers something strangely heroic in what he calls Foucault's Nietzschean quest. He summarizes the "ethical point of view" of Foucault's (1965) first major book, *Madness and Civilization,* as holding that "it is not immoral to be convulsed by singular fantasies and wild impulses: such limit-experiences are to be valued as a way of winning back access to the occluded, Dionysian dimension of being human" (p. 117). According to Miller, Foucault lived out what he wrote, heeding Nietzsche's invocation of primal energies as the only means by which man can transcend himself and "give birth to a dancing star" (p. 70).

Hilda Neatby, by comparison, seems to belong to a totally different world: prim and proper, naïve, living a sheltered, provincial life, restricted in her intellectual range, author of a minor book criticizing progressive trends in education. And yet the history professor at the University of Saskatchewan wrote a book about education that is grounded in contemplation of the fate of Western civilization, the relationship between faith and reason, the nature of humans, and the meaning of life. Her insights into the defects of progressive education run parallel to those of Foucault and are equally profound. A passage from *So Little for the Mind* brings one up short. Progressive educators, she writes, "have got out of the traditionalist rut, perhaps, but only to jog around a mysterious pragmatic circle, their eyes fixed on the mud beneath their feet because it is a real situation. The stars still shine over their heads but stars are under suspicion; there is about them more than a touch of the transcendental" (Neatby, 1953, p. 131).

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The Pedagogy of the Pastor: The Formation of the Social Studies Curriculum in Ontario

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The Ontario social studies curriculum, developed in the first half of the 20th century, was modelled on the techniques of the Christian pastorate. I use a Foucaultian methodology to argue that this curriculum developed within the students an attitude that formed their thinking as democratic citizens of a developing nation — that incited both a commitment to care for those thought to need Christian instruction and a strong respect for the British Empire. At the same time, this practice of care served a colonizing function.

Le programme de sciences sociales en Ontario, qui a été élaboré au cours de la première moitié du XXe siècle, a eu pour modèle les études pastorales chrétiennes. Se servant de la méthodologie foucaultienne, l'auteure soutient que ce programme a développé chez les étudiants une attitude qui a formé leur pensée en tant que citoyens d'une nation démocratique en développement — ce qui les a amenés à se soucier du sort des personnes qui, à leurs yeux, avaient besoin d'une éducation chrétienne et à éprouver un énorme respect pour l'empire britannique. Parallèlement, cette pratique de la compassion a rempli une fonction de colonisation.

Several scholars have written about the conceptual formation of the social studies curriculum in the first half of the 20th century (Barth 1991; Goodson & Marsh, 1996; Lybarger 1987; Tomkins 1986) and the development of pastoral care in Western school systems (Best, Jarvis & Ribbins, 1977; Duncan, 1988; Goodson & Marsh, 1996; Lang, 1985; Power, 1995,1991; Ribbins, 1985; Sarup, 1982). Most educational historians agree that social studies education in the North American context was a response to rapid technological innovation, industrialization, urbanization, immigration from non-English-speaking countries, the declining role of the church in public affairs, the rise of scientific rationality, and a belief in universal humanism. Speaking about the United States, Barth (1991) explains that the "country had just passed through metamorphosis — everything was changing and the country was no longer the rural, agrarian society founded in the seventeenth century" (p. 19).

Educational scholars writing on pastoral care understand its focus on the social and emotional needs of students as an extension of the modern

welfare state, and as having an intricate relationship to the development of comprehensive schooling in England (Power, 1991). Lang (1985) argued that in Canada the pastoral-care program manifested itself in "counseling and guidance practices"(p. 125) and educators had not incorporated it into the content of the curricula at that time. Although educators in Canada saw pastoral care as a pedagogical practice separate from curriculum content, unlike the British case where pastoral care was more explicitly fused with the learning material, I contend that there *is* a pastoral care component to the early 1930s and 1940s social studies program that has not been theorized.

The pastoral care component of resource material (and instructions given to teachers) for the Ontario social studies curriculum provides an example of Foucault's (1982) analysis of pastoral power, and this organization of power manifests itself in the ethical development of the child as a citizen of the British Empire. Pastoral power has been theorized as an individualizing form of power, one that is enacted upon individuals subject to its operations, but in the case of early social studies education there is a reciprocal engagement that organizes a colonial dyad. The Canadian student is subject to a constitutive form of power that shapes his or her relationship to whom scholars would now refer to as Third World others, thereby constituting the colonial dyad. The academic literature on pastoral care has not conceptualized the colonizing dimension to the pedagogical practice of care. What it means to institutionalize the caring function in a social studies unit focusing on international relations, and subject constitution within those relations, has not been subject to analysis in the educational literature. In this article, I have analyzed the colonial dimension to pastoral pedagogy and suggest that the caring function involves a form of reciprocal constitution: the Canadian child is constituted as future agent of global care, and the Third World recipient of that care (who is both a living subject and a Canadian social fiction) is constructed to be in need of care.

To develop my thesis I questioned the line of demarcation between the subject component of social studies education and pastoral care as a pedagogical practice and orientation to student welfare. Power (1991) argued that teacher practitioners and academics have seen the principles of pastoral care as being at odds with the more academically entrenched subject areas. This, she suggested, leaves a gulf between pastoral care initiatives on the part of individual teachers and the mandate of rigorous academic training. It also enables a conceptual split between subject-based curriculum theorizing and the pedagogical practice of pastoral care, which is transposed onto the subject matter itself. As Canadian educational

scholar Goodson and Marsh (1996) insisted, "The link between subject knowledge and subject pedagogy is a crucial line of inquiry" (p. 4); this assertion is particularly true for social studies education, which is most obviously concerned with the cultivation of moral character.

By analyzing the social studies program in Ontario, and drawing on illustrations from abroad to illustrate a common focus on pastoral care (despite nation-specific distinctions in the way social studies as a subject area developed), I show how the imagined cleavage between pastoral pedagogy and subject content functions to mask the operation of pastoral power first illustrated by French philosopher Michel Foucault, and to demonstrate how the ideal of pastoral pedagogy is not necessarily emancipatory or progressive (as advocates of the child-centred movement have argued), but that it mandates the ethical development of the child as Westernized citizen.

This pedagogical orientation organizes the Canadian child's relationship to formerly colonized peoples in Canada and abroad thought to be savage, uncivilized, and in need of the very pedagogical discipline the Western citizen has to offer. The motivational structure that this relationship orchestrated appears to be above reproach, yet, at the same time, is key to the liberal strategies of exclusion that continue to characterize international relations today. By understanding the emergence of this benevolent, yet colonizing, pedagogy of care in the social studies program, contemporary educators can better understand the historical underpinnings of disciplinary power in the present post-colonial context.

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

Social studies education in Ontario, as in other industrialized countries, was an extension of social welfare initiatives. Teachers, social workers, and concerned philanthropists with a distinctly Christian predisposition (including those belonging to charitable organizations and settlement houses) imagined an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of citizenship skills. These skills would prepare children to deal with uniquely modern social problems, including urban poverty, unemployment in large city centres, escalating crime rates, disease associated with urban slums, a highly routinized division of labour, and immigration policies and associated conflict between peoples of diverse lands wanting to settle in the Canadian context. Social studies promised to provide the next generation with citizenship skills to curb the difficulties associated with life in a highly diversified and changing society. Educators designed the curriculum to provide moral training for children in Ontario (as in other

Westernized societies) to guide them in understanding modern social problems and to teach them to act as rationally motivated, self-governing citizens of the newly formed, liberal-democratic order (Lybarger, 1987).

As Power (1995) argues, pastoral care — at its best — was student-centred, organized around a pedagogical commitment to the education of the whole child (including social, psychological, developmental, and educational needs) and other sorts of egalitarian educational-planning initiatives driven by a humanitarian impulse particular to the period. The pastoral care program that Power discussed was, like the Ontario social studies program, based on a conception of child welfare and social and moral neediness. Similarly, pastoral care in Britain was a feature of comprehensive schooling, which also speaks to the need to integrate children of vastly different life circumstances into a school or social system based upon principles of citizenship. The presumption that a distinction existed between the stated purpose of social studies education and pastoral care (in the English context and elsewhere) is a fallacy. Lybarger (1987) summarized the similarity of purpose between social studies education and pastoral care.

> School and settlement [work] were to serve [a common] welfare [objective] by teaching either children or adults to make the best of their immediate environment by utilizing existing public and private agencies; and at the same time serve the end of social evolution by devising experiences which might [lead to] . . . respect and imitation of Anglo-Saxon ideals. (1987, p. 186)

The school focused on the "conception of need [and this was understood to be] . . . a reflection of individual personal inadequacy and not institutional shortcomings" (Lybarger, 1987, p. 187). Educators organized school work to reform individuals and restore harmony and social order to a rapidly changing world. The emphasis placed on Judeo-Christian values gave the pastoral dimension to school work a distinct configuration. The centrality of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant values to the development of Canadian education — and its related pastoral component — can not be underestimated. Popkewitz (1997) made a similar observation in the U.S. context: "Since at least the Protestant Reformation, schools have been institutions that relate the state, civil (and religious) authority and moral discipline" (p. 140). He went so far as to suggest that "We can think of the mass public schooling of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a continuation of the disciplining and regulating project of the Reformation" (p. 140–141). Goodson (1987) also contended, in the Canadian context, that disciplined intelligence, as demanded by teachers, was

"continuous with early Calvinist dogma. The intellect disciplined by the moral sense and will to carry out Christian tasks; not knowledge for intrinsic education but knowledge to carry out moral and religious missions" (p. 9).

Given that compulsory schooling in Canadian history has been intimately related to what Popkewitz called the Reformation project (as it has in many Western nations subject to Christian hegemony), it makes sense to understand how this project operates in relation to curriculum development and the pedagogical teachings it mandates. As argued by Popkewitz (1997) "The question of what is curriculum history is also a question about the politics of the knowledge embodied in disciplinary work" (p. 131). By this, he was suggesting that curriculum as a knowledge form "inscribes rules and standards by which we 'reason' about the world and our 'self' as a productive member of that world" (p. 132). For him, curriculum can be understood as a disciplinary technology in a Foucaultian sense. It "directs how the individual is to act, feel, talk, and 'see' the world and 'self'" (p. 132).

PASTORAL PEDAGOGY

Hunter (1994), a neo-Foucauldian scholar, first defined pastoral pedagogy. In a study of the history of Australian schooling, Hunter elaborated on the inner workings of a teaching methodology dependent on "the subject-forming techniques of pastoral pedagogy with its arts of self-examination and its care of individual souls" (p. vii). In other words, he conceptualized pastoral pedagogy as a set of techniques that the Christian pastorate perfected centuries ago that involve self-reflection and self-watchfulness, self-discipline, moral indignation at having done wrong, and ethical self-development. As he chronicled the development of Australian schooling, Hunter showed how the modern teacher uses the older, more traditional techniques of the Christian pastorate in a now secular school system to shape the ethical development of children. Hunter did not necessarily refer to these techniques under the rubric of pastoral care but, nevertheless, he noted they functioned to enact the same pastoral care functions originally sanctioned by the organizing principles of Christianity.

Christian teachings are only loosely based on the message of a Christian God, but the ethical practice of self-problematization remains the same. In the Ontario social studies curriculum educators replaced the Biblical script with the governing principles of liberal democracy: civic duty to the British Empire and Christian morality. In his critique of the relationship between

the history of the Australian school system and its connection to pastoral guidance, Hunter (1994) wrote that it is "Christianity's 'shepherd-flock game' — with its distinctive articulation of surveillance and self-examination, obedience and self-regulation — that continues to provide the core moral technology of the school, long after its original doctrinal supports have fallen away" (p. xxi) to illustrate the common ethical practice of self-problematization in ancient practices of Christianity and in the early 20th-century Australian school.

The practice of pastoral pedagogy is a concrete, observable example of Michel Foucault's analytic of pastoral power. Drawing heavily on Foucault, Hunter (1994) looked at the history of the Australian educational state and its pastoral influences as an example of pastoral power in operation. Foucault (1982) explained that for the modern state it

> was no longer a question of leading people to their salvation in the next world, but rather ensuring it in this world. And in this context, the word *salvation* takes on different meanings: health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living, security, protection against accidents). A series of "worldly" aims took the place of the religious aims of the traditional pastorate, all the more easily because the latter, for various reasons, had followed in an accessory way a certain number of these aims; we only have to think of the role of medicine and its welfare function assured for a long time by the Catholic and Protestant churches. (p. 215)

Pastoral power, employed in the modern state, is not concerned with top-down power, corporal punishment, or overt physical control; it relies instead on the voluntary submission of individual subjects to expert authorities in the name of freedom and entitlement to social-welfare provisions. Children submit to the pastoral teacher to attain an education in both the traditional subjects areas and Christian values. For social studies students, education is in citizenship training, and as such they will gain entitlement to the very social welfare provisions outlined by Foucault: access to medical health, food, clothing, shelter.

The Foucauldian methodology of tracking institutional discourses (such as those authorized by a department of education) and the practices through which individuals subject themselves to them (student engagement with the techniques of the pastoral teacher) are governmental designs. The governing discourses are techniques of power that curriculum writers designed to work in particular ways. These designs did not always work in the intended way. Foucaultian methodology cannot account for the negotiation of governing principles by those subjected to its tentacles, the resistance that, by his own definition, is inherent to modern forms of power,

both of which are legitimate and important areas of inquiry in educational scholarship (Donald, 1985). As Donald (1985) explained, the "usefulness of a Foucaultian approach . . . lies in its power to reveal the principles governing the organization of schooling and its forms of discipline and pedagogy — those aspects sometimes referred to as 'the hidden curriculum'" (235).

THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN ONTARIO

The approved courses of study that the Ontario Department of Education issued in the early 1930s presented social studies as a composite subject, combining history, geography, and governmental studies — the latter becoming subsumed within the designation of manners and morals. As Goodson (1987) reflected, the Canadian curriculum was typically "broken up into a series of correlated units of study rather than conducted as a rigid sequence of lessons" (p. 28). In the case of Ontario, the social studies curriculum was meant to embody a newer focus on civic duty, but in practice closely resembled the older models of teaching history and geography as separate subject areas.

The Department of Education designed the curriculum to reflect the newly embraced child-centred model gaining force in the inter-war years, and a liberal-humanist, progressive orientation to education particular to the first half of the 20th century. The child was considered to be an active agent in the learning situation. Teachers no longer thought of their pupils as passive recipients of subject instruction. Child-centred education enabled pastoral pedagogy to flourish precisely because children were now thought to be active, inquiring, independent agents in an educational setting. They could become concerned with their own relationship to knowledge acquisition and intentionally learn the lessons of nation: citizenship, geography, and history.

In his discussion of social science curriculum in the United States, Popkewitz (1997) argued that "the production of new governing patterns was made possible through the concept of 'childhood'" (p. 141). The emphasis that advocates of the child-centred movement placed on the active learning capacities of individual children was key to the configuration of pastoral pedagogy in the social studies curriculum. With this emphasis the children needed to be better protected from the more rigid teaching methodologies that older, more traditional teachers employed, and also the impact of modern social problems. Champions of the newly established social studies curriculum used this idea to legitimize

the focus on citizenship education. The presumption about the active, inquiring nature of children was, itself, a regulatory device. As Popkewitz (1997) attested:

> At a different layer, the different curriculum theories of American schools at the turn of the twentieth century were struggles about how individuals should regulate themselves ("come to understand" and "participate intelligently") within new sets of relations and institutions that included the state, bureaucracies, commerce and work. (p. 143)

In the Ontario educational context, the theories of learning that advocates of the child-centred movement espoused also enabled new forms of social relations in educational institutions. The curriculum should inculcate self-regulating practices in pupils because they were presumed to be independent, self-directed learners. Students could submit to lessons in global citizenship that pastoral teachers offered because they were able to actively construe children's need to learn for social betterment.

MANNERS AND MORALS: GLOBAL UNREST AND THE TURBULENCE OF YOUTH

Canada claimed a devotion to "the moral superiority of British values" and Christian ethics (Tomkins, 1986, p. 102), a belief visible in the manners and morals segment of the Ontario social studies curriculum. In his history of Canadian curriculum, Tomkins (1986) explains that in the late 19th century "Idealists continued to pin their faith on a rational pedagogy which emphasized the cultivation of morality and character. For them the teacher was essentially a moral tutor purveying a curriculum based on eternal moral principles and absolute standards of culture" (p. 102). The Progressive Education movement of the 1930s and 1940s continued to embrace the Judeo-Christian moral value orientation (despite the rise of formal secularization) and the movement became intimately tied to the pastoral pedagogical orientation espoused in the Ontario teachers' manuals of the period.

Educational theorists can understand the Ontario emphasis on citizenship, morals, and manners as an example of the pastoral desire to shape the ethical development of children. The Christian mission, once marked by the saving of souls from eternal damnation, became an incitement on the part of teachers and educational experts to foster the propriety, decorum, and social graces of the patriotic citizen in children. The morals and manners section of the social studies curriculum instilled socially correct attitudes and moral values. As written in the 1941 curriculum guidelines, manners and morals involved

> Consideration for others, willingness to accept responsibility and to work with others in order to get things done; attitudes of helpfulness and loyalty to friends, home, school and community should be major outcomes of the course if it is properly conducted. (Department of Education, 1941, p. 71)

The curriculum guidelines also stated that, "throughout the courses the teacher should seek incidentally, through the songs, games, talks, and stories, from current events, and by her own example, to establish good habits in morals and in manners" (Department of Education, 1941, p. 71). The intent was to shape the ethical development of children; teachers cultivated an attitude of helpfulness and loyalty to the community and to the nation.

It was not enough that children learn to behave in the ways outlined in the unit: they had to adopt an appropriate attitude of helpfulness and loyalty to the developing nation and the motherland. Governing strategies inherent to curriculum documents are not only about the content knowledge, but the "sensitivities, dispositions and awarenesses" (Popkewitz, 1997, p. 145) inherent to the subject knowledge. The inculcation of an ethical sensibility, consistent with the work of government in modern society, depends on the work of ethical self-development, not unlike the earlier pastoral concern with the state of the soul in pre-modern times. As Foucault (1982) contended in relation to the modern configuration of pastoral power, it "cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people's minds, without exploring their souls, without making them reveal their innermost secrets. It implies a knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it" (p. 214). Mallory (1948) outlined expectations placed on teachers to instruct children properly in this regard.

> Every teacher should spend considerable time learning her pupils. That means knowing a great deal about them and their homes. A knowledge of the child's early health, his accidents and infectious diseases, his play facilities and the nature of his interests, and playmates will help a teacher to understand her pupil. So will a knowledge of the kind of discipline used at home, of the emotional climate and moral and economic status of the home, be of great help. (p. 8)

This call to know the pupil also coincided with the invention of adolescence. By the early 20th century, adolescence was a recognizably distinct developmental stage (Kaplan, 1984; Spacks, 1981). The middle, transitional stage of adolescent development was represented as a turbulent time, much like international relations during the First and Second World Wars. Public anxiety about adolescent youth was not unrelated to public worries about international relations, foreign policy, immigration, urban

poverty, teenage delinquents, crime, unemployment, and the changing societal structures associated with modernity. Popkewitz (1997) suggested that childhood "became institutionalized as strategies to confront social disorder through privileging standards of religious, and social and moral values" (p. 140) came into effect. The conception of the adolescent youth was instrumental in the development of pastoral pedagogy because it designated a developmental stage in which students were in need of guidance, tutelage, and moral guardianship. Educators could rescue pupils from the turbulence of modern society and set them on a proper developmental course. "The curriculum reforms at the turn of the twentieth century were social technologies to govern how children are to understand who they are and what they are in society" (Popkewitz, 1997, p. 142). Scholars can similarly understand the emphasis on manners and morals in the early 20th-century Canadian context as a technique, a design of government.

The reciprocal dimension to the pastoral engagement is evident in Department of Education documents and in professional guidance given to early 20th-century social studies teachers. Authors of such documents imposed on social studies teachers to comport themselves as pastoral guides, as models of good national living. For example, a 1943 article on democracy and education in the *Educational Courier*, a joint publication of the Federation of Women Teachers' Federations of Ontario and the Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation, stated that

> the first qualification of an educator in a democracy is that he or she should be a faithful and enthusiastic disciple of democracy, for no one can inspire others with a love for any cause or a willingness to sacrifice to defend it, unless he or she really believes in that cause. (Greene, 1943, p. 22)

The quotation is printed beside a call for teachers to participate in war-work. The duty of the democratic teacher is not only to cultivate in children a predisposition to national servitude, but to readily sacrifice themselves, as educators, in the effort to support the British Empire in its battles with enemy nations around the world. The teacher's professional duty, in this example, is informed by pre-modern ideological constructions about the sacrificial and martyr-like role of the pastorate.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY: A GUIDE TO GOOD NATIONAL LIVING

Anderson (1983) argued that the narrative histories of nations shape subject relations; I contend that this phenomenon is also evident in the constitution of student identity in the social studies curriculum. As Donald (1985)

summarized, "[I]t is the construction of a national past in terms of a specific narrative conception of time [and space] that allows for subjectification within the discourses of nationalism — whether as the subjects of national destiny or as a subject to the sacrifices it demands" (p. 240). For example, the Ontario teachers' manuals (1926) state that

> children . . . have more or less immature power of generalizing . . . [and so] we wish to teach the important facts of the development of the Empire and of Canada, so that these future citizens may know how we have come to what we are and have today. So many are inclined to take for granted the social, political, and other conditions in which we live now, and do not give credit as they should to the pioneers who made these things possible. (p. 5)

The 1926 Ontario teachers' manuals also stated that "knowledge of history is useful for citizenship and statesmanship [and this] is shown by the fact that our best citizens and our leading statesmen are faithful students of the past" (p. 6). To be students of the past — as social studies pupils are imposed upon to be — they must locate themselves in relation to the historical lessons taught. In other words, students must partake in what might be called the cultural unconscious, which demands patterns of subjectification to the discourses of nation, citizenship, and its history that are implicit, unspoken, and yet culturally salient. The process of subject constitution demands that self-directed students willingly submit to the expert knowledge of the teacher without questioning the authority that gave rise to the particular configuration of the nation's past.

Post-colonial scholar Said (1979) wrote that "imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (p. 55). Focusing on the rhetorical devices used to orchestrate a division between people of the Western and East Asian world, Said showed how the identity and history of Western nations depends on discursive techniques used to separate the First World from developing nations, and to claim superiority on the part of the former. Donald (1985) also contended that, "If the curriculum is a mechanism for instituting patterns of social differentiation, then it operates not through its content but by regulating the circulation and appropriation of symbolic codes for classifying knowledge and representing reality" (p. 240). The core curriculum becomes the homogenizing conceptual system for understanding what gets to count as history and who someone is in that narrative structure. The fictional unity that comprises the historical curriculum renders it difficult to opt out of the cultural logic on which the story is founded, and to imagine oneself outside of the pre-ordained subject positions constituted by the

dominant script.

Pastoral pedagogy demands that students of history engage in self-forming activities. Foucault (1985) explained in his discussion of moral action that it is not only

> self-awareness but self-formation as an ethical subject, a process in which the individual delimits that part of himself that will form the object of his moral practice, defines his position relative to the precept he will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal. And this requires him to act upon himself, to monitor, test, improve, and transform himself. (p. 28)

Submission to a governing moral discourse (and history is, of course, one such discourse) involves "behavioral [modification] and forms of subjectivation" (Foucault, 1985, p. 29). It is not enough that the devout pupil learn the content information pertinent to the development of the British Empire and Canada as a colony. The teachers imposed this attitude on children to foment an emotive attachment to the lessons of history. As written in the 1926 Ontario teachers' manuals, teachers measured the success of teaching not by knowledge or method but by a "well balanced mixture of knowledge, method and interest" (p. 9). The manual goes on: "It is also the function of the teacher to build up a taste for history, so that, by the pleasure it gives, history may help to fill up wisely the leisure part of life" (p. 7). Rote memorization of discrete names and dates will not alone fulfil the call to subjectivation that is essential to the pastoral pedagogical programming of the child-centred social studies program. Students must willingly submit themselves to the area of study.

The provincial curriculum stressed that the teacher should not fail to "Emphasize the extent, power and responsibilities of the British Empire, its contributions to the highest form of civilization, the achievement of its statesmen and its generals, and the increasing important place that Canada holds amongst the Over Seas Dominions" (Department of Education,1930, p.17). This emphasis should be accompanied by supplementary reading of Canadian and British stories about history, lessons on the significance of the flag, and inscribed duties of citizenship. As future voting members of Canadian society,

> Children need to be taught that citizens have responsibilities as well as rights; and the problem of teaching citizenship is mainly how to inculcate in children the spirit of *service* to the community, to make them realize that there are *others*, that citizenship is, after all, just *living together in a community*. (The Ontario Teachers' Manuals, 1926, p. 89)

The writers of these manuals deemed the ethic of the citizen to be the

most important objective of historical and geographical study. "It is a difficult matter to introduce this idea of service, of living together, into the minds of children, but it must be attempted" (The Ontario Teachers' Manuals, 1926, p. 89).

Not unlike the Christian missionary who spread the word of God, students of history disseminated the lessons of history in keeping with a British world view. For example, in the fifth-grade form of the 1930 curriculum, the teacher is required to introduce topics related to European expansion and colonization. Curriculum writers thought that the Age of Discovery was a product of a natural human yearning for a taste of the unknown. The authors of this curriculum document wrote that

> By the end of the twelfth century the lure of the unknown was beginning to urge the European to enquire what lay under the clouds that enshrouded the edges of his flat world. . . . [With] the desire for riches, and the spirit of adventure, seaman after seaman ventured farther and farther into the void, and returned to astonish his friends with tales of the new lands, vast oceans and strange peoples he had found. (Department of Education, 1930, p. 75)

As Said (1979) maintained, the foreign subject, the exotic and differentiated other, became separated from the Westernized subject. Children acquainted themselves with the earth's geography and relate to the Third World subject from the standpoint of the colonist: "Continents and islands, seas and rivers, mountains, volcanoes and glaciers. Reference to maps should give the child a knowledge of their position. . . . [And] stories will show, too, strange new peoples in their desert, jungle, or tropical island homes" (Department of Education, 1930, p. 76). Because foreign lands were the object of exotic fascination, teachers encouraged students to orchestrate an imagined relationship to colonized others in keeping with the colonial standpoint. Topics in the history section of the curriculum included a focus on the riddle of distant Africa and the missionary impulse of Livingstone and Stanley in the heart of the continent. That their mission was to bring light to the Dark Continent was very well established in the social studies units presented in the curriculum guidelines.

Like the instructions given to teachers of history, the subcommittee on elementary education, appointed by the Department of Education in 1936, emphasized the human side of the geography unit. The departmental document stated that

> Since geography is the study of the people of the world living under varied conditions, this committee recommends that the human side of the subject be stressed; and therefore, the matter taught will be determined by the extent to which associations, directly bearing

on the lives of people can be made. (Geography, 1936, p. 16)

The stated purpose of the unit was to consider how existing land formations and patterns of settlement have shaped Canadians — character, customs, and habits. Curriculum writers represented natural and inevitable colonial settlement patterns and social, economic, and political relations between European settlers and First Nations peoples in Canada, and tribal communities around the world. For example, the following quotation provides an example of how the geographical outlay of nations were rendered natural and inevitable:

> [T]he lack of a natural boundary between France and Germany has led to many disputes between these countries; the fact that Great Britain is an island accounts for many things in her history; the lack of a good seaport has influenced the foreign policy of Russia; the physical features of Quebec and Gibraltar explain the importance of these places; the waterways of Canada account for the course of early settlement. The climate and soil of a country affect its history; treaties are often based on physical conditions, and trade routes determined by them; a nation's commerce and wealth depend largely on the character of its natural resources. (Department of Education, 1930, p. 17)

The Department's description presumes a natural order of things that removes colonial encounters and their associated atrocities from the realm of human activity and social construction. It then becomes difficult to subject geographical facts to socio-political critique, and the cultural unconscious reigns supreme. The natural environment and the international struggles that were represented in the curriculum documents were written as if they were pre-ordained by God, and the governmental structures that have given rise to such struggles were sanctified by an auspicious claim to the nature of things.

The regulatory capacity of pastoral care was particularly evident in social studies instruction, with its focus, implicit or explicit, on European exploration, European colonization, and social relations between colonizer and colonized. Teachers taught children of the Empire to see themselves as a potential carer for the lost souls of distant Africa, and translated the history of colonial domination into one of Christian, philanthropic concern. As disciples of the British Empire, the children of Canada were born into a ready-made mission that teachers were expected to cultivate with sympathetic care, moral teachings, and guidance, by carefully inciting in children the desire to adopt an allegiance to the British Empire and the developing nation of Canada. The practice of caring through sympathetic and compassionate attachment did not offset the regulatory aspects of

pastoral pedagogy in schools (or the history of European colonization), but was itself an aggressive regulatory device mediating subject identification and relations between teacher and pupil, pupil and Aboriginal/foreign/immigrant subject. Not insignificantly, this process of identity formation also set the stage for the reproduction of colonial relations (and their original subject positions of colonizer/colonized) abroad as Canadian children were taught to cultivate feelings of paternal superiority, camouflaged as selflessness.

FROM COLONY TO NATION: THE EMERGENCE OF THE PATRIOTIC CITIZEN

In this article I have argued that Christianity played a role in the pastoral pedagogical orientation mandated by the early social studies curriculum documents of the early 20th century. Focusing on the rise of the social studies movement (and the child-centred pedagogy associated with this project), I have explored the relationship between social studies content knowledge and the pastoral pedagogical practice of self-government, ethical self-formation, and the reciprocal subject constitutions inherent to the pedagogical practice inscribed in the provincial curriculum documents of the 1920s and 1930s.

The notion of the loyal British disciple is key to pinpointing the moment in which content knowledge becomes linked with the pastoral, pedagogical project of national identity construction. The reciprocal constitution of the loyal subject is threefold: the teacher is first designated moral guardian, carrier of the Christian message as it is transmuted into the language of citizenship education; the pupils then internalize subject specific knowledge, cultivates an attachment to it, and then see themselves as responsible, self-governing citizens, agents of care; thirdly, pupils as future citizens of the British Empire are called on to foster a paternalistic relationship to non-Westernized others that is predicated on a colonial configuration of pastoral care. The aggressiveness of this incitement to care is masked by an appeal to sacrificial, ascetic care in the tradition of the Christian missionary; colonial encounters are subsequently reproduced, at the level of subject constitution, in social studies curriculum materials.

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A Case Study of an Equity Program in Teacher Education: Rethinking Feminist Leadership

Sharon Anne Cook

Open-ended admission policies to professional education programs, and particularly the admission of candidates with certain types of disabilities, have profound implications for teacher-education programs. Such policies and practices affect the entire educational community, including faculty members, university and faculty administrators, school partners, and pre-service teacher-education candidates. Through a case study of a special-needs candidate in one pre-service program committed to equity, I analyze some of the particular stresses experienced by leaders in faculties of education who aim to exercise leadership in socially transformative ways.

Les politiques d'admission aux programmes d'enseignement supérieur professionnel, notamment en ce qui concerne les candidats ayant certaines déficiences, ont des implications profondes pour les programmes de formation à l'enseignement. De telles politiques et pratiques ont une incidence sur tout le milieu de l'enseignement : membres du corps professoral, administrateurs universitaires et de facultés d'éducation, écoles partenaires et candidats à la formation à l'enseignement. Par le biais d'une étude de cas portant sur une personne ayant une déficience et un programme de formation à l'enseignement soucieux d'équité, l'auteure analyse certains des stress des décideurs qui, dans les facultés d'éducation, cherchent à exercer un leadership en vue de transformer la société.

I am a feminist. As an administrator and professor in a pre-service teacher-education program, I have tried to live feminist principles through my teaching and administrative practices. In addition to all that is implied in the dictum that the "private is public," this has required the active nurturing of learners so that they could develop their own distinctive voice as teachers, and the diversification of teaching practices and strategies to integrate a wider spectrum of race, class, and ability into the curriculum and teaching force. Having helped to frame the equity policy for my institution's faculty of education, I remain a proponent of equitable measures in education at all levels. However, one case during my administrative term crystallized for me, as for many of my peers, some of the limits of equity policies in teacher education. The experiences of one

candidate as discussed in this article demonstrated both the promise and some of the perils of equity programs for faculty members, co-operating teachers, school and university administrators, students, and the society these groups serve.

Within a context of organizational change, feminization of the teaching force, and the influence of feminism, I examine in this article one case of a special-needs student who appears to encapsulate many of the dissonances that suggest some of the unexpected limitations of inclusiveness. The methodology employed in gathering the data for this study included an analysis of the official procedures for admission of special-needs candidates at one university, the individual admission data provided by the candidate in question, all departmental, special-services, field-placement, and observation forms related to this candidate, and a personal journal maintained throughout one academic year. Finally, I offer some observations on the peculiar stresses experienced by leaders in faculties of education, particularly by those who define their role as socially transformative. Ultimately, this analysis represents an attempt to chart and understand the implications of the clash of practice and theory as all institutions, educational ones included, strive to respond responsibly and fairly to the challenge of inclusiveness.

THE PROMISE OF FEMINIST JUSTICE

One of my most vivid and cherished memories is of reading the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women through long winter nights in 1971. I remember my astonishment at realizing how little I understood about other Canadian women's lives, and especially the challenges and clear injustices faced by working-class and other marginalized women. For many Canadian second-wave feminists, the report served as a clarion call to work actively towards greater social justice (Friedan, 1963; Millett, 1970). Without a doubt, the report made clear education's implication in this process (Government of Canada, 1970, chap. 3). My belief — in 1971 and today — that feminism would make all the difference in the reform of Canadian society was shared by many others (Cumming, 2001a; Cumming 2001b; Speers, 2001).

I first became a school administrator in the 1980s. By that time, a fairly coherent approach to feminist leadership was developing, particularly among those of us who identified closely with liberal feminism. Although much of the energy of that period was channelled into having more women named to positions of responsibility in the school system, the period also

was characterized by major leaps in equitable curricula and resource materials. For those few women occupying administrative positions in schools, the main issues in feminist leadership included the importance of female models in the classroom, the introduction of co-operative, rather than strictly competitive, teaching strategies, and the enabling influence of women acting in a critical mass to achieve equity (Bourne, Masters, Amin, Gonick, & Gribowski, 1994; Stone 1994). However, wrestling positions, respect, and a measure of authority from organizational structures that had been established with very different objectives than feminists championed was one thing; implementing feminist principles once power had been achieved was something else again. The latter assumed not only equitable leadership practices, but also that complex organizations could respond to these challenges in a timely and fair manner. This task proved to be more difficult than most foresaw.

Organizations have been defined in a variety of ways: as concrete entities with distinctive organizational designs, power systems, internal and external environments (Mintzberg, 1989), as "network[s] of interactions and events, invented and enacted according to different images and beliefs about how people behave, how things work, or how successful outcomes can be achieved" (Morgan, 1997, p. 100), or as stable groups of people who have developed shared meanings that influence, if not determine, their perceptions and behaviours (Middlehurst, 1997). Teacher-education programs, and the organizations that support them, demonstrate all these defining qualities to some degree. Because of their complexity and shared belief systems, to mention only two common characteristics, a good many details about how such an organization runs, and what is required to be successful in it remain unarticulated. It can often take an event where several organizational structures and cultures must co-operate on behalf of a struggling student, such as the practicum in teacher education, for the unexpressed organizational assumptions to surface. When this occurs, tensions that lurk just below the shiny surface of teacher-education programs can also arise, demonstrating the limits of these shared assumptions as one organizational culture positions itself against another to protect its own interests, and the lines are drawn between presumably collaborative organizations.

Three factors have shaped the educational culture of all faculties of education in this country over the past several decades: the increasing rate of feminization of the teaching force, feminism, and policies designed to make the teaching force more consonant with Canada's student population.

THE FEMINIZATION OF TEACHING

Since its feminization in Canada in the late 19th century (Danylewycz, Light, & Prentice, 1983; Prentice, 1977 [originally published in 1975], pp. 438–439), the profession of teaching at the elementary level has been closely associated with notions of nurturance, empowerment of learners, and tolerance of difference, as well as by an ethic of forbearance and patience, demanding a degree of selflessness by teachers. Carol Gilligan (1982) has explored the moral implications of a pervasive "ethic of care" (p. 74) among women, by far the majority of elementary-school teachers. Despite the centrality of the caring ethic in schools, and the deep value attached to it by some scholars and practitioners (Noddings, 1994), it appears to represent the culture of elementary schools more commonly than education at other levels. Secondary-school culture, as has frequently been observed, is not as committed to education through nurturance, influenced as it is by other market forces and societal expectations for older students (Hargreaves, 1994). At this level also, many of the same values apply to teachers' work with students; indeed, as schooling increasingly adopts co-operative rather than competitive learning strategies, the role of the learner embarked on an educational odyssey of self- and societal-exploration requires the teacher to be supportive rather than rigidly dogmatic, democratic rather than autocratic, and collegial rather than independent (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). All these qualities are popularly ascribed to women, although they are by no means absent in many male teachers' practices, because they are influenced by the dominant teaching culture. Nevertheless, it has been argued that this construction often essentializes women (Acker, 1999, p. 278; Blackmore, 1996, p. 38; Grundy, 1987). The preponderance of women at the elementary level, and now also at the secondary level, has aided this process of envisioning the teacher as the "scribe on the side" rather than the "sage on the stage." Many teacher-education programs consciously construct a climate that is avowedly nurturant, providing an enabling culture for growth.

Pre-service teacher-education programs reflect much of the culture of the schools because they prepare candidates to enter this particular professional setting. A cursory survey of teacher-education literature clearly demonstrates that reflection, nurturance, and tolerance for difference are underscored as signal virtues among teachers, and that these should be developed in the prospective candidate (Henderson, 1996; Knowles, Cole, & Presswood, 1994; Posner, 1989). This culture is also reflected in the Standards of Practice of the Ontario College of Teachers,[1] the most recent prescription of acceptable teaching practice in Canada. At the same time,

however, teacher-education programs are necessarily influenced by pan-university ideals and practices, many more of which are exclusionary, elitist, and male-centred (Caplan, 1994). University personnel and faculties of education take seriously their role as critical advocates for an improved society through education that is humane while being also challenging. In many ways, then, teacher-education programs both reflect school culture and depart from it, defending schooling's merits at the same time as they critique schooling's easily-accepted notions. Faculties engage in this sometimes awkward dance as they test the boundaries and substance of accepted ideas and practices in school culture.

FEMINISM

In addition to the nurturant, female-dominated culture in both the elementary school and teacher-education faculties, two additional forces, feminism and equity strategies such as affirmative action initiatives, have deeply influenced Canadian universities. The resurgence of feminism since the 1980s in society at large, and within pre-service teacher-education programs, has added another element to a professional bearing already committed to nurturing those in its charge. Teacher-education programs validate many of the skills, areas of knowledge (Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Longino, 1993), and goals that have come to be associated with feminism through their policies and practices (Cott, 1986, pp. 49-62). This includes recognition of the double- and triple-tasking so familiar to women with households and families also engaged in waged labour. An appreciation of the burden carried by many of the pre-service students finds expression in attempts to accommodate parents' needs for timetabling and assignment loading. Many programs eschew competitive ranking practices in favour of large-scale, co-operative group work; fewer formal examinations than one typically finds in the rest of the university community; and classroom practices that encourage learning through conversation. Empathy and support, consensus strategies, and aiming to utilize the range of competencies of all participants are fundamental in most of these programs (Bourne et al, 1994; Culley & Portuges,1985; hooks, 1984; Lenskyj, 1994). Beyond this, feminism has demanded that a re-examination of the curriculum as it applies in all sectors of schooling, and acknowledgement that androcentrism, sexism, and gender ideology bias the curricula in many ways (Lather, 1984). Feminism has also interrogated the goals of education, broadly and specifically to a given age group, exploring the roots of unequal and unjust practices in education, including the investigation of hegemonic meaning systems that distort consciousness and ethical possibility (Grundy,

1987; Reynolds & Young, 1995; Gaskell, McLaren, & Novogrodsky, 1989). Taken as a whole, the cultural mantra of pre-service programs might be termed one of *nurturant feminism*. This discourse emphasizes the value of a student's right to self-discovery. It also finds expression in the powerful desire to ensure that every candidate entering teacher education emerges successfully with a degree in hand. The assumption that all candidates wishing to serve children and society in this way must be facilitated to do so is clearly at odds with other deeply held and avowedly non-feminist beliefs of such organizations as the remaining university community, schools, and parents' groups.

The literature is still divided on whether feminist administrators produce a distinctive approach to leadership. While much research points to a definable style arising from feminist principles (Harris, 1995; Reynolds & Young, 1995; Reynolds, 1995; Young, Staszenski, McIntyre, & Joly, 1993), others argue against a feminist leadership style as essentialist (Middlehurst, 1997.) However, perceptions of power that a leader exercises do seem to vary considerably, and in direct response to the organizational culture. These give rise to dominant norms and practices that either support the leader or abandon her to her own resources (Harris, 1995). Further, the leader's perceptions of power give rise to views of the range of allowable power invested in others.

EQUITY POLICIES

A third factor that has influenced the culture of pre-service programs across North America has been the introduction of affirmative action and other equity policies to provide incentives for members of underrepresented groups in the population to enter teaching. At my own institution, the "Access Program" currently allocates 14% of the spaces among incoming teacher-education candidates to visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and individuals with certain disabilities.[2] Access programs such as this have become fairly common over the past decade (Carr, 1995; James, 1997; Lundy & Lawrence, 1995). They have been sustained through considerable public support for the general notion of a teaching force more closely reflective of the student population in terms of race, ethnicity, and disabilities (Mahrouse, 2001). The incoming student cohort has been encouraged to declare status in one of these identified groups to obtain preference in the highly competitive admission process. An increasing number of applicants follow this recommended route.

To work effectively, teacher-education programs must develop a close and respectful relationship with partners in the educational community

at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. In cultural terms, elementary-school educators can identify with many of the objectives of nurturant feminism. These institutions mainly agree that the aim of education is to enable all learners to reach their potential through the active intervention of teachers as professionals. However, where persons with severe disabilities or particular areas of disability such as blindness enter elementary schools as teachers rather than learners, the educational system often has less sympathy. Provisions relating to teachers' custodial responsibilities under the Education Act in Ontario and comparable legislation in other provinces challenge full integration of the teaching force.

One instance underscored the competing interests of access and under-representation, nurturant feminism, and demanding standards, and personal actualization and safety. As it developed, this case cast into a confusing melange the interests of underrepresented pre-service teachers and their proponents, and those of some children and teachers, with the explicit principles underlying faculty and general university policy.

THE CASE OF A SPECIAL NEEDS PRE-SERVICE TEACHER

The case involved an applicant who applied for admission through the access program's "disability corridor" to the anglophone pre-service program for which I was responsible. The candidate, here called David,[3] indicated that he had a visual impairment. He did not admit to almost total blindness, however. As a forthright and conscientious individual who also happened to be a member of a visible minority, David immediately claimed the sympathies and efforts of most who interacted with him. During the frequent interviews held between David and a range of university personnel attempting to facilitate his success in the pre-service program, he repeatedly made two claims: first, that his candidature should be seen as a "test case" within the university, school system, and community. From the viewpoint of the Faculty of Education, on the other hand, the candidate represented one instance in a range of exceptionalities that we would hope to accommodate within a flexible program. David's second assertion was that, to be successful, he believed that services should be accessed as *he* dictated them, not according to the views of the general community of interest, the position of the faculty. The question of who held the locus of power in this case was very much contested from the beginning.

Consistent with the culture of nurturant feminism in our pre-service, teacher-education program, the instructors devoted themselves to this candidate's success. Because textbooks could not be placed on auditory

tape quickly enough to keep pace with the rapidly unfolding program, instructors reworked their materials, provided individual tutoring, and accepted oral assignments to evaluate his understanding of basic pedagogical knowledge. When even this was not enough, many responded with more time and personally generated support documents to translate materials into a form that David could understand. With the first assessments of his academic knowledge, he demonstrated a lack of fundamental pedagogical knowledge. Nevertheless, faculty members still found it exceedingly difficult to declare his lack of progress a failure. One premise grounding most teacher-education programs is the gradual development of pedagogical skills as a reflection of student teachers' learning and personal readiness in the journey to assume the teaching role. The broader university standard, however, is that a variety of formal and informal assessments indicate progress, or lack of it. If these assessments indicate progress to be inadequate at crucial junctures, students are failed. Instructors and students generally agree on how assessment operates within the university, but teacher education claims itself as a special case. Here, both candidates and instructors strongly resist the category of failure. Candidates experiencing difficulty typically summon even greater efforts on the part of their instructors to make knowledge accessible.

And so it was in this case. David requested a teaching assistant to help him prepare his assignments, including researching and writing reports and lesson plans. On behalf of the university, I declined this request because it went beyond accommodation into the arena of academic tasks that he was required to master and demonstrate independently to be recommended for teaching certification to the Ontario College of Teachers. Within the university community, the interpretation of necessary accommodation proved to be uneven. As director, I very much wanted to have this candidate experience satisfaction and success, but more than this, I feared that without help in the classroom, David would be unable to exercise the custodial functions required of anyone placed in charge of children under the terms of the Education Act. All pre-service candidates must be willing and able to assume the formal (and legal) role of a surrogate, custodial parent, acting *in loco parentis*. The university special services team took a different position from that of the Faculty of Education, as one would expect because of the different organizational cultures: it operated on the premise that candidates such as this one should declare their needs for accommodation, that help would be given where possible, and that the special-needs candidate would either pass or fail, just as would any student. Both positions were outlined for David, creating confusion

and tension. This fundamental difference in interpretation of what constitutes adequate accommodation for special-needs candidates consistently bedevilled the process on which we were embarked.

Faculty members also worried about safety issues, even in the university classroom: movement into group work could be dangerous as the large machines required for enlarging print were located in very confined classroom space. On one occasion, David narrowly missed falling down a flight of stairs as he negotiated his way with a cart and large-print reader. David assumed that his peers would read to him any transparency overhead documents needed for in-class discussions, and otherwise translate materials that were out of his view. This assumption, too, is consistent with the culture of caring of faculties of education and teachers generally. But this enormous task placed a burden on other students, who were themselves pressed by the short duration and heavy workload of the program, part-time jobs, and even new families. Although David remained an object of sympathy, fewer classmates made themselves available to him as the term wore on, either in class or outside, demonstrating the limits for a peer in difficulty. Once I received complaints from some of David's classmates about the stress this enforced helping relationship produced for them, I again discussed the problem with David, pointing out the multiple interests involved. An impasse resulted, with David's interests and those of his classmates now clearly in opposition, and as director I had to choose between these competing interests. As a result, I required that a teaching assistant be present in all university classes to ensure safety and to undertake any academic translation required to complete in-class tasks. David's response was predictable: he did not see the need for such help in the classroom and, as the arbiter in any accommodation dispute, he insisted that the assistant be removed. Faced with David's insistence that he control the situation and the reality that a special services team who imperfectly understood the culture of a pre-service program implicitly supported him in these demands, I struggled to maintain my own balance. My task was to judiciously shape these demands so that they did not compromise the interests of other pre-service students, David, or ultimately the teaching profession. Co-operation, collegiality, and democratic decision making were eroded as the crisis deepened. Within the protected setting of the university, the limits of integration were first tested.

The practicum presented a far greater challenge. David had chosen to qualify at the Junior/Intermediate Division, that is, to teach grades 4 to 10. Safety concerns assumed a heightened significance with David's personal mobility problems in the enclosed classroom space, to say nothing

of the children's safety, normally monitored by the custodial teacher. David requested and received a placement at the Junior Division for his first practicum because of the anticipated discipline challenges with Intermediate Division students. To arrange for the practicum, the university placement officer approached an administrator of a single-floored school. Fortunately, this principal had been a special-education consultant, and had chosen a hard-working, knowledgeable staff, committed to extending the range of teacher models into the special-needs population. The staff, who worked effectively as a team, had a positive relationship with the parents of this middle-class neighbourhood. The board of education's media consultant equipped the classroom with a print-enlarging reader, and with a specially fitted overhead projector that allowed David to give instructions with visual aids to the students. David's associate teacher provided an exceptional model of professionalism, patience, and creativity. Finally, the class itself was smaller and more homogenous than many, with very few special-needs children. These preparations for the practicum consumed many hours of the field placement co-ordinator and myself because we repeatedly interviewed David about his hopes and concerns, and we co-ordinated services for him. It appeared that the selection of classroom could not have been more welcoming.

To ensure that the school staff felt supported, various university personnel regularly visited the school before, during, and after the practicum. During two extended meetings, the school staff's and university's expectations were set down in writing. This became a supplemental document to the one that usually governs the practicum. The university placement officer presented these expectations to David, and made changes as a result of some of his questions or concerns. Predictably, the school staff was primarily worried about issues of student safety, coverage of the curriculum, and David's probable exhaustion. David rejected all these concerns. To help with the workload and children's safety issues, the university hired another teaching assistant to accompany David while at school. Three individuals from the university shared David's practicum supervision, and all of them used formal and informal observations, followed by written reports and discussion with David and with each other.

Problems arose almost immediately. David could not reasonably be asked to teach or supervise any activities in which students were moving quickly, as in sports. His associate teacher compensated for this by teaching this portion of the curriculum for him. David could not easily monitor children's movements in and out of the classroom, a clear requirement to maintain order and safety. His associate teacher suspended a bell above

the door that rang each time it was opened — which it did, many times each day. This strategy to monitor student movement resulted in regular interruptions, as children, parent volunteers, co-op education students, administrators, and many other visitors arrived and left. Each time the bell rang, David stopped, asked for information, and then continued. David's teaching assistant interpreted other classroom interruptions for him, creating even more disturbance. Soon, everyone in the classroom was almost permanently distracted.

David's supervisors observed that, although he was clearly working very hard, he demonstrated profound gaps in pedagogical and even subject-based knowledge, and used a narrow range of teaching strategies. Discussions following the observations were often taken up with the need to clarify fundamental skills associated with lesson and unit preparation. The associate teacher and principal were both very concerned with the knowledge and practice-based deficiencies, and attempted to introduce these to David while shouldering their regular duties. This support resulted in higher levels of fatigue for everyone closely associated with David, and he became progressively more stressed and anxious.

The school principal's leadership style emphasized collegial support and respect for David. This validated David's professional aspirations, but because criticism was strictly limited in the effort to treat him as a colleague, it also masked the depth of the problems. David was peculiarly insensitive to social messages, and therefore did not understand the degree to which his work fell short of an acceptable standard. For her part, the principal understandably chose to devote her energies to shoring up her flagging staff members. In consequence and contrast, my feedback to David was starkly negative.

The expected fatigue experienced by David mounted. Lesson preparations became spotty. He depended increasingly on the teaching assistant to check students' work, to help him with presentations, and to answer students' questions. Soon, with the overwhelming workload apparent to her, the (untrained) teaching assistant was researching materials for David, both outside and in the class. The teaching assistant also assumed an increasing amount of pedagogical responsibility. David's associate teacher also responded to his obvious distress by providing prepared lessons and generating new teaching strategies to make them more meaningful to this group of children. The principal and other school staff members added their labour, too, with other staff members providing support when the exhausted (and pregnant) associate teacher was near the breaking point. In short, the school staff made every attempt to nurture David to success; David lacked much understanding of or empathy for

the Herculean effort being made on his behalf. When the principal noted that her team could not carry on much longer, David protested that they had not offered him help, and demanded another teaching assistant for the preparation of lessons during the evening and on weekends.

The closing chapter of this sad case study came with a series of meetings at the school during which David's pedagogical skills, personal proclivities, and prognosis for improvement over the next weeks were reviewed. It was obvious to everyone but David that the situation was degenerating. At length, the principal determined that she could no longer expose her students to the low quality of instruction and weak classroom management that had become the norm in David's classroom. His associate teacher was close to collapse, and it was feared that David was also not far from this fate if the practicum were to continue.

I met with David to give him the difficult news that we were terminating the practicum. A painful and explosive meeting ensued during which David expressed shock and refusal to accept the decision. Finally, however, he had to reluctantly accept that the matter was beyond his control. In a matter of days, he voluntarily withdrew from the program; afterwards he attempted to rescind his withdrawal. He eventually left the university.

CONCLUSION

What are the lessons to be learned in this case study, particularly for those who have chosen to serve in leadership positions in faculties of education? If it is true that much administrative policy arises out of problematic cases such as this one, it is also true that, through such experiences, administrators learn much about their own strengths and weaknesses. This case weighed heavily on me for months afterwards, eliciting anger, frustration, and deep sadness. I continue to feel remorse for everyone connected with this saga: for the dedicated school authorities who poured their energies into this candidate's cause to no more effect than his anger that they were helping too little; for the children who genuinely tried to help during David's period in their classroom and whose learning became sadly muddled by the end of the period; for the university personnel who offered regular instruction and support while watching the situation disintegrate before their eyes; for myself, torn between the realization of David's inability to complete the job required, and yet wanting him to succeed against all the odds in this personalized "movie of the week"; but most of all, I regret the terrible loss sustained by this young man during those difficult weeks, a loss of dignity, of the possibilities in teaching, of repaying the hope that had been invested in him and that he had

internalized. I particularly grieved the loss of inspiration and hope to the wider educational system that he would have symbolized.

Some conclusions present themselves. As a hopeful teacher educator, I too am deeply embedded in an organizational structure and culture characterized by nurturant feminism, with all that that implies about a liberating pedagogy and self-direction through supportive relationships. This places me in good company with many teacher-education leaders. This case in no way belies the fundamental justice of equity initiatives, nor the ongoing systemic inequity of the educational system that these programs struggle to mediate. At the same time, this case demonstrated for me some of the limitations of inclusionary measures, and certainly of nurturant feminism. The practicum element of all teacher-education programs forces institutions like mine to face some hard facts:

- the will to teach is not enough, especially when the essential sense of sight is lacking;[4]
- institutions cannot in good conscience provide sufficient accommodations for some candidates to succeed without at the same time compromising their ability to meet professional standards;
- university procedures, themselves a product of cultural understandings, that are designed to accommodate special-needs candidates are frequently inadequate when these candidates must exercise custody of school children reliant on them for security;
- as partners in the practicum process, school staffs feel that they cannot afford to be as inclusive as can universities, nor does the organizational culture of schools make them as accepting of difference among teachers;
- leadership to guide well-meaning educators and candidates through stressful experiences, such as the one outlined here, inevitably falls on the teacher-education administrator as the one effective bridge between the field and university, between general principles of accommodation and specific demands for exercising *in loco parentis*, and between the many official and unofficial partners who support and make demands of the candidate.

At the end of the day, neither nurturant feminism nor inclusionary policies saved this candidate or the educational system from failure, and more, from a general loss of confidence in the system's ability to absorb candidates of difference. Despite my wish that all of this had happened to someone else in another time and place, I learned much from it. The fundamental lesson for me is that much more than a strong desire to succeed is needed to make a competent teacher because teaching is both difficult and one of society's sacred trusts.

NOTES

1 This professional body licenses new teachers for the province of Ontario, disciplines professional transgressions, and publicly represents the profession of teaching. See the Founddations of Professional Practice [1999] (Ontario College of Teachers, Toronto).

2 For documentation on the "Access Entry" initiative, see the Faculty of Education Teacher Education Calendar, 2000–2001, University of Ottawa, p. 4.

3 This name is a pseudonym.

4 In attempting to understand this candidate's difficulties, particularly when compared with other pre-service teachers with serious disabilities, it has been suggested that several other factors influence success of such candidates. These include, but are not limited to, the extent and quality of the candidate's personal supportive network, the degree to which candidates have developed effective coping mechanisms that engage others' help rather than resist aid on several levels, the extent of social facility so that social cues are acted on appropriately, and the degree of familiarity between the institutions and the candidates so that accommodation can be helpful. For more on these and other relevant factors, see Duquette (2000) and Lortie (1975).

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Shifting Out of "Neutral": Beginning Teachers' Struggles with Teaching for Social Justice

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In this article we explore the struggles of 12 beginning teachers committed to social justice to define their roles when facilitating classroom discussions of social issues. We discerned five distinct positions about the possibility and desirability of teacher neutrality. To teach for social justice involves shifting out of neutral, both in terms of a teacher's orientation to social inequalities and of pedagogy. Our preferred teacher role, *inclusive and situated engagement*, involves spotlighting the perspectives of subordinated groups and providing opportunities for young people to develop their deliberative capacities and to learn to act on their reasoned convictions.

L'article porte sur douze enseignants débutants soucieux de justice sociale et cherchant à définir leurs rôles dans les discussions en classe sur des questions sociales. Cinq positions distinctes au sujet de la possibilité et de l'opportunité de la neutralité de l'enseignant sont examinées. Un enseignement axé sur la justice sociale implique que l'enseignant sorte de la neutralité quant à son orientation vis-à-vis des inégalités sociales et de la pédagogie. Les auteures privilégient l'*engagement inclusif et situationnel*, l'enseignant mettant en lumière les points de vue des groupes marginalisés et fournissant aux jeunes l'occasion de développer leur aptitude à délibérer et d'apprendre à agir à partir de convictions éclairées.

Competing conceptions of the role of the public school are linked to different visions of democracy and the attendant purposes of public schooling in Canada. One view is that teachers should not engage their students in evaluating (or perhaps even discussing) various courses of action on important public matters, with the underlying assumption that teachers as public servants should carry out decisions made elsewhere. They should help children to understand the rule of law and respect traditional authority; the teacher's role is not to question policies arrived at by elected representatives but to focus on preparing students for the world of work and transmitting cultural traditions (see, e.g., the views expressed in Steffenhagen, 2001). Proponents of this vision assume that

consensus characterizes most of society and the school system, and that preparing democratic citizens means building patriotism and national unity.

A second, and the most prevalent, vision of democracy in Canada today is a liberal/pluralist one. "Within this pluralist conception, the school is an important arena for the expression of diverse values and the teacher must assume the role of a nonpartisan referee, whose dominant interest is to ensure fair competition in the classroom marketplace of ideas" (Kelly, 1986, p. 123). Teachers play an important role in helping students appreciate multiple perspectives. An implicit assumption of this view, though, is that these multiple perspectives compete on a level playing field. Thus, little talk occurs of the need for a critical analysis, for example, of the power asymmetries shaping the mass media coverage of events preceding or following the Iraq War.

Yet a third perspective, which informs the argument in this article, assumes that schools are not apart from the wider society; they are themselves sites of struggle and social change. Both inside and outside schools, societal inequalities (based on class, race, gender, or sexuality) place limits on the actual practice of democracy. Teachers alone cannot overcome the social injustices that currently impede democracy, but they can play an important role in nurturing a more active form of citizenship among young people. In a participatory and deliberative democracy[1] (see Kelly, 2003), teachers should prepare citizens to engage in collective problem solving. Students thus need to learn analytic, communicative, and strategic skills and to think about the consequences for social action based on their analysis of public policy issues. They need to develop capacities such as debate, reflection, and discussion across differences, criticism, persuasion, and decision making.[2]

In preparing democratic citizens, teachers play a key role in facilitating classroom discussions of social and ethical issues. In the many minute and seemingly mundane choices that teachers make when they facilitate such discussions (e.g., deciding which issues to recognize as social or ethical and worthy of class time), they enact at least a partial vision of social justice (or injustice). Social issues inevitably tap into the conflict among groups struggling for control over resources and ideas. Learning how to discuss and debate these emotionally charged and messy issues is a crucial first step toward working with others to solve collective problems.

The tensions and dilemmas that this facilitation role can produce for even the most experienced educator are felt even more keenly by beginning teachers, who struggle to articulate a teaching philosophy, hone subject-

matter knowledge, select from and improvise within curricular guidelines, and develop effective and equitable discipline and assessment strategies. Because they are continuously observed and evaluated as student teachers, they often can find it particularly stressful to facilitate open-ended discussions of social and ethical issues. They may come, mistakenly in our view, to think that they can remain above the fray and either be neutral purveyors of "facts" or referees of competing perspectives — or at least strive for what we will call "teacher neutrality"[3] as an ideal.

In this article we explore the struggles of beginning teachers committed to social justice to define their role in classroom discussions. We have mapped out five distinct positions with regard to the possibility of teacher neutrality, in practice or as an ideal, and illustrate them with examples drawn from four urban secondary schools.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section we outline the critical pedagogy perspective that underpins our inquiry. Our view of democratic citizenship as more active and participatory generally accords with what has been variously described as critical pedagogy (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1999; Osborne, 1991; Shannon, 1995), feminist pedagogy (e.g., Briskin & Coulter, 1992; Lather, 1991), social reconstructionism (e.g., Sleeter & Grant, 1994), and critical multiculturalism (e.g., Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). The three common themes emerging from these perspectives that relate most directly to our inquiry into beginning teachers' understandings of what it means to teach for social justice can be summarized as: (a) critical analysis of social and institutional inequities; (b) commitment to "principled action to achieve social justice, not only for those around but for strangers" (Greene, 1998, p. xxxiii); and (c) willingness to question one's own understanding of social justice, in part through listening to alternative perspectives. Important prompts to self-reflection for those working within the tradition of critical pedagogy, broadly defined, have been issued by those influenced by feminist poststructuralist theories, among others (for a review, see Kumashiro, 2000). Ellsworth (1989), for example, called upon critical educators to systematically examine the barriers to dialogue that the existence of "unequal power relations in classrooms" erects (p. 309) and to recognize that they themselves "are always implicated in the very structures they are trying to change" (p. 310).

Those who have written about critical pedagogy are clear that teaching is inevitably political and that teachers cannot be value-neutral. But how

to *teach* this problematic reality to student teachers, many of whom benefit from prevailing economic, political, and social arrangements, is far from easy.

In more mainstream educational discussions, the issue of teacher neutrality is more subject to debate. Thomas Kelly (1986), writing from what we discern as a left-liberal position, outlined four perspectives on the role of the teacher in facilitating controversial issues: exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality, and committed impartiality (which Kelly concluded is the most defensible).

The latter two teacher roles in Kelly's scheme are the most prevalent; both subscribe to impartiality, an ideal involving the principles of "critical dialogue" (p. 121) and a "fair hearing" (p. 121). The perspectives differ on the issue of neutrality. Teachers aspiring to neutral impartiality try to remain "silent about their own views on controversial issues" (p. 122), breaking their silence only as devil's advocate or when pressed by students. "In short, far from a positive ideal, the mere expression, much less advocacy, of their own point of view represents for the neutralist a practice to be optimally avoided" (p. 122; see, e.g., Cain, 1999; Furlong & Carroll, 1990).

Those espousing a perspective of committed impartiality would agree that teachers should create a respectful classroom where competing viewpoints receive a fair hearing, but they believe that "teachers should state rather than conceal their own views on controversial issues" (Kelly, 1986, p. 130). Teachers should, of course, avoid "heavy handed advocacy" (p. 131) and be "judicious" (p. 130) in deciding when and how to state their opinions (see, e.g., O'Brien & Howard, 1996).

Although we find Kelly's discussion useful and interesting, he did not provide detail about what "critical dialogue" (p. 121) would look like in practice. Further, nowhere did he question the neutralist assumption that ideas compete as equals in the "marketplace of diverse ideas" (p. 118). This, in part, led Kelly to assert that "individuals advocating feminism, ethnic and black empowerment and neo-Marxist social reconstruction" (pp. 117–118) sometimes espouse what he has called "exclusive partiality," whereby they expose their students to a "concentration of oppositional ideology" in order to counter the effects of prior "indoctrination" (p. 118). It is true that writers and thinkers in the critical tradition have emphasized the power of dominant institutions to perpetuate the status quo and have sometimes labelled this as indoctrination. For example, Freire (1972), in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, argued that "Education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the

world of oppression" (p. 65). Among contemporary critical thinkers and writers, however, we discern a commitment to interrogate ideas across the ideological spectrum, while feeling free to express their views (e.g., Zinn, 1994).

Most people writing about critical and feminist pedagogies appear to have espoused a form of committed impartiality, to use Kelly's terminology, although some would note the difficulty of achieving impartiality given societal inequalities. Their reasoning about the political nature of teaching, however, often stayed at a rather abstract level (see, e.g., Freire, 1985, pp. 188-189; Giroux, 1988, p. 127; Lather, 1991, p. 15). Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997), writing in the context of K-12 schooling, were more specific about why teaching is inevitably political.

> How is a teacher to choose a textbook or how is he or she to decide what knowledge to teach? . . . [Students'] voices and identities are constructed by incorporating and rejecting a multiplicity of competing ideological constructions. Which ones do teachers encourage? Which ones do they discourage? (p. 12)

One of the few writers to demonstrate what critical pedagogy might look like in a public school setting was Bigelow, a high school social studies teacher in Portland, Oregon. In describing a unit he created and taught on Nike and global capitalism, he highlighted in an honest and concrete manner the dilemmas that he confronted.

> On the one hand, I had no desire to feign neutrality — to hide my conviction that people here need to care about and to act in solidarity with workers around the world in their struggles for better lives. To pretend that I was a mere dispenser of information would be dishonest, but worse, it would imply that being a spectator is an ethical response to injustice. It would model a stance of moral apathy. I wanted students to know these issues were important to me, that I cared enough to do something about them.
>
> On the other hand, I never want my social concerns to suffocate student inquiry or to prevent students from thoughtfully considering opposing views. I wanted to present the positions of transnational corporations critically, but without caricature. (Bigelow, 1997, p. 14)

Continuing down Bigelow's path, we wanted to counter the tendency of critical scholarship to remain at the level of abstract theorizing, to look at what teaching for social justice might look like inside classrooms, while spotlighting the political aspects of the role of the teacher. We used the writing about critical pedagogy — or more broadly, anti-oppressive education — as a lens to focus on what goes on in schools and to suggest the possibilities for more inclusive, democratic practices.

METHODOLOGY

We have been engaged in an ongoing, qualitative self-study (based primarily on "post-positivist" research interviewing; see Kvale, 1996) of the successes and challenges of the Humanities and Social Justice Teacher Education Program (HSJTEP) at the University of British Columbia, which we helped to co-found in 1998. An annual cohort of up to 36 students preparing to teach social studies, English, or both at the secondary level can opt for this special program. We founded HSJTEP in response to some student teachers' demands for a more sustained examination of societal inequities (such as racism, poverty, sexism, and heterosexism) as they manifest in schools for knowledge of and what they could do to respond to such injustices.

In year two of HSJTEP, we interviewed nine of the student teachers at the end of their extended practicum. We heard them struggling with what the role of the teacher should be. Could they be caring individuals, subject-matter experts, and change agents, while at the same time steering clear of authoritarianism? From across a range of personalities and ideological orientations, a number of student teachers said that sponsor teachers, students, parents, and even voices in their own heads advising against indoctrination pressed them into a neutral stance. This admission surprised us, given that at least some argued — during classes with us in the preceding fall term — that (to quote one) "there is no neutral teaching position." We now realize more clearly that part of the paradox is explained by the fact that, in the fall term, the student teachers were reflecting on teaching from a more removed, analytic stance, rooted in their long-time role as students. Wanting to explore the paradox further, we decided in year three to focus on ways that beginning teachers committed to social justice define the role of the teacher. What tensions and contradictions arise between their stated teaching philosophies and the realities they encounter at school during their practicum?

To find out, we conducted semi-structured, hour-long interviews with 12 student teachers (one-third of cohort 3) toward the end of their practicum. Before the students went on their practicum, all 36 of them participated in a theatre exercise that focused on various situations where student teachers had to take a stand and then reflect in writing on the experience. We analyzed the written results of this exercise and sought interviews with students who expressed a range of views on the role of a teacher. The final sample of 12 reflected the demographic profile of the cohort as a whole in terms of sex (6 women, 6 men), age (most in their twenties and thirties), sexuality (11 heterosexual, 1 lesbian), and "race" (9

European Canadians, 2 Indo-Canadians, 1 Filipino-European Canadian). The participants taught in four public secondary schools; three schools were located in inner-city and working-class, multiethnic neighbourhoods, and the fourth was in an affluent neighbourhood.

We began each interview by asking the student teachers to describe one or more incidents where they felt they had "taken a stand" during the practicum. We deliberately used this broad and somewhat vague phrase because, as much as possible, we wanted to determine which arenas for choice and action they envisioned for themselves as new teachers. The two most common ways that student teachers described taking a stand (mentioned by over half of those interviewed) were calling attention to omissions in the socially dominant curriculum and challenging their students' use of demeaning language, stereotypes, or behaviour.[4] The first type of incident called upon the student teacher, by definition, to diverge from the text being used and launch into a more open-ended discussion of social and ethical issues, which inevitably made a consideration of inequity and power part of the curriculum. Similarly, student teachers spotlighted power imbalances and inequities as teachable moments when they encountered incidents of homophobia, racism, sexism, and ableism. They helped their students "name and deal with individual instances of prejudice as well as structural and institutional inequities by making these issues 'discussible' in school" (Cochran-Smith, 1999, p. 132).

MAPPING THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN DISCUSSIONS OF SOCIAL ISSUES

Although our group represented diverse ideological perspectives, all had elected a program that focused on teaching for social justice. Not surprisingly, therefore, none of them eschewed controversy or argued that public schools do not have an important role to play in preparing democratic citizens. They differed, however, on how best to accomplish this citizenship goal, as the following stories suggest. Only one of 12 student teachers argued that teachers could be value-neutral.

Teacher Neutrality Is Possible and Desirable

Although Rob's[5] position that teacher neutrality is possible and desirable was unusual among the HSJTEP cohort, we suspect that it is widely held among beginning teachers. Rob felt strongly that teachers should create an environment where students can hear all views and that he should remain neutral even if a student expressed a viewpoint completely at odds with his own. When facilitating discussions of social issues, Rob said, "My

position was to not express views but to allow them [students] to be able to express their views and possibly ask questions. I believe I was pretty balanced in my questioning." Rob considered himself successful when his students had no idea where he was coming from on social issues. "I don't think any of my students could come away saying that Mr. Cook is very conservative or Mr. Cook is very left leaning, and I think that's good."

A position of teacher neutrality is desirable, according to Rob, because it aids in developing students' ability to think critically, which in turn is important in preparing democratic citizens. An important assumption underlying his stance is that high-school students are highly impressionable. "A teacher does have such influence [and] . . . can taint people's opinions and unnecessarily direct students." Rob firmly believed that "strong teaching and teaching with critical thinking and teaching for participatory democracy . . . can occur without [the teacher] taking a stand" on social issues.

Critical thinking did not, for Rob, include raising concerns with students about school district policy voted on by democratically elected school board members. Rob alluded to the controversy in Surrey, British Columbia, where the school district has a policy against sponsoring gay-straight alliance clubs within schools and had banned certain books that portrayed gay and lesbian families. He noted that he might personally "have a different view and see the relevance" of discussing these issues. "However, if I am to work within their school, and . . . I'm an employee, I will carry out their policy. I don't believe that it's my responsibility or my right to object to their policy." His description of the role of the teacher as an agent of state policy marks Rob as unique in this study.

Temporary Teacher Neutrality Is Possible and Sometimes Desirable

Three student teachers (Matt, Sarah, and Sue) discussed the possibility and desirability of temporary teacher neutrality, particularly for discussions of controversial social issues. According to Matt, "I think sometimes the teacher has to remain neutral for a period of time so that [she or he] doesn't persuade or impact kids in any way so that they can truly think for themselves." Because they shared with Rob the assumption of high-school students' overall impressionability, they noted that it was best to wait until the end of a discussion to reveal their opinion, if at all. The conditions under which they mentioned that they would share their view were: if pressed by a student to do so, if they qualified it (e.g., "this is only one opinion"), or in the role of devil's advocate.

This group emphasized the importance of "maintaining a balance" in

what Matt called "the marketplace of ideas." Sue specified that competing political ideologies and "consumer culture" comprised topics about which she would not state her personal views during class discussions. In a unit on government, she did not reveal that she planned to vote for the Canadian Alliance in the upcoming federal elections. She reasoned that, as a class, they had examined the five major political parties, and she had given "equal time to each one." On social issues where "reasonable" people disagree, the role of the teacher is to ensure a fair hearing for all sides and to let students "form their own judgment." On an issue like capital punishment, for example, Sarah said, "My role is to present both cases (pro and con) and then give the students room to come up with their own opinions." Sarah, Matt, and Sue all underscored the idea of their students, as Sarah put it, being on "a journey on their own," an understanding that indicates that knowledge is individually rather than socially constructed, and the role of the teacher is to pose problems for students to think through (Scheurman, 1998).

What separates Sue, Matt, and Sarah from Rob with regard to teacher neutrality is only a matter of degree. Sue pointed out, however, that it was not "natural" for teachers to appear neutral on every issue; a sustained stance of teacher neutrality risked making teachers seem "apathetic." In contrast to Rob, Sue said it was important to let students know that she felt "really strongly" about some issues; this, she argued, made her "more human and not just the person who stands at the front of the room." For this reason, she neither claimed nor tried to maintain a stance of strict teacher neutrality.

Another situation where Sue, Sarah, and Matt broke from the idea of teacher neutrality arose during class discussions of what they interpreted as moral or ethical as opposed to controversial social issues. With the latter, they felt compelled to act as nonpartisan referees; whereas with issues they labelled moral, they more quickly and easily asserted their opinions. For example, Matt reflected on a class that met for the first time after one of the students had committed suicide. A counsellor visited the class but failed to state one of Matt's beliefs: "suicide is wrong." After the counsellor left, the students' comments disturbed Matt because he felt they "glorified" the student who had committed suicide for making "a decision about something" and taking action.

> I wanted to focus on the aftermath, all the harm he's done to his family and to his friends, all of the emotions that he could cause them, like guilt. So at that point I did pipe in and make those feelings known: "There are other options to suicide, it's not the best answer, regardless of all the pain that you may be feeling." So at that point I felt it was appropriate

> to step in, and I think I have the right to do that, just like anybody else in the classroom has a right to express an opinion that's called reasonable. (student-teacher, Matt)

Matt concluded, "I think we're supposed to be teaching kids a moral lifestyle."

Teacher Neutrality Is an Impossible but Worthy Ideal

Jack, Maddy, and Antoine said they strove for teacher neutrality; they acknowledged, however, that it was not really attainable. Maddy noted, "There are ways in which teachers make their opinions known through the language that they use, all sorts of adjectives that we slip in there to describe this politician or that leader." Jack was concerned about the "hidden curriculum" of teacher neutrality and said he did not want to convey "apathy" to his students. Instead, by taking occasional stands, he wanted to "model" how to think for oneself and form opinions.

Yet teacher neutrality appealed to this group as an ideal, particularly for discussions of controversial social issues. Maddy, for instance, said she "liked to play either the devil's advocate or just to encourage students to look at the issue from both point of views. . . . I may on occasion have stated what I personally felt, but . . . I found my role to be a lot more . . . [than] catching the basketballs and passing them to the next person and keeping [the discussion] going."

Maddy, Jack, and Antoine saw the role of the teacher as a "mediator" or "facilitator" of discussion. As such, they occasionally felt the need — out of a concern for fairness and balance — to supplement the curriculum to ensure that their students encountered multiple perspectives. They seemed to assume, however, that the multiple perspectives, once surfaced, would compete as equals on the neutral ground of their classrooms, as illustrated well by Jack's story about teaching a grade-10 social studies unit on "The Opening of the West." With the aim of balance and "open-mindedness," Jack decided to supplement the Eurocentric side of the "argument" with "the Aboriginal side." To his surprise, he found that his students did not see him as a neutral teacher. "I soon realized a few classes in that the students were actually saying to me, 'Yes, but you want us to see the Aboriginal side.' . . . They knew which way I was steering them." In retrospect, Jack recognized that his questioning, selection of supplementary materials, and overarching goals had exposed what he called his "biases."

Jack noted, "Grade-10 students will live under the assumption that the modern conveniences brought by Europeans to this continent is the better

situation to have, and . . . to compensate for that, I had to almost stack the deck in favour of the Aboriginals." When students "called him out" on his effort to compensate for the omission of the Aboriginal perspective from the textbook, Jack acknowledged his "bias." He did not, however, ask students to brainstorm reasons for the omission. Nor did he explicitly share with students his view or his dilemma in answering the question of whether the "exploration and settlement of western Canada by Europeans was clearly to the disadvantage of the Native peoples." He felt constrained by a concern that his students would see him as a "hypocrite." "If I come in as a teacher [of Irish descent] and say the European settlement in Canada was clearly to the detriment of the Aboriginal people and that we had no right coming in . . . and destroying their way of life . . . [then] why don't I go back to Ireland and right the wrongs that my grandparents made?"

The ideal of teacher neutrality is so pervasive in our society that even when it is recognized as impossible, teachers have the expectation that they should be neutral. One symptom of this is the word *bias*, which implies a prejudice or favouritism, something to be avoided. Certainly, teachers have been rightly accused of bias in this sense. But Jack's story showed him striving for impartiality (giving various sides in a dispute a fair hearing) by spotlighting and documenting a crucial perspective marginalized by textbook writers. By going against the grain of conventional wisdom without explicitly analyzing who benefits and who loses from the continued dominance of the textbook's account of history or without locating himself within prevailing power relations, Jack did not reveal his "bias." A better word for conveying this meaning of bias is *stance*, one's location (in terms of values, beliefs) for viewing the world. Feminist scholars, among others, have argued that all conceptual frameworks are partial and value-laden (e.g., Warren, 1994). Jack, Maddy, and Antoine acknowledged that they each had conceptual frameworks that shaped their views and pedagogies. They agreed that they inevitably take a stand on issues as they teach. They did not, however, critically examine these frameworks or their stances with their students.

Teacher Neutrality Is Neither Possible nor a Goal

Jasbir and Hardeep were both clear that teacher neutrality is neither possible nor a goal. According to Jasbir, "If you don't say anything at all, you're actually saying something. So there is no way you [as a teacher] can remain neutral." Added Hardeep, "You as a teacher can express your opinions and still have a fair and respectful environment, just as long as it's understood that your opinion isn't overbearing, that if anybody goes

against it, you would [not] knock them down."

They explained how their role shifted depending on particular classes and the range of students' initial perspectives on the social issue under consideration. For example, because Jasbir knew that the majority of her grade-11 social studies students favoured the death penalty, she decided to clearly state her opposition to capital punishment when her class did a Louis Riel re-trial. "You need both sides, and my side happened to be opposing their side, so that some of them afterwards were going, 'Hey, I can see that.'" More generally, Jasbir pointed out that she was modeling the voicing of a minority opinion: "I have different points of view; you're allowed to have them, too." Jasbir was clear about her goal: not to stay neutral but to prompt students to feel and understand the tensions and complexities of a situation before they reach conclusions.

In a poetry unit in a grade-9 English class, Hardeep and his students drew on rap music, which often contained profane or controversial lyrics. When students asked whether he listened to rap, Hardeep freely admitted doing so. Generalizing from this, Hardeep commented, "I think that becomes even more dangerous if the teacher is saying that he has no opinion, but we [the students] know he has one, so he's just hiding it." Concealing one's views behind a neutral stance does not allow students to question or evaluate the teacher's reasons for holding those views.

Because both Hardeep and Jasbir had developed excellent rapport with their students, they more easily were able to facilitate discussions of controversial social issues. Jasbir knew, for example, that her students "could handle me saying that [I was against capital punishment] without them backing off and then saying, 'Oh, now we agree with you.' They are opinionated and I could see us having a discussion." Hardeep explicitly stated that he co-constructed knowledge with his students: "On my practicum I made it clear that I was a part of the class, that . . . we were all a part of the same learning process, that I just had a different role." He wasn't worried about exerting undue "influence." In various ways, Hardeep and Jasbir implied a willingness to decentre the authority of the teacher.

Feigned Teacher Neutrality Supports the Existing Power Structure

Pierre, Mary, and Debbie noted that, in one way or another, feigned teacher neutrality supports the existing power structure. Like Jasbir and Hardeep, this group of student teachers felt comfortable sharing their views on social and ethical issues and were at pains to allow all voices to be heard in the discussion. Yet they explicitly enumerated the ways decisions in teaching

are inextricably political. As Mary put it, "The role of the teacher is always political, because what is emphasized and what isn't [in the curriculum] is very deliberate." For example, when her class discussed the Canadian west, she saw it as her role "to fill a gap in historical knowledge and understanding" by adding lessons on the role of Chinese labourers in the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway and on the Indian Act. She was not content merely to supplement the grade-10 social studies textbook in this way, but instead had her students brainstorm reasons why these topics had been minimalized. To do otherwise, said Mary, would mean "silencing a whole part of history that is racist but one that very much needs to be told."

Because Mary, Pierre, and Debbie believed that social and institutional inequities were prevalent, they were particularly aware that many choices they made as teachers could and would pose a challenge to existing power relations. Hand-in-hand with this awareness went a more fully elaborated and articulated defence against charges (hypothetical or real) that they were indoctrinating their students. They described a number of strategies they used to, as Mary put it, "deconstruct power dynamics between students and teachers" or the image of the "all-knowing teacher at the front of the classroom." Pierre thought it ideal to express his opinion, supported by "historical knowledge," in the middle of a debate rather than at the end, so that it would not be given undue weight by students. Given a teacher's formal authority (e.g., to evaluate students' work), Pierre stressed the importance of vigilance and reflection because "you never know — what you're promoting [either through action or inaction] may be oppressive." Mary strove to "allow for open discussion before, during, and after I've said anything about the issue. . . . I want the students to hear me say, 'I don't know' if I don't know and that I'll get back to them. I want them to see me affected by a hard issue that we're covering."

One of Debbie's sponsor teachers thought Debbie veered toward indoctrinating the students and advised her to assume a stance of teacher neutrality during a grade-9 media unit in English. Topics in this unit included concentration of media ownership, catastrophe journalism, gatekeepers in the media, and student production of their own media messages. Debbie acknowledged that she rooted planning of this unit in her belief that the mainstream "media is biased in favour of dominant groups."

Responding directly to the charge of indoctrination, Debbie acknowledged the importance of "standing back to a degree and letting students come out with their responses" (her sponsor teacher's stance), but she argued that "sometimes you [the teacher] do have to articulate a

position" because of student power dynamics. When "talking about controversial issues . . . the quieter students might have a criticism of the louder students' point of view. But if they feel they can't express it, for whatever reason, the dominant point of view goes unchallenged and students leave the class feeling like somehow that point of view has been validated." A teacher could, Debbie continued, bring in the minority viewpoint in a very qualified way as "only my opinion" or as devil's advocate. But she suggested that a more "honest" way might be to "offer an alternative perspective," because when a teacher plays devil's advocate, "people know that you're just taking on a role and in a way, you're almost trivializing that alternative point of view."

Debbie's story points toward the ways that the dominant culture and ideology are often present in the common-sense views that students express. She felt it misguided to assume that the classroom can somehow naturally be a neutral testing ground for competing arguments on important and controversial social issues. Pierre noted that, in the wider society, certain "people's voices are louder, but in theory everyone should have their voices heard." Thus, he noted the need to show students that in a democracy, "the only way to move forward [on contentious social issues] is through dialogue." This more critical group of HSJTEP student teachers pointed to the "huge tension" they felt (to quote Pierre) between the pressure to "maintain the status quo" versus their desire to be part of facilitating positive "social change."

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As our analysis of the struggles of beginning teachers to define their role has shown, taking up issues of social justice in the classroom is difficult and complex. It involves shifting out of "neutral," both in terms of student teachers' orientation to social inequalities as well as to pedagogy. Teacher neutrality is not only undesirable but impossible. The data from our study prompts us to agree with Bigelow (2001), who argues that "teachers who claim 'no politics' are inherently authoritarian because their pedagogical choices act on students, but students are denied a structured opportunity to critique or act on their teachers' choices" (p. 299).

Because the student teachers in our study were all committed to teaching for social justice, they hoped to prepare students for a more participatory democracy. They recognized that they would need to encourage students both to think critically and to act on their reasoned convictions. Some of our participants, however, felt they could not achieve this goal during the constraints of a practicum, given the political realities of public schools.

Others tried to approach the goal. They did so by thinking of action in modest and student-appropriate ways that unfolded in local contexts. Some examples of how student teachers considered linking deliberation and action through generating a sense of agency in young people included: (a) prompting students to think through alternative courses of action and their consequences (e.g., Hardeep had students brainstorm how they might intervene in incidents of racism at school); (b) advocating in wider public spheres (e.g., Pierre planned to have students prepare posters publicly displaying their research into historical and contemporary figures who had helped bring about social change); and (c) involving students in producing meaningful artefacts (e.g., Debbie asked students to create their own media messages that countered commonly used stereotypes).

Teaching for democratic citizenship is a crucial aim of public schooling; therefore both student and veteran teachers ought to provide students with opportunities to acquire and hone the skills necessary to participate fully in public deliberation and decision-making. Participation in class discussions — where opinions are expressed, analyzed, and critiqued — is essential as students experiment with forming their own opinions and clarifying the areas where they would like to take a stand.

That said, it is important to reiterate that societal inequalities currently reduce the possibilities for democratic citizenship and, thus, for teaching democratic citizenship in the schools, where powerful, conservative social forces are at work. In a world saturated with corporate-dominated media messages, social-justice-minded teachers have to work extra hard to enhance their students' ability to be literate in the perspectives of subordinated groups. Young (2000) explains why educators cannot assume that an open "marketplace of diverse ideas" exists.

> If group-based positional differences give to some people greater power, material and cultural resources, and authoritative voice, then social norms and discourses which appear impartial are often biased. Under circumstances of structural social and economic inequality, the relative power of some groups often allows them to dominate the definition of the common good in ways compatible with their experience, perspective, and priorities. (p. 108)

Given that only some interests and perspectives appear to dominate in our society, Kelly's (1986) recommended role for those teaching about controversial issues (committed impartiality) seems inadequate to describe the interventions that teachers would need to make in order that competing points of view get a truly "fair hearing" (p. 121). In this sense, our preferred teacher role is one of *inclusive and situated engagement*: "inclusive" to signal a concern to attend to the perspectives of excluded minorities;

"situated" to signal that all teachers (or knowers) are located within a particular landscape of identities, values, and social situations from which they view the world; and "engagement" to signal the need to make their viewpoints open to critique as well as to model reasoned inquiry and action.

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NOTES

1 We define deliberative and participatory democracy as a process of communication across differences that aims to solve collective problems (e.g., Young, 2000).

2 In Canada, liberal theorist Eamonn Callan (1997) has written about the need to teach "liberal soulcraft," that is, political virtues associated with "the ideal of free and equal citizenship" (pp. 5, 7). From a participatory (radical) democracy perspective, Ken Osborne (1991) has also written about the importance of teaching for democratic citizenship.

3 We use the term *teacher neutrality* to refer to the idea that teachers should not express their views to their students or weigh in on any particular side during class discussions or debates of social issues. The focus is on pedagogy or "the how" of teachers' modeling and encouraging democratic practices. None of the teachers in our study espoused or aspired to neutrality with respect to the aims of schooling; they expected schools to teach a set of values and capacities associated with democratic citizenship.

4 For a discussion of the ways that beginning HSJTEP teachers translated a concern for social justice into their teaching practices, see Brandes & Kelly, 2000.

5 All names used in this article are pseudonyms.

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Home-School Communication and Expectations of Recent Chinese Immigrants

Lily L. Dyson

In this study, I investigated the nature of communication between home and school in families who recently immigrated to Canada. I used an open-ended questionnaire in interviews of 21 Chinese immigrant families and 19 non-immigrant European-Canadian families. The immigrant parents' pattern of communication differed from that of non-immigrant parents: immigrant parents communicated less frequently, had more difficulty comprehending the communication, and were less satisfied with the communication. The immigrant parents especially emphasized the academic progress of their children and were concerned with the quality of teaching.

L'étude porte sur la nature des communications entre la famille et l'école dans le cas de nouveaux immigrants chinois. À l'aide de questions ouvertes, l'auteure a interviewé 21 familles d'immigrants chinoises et 19 familles de non-immigrants europo-canadiennes. Le mode de communication des parents chinois diffère de celui des parents non immigrants : les parents chinois communiquent moins fréquemment, ont plus de difficulté à comprendre la communication et en tirent moins de satisfaction. Ils mettent surtout l'accent sur les progrès scolaires de leurs enfants et se préoccupent de la qualité de l'enseignement.

Home and school form the microsystems of a child's educational development. The connection between home and school is integral to a cohesive and effective learning environment (Bronfennbrenner, 1979). Central to this connection is the communication between home and school. Scholars such as Epstein (1990) and Healey (1994) have stated that communication with parents increases many forms of parental involvement in school or at home; others (Norris, 1999; Watkins, 1997) have linked children's academic achievement and motivation to home-school communication. Watkins (1997) confirmed that the amount of teacher-initiated communication that parents perceive predicts parent involvement. Bowman (1989) suggested that effective home-school communication facilitates teachers' responsibility to interpret and relay the school's agenda to the parents. Bhattacharya (2000) identified a strong link between parents and teachers as a factor protecting children from dropping out of school.

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Parental involvement in education is particularly important for elementary school children whose native language is not English (Constantino, Cui, & Faltis, 1995; Swap, 1990). Unfamiliar with the English language, these children need additional educational support, which in turn requires the involvement of the home. Yet cultural and linguistic differences may prevent effective home-school communication, and hence hinder parental involvement in school activities. Parents who have grown up in a culture outside North America may hold different views of schools and children than those of their children's teachers (Theilheimer, 2001). A study of Latin American families in Canada found that, despite parents' high aspirations for their children and despite the great value they attached to education, their children's teachers showed little awareness for their concerns (Bernhard & Freire, 1999). The language barrier also deters immigrant parents' communication with and involvement in the school (Bhattacharya, 2000; Gougeon, 1993). Intimidated by the linguistic barriers they face in the English-speaking school environment, such parents may be especially unable to participate actively in their children's education (Commins, 1992). Yet immigrant minority parents' lack of involvement is often misinterpreted by school personnel as a lack of interest in their children's academic work (Commins, 1992). Immigrant families' communication with their children's schools becomes a major educational concern, which constitutes the focus of the present study with recent Chinese immigrants.

Herrera and Wooden (1988) have suggested that miscommunication between home and school prompted minority children's failure in school. However, socio-economic disadvantages often associated with the minority and immigrant status may have confounded such a finding. Social class disadvantages provide parents with fewer resources for participating in their children's education (Lareau, 1987). Economic hardship, however, is not invariably the experience of immigrants. Immigrants with no socio-economic disadvantages would serve as a less unbiased sample for the study of home-school communication.

Even in the absence of economic disadvantages, Chinese immigrants who recently arrived in Canada or the U.S.A. may face barriers against effective communication with schools. Both parents and teachers in the study by Constantino et al. (1995) confirmed that language barriers caused Chinese parents' lack of communication with their children's school. Recent Chinese immigrants in Canada or the U.S.A. encountered another barrier: the gap between their native culture and that of mainstream North America. In general, Asians tend to value the needs of the group and emphasize duty and obligation (Hui & Triandis, 1986). In their

communication style, Asian people are generally succinct whereas North Americans tend to favour eloquence of speech (Yang, 1993).

Moreover, Chinese culture emphasizes education (Ho, 1981). Grounded in a cultural belief in human malleability and effort (Chen & Uttal, 1988) and in education as a means for social advancement and the procurement of wealth (Ho, 1981; Stevenson, Lee, & Chen, 1994), Chinese parents value academic achievement (Lin & Fu, 1990) and set high expectations for their children (Ran, 2001). Chinese mothers also believed in direct intervention in their children's learning (Chao, 1996). Such an educational emphasis conflicts with the child-centred approach generally practised in Canada (Holmes, 1998) and hence might confound Chinese parents' communication with their children's schools.

North American schools have increasingly emphasized multicultural education, which Sleeter and Grant (1994) defined as "education policies and practices that recognize, accept, and affirm human differences and similarities related to gender, race, disability, and class" (p. 167). Governments and schools have introduced such a policy to reduce prejudice and discrimination toward ethnic and racial groups, and to promote ethnic identity and educational and career equity for minorities (Valencia, 1992). To achieve this policy, parents, especially those of an ethnic minority, need information about schools' policies and practices on multicultural education. Parents' knowledge of school practice of multicultural education depends on the effectiveness of home-school communication and thus constitutes a logical measure of such effectiveness.

Because of language barriers and their unique cultural values, recent Chinese immigrant parents would engage in a pattern of communication with their children's schools that differs from that of non-immigrant, European-Canadian parents, a basic pattern that includes frequency, method, and content of communication (Prescott, Pelton, & Dornbusch, 1986). In practice, Chinese immigrant parents communicate less frequently with schools, have difficulty understanding the communication, and are less informed about school programs such as multicultural education. Moreover, because Chinese immigrant parents incline towards a cultural emphasis on group well-being and educational achievement, their communications with the school tend to focus on public affairs such as school events and benefits and on their children's academic achievement. However, these characteristics of Chinese immigrants' communication with schools are yet to be verified as a distinctive trait in relation to parents in general.

No Canadian researchers have studied recent Chinese immigrant

families who are free from the confounding effect of socio-economic disadvantage. Such a study would be particularly timely because of the dramatic increase in recent years of Chinese immigration to Canada (Badets, 1993) and the U.S.A. (Zhou, 1997). The information would help schools develop effective communication with Chinese immigrant parents. To examine the home-school communication of recent Chinese immigrants, I investigated: (a) the pattern of communication in terms of frequency, method, and content; (b) parents' understanding of and satisfaction with the communication; and (c) parents' knowledge of the school's multicultural policies. In this paper, I refer to "recent Chinese immigrant" as "Chinese immigrant" or "Chinese," whereas "non-immigrant European-Canadian" is interchangeable with "non-immigrant" or "Caucasian."[1]

METHOD

Participants

The participants were 40 parents: 21 recent Chinese immigrants and 19 non-immigrant Caucasian-Canadians, each from a different family. These families had a combined total of 46 children, 21 Chinese and 25 European-Canadian. Only one father took part in the interview and only one family involved both parents in the interview; mothers represented the rest of the families. The families lived in a medium-sized Canadian metropolitan city. The Chinese families, who originated from Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong, had immigrated to Canada within the last 10 years, the majority (18) within the last 5 years. Members of the non-immigrant families were all Caucasian, having been born and having always resided in Canada.

On the basis of the Canadian socio-economic index for occupations (Blishen, Carroll, & Moore, 1987) and drawn on the major income earners, the majority of the Chinese (15 of 21) and non-immigrant (14 of 19) families obtained a socio-economic score of 50 and above, representing professional, technical, managerial, or small business categories. The rest of the Chinese and Caucasian families obtained a score of 25 to 49, which represented skilled and semi-skilled workers. Four families did not provide occupational data.

All the Chinese parents spoke some English; the most recent immigrants (one third of the group, immigrating within the last two years) spoke only limited English and had difficulty comprehending ordinary conversational English. Except for four parents who had completed high-school education, the Chinese parents had completed at least 14 years of

formal education. All the Caucasian parents had at least a high-school education, the majority (13 of 19) having 14 or more years of education. Respect for privacy prevented the collection of the parents' specific ages. Estimates suggested that the majority of the mothers were in their mid-30s to early 40s, with only one non-immigrant father in his early 50s. All the children were attending elementary school in grades 2 to 7, with ages ranging from 7 to 13 years. According to the parents' reports, none of the children had any school difficulties. The schools involved were distributed throughout the city, the majority in middle socio-economic neighbourhoods.

Procedure

I recruited immigrant families from various sources: a local intercultural society; ethnic associations that included families originating from Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong; English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes for children; and a regular elementary class. Community members or participants also suggested other possible participants. I distributed a Chinese version of the recruitment letter to potentially eligible Chinese families through these recruitment sources. I also recruited non-immigrant families from elementary schools and preschools, and through parents who had already participated in the study. These sources distributed letters to eligible families explaining the nature and requirements of the study. I also distributed the letter in preschool and elementary schools at their parent meetings. From this variety of sources, I obtained a broad representation of both the Chinese and Caucasian families in the city.

Using purposeful sampling (Coyne, 1997), I restricted the sample to families of Chinese origin who had immigrated to Canada within the 10 years prior to the collection of the data and who had children aged 7 to 14. I chose families not under any apparent economic stress. I also applied the same child and family demographic eligibility criteria to non-immigrant participants. In addition, I restricted non-immigrant families to those with a European background who had always lived in Canada. A total of 53 families gave their initial verbal consent; of them, 52 (27 immigrants and 25 non-immigrants) completed the study. I had to reduce the final sample to 40 families (21 immigrant families and 19 non-immigrant families) because of the target child's age (too old or too young) or the length of residence in Canada (over 10 years). After participants completed a written consent form, graduate research assistants in education and psychology and I interviewed families in their homes.

Prior to the actual interview process, we practised interviewing to ensure our proficiency in interviewing.

Instrumentation

In this study, I used structured interviewing, with an open-ended questionnaire to allow variation in responses (Fontana & Frey, 2000). I developed the questionnaire on the model of communication proposed by Prescott et al. (1986), which included frequency, method, and content as the major elements. Additional questions regarded (a) the extent of understanding of and satisfaction with communication with the school, and (b) knowledge of multicultural education as practised by the school. I had the interview questions (see Appendix) translated into Chinese using the "back-translation" method (Bracken & Barona, 1991). Thus, the English questionnaire was translated into Chinese and then the Chinese text was translated back into English to examine its equivalency to the original English version. I adjusted the discrepancies before I finalized the Chinese version.

To ensure parents' comfort and understanding, Caucasian and Chinese interviewers interviewed the group corresponding to their racial origin. The Chinese interviewers were fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese, using the language of parents' choice. The interviewers audio-recorded participants' responses; Chinese interviews were later translated into English for analysis.

For the purpose of this study, I defined communication as: "speaking or interacting in person, by phone, by writing, or through shared activities, such as parent-teacher interviews, or school events." During the interview, the interviewers further elaborated communication for the participants as: "talking to or interacting with your child's teacher about your child, either in person, by phone or by note, attending school activities such as parent-teacher interviews and school fairs, or getting involved in school events such as fund-raising or sports." The interviewers also advised the respondents that the definition of communication included "interaction initiated by the teacher or the parents" and "parents' response to the school's communication, such as a note or newsletter."

Data Analysis

A research assistant and I analyzed the data for each research question, using content analysis (Johnson & LaMontagne, 1993). Each word, phrase,

or sentence that related to the topic being studied constituted a unit of analysis. Examples of units of analysis were: a word ("[I communicated with my child's school] in-person"); a phrase ("[the communication was about] peer pressure or decision-making, grades and achievement"); or a sentence ("I understood the communication with my friend's help"). Initially, we identified a small, randomly selected sample of the participants ($n = 10$) and analyzed their responses for the basic idea within each unit of analysis. Through repeated comparisons, we integrated similar ideas until we identified the final, mutually exclusive, major themes. After we established major themes for each question, we used them for coding the rest of the data. We repeated this procedure with each study question. To examine the reliability of coding, another coder independently coded all of the families' responses to three of the questions. We then compared the two sets of themes generated for each question and the number of families who gave the response under each theme. When discrepancies in the wording or phrasing of a theme occurred, we discussed these differences; when coders reached unanimous agreement on the meaning, we then coded the theme. Otherwise, we left discrepancies as disagreements. We calculated a percentage score for the number of agreements by the sum of the number of agreements. The score for the three questions, respectively, was 76%, 90%, and 84%, with an average of 83%.

RESULTS

Five themes emerged that corresponded to the research questions from the analysis of the coded data: (a) pattern of communication, (b) understanding of communication, (c) satisfaction with communication, (d) understanding of school's valuing of child's culture, (e) knowledge of the school's multicultural education.

Pattern of Communication

Frequency of communication. Table 1 shows how Chinese and non-immigrant parents communicated with the school. Chinese parents communicated infrequently: the majority one to four times a year, almost half of them one to two times a year, and two once. In contrast, almost all non-immigrant parents communicated with their children's schools at least once a month, and almost half of them one to three times a week. Chinese parents volunteered reasons for their infrequent communication: lack of time, no specific matters to discuss, unfamiliarity in

communicating with the school, and the availability of school newsletters. The most common reason, however, was a lack of English speaking skills and hence the inconvenience of having to rely on interpreters. One mother explained:

> I have gone to my child's school only once since we came here because I cannot speak English. I cannot talk with his teacher directly. I had to ask my friends to go with me and help me to communicate with the teacher. So I have not initiated any meeting with the school. (Chinese mother)

Method of communication. Table 1 also shows the various methods parents employed to communicate with their children's school. Both groups of parents used in-person communication most often. A combination of in-person contact, written messages, and telephone conversations was the second-most popular option, followed by an augmentation of this mixture with newsletters or formal interviews.

TABLE 1

Home-school Communication by Group: Frequency and Method

Category	Immigrant (*n*=21)	Non-immigrant (*n*=19)
Frequency of Communication		
Very often/1–3 times per week	0	9
1–3 times per month	0	9
3–4 times per year	7	1
1–2 times per year	10	0
Not often or rarely (once for all time)	2	0
Often before but now only at parent meeting	2	0
Method of Communication		
In person alone	8	6
In person plus message/telephone	6	5
Letters, notes, newsletters plus interview/telephone	4	4
Telephone	0	2
Newsletters	1	1
Others	2	1

However, unlike non-immigrant parents, immigrant parents did not use the telephone alone as a method for communicating with schools.

When asked about the best means for the school to communicate with them, one third of the Chinese parents did not show any preference. For another third of these parents, the most preferred method was in-person contact alone, followed by in-person contact combined with other means such as notes, newsletters, or phone calls. Non-immigrant parents shared this pattern of preference (seven for in-person contact alone and eight for in-person contact combined with other means, such as notes, newsletters, or phone calls). None of the immigrants desired newsletters as the only way of home-school communication.

Content of communication. Chinese parents communicated with their children's schools for reasons largely different than those of Caucasian parents. Table 2 shows that most Chinese parents communicated solely about their children's academic progress to determine what extra academic support to provide at home. Referring to communication with her son's teacher, one Chinese parent revealed, "We talked about my son's study, his progress in English. I want to make sure that my son is doing fine in school." Another Chinese parent elaborated on her communication with the school:

> It is mostly about my son's learning attitudes, academic scores, and behaviour in school. I would also like to get advice from the teachers about how we, as parents, can help our child, about any good books for our son to read, and also about what we should emphasize at home to help our child learn more effectively at school. (Chinese parent)

TABLE 2

Content of Communication by Group

Category	Immigrant (n=21)	Non-immigrant (n=19)
Academic activities only (study, work, progress, report card)	17	0
School and relationship with others, general behaviour	4	4
General school activity and social events	0	5
School events plus child's progress	0	6
Others (school events plus fundraising or child attendance)	0	4

A smaller number of Chinese parents discussed both their children's general academic work and social relationships. A Chinese parent remarked, "We talked about my daughter's study and behaviours. I want to know whether my daughter is getting along with her classmates, whether she respects teachers, and how her study is going." One Chinese parent communicated only for the school's public events, such as fundraising.

In contrast to Chinese parents, none of the Caucasian parents communicated with schools about their child's academic progress alone. The same number (four) of Caucasian parents as the Chinese parents discussed their children's academic work and social relationships together. However, the Caucasian parents devoted much more of their communication to the school's public events and welfare (e.g., sports events, school concerts, and fundraising such as bake sales) or a combination of their children's academic progress and the school's public and social events. A Caucasian parent estimated her communication with the school to be "60% about the school activities and 40% about my daughter." Another Caucasian mother reported her communication with the school to be "two thirds about my daughter and one third about the Christmas hamper, Mustard Seed, and community issues." Several Caucasian parents communicated solely about school social events.

Understanding of Communication

In response to the question, "Do you understand the communication from your child's school," most (18 of 21) Chinese parents responded that they did, although some required assistance. One mother reported, "Yes, because I have an interpreter, either my eldest son or my friend." Another parent reported a similar experience: "I understand because of the translator. It's good they [the school] have a translator." Still another Chinese parent explained, "I told the teacher at the very beginning that my English is not so good. So, he would use easy words to talk to me." Three Chinese parents reported not understanding the communication from the school. Some Chinese parents also reported difficulties with large group meetings because of a language barrier. A problem arose for another parent when the regular class teacher who, unlike the previous ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher, spoke too fast to be understood. As expected, all the Caucasians responded that they understood the communication with their children's school.

Satisfaction with Communication

Table 3 summarizes the parents' responses by group to the question of whether they were satisfied with the communication they had with the school. Half of the Chinese parents responded affirmatively. One satisfied Chinese parent stated, "Yes, I was happy. The teacher was very nice and she pointed out my son's problem. I appreciated it because she cared about my son; she noticed his problem and told me in time." However, a few (three) happy Chinese parents requested more information about their children or more communication with the school. Two of these parents also suggested that the teachers and the school administration should use "easier words" in newsletters and initiate more meetings or other kinds of communication with parents.

Table 3 also shows that a number of Chinese parents expressed both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their communication. They were satisfied with the teachers' availability for parent-teacher communication and the school's newsletters, which briefed them on school events and filled in the communication gap. However, these parents were also unhappy with the content of communication, which, to them, gave unrealistically positive reports of their children's academic progress. One parent remarked, "I am not happy with the

TABLE 3

Parents' Response by Group to the Question: Are You Happy with the Communication you have with the School?

Category	Immigrant (*n*=21)	Non-immigrant (*n*=19)
Happy (teacher cares, is open accessible)	8	15
Happy but would like more information or communication	3	0
Unhappy (due to lack of English-speaking skills and school's failure to provide real information on child's academic performance)	4	0
Happy and unhappy (happy with some aspects of communication but unhappy with teacher's not providing real progress of child; happy with teacher or with school only)	6	4

content of the communication. There is too much good news. The reports were too good to be true. For example, the report cards seldom mention my son's mistakes."

Of the few Chinese parents who felt completely unhappy, one said she lacked the English skills to communicate with the school. Other completely unhappy Chinese parents (3) were dissatisfied for other reasons. Tellingly, one parent regarded the school's information about children's school performance as ambiguous and superficial because it did not identify children's weaknesses. This parent argued that children and parents would not know how the children could improve and develop their skills for coping in the future in the more demanding world outside of school. This parent expressed her frustration, disappointment, and concern forcefully.

> I would like to know whether my daughter is good at something or not so good at some subjects. I would like to know whether and how my daughter is progressing in learning and intelligence. But I really feel disappointed, even angry, about the comment from the school. The school will never tell me anything that I am really concerned about. I think it is because the philosophy of education here, the school seldom tells parents about their children's weakness. Even though a child does something not so good, not so perfect, the school still makes positive comments about his or her work. If children always hear the school talk about them positively, how can they encounter the society later on? In the real society, there is nothing that is always perfect. They will, of course, hear negative remarks about them. How can the children manage the contradiction between what they hear from the school and what they encounter in society? The school is not preparing them to face the reality outside school. (Chinese parent)

Non-immigrant parents did not share the dissatisfaction that some Chinese parents expressed. Instead, most of the non-immigrant parents were satisfied because of the open and prompt communication from the school. Satisfied European-Canadian parents commented that "the school philosophy encourages input from parents," and that "the school is always good with notices, returning phone calls, and quick chats in the school's hallway." Several non-immigrant parents indicated that they were both happy and unhappy with either the teacher or the administration. A Caucasian parent, unhappy with the teachers, expressed her frustration this way: "I find it difficult to explain my concerns in such a way as to ensure that the teachers understand and will take the appropriate steps if necessary." Other non-immigrant parents felt dissatisfaction with administrators when they failed to communicate ("the administrator was not very communicative.") or when administrators introduced funding cutbacks.

Understanding of School's Valuing of Child's Culture

To obtain specific information about the degree of effectiveness of home-school communication, I asked questions about parents' knowledge of the school's policies of multicultural education. The first question was, "From what you know, does your child's school value your child's race and culture? What evidence is there for your answer?" I defined valuing for the participants as, "showing respect in word or action" or "considering as important or valuable." Table 4 shows the participants' responses. Two thirds of the Chinese parents considered that their race and culture were valued at school. Two Chinese parents stated that their culture was not valued and that the school treated the child's culture just like traditional Canadian culture. Most Caucasian parents responded that schools valued their race and culture and treated their children equally. Only one such parent reported that individual children were not valued. A few Chinese and Caucasian-Canadian parents indicated that they did not know whether

TABLE 4

Response by Group on the School's Practice of Multiculturalism: Valuing of Race and Culture and Practice of Multicultural Education

Category	Immigrant (*n*=21)	Non-immigrant (*n*=19)
Valuing of child's race and culture		
My child is treated equally and fairly; race, culture and language are respected	14	16
Culture is treated fairly but child has been picked on by peers.	2	0
Culture is not valued, child is treated like a Canadian	2	1
Don't know how	2	0
No/unclear answer	1	2
Practice of multicultural education		
Good multicultural education programs	4	15
Unaware of any multicultural education programs in school	13	0
Inadequate emphasis (could be more, lacks respect for Asian or other cultures)	3	0
Not emphasized	0	4
No clear answer	1	0

the school valued their race and culture because they saw no evidence.

Knowledge of the School's Emphasis on Multicultural Education

With the second question, related to multicultural education, I asked parents, "From what you know, does your child's school emphasize multicultural education? What evidence is there for your answer?" I defined multicultural education for the parents, using the definition presented earlier. Table 4 shows that four Chinese parents reported that their children's schools emphasized multicultural education as evidenced by a good multicultural education program. However, the majority reported that they were unaware of any multicultural education programs in their children's schools because the school either did not have such a program or did not communicate it explicitly to children or parents. One Chinese parent's remark typified the sentiment of the parents: "I have no idea about multicultural education. I don't know whether his school has this kind of program or activity. I did not hear my son talk about it. Usually my son tells me everything that happened in school." Three of the Chinese parents responded that there was either inadequate or no emphasis on multiculturalism. One of these parents suggested that multicultural education was superficially practised with only token events, such as "a multicultural week," while history or social studies remained "very much European or North-American" with little Asian content.

Unlike immigrant parents, the majority of non-immigrant parents reported that their children's school emphasized multicultural education and had a good multicultural education program as evidenced by events celebrating international scenes or holidays. A non-immigrant parent answered:

> Yes, lots are being done about other countries, foods, etc. The school also has flags from all over the world. I think schools are making good efforts despite the negative views in our society such as that about the RCMP — they were not allowed to wear turbans. (Non-immigrant parent)

A few non-immigrant parents considered that multicultural education was not being emphasized in their children's schools. Referring to multicultural education, a non-immigrant parent remarked, "I have not really seen evidence of emphasis, even though the school is one-third Indo-Canadian." Both immigrant and non-immigrant parents indicated their wish for schools to balance their recognition of the main culture with that of minority cultures. Chinese parents especially desired to have their children

integrated into the mainstream while maintaining their cultural heritage. A Chinese parent expressed this wish:

> We would like our son integrated with the local culture as soon as possible. Our son also likes being integrated with the local people and local culture. But as parents, we would also like him to keep our Chinese culture — the values of Chinese culture. As overseas Chinese, we need, and have the responsibility, to pass our traditional values down to the next generation. (Chinese parent)

Other Comments

The participants, especially the Chinese, volunteered additional comments during the interviews (30 by the Chinese and 21 by the non-immigrant parents). Their comments focused on curriculum, instructional methods, and student discipline in the school. In general, most parents perceived that the curriculum lacked stringent academic standards because students did little homework and much of it was unproductive or non-academic work. The curriculum especially did not teach critical thinking skills, which to some parents involved such exercises as analyzing a phenomenon and understanding its underlying causes and processes. The following quotation from a Chinese father provides a summary of these criticisms.

> Students here are too relaxed because they do not have much schoolwork; students in Grade 5 still do not have much homework. Children also do not get sufficient teaching. Today my daughter brought home some insects because the teacher wants the class to observe the insects. That is all she has to do. A similar thing happened that my daughter's class spent several weeks blowing bubbles just to find out what kind of detergents can produce bigger bubbles. The teacher did not tell students [to find out] *why* and *how* detergent produces bubbles, which we think is more important for students to learn. (Chinese parent)

Parents who volunteered comments also criticized schools for their methods of instruction. Chinese parents were especially concerned about the lack of a well-defined instructional framework, guided by a systematic teaching model that co-ordinated with learning and that linked new knowledge to that previously learned. These parents further expressed their discontent with the weak mathematics instruction. Consequently, they were worried that their children would not be adequately prepared for future challenges in work and life. Referring to the lack of instructional framework, a Chinese father reported, "My son started learning French, but several weeks later, he switched to Italian since his teacher started

teaching Italian. We don't know why." Another Chinese mother articulated a greater concern that the instruction at school limited children's future success.

> Instruction is not systematic, for example, in mathematics. Mathematics is too easy, and sometimes what the school teaches is not relevant to what children have learned. There is no connection between new learning and old knowledge. It seems there is neither framework nor a systematic instructional plan . . . . Students may not have much to do with their study now. But later, when they enter college or university, they will meet a big challenge. Since the school does not prepare students for the future, how can they adjust to the new and more challenging situation in universities and how can they adjust to competitive society in the future? (Chinese parent)

Both immigrant and non-immigrant parents considered the lack of discipline in school to be problematic. These parents were also concerned about unsatisfactory teaching practices, such as not marking students' assignments. A Chinese parent added another concern about school sports that did not accommodate Asian students' physical build.

Both groups of parents recommended greater emphasis on student discipline and academic learning. One Chinese parent recommended that "education administration should be more stringent and discipline should be better set [established]." Non-immigrant parents requested teacher models in which teachers are "well-disciplined" themselves and do not threaten to go on strike as a means of resolving conflicts. Chinese parents, in particular, advocated more homework, more interesting assignments, and more emphasis on basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics. Finally, Caucasian parents requested better-defined criteria for the evaluation of schoolwork and asked that there be no strike action in schools, thereby allowing greater attention to children's learning.

DISCUSSION

In this study, I examined the home-school communication of Chinese families who recently immigrated to Canada. As expected, even in the absence of socio-economic difficulties, cultural and linguistic uniqueness created a largely distinct pattern of parental communication with schools. Thus, in comparison with non-immigrants, immigrant parents communicated with schools less often, had more difficulty understanding the communication, and were less satisfied with the school's communication style and multicultural education program. However, immigrant parents also circumvented the language barrier by using an interpreter (e.g., their own children, friends, or school appointee) to

facilitate their communication with schools.

The most distinctive feature of Chinese parents' communication was their high level of expectations for their children's academic achievement. Chinese parents communicated more for the sake of their children's academic progress than for the school's public events, such as fundraising, which was more the focus of communication for non-immigrant parents. Emphasis on education as a means for an individual's advancing in society (Stevenson et al., 1994) may have distracted the Chinese parents from their traditional valuation of group well-being, and hence from contributing to such public school events as fundraising. Real and perceived language barriers may also have reduced Chinese parents' involvement in school events. Researchers have observed that Asian-American parents often feel reluctant to participate in school functions because of their lack of confidence in English (Lee & Manning, 2001).

Drawing on their cultural philosophy and practices, Chinese parents expected teachers to communicate more factual appraisal of their children's school progress. These parents were thus dissatisfied when schools conveyed what they considered to be superficial and exclusively positive, "feel-good" generalizations about their children's performance. With their traditional belief in academic excellence as reflected in discipline and achievement (Mitchell, 2001), the Chinese parents also criticized schools for the lack of student discipline and the lower quality of curriculum and instruction in comparison to schools in China.

The Chinese parents' response to the issue of multicultural education further reflected ineffective home-school communication. Many Chinese parents were dissatisfied because the school did not value their race and culture; others were unaware of multicultural education at school. There were also Chinese parents who did not consider the multicultural education practised in schools adequate, especially to fulfil their desire to integrate their children into the mainstream Canadian life while preserving their ethnic distinction. The Chinese parents requested a multicultural education program that not only valued their ethnicity and culture but also contained substance that went beyond occasional, ceremonial festivals. Such a program would involve the ample inclusion of Chinese or Asian culture and history in the regular curriculum and the daily practice of multicultural education at school. However, Chinese parents' dissatisfaction may have been caused by their lack of knowledge about the school's existing multicultural education.

The present study clearly demonstrates the interplay between culture and home-school communication for immigrant parents. In their communication with the school, Chinese parents conveyed their

educational expectations for their children, which were rooted in their culture of origin, and sought genuine information about their children's academic performance. Notwithstanding differences between immigrant and non-immigrant parents in the style and content of communication with the school, a common parental expectation for schools existed. Parents expected quality communication and education. Immigrant or not, parents valued the kind of home-school communication that readily responded to parental concerns and that showed care for meeting children's needs. Parents especially requested the type of education that emphasized academic excellence, critical thinking, practical skills, and behavioural discipline.

The results of this study corroborate previous research indicating that language differences may hinder immigrant families' effective communication and involvement with schools (Commins, 1992; Constantino et al., 1995; Gougeon, 1993). The results further highlight the impact of the language barrier and cultural differences on recently immigrated parents' communication with and expectations of their children's schools. Of interest, the discontent of immigrant parents with the school's curriculum and instruction alludes to the difference between Chinese parents and Canadian schools in pedagogical philosophy. The dissatisfaction also suggests that, perhaps for lack of adequate communication, immigrant parents fail to understand the school's philosophy.

The results indicate the need for improving home-school communication for Chinese immigrant families. Schools may meet this need by attending to parents' desire for responsive communication that shows care for children and for quality education that cultivates critical thinking and student discipline. Schools may also consider practising a style of communication with parents that is sensitive to their idiosyncratic linguistic and cultural heritage and to their educational expectations. Additionally, schools can incorporate multicultural education activities into the curriculum and daily life, while at the same time inform parents of school policy and practices related to multicultural education. Such practices would improve home-school communication, perhaps leading to greater involvement in school events by immigrant parents. Effective home-school communication, however, requires communication skills on the part of school administrators and teachers, which can be enhanced through in-service and pre-service teacher-education programs, focusing on cultivating respect for and understanding of cultural diversity. Teachers' educational institutions may provide such programs.

The inclusion of families mainlywith socio-economic advantages

delimits the results of this study. Parents with less economic resources may have different experiences in communicating with the school and should be included in future studies. Research may further involve teachers and children as informants to study the bi-directional process that characterizes home-school communication (Theilheimer, 2001). Future research may also consider the pedagogical orientation of schools and immigrant parents as a factor mediating the communication between home and school.

The present study has produced a preliminary set of interview data and new knowledge about home-school communication of recent immigrants such as Chinese. The results suggest other immediate research questions such as: (a) are these findings replicable in other urban centres and with other cultural minorities? and (b) what practices have been shown successful to improve home-school communication?

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APPENDIX

The Questionnaire for the Interview

1. How often do you communicate with your child's school?
2. How is the communication carried out between you and your child's school?
3. What is the communication with your child's school mostly about?
4. Do you understand the communication given by your child's school?
5. What is the best way for the school to communicate with you?
6. Are you satisfied with the communication you have with the school?
7. From what you know, does your child's school value your child's race and culture? What evidence is there for your answer?"
8. From what you know, does your child's school emphasize multicultural education? What evidence is there for your answer?

Expectations of Chinese Immigrant Parents for Their Children's Education: The Interplay of Chinese Tradition and the Canadian Context

Jun Li

In this study, I used qualitative interviews to explore the expectations of the parents in seven Chinese families who had recently immigrated to Canada. These parents grounded their expectations for their children in Chinese tradition, their deeply rooted cultural heritage. Their personal life experiences and acculturative attitudes also shaped their expectations. The parents' understanding of Canadian society and their perception that visible minorities are disadvantaged prompted them to form a minority ideology and also to advise their children to pursue science-related careers. The expectations of these parents were situationally motivated in different ways to conform to the Canadian socio-cultural context

À l'aide d'interviews qualitatives, l'auteure a étudié les attentes des sept familles chinoises récemment arrivées au Canada. Les attentes de ces parents s'enracinent dans la tradition chinoise. Leurs expériences personnelles et leurs attitudes acculturatives façonnent également leurs attentes. Leur compréhension de la société canadienne et leur sentiment que les minorités visibles sont désavantagées les incitent à former une idéologie de la minorité et à conseiller à leurs enfants de viser une carrière dans les sciences. Les attentes de ces parents sont à divers égards motivées par une volonté de se conformer au contexte socioculturel canadien.

Since coming to Canada from China in January 1997, I have frequently heard from members of the Chinese community that their children are performing exceptionally well in Canadian schools despite of acculturative struggles and English being their second language. These comments prompted me to wonder what helped these students excel in a Canadian socio-cultural milieu, and more specifically, what role their parents played in their school achievement.

Researchers have suggested that, of many family variables that contribute to children's school achievement, parental expectations are the most salient (Hoge, Smit, & Crist, 1997; Patrikakou, 1997; Peng & Wright, 1994; Seiginer, 1983). Because Chinese parents are reputed to have high educational expectations, I examined their parenting and educational

experiences, looking particularly at their expectations for their children.

As the largest visible minority group in Canada, the Chinese population has surpassed one million (Statistics Canada, 2001). However, very few studies have focused on this community, and little is known about recent Chinese immigrant families. To address this gap, I explored the influence of the expectations of recent Chinese immigrant parents on their children's schooling. The purpose was to uncover how Chinese immigrant parents constructed their expectations while living in a dominant culture, and also to depict how they "do things on the basis of their beliefs and desires, striving for goals, meeting obstacles which they best or which best them" (Bruner, 1990, p. 42).

In this article, I focused on three research questions. First, what expectations do Chinese immigrant parents hold for their children? Second, how do their cultural beliefs and life experiences shape these expectations? And third, how do their visible minority experiences influence their educational expectations and career aspirations?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the mid-1960s, two influential American newspapers, *The New York Times* (Petersen, 1966) and *U.S. News and World Report (*"Success Story," 1966), featured articles on the educational and economic attainment of Japanese and Chinese immigrants, praising them as hard-working, uncomplaining role models of diligence and achievement. Since then, Asian Americans have been continually portrayed as a success story and lauded as a model minority (Kao, 1995; Kim & Chun, 1994). Numerous comparative studies have reported that, regardless of social class and family economic background, Asian students have higher SAT scores, higher grade-point averages, more years of schooling completed, and a lower dropout rate than European Americans and other ethnic groups (Kim & Chun, 1994; Sue & Abe, 1995). Many researchers have looked for explanations to account for this remarkable phenomenon (Chun, 1995; Hirschman & Wong, 1986; Kao, 1995; Kim & Chun, 1994; Peng & Wright, 1994; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Two views have emerged from previous studies: one ascribes this success to Asian cultural values, the other to the demands of acculturation.

The exceptional school performance of Chinese immigrant students, especially in science and technology, has been well documented. Although some researchers have accredited their academic success mainly to their cultural and family support (Chao, 1996; Chen & Uttal, 1988; Schneider &

Lee 1990), others view it as a co-product of Chinese cultural values and visible minority status (Kim & Chun, 1994; Sue & Okazuki, 1990). Chun (1995) argues that their orientation to science and technology is not necessarily a reflection of their personal preferences and interests, but an adaptive response to external, societal constraints of the host country. However, detailed portraits of this phenomenon have remained rare.

Different families in different cultures hold different parental expectations, underlined with different interpretations (Alexander, Entwisle, & Bedinger, 1994; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Although numerous studies have consistently reported a positive relationship in Asian cultures between high parental expectations and children's school achievement (Hirschman & Wong, 1986; Kao, 1995; Kim & Chun, 1994; Peng & Wright, 1994; Schneider & Lee, 1990), scholars have not been able to reveal through quantitative data how parental expectations work in a particular cultural and family context. Furthermore, previous research on immigrant Chinese families has been mainly carried out in the United States; few such studies have been conducted in Canada.

To understand the expectations of Chinese immigrant parents in Canada, it is essential to contextualize their experiences because their expectations are derived and conditioned by particular social, cultural, historical, and family circumstances. Generally speaking, the process of uprooting is always an uncertain and difficult journey, demanding determination and resilience. Compared to European immigrants, visible minority immigrants have to undergo a more tempestuous acculturative process because they are at risk of many potential stressors, such as racial stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (Chun, 1995; Suzuki, 1995). Hence, one cannot fully understand the experiences of the Chinese immigrants without examining their immigration history in Canada.

The earliest Chinese arrived on the west coast of Canada in 1858. From the gold rush (1858–1880) to railway construction (1881–1885), from the head tax (1885–1923) to the exclusion era (1923–1947), the Chinese made invaluable contributions to the construction of the new country, yet endured persistent institutional racial discrimination (Li, 1998; Sugiman, 1992). Li (1998) contended that, aside from Aboriginal people, no other ethnic group has suffered such massive torture and destruction of their community in Canada.

In 1967, Canada adopted an immigration policy to admit immigrants on the basis of their educational qualifications and professional preparation. This policy brought new waves of immigration of people with diverse ethnic backgrounds. According to "Immigration Overview: Facts and

Figures" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001), mainland China has been one of the top three source countries of immigration since 1996 and the number one source country since 1998. Unlike earlier Chinese immigrants, the majority of recent ones are highly educated urban professionals who intend to settle permanently in Canada by providing skilled work. However, many of them have to work as manual labourers for basic survival. After examining the data obtained in Canadian employed labour force from 1971 to 1991, Li (1998) reported that Chinese are under-represented in managerial, scholastic, and administrative positions. Although the Statistics Canada 2001 census has clearly showed that higher education is a gateway to higher income, recent immigrants have substantially less earning power than native-born Canadians, even after 10 years of residence in the country, regardless of their education (Statistics Canada, 2001). Ethnic background remains socially significant in Canada despite its multicultural policy.

The expectations of recent Chinese immigrant parents may depend not only on their cultural and educational background, but also on the attitudes of the host society towards newcomers and visible minority groups. Only by uncovering both their cultural values and acculturative struggles can researchers obtain a deeper understanding of these parents' expectations.

METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm

Researchers always approach a problem from a certain paradigm or world view, a basic set of beliefs or assumptions to guide their inquiries. The underlying philosophy of a study is shaped by the nature of reality, the relationship between the researcher and the researched, and the role of values (Creswell, 1998; Guba, 1990). These premises eventually lead to the selection and employment of research methods.

In this study, I sought to uncover multiple realities constructed by immigrant Chinese families in their given social, cultural, and personal circumstances, viewing the participants as collaborators or valued beings, whose perspectives and world views I attempted to uncover (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). I regarded the research process as a co-constructed activity, shaped by queries and narratives. As a researcher from the same cultural root, my intimate cultural knowledge and personal acculturative experiences have inevitably shaped data interpretation because, as Riessman (1993) has suggested, the construction of any work always bears the mark of the person who creates it.

Research Process

To understand the expectations of Chinese immigrant parents, I used open-ended interviewing as my primary data collection method to help uncover previous silenced voices and bring in rich and contextualized information. I collected the data in the city of Ottawa. The fieldwork lasted five months, from October 1999 to February 2000. Seven recent immigrant Chinese families from mainland China who had resided in Canada for fewer than 15 years, both parents and their adolescent children, participated in the open-ended interviews. This article reports only data obtained from the parent participants.[1]

The educational background of the parents largely represented the profile of recent Chinese immigrants, a result of Canada's "brain-drain" immigration policy. Except for one high-school graduate, eight participants had Ph.D. degrees, one a Master's, and four Bachelor's. All seven children interviewed had previously received some primary education in China. They were top students in Canadian shools, four of them enrolled in gifted programs. As a consequence of China's only-child policy, five families had only one child. The other two families had their second child in Canada.

I interviewed the parents in Mandarin, the language of their choice, and then translated the data into English. I began the data analysis as soon as I completed the first interview. My engagement with the data allowed me to make sense of the intentions and experiences of my participants, to identify emerging common themes and unique cases, and further, to craft a representation of their perspectives and stories.

FINDINGS

From the interviews with the parents, I developed five common themes: cultural expectations, life experiences, acculturative attitudes, career aspirations, and minority ideology. In presenting these themes, I have provided thick descriptions of their narratives (Geertz, 1973) to give voice to these immigrant Chinese parents.

Cultural Expectations

The parents unanimously emphasized that their children must obtain a quality university education. They regarded education as their top priority and viewed academic achievement as one of hallmarks of Chinese civilization. Mr. Chen,[2] for example, was proud that Chinese people historically had a high respect for formal education.

Our five thousand years of Confucian heritage have formed a firm belief that nothing is more important than formal education [*wei you du shu gao*].[3] This influence is fundamental to both the Chinese at home and abroad. Confucianism regards education as the most important thing in one's life. Probably this is why Chinese parents are willing to invest money and energy in their children's education. (Mr. Chen)

Likewise, Mr. Lin viewed the Confucian heritage as the source of high parental expectations.

Our Chinese history, five thousand years of feudal society, has produced unique cultural beliefs, such as academic achievement leads to higher social status [*xue er you ze shi*]. So in China, all parents want their children to achieve privileged positions through academic excellence [*wang zi cheng luong*]. The meaning of this Confucian motto is that only if you excel in your studies will you have a good future. (Mr. Lin)

The parents pointed out that children who grow up in Chinese culture are generally motivated to pursue excellence. Mr. Hua used a Confucian concept, filial piety (*xiao*), to account for this attitude.

Chinese children desire to honour their families and ancestors. If they fail, they would lose face in front of their families. . . . Chinese children want to succeed, to feel good, and to bring honour to their families. Whereas Western kids rarely have this kind of thinking. . . . The ultimate goal of Chinese children is to strive for a good position in society. They want people who know them, such as their parents, teachers, and friends, to be proud of them. . . . Chinese children have a sense of shame. This is their strength. (Mr. Hua)

All seven families resoundingly attributed their children's school achievement to the education their children received in their home country because high cultural expectations and the challenging learning environment in China kept them academically motivated. For example, Mr. Hua felt that, because his daughter was born and raised in Canada, she was more fun-loving, not as serious about schoolwork as her older brother. Mr. Hua discussed ideological differences between the two cultures and stressed that the school achievement of the Chinese students owed much to their cultural and personal characteristics.

Chinese beliefs are just the opposite of the Western ideology. Western people are interested in enjoying the present. They say that life is short, so play hard. See, our cultural background and life philosophy are entirely different. People say that the Chinese are intelligent. . . . I disagree. The Chinese success is not the result of intelligence but the result of diligence, self-discipline, and self-regulation. You know, they have standards and they strive for their goals. (Mr. Hua)

Life Experiences

The expectations of these parents were largely derived from their life experiences. It was clear that their past encounters, especially their childhood experiences with their own parents, had significantly influenced the expectations they held for their children.

With intimate knowledge about the importance of education, these highly educated parents wanted their children to obtain a quality education and to reap the benefits. Mrs. Hua, who had only a secondary education in China, held high educational expectations because of the discriminatory attitudes she had experienced in Chinese society.

> You know what happened in my generation. I was sent to the country to be re-educated during the Cultural Revolution, so I did not learn too much knowledge. I felt that I was discriminated against in Chinese society because I was not well educated. That's why I expect my children to get a university education, to live a better life. I want them to get good grades in school. I was not educated and was not very capable. I always tell them that they should not be like their mom. They should strive to achieve the best they can to ensure a good future. I repeat and repeat the same thing every day. (Mrs. Hua)

Mrs. Lin reflected that the high expectations the parents experienced in their childhood not only contributed to their own success, but also flowed to the next generation, leading them to set high expectations for their only child.

> The source of our expectations is deeply embedded in our family roots and our life experiences. We grew up with high parental expectations. Our own parents were very demanding when we were children. . . . To describe it with the word we frequently use today, I would say that their expectations were a pressure, but this pressure was effective and useful. Maybe the word "pressure" is not good anymore, but at that time it was positive for us. This pressure is what we Chinese refer as the driving force [*dong li*]. Therefore, our expectations for our son are the same as our parents held for us. Looking back at the journey we went through, from China to Canada, I should say that we did very well in the past. What we have achieved in our life could not have been done without our parents' expectations. . . . Because my husband has surpassed the expectations of his own parents, naturally he holds high expectations for his son. (Mrs. Lin)

In contrast, Mr. Fang grew up in China without high parental expectations. Everything he had achieved in life went beyond the imagination of his parents and surpassed his own self-expectations. Mr. Fang learned from his life experiences that it was impossible to plan a future; therefore, he preferred not to hold specific expectations for his daughter.

We cannot predict what she will do in the future. For my parents, they could not tell what I would be doing today. Myself, when I was a kid, I never knew what I would be doing now. . . . I never thought that one day I would come to Canada. When I came to Canada, I never thought that I would work for Nortel. Therefore, I believe what will happen in the future is not the same as you wished. See, I even cannot foresee the future for myself, how can I expect something for the next generation? . . . Because I have this kind of experience, I hold a similar attitude for my daughter's future. (Mr. Fang)

Instead of being specific, the Fang family held general expectations. While maintaining a basic requirement for a university education, they stressed that the most important thing was to help their daughter improve current performances to "build a solid ground" so that she would become a well-educated, independent, and responsible adult.

Acculturative Attitudes

With an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of Chinese and Canadian culture, the parents held varying acculturative attitudes. Favouring a cultural integration, Mr. Chen pointed out that Eastern and Western cultures could learn from each other to create an ideal education.

In Chinese culture, we stress that a certain amount of pressure is necessary for children's success, while Western people value children's natural development. In fact, I think both cultural and educational systems have their own problems. That's why there is a tendency to combine two cultures. For example, in China, the government is trying to reduce student homework; in Canada, there is a trend to increase student workload. Hopefully, it is going towards the right direction. The weakness of Eastern education is that students do not get hands-on experiences because it focuses on classroom teaching and exam writing. While Western culture emphasizes how to express oneself. I think it has something to do with history. In Chinese history, you do not need to say things but you have to show what you have done. In Western culture, people evaluate you by what you said more than by what you did. That's why they try as hard as they can to express themselves. (Mr. Chen)

In terms of education and parenting, the majority of the parents maintained Chinese standards. Mrs. Lin stressed that the demanding nature of Chinese parenting could ultimately produce positive outcomes.

One of the advantages in Chinese culture is that parents are very demanding. We believe that accomplishment is a result of tough discipline and hard work. We always tell our son, if he did not study hard, he would not have become a top student. Our demands, including the extra homework we assigned to him, are crucial for his school success. If we parent him like Western people, let him develop naturally, we won't get ideal results. (Mrs. Lin)

Mrs. Chen expressed a favourable attitude towards Chinese education:

"You know why could Chinese students excel in Canadian schools? It must have something to do with Eastern education. Chinese culture and education is good for children, and we are used to it, so we should parent our child in a Chinese way." She pointed out that some Canadian parents adopt "a let-things-drift attitude" (*fang ren zi liou*), and do not provide enough guidance for their children. She was particularly dissatisfied with weaker intellectual challenges in Canadian schools.

For me, I think that elementary and secondary school education in China is better than that of Canada. You know, children go to school to learn something, but sometimes the school system in Canada does not provide sufficient services. . . . As a teenage boy, he is curious and eager to learn many things, but the school system here cannot provide what he wants. (Mrs. Chen)

In contrast, Mrs. Fang was concerned about the Chinese academic inclination because it failed to nurture children's multiple intelligences and mental health. "In China, some schools label students by their grades. It has a great impact on those students who do not do well in school. It may damage their confidence for life long." The Qin family pointed out that the strict academic training in China did help children develop good study habits; however, it directed them only towards an academic journey, regardless of their own interests, talents, and abilities. With an appreciation of the inclusive and open education in North America, Mrs. Qin told an art exhibition story to illustrate this openness.

My daughter is not good at painting. From kindergarten to elementary school in China, whenever the school exhibited student artwork, my daughter's painting would not be chosen. We went to see the exhibition, always only two or three students' paintings were presented on the wall because those were evaluated as excellent products. The work of other students was not chosen. For our daughter, her painting would not be selected even if half of the paintings of her class were presented. She was weak at it. Usually she painted poorly. Her painting was never chosen for presentation. After we arrived in the States, she invited us to the school lobby in the first week. To our surprise, one of her paintings was presented on the wall! It was not because she painted better after coming to the States, but because all the paintings were exhibited [laughs]. In this way, my daughter became very proud of herself. Everything she did, she could show it to other people. She did not feel embarrassed about her poor painting. She felt that her work was appreciated by others. . . . Uh, I think it's bad that in China they only showed good ones. (Mrs. Qin)

Career Aspirations

The parents held specific career aspirations for their children. They pointed out that minority immigrants must align their career aspirations to the

demands of the Canadian labour market and their visible minority status. To avoid competing with mainstream society, all seven families encouraged their children to excel in science subjects so as to take up professions in engineering and other technical fields. They generally discouraged their children from pursuing careers in arts, politics, or law.

Mrs. Yu learned important lessons from her own job-searching experiences in Canada: "As a minority member, your choice of specialization is crucial for your future employment." In her mind, a good career meant a well-paid, high-tech job. Considering possible financial strain, she firmly objected to her daughter pursuing a career in the arts. She also discouraged her from studying law because of anticipated racial discrimination.

> I do not support my daughter to become a lawyer. In Canada, although multiculturalism is written into the government policy, you can feel racial discrimination everyday, everywhere. It's very common. Minority groups, especially visible minority groups are in a very disadvantaged situation.... I advise my daughter not to choose lawyer as a career because a lawyer represents justice, but how can you argue with the dominant society if they believe that the "truth" is on the side of the white majority, not on the side of visible minority? It will be very difficult for my daughter to pursue such a career. If she wants to become a doctor or a computer expert, that will be easier. (Mrs. Yu)

Mr. Hua stood firm that he had a significant influence on his son's interest in science and his career choice in computer engineering. He mentioned that his son aspired to become a medical doctor in his junior-high years, but Mr. Hua discouraged this ambition because he was concerned that pursuing a medical profession would be too long and unstable. He believed that his daily directives had instilled in his children a strong awareness of their minority disadvantages. He illustrated intangible racial preference in the Canadian job market.

> As a minority group, we are in a disadvantaged situation. I often tell them that if all candidates are on the same level, for sure the employer will choose blue-eyes first. The opportunity won't be given to them. To deal with this, they should be better, no, much better than the whites, then the employer may consider choosing them instead of blue eyes. My children knew this since they were very young. (Mr. Hua)

Mrs. Qin, a pediatrician in China, was not able to practise her career in Canada, even though her daughter dreamed of becoming a medical doctor. The parents had worries because they knew that she would have to commit to lengthy training and study, and also to compete with the mainstream. However, they did not thwart her career ambition; instead, they considered alternative options in case she failed in her pursuit. Mrs. Qin explained:

She can start from medical science. If she fails, she can always switch to a relevant field, such as biology or pharmacology. If all of these fail, she can go to study engineering even around the age of thirty.

Minority Ideology

Confronting an unexpected new reality that was far from their original rosy dreams, these families had to make a painful adjustment in Canada. The disadvantaged status of new minority immigrants deeply disturbed Mr. Wang.

I have lived in Canada for several years now. I feel that, as first generation immigrants, we have a big tragedy. We are highly intelligent with excellent professional and technical skills as well as good manual abilities. However, due to our cultural background and language barriers, we are placed in a very disadvantaged situation. We can only show our strength in high-tech fields. It's very sad that most Chinese immigrants have to work in high-tech companies. Given our intelligence and ability, we can run or manage a company instead of only working as technicians. (Mr. Wang)

To cope with minority disadvantages, the parents resoundingly asserted that their children needed to be better and stronger than the white majority. Mrs. Wang constantly reminded her son of the potential racial discrimination he would encounter in Canadian society. She stressed that he must be fully prepared for this reality.

I told him that he should prepare himself and know how to deal with discrimination. . . . In mainstream society, sometimes even though he is excellent, the good position may not be offered to him. He should remember that there always exists racial discrimination. If he wants to get respected, he should do a remarkable job so other people won't put him down. . . . The first important thing is that he should be strong and good enough to earn the respect of others. One of our expectations is that wherever he goes, he should always remember that he is Chinese and is not inferior to anybody. He should be physically, psychologically, and intellectually strong enough so nobody can bully him and put him down. There exists racial discrimination here and there, now and then, he should prepare himself and know how to deal with it. (Mrs. Wang)

According to the Chen family, their expectations were essentially shaped by their visible minority status. Mr. Chen maintained that, to create a chance for success, minority members must do better than the white majority.

As a visible minority in Canada, only if we do our best can we compete with mainstream people. I mean we can never stand at the same level with those Western people. Only if we are better than them can we be treated as the same class and at the same level. So as

a minority student, my son should not act like those white students, playing and enjoying every day. They can do whatever they want in the future but he does not have the same privilege as they do. If he does things like the whites, in the future, even though he achieves at the same level, he won't get the same benefit as they do because there are some other factors involved. That's why he needs to compensate this disadvantage with other means. The easiest way is through education. If his educational level is higher than them, for sure he will be able to compete with them. It is this consciousness that motivates Chinese parents to hold high educational expectations. (Mr. Chen)

Mr. Hua equated the status of visible minority immigrants to that of women's situation in Canadian society. He pointed out that the awareness of minority disadvantage drove immigrant Chinese students to work harder.

The Chinese immigrants seldom get into a director's position, no matter how excellent they are. They call it a glass ceiling. It is almost like women's situation. Women have much less chance to get promoted. . . . As immigrants, Chinese children know that they should hold higher standards for themselves and do better than white Canadians. You ask immigrant Chinese students if they behave like the whites, can they get the same benefits as they do? Nobody will answer yes. They know there is a race issue here. They know that they must be better than the whites, no, should be much better than them in order to get priority to be selected. All Chinese students know this fact. . . . My directives play an important role in my son's academic success. He knows that as immigrants, we need to be better than the whites to be treated the same way. (Mr. Hua)

Mrs. Lin also asserted that their son must understand that, as a minority member, it is both important and necessary to surpass others.

We are visible minorities, and we look different from the majority. We want our son to do better than others so as to earn their respect. Otherwise, nobody will respect and value us. We need to show our abilities so other people will look up to us. As a minority group in a foreign land, we do not have advantages as those native-born Canadians have. For example, the same position, maybe a white person can get it with 8, but we need to get it with 10. Therefore, we must devote ourselves to do better. We always talk with him about this issue, seriously. . . . He understands us and knows that he must try harder than others. (Mrs. Lin)

DISCUSSION

The convergence and divergence of the accounts of the participants have touched many aspects of their lives in China and Canada. Their expectations reflected their deeply ingrained cultural values, their desire for a better life, their striving for excellence, and their struggle to adjust to their visible minority status. As new immigrants, they had to live daily

amid the clash of two cultures, which presented new challenges to what they had cherished. Tension, or a coexistence of contradictory views and feelings, permeates the narratives of the parents, such as determination and hesitation, expectations and apprehensions, and dreams and worries. In accordance with the arguments of Kim and Chun (1994) and Sue and Okazuki (1990), the findings of this study suggest that indigenous Chinese cultural values and acculturative struggles have co-contributed to the expectations of these Chinese immigrant parents for the educational achievements of their children.

The parents all saw high educational expectations as a cultural phenomenon and the essence of Confucian philosophy. With this cultural pride, they frequently referred to classical Confucian tenets to justify their parenting beliefs and practice. Consistent with previous research literature (Chao, 1996; Chen & Uttal, 1988; Schneider & Lee 1990), this study has affirmed the power of Chinese cultural expectations. High Chinese parental expectations and children's striving for excellence are not only individually and psychologically driven, but largely a collective function of their family, community, and society at large.

Chinese cultural expectations hold both the authority of tradition and hope for the future. In a context where everyone respects education, Chinese parents regard achievement as a family honour, and view success as a source of happiness. As Mrs. Hua experienced, people in Chinese society are judged by their educational backgrounds. High achievers are valued for their excellence, and poor performers are discriminated against for their incapacity. Although Chinese cultural expectations exert pressure on children, Mr. Chen and Mrs. Lin insisted that this pressure is necessary and positive because it produces desired outcomes. This cultural pressure has served as the driving force behind high parental expectations, passionate parental support, and demanding parenting practices. Except for the Qin and Fang families, who were relatively open to alternative options, the other five families seemed to more or less push their children towards their expected path.

Mr. Hua attributed the shared parent-child expectations in Chinese culture to *xiao,* a Confucian construct that Chinese people have practised for centuries. *Xiao* requires that children should unconditionally bring reward and honour to their parents. In this cultural climate, Chinese children generally study with a sense of duty, a sense of shame, and a desire for parental approval. The power of parental expectations in Chinese culture cannot be understood without taking their tradition and history into consideration because a certain parent-child consensus needs no justification in that context, and, too often, this tacit agreement appears

incomprehensible to outsiders.

Parental expectations were also derived from and shaped by personal life experience, as featured in the stories told by the Lin and Fang families. Because of the high expectations they experienced in their own childhood, and the benefit and prestige they enjoyed in their adult life, the Lin family maintained high standards for their son's school performance. The Fang family, in contrast, insisted that they should not plan a future for their daughter because their own achievement had little to do with their own parents' expectations. Despite the pressure of cultural expectation, different life experiences can lead to different parenting philosophies and beliefs, and ultimately to different parenting practices. Because the parents tend to parent their children the way they were parented, the formation of Chinese parental expectations can be understood only in respect to its complexity and dynamics.

Parental expectations were significantly shaped by their immigration experiences and acculturative attitudes. While concurrently transiting two cultures that are distinctively different from each other in multiple ways, different families held different acculturative attitudes based on their views of Chinese and Western culture. In general, the parents took pride in their Chinese heritage, especially the value it places on education, but disliked the constraints of its academic inclination. They appreciated Western openness, yet were concerned about its limitless freedom and weak intellectual challenge. Although these new Chinese immigrants were making an effort to adjust to the challenge of acculturation, they retained a strong Chinese identity. For instance, Mrs. Chen espoused Chinese education and insisted that she should parent her son in a Chinese way. Mrs. Qin favoured Western openness; however, her mind was essentially conditioned by conventional Chinese thinking because she believed that her daughter's artwork was poor. In reality, she perceived her daughter's artwork as poor not because her daughter painted poorly, but because Chinese culture imposed an adult-centred standard on children's work.

Based on their minority experiences and perceived racism in Canada, the parents held specific career aspirations; that is, their children should specialize in science and technological fields. Their accounts lend support to Chun's (1995) argument that the limited occupational aspirations of Asian immigrants are not necessarily motivated by their personal interests and preferences but by their disadvantaged, visible minority status. Mrs. Yu's objection to her daughter studying law, and Mr. Hua's "blue eye" priority, have well illustrated their awareness of this race-based inequality in Canadian society in general, and the Canadian labour market in particular. The stories told by these families affirmed Li's (1998) assertion

that race is still of significance in the Canadian employment sector. As he reported, in certain occupations such as management, academia, and administration, the Chinese are under-represented. The lack of role models in these fields has greatly limited the career aspirations of these new Chinese immigrant parents and will continue to condition their participation in the social, cultural, and economic life of Canada.

To date, Canada has made much progress towards an open, inclusive society; however, as the narratives of these parents have revealed, it is naïve to assume that once the Constitution outlawed racism, it would disappear from everyday life. New forms of racism are expressed and implemented in subtle and covert ways. They might appear to be invisible in Canadian society, but are evident to minority groups. Given inveterate racial prejudice and discrimination in Canadian history, and the denial of racism in the present day, to achieve true multiculturalism is by no means an easy task. The worries and fears the parents expressed send a clear message that ethnicity is a factor they have to consider when making career choices and life decisions for their children. Their unique minority ideology is a product of perceived institutional racism, a pattern emerged from social practice and exercise of power.

Although realizing that not everybody is an equal participant in Canadian society, the parents viewed education as a weapon against racism, and regarded a science-related career as a means of obtaining upward mobility. They encouraged their children to be better prepared, and guided their children towards certain paths to earn respect, to maximize the chance of success, and to minimize damaging outcomes. Perceived life disadvantages associated with their visible minority status have not only reformulated their identity, produced a minority mentality, but also reshaped their educational expectations and career aspirations.

Given their educational and professional qualifications, it is not surprising that these immigrant parents wanted their children to secure a good life through education. As previous research has suggested (Alexander, Entwisle, & Bedinger, 1994), social class can be a factor that leads to high parental expectations in these Chinese immigrant families. Future studies need to recruit participants from various educational and occupational backgrounds to obtain a fuller picture of the immigrant Chinese experience.

CONCLUSION

From this study, I have come to better understand the Chinese perspective on success in Canada. Obviously, the expectations of these Chinese parents

played a significant role in their children's school achievement. Notwithstanding their different acculturative attitudes, the parents generally attributed their expectations to Chinese cultural values and their visible minority status in Canada. Although the high educational expectations of these parents were rooted in their cultural beliefs and shaped by their life experiences, their career aspirations and minority ideology were directly related to the disparity between their dreams of success and the constraint of minority disadvantages in Canadian society.

No culture is static. In accordance with research literature, this study has demonstrated that the expectations of these Chinese immigrant parents are significantly shaped by the dynamic and complex interplay of indigenous Chinese cultural expectations and the challenges of acculturation. In other words, high parental expectations are rooted in Chinese cultural heritage and are situationally motivated and historically transformed in different ways in response to the demands of the Canadian socio-cultural context.

Too often, people tend to "mistake their own experiences for the experiences of others" (Denzin, 2001, p. 3). A mainstream understanding, therefore, can be a far cry from minority experiences. By giving voice to this fast-growing and largest visible minority group in Canada, I have addressed the gap for this under-researched population. Beccause any phenomenon can only be contextually meaningful, more research initiatives on visible minority groups are needed to raise their voices, to help the mainstream learn about them and from them. Given the changing racial and cultural composition in Canadian society, policy makers, researchers, and educators need to make a concerted and sustained effort to ensure that our educational system serves as an important vehicle to provide equal opportunities for students of all backgrounds, to help them contribute to, and benefit from, a plural, open, and progressive society.

NOTES

1 For a complete report of the study, see Li (2002).

2 I have assigned pseudonyms to all participants to ensure their anonymity.

3 The classical Chinese phrases the parents used are in brackets.

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On-line Learning: Secondary Students' First Experience

Scott Tunison

Brian Noonan

The development of on-line schooling may significantly affect the lives of both students and teachers. This study, conducted in a Canadian on-line secondary school, showed that students were generally satisfied with their first on-line learning experience, although they noted some serious deficiencies such as lack of training for the on-line class and ineffective use of key communication tools. We noted a contradiction between students' appreciation of the flexibility and autonomy afforded them in the on-line environment and their struggle to manage that autonomy effectively.

Un type de restructuration scolaire qui pourrait avoir un impact important sur la vie des élèves et des enseignants est le développement d'écoles en ligne. L'étude, qui a porté sur une école secondaire canadienne en ligne, révèle que les élèves étaient en règle générale satisfaits de leur expérience d'apprentissage en ligne bien qu'ils fassent état de graves lacunes, comme le manque de formation pour les cours en ligne et l'utilisation inefficace d'outils de communication clés. Les auteurs notent une contradiction entre le fait que les élèves aiment la latitude et l'autonomie que leur donne l'apprentissage en ligne et leur difficulté de gérer efficacement leur autonomie.

Much of the hype in educational literature argues that educators are not current in their thinking. Such critics advocate a wholesale restructuring of education to reflect contemporary economic and social conditions. Much of this literature suggests that schools transmit short-term knowledge in an environment that encourages and, perhaps, requires students to be passive and uncritical recipients: a stance that does not fit with changing cultural and societal realities. Gardner (2000), for example, observed, "A human being miraculously transported from 1900 to our time would recognise much of what goes on in today's classroom – the prevalent lecturing, the emphasis on drill, the decontextualised materials and activities" (p. 30). At the heart of these arguments is the notion that current and future Information Age employment opportunities require students

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to become not only active participants in their own learning in school but also active life-long learners. Teachers apparently have shirked their duties by not developing these abilities in their students.

We do not share this view of education: teachers are providing students with excellent educational experiences, often under difficult circumstances. In this article, we present our recent research in an on-line or virtual school. Lankshear, Peters, and Noble (2001) suggested that the development of virtual schools may have a significant impact on the lives of both students and teachers because they are a form of school improvement and innovation that confronts many of the short-comings of education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A virtual school provides educational opportunities for students via the Internet. Tuttle (1998) viewed the virtual school as "one of a new breed of schools that uses email, online chats, internet resources, and archived resources to teach courses. No classrooms. No lectures. No surprise quizzes. No buses. No buildings" (p. 46). Johnson and Mitchell (2000) have extended this vision with their observation that "in a virtual school . . . the classroom is always open . . . the opportunity to learn is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week" (p. 52). Rutkowsk (1999) hyas defined virtual schools:

> Places of learning that do not have a geographic building, [in other words] they serve the educational needs and interests of a geographically dispersed rather than geographically determined community of learners . . . using primarily broadcast or networking technologies, or a combination thereof. (p. 74)

Joinson and Buchanan (2001) theorized that the Internet, and consequently the virtual school or cyberschool, may be just the environment to develop in students the skills and attitudes that other writers describe as necessary in contemporary society.

> There is the possibility that the Internet does not simply enhance students' learning, but it might introduce new ways of learning [as well]. For example, Internet technology in learning will change the traditional balance of students' educational experience, with less emphasis (and time) on reading, and more on practicing and doing. (p. 238)

Reyna, Brainerd, Effken, Bootzin, and Lloyd (2001) point to new complexities that occur with virtual schools: "an obvious common-sense hypothesis is that with [Internet-based] technology, factors such as learners' computer skills, availability of computers for learners' use, and learners' access to the Internet, the Web, e-mail, and related resources will be

predictors of learning outcomes" (p. 30). Although these assertions are interesting, they have not been widely examined and they add considerable fuel to the confusion in the professional literature.

The virtual school may have a great deal of potential to meet the needs of students in the global context. Diversity, flexibility, anonymity (race, colour, and physical impediments become non-issues or, at least, lesser issues), and other aspects of the Internet make it possible for school systems to provide relevant education using current technologies. However, questions arise. To what extent are these possibilities realized in current virtual school initiatives? What structures of the virtual school make learning on-line appealing to students? Who are these students in virtual schools and why do they enroll?

PURPOSE

In this study, we examined the experiences of early on-line learners (EOLLs) in their first on-line high-school class to explore their perceptions of program delivery and effectiveness. For the purposes of this study, EOLLs were those students who were enrolled in Web-based courses for the first time.

The following research questions guided this study:

- What were the demographic characteristics of the EOLLs enrolled in a virtual high school?
- What did EOLLs perceive to be the benefits and challenges of learning in a virtual school setting?

METHOD

We collected data for this study at the end of the second term (May–June) of the second full year of operation (2002) of Central Cyberschool (CC),[1] a virtual high school in a mid-sized Canadian city. Embedded within a conventional school system, CC had been created primarily as an alternative learning environment for the students of Great Canadian School Division (GCSD), its host school system. At the time of study, CC provided academic courses to 126 individual students via the Internet (school enrolment was listed at 142; however, 16 students were enroled in more than one course). The specific courses offered at the time of study were grade-9 mathematics, grade-10 information processing, grades-11 and -12 chemistry and physics, and two separate grade-12 English language arts courses.

The majority of the students enrolled in CC lived in the school district;

all were part-time on-line students. Approximately 85% of these students were taking one or two on-line courses as well as courses at one of the traditional high schools operated by GCSD. Approximately 10% of the students were recent high-school graduates who were either repeating courses to improve their grades or taking an additional course to fulfill post-secondary entrance requirements. The remaining 5% were either foreign students living in Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates, El Salvador, or Hawaii, or rural students living in one of several communities in CC's home province.

The teaching staff at CC worked on-line part-time. In addition to teaching on-line, each teacher taught conventional classes in one of GCSD's high schools. The division's administration had recruited teachers for this project because of their expertise with the particular courses they were teaching rather than for their facility with technology. In fact, some of the teachers had never used the Internet when they began to work on their courses. Nevertheless, because GCSD favoured a course development model in which teachers developed empathy for students' frustrations as they worked on-line, each teacher was required to develop both the content and the technological aspects of his course (all were males).

Sample/Instrument

In this study, we made secondary use of data collected by the school as part of its on-going quality control program. In its Tri-Council guidelines for ethical research involving humans, the Government of Canada (1998) indicates that secondary use of data refers to "the use in research of data contained in records collected for a purpose other than the research itself" (p. 3.4). In this case, CC's staff gathered data using an on-line exit survey as part of its ongoing quality control program. However, this survey was developed in consultation with us, as researchers. The school administered this survey via its WebCT course platform. It consisted of 14 items – 9 defined response items and 5 open-ended questions (a copy of the survey is included in the appendix). With the approval of the school system and the university's research ethics board, the school administrator forwarded the raw data from the exit-survey to us with all identifying information removed to ensure students' anonymity.

The response rate for this study was rather low, perhaps a function of the timing for data collection (semester end). Fifty (40 %) of the 126 potential respondents completed the survey. The sample consisted of 30 females and 20 males of whom 47 were enroled in a single course and three were enrolled in two courses. We used two main methods to analyze the data:

descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and cross-tabulation, for the defined-response items using SPSS; and content analysis of the open-ended questions.

RESULTS

Student Characteristics

A breakdown of respondents by course included: 25 (50%) students enroled in grade-9 math, 11 students in information processing, 1 student in chemistry, 6 students in physics, and 7 students in English language arts. Nearly all the grade-9 math students (92%) were grade-8 students taking the course a year early. This fact could be seen in at least two ways. On one hand, GCSD may have been forward-looking and progressive because it provided students with an opportunity to enrich their educational programs by accelerating their study of math. On the other hand, it may have been short-sighted because it created a course that appealed primarily to students other than those for whom the course had been originally designed. A determination of the actual intentions of GCSD for the creation of grade-9 math would require more study; however, the creation of this course did have implications for both the teacher and for GCSD.

Because many of these students were in grade 8, at least in comparison to students attending conventional schools in the same school system, theywere younger than the originally intended participants in the course. Thus, some of the assumptions that the teacher made about the potential students of the course as it was being developed — such as maturity level, experience of particular teaching strategies, and integration of relevant material from other grade-9 courses — were erroneous. These assumptions led to student frustration with their on-line tasks and, in some cases, to low success levels because the course required an independence that was common at the grade-9 level but was relatively unfamiliar to the students in grade 8. In addition, the course assumed a facility with computers that many of the students did not have. Further, since CC did not offer grade-10 math on-line, these accelerated students would not have an appropriate math course available to them in their conventional schools next year because of timetable restrictions and local school expectations. In other words, because GCSD did not allow timetable flexibility for its grade-9 students, these students may have to take their grade-9 math course again, this time in a conventional classroom.[2]

CC required all students enroled in on-line courses to complete an on-line preparation course on the technical aspects of using WebCT. As well, the preparation introduced students to the social aspects of their courses by requiring them to use the various communication tools available to them. Although students were not asked to evaluate the usefulness or quality of specific aspects of the preparation course, they were asked about the overall usefulness of this course in helping them to cope with their on-line learning experiences in this school. In response to this question, 16 students (32%) found the preparation course either somewhat useful or very useful and 14 students (28%) saw the preparation course as not very useful or a waste of time. The remaining 19 students (38%) were neutral about the usefulness of the preparation course.

A thorough evaluation of the preparation course in this school was beyond the scope of this study; however, because all students enrolled in this on-line school were EOLLs, one would reasonably expect that they would find a training course of some sort quite useful. Because only 32% of the students saw the training program as being at least somewhat useful, the preparation program did not appear to meet the needs of EOLLs.

Finally, students were asked to identify the reasons that they had chosen to pursue on-line learning. The survey allowed for choices including:

- for convenience/for the flexible schedule,
- to get an extra class (in addition to a full load of classes at their home school),
- to boost marks for post-secondary entrance (upgrade class),
- to take a course not available in their home school,
- to avoid conflicts with teachers at the home school,
- because they like working with computers, and
- other reasons.

The most popular response was the "other" category. While they were not asked to elaborate with respect to their choice of "other," most students who chose this option were the grade-8 students, taking the course to accelerate their educational programs. Ten students took the on-line course as an extra course in addition to a full academic load at their home school. Seven took the course because they liked working with computers; another seven said that they appreciated the convenience afforded them as on-line learners.

Communication Tools

The communication tools, e-mail, bulletin board, and a chat room received mixed reviews. Most students saw them as important, but many felt that using them was more of a necessary evil than a priority as they completed their course work.

E-mail. A majority of CC's students identified e-mail as the most useful tool, viewing it as a bridge between the conventional school in which they had personal, face-to-face contact with a teacher and a virtual school with little or no personal, face-to-face contact. Students typically stated that they used e-mail to talk to their teacher. One student wrote, "The communication tool that was of most use to me was e-mail; it was very helpful in getting questions to [the teacher]." Another stated, "Only the e-mail to the teacher was helpful [the other communication tools were not]."

The primary use of e-mail was more pragmatic than simply talking to the teacher. Rather, these students saw e-mail as a way to address questions and problems in a direct way, for example to prompt their teachers for answers that allowed them to complete their work. These comments were representative of the students' views:

> I found the e-mail the most convenient because that was my easiest way to contact my teacher about any problems I was having. (grade-12 student)

> E-mail: used lots, helpful to talk to teacher directly. (grade-10 student)

> I used the e-mail every now and then to get help with an assignment that I was having trouble with. (grade-12 student)

Students valued e-mail for other reasons. They felt that e-mail provided a private means of communication between them and their teachers. As one student commented, "When it comes to questions, private e-mail was my most helpful resource." Students also saw e-mail as a useful means to communicate with other students: "I found the e-mail section the most beneficial to me, because I knew some of the other people in the class and was able to ask them questions." A few students saw e-mail as a means for meeting people who might become new friends, as this comment illustrates: "I used e-mail to find out who they were and what they were like, then I switched to ICQ's [Internet chat rooms] with those I felt I could get along with and could talk to in real time instead of always having to check my e-mail!"

Bulletin board. In contrast to their use of e-mail, students saw the bulletin board more as a means of socialization than as a means of getting information or having questions answered. For students, the bulletin board was fun to use; through it, they got to know each other.

> It was really nice because you could really get to know all of the other students really well — it was a nice break from doing math. (grade-8 student)

> [I liked] the bulletin board because everyone talks and you get to know people and ask them questions. (grade-8 student)

> The bulletin board was the funnest of the communications tools because you got to talk with other cyberschool people about anything. (grade-8 student)

The bulletin board also provided students with a way to help each other. Although they identified e-mail as the primary means of communication with the teacher, they saw the bulletin board as their domain.

> I used the bulletin board to talk with the other students and answer the discussion questions. (grade-11 student)

> [The bulletin board] helped me get quick answers for the questions I had. (grade-8 student)

> I found the discussion posting rather helpful and fun to read and use. (grade 8 student)

The use of the bulletin board had an interesting effect on the attitude of the students. It became an empowering activity that gave them a new role in their class: a teacher. "The bulletin board helped cler [clear] a lot of things up along with letting me help others with problems we all had."

Chat room. The students frequently suggested that the chat room was an interesting possibility that did not live up to its potential. Most students said that they rarely used the chat room unless they planned in advance to meet there. However, many believed that an active chat room would be a positive addition to their cyberschool experience. One student's response was particularly poignant: "I never got to use the chat rooms, I wish I could have but no one was ever in there when I went in!" EOLLs believed that the chat room would fulfill an important need but that it would probably take teacher intervention to guarantee its effective use.

General comments. In summary, students were satisfied with the level of communication in CC. In fact, one student stated that the communication tools were the best thing about being an EOLL and another stated that the tools were the *only* good thing about being an EOLL. Some students found

the sheer volume of communications overwhelming. One student commented, "For the first little while, I did use the communication tools a lot, as they are very useful. However, after a while there were so many discussion board entries that I didn't have time to read them all." Others felt that regular communication using these tools was not only too much bother but also overwhelming. For example, one student stated, "Yes, I found these tools useful to get in touch with your classmates but that [was] about all, I kept written notes in a binder for this course and didn't even bother after a while to type them into my journal."

Many students observed that, while they recognized the value of the communication tools and of communication in an on-line course, they did not choose to use them much. In fact, many students stated that, upon reflection, they should have made an effort to communicate more with each other and that perhaps they had missed something in choosing not to get involved.

THE VALUE OF ON-LINE COURSES

Participants in this study as EOLLs answered five open-ended questions to comment on the value of various aspects of CC's on-line courses.

- To what extent did you use the communication tools in this course? Which ones (e-mail, bulletin board, chat room, etc.) did you find the most useful/helpful? Why?
- What are the positives/benefits of taking a cyberschool course?
- What are the barriers/challenges of taking a cyberschool course?
- What did you like the most about your cyberschool experience? Why?
- What did you like least about your cyberschool experiences? Why?

Benefits of On-Line Learning

In general, students believed that there were a large number of benefits to being an EOLL.

Autonomy/freedom. The most common student response to the question of benefits of a virtual school course was their appreciation of the autonomy and freedom. Although most students identified the teacher as the ultimate source of information, many students enjoyed the opportunity to work on their own and to figure out things for themselves without having to wait for their teacher to tell them what to do. A grade-8 student wrote, "You can challenge yourself, and get a real taste of what high school is going to be like . . . you can see how well you can do without a teacher to always turn to." Another student put a slightly different spin

on this theme: "You don't get into trouble for doing nothing, you don't have to long [log] on every day." These students felt empowered and in control of their own learning and they appreciated the opportunity to make decisions about when, where, and for how long they worked on their cyberschool tasks. This student statement encapsulates this sub-theme. "I got to choose when I wanted to do parts of the course, like if I was sick I could leave or come back and do more later. I could also do more at a time instead of having to quit when the bell rings. I didn't feel as rushed."

Work ahead. A more pragmatic sub-theme also emerged from students' responses: students were happy to get a class out of the way. Many of the grade-8 students, in particular, stated that the cyberschool allowed them to finish their math class ahead of their traditional school classmates. At the same time, they believed that it opened up their high school schedules because they completed a compulsory grade-nine course while they were still in elementary school. This was an efficacy issue as well. These students indicated that they felt more mature.

Several students raised a similar pragmatic issue: they appreciated being able to work ahead and not wait for other students in the class. The following comment illustrates the general theme that students raised: "Personally, I think the advantages of it are that you get to work at your own pace. You don't have people [who don't understand it] in your class slowing you down either. It also helps your independent learning skills."

Flexibility. Flexibility in a variety of forms was also an often-identified positive of the on-line school. Students were able to work at home, to get extra credits that did not fit into the regular school day, and/or to take a course that was not offered at their home school, particularly for the grade-8 students.

> You can get ahead in math and have a flexible schedule so you can work at home. (grade-8 student)

> I like being able to have a flexible schedule. I took my grade-nine math and grade-ten information processing in cyberschool [in grade 8]. That will allow me to take grade-10 math next year and have openings in my timetable to take classes in high school that I wouldn't be able to take otherwise. (grade-8 student)

> I think that by taking the cyber-courses we can free up extra credits in the future of our high school lives. By doing this we have more leeway on extra credits, time, etc. (grade-8 student)

Development of new skills. Many students also identified learning and developing new skills as a key benefit to taking an on-line course. They

related some of the new skills to technology. Comments such as "I get to use computers in ways I never knew" were common.

Several students believed that they had learned to be independent learners because of their on-line school experiences. One student wrote that he "could see how well [he] could do without a teacher to always turn to." Another said, "You get taught lessons, such as organizing your time that you wouldn't receive at an in-school class." Finally, a grade-12 student observed, "Cyberschool was good practice for university for independent work and practice going out of your way to get help."

Interpersonal issues. The last of the sub-themes to emerge from students' responses about benefits was related to interpersonal issues. Students reported that they felt more confident about their abilities to learn material while working together. One student observed that she had more sources for help on-line than in her conventional classroom. Many grade-8 students observed that cyberschool provided them with an opportunity to meet people. Two students felt that cyberschool was the answer to many of the interpersonal problems that they experienced in regular schools. For example, one said that she was too shy to interact with the other students in face-to-face situations, but she felt that she could contribute on-line. Another student, one who had already graduated but was taking the course again to improve his mark, stated that because he did not see teachers and other students face-to-face, he was able to stay out of trouble and finish his courses.

> You don't get IN TROBBLE [trouble] for just sitting in class doing nothing! Oh yea, the last thing is I get to graduate without having to sit in a Grade-10 class and feel like an idiot ... I never got bored or lost in the class for I could skip to other parts and do them then come back and do what I felt I should do. . . . There was no leaving it to the last minute (like I did in regular school) for you could see all that had to be done from the start and when you were finished you were actually done. (grade-10 student)

Concerns with On-Line Learning

Many students stated that, in some ways, the benefits associated with taking part in an on-line school, such as freedom and autonomy, were also barriers to their success.

Time-management. Although students saw working at their own pace as a benefit of the on-line school, they struggled with procrastination because their teachers did not set deadlines for their cyberschool projects, making it easy to put them off. Older students in particular mentioned this problem. A grade-12 student's statement illustrates this opinion: "[It

was hard] having to make yourself work after a hard day of school! [I don't have the] motivation to do the work."

Technology. The technology issues followed two main themes: hardware problems with the school's server and Internet bandwidth issues that prevented students from uploading their assignment files easily. One student also stated that he preferred the drop box method to e-mail attachments for submitting assignments.

> I found that attaching files to e-mail was a set back. I liked the drop box option that was offered in the other 3 classes I have taken better. By having the drop box, I was able to upload parts of assignments and have them already there on the server, rather than uploading all at once. [It allowed me] to access my work from anywhere, instead of just my own computer. (grade-12 student)

Autonomy. Although acknowledging the value of learning at their own pace, students missed the instant feedback typical in face-to-face classrooms. Some students stated that they were impressed with the speed of their cyberschool teachers' responses to questions; however, they still preferred the opportunity to go to the front of the class to get instant feedback when they had a question. Other students, particularly the older ones, found that the teachers' physical presence in a conventional class played an important role to motivate them to finish their school work. Because cyberschool provided no such presence, they when no one told them to do so. One grade-12 student said, "The main challenge of doing cyberschool is the fact that no one is pushing you to stay up with the class. If you fall behind you are behind until you decide to catch up with the class."

Lack of face-to-face communication. Some younger students expressed regret that they were not able to be in math class with their peers. Although they found the pacing of the conventional class frustrating because it often moved too slowly, they missed the opportunity to interact with their home-school peers. Many older students recognized the challenges of conveying complex concepts using only text. For example, one student wrote, "Things are not explained as clearly as I would have liked, and the meaning of your [my] questions or [the teacher's] statements can be lost in the text." Another student expressed frustration over making herself understood: "The challenge in cyberschool is trying to explain to your teacher what you don't understand when he can't see what you're trying to understand. Then, if you get behind like I did then you have to work extra hard."

Comparisons to regular courses. Some students felt that their on-line course work was more difficult than the work their peers were doing in the same courses off-line. Others said that they felt that their cyberschool

courses took more time than their did regular courses. One also attributed a drop in his math mark from the mark he received in a regular course the previous year to his involvement in the on-line school.

What EOLLs Liked Best

A majority of the EOLLs in this study (29 out of 50) said that the thing they liked best was working at their own pace. Many thought that cyberschool was more engaging or interesting than conventional school. One student said, "I had to use my brain. I couldn't count on the teacher to tell me everything." Some students felt empowered by their on-line school experience. "It made me feel mature"; "I now know that I can handle [high-school]." Some students also liked the feeling of community that developed in their on-line course. They appreciated the opportunity to "meet new people even though it was only on paper." They liked working with other capable students, avoiding having to "wait for the other students in a noisy classroom."

What EOLLs Liked Least

EOLLs did not like autonomous, self-directed learning. Twenty-one (40%) of these students did not like taking responsibility for their own learning tasks. Some preferred to have a teacher to explain tasks verbally; others did not like to work things out on their own. One student found it difficult to manage the sequence of his learning tasks. "Without the teacher, I skipped ahead because I thought I knew it – I didn't always do so well" (grade-10 student).

Many students were frustrated with various technological issues from server stability to problems with their own computers. In addition, several students felt that the technology sometimes got in the way and made certain things hard to understand. Finally, some students perceived that cyberschool courses were either more difficult or more time consuming than their friends' regular courses had been and some felt that their grades were lower than they would have been in a regular course.

CONCLUSION

A major conclusion of this study is that CC's students were generally satisfied with their on-line learning environment and experiences. Although a few students indicated that they did not like learning on-line, most were relatively complimentary about their cyberschool experiences, a point that

coheres well with the existing educational literature in the area (e.g., Barker & Wendel, 2001).

However, this study highlights some key challenges that on-line schools in general may wish to address to better facilitate student learning. First, the nature of support provided to students as they become acclimatized to on-line learning is a major issue. While it is true that students typically have greater facility with information and communication technologies (ICTs) as compared to that of their teachers (Moursand, 1997), on-line schools cannot assume that students will readily make the transition to learning in the on-line context without support. The support available to EOLLs in CC was inadequate. For example, the preparation course that CC used did not meet the needs of the students. Although it would require further study to determine exactly what the students believe is necessary and what would be possible or realistic, the fact that a majority of EOLLs in this study found the preparation course of little use suggests that the staff of the school had not met the needs of their students. Staff members may wish to ask their students about those activities or pieces of information that they would find useful or necessary for a preparation course and design future preparation courses with student recommendations in mind.

In the absence of face-to-face interaction between teachers and students, effective communication becomes a critical component of student success in the on-line school. Although some of CC's students identified the communication tools as the only good thing about an on-line school, these tools fell short of their potential. A great deal of interaction between the teachers and their students occurred; however, the interaction among students was uneven. Pedagogical thrusts in recent years have encouraged the use of educational activities that foster student collaboration, perhaps, in part, as a response to the new economic trend that sees information age workers as private contractors who provide key specialized services to corporations — often as part of a team, usually across significant distances (Thornburg, 2002). Yet the students in CC appeared to have little experience with collaborative activities. Although some students saw their classmates as potential collaborators to assist with their course material, these collaborations did not appear to be common. Far more commonly, students worked essentially on their own with relatively little contact with their teacher and virtually no contact with their classmates.

Educational literature speaks of new skills necessary for success in the new economy, skills that schools ought to address (e.g., Britt & Gabrys, 2001; McNair, 2001; Thornburg, 2002; Tyner, 1998). A key aspect of these skills is that the students must develop the ability to be self-directed learners

who have "learned how to learn" (Dolence & Norris, 1995). The students in CC were uncomfortable with this role. Although the teachers provided some opportunities for personal growth in this area, many students preferred to have their teachers answer all their questions, rather than explore the Internet's vast store of knowledge to address those questions for themselves. This reaction may simply be an issue of a lack of time. Because all of the students were on-line part-time, they tended to see their cyberschool activities as external to their regular educational programs. Consequently, many students were less willing to spend the time necessary to work things out for themselves and had difficulty fitting their on-line school responsibilities into their already busy lives. However, given the importance of self-directed learning in the new economy (Cortada, 2001), educators will be challenged to explore ways to ease this tension.

In this study, we have also highlighted the challenge of creating a truly innovative educational alternative within the context of a conventional school structure. Fullan (2001) observed, "[W]e have become so accustomed to the presence of change that we rarely stop to think what change really means – the crux of change is how individuals come to grips with this reality" (p. 29). This study challenges not only individuals but also organizations to cope with change. In the case of the grade-8 students taking grade-9 math a year early, the system had provided the students with a vehicle to challenge themselves and accelerate their study of math but had not altered the school-system structures to accommodate these students in the subsequent year. In this new on-line school environment, educators can find ways to assist students to reconceptualize their visions of their own learning and give them support structures to ease their transition from teacher-led, face-to-face instruction to student-centered, on-line learning. These EOLLs appeared to be at an intermediate step between the more traditional, teacher-led classroom and the autonomous, student-directed, on-line classroom. They appreciated the autonomy of working at their own pace but wanted instant access to a teacher. This area requires further study. What would be necessary to ease this transition for EOLLs? Will these students change their views after taking more on-line courses? Perhaps the EOLLs' frustrations were simply a function of being first-time on-line learners.

It is too early in the evolution of on-line schools to evaluate their effectiveness conclusively. Nevertheless, CC provided students with an opportunity to learn Information Age skills. In particular, the virtual school had a positive impact on students' perceptions of their own abilities to learn and encouraged them to take responsibility for their own learning.

NOTES

1 Pseudonyms have been used for the names of the school and district.

2 At the time of this study, the school system had not yet formulated a plan to address the challenges associated with the grade-8 students in accelerated math. The situation had arisen because the system had an extended learning opportunities (ELO) program for gifted students until grade 8 and all of the accelerated students in CC had been participants of this program. In the absence of an on-line course for grade-10 math, it was likely that the accelerated students would be permitted to enrol in grade-10 math courses in their conventional high schools. However, no systematic procedure for ensuring this in all schools had yet been developed.

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La rencontre des intérêts et des préoccupations tant des responsables politiques et des praticiens ou des gens de terrain que des analystes et des chercheurs, dans la prise en compte de leurs points de vue différents et parfois divergents sur une problématique et ses enjeux, est chose rare, et plus rarement encore réussie. Cette réussite, entre autres éléments, fait l'intérêt de l'ouvrage de Marie McAndrew sur l'évolution des politiques et des pratiques d'accueil et d'intégration des immigrants au Québec par et dans l'école (montréalaise) au cours des trente dernières années. L'auteure y rend compte, dans une langue claire et simple qui ne trahit pas pour autant la rigueur des analyses et qui n'escamote pas les nuances, d'un travail assidu d'observation critique et d'analyse, de recherche, d'intervention aussi. Ce travail aux multiples volets est mené depuis plus de dix ans par Marie McAndrew — au titre de chercheure principale et comme directrice du Groupe de recherche sur l'ethnicité et l'adaptation au pluralisme en éducation (rattaché au Centre d'études ethniques des universités montréalaises), dont elle a coordonné assidûment les travaux depuis sa création, et d'*Immigration et métropoles*, le Centre de recherche inter universitaire de Montréal sur l'immigration, dont elle fut également la directrice depuis sa création jusqu'à tout récemment.

L'ouvrage analyse six temps et lieux, et autant d'enjeux majeurs du processus de « normalisation », pour reprendre un des mots clés de la conclusion, des rapports entre la majorité québécoise francophone et les immigrants — plus largement les Québécois et Québécoises d'immigration relativement récente : l'enseignement (et l'apprentissage) du français et les classes d'accueil; l'enseignement des langues d'origine et le PELO; la jonction ambiguë de la pluriethnicité et de la défavorisation dans la lutte à l'échec scolaire; la nécessité, les exigences et les limites — je serais tenté de dire : les voies et impasses — de la prise en compte de la diversité religieuse et culturelle à l'école; l'éducation à la citoyenneté parfois présentée comme une alternative à l'éducation interculturelle ou antiraciste; le partage d'institutions communes comme voie ou condition de l'intégration souhaitée.

Sur ces six thèmes, éléments majeurs de la problématique globale analysée, six synthèses sont présentées en autant de chapitres. On y tient compte, en chaque cas, de l'évolution des politiques et des pratiques dans la société québécoise, respectant en outre la séquence de l'élaboration et de la mise en œuvre des projets/propositions pour l'éducation et plus spécifiquement pour l'école. L'analyse des thèmes retenus fait en outre appel, dans une perspective comparative, à ce qui se passe et se fait ailleurs, notamment au Canada anglais, mais aussi aux États-Unis, en Angleterre et en France, également en Belgique (Flandre) et, à l'occasion, en d'autres pays. L'ouvrage s'en trouve enrichi : cette perspective comparative, permettant d'adopter un temps un point de vue autre, différent de ceux auxquels nous sommes habitués, ouvre à la réflexion et au débat, éventuellement à l'action, des pistes neuves, des alternatives. L'apport des expériences faites ailleurs est d'ailleurs présenté, à la fin de chaque chapitre, comme « contribution potentielle au débat québécois ».

Au terme, après avoir pris acte des « acquis relatifs à la maîtrise et à l'usage du français chez les nouveaux arrivants » et d'une relative « *décrispation* des décideurs et des intervenants scolaires face à l'enjeu linguistique », l'auteure invite à prendre aussi conscience de « la relative détérioration du statut des immigrés, et surtout des *minorités visibles*, dans le *pecking order* de la réussite scolaire » (p. 216). En outre, si le marqueur linguistique semble aujourd'hui moins discriminant, son remplacement par les marqueurs religieux et racial, qui prennent pour cibles la communauté musulmane de Montréal et les personnes d'origines diverses réunies par la langue arabe, ne peut être maintenu dans une confortable inconscience. Il y a, en matière de prise en compte de la diversité dans l'école québécoise, une « nouvelle donne » et la nécessité d'un nouveau débat : la majorité francophone doit assumer désormais, face aux immigrés et aux enfants d'immigrés, les obligations qui découlent de la reconnaissance de son statut et de ses droits (p. 219).

Un incontournable. Un ouvrage à lire, puis à consulter. Le lecteur souhaitant aller plus loin trouvera en appendice une riche bibliographie de 43 pages.

Egan, Kieran (2002). *Getting It Wrong from the Beginning: Our Progressivist Inheritance from Herbert Spencer, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget*. New Haven: Yale University Press (hardcover), 204 pages.

Emery J. Hyslop-Margison, Ball State University

On Kieran Egan's view, contemporary education pursues flawed progressivist practices that harm student academic development. Many of these misguided ideas originate with the pseudo-scientific theories and fallacious presuppositions of 19th-century British philosopher Herbert Spencer. Rather than simply parroting faulty progressivist practices that undermine learning, Egan argues that contemporary education should cultivate student mastery over various cognitive tools such as oral language, literacy, and theoretic abstractions: "Understanding how these tools shape our learning can give us a better set of principles for improving the effectiveness of students' learning than anything progressivism can provide" (p. 75). *Getting It Wrong from the Beginning* convincingly discredits many progressivist pedagogical practices, but unfortunately overlooks the crucial democratic dispositions also fostered by this approach to schooling.

There is no disputing that Herbert Spencer constitutes a major intellectual figure in the philosophical lifeblood of the Victorian era. A leading proponent of Lamarckian evolutionary theory in the mid-19th century, Spencer's reputation briefly rivalled that of Charles Darwin. Spencer was most recognized during the period for applying survival-of-the-fittest principles to philosophy, psychology, and the general investigation of society. Although he is typically remembered in contemporary academic circles for his controversial support of social Darwinian assumptions, he devoted significant philosophical energy to improving education based on "scientific" principles.

Egan claims that many of the education principles Spencer developed had considerable impact on the subsequent progressivist theories of both John Dewey and Jean Piaget. Although Egan admits that establishing direct connections between related ideas is always causally problematic, he provides plenty of circumstantial evidence to support his thesis. Egan speculates that progressivist scholars such as Dewey and Piaget refused to acknowledge their indebtedness to Spencer because of his morally offensive positions on race and social class. Spencer assumed that poor people were biologically inferior to the wealthy and that any attempt to improve the former's circumstances through education was simply a waste of available resources. His remedy for social disparity was to discourage

poor people from procreating. Thankfully, Spencer's objectionable political beliefs eventually fell from grace, but his ideas about education endured and, as Egan suggests, attained considerable academic influence.

One especially influential principle Spencer developed maintains that children's learning must begin with simple ideas and progressively advance to more complex conceptions. This widely accepted view is most notably reflected in Piaget's claim that young children are primarily concrete thinkers and only later acquire the cognitive capacity for abstract thought. According to Egan, this principle actually originated with an educational inference Spencer drew from Karl Ernst von Baer's scientific theory that humans "are parts of an immense process that moves inexorably from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous" (p. 26). In spite of the fact that this cosmological paradigm was challenged by Helmholtz's second law of thermodynamics, its influence on education continues. In the mid-19th century, Helmholtz suggested that the universe is actually moving toward increased homogeneity rather than toward greater degrees of complexity.

Recapitulation theory also deeply influenced Spencer's developing ideas on education. Now generally dismissed as ludicrous, the theory suggested that appropriate individual development parallels that of Western civilization. The young undeveloped child, then, represents a primitive character who must be transformed through education into a civilized being. Although this conspicuously Eurocentric theory grossly underestimates the intellectual capacities of children, it nevertheless influenced the developmental theories of both Dewey and Piaget. Egan does not reject the possibility of cognitive stage development, but complains the idea is far more prescriptive than descriptive in its current application to learning. The unfortunate consequence of this application is that developmentally appropriate learning becomes a justification for academically constraining students.

The current widespread rejection of rote learning apparently originates with Spencer's view that education should not render "the pupil a mere recipient of other's ideas" (p. 17). Although this rejection remains a common feature of contemporary teaching, Egan suggests it embodies a grave misunderstanding about how learning influences human experience. Memorizing a Romantic poem by Wordsworth or an eloquent passage from Shakespeare provides students with more than an accumulated pool of readily available but primarily inert information. Rather, it potentially shapes their character by influencing perceptions about experience or possibly modifying their entire world view.

The pervasive influence of psychology on current curriculum development is another legacy of Spencer's belief that science offers the

optimum method to enrich learning. Aside from advancing the usual critique that social science methods are unable to grasp the complexity of human experience, Egan believes that most claims emerging from educational research amount to analytic propositions. These claims are not analytic in the proper logical sense, but discoveries such as time on task enhances learning, parental involvement improves academic achievement, and well-managed classrooms offer superior learning environments are decidedly trivial. Employing the work of Lev Vygotsky, and more recent scholarship by James Wertsch, Egan argues that education should stop trying to understand the imagined "nature" of the learner and focus instead on the idea of cultural tools. Culture is accessible to our investigation in a way that the nature of the learner is not.

Getting It Wrong from the Beginning mounts a convincing case against the pseudo-scientific principles of Herbert Spencer and many of the progressivist pedagogical practices they occasioned. But the contribution of progessivist principles to contemporary education cannot be completely dismissed on this basis alone. Much of John Dewey's most valuable scholarship emphasizes the political connection between democratically structured education, student agency, and participatory citizenship. Although educators continue to adopt many of the fallacious "scientific" precepts developed by Spencer, they typically overlook the pedagogical significance of progressivist democratic learning practices. It is an oversight that Egan unfortunately repeats in this otherwise insightful, engaging and critically important book. Indeed, with continued effort from those convinced of its political significance, perhaps progressivism's lasting legacy to both education and society will be its advocacy of democratic learning.

Gail de Vos, Merle Harris. & Celia Barker Lottridge. (2003). Telling Tales: Storytelling in the Family (2nd edition, revised and expanded). Edmonton, AB: The University of Alberta Press. 232 pages. ISBN 0-88864-402-7

Ann Patteson, Queen's University

In *Telling Tales*, de Vos, Harris, and Barker Lottridge write convincingly of the power of storytelling to secure an individual's foothold in the family. Stories convey knowledge of family heritage within a framework of individual human experience, and bring humour, understanding, and healing to present relationships, particularly those between parents and

children. The authors remind the reader of the special delight that children experience when hearing stories "from your mouth" (p. 5) and of the creative, intimate partnership that exists between parent and child as both engage in the imaginative construction of images and meaning.

This *Telling Tales* is an expanded and revised version of an earlier work by Harris and de Vos, aimed primarily at beginning practitioners of storytelling. The authors instruct the reader about the various aspects of creating and conveying enthralling family stories, and provide resource lists for readers who might wish to "delve deeper into the world of storytelling" (p.143). For example, in chapter 5, the authors give guidance about how to retrieve stories from "dusty corners of our brains" (p. 67) and advise on such essential storytelling elements as character development, story shape, pace of delivery, the power of silence, and use of an energized voice. Toward the end of the book, the authors devote 55 pages to annotated bibliographies of resources for exploring different methods, venues, and applications for storytelling, and recommend collections of age-appropriate picture books, nursery rhymes, myths, legends, and folktales as resources for storytelling within and outside the family setting.

Telling Tales provides a somewhat uneven reading experience. By basing the book in their own family lives, the authors tread a fine line between telling what is of broad interest and what is not. Not surprisingly, the most satisfying reading moments are found in stories. For example, the tale of a little girl (one of the authors), who somewhat maliciously and very falsely convinces her younger brother that the train on which they are riding is about to pull away from the station, without their parents, who have disembarked in search of coffee. (The story, the writer reminds us, is set in a more benevolent time when children could be entrusted to the care of strangers.) When the little girl suddenly becomes convinced by her own tale, the two children break into uncontrolled wailing, to the panicked chagrin of their parents, who upend their sought-after coffee to reach their distressed children. For those who have ever experienced sibling rivalry, this sweet tale of power, retribution, and love will delight and instruct.

Places in the text, however, cause the reader to wish that the three authors had used an example from just one of their lives, rather than examples from all three. One rendering of a timeline (chapter 3) would have been sufficient to convince readers of the efficacy of this technique to uncover the dramatic, story-worthy moments of our own lives. Likewise, the first chapter concerning the families of the authors provides information that is clearly of interest to them and their own family members, but does

not always engross the reader. This being said, the authors' message that stories can preserve the family heritage and create cross-generational and cross-cultural understandings is well taken.

Telling Tales is not meant for audiences in search of empirical data concerning present-day uses of storytelling. It contains little in-depth examination of some of the current issues of scholarly and research-based explorations of storytelling: gender portrayal (e.g. Mello, 2001b); storytelling in adult and teacher education (e.g. Gold & Holman, 2001; Luwisch, 2001); effects of storytelling on the teacher-student relationship (Mello, 2001a); language acquisition and literacy (Isbell, 2002); possible roles of "storying" in non-traditional family constellations (Hill, 1998), as well as in populations comprised of displaced persons (Rousseau, Bagilishya, Deogratia, & Heusch, 2003), marginalized groups (e.g. Bell, 2003), and special needs individuals (Craig, Hull, Cummins, & Crowder, 2001). The authors mention many of these issues, but leave it to other writers and researchers to detail of the myriad shapes and benefits of storytelling within specific contexts other than the family.

The authors of *Telling Tales* are convincing in their avowal that storytelling is not the preserve of experts or specialists: "natural storytellers are made, not born" (p. 63). They argue that the material of stories is at our fingertips and, with equal amounts of practice and courage, we can learn to seize the storytelling moments of family life. In weaving stories into our family relationships, we can reveal the intricacies and marvels of lives past, present, and, perhaps, future. As storyteller Ruth Stotter says in the introduction to *Telling Tales*, "Stories often describe a different perspective than history books, offering insight into the everyday concerns of ordinary people, who often turn out to be extraordinary when we know their stories" (p. xviii). The authors show us that, for all their apparent ordinariness, our lives are, indeed, rich in meanings. Storytelling makes the "ordinary" remarkable.

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Politique rédactionnelle

La *Revue canadienne de l'éducation* publie des articles de recherche, des essais critiques, des débats, des recensions d'ouvrages et des notes de recherche traitant, de manière directe mais non exclusive, de l'éducation au Canada. Les sujets traités doivent être susceptibles d'intéresser un vaste auditoire; de même, le langage utilisé doit être accessible à un lectorat cultivé mais non nécessairement spécialisé.

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2. En soumettant un manuscrit à la *Revue*, l'auteur atteste que la recherche est originiale et inédite; qu'elle n'est pas sous presse sous une autre forme; qu'elle n'a pas été soumise ailleurs aux fins de publication et qu'elle ne le sera pas tant que l'évaluation ne sera pas complétée. Ceci vaut pour les données et l'argumentation présentées dans le manuscrit.

3. Les articles de recherche ne doivent pas dépasser 7 000 mots, notes et références incluses; les essais critiques, 2 000 mots, les débats, 1 500 mots; les recensions et les notes de recherche, 1 000 mots.

4. Les tableaux, figures et graphiques ne sont acceptés que s'ils s'avèrent indispensable à la rigueur de l'argumentation.

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- au recours à des médias distincts telles la vidéo, les bandes sonores, l'insertion de graphiques animés, etc.;
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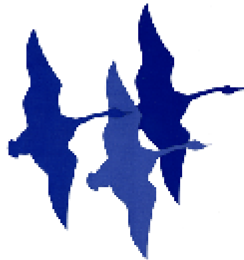
Les textes soumis feront l'objet d'un arbitrage scientifique par les pairs. Les articles acceptés seront publiés sur le site de la RCE ; les titres, les résumés et les hyperliens menant à des textes intégraux disponibles en ligne seront inclus dans la version imprimée de la revue. Vous êtes donc invité à faire parvenir vos questions concernant ce nouveau format de publication ainsi que, le cas échéant, vos propositions de contribution au corédacteur francophone de la RCE.



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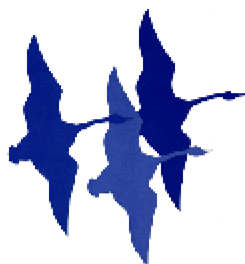

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