

STUDIES IN NEWFOUNDLAND
EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

VOLUME IV

Edited by

Ishmael J. Baksh

George Haché

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Memorial University of Newfoundland

Studies In Newfoundland Education and Society

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**Faculty of Education
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PREFACE

This anthology, the fourth in a series, brings together articles which have been published in **The Morning Watch** over the eight-year period, 1991-1999 (i.e., Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 to Vol. 26, Nos. 3-4). The first anthology appeared in 1977 under the title **Society, Culture and Schooling: Issues and Analysis**. The second was published in 1982 in two volumes, with the title **Society and Education in Newfoundland**. The third was published in 1991, also in two volumes, with the title of **Dimensions of Newfoundland Society and Education** (ISBN O-88901-159-1). All three anthologies were edited by Dr. Ishmael J. Baksh and Dr. Amarjit Singh.

We have written about the origin, history, purpose and orientation of **The Morning Watch**, which may be of some interest to readers, in the prefaces to the previous volumes. Some of the information is now also available on the web-page of **The Morning Watch**. Having **The Morning Watch** on line (World Wide Web) is an indication of an important shift in the context in which the Faculty of Education now functions. Just to keep the story about the evaluation of **The Morning Watch** going, it is perhaps worth noting that in the Fall of 1996, the financial limitations faced by the Faculty of Education made it necessary for **The Morning Watch** to be published electronically. Dr. Marc Glassman assisted us in initiating the first on-line version - the Fall 1997 issue. More recently, Dr. George Haché has taken over the task of further developing the site in the capacity of Technical Editor. Dr. Ishmael Baksh and Dr. Amarjit Singh remain the co-editors. The publication of the Fall 1997 issue marked the twenty-fifth year of the journal.

Seven recent issues of **The Morning Watch** appear on the web-site <<http://www.mun.ca/educ/faculty/mwatch/nmwatch.htm>>. **The Morning Watch** can also be accessed through the homepage of Memorial University <<http://www.mun.ca/educ/>> by browsing the On-line Publications icon.

The publication of **The Morning Watch** has been possible only because of the financial support provided by a succession of Deans in the Faculty of Education, among them Dr. George Hickman, Dr. George Ivany, Professor Brose Paddock, Dr. Leslie Karagianis, Dr. Robert Crocker and Dr. Alice Collins. Most recently, Dr. Terry Piper and Dr. Clar Doyle (Dean Pro tem) have lent their support, despite the budgetary constraints faced by the Faculty. Also invaluable is the assistance rendered the publication over the years by Bill Griffin, who specialized in design, and by staff in the General Office of the Faculty of Education and in the Printing Services unit of the university, especially by Glenn Taylor. Dr. William J. Gushue's initial assistance, participation and encouragement in launching **The Morning Watch** can never be forgotten by the co-editors. Other individuals who have contributed to the present online version are identified on the online **Morning Watch** historic page. Miss Laura Walsh in the General Office has contributed towards the preparation of the manuscript of these four volumes in a very special way. Her commitment, hard work and critical comments are very much appreciated by the co-editors and the Technical Editor. Finally, we wish to thank all the authors who have contributed to **The Morning Watch** since its inception in 1973, particularly those who have written for it more recently. We sincerely hope that others will decide to contribute to **The Morning Watch** as Newfoundland and Labrador society and culture encounter globalization and internationalization as well as concomitant social, cultural, economic, political, and technology and information related changes. The papers in these four volumes testify to the fact that the authors have already begun to articulate many issues emerging in the field of education and schooling in this

province in the context of globalization and internationalization of all aspects of our lives. A full version of the content of this anthology will also be placed in the online site of **The Morning Watch**.

For convenience, we have referenced each article by placing its date of publication under its title.

If there is any merit in publishing this four volume anthology, the credit is due to all those people who have been involved with **The Morning Watch**, including readers consisting of graduate and undergraduate students, colleagues and the larger public. However, the editors and the Technical Editor bear sole responsibility for any shortcoming which this anthology might have.

Amarjit Singh
Ishmael Baksh
George Haché

St. John's
April, 2000

FOREWORD

The Faculty of Education at Memorial University publishes the **Morning Watch**. This publication serves as a vital and essential communication tool for the examination of educational and social issues in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The **Morning Watch** not only comments on current issues but often leads the way in reporting significant research findings and trends. The **Morning Watch** offers articles on wide-ranging topics and agendas. Such writings represent diverse thinking and viewpoints. In this way the journal encourages initiative and debate, which is crucial for any educational community. We encourage you to contribute to this discussion.

Clar Doyle, Professor
Dean (pro tem)
January, 2000

For many years **The Morning Watch** has served as an effective two-way communication link among educational stakeholders in Newfoundland and Labrador. Opportunity has been provided through this publication for the Faculty of Education and its field partners to share research findings, field experiences and “cutting edge” theory. This journal has also served as a pedagogical conduit for both undergraduate and graduate expression; it has functioned as a forum that allows undergraduate students/society to debate issues of the day, while simultaneously providing graduate students with what is often their first experience at publishing research undertakings in public.

The focus of **The Morning Watch** has been sufficiently broad to present an educational and social analysis of a wide array of educational issues. Written and organized to provoke creative thought, challenge traditional modes of operation and provide critical/reflective consideration of the change process, journal articles over the years have served to guide and inspire educational reality in this Province.

This current compendium represents a very special effort to bring together four volumes of **The Morning Watch** comprising some 120 thought-provoking articles spanning the decade of the nineties. To both the editors and authors, thank you for providing your readership with a further opportunity to savour the assimilation of a decade of first rate educational journalism with a Newfoundland and Labrador focus. It is my hope that all of us, as partners in education, will seize this moment to reacquaint ourselves with a journal which has truly served as a beacon for educational initiative over many years.

Dennis Treslan, Professor
Associate Dean, Undergraduate
Programmes
January 26, 2000

As the sole university in Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial assumes a special obligation to educate the citizens of this province, to conduct research related to the challenges of this province, and to share its expertise throughout the provincial community. Within this context, the Faculty of Education recognizes its mission as related to both the professional preparation of those who will give leadership in education and research related to the improvement of educational practices. Since its inception, the **Morning Watch** has served as a key component of both the University's and the Faculty's provincial mission. It has served as a forum for presenting Faculty research and innovative ideas to the local educational community, thereby creating a critical communication link among practitioners and faculty and student researchers. As well, it has served as a friendly venue for an initial airing of ideas and research findings conducted by graduate students who would otherwise have been reluctant to publish their first scholarly work. As a result, much of the graduate student research that focussed on local educational issues was disseminated throughout the province.

On a review of the contents of this volume, it becomes obvious that the scholarly concerns addressed throughout the period from 1991 to 1999 have been varied. It should be noted as well that, during this period, the **Morning Watch** has evolved as a consequence of advances in information and communication technologies. In 1996, the **Morning Watch** became an on-line journal. It is now not only available within the province but is internationally accessible. As it continues to serve its original mandate of contributing to local knowledge by sharing research findings, articulating differing philosophical viewpoints, and raising issues for debate and discussion throughout the educational community within Newfoundland and Labrador, it is my hope that, in its new on-line format, it will continue to evolve as a scholarly journal that will become more fully recognized internationally.

In conclusion, as an educator who has worked in this province since the appearance of the **Morning Watch**, I would like to extend my personal appreciation to all those who have contributed to articles and I would especially thank and congratulate those faculty members who have served as members of its editorial board.

Bruce Sheppard, Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Graduate
Programmes and Research
January, 2000

TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING

STEM-NET: WHO NEEDS IT?

**Bruce L. Mann
Harvey Weir
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Fall 1993**

Computer networks like STEMNet are changing some of the ways in which we teach and learn from one another (Newman, 1993). Before long, we should expect to see improved academic performance in mathematics, science and technology education in this province, due in large part to pedagogical uses of these networks (Beals, 1992; Harris & Anderson, 1991). This paper will present answers to questions the reader may have about the STEM-Net computer network.

What Is STEM-Net?

STEM-Net means "Science, Technology Education and Mathematics Network", a computer network for K-12 and college educators in Newfoundland and Labrador (Weir, 1993). STEM-Net, like other computer networks, provides these users with a variety of services including access to electronic mail, libraries, news groups, conferences and the Internet (Flanders, 1991; Hunter, 1993). STEM-Net maintains and promotes the following services:

- databases of questions, problems, tests and exams;
- databases of lesson plans and teaching ideas;
- NTA Special Interest bulletin boards;
- Science Fair council bulletin boards;
- newsletters (online);
- distance education course materials (online);
- mini-course resources (online);
- conferences (online);
- electronic mail to peers or superiors;
- matching novice and experienced teachers (online);
- "Interact with an Expert": science, tech. ed. or math;
- Science and Technology Advisory Council activities;
- Women in Science and Engineering/ Women in Trades & Technology;
- teacher-sponsored class projects (e.g. AT & T Learning Net).

STEM-Net also supports School-Net, a cooperative federal provincial initiative that links K-12 students electronically across the country. School-Net provides students with access to national and international databases. Online educational activities with School-Net includes electronic scavenger hunts, career counselling and college and university course calendars.

Will It Succeed?

STEM-Net's staff and consultants have a plan for its success. An important aspect of the plan is that course development, evaluation and training in STEM-Net is based on empirical data about the educators and students in this province. This data reveals current levels of cultural lag in each user subgroup (e.g. primary, high school). Cultural lag refers to changes in the technology occurring more rapidly than changes in our values and attitudes. Cultural lag is discussed in Mann (1993). Course materials and delivery strategies, therefore, include elements of critical thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and living-with changing environments and tools. The rationale for implementing this comprehensive approach lies in the belief that "skills training" alone can not guarantee continued use of STEM-Net (Mann, 1992).

STEM-Net's comprehensive approach is a critical feature in the plan for managing change in education and ensuring its own success. The plan for managing change is focused on four categories (Mann, 1992):

- 1) high quality of services and products;
- 2) low maintenance costs;
- 3) rapid delivery;
- 4) excellent spirit of service.

Continuous improvement and a commitment to quality services and products have become the hallmarks of other success-oriented educational organizations (Harvey & Green, 1993; van Vught, 1993). These hallmarks are also distinguishing features of two other successful computer networks: the AT & T LearningNet and the National Geographic KidsNet.

Who Needs It?

Based on recent reports (Crocker, 1989; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (1992); Royal Commission of Inquiry, 1992; Withers, 1992), educators should be investigating new educational products and services. Student will soon become the recipients of these products and services. Student achievement is expected to show the impact of effective teacher use of STEM-Net.

Who Pays For It?

There is no user charge for STEM-Net until April 1996, and perhaps beyond that date. A joint federal-provincial agreement (Canada-Newfoundland Cooperation, 1993) has provided the funding for STEM-Net. It is expected that STEM-Net will evolve into an open education network for educators, parents and students.

I'm Not A Science Educator. Am I Excluded?

Not really. You'll have access to a selection of general services:

- electronic mail to peers or superiors;
- general information bulletin boards;
- access to a wide-range of on-line general library and database resources;
- access to the Internet (a world-wide computer network).

The reason for this apparent inequity is that STEM-Net's mandate is to address the primary problem of low math and science achievement in Newfoundland and Labrador by serving the educators teaching in these curricular areas (Weir, 1993).

I Know Very Little About Computers...?

Computer-experienced educators in the Newfoundland education system are currently participating in development and pilot testing of the STEM-Net services. Training and ongoing advice will be provided to all interested educators. The initial round of comprehensive training is expected to be completed by September of 1994.

How Can I Get Involved with STEM-Net?

While some readers may prefer to take a wall-and-see stance to this innovation, others may wish to get in on the ground floor. Interested individuals should speak to their School Board officials about getting involved. Interested individuals should speak to their School Board officials about getting involved. If you are currently working as a K-12 teacher or college instructor, contact your school board or college president's office to receive a copy of the form. If you are a student of Memorial University of Newfoundland, you can drop by the STEM-Net office for a User Permit Request form. If you would like to participate as a resource person, express your interest in a letter to the STEM-Net Office. Provide any computer related competencies in your correspondence. The address is:

STEM-Net
 G.A. Hickman Building
 Memorial University of Newfoundland
 St. John's, Newfoundland A1B 3X8
 Phone (709) 737-8836
 Fax (709) 737-2179
 E-mail: hweir@morgan.ucs.mun.ca

How Do I Get My Own Project On the STEM-Net?

Those interested in developing instructional materials for the STEM-Net, should write a proposal. The proposal should identify a need (e.g. a paucity of effective and efficient materials to teach Earth Science). The proposed target audience should be identified (e.g., thirty elementary students, three with learning disabilities). A method of student assessment should also be suggested. The proposal should be sent to the STEM-Net Office.

Conclusion

STEM-Net is currently under development. The hardware implementation and software training is being introduced gradually throughout the provincial education system. In fact, this network will always be under development, managing and maintaining the educational quality of select computer networking services. STEM-Net's existence depends upon it. Without quality control, STEM-Net could accumulate large quantities of junk mail, out-dated lesson plans and invalid or unreliable test items. Quality control assures educators that STEM-Net's educational products and services have been beta-tested and evaluated with educators and students.

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**TECHNOLOGY ORIENTATION FOR EDUCATORS: LEARNING
FROM THE INDUSTRIAL SUBCULTURE**

**Bruce L. Mann
Faculty of Education
Winter 1993**

This paper describes a recent educational initiative involving The Newfoundland Telephone Company and the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. The initiative was planned in response to remarks made by the company's President and CEO Vince Withers at a recent computer conference at the University:

We are facing growing competition. Business no longer has the time nor the resources for extensive retraining.... We need the education system to develop these thinking, reasoning, learning, living-with-change and problem-solving skills But we must get beyond the computer 'how to's' to understanding and applying concepts.... it is important that we ask fundamental questions about our view of computers and how we use them, at all levels of the education system (Withers, 1992, p. 5, 6).

Coincidentally, Mr. Withers' 'time and resources problem' corresponds with several educational reports. In a document on high school and first year post-secondary math and science programs, Crocker (1989) speculates that computers are the essence of an ongoing transition into an information society. This transition requires that educational institutions (like other sectors of society) must also set aside the necessary time and resources. The improvement of education requires that opportunities to use computers are grasped and exploited fully.

This year, specific recommendations were published by a Royal Commission of Inquiry Into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education (1992):

Although the specific content of the curriculum is important, in a world of rapidly changing technologies and an unprecedented explosion of knowledge, learning how to locate, analyze and utilize information and how to think critically about it is also crucial. Now more than ever, the emphasis of education must be on acquiring process skills, as specific content becomes outdated with increasing rapidity... (Royal Commission of Inquiry, 1992).

This emphasis on "process skills" over content is echoed in Challenge and Change (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992) which specifies a goal of strengthening links between private industry and the education system,

.... by expanding the current post-secondary cooperative education program by including additional designated occupations and exploring the application of work study concepts to the pre-apprenticeship programs (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, p. 26, 1992).

In conclusion, it seems that the 'time and resources problem' is a case of demand exceeding supply, the growing demand for skilled people exceeding the supply available from the education system to meet industry's needs. Thankfully, some industrial and educational planners have agreed to share the responsibility for solving the problem. A first step toward solving the 'time and resources problem' through 'process skills' learning seems to be the reduction of "cultural lag."

Cultural Lag

In our society, "cultural lag" refers to changes in the technology occurring more rapidly than changes in our values and attitudes. Within corporation subcultures, computer use is often linked to powerful work values, including: 1) the desirability for higher rates of work speed; 2) better work efficiency; 3) more work power, and 4) the removal of human error from work activities (Maddux, 1992).

The first three work values would likely be consistent with those of many educators: most teachers would probably welcome more working speed, efficiency and power. However, the removal of human error from work (the fourth value) is contentious. Educators who still believe that computers are replacing them have tended to reject, or at least ignore, new technology, just as labour unions frequently reject technology that threatens jobs (Maddux, 1992). The difference is that the opposition by educators within the education subculture has the potential to be far more effective than the opposition of labour unions within the business subculture.

Although many university faculty have stated a commitment to technological change, recent reports reflect a marked differential rate of change remaining between educational technology and workplace technology, and between the expectations of educators and those of business leaders. The rate of change and attitude in education appears to have been much slower than that in business and industry. Since student-teachers have the responsibility of preparing children for the changing work conditions perhaps a kind of 'culture shock' should become a required experience before resuming the responsibility of educating society's children.

To help reduce the inequity between educational and corporate values and attitudes, computer education students at the Memorial University of Newfoundland registered in the summer and fall semesters of 1992 were 'culture shocked'. They were introduced to corporate technology. The six-week 'Technology Orientation' to state-of-the-art technology took three forms: 1) the tour; 2) the work venue, and 3) the visit from Personnel.

Students' Reaction by Electronic Mail

Graduate and undergraduate education students were asked to respond by electronic mail (email) to their day-long intensive guided tour of the corporation's facilities. The rationale for introducing electronic mail to communicate with the course instructor was summed up nicely by first-time undergraduate email users:

UI: "I am enthusiastic about learning all about Email and I hope to get more comfortable with it as I gain more experience. I am using the computer at work to send this message and since I work at the university it is more convenient."

U2: 'I wanted to let you know how I felt about email. It is a great program for students. It allows you to communicate with your teacher as well as your classmates. It is especially beneficial to those who are a little shy in speaking in class. Also, when you want to get in touch with a classmate you can use email to leave a message about a project or a meeting. However to get the most out of email you need to be using it all the time. I would like to thank you for introducing me to email. It is another experience for me to add to my list of computer knowledge.'

As well as being another source of formative evaluation data for course revision, student Email messages are also a record of student participation in course activities.

Student Reactions to the Tour

One question was put to graduate and undergraduate students following a tour of the Fort William and Allendale facilities of The Newfoundland Telephone Company:

"What were your impressions of The Newfoundland Telephone Company? Is the tour a good idea for educators and their students?"

The following sampling of responses were typed by the respondents themselves and have been downloaded to this document without correction. Email headers (i.e., the names and descriptors) have been removed to maintain anonymity. Comments written by undergraduate students are shown below as U1, U2, etc.; while those written by graduate students are shown as G1, G2, and so on.

U1: "I found the Newfoundland Telephone tour to be very interesting. It showed me the varied applications of computers in a working environment. In fact, I found myself wondering what kind of computer course could possibly be offered to students to prepare them for such a variety of uses. It also got me thinking about the idea of teaching programming vs. software packages. Of course, then the problem arises of what kind of programs or which kind of software? Though the technology was a bit overwhelming, it was easy to see how much easier running the company was made by computers. I particularly enjoyed the computer mapping section of the tour of the Fort William Building. Overall, I found the tour to be both interesting and useful."

U2: "I found the tour to be very interesting. I did not realize how much time and training was needed for a company to change over from a manual operation to a computerized one. The cost alone was unbelievable. I can see why companies like Newfoundland Telephone are concerned about the lack of knowledge our graduating students have about computers. This tour gave me a better idea about the rationale for using computers in our schools. This is the way of the future. I realize computers won't solve all our problems but I can see now why we need to use computers in our classrooms even at the Kindergarten level. The tour was a bit long and at times a bit technical but all in all it was very enlightening and interesting. I did not realize how important computers were in running an efficient and cost effective company."

G1: "It seems that Newfoundland Telephone is aware of the cultural lag existing in Newfoundland Making educators aware of the technological advances occurring

in business will increase the likelihood that they will better prepare today's students for the challenges they will encounter tomorrow."

G2: "I enjoyed the day at the NTC. I think it's a good idea to know what the business world expects from their employees."

G3: "I was quite impressed with the tour of Newfoundland Telephone. Their approach to technological change and their attitudes towards making the change painless for their employees was very positive and could provide a productive model for other businesses and government departments in our province."

G4: "I think that the tour was very informative. Newfoundland Telephone has made strides in automation, which I presume they had to do to stay current and competitive. More important from a teachers point of view, they should be congratulated for exposing this technology to the education system. We as teachers can always learn more about technology, which can then be relayed back to students. Also, it may help us all to solidify our point of view regarding the use of computers in schools, and hopefully resolve some of the related issues. Computers and technology are here to stay, we must determine how best to work with and use this technology."

G5: "I was very impressed with the tour of the Newfoundland Telephone facilities. I was interested to find out that people have adapted very well to the new system. In fact, those who were most reluctant to start to learn about the computer system are now among the best employees at the company."

G6: "The tour was excellent. Big environment change for the people. Exciting for a positive thinker! Gives us a sense of the effect of change. The project would have helped to gain better insights. Would like to take my class there!"

U3: "The treasury department was most interesting for me. I was made very much aware of how much education is lagging behind in technology in comparison to industry. It definitely is time that we get on the ball!!!"

U4: "I found it was a great, informative day. People were very easy to talk to and were very willing share information with us."

U5: "Newfoundland Telephone's Communications and technology advancement is an inspiration for the educational field. The trip was very rewarding, even though it was overwhelming at times. It was nice to see how technology and the work place can operate together. Personally, I have gained a better appreciation for Newfoundland Telephone and other work places. It has also added to my concern for technical advancements in our schools."

U6: "In the Training Officers opening remarks he stated that without the main frame computer Newfoundland Telephone employee's could go home. Computer technology is a very big part of their operation. I found the video to be very informative. It basically reviewed the terms found in Chapter 2 of our text. It was interesting to find out that many workers received on the job training and that no computer knowledge was essential for workers hired. Anytime I have to complain about a service, or wonder about the process when paying telephone bills, I can get a visual image of the behind the scenes work. Very interesting!"

U7: "It was a great learning experience. I saw a good opportunity for co-operative learning between schools and technical institutions. Shared program planning would be beneficial to both. I now more fully realize the tremendous impact that technology is having on industry."

U8: "I really enjoyed the tour of Newfoundland Telephone. Learning about their systems was quite interesting. I especially enjoyed map-making department. It would be nice if students could take a short tour of the company."

In conclusion, this sampling of student comments on the guided tour of the company's facilities seems to indicate a change in their attitudes and values about computer-based activities. Through subsequent class discussion, they have come to realize that:

- 1) corporate restructuring moves far too quickly to be captured into discrete skills for teaching. Computer courses using "how to" instruction may never capture the dynamic of a corporate environment;
- 2) some students may have already missed the opportunity to acquire sufficient process skills. Process learning must begin at Kindergarten;
- 3) some understanding of increased work speed, efficiency, power and few errors seems to improve understanding which reduces anxiety and cultural lag.

Experiential Learning: Student Teachers in Industry

On-site work was one of four options introduced in the Computers in Education graduate course. The other options were a software evaluation, a technical or research paper and a courseware development option. Graduate education students in the on-site work option were given the opportunity to work at the company in one of six locations. The intended goal was to provide graduate students with an awareness of the corporate world of work and the types of activities in which their students may eventually require.

This summer, four of the nine graduate students enrolled in the course completed a project at the Newfoundland Telephone Company. Their objectives were: 1) to write-up a task list; 2) develop a workflow chart for the department using EasyFlow software; and 3) determine the benefits and drawbacks of the technology. The following project proposals were solicited prior to beginning the analysis:

G1&2: "For our project, we will outline the information flow within the COMAND Department of Newfoundland Telephone. We will use a flowchart to show the relationship between various tasks, and will highlight both the human and computer components of the flow. We arranged to go to the phone company on Wednesday afternoons. We'll be keeping you up to date - and getting advice. We're going to have a look at the EasyFlow software now."

G3: "I have decided to do a task analysis of the CCAD [computer-assisted design] area. I have established a time with The Training Officer and will have my first meeting with the people of the CCAD area Thursday morning."

- G4: "I would like to work in the Martens process area at the Fort William Building. I will complete a task analysis of the work flow in the department and briefly discuss how the new technology has changed the work itself. I will also discuss other relevant issues."

A written document was then produced on the apparent effects of differential levels of involvement in the "Technology Orientation" program on these practicing teachers. Students described the workflow within their departments (using EasyFlow software) and determined the benefits and drawbacks of the technology. EasyFlow is a program used in industry for drawing flowcharts. Detailed accounts were produced of the effects of the changing technological workplace on the types of work, on the workers' requirements for remembering facts, and on their social relationships. Redundancies and inefficiencies became evident from a study of the workflow charts. This experience provided students with an awareness of the corporate world of work and the types of activities which students in the school system should be learning.

The Visit From Personnel

One question was put to graduate and undergraduate students following a visit from the company's Personnel Manager:

"How was the company's Personnel Officer? About what you'd expect?"

The following sampling of responses were typed by the respondents themselves and have been downloaded to this document without correction. Email headers (i.e., the names and descriptors) have been removed to maintain anonymity. Comments written by undergraduate students are shown below as U1, U2, etc., while those written by graduate students are shown as G1, G2, and so on.

- G1: "The presentation was informative. I will be able to take this information back to my students to inform them as to what type of employees companies like Newfoundland Telephone are looking for. His emphasis on potential employees having knowledge of computers seems to drive home the importance of computers in education. We, as educators, have the responsibility of ensuring that our students leave secondary education with the necessary skills and knowledge to make well-informed decisions as to their future. Giving students the proper introduction to microcomputers is part of this responsibility.
- G2: "I thought that the presentation was very informative. It appears evident that the educational requirements of employees are increasing. Computer ability is also required. Even though it is easy to believe that computer knowledge is essential, the Personnel Officer did outline an important point as it relates to education and employees. It is important that employees have the abilities to think, learn, and communicate. We as educators should keep this in mind for all of our students. In summary, I am pleased that you invited him to give a presentation in class."
- G3: "I found his presentation informative and interesting. NTC seems to be trying to establish very clear guide lines for their expectations of new employees. These may provide a reasonable place to start but we must be careful that we do not let large corporate interest dictate approaches, teaching strategies and curriculum for our schools. Their input is important but we should not be content to be a

corporate training program. The company attitude towards computer literacy is interesting but their definitions need to be refined."

- G4: "I was very interested in what he had to say. Some of his answers were what I would have expected. This is good information to pass-on to other teachers in September."
- G5: "I found his presentation informative. I believe I'll ask him to come into my our Junior High School to talk to our Grade 8 students next year. If students are aware of what companies with computer technology expect from potential employees, they may be more motivated to use the computers in our lab - and the computers that many of them have at home."
- UI: "I found the presentation very interesting. I was wondering if they had some sort of component to their interview where they tested computer skills. This way they could know that the student didn't just know theory but also practical applications."

The reduction of cultural lag appears to have been immediately apparent. Twenty-three student teachers were unanimous in stating (verbally and through email) that their tour of the technical facilities and the subsequent presentation the company's human resource officer were good ideas and could only have a positive impact on young children. Several students stated that similar tours of the technical facilities and subsequent presentations from the company's human resource officer should be arranged for children at all grade-levels. There was only one exception, a graduate student who stated that this initiative may have limited appeal for primary and elementary teachers. Notably however, this individual had not experienced the tour on the onsite work.

Culture Shock

Computing student-teachers come to know that, under certain conditions, computers can affect student achievement (Kulik & Kulik, 1991). However, their personal exposure to a corporate technological experience seems to produce a realization, a 'culture shock'. While 'culture shock' is evident in their comments, most students seem to feel that they can adjust to the demands of such an environment. For example, one student claimed:

"It was interesting to know that they do not use computer training packages with their employees. The technology advances too fast, and these packages would be obsolete by the time they were designed. I am beginning to feel obsolete myself ... But look at me now ... I'm using email! Maybe I can learn this stuff!"

In this light, educators can no longer afford to leave the 'time and resources solution' to someone else. There are four things we can do. First, we can encourage business leaders to influence educational policy. Second, we can actively participate in the technological and strategic changes occurring within industry. Third, we can lobby to support industrial initiatives within our own educational computing facilities. Fourth, we can abandon discrete skills in favour of strategic objectives (Hannafin, 1989; Hannafin & Rieber, 1990; Jonassen, 1988) that promote team-based, critical thinking activity.

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In conclusion, based on the reactions to the Technology Orientation program of student teachers, representatives of the company, the Faculty of Education, The Department of Education and the local media, this initiative can be expected to continue to influence educators' values with society's changing technological expectations.

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COMPUTING THEN AND NOW

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This paper is a brief review of the history of educational computing and some of the issues surrounding the use of computers in education.

Computing Before Personal Computers

Two centuries ago, Leibnitz envisioned a calculating machine which embodied most of the essential features of recent keyboard devices. Financial considerations, however, prevented its production. In the nineteenth century, Charles Babbage developed a Difference Engine and his steam-driven Analytical Engine for creating mathematical tables. Maintenance costs, however, prevented Babbage from mass producing his arithmetical machines.

In 1936, Alan Turing described the nature and theoretical limitations of computers. Vannevar Bush speculated in 1945 that, "the world has arrived at an age of cheap, complex devices of great reliability and something is bound to come of it" (p. 25). And something did come of it. The first electrical computer was the ABC (Atanasoff-Berry Computer) developed in the early 1940's for solving linear algebra equations. Soon after the ABC, the ENIAC computer was developed with vacuum tubes for military and census purposes. The vacuum tubes were replaced in 1959 with transistors, and replaced again in 1964 with integrated circuits.

During the 1960's an increasing number of computers were used in education. Computers began appearing in American schools and universities. Patrick Suppes initiated a large math education project at Stanford University in 1963. By 1967, computer-assisted instruction (CAI) programs were developed across the curriculum for grades 1 through 6. Thousands of students were involved in the formative testing of these programs and research results were maintained on the students' achievement. Educational software such as PLATO (Programmed Operation for Automatic Teaching Operation) was developed at the University of Illinois and elsewhere, while SCHOLAR was an early "intelligent tutor" which attempted to simulate the behaviour of a human tutor. In 1977, the Apple II microcomputer was developed and marketed by Wozniak and Jobs.

Coincidentally, Cognitive Science also became established in the 1960's with the initial goal of using computers to imitate human intelligence. Cognitive Science emerged as one of the most dynamic new sciences of the twentieth century. The interdisciplinary nature of Cognitive Science extended to education with a mission to improve education by extending the frontiers of scientific understanding of the human mind. Work in Applied Cognitive Science impinged on education at several levels. It offered down-to-earth guidance for teaching, but at higher levels, it addressed questions such as what needed teaching and what was best acquired by other means. Applied Cognitive Science pointed to new possibilities for the design of educational approaches and technologies and for promoting new kinds of learning cultures. It helped

researchers to identify the challenges education must face in the next century and in devising imaginative ways to meet these challenges.

Educational computing and Cognitive Science have had their share of critics, however. Cognitive Science critics tended to focus on the continuing quest for artificial intelligence. Educational computing critics represent a diverse set of disciplines and opinions. In the mid 1950's, Jacques Ellul (1964) advanced a detailed argument to the effect that technology was now operating according to its own inner logic and had become the dominant force shaping the direction of cultural development around the world. Heidegger's existentialist perspective added a potent realization that our personal affect about technology could not be reduced by our personal affirmations or denials about its effects or use. Heidegger's technological determinism gradually gained more prominence throughout the field in works by Sherry Turkle (1984), C.A. Bowers (1988) and Ron Ragsdale (1988), whose work will be discussed later in this paper. Neil Postman at New York University argues, "Americans have come to believe that technological progress is the same thing as human progress and that through technological ingenuity and development we can all reach paradise" (Cordes, 1994, p. 10). Cordes (1994) reported five of the most common criticisms:

- a lack of democratic participation in the design and use of technologies that can profoundly alter ordinary citizens lives;
- the threat of global and local ecological crises fuelled by technological advances with unforeseen consequences;
- the increasing isolation of humans from the rest of the living world and a technological vision that is making of the natural living world, including most of the human body, obsolete;
- family and friends become strangers and strangers friends with technology that permits users long-distance relationships--and a false sense of power;
- the tendency for new technologies and the global economy they promote to centralize political and economic power and to homogenize and impoverish cultures.

Arguably the most influential critic of computing in education, however, has been Richard Clark (1985), who has stated that 'computers no more affect student achievement than the truck that delivers their groceries can affect their nutrition'. We will also revisit Dr. Clark's argument later.

Educational Computing Before 1988: Tutor, Tool, Tutee

Before 1988, advocates of educational computing tended to adopt one or more of Patrick Suppes' roles for the computer (in Taylor, 1980); as a "tutor", as a "tool" or as a "tutee". Briefly, the "tutor" mode of computer operation required content design in a specific content area and substantial coding by expert computer programmers. This mode was thought to accommodate a wide-range of individual differences. Psychologists and educators who adopted the tutor mode of computer operation proposed that computer programs be designed to teach all manner of knowledge and skills to a wide range of audiences. Instructional designers diligently applied

behavioural principles of operant conditioning (Skinner, 1960) and data transmission (Shannon & Weaver, 1949; Weiner, 1950) to a variety of educational situations. The advice to educators was to adopt computers as "integrated learning systems which permit students to work at their own pace" (Becker, 1993, p. 129). Proponents of the "tutor" approach criticized the "tutee" camp for delaying the acquisition of skills which would be needed to make "real" discoveries.

The "tool" mode of computer operation required only pre-programmed software like a statistical package or word processor. This mode was thought to save time and preserve intellectual energy by transferring necessary but routine clerical tasks to the computer. The advice to educators from researchers was, "Don't treat students as objects to be stuffed with information. Students should use computers as tools like adults; they should learn how to use spreadsheets, databases and word processors" (Becker, 1993, p. 129).

Trainers, teachers and students who adopted the "tool" mode of computer operation (to this day) sensed intuitively that this was somehow better than doing things the old way, despite empirical research to the contrary (see Lockard et al, 1994). Only recently have teaching and assessing methods been improved. When the computer was given a "tutee" role, the students would learn a programming language to program the computer (Becker, 1993). The "tutee" mode of computer operation required students or the teacher to learn a programming language to communicate with the computer. The computer was thought to be a good tutee because of its dumbness, its patience, its rigidity and its capacity for being re-initialized. Papert (1980) at MIT championed this use of the computer in education with his children's programming language called LOGO. Papert and others claimed that LOGO programming forced students to think like the computer thereby concretizing the learning process for them. In this way, student computer programming (the "tutee" role) was thought to be more beneficial than when students were being programmed by the computer (the "tutor" role).

Critics of educational computing, however, were gaining a firm hold. They came down hard on claims about knowledge transfer and cognitive benefits from tutor, tool and tutee computing. Richard Clark (1983; 1985, 1991), for example, maintained that, in educational settings, any technology was as good as any other as long the technology was matched with the appropriate instructional strategy. Supposedly, this was always true because there was nothing unique about any educational technology and that many effects could be attributed to instructional method. As a consequence of this statement, several generic, print-based models of instructional design were applied to computing contexts. These generic models, however, were found to be inappropriate: in intelligent tutoring systems (Dede & Swigger, 1988); in computer-supported intentional learning environments to improve knowledge-building discourse (Scardamalia et al, 1989); and when the computer was a zone of proximal development (reading partner) for internalizing reading-related metacognitions (Salomon et al, 1989), to name a few.

Nevertheless, Clark continued to apply the delivery truck analogy to illustrate his point. In 1991, Clark admitted, with some regret perhaps, that many good jobs in the mid-1980's in educational technology had been dissolved as a direct result of the publication of his 'delivery truck argument'. The delivery truck analogy stated that 'computers no more affect student achievement than the truck that delivers their groceries affects their nutrition'.

However, several false premises made Clark's argument presented by analogy invalid. First, there was what Salomon & Gardner (1986) called Clark's "average effects of a technology" premise. This premise incorrectly stated that the multitude of typical computing attributes were all similar to the solitary typical purpose of a delivery truck. Second, the delivery truck-computer analogy was false as well because it was imprecise on the attribute level, as noted by Mann (1992a). Cognitive activity had become more important than the physical evidence of the learner's interactions with software. It was no longer adequate for researchers in the 1980's to describe interactions simply in terms of either the input technology employed or the physical characteristics of the responses made, since these would change over time.

Despite these inaccuracies in the educational computing literature, skepticism about the actual effects of tutor, tool and tutee uses of computers on student achievement and problem solving continued to have an impact on computing educators. Sociological and axiological issues began to play a greater role in educational computing research. Three other researchers deserve mention here: Dreyfus and Dreyfus, Pea and Kurland, and Winograd and Flores. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1984) advocated that the optimism over intelligent tutoring systems was unwarranted. Pea and Kurland (1984) took issue with Papert's Bank Street studies on LOGO programming with children. Winograd and Flores (1987) introduced what might be described as a hermeneutical approach to Educational Computing in which observers and settings were scrutinized as intensely as learners' posttests and verbal protocols.

Educational Computing After 1988: Constructing a Rationale

Bowers and Ragsdale brought fresh insight to this fledgling field in 1988. C.A. Bowers (1988) published an important little book entitled, **Cultural Dimensions of Educational Computing: Understanding the Non-Neutrality of Technology**. In this work, Bowers criticized Taylor's tutor, tool and tutee categories of educational computing for assuming conditions of technological neutrality, the autonomous nature of people and a conduit view of language. An elaboration of these arguments is beyond the purpose of this paper.

Ragsdale extended Bowers' sociological investigations with practical suggestions for the student, teacher and parents of children doing educational computing. In his book, **Permissible Computing in Education: Values, Assumptions and Needs**, Ron Ragsdale (1988) proposed the idea that the benefits of educational computing were always situated and relative. He presented several frameworks for computing educators to consider including: four kinds of student expectations about using computers; four different roles for teachers; and a four-part role for parents. Ragsdale also offered direction for preservice training and certification, for graduate education and for appropriate research directions in educational computing.

The field was beginning to develop a scholarly tradition of its own. Educational research with the personal computer was shifting away from the three laboratory modes (tutor, tool, tutee) toward new combinations of attributes that computers could be made to have (Salomon & Gardner, 1986). Raster graphics, for example, substantially increased a computer's attributes for simulating expensive chemical experiments (Mann et al, 1989) or dangerous events in a school setting such as detecting radioactive isotopes on a workbench (Mann, 1988). Another, more widespread use of attributes was the computer's capability of managing text.

The debates about educational computing, with the exception of the Clark argument, remained at the heart of educational computing research and development. The physical presence of computers was a necessary albeit insufficient cause of widespread usage (Becker, 1993). Between 1983-84 and 1991-92, the number of personal computers in American schools subsequently increased to 600 per cent, with a reduction in the number of students-per computer from 125 to 19 (Kinnamen, 1992). Computer use was restricted to either a few teachers who could use computers intensively or many teachers who could use them only incidentally (Pelgrum & Plomp, 1993). Most teachers, however, had little opportunity to learn about attributes and teaching methods until the mid-1980's when personal computers became affordable and available. Many educators simply adapted their old teaching methods and learned some new ones to accommodate the computing attributes (Healy et al, 1994). In sum, this meant that the majority of teachers had less than a decade of experience using technology in the classroom (Kearsley & Lynch, 1992).

Computing in Education Today

Today, educational computing tends to adopt one of three approaches: Transformativism, Collaborationism or Incrementalism. Transformationalism proposes that an overhaul of the education system is required before teacher development involving computers is possible (Becker, 1993; Lockard et al, 1994; Mann, 1994; Pelgrum & Plomp, 1993; Zorfass, 1993). Undoubtedly, this classical western approach to improvement has led to dramatic improvements, but typically has not been standardized and maintained. Transformativism, therefore, is often found to be an exercise in planned obsolescence.

Collaborationism advocates that educational reform should be spear-headed by collaborative interactions over computer networks such as computer work groups or computer conferences (Harrington, 1993; Flanders, 1991; Hunter, 1993; Mann & Weir, 1993). The main rationale for adopting a collaborationist policy is that learning activities and environments can include and take advantage of interactions of learners and teachers with people, information and machines that are geographically and institutionally distributed (Hunter, 1993). The assumption that distributed collaborations computer networks between learners or teachers improves achievement in curricular areas, however, is untested. Users of computer networks, like users of any other hypermedium, often feel subjected to what is sometimes described as "a cohesion deficit from hyperspace wandering" (Duchastel, 1990, p. 230).

Collaborationism involving computer networks often relies too heavily on untested distributed resources. Quality control, therefore, must become an important issue in collaboration over educational computer networks (Mann, 1992b, 1993; Mann & Weir, 1993).

Incrementalism is the best of the three approaches because of its reliance on knowledgeable people instead of massive expenditure on innovation. This preference is consistent with the Japanese management practice of kaizen meaning "slow, never-ending improvement in all aspects of life" that focuses on quality control (Mann, 1992). Incremental changes can be made to occur at different levels of an educational system. Incrementalism accounts for differences between general and special-purpose computing factors for graduate and undergraduate students and can be implemented by administrators or individuals with a commitment to respond to business and government concerns about computing policy for education. Policy makers in

Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, have taken an incremental, bottom-up approach policy development to improve the chances of policy implementation. Phase 2-3 of the "Technology in Learning Environments" (T.I.L.E) document (Eaton, 1994), written by and for educators of Newfoundland and Labrador, proposes substantive and cost-effective improvements in the policies and practices of educational computing. A more complete description of these approaches can be found in Mann (in press).

Summary

Educators aspire to implement substantive and cost-effective improvements in their policies and practices on educational computing. The relatively short history of this field, however, offers few prescriptions toward this end. This paper briefly reviewed computing history and examined three contemporary approaches to implementing change. The preferred position advanced in this paper might be called incrementalism. Incrementalists propose that inservice courses in educational computing be provided to assist teachers in how to implement computers in the instructional process. This approach is focused beyond the computer "how to's"; to understanding and applying concepts, and to developing thinking, reasoning, living with-change and problem-solving skills.

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ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S EXPERIENCE IN BUILDING A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

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Within the last decade, there have been strong calls for the development of new models of school administration which recognize the need for collaboration among teachers and school-based management (Caldwell, Smilanich, & Spinks, 1988; Royal Commission, 1992; Fullan, 1993; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1994). Although school-based management is linked to school improvement and reform efforts, research suggests that the implementation of school-based management may not result in the improvements in student achievement that are anticipated by reformers (Berman & MacLaughlin, 1976; Deal, 1990; Cranston, 1994; Fullan, 1993; Murphy & Hallinger, 1993; Sarason, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1995; Sheppard & Brown, 1995). In fact, "the empirical evidence in the literature up to this point is that the majority of cases are counterproductive" (Fullan, 1995, p. 231). It is within this context of scepticism toward school reform that this research is conducted, as it seeks to determine to what extent (a) leadership training can influence (b) leadership behaviours of school leadership teams, (c) the development of the school as a learning organization, and (d) student outcomes.

Leadership Approach and Training

The need for strong school leadership has been supported by research on effective schools (Edmonds, 1979; Gezi, 1990; Hall & Hord, 1987; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1990); school improvement (Cox, 1983; Crandall, 1983; Hallinger & McCary, 1990; Louis & Miles, 1990); innovation, change, and implementation (Fullan, 1993; Hall & Hord, 1987; McLaughlin, 1990). However, there is agreement that the concept of leadership is not well understood (Bass, 1981, Bolman & Deal, 1994; Brown, 1995a; Handy, 1985; Owens, 1995). Emerging theories are moving away from technological, rational planning models, toward cultural, collaborative approaches in which teachers are viewed as partners (Blase, 1993; 1987; Evans, 1993; Griffiths, 1988; Laroque & Coleman, 1991; March, 1988; Pellicer, Anderson, Keefe, Kelley, & McCleary, 1990; Weber, 1989). Current studies support the transformational leadership framework as appropriate when schools are engaged in change (Brown, 1994; Leithwood, 1992, 1994, 1995a; Sheppard, 1995a). The collaborative nature of such leadership is supported by research which reveals that department heads play significant roles in leadership for change (Brown, 1994). Additionally, it is based on the proposition that change cannot be left to the experts (Fullan, 1993; Glickman, 1993; Harrison, Killion, & Mitchel, 1989; Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992; Lewis, 1989; Peters, 1992). Teachers must be leaders in the change process and they must be critical-reflective, action oriented professionals working in an environment of collaboration where they are committed to making a difference to teaching and learning (Calhoun, 1994; Fullan, 1995; O'Neil, 1995a; Sagor, 1992). Despite such studies supporting the model of leadership noted above, there exists little evidence that such leadership can be developed through training (Krug, Ahadi, & Scott, 1990). Yet, training through leadership institutes is an integral component of this emerging concept of leadership. As our research reveals

weaknesses in the leadership training process, therefore, our training is modified as a means of further contributing to theory in this area.

Schools as Learning Organizations

In light of uncertainty of reform efforts, "the generative concept of the learning organization" (Fullan, 1993, p. 6) provides the basis of a promising theoretical framework for the development of improving schools. This concept is grounded in the five "disciplines" expounded by Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner (1994): the development of personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. While the concept of the learning organization has developed outside of the school setting (Senge, 1990), research within education (Fullan, 1993; Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1993; Louis, 1994) supports its meaningfulness in the school context. Fullan (1993) sees this as "the new work of the principal and the teacher" (p. 66) and further contends that if we are to succeed in bringing about meaningful improvement "schools must become learning organizations" (Fullan, 1995, p. 234). In spite of such support, the relevance of this learning organization concept to education requires empirical study (Fullan, 1995; O'Neil, 1995b). The intent of this research is to provide such study, and to contribute to the development of a theory of "learning organization" in the school and school district context. It extends research of learning organization into rural and remote schools (smallest is a remote, multigrade school with 50 students, not accessible by road). Also, it addresses teacher leadership training relative to the learning organizations and how this relates to student learning.

Student Outcomes

The intent of efforts at reform in education is improved student learning (Fullan, 1995; Goodlad, 1992; McLaughlin, 1990; Murphy, 1992; Murphy & Hallinger, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995). Goodman (1995) contends that schools have been based on a model of the efficient and productive business organization where test scores have become the essential products. Successful school reform, he argues, must be based on values other than those of efficiency and productivity. While the selection of appropriate student learning outcomes is subject to debate (Madaus, Airasian, & Kellagan, 1980), Fullan (1993) suggests that The Conference Board of Canada profile of employability skills is indicative of directions schools in Canada are looking toward. This profile suggests that employers need people who can communicate, think, and continue to learn for life; who have positive attitudes and behaviours, are able to take responsibility for their actions, and are adaptable; and who can work with others (McLaughlin, 1992). In Newfoundland and Labrador, desired student outcomes have been determined through a public consultation process (Newfoundland and Labrador Educational Indicators System, 1995). A central contribution of this research is to determine the extent to which leadership training, leadership approach, and the learning organization accounts for variance in student outcomes that have been deemed important by primary education stakeholders.

Methodology

Sample

The sample is composed of 8 schools in one school district in Newfoundland with 139 teachers and 2623 students. School size ranges from 50-530 students located in both rural (50%) and urban (50%) centres. Teams of teacher from all participating schools (38 teachers) attended a week long summer leadership institute developed and conducted by the researchers in partnership with district office personnel. There was equal representation of male and female teachers attending the leadership training. The unit of analysis for the quantitative aspect of this research is the individual teacher. The choice of the teacher as the unit of analysis is based on research which suggests that if leadership is to be effective it must be validated by the consent of individual followers. In fact a criticism of transformational leadership theory is that it presents a view of leadership that resides in the individual leader without due attention to the leader-follower relationship (Blase, 1993; Brown, 1993; Lord & Maher, 1990; Sheppard, 1995a). The focus for the qualitative aspect is the school. This choice is based on the recognition that leadership is context bound and exists within "the corridor of beliefs" which already exists in the followers (Brown, 1995b; Foster, 1989). Bringing both individual and school foci together recognizes that "leadership is interactive in multiple directions such that in schools for instance, the principal is largely shaped by the teachers, the reputation and history of the school, and the expectations that have become institutionalized over time within the school and the community" (Angus, 1989, p. 76).

Data Collection & Analysis

In all participating schools, data were collected throughout the first year. All leadership team members were asked to maintain journals and to participate in school leadership interviews. A sample of one-third of each school staff were asked to participate in school leadership interviews. Interviews were conducted quarterly, in site visits, with the first interview data being collected four months following the leadership institute. All teachers were asked to respond to two survey instruments: School Leadership Survey and Process of Professional Learning Survey (Leithwood, 1995b; Leithwood, 1995c). The survey data were collected midway through the first year. Documents analyzed include: school improvement plans, staff meeting minutes, and team meeting minutes. On-going support was provided to leadership teams in each school through both a district support network and the faculty researchers. District and school teams have agreed to provide student outcome data consistent with the Newfoundland and Labrador Educational Indicators System (1995). At this point, however, there has been no formal attempt to measure change in student indicators that were targeted by this initiative. This lack of formal measurement of these indicators is deliberate. Like Senge et al. (1994), school and district teams and the researchers concluded that "measurements that are made prematurely will lead to erroneous conclusions" (p. 45). Only when it is reasonably certain that leadership approach is shifting toward the model promoted in training sessions and that schools are moving toward becoming learning organizations can impact be measured.

The Advantages of Partnerships

In this research, the university researchers play the role of "critical friends" and the school staffs assume a critical-reflective role which actively involves them in the research process (Lieberman, 1995, p. 3). The staff provides the closeness necessary for greater depth of understanding of practice, whereas the university researchers are

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more able to distance themselves in interpreting what is happening. Below is an outline of the various roles and responsibilities of the three main groups.

District

Role: School district personnel as members of the research team

Provides: Organization and facilitation, on-going support and continuity, legitimacy

Schools

Role: School teams as leaders of change and researchers

Provides: School ownership and involvement, school-driven research, legitimacy

University Faculty of Education

Role: Co-investigators as "critical friends" in research and change

Provides: Collaborative research design, an outside perspective, graduate student assistance and support, links to the broader research/theory base

The Partnership

Role: A research and development team drawn from school, district, and Faculty of Education

Provides: Complementary expertise, mutual support, follow-up, and synergy

Findings

The partnership model appears to work for all partners: return rate on surveys has been exceptional (86%), thereby providing an excellent sample to help understand the process. Feedback provided to the district and schools has been recognized as critical to their improvement efforts and provides endorsement of the concept of teacher as leader of change. As a result of positive feedback regarding the process, other schools have asked to become involved as partners.

School Team leadership appears to work best when the principal is recognized as a significant source of leadership as well. It appears imperative that one individual must emerge as a source of leadership; otherwise the team leadership appears to falter. Neither training nor support from the district has been sufficient to get two particular school staffs to engage in the process of school growth through team leadership. In both schools, teachers did not perceive that the principal provided leadership. While such a perception existed in a third school, changes have begun. In this school, teachers recognized the vice principal and a lead teacher as providing leadership for school improvement.

Leadership is often perceived as administration. As a result, the development of team leadership can be misinterpreted. Also, one cannot assume that all are ready for a new model of leadership. For example, some principals moving from the traditional model of administration to shared decision-making and school-based management revealed anxiety about their changing role, questioned their effectiveness, and needed on-going support. There is a need to provide principals with clear images of the emerging role, since facilitative power or "power with" appears to be confused in some cases with the abdication of responsibility or laissez-faire leadership. In another case, efforts of the Leadership Team were derailed because teachers viewed the team as "additional administration".

A District Superintendent's desire to shift leadership approach from a traditional hierarchical approach to a school-based model does not result in a quick shift either at the school or at the district level. Even when recognized as a direction to work toward, differing expectations result in frustrations at both levels. One particular district wide initiative promoted by an assistant superintendent and by some principals seemed to cause major difficulties in some schools attempting to operate in the school-based model endorsed by the superintendent. A consistent message reinforced by appropriate action from all district personnel is essential.

Teachers perceive that most leadership for school improvement comes from individuals or groups within the school. They do not perceive that program coordinators or district administrators provide much leadership in that direction, even though close examination reveals evidence to the contrary. They attribute even less leadership to parents, students, and the Department of Education. In the current sample, 72% of teachers perceive that the principal is a significant source of leadership; 54%, the whole staff; 24%, program coordinators; 19%, district administration; 12%, parents; 10%, students; and 16%, Department of Education.

Team members who attended the summer institute attribute much of their progress to the institute. Other teachers are less aware of the influence of the institute, but some recognize a shift in approach to change.

Journal keeping is a key component of this research model. It allows time for reflection and when shared with the "outside critical friends" it provides a critical component for formative evaluation of the process. While all members of the Leadership Teams agreed to keep a journal, for most it became lost in the practical realities of daily routines in the district, school, and classroom. This poses a challenge as we continue to work with teachers to develop a new model in which teachers are critical-reflective action oriented professionals who are leaders in the change process.

In the majority of schools with which we are working, the principal is recognized as the primary source of leadership for school improvement and this is complemented by a team comprised of teachers and school administrators. Leadership is perceived to promote high expectations (87%) and to be democratic (78%), participatory (70%), inclusive (70%), visionary (83%), change oriented (86%), visible (94%), supportive (90%), collaborative (83%), goal-oriented (89%), and intellectually stimulating (75%).

The positive direction of the constructs suggests that the leadership approach and the professional learning is perceived to be consistent with characteristics desirable in "Learning Organizations" that the district has been attempting to promote. In most cases, however, the score is close to the mean, suggesting that work is required on all constructs.

In one school that has been engaged in this process over a two year pilot period (Sheppard, 1995b) results indicate that the model of team leadership training directed at the development of the school as a learning organization is workable and that it contributes to improvements in teaching and learning and student outcomes. Teachers and administrators observed that efforts to implement cooperative learning as a teaching strategy within the new model was much more successful than any previous implementation attempt.

One teacher commented, there is a greater focus on this than any other initiative that we have attempted. There is far more consistency and more follow-up. As a staff we are far more like a team. We are drawn together around the implementation of cooperative learning.

Similarly, a program coordinator stated: There is more cooperative learning going on than before. There is significantly greater commitment to trying cooperative learning. There is a climate of collaboration at the school that did not previously exist. There is a feeling in the school among teachers that they can do something about what is happening in the school.... Teachers see that they have control and that this is not just another bandwagon; rather this is a step by step plan that provides the direction they believe to be necessary in their school.

The deliberate attempt to delay measurement of student outcomes has not prevented casual observations. Teachers believe that the school has fostered a culture that is conducive to learning. Students and teachers have learned the power of cooperation. Students are engaged in developing their social skills each day, they have become more tolerant of student differences, and behaviour problems and absenteeism have been significantly reduced.

The summer institute for team leadership training must include the presentation of methods and tools that assist in the application of theory and must allow practice time in their use. While teams were quite positive during the summer session and were engaged in several problem-solving sessions on team learning and school improvement, they found that back in their schools they did not have the practical experience to sustain the process toward the development of a learning organization. Also, the need for a follow-up reflective session for teams during the Fall Semester was suggested by many as a critical need.

On going support and follow-up with high expectations for change is essential. Many teams expressed the significance of follow-up by the district coordinator for school improvement and the continued presence of the "critical university friends" in providing the support and the motivation to sustain their efforts toward school growth.

Administrative structures can be major obstacles and some second-order changes are needed to facilitate the transition to a learning organization. Evidence confirms that a school structure which limits teacher flexibility inhibits collaboration and team planning. Also, downsizing, the loss of key team members, and forced transfers into the school can adversely affect the fragile environment being created, and undermine efforts at school improvement and reform.

In summary, findings from this research confirm that leadership training can influence the leadership approaches taken in schools such that team leadership is an integral component of the way schools operate and such teams provide the foundation for the school to become a learning organization. While we have not yet attempted to

formally evaluate the effects on student outcomes, informal observations indicate that our current efforts show much promise. This research, however, supports other findings that training and support must be on going rather than a one-time event. Leadership patterns and professional practices in schools and school districts are deeply engrained components of the educational culture that cannot be changed by simply declaring new values. "Deep beliefs and assumptions change as experience changes, and when this happens culture changes" (Senge et al., 1994, pp. 20-21). The partnership between university researchers as "critical friends" and the educational practitioners (teachers and district office personnel) as critical-reflective professionals actively engaged in the research process provides the methods and tools that allowed teachers to explore new ideas. These new ideas result in changes in the traditional structures. Overtime, such "surface movements" begin to change aspirations, skills and capabilities, attitudes, and beliefs--change that really matters (Senge et al., 1994). Findings of this research that indicate a shift in leadership approach and the development of a culture of professional learning consistent with that found in a learning organization indicate that appropriate training can make a difference. This difference promises to improve student outcomes.

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SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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In the last issue of The Morning Watch the author traced the beginnings of school-based management (SBM) in the Edmonton Public School District.

With SBM being currently examined by several districts throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, this article discusses implementing the concept in this province and how it may impact on school improvement at the building level.

School-based Management Defined

School-based management (SBM) has a variety of names in the educational field: site-based management; school-based budgeting; collaborative school management; shared decision making; and shared school governance to mention a few. In this article the two terms, school-based management and site-based management are used interchangeably.

The literature on SBM abounds with definitions which attempt to explain the concept. The author has found the definition proffered by Herman (1991) to be a rather straightforward one:

School-based management is a structure and a process that allows greater building level decision making related to some or all of the areas of instruction, personnel, budget, policy, and other matters pertinent to local school building governance; and it is a process that involves a variety of stakeholders in decisions related to the local, individual school. (p. vi)

The Status Quo

At the present time education in Newfoundland and Labrador is a highly centralized operation with the Department of Education controlling the school curriculum and the monies allocated to the 27 school districts throughout the province. In turn, these 27 districts control the monies available to each of their schools and the staffing available to each school, having responsibility as well for consulting services and the overall maintenance and upkeep of the school buildings in their jurisdictions. In recent years there has been considerable talk of having more input at the local building level into the decision-making process. However, for the most part, this has been sporadic and ad hoc with some districts experimenting with site-based decision making pilot initiatives. To the author's best knowledge, nothing has been attempted on a provincial scale even though the recent Royal Commission (1992) has suggested that school-based management is one such model of participatory school administration that schools should be considering.

With the impending school reform initiatives, it appears that the number of school districts will be reduced from 27 to 10. This translates into larger school districts

and the obvious, inherent danger is that these larger districts may tend to become even more centralized than they are at the present time. For example, the board which is rumored to replace St. John's Roman Catholic, Avalon North, Avalon Consolidated, Conception Bay South, Ferryland, and Western Avalon Roman Catholic will have responsibility for in excess of 35,000 students. Hence, it is suggested that the need for decentralizing the decision-making process to the building level would become even more crucial if stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, and the community at large) are to feel that they have the opportunity for meaningful involvement.

Motivation for School-based Management

It has been stated that school improvement should be the underlying reason for schools operating under a school-based management model (Delaney, 1995). When the Edmonton Public School District made the transition to all of its approximately 200 schools in 1980, the term "school improvement" was not used in the process. However, by schools being responsible for decision making in the areas of curriculum, staffing, and budgeting, the implication was that it would indeed lead to an improvement in the teaching and learning process (Delaney, 1995).

In recent years there has been considerable attention paid to the school improvement process in this province with many schools and boards having established school improvement teams and co-ordinators. Specifically, this has involved schools designing mission statements, strategic and operational plans, as well as specific action plans to bring about improvements at the building levels. The latest initiative, that of school councils, is one for which the provincial government is to be commended. The approach has been a somewhat methodical and cautious one with the establishment of a provincial pilot consisting of seven school councils throughout the province. The suggested modus operandi for these school councils according to the government's own guidelines is that these councils should be primarily advisory at this particular point in time (Department of Education and Training, 1995).

According to David (1996), "reasons for initiating site-based management run the gamut...". She further elaborates on those reasons:

To some, site-based management is a governance reform designed to shift the balance of authority among schools, districts, and the state.... To others, site-based management is a political reform initiated to broaden the decision-making base, either within the school, the larger community or both.... Site-based management may also be an administrative reform to make management more efficient by decentralizing and deregulating it.... Yet another premise of site-based management educational reform is that the way to enhance student learning is to let education professionals make the important professional decisions.... Further complicating the landscape, there are often underlying motives. Stated purposes may obscure far less lofty aims, such as weakening entrenched and distrusted local school boards, creating the illusion of reform without investing additional resources, putting a positive spin on central office downsizing by calling it decentralization, or simply trying to shift the blame for failure to the school itself. (pp. 5-6)

The author contends that the major stakeholders in education - students, parents, teachers, and the community at large - are primarily interested in school-based management as a vehicle for school improvement. As for other reasons such as political reform, governance per se, or government's sometimes hidden agendas regarding the weakening of school board power, the author further contends that the stakeholders as listed above, could not care less. However, the enhancement of the school as a vehicle for student learning is what will ultimately convince stakeholders of the merits of school-based management.

School Improvement

There currently exists an extensive debate in the SBM literature as to whether or not this form of school governance results in raising academic achievement levels in schools. Detractors of SBM constantly whine about the paucity of empirical evidence linking SBM to increases in student achievement (Allen, 1993; Cuendet, 1993; Levin, 1992; Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990; Skaruppa, 1994). On the other hand, proponents view SBM as a very positive and successful vehicle of school improvement (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988; David, 1989; Herman, 1991; Levine & Eubanks, 1992; Neal, 1991).

There appears to be a tendency among educators to view school improvement in terms of academic achievement only. School improvement, suggests this author, is a much broader, more holistic concept than academic achievement. It certainly encompasses academic achievement but is not limited to only academic achievement. Proudford and Baker (1994) posited the following very useful definition of school improvement: "an ongoing process linked to an educational philosophy and clearly articulated goals rather than an *ad hoc* implementation of discrete classroom and school-wide initiatives" (p. 33). They also stated that there are three broad dimensions to this process: "namely, the approach to curriculum, the dynamics of school improvement, and the outcomes of school improvement" (p. 22).

Although the literature on SBM and school improvement appears to be conflicting and inconclusive, there is considerable optimism regarding the potential of school-based management. David (1989) exemplified that optimism:

Once school-based management is understood in terms of empowering school staff to improve educational practice through fundamental change in district management functions, the relevant research topics are easy to identify. They include school improvement programs, organizational change, efforts to stimulate innovation, participatory decision making, and effective practices in many areas, from teacher selection to staff development. (p. 46)

School-based management is not a panacea for all the educational ills facing our schools today. "That school-based management is no 'quick fix' is evidenced by the fact that it took 10 years to accomplish in Dade County [Florida].... It takes at least five years for tangible results to be achieved" (Shelton, 1992, p. 2). In a similar vein, Brown (1990) acknowledged that although the concept had "some attendant problems [there were] also possibilities for the improvement of schools" (p. 9).

A Practical Approach

The Edmonton Public School District in beginning their transition to SBM in 1976 started with a pilot project of seven schools. In 1989 the concept was expanded to the other approximately 200 schools in the district. As of 1996, the concept has been well institutionalized but that is not to say that all is perfect in Edmonton Public. However, educators in that district are generally pleased with SBM and would definitely not want to return to the days of centralized decision making (Delaney, 1995).

As mentioned earlier, there appears to be no concerted effort provincially for schools to adopt school-based management. There are isolated pilot initiatives by certain boards (e.g. Appalachia R.C. School Board) which are presently attempting to implement site-based decision making. A provincial effort is needed if SBM is to receive the attention that it deserves and that may or may not happen as the school reform efforts intensify over the next several months. What are some of the challenges and obstacles which may stand in the way of Newfoundland and Labrador schools going the SBM route?

This province has a history of centralized decision making in education. A mindset exists that school boards need to control every aspect of an individual school's operation, especially its finances. Teachers and school administrators perceive themselves as educators and not business managers, hence the attitude on the part of educators that finances are "low on one's priority list". Similarly, business managers may be of the opinion that educators, particularly building administrators, lack the expertise and the motivation to really "worry about" the money situation in their schools.

Edmonton Public experienced many roadblocks in its attempts to convert to SBM and "one of the most obvious obstacles at the time was the resistance on the part of central office personnel who worked in the area of school finances" (Delaney, 1995, p. 57). Because of their control over finances, these individuals wielded considerable power over the schools and perceived their very existence and employment threatened by the introduction of school-based management. Whether or not similar opposition would surface in Newfoundland and Labrador should schools decide to embark on the road to school-based management is totally speculative at this point in time. Appropriate in-service with a clear definition and understanding of roles and functions of the major players such as district business managers and school building administrators would obviously help to allay various suspicions that may arise in school board offices.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing those involved in attempts to have schools convert to school-based management would be to come to an understanding of the new roles that are associated with all stakeholders. In the past the majority of "stake holders" have been passive recipients of what school and district administrators have decided was "appropriate and wise" for all involved in the education business. SBM is premised on the basis of stakeholders becoming active participants in the decision-making process, a leap of gigantic proportions for many of those "stakeholders"!

The roles of central office personnel and the school principal are ones which undergo significant transformation when the decision-making is decentralized and schools begin operating under a school-based management model. In a study by Koerner (1991) several nationally-honored principals in the United States were asked to share their thoughts on the principal's role in school-based management. They perceived a pending role change, seeing SBM as a shift in control from the centralized power structure to the people most affected by the school. They believed, furthermore, that although principals would continue to be decision makers and organizers they must

also be bridge builders among local groups and must involve parents and teachers in decisions that affect the student.

This may cause considerable stress for principals who have not been used to working in a "shared decision-making mode" and for the teachers and parents working with these principals. Appropriate in-servicing in the areas of collaborative decision making, conflict resolution, consensus and team building are essential if principals are to be successful in making this transition.

The importance of the school principal in school-based management cannot be overstated. In a recent study the leadership style of the school principal was the primary factor contributing to a successful relationship between school improvement and school-based management (Delaney, 1995).

Central office personnel undergo significant role changes under school-based management. Hirsh and Sparks (1991) quoted a superintendent whose message regarding the nature of his job and that of his staff was to assist in the attainment of long range goals: "Once we sign off on your mission and objectives... it's our responsibility to provide you with the resources and support you need to get the job done. If you fail, we also have failed" (p. 16). They further spoke of this altered relationship:

- Central office administrators were coming to see change as a constant for continuous improvement.
- Central offices were shifting from monitoring and regulatory agencies to service centers for schools.
- Day-to-day, central office administrators were spending more time as planning facilitators and members of school improvement teams either at the school or district level. (p. 16)

Concluding Comment

School-based management is by no means the perfect system. However, as Odden (Mohrman & Wohlstetter, 1994) has stated, "school-based management should be conceived as a part of an overall systemic education reform, not as a reform in and of itself, and that decentralized decision making provides the conditions that allow school-site teachers and administrators to design changes in school organization and curriculum that ultimately will improve student achievement" (p. xi). The process of school improvement is complex and arduous. School-based management may help to facilitate that process.

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**THREE DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN A TELELEARNING
ENVIRONMENT: SCHOOL NETWORKING, COLLABORATIVE
TEACHING AND OPEN ADMINISTRATION**

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Many educators are aware of changes taking place in educational systems as computers, the Internet, interactive television, satellite dishes and an ever expanding range of software provide new and often exciting ways of bringing teachers and learners together. The development and convergence of information and communication technologies provides opportunities for leaders in education to organize inter-school networks, collaborate with one another and administer schools in new ways. This has been particularly important in rural areas with very small schools. The viability of small schools has been the subject of debate in both Canada and New Zealand and the provision of education to rural communities has, accordingly, been a policy issue in both societies. The 'cost effectiveness' of small schools (Bray, 1987) has to be considered in relation to the issue of equity if young people are not to be disadvantaged by the location of their homes.

The following observations are from the author's recent experience working with several regional telelearning networks in New Zealand. Most of the issues raised are relevant to electronic networks that link schools in other parts of the world, while others are peculiar to the unusually deregulated and decentralized system of education in New Zealand.

Telelearning was adopted in many rural areas of New Zealand as a means of keeping schools open in small and isolated communities. By sharing teaching and learning resources through the electronic networking of small schools over wide geographic areas, many small schools have become, in effect, constituent parts of a large school (Stevens, 1995b). In the process, many learners in rural areas are provided with a considerably enlarged range of curriculum choices as well as extended on-line peer groups. In a report on the development of rural school networking (Stevens, 1995a) it was noted that leadership by Principals who recognized the potential of new technologies in classrooms is critical to the survival of many small schools.

School Networking

The academic and administrative interfacing of schools into local, provincial and even national networks using audiographic and video technologies, satellite dishes, the internet and interactive television is changing the way in which education in whole regions of New Zealand is organized. The networking of small schools on dispersed sites into virtual classes has the potential to provide rural students with access to an increased range of teaching expertise and with learning environments comparable to those available to their peers in large urban institutions. According to Tiffin and Rajasingham (1995), a virtual class is "where two or more people can come together as telepresences for instruction." This involves a situation "where everyone can talk and be heard and be identified and everybody can see the same words, diagrams and pictures, at the same time. This calls for the use of telecommunications and computers.

At its simplest, it can be done using two conventional telephone lines at each site, one to link telephones and one to link computers."

Schools that are networking with one another and thereby providing a basis for virtual classes to develop, use computers and other technologies as integral parts of the day to day life of both teachers and learners. By integrating information and communication technologies in classrooms and by applying these to the development of educational networks, schools can provide students and teachers with access to non-local industrial and commercial environments. Links with industry, commerce, polytechnics and community colleges considerably extend the scope of the education that young people, particularly those in rural areas, can experience from their schools. These technological developments provide students with expanded horizons when considering their educational and vocational futures. The introduction of computers, the internet, email and, in some schools, satellite dishes, to develop virtual classrooms covering dispersed sites has the potential to redefine the ways in which teachers and learners interact. Within a virtual class there may be more than one teacher with a telepresence at a particular time. Decision making, teaching-styles and inter-personal relations are much more public in electronically-networked classes than they are in conventional classrooms and for some teachers this may initially be threatening. For other teachers, new communication technologies are liberating as they have their skills exposed to an expanded audience. Virtual classes can be a vehicle for professional and public recognition.

There are a number of leadership issues in the interfacing of schools and the development of virtual classes. As one school culture meets other school cultures in the academic and administrative interface of the virtual class, leaders have to be particularly sensitive to potentially competing agendas. In networks that have been developed in schools across rural New Zealand, for example, it has been necessary to have a hub school as the administrative, technological and curriculum centre. Not all teachers want to teach on-line and school leaders will recognize that some teachers will adapt to the emerging tele-environment more readily than others. Tele-teaching is essentially collaborative when provided within school networks and, for this to succeed, a well-developed inter-school framework is most important.

Collaborative Teaching

In a one-room, usually rural school, consisting of a single class of less than twenty students under the care of one teacher, we are likely to find a complex educational environment. Learners in a one room small rural school, however, unlike their counterparts in other educational institutions, usually range widely in age and in educational level while all sharing the same space. It requires considerable organizational and pedagogical skill of the teacher if all students are to receive educational opportunities equal to those of their urban counterparts who are educated in much larger institutions where they will share classrooms with a cohort of peers of approximately their own ages.

It is not necessarily appropriate for all students in a one-room school to participate in the same lesson with their teacher. It is sometimes appropriate for certain students to take time out, without leaving their classroom, if they have access to a computer that is attached to a network which will provide them with access to classes in other schools. It is possible for a small, geographically isolated and diverse grouping of students to be together in a single classroom under the direction of one teacher while

participating in a range of other classrooms simultaneously, none of which is necessarily located in the student's own district. Through judicious application of modern information and communication technologies, teaching and learning can be increasingly individualized and the educational significance of the location of the student's home and size of his or her school becomes unimportant. This, however, requires a considerable measure of organizational skill.

In some of the very smallest schools, teachers have developed organizational and teaching skills with direct application to networked, on-line learning. For many years teachers in these schools have taught students of different ages, with varying levels of academic achievement, different learning styles and different levels of interest in what is presented to them, within one room. The study of multi-grade classrooms (e.g. Mulcahy, 1993) has particular relevance to rural school teleteaching and telelearning.

As an increasing range of technologies becomes available, some teachers recognize the possibility of combining traditional face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in the course of a school day. In New Zealand, some teachers in rural networked schools initially attempted to teach in a traditional classroom fashion when their class was 'on-line' with other schools. A common problem was talking on-line as though they were in front of their traditional classes, something that was not always appreciated by distant learners. Questioning skills become particularly important in the course of an on-line lesson to ensure participation by all students. A degree of independence in a student's learning is required when on-line, including the ability to work without a teacher in the same room.

At present many teachers require assistance in preparing learning resources in ways that are suitable for delivery to students across electronic networks. There are a number of questions to be considered by educational leaders: How is the curriculum to be developed in a multi-media format? Is teaching across networks to be made available to all students in secondary schools or just senior students? How should professional development be provided for teachers within an electronic school network?

Positive outcomes have been found by some rural networked schools in terms of increased student motivation when learning is provided by audiographic technology (Stevens, 1995a). The student's need to concentrate very closely on the audio-graphic lesson as it is taking place to fully participate in it was noted by some principals. Students cannot anticipate when they would be asked a question on-line and, accordingly, usually came to these classes very well prepared. Particularly positive outcomes were reported in the learning of other languages using audio-graphic technology, including Maori.

There is considerable scope in the development of rural school networking for the provision of individualized learning programs for students. However, as one skilled on-line teacher pointed out to the writer, "it is what goes on in the head of the teacher that matters." The teacher is the essential resource base of a successful lesson taught over any electronic network linking schools.

Open Administration

There can be considerable expense involved in maintaining hardware, including the costs of repairs, on-line time, preparation time, 'down time', staff training

time as well as the cost of software. Not all schools in New Zealand have computers that can be dedicated to audiographic teaching, an issue that is symptomatic of the bigger problem of the co-ordination of hardware and software across all institutions participating in an electronic network. The abolition of regional school boards in New Zealand has not helped in the development of school networks. Many regional networks began to take shape before the need for inter-school co-ordination of hardware and software was fully appreciated. The constant changes in the design of hardware and software and the need for continuous upgrading is now recognized by networked schools as a shared cost. "Bulk buying" for a network rather than for an individual school is now widely accepted by principals, as is the need for a close relationship with the suppliers of technology to obtain expert advice and support.

It is often difficult to coordinate the timetables of schools across a network and, accordingly, a considerable measure of inter-institutional and intra-institutional cooperation is required. Much of the success of rural school networks to the present time has depended on the goodwill and enthusiasm of participating teachers and principals. In an educational system in which educational institutions often compete with one another for students, many small rural networked schools have developed collaborative teaching and administration structures. Rural school networks in New Zealand have, remarkably, developed in the absence of any national program to support them.

Conclusion

At present small rural schools that are networked are providing a model for teaching, learning and the delivery of the curriculum that makes considerable use of new technologies. The advent of electronic networking of schools has encouraged a view of the school that is academically and administratively open to other schools. In many parts of rural New Zealand, communities have schools which are, in effect, sites within teaching and learning networks. Some parts of a small rural school, such as the teachers of subjects not provided locally, may be located in widely dispersed locations. Many of the students in a networked rural school in a particular location attend only 'on-line' - as tele-presences for part of a day.

School networks are ceasing to be regional in nature as telephone costs are reduced. Increasingly, regional networks share resources with one another and links have been forged with other educational institutions - community colleges, polytechnics and selected large urban schools. The management of tele-learning in New Zealand has been critical to the survival of many small schools in rural communities. In the struggle to keep small schools open in many parts of the country, a new phenomenon has been created - the virtual class.

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TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM AND THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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As curriculum planners are swayed more and more by the influences of technological determinism, it becomes imperative that all educators try to get a broader sense of the changing socio-cultural interactions that take place within classrooms. Digitized information manipulation, on-line communications, the incorporation of electronic files and graphics into texts, the transferring and downloading of World Wide Web data, and the inclusion of HyperCard and other interactive multimedia programs into documents are all becoming part of the regular high school English curriculum as we move toward the next millennium (see the 1996 *Atlantic Canada English Language Guide*). In addition, for high school English students, the experimenting with Home Page technologies (using HTML language) "to become information providers on the Internet...", the creating of a "broadcast/Home Page for their schools," and the planning of publicity campaigns in a range of media, are all part of the changing English language arts curriculum (p. 155). This essay will discuss some of the challenges these types of curriculum objectives have for the English classroom and give some insights into their pedagogical implications.

English, as a discipline, has been taught in schools for about 130 years (Applebee, 1974). Its general structure has remained the same within the university; a literary canon is studied and appropriate composition skills are used to demonstrate an understanding of various literary works. This decoding/analytic literacy is typically marked by generic concepts delivered to learners through anthologies or textbooks. In turn, students individually study the material and demonstrate the power of their textual engagements through analytical papers, tutorials, and/or examinations.

Canadian and U.S. high schools typically used this form of English instruction until the 1980s. Scholars such as Rosenblatt (1978), Iser (1980), Crossman (1982) and Sholes (1985) challenged this methodology and moved English teaching toward a transactional/critical form of literacy. In the process, individual learning succumbed to collaborative learning, preconstructed learning outcomes gave way to student constructed meaning, and the quests for the ultimate literary criticism gave ground to confirming and deconstructing personal and aesthetic readings of texts. The 1980s saw an increase in the use of nonprint texts such as music, film, television, and photojournalism in the English classroom. What is important here is that high school English instruction began to take on a very different appearance from university English instruction. An individual student's engagement with literary works became a paramount concern; historical or critic's conception of a particular work took on lesser importance.

English language arts curriculum in the 1990s has greatly expanded the kinds of texts given over to study (See for example the 1996 *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Art Curriculum* document and the *Western Canadian Protocol-Common Curriculum Framework*). CD Rom technologies, multimedia texts, Internet links, and rock videos are now among the many items to be 'read' for meaning. As the very physical nature of texts has changed so too has the student's modes and methods of recording and responding to textual engagements. Representing has been added to the traditional strands of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their responses to various textual engagements through

3-D constructions and presentations, multimedia assemblages, models, or graphic displays. The result is that high school English as a subject, with its expanded notion of what can be 'read' and its move and acceptance of multiple ways of representing knowledge, is now markedly different from university or traditional conceptions of the discipline.

Information, media, and visual literacies are increasingly taking their place along side more traditional understandings of literacy. To be clear, information literacy is computer based and uses multiple technologies to produce and manipulate data. Media literacy is understood to be an engagement with the mass media in ways that will give insight into how it manufactures and manipulates meaning. Visual literacy is an ability to conceptualize and understand the symbolism in static and moving images, and to understand their impact as they construct meaning.

The result of this all-inclusive conception of English education is a discipline with new and greatly expanded parameters. A vocational/technical conception of education is being juxtaposed against an aesthetic/literary one; efferent readings are challenging aesthetic readings for class time. In this reconstruction, media and computer accessed information is assured a greater and greater role in the curriculum. In some quarters the discipline of English is undergoing a name change. General students will be taking "Communications" instead of English in grades 11 and 12 in Atlantic Canada (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide*. Draft: July 8, 1996, pp. 31, 32, and 35). English will be for the elite--those who are university bound (p. 31). Communications courses are vying with English courses for a central place within the English high school curriculum.

What is disturbing about the direction of the new English language arts curriculum is that it is adding enormous amounts of material to an already overcrowded program of studies. The addition of a course on media studies or the inclusion of a business course on computer-based text manipulation or a computer course in advanced graphic design sounds progressive. However, the incorporation of these topics within the English language arts program, as they are in Atlantic Canada, causes pressure to be placed on limited instructional time. This is not to say that the use of new technologies is not applicable in responding to texts; rather in the literature class it is the response that is of importance as opposed to the packaging. Behind the most technologically advanced special effects Hollywood movie is a written script.

Teachers of English are now expected to engage students in a multitude of texts in a variety of mediums. With the expansion of the definition of text comes an expanded definition of what constitutes reading. To understand and to 'read' the media and advertisements, English teachers need to be versed in the nuances of popular culture. They are expected to build bases of cultural capital that are situated in and engaged within television, Hollywood movies, pop radio, videos and an assortment of pulp journals and novels. In order to lead students in meaningful text discussions, teachers of English are expected to keep current with media happenings. Thus Calvin Klein's pictures of scarcely clad children or Bennington's ads (texts) of copulating horses or Disney's placement of its corporate symbols on Canadian postage stamps need to be studied. Traditional teachers of English will argue that you cannot have it all. They will say that a blending and rolling of academic, vocational, workplace, technical, personal-growth, and liberal conceptions of English into a 'one-philosophy-fits-all' notion of secondary education will not fly. The rise of electronic communications skills and the decline of literature is challenging traditional conceptions and values associated with the teaching of English. An industrial/technical/vocational model of education raises many

new theoretical questions for English educators. As the new curriculum documents are implemented in Canadian high schools, questions arise about the kinds of educational backgrounds and experiences the next generation of English teachers will be expected to have since a literary education seems to satisfy only part of the new requirements of the discipline.

English teachers will need a background in specific computer skills. In *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, teachers are required to be more flexible in the uses of technology in classroom practice. Included under the document's teaching suggestions are such ideas as having students "use a range of media (including, but not limited to computers) to produce a text..., edit spreadsheets, use formulas, sort information and manipulate data in a number of ways to create meaning", and "apply the principles of good design to produce a variety of desktop published documents using desktop publishing software" (p. 152). Teachers are to encourage students to "subscribe to listservs and news groups of interest to them and participate in electronic discussions," (p. 153).

Assuming the present generation of traditionally educated teachers can set aside the overwhelming weight of tradition and historical precedence that has come to guide and inform the intellectual habits and nuances of English instruction, a host of questions come to mind in light of these new curriculum initiatives. Literature based teachers are bound to ask a number of questions: What are the methods we might develop to evaluate electronic texts? What are the new grammars and genres students will need to learn as they begin to write in networked classrooms and electronic and digitized environments? How will twenty-first century virtual environments support the more traditional educational objectives of English and language arts instruction? As a culture raised on print, are we relying too heavily on print conventions to address virtual communication requirements? Some teachers of English might feel they are becoming the servants of technology and question a curriculum that focuses on Internet communicating rather than looking at the structure of human communications. Others will question the use of multimedia and a cacophony of technologies to make critical judgments about media and technology. They will direct students to more traditional sources and see in them the tried and tested seeds for developing critical thought.

As I have written elsewhere (Barrell, 1996), the exposure to Internet information and databases fails to guarantee much. Just as the existence of community libraries did not guarantee literacy, neither does the availability of computer printouts, Internet search engines, complex statistical graphing, or technological forecasting necessarily improve instruction or learning. In the English classroom it is time, memories, solitude, and companionship that are the ingredients that encourage one's ideas to marinate and mature into thoughtful words and creative actions. Literature study, as Northrop Frye would have us understand it, is there to educate the imagination. We need to be careful about moving away from time spent on aesthetic textual engagements and creative critical thought. Efferent reading is useful, but it must not come to dominate student readings. Just as I have asked questions about what it means to write in electronic environments, I can also see that a new set of reading skills is required to function well in hypertext. The act of 'reading' on the Internet is not as simple as we might think. Print authors restrict our reading as well as control and filter the flow of information that reaches us. Reading on the Internet, if it is to be done knowledgeably and skillfully, requires an ability to elbow past undifferentiated information and to find links that render access to relevant data. Because of the multiplicity of pathways on the Internet, I see the instructional role of the teacher as being responsible for finding pathways through encroaching distracters and advertisements to worthwhile sites. They must make sure

that the lateral reading access the Internet gives students is not done at the expense of depth. Teachers of English in the next millennium will need to develop trustworthy, accurate, reliable, and reapplicable materials and be able to leave markers for students to follow as they venture and read in various sites (Barrell, 1997).

English educators will need to spend time assessing the new conception of high school English instruction being introduced in Canada. Though they have argued over the nature and the thrust of various literary canons, they have tended to agree that aesthetic readings are key to understanding the human condition and for allowing young people to engage with the issues that impact on their lives. They know it allows students to vicariously experience human motives, conflicts, and values. Technology is seriously challenging literature for time and space in the English classroom. A balance must be struck so that English does not simple become a vehicle for working and operating in cyberspace.

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EVALUATING ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUMS: USENET NEWSGROUPS AND THE CLASSROOM

**Michael K. Barbour
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Introduction

In an article which appeared in Atlantic Monthly approximately two years ago, it was stated that:

In 1922, Thomas Edison predicted that "the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and... in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks." Twenty-three years later, in 1945, William Levenson, the director of the Cleveland public schools' radio station, claimed that "the time may come when a portable radio receiver will be as common in the classroom as is the blackboard." Forty years after that the noted psychologist B.F. Skinner, referring to the first days of his "teaching machines," in the late 1950s and early 1960s, wrote, "I was soon saying that, with the help of teaching machines and programmed instruction, students could learn twice as much in the same time and with the same effort as in a standard classroom." (Oppenheimer, 1997: 45)

While the motion picture, radio or teaching machine has not revolutionised the classroom as was originally anticipated, computers may very well accomplish this task. However, this will not be achieved through computers alone, and computers will not replace teachers altogether. Nonetheless, teachers have begun to employ computers as tools to assist in their teaching and this might well revolutionise the classroom.

In recent years, teachers have begun to use the Internet as a teaching tool. Language and culture teachers, for example, have been using e-mail pen-friends to help their students in their studies in these areas. Other teachers have been exploiting the World-Wide Web to enhance and enrich the curriculum in all subject areas. There are, of course, three components to the Internet: e-mail, Usenet newsgroups, and the World-Wide Web. While e-mail and the World-Wide Web have found a number of educational applications and there is much literature reporting on these, there has been less use of and less written about Usenet newsgroups. One educational institution that has capitalised fairly extensively on Usenet newsgroups is the Canadian university.

Definition and Comparison

Before proceeding to consider how and to what extent Canadian universities have used Usenet newsgroups, it would be helpful to consider exactly what Usenet newsgroups are. American political consultant and political Internet guru Phil Noble describes Usenet newsgroups as "[discussion groups] with topics ranging from sex... to contemporary European literature." (Noble, 1996: 9) These discussion groups are based in a DOS (lynx) or non-icon based environment. Best estimates state that there are approximately 13,000 different Usenet newsgroups. They can be created by system administrators at any Internet Service Provider. While Usenet newsgroups used by universities are generally within the domain of that particular university, other Usenet newsgroups generally fall into one of the nine following domains:

alt - an unregulated hierarchy of controversial or unusual topics (not carried by all sites)
comp - computers and related subjects
humanities - literature and the humanities
misc - discussions that do not fit anywhere else
news - news about Usenet itself
rec - hobbies, games, and recreation
sci - science
soc - social groups (often ethnically related)
talk - politics and related topics. (Bull, Bull and Sigmon, 1997: 12)

In addition to these general domains, most countries, states, provinces, and even cities also have domains to cover issues within their areas of interest.

One of the advantages of Usenet newsgroups over other forms of Internet discussion groups is the ease with which they can be created. Unlike web-based methods, all a system administrator needs to do is enter a simple command into the Internet Service Provider's server and the newsgroup is created. In recognising this advantage, however, one is reminded of the fact that there are other methods of Internet discussion available.

The two other common methods of Internet discussion are e-mail listservers and world-wide web-based discussion groups. E-mail listservers are a device which forwards a copy of every e-mail sent to the listserver to all the individuals who have subscribed to that list. There are some short-comings of e-mail listservers when compared to Usenet newsgroups:

Newsgroups differ from mailing lists in several important respects, ... A subscription to an Internet mailing list brings postings that are placed directly in a subscriber's electronic mailbox. Active mailing lists can generate dozens or even hundreds of messages per day. Although filters and other methods of organising this volume of mail are available, the recipient still must organise the incoming messages. It's no wonder that subscribers to mailing lists are frequently overwhelmed by the volume of their mail.

In contrast, newsgroups reside on a central news server, and their messages are viewed with a separate "newsreader." The messages are organised by topic, which allows the viewer to designate an entire conversational strand (known as a "thread") as already read if it is not relevant. (Bull, Bull and Sigmon, 1997: 13)

In these respects, Usenet newsgroups address many of the problems that can be associated with e-mail listservers.

World-wide web-based discussion groups constitute the other most common method of Internet discussion. Web-based discussion groups work in almost the same manner as Usenet newsgroups, except that the messages are kept on a single world-wide web site and the messages appear in an icon-driven environment. Again, there are also a number of differences between Usenet newsgroups and web-based discussion groups. "Web-based browsers lack many [Usenet newsgroup] features. For example, most Web-based discussion groups do not provide an easy way to mark, hide, or delete previously read postings or to mark an entire topic thread as "read" with a

single keystroke" (Bull, Bull and Sigmon, 1997: 15). The other major advantage that Usenet newsgroups have over web-based discussion groups is that there are still computers and Internet connections that operate in a non-icon driven environment. On these computers Usenet newsgroups can be read quite easily, but the web-based discussion groups are not as user friendly towards this sort of environment.

Canadian Universities

In May of this year, an e-mail was sent to the webmasters of thirty-five Canadian Universities. This e-mail identified the author as a researcher inquiring about the use of Usenet newsgroups as a companion to traditional teaching and learning at the post-secondary level. It also asked a series of simple questions regarding their university's use of Usenet newsgroups as a companion to courses offered at their university. The response to the initial inquiry was not great, so three weeks later the same e-mail was sent a second time with an explanation as to why it was being sent again and a list of universities which had responded to the original inquiry. The questions were as follows:

1. Has your University established Usenet newsgroups for any of the courses offered in your University calendar?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
2. If yes, to what extent does your University provide these newsgroups?
 - a) a select few courses
 - b) some courses, but not all
 - c) all courses in some departments and none in others
 - d) all courses in some departments and some in others
 - e) all courses offered in your University's calendar
3. If no to question 1 or anything other than e) to question 2, what are your University's plans in this area in the future (if any)?

Of the thirty-five universities contacted, twenty-two responded. There were five universities which stated that they did not use Usenet newsgroups at all; nine that stated that there were some Usenet newsgroups for a selected few courses; seven that saw themselves as offering Usenet newsgroups for some, but not all courses, and one university that had established a Usenet newsgroup for each and every course listed in its university calendar.¹

The responses to the third question varied greatly. For the most part, universities felt that if professors requested that a Usenet newsgroup be created for their particular course the university would have one created for them. One of the problems that many of these webmasters voiced with this method was that once the newsgroup was created it was never removed and after a year or two could end up totally unused. However, the most common theme that emerged in these answers was the belief that Usenet newsgroups were "a good tool for the 80s!" but that for the next millennium universities need to move towards world-wide web discussion forums (such as Web-CT, AltaVista Web Forum or Caucus web-conferencing software). Another "new" strategy that was mentioned was the use of shared folders on a departmental or faculty server.

There was one university, however, which used a full integration of its curriculum and Usenet newsgroups. Approximately five years ago, Carleton University used the above mentioned system of instructor request for the creation of course-related Usenet Newsgroups (such as *carleton.courses.47100d*). Approximately three years ago, it allowed for a system which created two newsgroups for each course, one for course materials and one for course discussion (such as *carleton.courses.47230b-d* and *carleton.courses.47230b-m*). In the summer of 1997, Carleton decided it would be a lot less work to simply create course newsgroups for every single course regardless of whether or not the course instructor wanted a newsgroup. In other words it was a time saving measure rather than a thoughtful strategy.² The main reason that they created a course newsgroups for every course was that it became difficult and time consuming to create course newsgroups on request. In actual terms, this means that there are 2972 *carleton.course. #####X* Usenet newsgroups.

According to the Carleton University webmaster, Rick Mallett, the use of Usenet newsgroups was more a convenient choice than a decision based upon educational pedagogy:

We felt that an electronic forum for course discussion was useful and straightforward to implement. We didn't care exactly how the newsgroups would be used but assumed that faculty would use the newsgroup to distribute assignments and course notes and that students would use the newsgroup to ask each other (and TA's) questions. In many cases the faculty were oblivious to the existence of the newsgroup (despite our efforts to inform them) and the newsgroup was used exclusively by the students for course related discussion. In other cases the course instructor actively participated in the discussion and attempted to answer as many questions as possible. We've been meaning to look at web forums but haven't had time. Usenet newsgroups are well supported and easy to maintain and there are numerous available newsreaders etc. etc. etc.³

The Carleton University example is the most comprehensive use of this technology of any Canadian university.

Usenet Newsgroups and Learning

In general, though, the mere creation of Usenet newsgroups does not necessarily mean they are being used for sound educational purposes or that they are being used at all. One of the comments made by a number of the webmasters was that for a Usenet newsgroup to be effective it has to be monitored by the instructor. However, my experience in this area would indicate that it has to be a much greater commitment to the technology than is implicit in this simple task. For online discussion groups to be of use to students, instructors must know beforehand exactly how they intend to use this technology to either supplement or enrich students' learning.

There are a number of ways in which effective use of the technology can be accomplished. One of the easiest is to have the professor post questions to generate student discussion around particular themes, remembering that the Usenet newsgroups are organised in threads which consist of an initial post and then all the responses to that original post. In this scenario, the professor would grade students' responses to the questions and the students' interaction around one another's responses. Another simple way to use the Usenet newsgroups is as a means to post administrative messages regarding the course. Another administrative use is for students to post questions regarding components of the course to the instructor, such as clarification of lecture points or questions about course assignments.

According to Gina Bull, one of the authors of the "Internet Discussion Groups" article, there are two basic ways to use Usenet newsgroups in education:

One is to view the articles as primary sources in a discussion of a topic, much like interviews or letters. In this model, the students would read the newsgroup much like a daily paper, perhaps without interacting at all. The other way is as a support mechanism for the class itself -- a local newsgroup is created for the class (assuming the school has a local Usenet server) -- and is available at all hours for extra class discussions, clarification of assignments, "office hours", etc..⁴

These methods of using the Usenet newsgroups are not particularly creative, nor do they challenge students much beyond basic knowledge and lower-order reasoning. However, there are other methods which can be used, methods which serve to provide more challenge for students. For example, as a student I witnessed one professor in a course in Canadian constitutional politics conduct an online First Ministers meeting. For this activity, the professor created groups during class for each of the ten provinces, two territories, federal government and aboriginal groups. These groups formulated their positions offline, then posted them to the course's Usenet newsgroup. Once all the positions were available on the newsgroups, individual students and groups were encouraged to generate discussion and debate around their areas of common ground and their areas of vast difference. As the participation increased, there was posturing by groups, deal-making, individuals standing firm, everything that would have occurred had this activity been conducted during class-time. However, by moving the activity to a Usenet newsgroup the professor was able to extend the amount of time devoted to the activity and increase the number of students participating in the activity. Conducted offline, this activity would have taken three to six classes. By conducting it online, the professor was able to use one class to explain the activity and get the ball rolling, and then allow the students weeks to participate in this activity.

This approach is similar to one of the four components of the Acadia Advantage. In the example used by the Acadia Advantage, a piece of software called MS-Netmeeting is used by the Institute for Teaching and Technology to assist groups of students in constructing a model of learning. This project would see students orient themselves during class-time towards how they will approach the project and then use their laptops and the MS-Netmeeting software to complete their construction of a model of learning (Hemming and MacKinnon, 1998: 7). Another component of the Acadia Advantage is the use of coded discussion groups to promote substantive discussion. This component worked much the same way as the above mentioned scenario where the professor posed questions for the students to respond to. The coding of the responses was based on a system created by Acadia and every two weeks the responses were compiled by topic and e-mailed to each of the students.

While these may not be uses of Usenet newsgroup, they do illustrate projects that could also be brought into a Usenet newsgroup environment. In addition to the advantages of Internet discussion groups and Usenet newsgroup for enhancing learning, there are some inherent values that come from using these types of technologies. The first value, which was evident in the description of the online First Ministers meeting, is the fact that Usenet newsgroups can allow for a dynamic, on-going discussion. In a classroom situation, an instructor can allow a discussion to be conducted in a particular lesson. However, if that instructor wanted that discussion to continue into the next lesson the instructor would have to bring it up again, or the discussion would die. However, as has been illustrated earlier, there is no time limit for an online discussion. Also, an online discussion which continues over a longer period of time allows students think time before participating in the discussion (something that is not always practical during an in-class discussion).

Another value of Usenet newsgroups is that they can create a sense of community. In many cases, especially at a post-secondary level, students do not have time to associate with one another outside of class-time and have even less opportunity during class-time. Even with the opportunity for interaction during class-time, students tend to gravitate towards others who shared common characteristics as themselves. Online discussion forums can give students who would not otherwise interact with one another a greater chance to get to know their colleagues, creating in effect a cyberfamily.

Another value that Usenet newsgroups help to foster is the teacher's role as a facilitator. In most of the activities outlined above, once the instructor has begun the activity he/she can move aside and allow the students to interact with one another. It is through this interaction that students learn. In this model, the instructor is no longer a teacher but acts only as a facilitator to make sure that students are heading in the right direction and remain on-task or on-topic. In the activities that have been outlined, the pedagogy matches the technology that is being used. Not only is the instructor able to act as a facilitator, but he/she is able to provide a more substantial individual feedback, both in quality and quantity. During an in-class situation, it is not feasible for an instructor to wait for each and every student to make interjections into the discussion and to provide each student with individual feedback.

To end this consideration of Usenet newsgroups at this point would be premature. Up to this point we have examined how Usenet newsgroups can be used, how they are being used, and to what extent they are being used. However, there are some problems with using Usenet newsgroups that can also be detrimental to students'

learning. To complete any consideration of the educational value of Usenet newsgroups, this point must be taken into account.

Pitfalls of Usenet Newsgroups

The reasons for using online discussions and specifically Usenet newsgroups are compelling. Yet there are a number of problems associated with using Usenet newsgroups for educational purposes. The first that can arise and perhaps the easiest to remedy is the issue of off-topic posts. By this I mean online entries from students that are irrelevant to the discussion, the topic or the course in general. While there can be a time and place for these sorts of relaxed discussions, there is always the chance that an instructor's well-thought out, online discussion could turn into a petty flamewar⁵ between students. This can easily occur and it is not easy to remove or delete messages that have been posted to the Usenet newsgroup.⁶ This problem can be monitored, with serious problem being minimised if the instructor regulates the online discussion and is able to catch such deviations before they turn into something that the instructor is unable to stop.

Another problem that can arise with Usenet newsgroups is the students' individual access to this technology. While it is assumed that, since these newsgroups are available online, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, all students have equal access, this is not the case. To be able to access Usenet newsgroups, a student would need a computer with some means of connecting to the Internet (either via modem or through an Ethernet connection). This basic requirement means that students who have access to their own computers at home have a greater opportunity to have access to these newsgroups. Students who do not own a home computer have to gain access to these newsgroups using computers provided by the school. However, computer labs are not always open, students are not always on campus to use the labs, and sometimes there are just not enough computers in the lab for every student who wants to use one. The issue of access, or rather equal access, is one that will exist in most situations where technology is involved and one that is not easily addressed.

There is also the problem of inequality in terms of students' ability to use the technology. This is one of the few problems that can be overcome relatively easily and in an effective teaching environment should not be a hurdle. When instructors assign a task, it is necessary first to ensure that the students have the skills to complete the task, a principle which is as relevant to the use of technology as it is to other aspects of learning.

Another problem typically associated with online discussion groups is the loss of direct discussion with other live persons. This problem was exacerbated with the invention of television. With the advent of computers and especially the Internet we, as a society, are spending even less time with each other. We are quickly becoming a faceless society. This phenomenon has a number of problems associated with it. For example, some students are oral learners and remember things that they hear more than anything else. Other students may enjoy interacting with others, while they feel that interacting through a computer screen is cold and unemotional. Finally, the phenomenon of the faceless society is troubling in that children do not have as much opportunity to develop social skills needed to interact with others.

Conclusion

Where does this leave the use of Usenet newsgroups as an educational tool? As has been shown, online discussions (and specifically Usenet newsgroups) can play a beneficial role in students' learning. We have also seen that there are a number of activities that can be enhanced through the use of online discussions. However, we have also noted that there can be problems associated with the use of online discussion, including problems for which there are no easy or adequate solutions. Yet, to dismiss the use of this technology on this basis would be premature.

Several conclusion might be drawn from this paper. The first is that before deciding to use an online discussion as a part of a curriculum, the instructor must make sure that this technology meets the goals and objectives of that curriculum. In other words, there must be sound pedagogical reasons for its use. The second conclusion is that instructors need to choose the appropriate venue for this online discussion. While this paper has dealt primarily with Usenet newsgroups, there has also be consideration given web-based discussion forums, to e-mail listservers, and to shared folders on a central server. All of these alternatives have particular advantages and disadvantages that instructors should consider when choosing what it is they want to achieve with the online discussion.

Thirdly the instructor should have a well thought-out, well planned activity before beginning an online discussion. As with most teaching activities, both online and offline, a lack of planning will usually result in a lack of learning. Finally, for an online discussion to work well and for students to learn effectively from the exercise, an instructor needs to closely monitor the online activity. Specifically, the instructor needs to make sure that the discussion is moving in a constructive way, that students are not engaging in off-topic posts, and that students are participating in a constructive manner. If an instructor can anticipate problems before they occur, there is a good chance of finding a way to prevent them (or at least stop them before they become too unmanageable).

No one is quite sure what teaching will be like in the next millennium. Will we become an even more faceless society? Will computers become just another teaching aid, no more useful than the overhead projector and VCR? No one really knows. However, while we are waiting to find out, we can try to incorporate new, different and exciting approaches into our teaching. Maybe Usenet newsgroups, or at least online discussions, can be one of those approaches.

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APPENDIX A

1. Has your University established Usenet newsgroups for any of the courses offered in your University calendar?
 - a) Yes
17 universities (see question 2)
 - b) No
5 universities

2. If yes, to what extent does your University provide these newsgroups?
 - a) a select few courses
9 universities
 - b) some courses, but not all
6 universities
 - c) all courses in some departments and none in others
None
 - d) all courses in some departments and some in others
1 university
 - e) all courses offered in your University's calendar
1 university

3. If no to question 1 or anything other than e) to question 2, what are your University's plans in this area in the future (if any)?
 - e-mail is checked more often than Usenet newsgroups
 - e-mail is delivered faster than Usenet newsgroups
 - for newsgroups to be effective, the instructor must monitor them
 - using shared folders
 - strategy to use WWW-based approach for Internet delivery of course material
 - Usenet newsgroups in many cases are only accessible from the campus domain
 - web-based newsgroups such as Web-CT
 - newsgroups created at the instructor's request
 - web conferencing (Caucus)
 - a good tool for the 80's!
 - web-based conferencing, such as Caucus, offer access control, control over deleting responses and full HTML content in responses

Those who did not respond:

- 13 universities

ENDNOTES

1. Full results are provided in Appendix A.
2. The author began attending Carleton University approximately five years ago and was a student during these advances.
3. Taken from an e-mail received by the author on 05 Aug 1998.
4. Taken from an e-mail received by the author on 27 Jul 1998.
5. An off-topic discussion which usually involved students verbally attacking, or "flaming", other students.
6. Note that messages can be removed (or cancelled) from Usenet newsgroups, although most Internet users do not know how this is done. In addition, there are individuals who monitor Usenet for cancelled posts. Once they find users who have cancelled posts, they sometimes harass that individual both through e-mail and publicly in the particular newsgroup.

TRAINING AND NETWORKS

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This article has been formulated from the contents of a workshop delivered to the Newfoundland and Labrador Trainers Association on April 23, 1998.

Introduction

The Internet is a vast yet relatively simple to use information system that has captured the attention of a growing number of training providers. Its capacity to deliver information in support of training services provides a number of advantages that benefit trainers and trainees alike. Generally users need only have a moderate level of literacy skill, access to computers with Internet capability and sufficient time to devote to the training tasks that would be presented to them. To use it effectively as a medium for planning instruction or for learning new content, a particular intuition for locating information and how to apply it to complement the content and methods typically found in training can make the experience more worthwhile. This article provides a perspective on the evolution of training and the Internet and further identifies a number of resources that are available to augment training in general.

Historical Patterns in Training

Fundamentally, all approaches to design of a training provision have included two important characteristics. Trainers have always attended to (1) required sets of specific knowledge and skill requirements and (2) basic philosophical approaches and relationship between individuals involved in the training processes. The former has largely been influenced by the many occupations from which the knowledge and skill are drawn, and which the trainee eventually hoped to enter, the latter not always as clearly recognized but most often left to instructors' discretion to fully exploit.

From evidence that formal structures existed to promote training in ancient cultures to more recent models that are typically based in the present day institutions, one can find unending support for training as mean of passing on critical levels of skill to succeeding generations of practitioners in countless occupations (Roberts, 1971 p. 22-45). Regardless of the culture or historical time period, technological capability has never been distant from a training provision and the economic and social well being of the culture. Indeed as any technological change is introduced, increased demands for advanced levels of technological capability follow as does renewed emphasis on some kind of training provision.

Historical evidence indicates as well that trainers have also long recognized that commercial interests in a region are a principal force that promotes and sustains good training. Trainers have typically embraced new technology and used dynamic relationships that exist between a trainer and a trainee to provide us with numerous training models, many of which have influenced our present training practices. Largely, these have been characterized as developed in situational contexts in response to needs as they arise and in the settings in which such needs have been expressed. This

has resulted in a myriad of procedural and philosophical patterns that almost always have had objectivism at the base of its approach (Jackson, 1992, p. 76-83).

Trainers' roles have long been in guiding trainees through a specific amount of content, both theoretical and procedural. They focus on the degree to which trainees acquire the confidence, skill, and knowledge needed to be an effective practitioner in a workplace. Particular levels of skill attainment that trainees are subjected to have largely reflected the advice expressed from the field of practitioners, essentially those who would hire trainees. Evidence of quality in a training provision is drawn from observations of trainees' performance in work simulations, apprenticeships, mentoring strategies, laboratory activity, drill and practice sessions, paper tests and examinations, and surveys of employers who hire trainees. Hard-line trainers are characteristically guarded on the matter of training quality in training provisions, principally because of its implications for licensing and credential procedures that exist for occupations and the repercussions if their trainees cannot measure up to prevailing standards.

The sub-baccalaureate work force in Canada accesses training through private and public community colleges where the above pattern is characteristic. These institutions have obtained mandates to provide training and do so in response to ever-growing community needs for skillful workers. Not surprisingly training can be found available in varied and convenient locations that include college campus, industrial and business work settings, community halls, mall outlet, on the bridge of ships and in the cabins of aircraft. In more recent years advancements in technology have enabled trainers to develop provisions uniquely adapted to distance education and computer networks.

The Growing Influence of the Internet in Training

Offering network-based training appears on the surface to be a dramatic departure from previous training patterns. Yet on closer examination one can see that the recent introduction of internet based training has similarity to other patterns of training development. The provisions have appeared in response to perceived economic need; they acknowledge and exploit the latest technological advancements; they show positive potential to contribute to the general economy, and individuals who participate in the training do so with the expectation of future benefit, usually gainful employment. Needless to say, the dramatic technological change that has occurred in recent decades has stimulated optimism among trainers, principally because the advancements have catalyzed greater capability to access information and disseminate training material (Ross, 1995, p. 141-144).

It is not surprising that, to gain a foothold, many individuals turn to training that includes the use of computers (Grubb, 1996, p 229-254). From its onset the internet was recognized in the communications industry as a potent means of disseminating training material. Among trainers there were fears that an internet based program would pale in comparison to traditional methods. Initial concerns were the system would not provide sufficient evidence and guarantees that its contents and provisions would carry standards of quality comparable to traditional training practices (Negroponte, 1996, p. 163-219).

These concerns have not totally subsided, and they are only partially resolved. More importantly they have been viewed as prematurely conceived and incompletely stated. For those who would design instruction for delivery on the Internet, the question

of guarantees has been relatively more complex and the clear evidence that might be used to provide answers arguably inconclusive. We have come to see that asking questions more related to how to find information and present it on-line to augment proven training structures and practices is the more fruitful enterprise, one that is also more intriguing and challenging for trainers. It seeks solutions.

It is quite obvious that learners who commit themselves to on-line courses are required to have a fair degree of disciplined self-learning. For trainers this conjures up concerns over a need for quantified assurances that trainees have the requisite skills to commence the instruction and, later, that they have learned the content and are able to use it effectively in a future work role. Internet based training does not readily provide the assuring evidence in a fashion similar to what is typically available in traditional training practices. Yet the demand for assurances has been well established as the basis for obtaining a credential to practice in many occupations and this is unlikely to change.

Clearly expanding the prevailing views of what can be used as evidence that training has been received and has produced desirable outcomes is an area in which further development needs to occur. Those provisions that focus on individual responsibility with respect to acquiring technical knowledge and capability appear to have merit. Strategies that focus on individuals' responsibility to commence and consummate self-learning and then prepare and provide evidence that could be used to pass through credential barriers appear to be workable. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) provides some of these features and there is evidence that such models can work.

Self-instructional capability is inherent in all Internet based training provisions and these can have positive effects on trainees. In an on-line article McManus (1995) reviewed such effects and the learner attributes associated with Internet based courses. Among these were that students were found to:

- be more interactive with each other than when engaged in other media based courses
- be using the provisions for greater open-ended intellectual pursuits
- have greater access to specialized visual and auditory capabilities
- access more diverse information sources often located at very remote locations
- engage in greater partnering, learning from other users, use of a broader range of colleagues
- be more attentive, with fascination, to interesting collections of resources and tools
- have greater access to training material at a time that is convenient and away from school or home and
- more research oriented and using a greater number of general query strategies.

These observations show that users of on-line training are not unlike the other learners who are placed in situations where acquiring power and authority over a subject matter is required. It would appear, however, that greater levels of individual confidence with on-line training lead one toward finding new ways of being together with other participants.

Notwithstanding the benefit of internet based training, there continue to be concerns. These are mainly related to whether training can be effectively deployed and used by sufficiently large numbers to warrant its costs. Typically, those accessing training on-line have concern regarding:

- their individual proficiency with using the Internet as a system
- pitfalls in getting started with the basics such as access to accounts
- inconsistencies such as slow speed and inconvenient access times
- the amount of personal skill to be intuitive and use information more aggressively when seeking solutions to problems
- relations that would be designated as assisting but more often appear to be indifferent and
- the recurring cost, a view not fully understood.

Information Sources in Support of Training

With advancements in technology new training perspectives have emerged to provide opportunity for those who would seek to use the Internet to access information in support of training. In particular, a growing number of agencies and interest groups have provided web-pages that offer useful information for trainers. They have provided information that details the nature of the training industry, expands its base of expertise, alerts trainers to available services, provides points of access regardless of geographical region, and expands access to a greater number of on-line training models for comparative viewing. The following is a selected sample of sites that have been collected to demonstrate the variety of provisions available to augment modern training or provide service to trainers. Among these are a growing number that are commercial in nature and only provide information for a fee:

- The Canadian Technology Network, [CTN](#)
- Canada [Human Resources Development](#) provides a searchable database for training who would deliver information in course detail
- The [Western Economic Diversion](#) site leads to examples of training provisions in Western Canada
- [Web Training Solutions](#) provides PCWeek review of on-line training
- [E v a l u a t i o n S t r a t e g y](#) (<http://www8.zdnet.com/pcweek/reviews/ibt.html>)
- [Inside Training Technology](#) a trainer's magazine that offers numerous tips
- [Newfoundland Council of Higher Education](#)
- [Human resource development programs](#) available from Human Development Canada
- The University of Chicago site that provides a large collection of [internet tools](#) (<http://www.uchicago.edu/inet/about.html>)
- [TCM Hotlinks](#), a human relations site that provides HR-related internet resources sorted alphabetically.

Access to Professional Literature and Research

Assess to vital information regarding what works for trainers has not been readily accessible to many training practitioners, particularly those who reside in remote locations. Today an increasing amount of professional literature that deals with training has become available on-line to assist trainers who plan for and develop training. Greater access to both quantitative and qualitative information regarding, not only the relative health of on-line training, but also the varied approaches and arguments constitute a body of content that had previously been available to a lesser number of trainers.

The following are a selected sample of characteristic on-line sources of professional literature that feature information for trainers. Among these and others are professional journals that provide a means to further expedite searching for information:

- [American Society for Training Development](#)
- [ASTD Conference](#)
- [Internet training](#) journal that reports on on-line course experience

As would be expected, the contents of on-line journals contain reviews of studies on any number of conditions, projects, views and philosophical perspectives characteristic of paper versions of education and training journals. The widening collection of on-line information sources include:

- general policy papers
- comparative examples of training provisions
- samples of student work
- views of colleagues from other nations
- means to exchange their individual perspectives
- evidence that training standards are under constant review
- access to standardized assessment procedures
- models that better describe how the internet can be used to augment traditional practices.

Research into post-secondary education is a growing area of concern for both its instructors and those who plan for human resource training. For training developers internet access to quick and easy retrieval of professional information is an expanding resource that had not previously been readily available.

Access to Assisting Information

Not unrelated to journal access and increasingly important to training planners are a number of on-line provisions that expand the amounts of assisting information trainers can use in both their conventional training programs and for those formatted for on-line users. They are among a growing number of on-line provisions that focus on individuals who have particular needs attributed to physical barriers but wish to enter, or re-enter, education and training. With an internalize perspective that all individuals can acquire and benefit from training, the sites provide information resources and point to assisting services that facilitate this cause. The group listed below detail procedures to follow to access service in the immediate region. Other similar sites provide additional resources typically available in other Canadian provinces:

- Site provides Canadian Education Links [Nova Scotia](#)
- [Ontario](#) site for adults with physical disabilities

- [New Brunswick](#) training and support services for individuals with disabilities
- [Newfoundland and Labrador](#) Using technology to help individual with disabilities

International Perspectives

As trainers are becoming increasingly aware of competition in the training market they quickly recognize that practices and standards that exist in other locations provide a healthy basis for comparison of programs, ideas for improvement and arena for collegial exchanges. Notably, the growth in EEC (European Economic Commission) has heightened awareness of the necessity for unified training standards throughout all participating nations, but it also offers a source for information transfer. The development of [CEDEFOP](#) as a means of disseminating information about training models used by the partner nations is detailed in their link. Similarly, opportunities made available to trainers in a host of other developing nations are featured in a site made available by [UNESCO](#).

Conclusion

After a perusal of the above overview and links it becomes apparent that, in spite of its relative newness, the internet provides a means for accessing useful resources to support various training requirements. As well, it has brought to the training community an extraordinary opportunity to capture numerous examples of how training continues to grow and add to our views of learning to deal with new technology. Being aware of the diverse sources of information and resources that are available to describe the relative merit of, and how to interlace, training that best responds to the many needs expressed by both employers and clients is the first step for those engaged in planning for training. If lacing present training provisions with content drawn from the vast array of resources is the present preference, critical selection of information has become a necessary skill for both to acquire. As trainers become skillful in developing well designed, intuitive, and user friendly Web pages in support of their instructional delivery, they will invariably recognize that the process will also require constant vigilance to keep it all up-to-date and consistent with training objectives.

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RURAL/ADULT EDUCATION

SUCCESS IN A SMALL SCHOOL

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I have spent most of my career in smaller, more isolated areas of Newfoundland, first in Makkovik, Labrador, a community of Inuit and Settler Persons in Northern Labrador, and then in Cartwright, considered part of Southern Labrador. These were isolated communities accessible only by air or water. In December the last boat would arrive, as ice conditions closed water navigation routes, and the airways became our only link with other communities until June. Five years ago I moved to Woody Point, Bonne Bay, where I work and live today.

The experiences of these communities have shaped how I view the attitudes of others, and how they see smaller schools. I feel we can never be truly recognized for our achievements, or correctly evaluated, unless we ourselves change how we are viewed. The larger areas control all the viewing instruments, from governments, to testing, to media access. Perceptions by larger groups all too often seem to shape or define reality for others. We can develop programs, or achieve success, but unless demonstrated to the mainstream communications network it is as if nothing was done. Communications and achievement in smaller schools are much like the struggle of the once mighty salmon. It's all upstream, whereas the major centres appear to be able to swim with the tide, taking advantage of any major current of social evolution. The present day communication network is both a creation and a slave of the Central or Urban community. The Northern and Native experience has convinced me that this is a concern among all those who choose to live off beaten paths. The struggle of these people to develop or modify Northern American innovations to suit themselves has met with many failures. Their attempts to develop innovations which reflect their reality have been met with outright hostility or have been outlawed. Imagine our wisdom, as we eliminated native social and legal customs, and then blamed Native peoples for not understanding the imposed Social systems. There is also a strong Urban bias in everything related to schooling.

When was the last time anyone heard of a Report into the "Successes of Small Schools" or "Effective Small Schools"? Perhaps the communications age can be an age of enlightenment regarding our efforts as well. One computer can be used to access the entire world communications network with ease, from any source. Smaller schools will be able to spread their message in ways only imagined previously.

Bonne Bay Academy is situated in the town of Woody Point, the doorstep of Canada's Gros Morne National Park which lies on a large part of Newfoundland's North West Coast. The communities we serve stretch along a 15 kilometre road on the South side. Our school was formally known as Bonne Bay Elementary and Bonne Bay Central High School and was consolidated this year. The Bonne Bay Elementary was itself consolidated from 3 smaller 2 room schools which were located in several smaller communities around the area. The High School was built some 30 years ago. We have a student population of 135 students from grades K to 12. Our students come from a range of backgrounds, some from fishing industry families, and some from forest worker families. There are also trades persons, professionals, and a few people involved in tourism. We have fared well compared to many smaller Newfoundland communities; we have a healthy Pelagic fishery and our Forest Industry appears still strong. Tourism

has brought some benefits, although many local people feel the National Park is ignoring this particular area in favour of others. As well, there has been a strong outward migration to areas outside, especially Brampton, Ontario.

We are a very active school with a range of extracurricular activities. We have won the Zone Basketball Championships 3 years in a row and the Regional Basketball championships twice. A notable achievement for a school this size. Last year we were selected for the Canadian Educators Association study, noted by our School Board because of our record of success and the innovations we have shown, such as the Crisp program, and our Language Arts Program described below.

The CRISP, "Career Risk Intervention Student Placement Program", was designed at this school to meet the needs of some of our "At Risk" students, and some of those who appeared under-motivated. We were also successful in receiving funding from "Canada Youth Strategy" for this action plan. The program operated under the belief that many of our "At Risk" students have already psychologically withdrawn. Such students use two means to resolve their school status, one active, the other passive. In the active mode they would follow a predictable pattern of decline until they face what, at some point, would seem to be a rational choice, that of dropping out. In the passive mode they simply do not return after failing courses in what could have been their final year. The Crisp program was meant to re-awaken their interest and attach realistic goals to realistic and achievable objectives. Thus, once reenlisted the student would begin to make more direct connections between school and the "Real World". The program is simple in design: explore career areas, audit classes at an applicable college, and spend a day job shadowing in each of the career areas. We selected a group of students and had them determine five career areas of interest. They were aided by our Guidance Counsellor and Teacher Advisors in evaluating the academic requirements, as well as institutions that were accessible to and realistic for them. Students toured many facilities to get a feel for institutions which most had only seen from the outside. Realize that not only do our students change schools on graduation, but they also must leave home going to places they have very little familiarity with. At the Post Secondary institutions they spent a day in class related to each of their career interest areas. For example, students interested in Mechanics spent a day in class and in shop at Westviking College, in Corner Brook. The third part was to work in a garage for a day. One of the concerns was getting the Job shadowing completed for all these students and, unfortunately, it was not completed for some students. Was it a success? Well, I don't have any statistics, except that we have not had any dropouts for a while, with the exception of the only two students who declined to participate. Teacher reports about students see an improvement in attitudes, and students seem to have a better grip on the school's role in their future. So I would say it was!

We also had a look at our Language Arts Program, as we were not satisfied with the continuity of our Intermediate Language Arts Program. To look further into this we set up a "Language Arts Curriculum Committee". The mandate was to study all objectives, guides, programs, and our schedule. Our hope was that we would become more consistent and modify our approach to the benefit of our students.

The result was better than we had hoped. First, the committee studied the various guides, themes, areas of study at each of our grade levels. Then they set out to plan areas that would ensure the completion of our Provincial Department's objectives. Since we also multi-grade any time saving mechanisms were also important. After much work they developed a Language Arts program for grades 7 to 9 which sees our grade 9 students starting our Senior High School Language Arts course for Senior

High School credit while still in grade 9. It is important to point out that all objectives will have been met by the time these students complete our Literature 1200 and Language 1101 courses. These students, if strong enough, will complete Level III Language Arts in their second year of High School. In their final year they will be able to take an Advanced Placement Literature course, hopefully to get university credit. The weaker students will also be taken care of in the regular stream. It is important to point out that this program is not simply putting "brighter" students into a High School course, but accelerates all students from both ends of the spectrum. We are now spreading our focus into areas such as Computers, and French, but slowly to ensure that the process is effective.

If small schools are to survive we must become curriculum innovators. We must be able to do more with less, get away from our grade based and big-school biased training. Otherwise the "Bigger is Better" and "Consolidate and Bus" will continue to be the only response to small schools as they become even smaller. If we have a future it is up to us to demonstrate that we are effective in what we do.

**USING TELECONFERENCING TO PROVIDE GROUP COUNSELLING
TO RURAL AT-RISK STUDENTS:
AN EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMME FOR TEENAGE MOTHERS**

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**A Distance Career Group Counselling Intervention
Program for Teenage Mothers and Pregnant Teens**

Faculty of Education

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INTRODUCTION

The project entitled "A Distance Career Counselling Intervention Programme for Teenage Mothers and Pregnant Teenagers" (Garlie, 1990-93) consisted of a pilot project conducted (Spring 1991) in preparation for a field study which was completed in June 1992. This paper presents the rationale for designing the project, a description of the procedures used and a summary of the results.

Rationale

Adolescence is a time when numerous self-doubts persist, especially if one is pregnant or a mother (Shilling, 1986; Eskilson, et al., 1986, and Ortiz and Bassoff, 1987). The evaluations that adolescence put on these self-doubts are known as self-esteem, which during this period is reported as very low (Schilling, 1986). The low self-esteem usually is combined with many stressors, negative self-descriptions, anxieties, poor social skills, passiveness, and incompetence (Schilling, 1986). These occur in different combinations depending on the adolescent.

Ortiz and Bassoff (1987) noted that teenage mothers are considerably less optimistic and less hopeful about the future than their non-parent peers. It seems that the experience of early parenthood significantly alters perceptions of reality and lowers life expectations and aspirations. For many of these teenagers there is a general feeling that school is irrelevant and many drop out of school as a result. Many pregnant teens abandon completely the search for a specific career goal (Ortiz and Bassoff, 1987). Moreover, they feel uncertain how they would even attain a career goal, being pregnant or being a teen mother, anyway. At this point in their lives the level of self-esteem is quite low and many self-doubts persist in all areas of their lives.

Enhancement of Self-Esteem

The vital question is "How can the self-esteem of pregnant teens and teen mothers be changed?" Group counselling may be one process whereby the problem of low or negative self-esteem can be resolved for adolescents willing to invest their time (Bergen, 1989). Evidence has shown that group counselling is indeed a vehicle that is a worthwhile approach in developing self-esteem. Individuals in the same group can easily relate to each other, experience many of the same feelings and stressors, receive similar reactions from others and, often, have similar levels of self-esteem, assertion and competence.

One important aspect of how pregnant teens and teen mothers appraise stressors is the perceived available social supports. Social supports consist of interpersonal ties with individuals who share familiar values and status and who can be depended upon to provide emotional support, help and needed feedback. The present intervention programme attempted to meet these requirements.

Peer relationships are highly significant at this age level, and it was hoped the group situation would provide a "comfort zone" for these girls to speak of their concerns (Bergen, 1989, p. 20).

Omizo and Omizo (1986, 1987, 1989) have conducted research to investigate the effects of participation in group sessions on the self-esteem and locus of control of children and adolescents of divorce. The results indicated that participants had higher internal locus of control and a more positive self-concept than those who did not receive counselling. Schilling (1986), also, suggested using group discussion to help increase feelings of significance.

The present group counselling intervention programme was intended to result in the development of a more stable and assertive teenage mother with greater overall self-awareness and more positive self-esteem.

Distance Group Counselling

Teleconferencing is one form of distance education that has gained widespread support. Olgren and Parker (1983) define teleconferencing as "two-way electronic communication between two or more groups, or three or more individuals, who are in separate locations" (p. 34).

For several years the author has been teaching classes in exceptionality via audio teleconferencing. Several times during the offering of these courses incidents have occurred which call for active, tactful listening to the expressed hurt of students over some issue of importance in their life. For example, last year during a lecture and discussion on suicide one person broke into tears and shared with everyone on the "system" that she had recently lost someone close to her by suicide. This led to several supportive comments by the instructor and other participants, i.e. an atmosphere much like occurs in group counselling.

Having a strong interest in group counselling coupled with literature reporting tentative positive results using group approaches via telephone conference calls (Jaureguy & Evans 1983) (Evans & Jaureguy 1981) (Evans & Jaureguy 1982) (Evans et. al., 1984) led the author to wonder if the "system" might be able to be used for therapeutic purposes.

Audio-teleconferencing was used in the present programme. Basically, audio-teleconferences can occur among three or more participants in several locations linked anywhere along the telephone network with graphic, written or video materials provided by mail in advance (Younghusband, 1990). Edison-Swift (1983) found there is more private conversation among participants and a greater chance of active involvement. The use of audio teleconferencing does not de-personalize interactions as much as often thought when compared with face-to-face groups (Elliott, 1989). In fact, it produces an anonymity that can be helpful to encouraging disclosure and participation. There is also some evidence of greater task orientation and participants

are generally more well prepared than in face-to-face meetings. The major asset of teleconferencing is its flexibility in providing the exchange of indispensable information, to meet the needs of participants, in any locale with a telephone.

There have been very few studies identified on group counselling via telephone and only one via teleconference. Elliott (1989) hypothesized "that since group process is necessary for successful group counselling in face-to-face situations then it ought to be necessary for successful group counselling via the teleconference system as well" (Elliott, 1989). In an initial study using volunteer Memorial University undergraduate students, he found that the same process development occurs in both types of groups. The present study attempts to expand on these findings.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The pilot study involved a group of nine teenage mothers ranging in age from 15 to 20 years old, from rural areas of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The average age was 18.7 years. Eight had children and one was expecting. One had two children. The children's ages ranged from 14 months to 3 years. They were located in 4 different teleconferencing sites (Garlie, 1992).

There were 8 participants involved in the field test. They ranged in age from 17-22 (Mean=18.9). Seven had children and one was pregnant. The children ranged in age from 2 months to 4 years.

A control group (N=9) was also used during the field test. They ranged in age from 18-24 (Mean=19.7). One had two children. All the others had one child. The ages ranged from 6 months to 3 and one-half years.

There were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of age or geographic location. The participants all lived within one rural region of the province. The field test group came from three different rural communities. The control group came from several other nearby communities.

Instruments

Six instruments were used to collect pre- and post-treatment data. They included the: (1) Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI); (2) Ways of Coping Questionnaire; (3) Parenting Stress Index - Short Form (PSI/SF); (4) Modified Rathus Assertiveness Schedule; (5) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behaviour Scale (Firo-B); and, (6) the Locus of Control Behaviour Scale (LCB).

In addition to the formal instruments, subjects recorded, after each session, what they liked or disliked.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Subjects participating in the intervention programme will show a significant increase in positive self-esteem after completing the programme.

Hypothesis 2: Subjects participating in the intervention programme will develop increased assertiveness after completing the programme.

Hypothesis 3: Subjects participating in the intervention programme will increase their stress management skills from commencing to completion of the programme.

Hypothesis 4: Subjects participating in the intervention programme will develop a more internal locus of control than was present at the beginning of the programme.

Hypothesis 5: Subjects participating in the intervention programme will demonstrate a greater awareness of themselves in terms of what they uniquely need to feel correct, comfortable or secure in relationships.

Procedure

The intervention programme focused on the development of many of the skills that the literature suggests this group of teenagers tend to be lacking (Ortiz and Bassoff, 1987; Eskilson, et al., 1986). Included were: communication skills, stress management skills, self-esteem, locus of control and assertiveness development. Each weekly session was intended to focus on a different objective of the programme. The counsellor selected relevant materials, from a pre-prepared manual, as the group progressed. Participant manuals were also provided for each person.

The experimental group completed pre- and post-testing and was involved in a variety of activities during the sessions as well as after the sessions at home. They listened to and spoke with guest speakers, via teleconferencing, and viewed relevant videos, one of which (**Jenny's Choices**) was produced specifically for this project (Garlie, 1992). The control group completed the pre- and post-testing at approximately the same time interval as the experimental group.

Limitations of the Study

There were questions concerning whether eight sessions would be enough to cause any change in the participants' behaviour in the areas purposed. There were, also, minor problems in arranging transportation. Some of the participants could not, at times, attend the sessions because they had no way to commute to the next community in order to use the teleconference system. Others would arrive late and have to leave early because of other commitments. Attendance was an ongoing problem. Like any group of this nature there were also questions about confidentiality and this had to be addressed and its importance emphasized.

There were also some minor problems with the teleconferencing system itself, e. g. malfunctions and unplanned interruptions. Care of the children while the mothers were attending the sessions was a concern. This problem was solved by families intervening, so in most cases funds for babysitting were not needed. However, monies were needed for transportation costs.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The following are the results from the field test. Pre- and post-test responses for five of the six instruments were scored and computed. Because of test administration problems the results on the Ways of Coping Questionnaire were not used. The t-test for independent instruments (Hopkins, et al., 1987) was used to determine any significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores on each of the instruments completed by the participants. All statistical tests were evaluated for significance at the .05 probability level.

RESULTS

Comparisons between pre- and post-test results are shown in Tables 1-4 below. Discussion of the results follows the presentation of the data.

Table 1

T-test to determine differences in pre- and post-test results for each instrument - Experimental Group

Instrument	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tail Probability
SEI	1.08	5	.330
LCB	2.42	5	.060
MRAS	.57	5	.592
PSI	.76	5	.48
FIRO-B-Sum	.13	5	.900
D	.42	5	.692

Table 2

**Means, Standard Deviations and Mean Differences
for each test - Experimental Group**

Instrument	Pre-test	S.D.	Post-test	S.D.	Difference
SEI	48.67	21.08	57.33	18.53	8.67
LCB	28.83	13.67	34.83	12.81	6.00
MRAS	6.33	16.50	1.50	17.42	4.83
PSI	87.17	23.19	83.50	23.42	3.67
FIRO-Sum	20.67	4.13	20.17	7.00	.50
D	-1.50	6.75	.17	7.76	1.67

Table 3

**T-test to determine differences in pre- and post-test
results for each instrument - Control Group**

Instrument	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Probability
SEI	.32	6	.758
LCB	1.76	7	.121
MRAS	2.85	7	.025*
PSI	1.01	7	.347
FIRO-B-Sum	.70	7	.504
D	1.99	7	.087

*Significant @ .05 level.

Table 4
Means, Standard Deviations and Mean Differences
for each test - Control Group

Instrument	Pre-test	S.D.	Post-test	S.D.	Difference
SEI	61.14	20.23	63.43	21.59	2.29
LCB	28.13	8.37	32.25	5.23	4.13
MRAS	-14.75	27.31	-2.00	27.95	12.75
PSI	74.50	8.26	79.38	12.28	4.88
FIRO-Sum	17.25	8.95	18.00	7.01	.75
D	-5.00	5.73	-2.75	4.59	2.25

DISCUSSION

Since there was only one significant difference found in the testing and that was in the control group it could be inferred that the overall level of change in the participants was nil. Since the participants self-reports were positive it was decided to look at any trends in the data that might be helpful in trying to understand the results.

There was an increase in the SEI score for the experimental group from 48.67 to 57.33. Since average scores typically fall in the 70 to 80 range we can note that the initial self-esteem of this group was quite low and it did increase. The control group appears to have had a higher self-esteem (61.14) at the beginning of the test period and it changed very little over time.

The Locus of Control (LCB) scores were low for both groups and increased only slightly over time. This would indicate all of the subjects have an internal locus of control and would attribute events in their life to be under their control. This finding is the opposite of what the literature suggests teenage mothers would be like in this area.

Modified Rathus Assertiveness Scale (MRAS) scores can range from plus 90 to minus 90. The experimental group fell about in the middle for both pre- and post-testing. The control group scored slightly toward the low end of the scale and moved toward the middle of the scale in the post-test. This was the only statistically significant change. It would appear that both groups were in the normal assertive range before beginning the program.

The Parenting Stress Index (PSI) was used to identify parent-child systems that might be under stress. The stress scores of the experimental group were somewhat higher than the control group at pre-test (87.17) and decreased slightly at post-testing (83.50). The control group scored at about the 60th percentile (74.50) at pre-test and slightly higher on the post-test.

The data was not available at this time for the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ).

The two scores analyzed from the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behaviour Scale (FIRO-B) did not change significantly for either group. The control group scores were slightly lower than average at both testing. The sum score is often used as a "Social Interaction Index". Average scores range from 20 to 28. Our participants were in the low average range. The FIRO-difference score (d) was low for the experimental group at pre-test and increased slightly. The control group pre-test score was very low at pre-test and also increased slightly. These scores indicate both groups have a strong preference for waiting for other people to take the initiative in relationships.

Several observations concerning the group were made by the writer: (1) All participants expressed how important they felt such a group was for support and as an outlet to express various similar concerns and issues. There were no complaints from the participants concerning the group counselling received. (2) Participants reported being very comfortable, safe and motivated to communicate with their peers. (3) Participants reported being interested in asking questions regarding various session topics and in using the teleconferencing system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations can be suggested to improve the overall intervention programme. Included in such a list are the following:

1. An increase in number of sessions might allow greater chances for a significant change in all proposed areas.
2. To overcome the issue of poor attendance and/or early leaving during sessions, some type of incentive should be given to the participants, e.g., credit as part of their family living course at school. (A small financial incentive was tried in the field test and seemed to be helpful.)
3. If participants are unable to attend sessions due to a need for a baby sitter then one should be provided.
4. To increase attendance one could arrange the intervention programme during the school day.
5. A more in depth analysis of some of the test results needs to be carried out.
6. All sessions were audio taped. An analysis of this material should be carried out to see if any changes on the variables predicted to change can be observed.
7. A local person (warm, fuzzy) should be hired to encourage the participants' full involvement. (This was attempted in the field test and was helpful, particularly with last minute detail problems.)

SUMMARY

A group counselling intervention programme offered via teleconference with techniques for moving these teens from the negative toward the positive was the focus of this programme. These young women were encouraged to further develop their

feelings of self-confidence and self-worth and begin taking control of their lives. Skills taught in the intervention programme attempted to directly relate to the concerns of the pregnant teen and teen mother. Concerns such as, parenting, health, counselling, career knowledge, and finances were addressed. The test data collected in the field test did not support the hypotheses as stated. However, the participants self-reports were positive.

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WHY RURAL EDUCATION?

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Imagine for a moment a developed nation which regarded its rural schools as its elite and as models to be envied and emulated by metropolitan schools. Imagine a system in which rural schools were the prime beneficiaries of educational research, the recipients of a steady stream of the nation's best educators, and the bastions of the education world's power prestige, and resources. - Jonathan Sher.

Introduction

Over the past four years I have become increasingly involved in rural education studies. The rural nature of Newfoundland and Labrador presents a unique opportunity to do specialized work in this field. Sixty percent (60%) of all schools are officially classified as rural; fifty percent (50%) of the 472 schools in the province have fewer than 200 students. Sixty-five (65) of these schools have fewer than 50 students and only 14% of our schools have a student population of more than 400 (NF Department of Education Statistics, 1996). Given these numbers, perhaps, the context makes rural education studies an obligation.

In this essay I will describe how I came to be interested in rural education. I will also outline some the projects and activities that I have engaged in over the last four years as this interest has grown and developed. I will conclude the essay with some thoughts about the future direction I would like to see rural studies take in this province.

At the very beginning, I would like to say that rural communities and small schools were not obvious places of affinity for me. My personal and professional background were urban. My experiences as a student and as a high-school English teacher were in large city schools. After graduating from Memorial University with an Arts Degree (English) and an Education degree (Secondary), I began my teaching career in Corner Brook. It never occurred to me at that time to consider applying for a position in a small rural community. My places of choice were the larger centres with their larger schools. This earlier attitude of mine has served to sharpen my appreciation of one of the perennial concerns of rural district: teacher recruitment and retention.

After eleven years as a high-school English teacher, I returned to university to pursue graduate work (M.Ed.; Ph.D) in curriculum studies and drama education in Toronto. I cannot recall at any point during my undergraduate or graduate programs at Memorial or the University of Toronto (OISE) ever hearing anyone speak of small schools or rural education. To be fair, I have to say that I did not seek out such knowledge either. Why would I? Nevertheless, upon reflection, I think it is remarkable, given the rural nature of this province, the extensive rural areas in Ontario and the rest of Canada, that I completed three education degrees and never once encountered small schools or rural education as a significant topic.

I did not set out to become interested in rural education; nor was it ever suggested to me by anyone that it might be an interesting or useful area of study. I think

I was a typical urbanite, or townie as we say in Newfoundland, whose knowledge of rural Newfoundland and Labrador was at best vague and at worst stereotypical. West of the "overpass" was the old fashioned, the quaint, and the past. Something I knew very little about and had even less interest in. The point I am trying to make is that nothing in my experience or education pointed me in the direction of matters rural. So I have to conclude that somehow rural education found me.

Idle Curiosity

The impulse that initiated my interest in rural education was primarily idle curiosity (not necessarily a bad reason to begin any inquiry). Somehow, I do not remember how or why, I happened on Frank Riggs' Report of the Small Schools Study Project (1987). This was in 1992. The report introduced me to a term I had never heard of before: multi-grade classrooms. As I read about these classrooms, I was both amazed and curious. I had spent all of my educational life as a teacher and a student in single grade classrooms. As a teacher for eleven years in a large city high-school, I was responsible for just one subject, English; I never had more than one grade level in my classroom. This report informed me that in small rural schools, teachers are not only responsible for many subjects but often have to teach more than one subject and grade at the same time in the one classroom. This seemed like a truly impossible teaching situation. How could one teacher be responsible for more than one grade level and have to teach as many as twenty, thirty or more subjects? How could anyone manage in such a situation?

Qualitative Inquiry

I decided I wanted to know more about these "multi-grade" classrooms. Specifically, I wanted to know how the teachers did it. From my urban, large school, single grade, I could not imagine how effective teaching and learning could possibly occur in such situations. To discover how they did it I started to plan a research study. At this point in time I was interested in multi-grading as a distinct phenomenon. I was not interested in small schools or the rural context. My intention was to conduct this study, find some straightforward answers to my methodological enquires, write a report detailing the strategies used by multi-grade teachers and move on to something else.

That was the plan. Four years later I find myself totally immersed in rural education studies and totally committed to sustaining and supporting community based small rural schools. How did this happen? How did I get from what was supposed to be a quick "how-do-you-do-it" study to where I am at today?

What happened was my intended straightforward inquiry starting to take a number of number of detours. The problem was I chose the "wrong" methodology for my intended purpose. I began my study by visiting some small schools. I spent some time in multi-grade classrooms, talking at some length to teachers about their approaches. This resulted in my original question developing into many questions. The participants in the study were quite willing to have me come to their schools and classrooms. They were quite eager to answer my questions. They were quite delighted that someone was actually interested in what they doing. These teachers, however, were not just interested in answering my questions. They insisted in asking me a few of their own.

They wanted to know, for example, when the University was going to start preparing teachers for multi-grade classrooms. With so many small schools and multi-grade situations in the province, didn't I think that this was an issue the Faculty of Education should be addressing? Other questions they asked included: Why do the curriculum guides produced by the provincial Department of Education provide no advice or guidance as to how to implement the prescribed programs in multi-grade situations? Why is it that when we go to a professional development workshop and ask a question about how to do something in a multi-grade classroom, the presenting "expert" confesses he has no idea what we are talking about? Why were the needs of teachers and students in multi-grade classrooms and small rural schools almost totally ignored by all agencies responsible for education in the province? The teachers in the schools were willing to share with me the strategies and approaches they used in their multi-grade classrooms. I, the expert educational authority, was unable to answer their questions. More to the point, I had to confess that it never occurred to me even to ask these questions. My first rural school contacts also asked me one more question: What was I going to do with the information I was collecting? What they were really asking was: Was it my intention to use the data I was collecting to help improve their situation. They were assuming and hoping that my interest in their work was an indication of my commitment to help. I think there was an assumption on their part that somehow I cared about their situation and was interested in doing something about it. At that point in time their assumptions were mostly wrong; for the most part I was interested in my questions not their problems.

To communicate with people in person where they work and live can a dangerous thing to do. To spend an extended period of time in a school and a community with the teachers, the students and sometimes the parents is a very different research experience than gathering data at a distance. It provides people with an opportunity to elaborate on issues and to identify additional research questions. This is very different (not necessarily better) than the receiving in the mail several hundred (possibly anonymous) completed questionnaires with the appropriate boxes ticked to the predetermined set of questions.

These initial encounters with rural teachers in small schools changed the nature of my first research study and reset the course for my future work in rural education. Two things struck me very forcibly. One of these was the distinctive and inviting atmosphere of small schools. The human scale of the places, the relaxed informality, the family-like atmosphere, the style of interaction between teachers and students, were all very appealing to me. Secondly, as I talked with the teachers, and importantly the more they talked and the more I listened, increasingly, I became convinced that our system of education was not treating them in a fair or just manner. They appeared to have the most difficult of teaching situations yet they received the least help and consideration.

These initial encounters forced me to broaden the scope of the inquiry. I was still interested in the methodology issues (the how-do-you-do-it questions) but I decided to paint a more comprehensive portrait of multi-grading in the province. I decided to document the number of multi-grade classrooms in the province and their great diversity in terms of the number of grades combined and the grade combinations that existed. Also, I was determined to provide the opportunity for multi-grade teachers to describe the challenging nature of their teaching situations. I provided them with a forum to express their frustrations and anger with the lack of attention small rural schools had generally received from the educational establishment and its leaders in the province.

The report of the study, *Learning and Teaching in Multi-grade Classrooms* was published by the Faculty of Education Publications Committee in 1993. One chapter of the report focused on methodology (my agenda); most of the contents of that report reflected the concerns that had been identified by rural teachers. The final chapter entitled "Future Directions" consisted almost entirely of their suggestions as to how the various educational agencies in the province could do a better job of preparing and supporting multi-grade teachers in our small rural schools.

From Multi-grading to Small Schools

My curiosity about multi-grade classrooms lead me necessarily to be interested in small schools. With very few exceptions, multi-grade classrooms are a feature of our smaller schools where the enrolment does not warrant the allocation of one teacher per grade as dictated by Department of Education Guidelines. It is difficult to study multi-grading without becoming aware of issues and questions related to small schools.

Interestingly, for some teachers and parents in rural communities the existence of multigrade classrooms is the least of their concerns. A more pressing issue for them is the way that existing Department of Education funding guidelines discriminate against small schools. Funding is primarily on a per pupil basis; this means the total amounts of money coming into a school depend on the number of students. Invariably, this results in small schools not having enough money for even the most basic of resources. The extra provision made by government for small schools is woefully inadequate to compensate for the built in inequality of the funding arrangements.

The nature of the workload of teachers in small schools is yet another serious issue. Teachers have responsibility for many more subjects and courses. At all levels they are required to teach often in areas in which they have little or no academic or professional background.

The first "small schools" issue that attracted my attention was school closure and consolidation. It was through my study of multi-grading that I became interested in this issue. I discovered that multi-grading has been used quite often as a weapon in school closure battles between school boards and rural communities. The existence of multi-grade classrooms or the threat of having to create them was used to convince people to agree to the elimination of schooling in their community. Parents were told that multi-grading was an inferior and outdated form of schooling. If they really cared about their children's education, they were told, they would agree to have their children bussed to another community where they could attend a larger school with single grade classrooms.

As I became more knowledgeable about multi-grading I came to the realization that these closure decisions were being made on false or misleading information. The fact is that multi-grading is a world wide phenomenon wherever there are small schools. Many people believe that having more than one age group and grade level in a classroom is a preferred approach to education. In addition, research studies generally suggest that children learn as well in a multi-grade classroom as in a single grade classroom. I began to wonder what other "facts" were being used to force people to give up something they felt so strongly about and wanted to maintain.

This "wondering" has lead to the second major thrust of my research work in rural education: school closure and consolidation. I am particularly interested in

community response and resistance to closure efforts on the part of school districts. I have been collecting case studies that describe how the drama of closure and consolidation has been played out in this province. In some instances, schools have been closed without protest; in others the people in rural communities have fought long and hard to save their small community schools. Sometimes the protests have been successful; most often they have failed. The beliefs and values that inform the bigger is better and the one best system ideologies are strong and deeply entrenched. Too often the views and values of rural communities are discounted and dismissed for being irrelevant. Too often their protests and appeals have been treated with contempt by those in positions of power and authority.

School closure and school consolidation are also the most current issues of concern for rural parents and teachers. I am writing this article on November 13, 1996. In two weeks time the government will release a revised Schools Act. One section of this Act will detail a revised version of school viability regulations. These regulations will set the criteria that will be used to decide the future of small schools in this province. Earlier this year (January, 1996) the government set minimum standards for school viability in terms of grade enrolment. A k-6 school, for example, had to have at least 20 students per grade to be considered viable. Any school not meeting this standard would be labelled non-viable and targeted for closure. Under these regulations 150 rural schools became non-viable.

These guidelines were successfully challenged by rural parents and educators and the government was forced to withdraw them. During September and October of this year the minister of education has toured the province conducting "public consultations hearings." People have been provided with an opportunity to provide the government with input on the issue of school viability and the related issue of school busing. Everyone now is anxiously awaiting to see what the new version of school viability will look like.

From Small Schools to Rural Education

When someone asks me now what my primary research interest is I tell them rural education. That's not to say I am no longer interested in multi-grading and small schools and the pedagogical and organizational issues associated with these topics. However, I find that Rural Education is a more inclusive term for the range and scope of issues and questions I am interested in pursuing. More importantly it situates and identifies my work within a very specific context - rural communities. I have made this change for several reasons.

The first reason is rather obvious. As I indicated at the very beginning of this paper Newfoundland and Labrador is primarily a rural province and a province of small rural schools. Thus, to be interested in small schools in Newfoundland and Labrador is to be interested in small rural schools. It is important to note that, while all but a few of our small schools are rural, not all rural schools are small. Because of many successful attempts at closure and consolidation we have a fair number of larger schools (by our standards) located in rural communities. Small schools in urban areas are not the same as small schools in rural areas. The small private school in St. John's has little in common with a school the same size located in an isolated fishing community on the south coast of the island.

A second reason for emphasizing "rural" was not so obvious to me when I began this journey. However, I am becoming convinced that it is the unique features and characteristics of the rural context that give primary definition and direction to my work. I do not think I can make a contribution to improving education in rural communities if I do not understand and appreciate the strengths and challenges associated with living in rural areas. Coming to this realization has both complicated and enriched the nature of my work. It would be simpler to ignore the context but to do so would make anything I do less valid.

I am still struggling to understand the rural context and its implications for education and schooling in Newfoundland and Labrador. Part of the challenge here is the sheer diversity of that context. In Canada rural communities are defined by default. Statistics Canada gives an urban designation to all communities with a population of 5,000 or more. All others by default are classified as rural. Newfoundland and Labrador follows this model as well. Thus, included in this general category are communities that differ quite substantially, and for research and development purposes, quite significantly, in population. Such a crude indicator gives no information about the degree of isolation or remoteness; not does it tell us anything about the infrastructure of the community or the services that might be available in the community or nearby. In terms of infrastructure one of the most important considerations is basic tele-communications connectivity.

Existing and emerging technologies are increasingly making the size and location of rural schools irrelevant to their capability of providing a broad range of course offerings. It is no longer valid to close a rural school because it cannot offer the kinds of courses available in larger schools. Hence one of the traditional perceived "problems" in rural schools now has a possible solution. However, many rural communities in this province do not have the necessary telephone lines to enable students and teachers to access the various services that are now available. Internet access is still problematic in many schools often the very ones which need it the most. There is little point in suggesting technological solutions for small rural schools if the technology assumes an infrastructure that does not exist.

I am becoming increasingly aware that the socioeconomic characteristics of rural Newfoundland and Labrador have to play a very prominent role in any investigation or discussion about educational provision and achievement. Our province is well known as the most economically depressed area of Canada. In many of our rural areas the depth of that economic depression is truly startling. Levels of unemployment exceed 70% in some instances. There are a significant number of families who are dependent on welfare and many, many others who fit the category of the working poor. In addition the educational levels of the rural adult population is significantly lower than the national average. When we consider what we know about the relationship of factors such as these and student achievement and participation in school, the rural context of education in Newfoundland and Labrador is truly unique. To plan a curriculum and to evaluate student and school performance without taking these and other rural factors into consideration (which is what is done all the time!) is to distort terribly the educational achievement of our rural educators. In terms of educational progress and human development many of our small rural schools emerge as some of the best in the country when measured using a fair test.

Small schools may also benefit greatly from being situated in rural communities. Traditionally, rural parents and other members of the community have taken a great interest in their schools. There is much written about the special

relationship that often exists between school and community in rural places. Unfortunately, this special bond between school and community is constantly under siege as government attempts to force more and more communities to give up their schools.

There is an emergent body of research data purporting to show that small schools have a positive effect on "at risk" children. The at risk factors focused on in these studies are those associated with socioeconomic factors. The conclusion of these studies is that with student populations in economically depressed regions, a small school may provide these students with their best chance of success. Given the current economic conditions in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, closing our small rural schools may be the single worst thing we could do in the name of reform. Instead of improving matters for rural students we may in fact be condemning them to failure.

The umbrella term, Rural Education, also allows me to include in my areas of interest Native Education. The Micmac, Innu, Inuit and Metis populations of this province go to school and receive their education in the rural areas of this province. These unique culture groups add to the diversity that defines and enriches the rural context.

I feel that I have only scratched the surface in my attempt to understand the contextual realities of rural schooling in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mythology, nostalgia, sentimentality, stereotypes, outdated notions, misinformation, lack of information, and urban indifference create barriers that impede the search for knowledge. One thing is crystal clear: to speak of rural Newfoundland and Labrador in generalities is to speak falsely. I have become very wary of anyone who attempts to make any general statement about rural Newfoundland or rural schools. A typical rural community simply doesn't exist.

The international field of rural education studies makes problematic all our traditional, i.e. urban, notions about education and schooling in rural communities. It suggests we need to re-think and re-evaluate whose interests are being served when centralized governments set out to improve rural schools. Historically, rural education reform has always assumed that improving rural schools meant making them more like urban schools. This has resulted in the closure and consolidation of small community schools and various attempts to find ways of delivering an urban curriculum to rural students. Today, however, there is growing realization that rural education reform must proceed from a very different paradigm. The uniqueness of the context, the particular cultural and economic aspirations of rural citizens and the views of rural people must be the starting point for change. Perhaps, most important is the view that rural education change and improvement must, in the first interest, serve the needs of rural communities and rural children. It is rural citizens who must be the prime decision makers as to what is best for their communities and their children. The role of the rural education studies should be to provide rural communities with the knowledge they need to make their own informed decisions about education and schooling.

Ultimately, we have to come back some fundamental questions: What is the purpose of education and schooling in rural communities? Whose interests are being served by current practices and provision? Should not the primary aim be the sustaining and developing of rural communities? Some would argue that the success of rural education is measured too often in terms of how many young people choose to leave their home communities and move to the cities and towns. Intended or not the outcome

of education in rural areas has seen in many instances their de-population and eventual demise.

In the first part of this essay I have tried to trace the progress of my journey so far in becoming interested in rural education. I have tried to show that what started as idle curiosity has been transformed into a commitment to understanding and improving the provision of education for children in the rural areas of our province. In the second part I will suggest some future directions that might consider in terms of further developing rural education studies in the faculty. I will also suggest some resources and connections that that I have discovered over the past four years that may prove useful to others.

II

Centre for Studies in Rural Education

I think the time is right for the Faculty to establish a Centre for Studies in Rural Education. There are several such centres in the US and a few in Australia. There are none in Canada. Such a centre would be an important step forward for Newfoundland and Labrador. It would send a clear signal to the people of the province that the university recognizes the significant number of rural schools in the province and is committed to working on their behalf. Such a centre would provide a focus and meeting place for all those with an interest in pursuing research and development work in rural education studies. One very important role for such a centre could be to develop a data base of information about rural schools in this province which would be available to any faculty member or graduate student who wished to develop a research project in rural studies. Another function of such a centre would be the compilation of both local, national and international resources specifically related to rural education. Such sources would include both published materials and electronic links and resources. Establishing connections with rural education scholars and other rural research and development centres world wide would also be part of the proposed centre's agenda.

Newfoundland and Labrador is not unique in having a large percentage of rural schools. Other Canadian provinces and territories, many US states, many parts of the UK, especially Northern Scotland and Wales, as well as other places have similar challenges as we do. One role for the proposed centre would be to establish and maintain contacts with individual scholars and organizations in other places who have a special interest in rural education.

One such organization in North America is The National Rural Education Association (NREA). The NREA is the national organization in the United States for people interested and involved in rural education. Membership includes university teachers and researchers, rural teachers and administrators, and school board personnel and parents. This group has an annual conference and features a wide variety of presentations and forums dealing with a wide range of rural education issues. Although most of the participants are from the US, others come from Canada, Australia, and the UK. It is often claimed that small rural schools have more in common with similar schools in other contexts than they do with larger schools in their own province, state, or county. The presentations and discussions at the NREA conferences certainly confirm this. The NREA publishes one of the two main journals in rural education studies, *The Rural Educator*. (The *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, published by the University of Maine is the other.)

Last year the First National Rural Education Congress was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Organized by the SELU, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, this was the first time that a national conference on rural education had been organized in Canada. Plans were made at this conference to create a national organization for those interested in rural education. Following the American model this organization will be open to everyone: university researchers, k-12 educators, school board personnel and parent groups and organizations. The second annual conference is scheduled again for Saskatoon in February 1997. At that time final plans will be made for organizing a national organization. Starting in 1998 the conference to be held in different parts of the country. I think it would be a good idea for that third conference to be held here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Having a Rural Education Centre in place would certainly facilitate the planning of such a conference. I have had preliminary discussions with the Minister of Education, Roger Grimes, the NLTA president Art Baggs, and Dean Piper of the Faculty of Education, MUN, about the possibility of Newfoundland and Labrador hosting this Rural Education Congress in 1998. All have expressed support for this idea.

A third group that a connection could be established with is the Small Schools Network. This is a national organization for "all those interested in small schools" and is run by John Davis of The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto. This group publishes a regular newsletter (the current editor is Wynanne Downer of Corner Brook) and holds an annual conference. Their next conference is being held in June 1997 here in St. John's.

The Centre for Studies in Rural Education could function as a link and connector for rural educators in this province and organizations and groups such as these and others world wide. It could facilitate contacts, promote exchanges between teachers, administrators and researchers in Newfoundland and those in other parts of the world.

Curriculum Development

I would like the Faculty to consider establishing at the graduate level a program focus or specialism in Rural Education Studies. We have the potential in this province to develop a world class program in rural education. Many of our graduate students come to us with years of experience in small and rural schools. The context provides us with a ready made laboratory for extensive field work in all discipline areas from a small and rural school perspective. There is an opportunity here that many others in similar contexts have developed to the advantage of the institution and the rural communities it serves. The most recent example I have come across is Northern College in Scotland. (Memorial University and Northern College recently signed a memorandum of agreement). Iain Maclean, the college's Director of Development, recently visited this province. One of the reasons he was here was to recruit teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador for the graduate program in rural studies offered by Northern College. Mr. Maclean informed me that Northern Scotland is very similar to Newfoundland in the number of small rural schools. Northern College has developed their rural program with these schools in mind but also with a view to marketing these programs to rural educators world wide.

The very least we should do is to continue to develop new courses that address rural issues and to include these in existing graduate and undergraduate programs. We should also continue to address the special circumstances created by small and rural

schools in all existing courses at both graduate and undergraduate levels. We need to be preparing our teachers and educational leaders for the actual context in which many of them will work.

Our undergraduates will, in many instances, have their first teaching experience in a small rural school. In such situations they will have to teach a large number of courses, frequently in learning areas that were not part of their degree programs. Invariably they will have to teach more than one grade level in the same classroom at the same time. In small rural schools, the principal is also a full time teacher. This places very challenging demands on such an individual who must find the time to do two full time jobs in the time allotted for one. Distance learning is an integral part of many rural high-schools and provides access to programming that would be otherwise unavailable to students. However, the presence of distance learning in a school often changes everything from bus schedules to teaching assignments. This creates special organizational and planning demands for principals. The recruitment and especially the retention of teachers in rural areas is another topic that has to be approached somewhat differently if we are preparing educational leaders for rural districts. We need to focus more attention at both the graduate and undergraduate levels on the unique characteristics and demands of the rural context per se. For many students going to a small rural community is a definite cultural shock.

Distance Learning

At the present time the Faculty offers a number of courses through a variety of distance learning formats. This enables individuals who live in rural areas of the province to take courses without having to come to St. John's. I think we should continue to develop and offer programs and courses through distance learning. However, I have a number of reservations about this approach to education.

In my view, distance learning is, as the telephone commercial says, the "next best thing to being there." For me, teaching at a distance will never take the place of working with students in person on campus. I have been a teacher for twenty-seven years. For twenty-six of those years my students and I shared an actual space. We could see and hear each other in real time. Teaching at a distance doesn't allow for that. I miss meeting with the students as a group once or twice a week in a classroom setting. I find it very strange interacting with people whom I may never see in person. I miss not being able to see the students' reactions to what I am saying in their eyes, their smiles, their frowns, their looks of puzzlement or interest. There can be no silent or subtle sharing of an understanding, no non verbal indications of agreement. Perhaps my preferred teaching style does not lend itself very well to distance teaching. At the beginning of the term I like to establish a sense of community in the class by having people interact together and share their experiences. I like joining my students for a cup of coffee at break time. I especially like having them drop by for an in-person chat about their research papers or points of interest raised in the class lectures or discussions. And I remain unconvinced that accessing a library on-line is equal to visiting a library in person and browsing around the periodical shelves and book stacks. Many of the most interesting items I have found in libraries over the years I have discovered when something other than what I was looking for caught my eye. And a key board and a terminal will never take the place of a live librarian.

In the view rural students, being able to take courses at a distance is crucial. Before distance learning, students had to travel to St. John's to take a course. For rural residents this mean a much greater investment in time and money compared to students who lived in town or close enough to drive to commute. They were clearly discriminated against because of where they lived. Students who learn at a distance are aware of the differences I described above. However, in their view, what they lose is more than compensated for in what they gain.

Given the point of view of the students, I think we should continue to develop and offer distance courses. Also, I think we should be constantly monitoring and evaluating our delivery formats to ensure that we are offering the highest quality distance learning experiences to our students.

One of the key issues for me is to ensure that distance learning not become a form of "learning in isolation" for the student with little or no direct human contact. A very important element in the distance course I teach is the biweekly teleconferences that I requested be one of the delivery modes I would be using. Although my students and I are all in our separate places at various points around the island and Labrador, we do manage to create a living verbal community that provides some sense of human contact. At least we can hear each other's voice and this helps us to imagine the rest. Although we also communicate by E-mail and have a list server, we all agree that the live teleconference is a very important dimension to our course.

Scheduling some in-person gatherings for students and instructors is another way of humanizing distance learning for the participants. There is a distance graduate program in education currently being offered by another university in the Atlantic Region taking this approach. Teachers from around the province, enrolled in this program meet at regular intervals in Gander with their instructors. These meetings are a very important component of this program for the participants.

A second important issue is the creation of barriers that exclude people in rural communities from taking distance courses. There is little point, it seems to me, to create distance programs and courses and then erect technical barriers that exclude people who may not have access to the hardware, soft ware, or infrastructure, or do not have the expertise required to participate. Distance learning eliminates the barrier of physical location in terms of access to education. It should not create a whole new set of barriers in terms of technical demands. This is where knowledge of context is important. Knowing whom you are attempting to help, where they are located and what their capabilities are must be the basis of distance programs if we are to meet the needs of our rural teachers. Otherwise we may end up excluding those who are in most need of our help.

Distance learning should be available through our faculty in a variety of formats providing access to those with the most up to date machines and technical skills and to those seeking to learn in more traditional distance formats. Distance learning should supplement and complement our campus based programs, but it should not in any way replace them.

A Research Tradition

Research and scholarly writing on rural education in Newfoundland and Labrador has been a tradition with the Faculty and other educators in the province. Earlier I have referred to the work of Dr. Frank Riggs. Previous to this important work was done by Ishmael Baksh and Amarjit Singh in 1977 (*Society, Culture and Schooling*), 1979 (*The Teacher in the Newfoundland Community*) and 1980 (*Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching*). A record of some of the other significant work that contributes to our understanding of rural education in Newfoundland can be found in back issues of the *Morning Watch* (see especially Vol. 1, No. 3) and *Society and Education in Newfoundland Volume I & II* (edited by A. Singh & I. Baksh). The former NTA Journal and the current NLTA Prism also contain important contributions to our research base. "Dealing with individual differences in reading in a one-room school" by Lary Sipe and published in the Summer edition of NTA Journal in 1974 is a good example of rural educators in the field attempting to share their experiences with colleagues.

A number of teachers in the province have completed Masters' Theses which focused on rural issues. Among those are: E. Smith, who described a whole language approach to literacy in a four/five multi-grade classroom; L. Barr-Baillet, who examined the provision for science education in small rural schools, C. Vincent who focused on the effects on rural students when they make the transition from attending a small school in their community to being bused to a larger school in a distant community. J. Howard investigated a sample of small schools which went against the norm and performed on standardized tests at or above the provincial average. P. Ryan inquired into the capabilities of teachers in small rural primary schools to deliver a new French program that assumes a high level of oral competency on the part of the teacher.

In addition there other graduate students who have also chosen rural and small schools issues as their focus and are at different stages in their work on thesis, projects and paper portfolios. Most recently Dr. Jean Brown has published an article entitled "Grandy's River Collegiate: Can a Rural School Survive in an Urban Landscape?" in the Alberta Journal of Education. The newest member of the Faculty, Dr. Ken Stevens, the new Chair of Tele-Learning, brings with him a wealth of experience in rural education research and development.

There are strong traditions and current expertise here for us to build on. There is a steady stream of graduate students coming into the faculty who bring with them an interest and expertise in, and a commitment to, rural and small schools. By combining our efforts and interests we could create within this Faculty a centre of excellence in rural education studies.

Conclusion

The title of this essay is "Why Rural Education?" I have attempted to provide a very personal answer to this question. First I described how I became involved in rural schools and how that initial inquiry has been transformed into a much broader set of interests and a deep commitment to improving educational provision in rural areas. In the second part I shared some ideas for the future development of rural education studies in the Faculty.

To be involved in rural education is very challenging, rewarding and frustrating. This is a particularly difficult time for the rural areas of the province. The rural areas have always endured tough economic conditions and have somehow survived. The current period, however, is one of extreme crisis. The cod moratorium has threatened the continued existence of many rural communities. Even in those areas not directly affected by the moratorium unemployment is at all time high. Many people have left their home communities. The decline in population and school enrolment is dramatic in many areas. This coupled with an ongoing erosion of rural services through an endless round of cutbacks and layoffs have created grave concerns and doubts among the people about their futures. There is a sense of unease as people wait and wonder what is to happen next. There is also a conviction among many that the government's hidden (perhaps not so hidden) agenda is another round of resettlement. To have the task of providing education to the children of rural Newfoundland at such a time in such a state is very challenging. I have been following this developing situation closely with a particular interest in how this general condition is affecting the schools. I continue to admire and be impressed with our rural educators who struggle on a daily basis to provide quality learning experiences in communities under siege. One thing is very clear. We ignore this situation and its impact on education and schooling in this province at our peril.

**PARTICIPATION IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN
NEWFOUNDLAND: SOUNDINGS FROM A LOCAL STUDY**

**Samuel McGrath
Department of Education
Winter 1996**

Introduction

Education and training have always been viewed as primary instruments for determining the labour market outcomes of youth, especially for the successful transition of youth from high school into the world of work. Further education meant an assured means of improving employability in terms of obtaining and retaining employment, increasing the range of employment opportunities, providing access to higher salaries, and assisting the worker to become more adaptable to occupational and industrial changes (Sharpe & Spain, 1991). While many youth make a decision to seek full-time employment prior to completing school, they generally encounter more difficulty in finding employment or in obtaining other than part-time, menial, low-paying, and cyclical jobs (Samuelson, 1988). The best chance any young person has of obtaining full-time, better-paying, and more meaningful work is to stay in high school until graduation and to continue on to post-secondary education afterwards (Ashton, 1988; Khran & Lowe, 1989). This participation imperative is being made all the more urgent in the new industrialism with its growing demands for sophisticated and highly technical work skills.

In Canada, however, and especially in Newfoundland, participation in post-secondary education has been historically low in absolute terms. For example, in 1990-91, the combined national rate for university and public college participation among 18-24 year olds in Canada was 23.0%. The comparable rate for Newfoundland was 18.7% (Table 1). While the gap between the rates has narrowed since 1971-72, the Newfoundland rate was only slightly closer to the national rate 20 years later despite increasing by 97% from its baseline rate of two decades earlier.

In spite of concern expressed in the province over the years about our low post-secondary participation rates (Crocker & Riggs, 1980; Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986), participation in higher education has not been extensively studied in Newfoundland. Several Masters level theses were completed in the past two decades or so on such issues as educational plans of youth, career decision-making, knowledge of post-secondary institutions, and dropouts (Baker, 1978; Burry, 1975; Coffin, 1976; Duncan, 1973; May, 1975). Several government-sponsored studies or position papers were also completed (Crocker & Riggs, 1980; Montgomery, 1982; Batten et al., 1974; Kealey, 1986). These research projects reported on ways to improve student retention and post-secondary participation, employment issues related to women in the labour force, and/or equity issues of working women generally. Only one study (Parsons, 1974) specifically devoted attention, albeit in an ancillary way, to the personal and environmental antecedents of post-secondary participation. Because of this general lack of direct research on participation, the current study--on which this paper is based--was a foundational, exploratory one aimed towards increasing our understanding of factors which might influence the decision young people make about continuing their education beyond high school.

Table 1

Post-secondary¹ Participation² Rates by Province, Canada, 1971-1991

Province	71-72 ³	72-74 ⁴	74-76	76-78	78-80	80-82	82-84	84-86	86-88	88-90
NF	9.5	8.5	7.3	7.5	7.3	8.6	11.0	14.0	15.9	17.2
PE	15.9	14.1	13.5	13.4	12.1	12.5	14.3	14.5	15.8	17.6
NS	16.4	15.5	15.9	16.1	15.2	15.7	17.8	18.9	19.5	21.7
NB	14.6	12.5	12.0	11.8	11.5	12.4	14.4	15.8	16.8	18.2
PQ	13.9	15.4	16.0	16.3	16.7	17.3	20.3	23.7	25.3	26.9
ON	16.5	16.8	17.3	17.2	16.8	18.1	19.9	20.6	21.4	22.7
MB	14.3	13.9	13.8	13.3	11.9	12.6	14.2	14.2	14.1	14.8
SK	14.3	12.8	12.3	12.0	11.0	11.3	13.1	14.0	15.1	16.1
AB	15.7	15.2	15.1	14.2	12.2	11.3	12.6	14.8	16.4	18.3
BC	13.0	11.8	12.5	11.9	11.1	11.0	12.5	13.3	14.3	15.4

Source: Human Resources Development Canada, 1994

¹ Public colleges and universities (undergraduates).

² Participation by 18-24 year-olds as a percentage of the general population, 18-24 years old.

³ Actual percentages are shown for 1971-72 and 1990-91.

⁴ Percentages are averaged over intervals of two academic years from 1972-73 to 1989-90

Theory and Method

Theory related specifically to post-secondary participation is derived from the general literature on status attainment. A vast sociological literature on status attainment, both educational status and occupational status, exists for many countries. Findings from Canadian studies since the 1970s generally supported the findings of studies conducted in the United States, Australia, and elsewhere, namely, that social origin factors were strong determinants, directly and indirectly, of both access to and the attainment of higher education.

The conceptual model typically used in this kind of research assesses an idiosyncratic selection of social and psychological influences on the level of education that subjects under study have attained. These influences are derived from the social and economic status of the subjects' parents or are attributed to achievement characteristics which the subjects have acquired through personal effort. The overwhelming use in the literature of this status attainment model prompted its adoption in the study cited in this paper. The model (Figure 1) follows the conventions established by Blau and Duncan (1967), Sewell & Shah (1967), and others with the exception that a socioeconomic variable, common to other status attainment research, was not specifically included. However, several of the background variables, e.g., well-being, career plans, value of education, family size, and advanced mathematics, can be regarded as socioeconomic variables.

The model assumes that personal status variables, selected family status variables, school resource variables, and community context variables are all exogenous variables. It also assumes that academic achievement, high school graduation, vocational self-concept, the influence of significant others, and barriers are all intervening variables that mediate the effects of the exogenous variables on the criterion variable--participation in post-secondary education. In quantitative terms, the model is a series of structural equations in which the parameters of the variables are estimated from correlational matrices or partial regression coefficients. It is additive in nature in that the effects of the exogenous and endogenous variables combine directly and indirectly to affect the probability that a young person will participate in post-secondary education (see Hayden & Carpenter, 1990).

The design of the research flowed from the conceptual framework. The independent and dependent variables were selected following a review of the youth transition and status attainment literatures and from a pilot study and series of interviews undertaken as a preliminary to the main study (McGrath, 1993). Quantitative data for the study were obtained from a longitudinal study that began in Newfoundland in 1989 (Sharpe & Spain, 1991). Qualitative data were from interviews conducted in the province with former students, guidance counsellors, principals, and district superintendents from the K-12 system, and with public college presidents, Memorial University faculty, and senior provincial government officials responsible for post-secondary education. Other information was obtained from federal and provincial public documents and from the public examination database at the Newfoundland Department of Education. The data were organized and analysed using factor analysis, multiple regression, and path analysis. Separate analyses were conducted for males and females.

Findings

Both the correlational and regression analyses revealed that six of the 17 independent variables were consistently most highly related to Post-secondary Participation. In descending order, they were Academic Achievement, Barriers, Value of Education, Advanced Mathematics, Academic Attainment and Well-being.

Their correlation coefficients were comparable in all three matrices, i.e., the model for males, the model for females, and the total group model. In the regression analysis, the order of the effects of the six variables was generally consistent in all three models and the relative size of the effect of each variable on Participation was generally comparable across the three models (Table 2). While these relationships were statistically significant at the .01 level throughout (an artifact doubtlessly of the large sample size; $N=5,420$), they were weak in real terms and suggested that major shifts would have to occur in the effects of the independent variables for a movement from non-participation to participation to take place.

A profile of the most likely participant in post-secondary education in Newfoundland emerged, albeit opaquely, from the regression analysis for the integrated model. The participant could be either a male or female from a small family in any community--rural or urban--in the most populous region of the province (Region 1, the Avalon Peninsula). He or she would have graduated from high school with a high average in the provincial public examinations, and would likely have taken advanced mathematics in high school as well as attended a school where career information services were available. The person may not have formulated a career plan but would possess a high sense of well-being.

Path analysis was utilized to determine whether any of the independent exogenous variables influenced post-secondary participation indirectly as a result of the influences of the intervening variables. Indirect effects showed if the influences were mediated or transmitted through the intervening variables. For example, attachment to home and community was not statistically significant as a determinant of participation in the extended integrated model. But, in both the male and female reduced models, attachment was statistically significant as a barrier to post-secondary participation with about equal effects on males and females (see Table 2). The object of examining the indirect effects and the direct effects of the attachment variable in a path model was to determine if the total effect was a predictor of or a detractor to participation. It was hypothesized that attachment was a factor in participation as a form of barrier which prevented young people from otherwise enrolling in post-secondary education. Other independent exogenous variables were also examined for direct effects.

Table 3 shows the estimated direct effects, indirect effects and total effects for each of the background variables. A t-value was calculated for total effect only. All values found to be statistically significant at the .05 level included gender, value of education, rural/urban, regions 3 and 4, career plans, family size, career information, attachment, advanced mathematics, well-being and learning style. Standardized regression coefficients (?) for independent variables that were shown in the extended integrated model analysed above to be statistically significant with participation were generally enhanced through the effects of indirect analysis. That is, the size of the total effects in nearly all cases was bigger than the for direct effects indicating support for the

Table 2

Comparisons of Regression Parameters for Participation

Independent Variables	Participation					
	Male Model		Female Model		Integrated Model	
	b	?	b	?	b	?
Gender		n/a		n/a	.045	.048
R_u	.020	.020	.046	.050	.035	.037
Reg 2	.046	.031	.035	.026	.040	.028
Reg 3	-.057	-.054	-.042	-.042	-.048	-.047
Reg 4	-.057	-.044	-.022	-.018	-.039	-.031
Reg 5	-.006	-.003	.031	.014	.009	.004
Plans	.013	.031	.032	.062	.021	.044
Famsize	-.011	-.044	-.010	-.049	-.010	-.047
Attach	-.017	-.032	-.005	-.011	-.011	-.022
Valued	.059	.129	.061	.127	.060	.128
Guidance	.051	.022	.047	.024	.061	.029
Careinfo	.029	.060	.031	.069	.031	.067
Advmath	.107	.086	.070	.060	.087	.071
Wellbe	.032	.067	.045	.093	.038	.079
Lstyle	.014	.029	.007	.016	.010	.021
Avg.	.006	.163	.006	.178	.006	.170
Hsgrd	.130	.074	.224	.109	.170	.090
Vocself	.005	.010	.009	.019	.007	.016
Sigoths	.015	.020	.016	.022	.016	.021
Barriers	-.089	-.183	-.070	-.145	-.080	-.165

R² = .2152 (Male Model)

R² = .2233 (Female Model)

R² = .2246 (Integrated Model)

general hypothesis that the exogenous variables were mediated by the intervening variables.

For some variables--attachment, value of education, and advanced mathematics--the total effects were substantially higher, relatively, than the direct

effects. In the regression equation for the extended integrated model, the standardized coefficient (direct effect) for attachment, for example, was not statistically significant with participation. Through the mediating effects of the intervening variables, however, the β for total effect of the attachment variable was rendered statistically significant at the .05 level. The magnitude of the attachment-participation relationship was made twice as strong by the addition of the indirect effects. Similarly, the magnitude of the advanced mathematics- participation relationship doubled through the addition of indirect effects. In addition to attachment, three other variables changed status in terms of statistical significance through the total effects analysis, namely, region 2, guidance, and learning style (see Table 3).

Findings from the series of interviews with youth, principals, and guidance counsellors in the K-12 education system, with principals and senior officials from the post-secondary system, and with staff from the Department of Education complemented the quantitative results from the survey data. Results from the interviews gave added weight to the influences of the variables found in the regression analyses to have statistically significant effects on post-secondary participation. For example, the importance of advanced mathematics to participation was confirmed by the principals and guidance counsellors, all of whom also said it was important for parents to have a high value for education because a positive attitude largely determined whether parents encouraged their children to attend university or one of the public colleges. And the nature of the barriers to participation that were identified in the regression analyses was similar to the kinds of barriers the stakeholders identified; the main impediments in their view being lack of money, meeting academic prerequisites, inadequate access to programs, negative family influences, and an encumbering attachment to home and community.

Conclusions and Implications

Generally, the hypotheses formulated for the study were supported by the findings from the data analyses. The effects of the independent variables on participation, both the background and intervening variables, also generally conformed to the theory reported in the literature.

With reference to the theoretical model, none of the effects of the personal variables was strongly associated with participation in post-secondary education. The effects of well-being were higher than the effects of gender, career plans, and learning style, but not to the extent where it could be generalized that a continuing sense of well-being is predictive of entry into post-secondary education. The extent to which family variables influenced participation was contingent on the value held for education in the home. Family size had little effect, but value of education had the third highest effect on participation of all the independent variables in the study. School variables on average were moderately related to participation.

Table 3

Correlations, Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, Total Effects, and t-Values for the Effects of the Exogenous Variables and the Intervening Variables on Post-secondary Participation

Outcome Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation (r)	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	t-Value
Participation	Gender	.097	.048	.022	.070	3.823
	R_U	.099	.037	.008	.045	2.438
	Reg 2	.022	.028	-.007	.022	1.166
	Reg 3	-.079	-.047	.007	-.039	-2.133
	Reg 4	-.033	-.031	-.016	-.047	-2.569
	Reg 5	.006	.004	.008	-.004	-0.233
	Plans	.130	.044	.016	.060	3.261
	Famsize	-.123	-.047	-.013	-.061	-3.288
	Attach	-.071	-.022	-.027	-.048	-2.634
	Valued	.286	.128	.079	.208	11.525
	Guidance	.001	.028	-.004	.025	1.330
	Careinfo	.113	.067	.019	.086	4.694
	Advmath	.226	.071	.073	.145	7.933
	Wellbe	.153	.079	.021	.100	5.435
	Lstyle	.065	.019	.019	.040	2.161

Multiple R = .4739

R² = .2246

Note: The t-values are given for the total effect only. A t-value equal to or greater than 2.00 is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Guidance had a negligible influence and career information and advanced mathematics in the numerical analyses both had small effects. However, the interview results gave much more support to all three variables in the extent to which they were related to participation. Community variables generally had little or no effect on whether residents obtained higher education according to results from the survey data. Results from the interviews, however, indicated that the attachment variable was highly associated with participation for many students from small communities. Post-secondary administrators, principals, counsellors, and even several youth referred to the inhibiting effects on young people of not wanting to leave home. These respondents all regarded community attachment to be a significant influence in detracting young people from participating in post-secondary education.

Generally, the mediating effects of the intervening variables enhanced the effects of the background variables on participation. While the boosting effects were not large in substantive terms, the influence was in the direction hypothesized for them and as theorized in the literature. An ancillary question had been examined in the study as to whether the effects of the background and intervening variables on post-secondary participation differed between males and females. In general, the similarities between males and females were more apparent than the differences in all the analyses. In short, there were no substantial differences between males and females in the effects of the variables on participation.

In summary, the variables found to be most frequently associated with participation were academic achievement, barriers, value of education, advanced mathematics, academic attainment, and well-being. These six consistently had the biggest effects in the various analytical models used in the study. Results from the interviews held with various stakeholders supported the findings from the regression and path analyses and gave added weight to the influences of the variables found to be related to participation.

Several policy initiatives emanate from the study that if carried out would additively contribute to a more complete explanation of the predictive influences on post-secondary participation. For example, three of the variables found to be most influential, relatively, on participation--academic achievement, advanced mathematics, and academic attainment--are directly manipulable by the K-12 education system. The advanced mathematics variable is more open to policy change than the other two because it is a clearly defined part of the curriculum and is less intricate and nebulous than is achievement or attainment. However, in 1992, only a little more than 22% of Grade 12 students in the province were enrolled in the third year advanced mathematics course. While this percentage was double the enrolment six years earlier, it was still quite low considering the course was available in more than 90% of all Newfoundland high schools. A way to begin increasing participation in post-secondary education, therefore, might be to increase the participation of high school seniors in the advanced mathematics courses (which could be a consequence of current high school curricula policy considerations).

The variable, value of education, is less within the control of the school but not outside its sphere of influence. Schools experience varying degrees of contact with parents and they generally know the family situations of their students, even in urban communities. Professional school personnel such as teachers, principals, counsellors, and others have an opportunity to enhance the esteem held for education in families where esteem is known to be low. Information obtained in the interviews clearly disclosed that many educators felt that some parents from their area placed a low value

on education. This disregard resulted in children from these families neither completing high school nor continuing with their education if they did graduate. But, the anomaly also exists where the reverse is true in that youth from "good" families are known to complete high school, do well academically while there, are encouraged if not implored by their parents to continue their education, and have brothers or sisters who went into post-secondary education, yet opted not to attend after they, themselves, graduated. Why do such anomalies occur in families where education is demonstrably highly valued? The variable has much research potential but none was found that focused on the issue. Pending the research, the variable's contribution to educational attainment theory remains unknown.

The barriers variable is similarly within the sphere of influence of the schools in terms of their capacity to inform. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that financial constraint was the main barrier that prevented many eligible high school graduates from enrolling in post-secondary education. Despite recent revisions to it, many students believe that the Canada Student Loan program is inadequate to meet their financial needs, at a time when availability of a loan is becoming crucial to high school graduates in their decision to go on to further education. Yet, little research has been undertaken in Newfoundland about the effects of the student loan program on post-secondary participation. While the loan program was never meant to be other than a supplemental source of funding for students, it has evolved to where it is for many the only source of financing that enables them to enrol in and continue with university or college studies. New phenomena might be emerging, however, where a reduction in demand for student loans could occur. Many students reported they are hesitating to accumulate large debts to obtain higher education when there is no assurance they will find subsequent employment to repay them. Further, the number of students defaulting on their loans, reported in the public media as already high, might increase in the near future which could potentially have serious implications for future loan availability. These factors are in addition to a naturally occurring reduction in demand as secondary student populations decline further in the years ahead. The entire student loan program has recently undergone substantive changes which makes comprehensive research into the issue both timely and topical if loan accessibility, and thereby post-secondary education accessibility, is to be enhanced and maintained.

Other barriers such as lack of access to courses and programs, lack of career direction, and insufficient knowledge of occupations and educational options were also identified in the study as important impediments for many youth. Several of the post-secondary administrators said that general information was known about participation in post-secondary education in Newfoundland but that specifics were lacking on many of the pertinent factors believed to affect it. Variables such as guidance, career planning, and career information especially required more research. Some of the basic assumptions underlying present career education curricula may need to be examined. For example, the traditional focus of providing information on careers and educational options are based on the assumption that the more information students have, the better their decision-making capability about post-secondary participation. This assumption may only be partly valid; further theoretical perspectives yet unknown to program developers or which have not been given prominence in the career education literature need to be explored. Emphasis, for example, may need to be placed on the way students process the information that is already available or on their perceptions of the value of such information to their career decision-making.

With a few exceptions, the effects of the study variables on participation were in the direction that was expected and were generally similar to the findings of previous

research. Further research to substantiate the effects of the variables would be desirable, but some indicators are already apparent which can generate changes that could lead to greater participation in post-secondary education. It is important that such change be made. The issue of participation in education generally has become more important in recent years because of the general economic restructuring that has occurred in industrialized countries where traditional sources of work have largely disappeared. There was a time in Newfoundland, for example, when many people were self-sufficient with a modest income. Outlets such as fishing, hunting, gardening, raising a few domestic cattle, wood-cutting, building one's own home and carrying out one's own maintenance could substitute for hard currency. Seasonal work in the Newfoundland construction industry, fishing, forestry, or mining industries, or in a metropolitan area on the mainland enabled many people to earn a reasonable living without long-term work. In the last decade, however, high unemployment in these traditional industries, combined with decreasing employment opportunities elsewhere in Canada, has left many Newfoundlanders, especially youth, without the traditional means of earning a living. The options for employment will be limited even with an education, but the conventional wisdom is that, as youth everywhere in the industrialized world, young people in Newfoundland will have no chance at all to compete for better-paying jobs without some formal education beyond high school. With severe economic conditions currently facing the province, educational participation is regarded as instrumental in the government's strategic economic plan that is expected to reshape the provincial economy. Higher education in particular is viewed as an important means of revitalizing the province's labour force and for creating new employment opportunities. If the theoretical relationship between education and economic development is valid, the sooner a change process can begin that is directed at enhancing present levels of participation in post-secondary education, the quicker could positive results be realized that would bring about corresponding desirable changes in the provincial economy.

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**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) AND LITERACY:
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

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Reading and writing are necessary but not sufficient conditions for literacy. Reading and writing both involve the construction of meaning via print and prior knowledge. Literacy entails both attitude and action with respect to reading and writing and is influenced by social, economic, political, and cultural conditions.

Adult Basic Education and literacy are two significant constructs for adult learners who have not completed high school and who choose to increase their level of school achievement, possibly leading to a high school certificate. The purpose of this paper is to try and understand the relationship between literacy and adult basic education as educational experiences for the attainment of this goal.

Historical Insights

Literacy programs have a long history in Newfoundland including the Opportunity Schools of the 1930's. These entailed six permanently employed teachers who travelled from community to community assisting people with their reading skills. The work of Dr. Florence O'Neill continued this tradition in the 1940's. In the 1950's and 1960's the approach to literacy (called reading then) was much more traditional and any adult programs tended to use reading materials from elementary schools.

Adult Basic Education was initiated in 1968 when the first Basic Training and Skills Development (BTSD) program (a federally funded program) was established in the province at Stephenville. For students who were unable to cope with the academic demands of this program, a pre-BTSD literacy component was developed. By 1970, the Literacy portion of the BTSD program "had become clearly established as a program in its own right and the Adult Education section of the Department of Education undertook to put a curriculum in place" (p. iv). The Educational Development Laboratories (EDL), a United States program formed the basis of literacy instruction in the province for the next eight years. The BTSD program had a pre-employment orientation. Initially there were courses offered in mathematics, communication skills, science, and social studies; the latter was dropped from the curriculum as it was not a prerequisite to any trade. The BTSD program was a mastery based, individualized program patterned after the Saskatchewan Newstart Program. In 1973 the BTSD program was revised and three basic streams were developed: technical, biological, and commercial. The Generic Skills Research conducted by the Occupational and Career Analysis Development Branch of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission was used to determine which parts of the program would be prerequisites for entering different occupational training programs. As part of this revision, a life skills course was added. The Department began issuing certificates for the BTSD program based on the completion of courses in three areas: mathematics, communication skills, and science. Students who received certificates were eligible for admission to trade and technical programs in vocational schools.

With a downsizing of Federal support for the BTSD program, the Division of Adult and Continuing Education established a Provincial Literacy Committee in 1978,

the mandate of which was to develop a Literacy program for the province, suitable for full-time and part-time delivery. The Literacy program introduced in 1978 was very similar to the EDL program - a self paced literacy skills instructional program. In the 1980's with the restructuring of the high school program by level, the ABE program was revised to parallel this approach. In 1985, ABE certification was accepted for entrance into Memorial University.

In June 1988, the Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies established a committee to examine the Literacy Program, the ABE Program, the BTSD program, and the Academic Support (Concurrent Training) Program. In March 1989, the committee recommended that the Department "create one provincial program consisting of Levels I, II, and III, to encompass and integrate the Literacy, ABE, and BTSD Programs" (ABE Level I Program Guide, 1995, p. i). A 1990 revision to the ABE Level I (Literacy) program marked a significant shift in the approach to literacy programs. Instead of basing the program on a set of resources, such as EDL, it was based on general learning objectives. The manner in which the program was to be executed was not specified so that the onus lay on the instructors. In 1993, the ABE Monitoring Committee was established to continue to examine and evaluate the program; this committee evolved into the ABE Standing Committee in 1994.

Purpose of ABE Levels I, II, and III

Literacy preceded ABE as an area of study. Quigley (1997) points out that the origins of ABE must be understood within a human capital model. In 1962 the first bill to promote literacy education in the United States House of Representatives did not get beyond the Rules Committee. It was then considered more "politically and economically correct" to have adults enroll in ABE programs which would tie their educational experiences more closely to the labour market. Literacy as expertise in , and critical use of language (reading and writing) was perceived as too general for this purpose. This was an unfortunate turn of events as the basis for the development of critical reading and writing skills transferable to a wide range of contexts was minimized. The focus on the relationship between ABE programs and entry into the workforce is characteristic of the Newfoundland and Labrador ABE program.

According to the ABE Level II/III Instructors' Handbook (1995), the ABE program was "designed with the intent of providing adults who have not completed high school with the opportunity of acquiring a solid, high quality educational background to allow them to function in society, and to access avenues to further education, training, employment, and personal enrichment" (p.10). The ABE Level I Program Guide (1995) delineates this goal somewhat by specifying that learners enter the ABE program for a variety of reasons. While some may aspire to obtaining a certificate, others may use this as a stepping stone to further education, or trade skills instruction, while others may attend to assist their families, or for their own personal goals. However, there appears to be a discrepancy between the stated goal of the program and the content. As indicated above, social studies was dropped from the ABE curriculum, not because it did not contribute to a "solid, high quality, educational background" but because it was not a prerequisite to any trade. The prominence of the work orientation is evidenced by such statements as "Prevalent education and training theory . . . stresses the importance of providing more rounded basic educational opportunities to prepare people to cope with the pressures of information technology and a fluid labour market" (ABE Levels II/II Instructors' Handbook, 1995. p. 10). The Handbook authors also quote from Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer (1990, p. 2), "Today's workplace demands not only a

good command of the three R's but more. Employers want a new kind of worker with a broad set of workplace skills - or at least a strong foundation in the basics that will facilitate learning on the job". The Handbook authors continue that "Confidence and independence, and the ability to seek and use many learning resources are desirable attributes to foster in adult learners" (p. 11).

Literacy Within the ABE Program

Regardless of the focus on preparation for the workforce, there is provision for literacy instruction within ABE. Literacy at the three ABE levels is briefly distinguished by describing Level I as being synonymous with literacy, Level II as constituting a transition between literacy and high school, and Level III as being synonymous with high school. In more detail, Level I is described as "designed to enable adults to achieve the fluency in reading and writing, to acquire the knowledge, and to develop the skills required to participate fully in their day to day lives as citizens, workers, parents, consumers, and students (ABE Level I Instructors' Handbook, 1995, p. vii). The encompassing objective of ABE Level I "is that at the time the adults leave the program their facility in reading, writing, and critical thinking, and their ability to transfer knowledge to the development of life coping skills will be enhanced" (ABE Level I Program Guide, 1995, p. x). "Level II is meant to provide the transition between the literacy skills adults need to function in our society and those that are associated with high school completion" (ABE Level II Program Guide, 1995, p. xi).

Literacy components/courses are addressed within the Communication Skills section of the ABE Program. ABE Level I also contains a content area section, the overall objective of which "is the development of functional literacy" (p. 43).

Program Requirements

Following are a list of required courses with a literacy component at the three ABE levels:

ABE Level I Communication Skills, including:

- Reading
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Mathematics
- Science
- General Knowledge

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ABE Level I - 18 courses

Communication Skills, including:

Reading
Writing
Spelling
Oral Communications
Mathematics
Science
General Options (Level III Credits)

ABE Level III 36 credits required

Minimum of 6 Communication Skills
Minimum of 6 Mathematics
Minimum of 6 Science
Minimum of 4 Employability Skills

Plus 4 additional credits from above

Maximum of 10 General Options (may include equivalency and maturity credits)

Estimated Time for Completion

The suggested time for the completion of one course is seven weeks or one-half semester, part-time at 3 hours a week. Full-time day attendance would allow a learner to complete the course in 2 weeks.

Level II would take a year to complete on a part-time basis, or 6 to 8 weeks on a full time basis. Completing Level I would depend on how quickly the learner completed the general learning objectives specified for that Level. The ABE Level I Program Guide states that "Students whose reading skills are already fairly advanced usually need a few months to brush up on their skills and get used to being in an educational program before going on to Level II" (p. 5). It is recommended that "About three weeks after the initial assessment, a student who has attended classes regularly could be introduced to the reading and writing evaluation charts" (p. 173) which are given in the Handbook.

The ABE Level II/III Handbook states that full-time students who are HRDC funded are often under pressure to complete the program in 65 weeks. Another statement indicates that "Those who enter at a low level usually take a long time to complete, at least three years" (p. 53). It is not clear if this reference is to students in Levels II and III or one or the other.

Issues in the ABE/Literacy Program

The experiences which adult learners have in ABE/Literacy Programs depend on a number of factors or issues. Because of space, a few of these which are under the control of program developers will be addressed here. These include: nature of literacy, nature of instruction, and instructor preparation/support.

Nature of Literacy

There is no single definition of literacy so one must abstract its meaning from the proposed content and intent of the Program. There is no doubt that literacy is the main function of Level I for the Program Guide states that "While it can be argued that basic math skills are a part of functional literacy, the ability to read and understand and communicate in print are more central to what it means to be literate" (p. 32).

Literacy for ABE Level I is addressed in 25 general objectives. Some are prefaced by a condition, such as: "Given a text of appropriate difficulty, relevant to personal interest or program content areas . . ."; also each general objective may have sub-objectives. The main objectives are:

Critical Reading Skills

1. Paraphrase to demonstrate clear understanding of author's message.
2. Identify author's purpose and audience.
3. Distinguish between fiction and non-fiction.
4. Distinguish between fact and opinion.
5. Identify major ideas and supporting detail that is explicitly stated.
6. Identify unwritten meanings.
7. Evaluate for personal significance.
8. Scan to locate specific information.
9. Skim to choose a book or item or (a) interest, or (b) relevance to the purpose.
10. Locate, interpret, and apply information.
11. Classify and categorize information.

Purpose of Reading

1. Identify ways in which reading is used.
2. Identify different forms of printed information.
3. Select appropriate reading or print material for the location of required information.
4. Identify situations in which printed materials may be presented orally.

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5. Use appropriate study skills.

Oral and Written Communications

1. Present personal information orally and in writing.
2. Present personal experience orally and in writing.
3. Express personal opinion orally and in writing.
4. Write a narrative paragraph.
5. Write a descriptive paragraph.
6. Extend the principles of paragraph writing to a short composition of 3 or 4 paragraphs.
7. Perform practical writing exercises using the appropriate format.
8. Perform handwriting exercises with reasonable speed and legibility.
9. Read orally with expression and a reasonable degree of fluency.

In addition to these general objectives there are 126 Skill Areas, and 7 Pre-Reading Skills listed. The relationship between these skills and literacy is explained at various points. ABE Level I Program Guide states that "While the attainment of the general learning objectives assumes full literacy (my emphasis), the skill areas refer to very basic steps in the development of literacy" (p. xvii). This point is made elsewhere in the Program Guide that the simple acquisition of the skills required to read cannot be equated with literacy. The Skill Areas appear to be prerequisites for literacy. The assumption appears to be that if the Skill Areas and Pre-Reading Skills are developed, they are done so separately, or in addition to these exercises which would be used for the general literacy objectives.

It is not expected that students will attain the full literacy implied by the general objectives at Level I. The ABE Level II Program Guide states: "Because most adults entering Level II will have underdeveloped reading skills, it is imperative that every instructor encourage students to read as often as possible, and as widely as possible" (p. 1). There is no similar admonition with respect to writing. There is a shift in philosophy and emphasis on the nature of literacy in Level II. Rather than being guided by general objectives, there are three specific courses plus one in literature. The three courses directly dealing with instruction in literacy are:

IC 2012: Vocabulary
 IC 2013: Reading Comprehension
 IC 2015: Writing Skills
 (IC 2013: Literature)

There is also IC 2011: Study and Research Skills, which includes topics related to literacy development. There seem to be more commonalities between the suggested reading course at Level II and the Skill Areas in Level I, than with the General Literacy Objectives at Level I. The writing course for Level II contains much more content on the mechanics of writing (Grammar, Punctuation and Capitalization) than is implied by the General Literacy Objectives at Level I. The sequence of literacy development appears to move from a more general to a more narrow perspective across Levels I, II, and III.

Level III continues the philosophy guiding the nature of literacy at Level II. A rationale is provided: "Writing, reading, speaking, listening, viewing, study, and all communication skills are crucial to learning in all content areas. Development of these skills must continue throughout all Levels of the ABE program, in all content areas" (ABE Level II Program Guide, p. 1). Apart from four literature focussed courses, there are 7 courses devoted to the development of literacy. These are:

IC 3211: Basic Grammar
 IC 3112: Writing Skills
 IC 3113: Evaluative Comprehension
 IC 3214: Oral Communications
 IC 3215: Research Writing
 IC 3116: Business Communications
 IC 3117: Vocational English

There is some overlap between the Oral and Written Communications General Objectives at Level I and the related Skill Areas, and the Writing Skills, and Oral Communications courses at Level III. The courses relating to literacy at Level II appear to be isolated from the literacy activities that a learner would encounter in her/his environment. Business Communications is a written language course; the first section, Basic Skills Review appears to be a review of the Vocabulary and Writing Skills courses from Level II. Vocational English, with the exception of a section on "Technical Writing" is very much a "job search" course.

The graduation requirements for Level III (Program Guide, p. 275) specify the following required courses from Communication Skills.

IC 3211: Basic Grammar IC 3116: Business Communications
 IC 3112: Writing Skills plus one of: IC 3215: Research Writing
 IC 3221: Optional Literature

No course in reading is required for graduation at Level III.

Overall, the literacy program may be described within an autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1984). The objectives are based on content/skills to be mastered rather than arising from the personal/social/political/economic needs of the learners. The focus is on text (the nature or structure of the written passages) rather than on task (the event or occasion when literacy may be used) (Purves, 1991). A writing stage framework (Graves, 1991, 1978) does not guide the writing courses. For example,

rather than being addressed as significant to the "editing" stage of writing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation are studied in isolated courses. The literature courses tend to be focussed within Rosenblatt's (1978) efferent model as opposed to the aesthetic model, and there appears to be minimal emphasis on "response to literature" (Langer, 1995).

Nature of Instruction

Language is perhaps one's worst enemy in trying to delineate or explicate a particular construct, such as nature of instruction, because there are often so many meanings of the same words. For the purpose of consistency in meaning, the following terms often occurring in discussion on instruction will be defined as indicated:

Delivery: this relates to the manner or the mechanisms by which a learning experience is provided to the learners, and may include: instructor, computer, video, teleconference, internet, etc.

Organization (for delivery): this relates to how learners are structured, assigned, or organized to take advantage of the experiences. This may include: individualization, small groups, large groups. There may be interaction between the mode of delivery and the organizational arrangement; for example delivery by computer would more likely entail individualization organization.

Methodology: This may be used synonymously with instructional procedure, or instructional strategy. Methodology may be superficial such as "exposing" learners to an experience (asking them to read a section of text, write a summary, read the newspaper). This often entails learners practicing or demonstrating what they already know. It may also entail in depth strategy by which the instructor attempts to engage the learner both cognitively and affectively in the learning act. An example would be to help the learner acquire the steps for writing a summary, the techniques for effective study of words for spelling, how to monitor one's comprehension and what steps to take should the learner go "off track." (Examples of literacy strategies may be found in Fagan, 1992). There is also interaction between methodology and organization and delivery. For example, superficial methodology is often found in computer programs, while highly interactive methodology, with a give-and-take between learner and instructor is best accommodated in a small group situation.

Integration: This usually entails an interaction between methodology (or process) and content. One may be expected to memorize content without any knowledge of how to best process this information for memorization, or strategies for memorization can be interwoven into the goal of remembering or mastering the content.

A rationale for stating general objectives of literacy at ABE Level I is that there will be flexibility in how the program is delivered, how learners are organized, what methodology is selected, and how integration may take place. This places a major responsibility on the instructors. There are many suggestions throughout the ABE Handbooks that instruction should be learner-centered; however, the definition of this concept is not always clear. The ABE Level II/III Handbook states that "the instructor

creates an educational environment in which learning can occur. A variety of instructional techniques can be used. Learners are expected to assume ever increasing responsibility for specific content determination and acquisition" (p. 57). However, this suggestion is not compatible with a program in which course content is specified. It does not appear that learner-centered necessarily means individuals engaged solo in activities. In fact, there are many supportive points for group instruction and interaction. The following are taken from the ABE Level II/III Handbook. Individual instruction "emphasizes individual responsibility for efforts in performance" (p. 58). However, individual does not mean isolation, and individual responsibility could be promoted in a group situation. "An investment of time is required to build a community of learners" (p. 61). "Interactive teaching methods and materials allow adults to actively use the information they are seeking to learn" (p. 89). "Group support is important for effective learning" and "social and personal development are important facets of the learning experience" (p. 89). However, in contrast to this emphasis on group learning and interaction, there is also strong support for particular computer instructional programs.

A difficulty with the use of computer instructional programs as a means for delivering communication skills is that they are limited to providing reading and writing skills. Literacy, involving attitude and action in response to reading and writing in current, everyday activities cannot be easily developed via computers. It is very difficult to provide for the insert of new material (such as today's newspaper) or to engage in spontaneous interaction between learner and instructor over an issue initiated by either of them.

While the concept of integration is promoted in the ABE Handbooks, the focus is on content: "What the integration means, rather, is that the major focus of the program in terms of resources should be on material relating to the program content are as" (p. 37). An examination of the balance between focus on content and methodology in the Program Content section of ABE Level I indicates that the emphasis appears to be on mastering content rather than on developing effective reading and writing strategies for mastering content.

Instructor Preparation/Support

When many decisions on delivery, organization, methodology, integration, and selection of content for literacy development are left to the instructor, it puts a significant responsibility on the instructor's professional preparation/support, time, and experiences, and further responsibility for provision for support and professional development experiences. Several references are made in the Handbooks regarding this responsibility: "Although the majority of ABE teachers may not have specific training in the teaching of adults, many will be familiar with some of the literature on adult education" (ABE Level I, p. 8). "Teachers should have a basic knowledge of word processing before attempting to use it as a teaching tool" (ABE Level I, p. 143). "Most instructors in ABE arrive there indirectly. Many have experience in secondary or even elementary systems. Consequently they bring many routine practices which served them well or were required in dealing with children and adolescents" (ABE Level II/III, p. 35). The focus appears to be on having instructors understand reading and writing skills rather than on understanding literacy and what it means to be literate. And even the requirements to understand reading and writing skills necessitates a broad background of knowledge by the instructor. For example, at Level I, an instructor would have to be knowledgeable of 126 Skill Areas and 7 Pre-Reading Skills and know when these are pertinent to one of the 25 general literacy objectives and know how to best develop them so that they enhance the attainment of the general literacy objectives.

The "andragogical principles" promoted by Knowles are addressed and compared to "pedagogical principles". While the andragogical principles still apply to working with adults, one must be cautious in the nature of the comparisons, for with the introduction of "whole language" in schools, the pedagogical principles suggested by Knowles are long outdated.

There are no suggestions as to the literacy knowledge and experience that literacy instructors should have. It is assumed that the instructors understand "literacy", "skill areas", "pre-reading skills", and how these relate. The International Reading Association, the largest professional reading organization in the world, provides standards of knowledge of reading for different educational personnel. For adult literacy instructors, 102 knowledge goals are suggested under the following headings.

Philosophy of Reading Instruction
 Language Development, Cognition and Learning
 Knowledge of the Reading Process
 Creating a Literate Environment
 Organizing and Planning for Effective Instruction
 Knowledge of Instructional Strategies
 Demonstrating Knowledge of Assessment Principles and Techniques
 Communicating Information about Reading
 Planning and Enhancing Programs

The relationship between instructor support interacts with the generality-specificity of the program objectives. When objectives are stated generally or globally, and there is considerable flexibility in how these are implemented, there is a much greater responsibility on the part of instructors to have a comprehensive understanding of the discipline and to make many decisions; on the contrary, when objectives are specified, and the delivery is controlled, such as by computer, there is little responsibility on the instructor for decision making about program implementation.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that literacy is a major part of the Newfoundland and Labrador ABE Program. It encompasses almost all of Level I, much of Level II, and six credits within Level III. The sequential relationship across Levels, however, is not that clear. "Full literacy" appears to be a goal of Level I and is guided by a number of general objectives and specific skill areas and pre-reading skills. Courses with specific literacy related content occur at Levels II and III, sometimes with overlap of the Level I program.

The literacy program is traditional in nature and may not be conceptualized within reading/writing, literacy theories of such educators/researchers as Street, Graves, Rosenblatt, or Langer, or within the nature of literacy by such writers as Courts, Lankshear, Meek, Mitchell and Weiler, Morris and Tchudi, Shannon, and Taylor. However, there is an expressed need for literacy development to be meaningful for the learners. "A program which reserves meaningful material until a student has achieved a certain reading level, will in all likelihood lose the majority of the beginning level students before they ever significantly increase their reading level" (ABE Level I Handbook, p. 39). While, there is suggested flexibility in the nature of the delivery, organization, methodology, and integration of the literacy program, the effectiveness of any such decisions is dependent on the support given instructors and on the

opportunities for professional development. The instructor is a key factor in the success or otherwise of the program.

In order to get a better view of how the literacy components of the ABE program meet the needs of learners and of society, an evaluation checklist could be drawn up covering both theory and practice against which the current program could be rated.

Recommendations

1. There should be a clear definition of literacy so that it is related to and distinguished from reading and writing. As the initial quote in this paper states, reading and writing are necessary but not sufficient conditions for literacy. The word "literacy" is a frequently used but often misunderstood term. The study of almost every subject, whether science, computers, or religion, is prefixed with the word "literacy", which in these cases, simply means knowledge. Literacy is best reserved for the applicability of a knowledge of reading and writing to peoples' lives, an applicability that entails critical awareness, attitude and action.
2. The purpose of literacy at each of the three ABE Levels needs to be clarified. For example, the purpose stated for Level II is that literacy is to provide transition from society to high school functioning. But literacy can never be separated from society and peoples' lives. (The words reading and writing rather than literacy, would be more appropriate in this stated purpose.)
3. Reading and writing should be taught interactively with literacy development. When reading and writing are taught separately as in a computer program, there must be provision for developing a literacy context for these skills.
4. A basic and comprehensive reading/writing/literacy program should be available for Level I and Level II learners. The focus on reading and writing may vary, depending on the current reading and writing expertise of the learners.
5. At ABE Level III, more specific courses in reading and writing, such as Reading in Response to Persuasive Writing, or Writing for Research Purposes may be included.
6. Specific aspects of writing such as Grammar or Spelling should be introduced as part of the Editing Process of Writing.
7. Reading and writing skills and strategies as taught in specific reading and writing courses/components, should be integrated with the study of area courses. That is, there should be simultaneously teaching or planned transfer of strategies appropriate for content area study.
8. There should be an optional literacy component that focusses on leisure time reading and writing for those learners who seek literacy for these purposes.
9. In light of the fact of the high out-migration rate of residents from Newfoundland and Labrador, and that the majority of those are the most educated, it is likely that people with ABE certificates rather than university degrees will remain in small communities. In light of the fact that if rural communities are to be sustained and

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remain viable, then there is a need for strong leadership. This point was made in a study by the Canadian Institute for Research on Regional Development (1995) after a study of 12 communities in Atlantic Canada (six in Newfoundland and Labrador) that had become dependent on TAGS for their main source of income. A literacy component focussing on literacy for leadership should be included within the ABE Level III program.

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**FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RURAL SCHOOLS IN
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: IS THE "VIRTUAL
SCHOOL" THE WAY TO GO?**

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Introduction

On August 19, 1999, Premier Brian Tobin and Education Minister Judy Foote held a joint press conference to announce the creation of a ministerial panel on the delivery of education in the classroom. Despite having already spent millions of dollars on a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education (1991/92), a Royal Commission Secretariat (1994/95), and an extensive province-wide Consultation Process in 1996/97, there is still a need, apparently, for further study and consultation before educational reform can go forward.

At the press conference the Premier stated that the creation of the panel is in response to the "debate" this past spring over teacher allocations. "Outrage" might be the more appropriate term to describe the reactions of parents and educators to the impact of the persistent and harmful cutting of teachers from rural schools. Over a two-year period (1996/97 to 1998/99), 648 teachers have been cut from the education system. Rural communities and rural schools have absorbed the majority of these cuts.

The government has justified the reduction in the teaching force on the basis of enrolment declines. In that same two-year period, the province's K-12 enrolment declined by 8,804 students. Although the decline in enrolment has been a province-wide phenomenon, it is the rural areas of the province that are most severely affected when teacher allocations are automatically reduced as enrolment declines. For example, from 1995/96 to 1998/99 District #10, a predominately urban district, saw its enrolment decline by 7%. During that same period District # 7, a rural district experienced an enrolment decline of 17.6%.

Rural schools are, generally, considerably smaller than urban schools. The average urban school in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1998/99 had an enrolment of 413 students. The average rural school's enrolment in that year was considerably less at just 180 students. In a larger urban school the loss of one or two teachers may or may not be a serious matter; in the smaller rural school the loss of just one teacher may seriously undermine the ability of the school to continue offering even a minimal, bare bones curriculum. After several years of cutbacks and an admirable effort to maintain quality education, rural educators feel they have nothing left to give or to cut.

There is a fundamental problem with the unfair ways resources and funding are allocated to the province's schools. A single formula for allocating teachers works equitably and fairly well if all the schools being resourced are of comparable size and have a student population that is more or less homogeneous. However, if some schools within a system are considerably smaller than others and/or have a student population that differs from the norm in some significant way, then rigidly applying a formula will discriminate unfairly against the children attending these smaller, more diverse schools.

That is why, in almost all jurisdictions, special provision is made for allocating resources to smaller schools and schools with special populations.

The "debate," as the premier referred to it, occurred because the current teacher allocation formula was being applied blindly across the system without any consideration being given to the uniqueness of the rural context and the preponderance of smaller schools in that context. Districts and schools were assigned teachers strictly on the basis of enrolment figures. The expressed "outrage" was generated when rural parents and educators realized that these latest teacher cuts would decimate the limited educational programs still available to their children.

Some (not all) of those small schools that had been granted "necessarily existent" status fared a little better (but not by much) than those small schools that did not gain this designation. However, as I pointed out in the last issue of the *Small Schools Newsletter*, the criteria used in this province for designating a school as "small" for the purposes of additional resource allocation needs revising.

We are a province of small schools. Sixty-four per cent of our schools have fewer than 300 students; 43% have fewer than 200. In all other educational jurisdictions that I am aware of these schools would be considered "small" and would qualify for additional resource allocation. Not only did the application of a single formula discriminate against most of our rural schools, but so too did the restrictive criteria for designating a school as "small."

Typical of the anger and concern expressed by rural parents and educators was a "Telegram Forum" article written by Agnes Loveridge, a teacher/guidance counsellor/parent at Buchans Public School. In "Teacher cuts hurts small schools," Ms. Loveridge writes:

I was both astounded and dismayed to hear Education Minister Judy Foot's comment that she was not aware of any program cuts in schools as a result of the reduction in teaching units for this coming year. Although Buchans Public School is a necessarily existent small school, we have lost teaching units every year-seven since 1991 -and will lose 1.5 this coming year. We have had to double grades and courses, and cut programs with each loss of units.

Does the minister of education believe these schools can cope with more cuts? I am not sure Ms. Foote understands the reality of programming in a small school. The small number of students we have are spread over the 13 grades, however, we still have to offer a full K-12 program.

After detailing some of the realities of teaching and learning in small rural schools and the mounting frustrations of rural educators in the struggle for quality education for rural children, Ms. Loveridge concludes with this accusation:

Ms. Foote, our education system is in crisis and it is a crisis of your making. We have accepted reform, we have restructured, we have believed your government's promise to put savings back into the education system. I am disgusted and angered by the government's callous indifference and hollow promises.

There are two serious impediments to the development of education in rural communities. One of these emerged in the sixties and the other is of more recent origin but is based on an educational perspective developed in the twenties.

The Urban Mindset and the Rural School "Problem"

In 1967 and 1968 Dr. Philip Warren released the two-volume *Report of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth*. Of the twenty-four "major recommendations" of that report only one spoke specifically of rural schooling. Recommendation 3 in volume one stated:

We recommend that extensive consolidation of schools be undertaken at the elementary as well as at the secondary level.

The Commission Report paints a rather dismal picture of rural education and identifies the major source of the problems with rural schools as their size. The solution to the problem was to make them more like urban schools, i.e. bigger. This could be achieved through a process of closure and consolidation.

Although it may not have been the intention of this Commission Report, its publication marks a change in thinking regarding education and schooling in Newfoundland. As happened in other areas of the culture and life there was an official turning away in education from the rural nature of our province. The intention was to develop a modern, progressive, professional and standardized education system and this required, it was thought, larger schools. A major closure and consolidation effort was initiated and many small community schools were closed.

Although the majority of the schools in the province continued to be rural and small, there was a tendency on the part of many educational leaders, politicians and bureaucrats in this province to ignore the unique rural characteristics of our school system. There developed what I refer to as the urban mindset in education. This mindset tended to think only in terms of larger and standardized urban schools. The continued existence of small schools and the necessity of combining grade levels were perceived as unfortunate and problematic. For some the fact that we still had small schools was even a source of some embarrassment and shame.

This urban mindset led to the creation of educational policies, curricula, teacher education programs, professional development initiatives *and* teacher allocation formulas that did not adequately reflect these rural realities. There was a tendency to act as if small rural schools had ceased to exist.

Small rural schools were officially rediscovered by Frank Riggs in 1987. In his *Small Schools Study Project: Final Report*, Riggs alerted the province to the fact that we still had small schools and that educators in those schools felt terribly isolated and disenfranchised from the educational mainstream. In that report Riggs also reminded the educational community of the unique characteristics of rural schools. They tend to be smaller, more diverse in terms of configuration, and more distant from each other than schools in urban areas. In addition rural schools are very meaningful and important to their communities. These characteristics present unique educational opportunities as well as challenges.

Despite recommendations to be more responsive in reports such as *The Small Schools Study Project: Final Report*; *Our Children Our Future*; and *Learning and Teaching in Multi-grade classrooms*, little has changed in the urban oriented mindset that continues to dominate educational planning in this province. (How else might we account for the "debate" about teacher allocations?) This mindset tends to see rural schools as distant or remote "problems" that must be solved. In point of fact the real problem lies in the limited perspective of some urban based bureaucrats, many of whom, ironically, happen to be former ruralites.

The Cult of Efficiency

A second problem that is hampering the progress of genuine educational reform in all areas of the province is the manner in which our educational leaders and planners have been taken over by the "cult of efficiency" (Callahan, 1962). Frederick Taylor would be proud of our current generation of scientific managers and corporate "wannabes." Armed with calculators, tape measures, stop watches and odometers, educational bureaucrats have spend the last several years going around the province timing, measuring, calculating, and quantifying every aspect of the school system.

The primary goal has been to make maximum use of space, equipment, transportation and personnel. With little regard for the practical realities of schooling, or the quality of the living and working conditions of students or educators, efficiencies have been pursued and achieved in a most single-minded fashion. The Minister of Education takes great pride in what has been achieved:

"When government initiated education reform in the mid-1990s our focus was on governance and bringing efficiencies to the administration of our school system," said Minister Foote. "This has been achieved with the establishment of 11 elected school boards from 27 denominational boards."

Efficiencies have been achieved at the District level by having one person now doing the work previously done by two or three. Efficiencies have been achieved by building new schools that are cramped and with little regard for any aesthetic considerations. Efficiencies have been achieved by creating overcrowded conditions in schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and on busses. Efficiencies have been achieved by making bus runs longer and creating schedules that are a nightmare for parents and school administrators. Other than the Minister, few people seem impressed with our leaner and meaner educational system. The expectation and the hope were for improved quality, not greater efficiency at the cost of that quality.

Ministerial Panel on the Delivery of Education in Classroom

According to the government press release of August 19, 1999, the ministerial panel has been created in response to the expressed concerns of parents and educators. The purpose of this panel is to investigate and make recommendations on the allocation of teachers throughout the province and the breadth and depth of the province's curriculum. Throughout its deliberations the panel will focus on three specific issues: "programming, delivery, and resource supporting."

Programming

The most important and surely the most challenging and potentially contentious issue that the Panel has to deal with is the fundamental curriculum question: What should rural schools teach? The Panel was created because it has become abundantly clear that our smaller rural schools cannot offer the current prescribed program of studies that can quite easily be accommodated in our larger urban schools.

As I indicated above, rural educators have done an admirable job over the years of finding creative and innovative ways of providing their students with as rich a program as possible. They have done this without clear direction or guidelines from the Department of Education. Their school-based efforts have been supplemented in some areas with distance education courses. However, we are at the point now where a genuine curriculum crisis exists in our rural schools.

In the government press release, Premier Tobin has stated that, The establishment of this ministerial panel is a clear indication that the government of this province is listening to those concerned with education in our province and is committed to doing everything possible to ensure that that all children in this province, regardless of where they live, have access to a balanced and high quality education. (Emphasis added)

To live up to this commitment the government must develop a clear policy regarding the educational provision for rural schools. This policy has to define clearly the educational experiences that will be provided for all children of the province regardless of the size or location of the school they attend. Programming cannot be guaranteed just to those students who happen to attend schools officially designated "small" and "necessarily existent." (The current criteria for designating a school as small serves more an economic and political function than an educational one.)

The challenge for the Ministerial Panel will be determining the nature of those educational experiences that will be guaranteed to all students. What does a "balanced" and "high quality" educational program look like? What kinds of experiences must be included? More importantly, who will decide the nature of that program? "Balanced" and "high quality" are inherently value laden terms, thus highly contentious. Developing school programs is not simply a technical or scientific exercise. The process is fundamentally a political one always reflecting the values and assumptions of those empowered to make the decisions.

To come to terms with what is admittedly a very difficult challenge, I think the Panel should liberate itself from traditional approaches to curriculum planning. In the past we have always tended to think in terms of individual subjects and courses. Curriculum development usually means trying to decide what subjects and courses to add to or drop from the program of studies. Invariably, the curriculum expands and, as many teachers have pointed out, becomes overcrowded. Many critics describe this current curriculum as "a mile wide and an inch deep." Quantity has replaced quality; depth has been replaced with shallowness.

Programs and courses are also added as a way to respond to the diversity of students in our classrooms. Thus, we may have as many as three levels of math or English being offered in a school. Changing our pedagogy may in fact be a better and more responsive approach to diversity than adding yet another level of courses.

It is interesting to note that there is a growing rejection of these traditional curriculum notions in many places. Educators and parents are starting to realize that *less may, in fact, be more* when it comes to education and curriculum. To do a few things really well may be much better and more effective than to do many things poorly. Ted Sizer's *Coalition of Essential Schools* is but one example of new ways of thinking about curriculum and education that may provide alternative ways of ensuring high quality education in our small rural schools.

Small schools are unique places and require unique educational ideas. We need to liberate ourselves from our traditional ways of thinking about curriculum as we attempt to respond to the current educational dilemma.

I have deliberately used the phrase "educational experiences" in my comments above because I believe we have to stop thinking of programs only in terms of separate subjects and individual courses. We have to use our imagination and ingenuity. There are innovative ways of achieving the educational goals and aspirations we have for our children and youth; and there are alternative ways of responding to student diversity. But we will make no progress if we do not change our educational paradigm.

Part of the paradigm shift that is needed is a move away from the notion that the curriculum has to be standardized for the whole province or standardized for all rural schools. When faced with diversity (and diversity is one of the defining characteristics of rural schooling) the only truly useful response is flexibility and adaptation. The "one size fits all approach" is quite counterproductive and even harmful.

One other comment might be made on this point. It is the parents and educators of rural Newfoundland and Labrador who must take the lead in defining what should be taught in their communities and schools. They must make their ideas and views known to the Panel; and the Panel must heed what these folks have to say.

The Delivery of Education in the Classroom

The second focus of the Ministerial Panel's investigations is "the delivery of education in the classroom." It is interesting to note, however, that in all four of the Panel's "Terms of Reference" there is some reference to "the delivery of education." Is this an indication that the primary focus of their work is on "delivery?" I hope not. I think the primary focus should be on curriculum. What kinds of educational experiences do rural parents consider essential to their children's growth and development as human beings? Discussion of how to deliver that program should follow from that.

If curriculum isn't the primary focus, the panel risks falling into the trap of simply investigating those aspects of the urban curriculum that *can* be "delivered" or transmitted to the rural school. The opportunity to develop a rural education program which is unique and responsive to rural needs and aspirations and which fits the unique characteristics of small schools may be lost.

Earlier in this essay I quoted from the August 19, 1999 press conference, the Premier's commitment that all children, "regardless of where they live, have access (my emphasis) to a balanced and high quality education." What are we to understand by "access?"

The majority of students in this province gain access to educational programs by having to ride the school bus. Many rural students currently spend up to two hours a day riding to and from school. Is this part of what is meant by the government's commitment to "access to quality education?" Although many people seem to think we have consolidated schools as far as we can or dare, this isn't the case. There are still visions of rural "super schools" being entertained by some educational planners as a way of providing *efficient access* to "quality educational programs."

Another type of access being availed of by some rural students in this province is the old bursary program. Although not used nearly as much as it once was, there are still a number of students who leave their home communities and spend the week boarding and going to school in another community. Is there any thought being given to revitalizing this program as a way of providing access to programming for rural students? Should this be an enhanced option for those students who might like to try it?

Distance Education and Multiage Pedagogy

The overwhelming majority of students in this province have education "delivered" to them, once they are in school, in a very traditional manner. They are grouped by grade level and have an actual teacher present in the classroom. Rural students, on the other hand, have always had access to alternative approaches to learning and teaching. The Ministerial Panel has identified Distance/TeleLearning and Multi-grade/Multiage as possible alternative methods of delivery for small rural schools.

It is a long-standing tradition in rural schools to have students of more than one grade level in a single classroom. In the old one-room schools, students of all ages and grade levels learned together. As schools became larger the number of grade levels combined in a single room decreased; however, in this province, as in most other rural places, this alternative organizational survived and continues to this day. Declining enrolments over the last several years have created the necessity of going back to this traditional rural practice. For some schools it means increasing the number of multi-grade classrooms and the number of grade levels in such classrooms.

Although we have always had classrooms with multiple grade levels, we have never accepted them as viable and hence never, officially at least, built up an expertise in this necessary aspect of small school pedagogy. In this province (as well as elsewhere) parents and teachers have been educated to think of this organizational structure as an inferior, backward, old-fashioned and ineffective approach to education. Regrettably, to this day some of our educational leaders continue to use the existence of this grouping practice as a way of convincing rural parents to close their small, community schools.

Ironically, grouping students of two and preferably three grade levels together in a single classroom is advocated by many parents, educators and researchers around the world as an ideal form of classroom organization. The extended time frame that parents, teachers and students have together and the presence of children of different ages and development levels facilitate the practice of a more responsive, child-centered pedagogy. An increasing body of research supports the viability and value of multiage classrooms *if teachers are provided with the appropriate professional development and curricular support.*

The traditional approach that was taken to multi-grade classrooms may be considered an alternative "method of delivery." Multiage education, however, is much more than that. It incorporates a very particular view of education, teaching and learning. (See "Digging Square Holes For Square Pegs" elsewhere in the *Newsletter* for an excellent overview of multiage).

If we are going to endorse multiage pedagogy in this province, that endorsement has to be informed by genuine understanding of the concept. There has to be, as well, a commitment from the Faculty of Education that teachers will be prepared during their pre-service education to implement multiage approaches and commitment from Department of Education that curricula will reflect the existence of multiage classrooms.

Taking Responsibility for One's Learning

Another long-standing tradition in rural schools is students having to take a fair degree of responsibility for their own learning. As part of my research on rural schooling I have had the chance to speak to many former students about their experiences of learning on their own and with the assistance of a distant educator. In the rural schools of the past, the one or two teachers in the school may have lacked the knowledge or the time to teach particular courses. In this situation, an individual student or sometimes a small group of students simply worked their way through the course materials and at the end of the year wrote the exam for the course. In these situations the teachers provided whatever help they could. To a much lesser extent this practice of independent study is still an occasional feature of some rural schools.

Bud Davidge, who attended a one-room school in Bay du Nord, shared with me some of his experiences with correspondence courses ("a course in a box" was Bud's term for the experience). Correspondence courses were the first efforts made by government to try and supplement the educational program that was offered in the province's rural schools. Building on the independent learning capability that was engendered in students by the very nature of the one- and two-room schools, teachers situated in St. John's developed courses for students in rural schools. Communication between students and teachers was through the mail via the coastal boats. As students completed assignments they were sent to St. John's for correction and evaluation and then sent back to the student.

The "School Car," the "School Broadcasts," and the "Travelling Library" were three other ways of trying to respond to the rural realities of schooling. The school car was a classroom on wheels converted from an old railway car. A teacher traveled the rails from one rural community to another spending a week or two in each one. While the car was in the community the children came to this "classroom on wheels." When it moved on the teacher left the children work to complete on their own until his return. An interesting aspect of this school car was that the teacher would often in the night-time provide basic education for the adults of the community.

The school broadcasts were intended to be a curriculum resource for the teacher in the classroom. They included dramatizations and readings from works of literature and also background materials for social studies. The programs were produced in St. John's and could be received by any school that had a radio and was within broadcast distance. Unfortunately, the further one got from St. John's the less reliable was the technology. (Plus ça change!)

The travelling library consisted of boxes of books, mostly fiction, that were sent by coastal boat to the various isolated communities around the province. In most small rural schools there was little reading material other than the text books. In most homes there would not be many books either. Consequently, the travelling library was a very important of educational enrichment for outport students.

Distance Education

In 1987 the Department of Education instituted a formal Distance Education Program in the province. In that first year 13 schools offered Math 1201. The program was offered via the facilities at Telemedicine. Today the distance program provides three advanced math courses and a calculus readiness course, two levels of physics and chemistry, and three French courses. Courses are transmitted to approximately 80 schools and 300 to 400 students. One recent change has seen the Districts take over responsibility for distance education.

I think it is clear that the Ministerial Panel is giving (as it should) careful and critical consideration to the evolving tele-communications technologies as methods for providing educational experiences and opportunities for students in small rural schools. The use of computers, the internet, on-line courses, interactive two-way video, and satellite communications systems have increased the possibilities and potential for making the size and location of a school irrelevant as far as its capacity to provide access to educational programming and resources.

However, there are a number of issues and questions that should be critically investigated. One of these is a cost benefit analysis of purchasing, implementing and maintaining the new technologies. Technology has become an enormous black hole into which an increasing amount of our educational budgets are disappearing. In recent years most schools have had to devote a considerable portion of their budgets either to purchase or upgrade their hardware or software. A change in one thing seems, invariably, to necessitate a change in something else.

Does it make economic sense to increase distance education or change its method of delivery? Are the costs justifiable in terms of the increased educational opportunities for all students? At present, a small percentage of rural students benefit from distance education, and these tend to be the academically more able students.

Another issue is the communications infrastructure that is required to support the more sophisticated forms of distance education or telelearning. Dennis Parsons, former Director of District # 2, claims that, "Technology in small rural schools is a myth." Despite the fact, says Mr. Parsons, that we have "more hardware than ever, computer networks in schools, good software, satellite dishes, [the] truth is, in small rural schools we don't have the phone lines, backbone system, bandwidth, money for equipment, training for staff or technical support." It is the smaller schools in the more remote regions of the province that could benefit the most from distance education; however, it is these regions that have the most challenges when it comes to telecommunications.

The primary focus of my research interest in distance education and telelearning is pedagogy. Within that general focus I am particularly interested in the kinds of *human* support that young learners require when they are working in an educational environment that is mediated through technology. Providing access to programs and courses via technology is not just a technical exercise. Just as in a

classroom situation it isn't enough for a teacher to simply show up and lecture to the students or present a series of overheads, it isn't enough in a telelearning educational environment simply to have courses available through a machine and online. There is much more to education, teaching and learning than that.

It is crucial I believe that we make a necessary distinction between adults learning via distance education and children and youth learning via the same media. It is true that some young students are highly motivated, very independent, and quite capable of learning on their own. They are the same type of student that excelled in the one-room schools of the past.

But many young learners are not like that. Although academically capable, these learners need a human hand and voice to encourage, cajole and support their educational efforts. These young learners, and arguably they would be the majority of high-school students, need a great deal of the kind of engagement and interaction that is intrinsic to good teaching in the classroom. When young students are engaged in educational experiences mediated through technology they require human support in the school and at a distance.

One of the short-comings of the current approach to distance education in this province is that there is no formal pedagogical support for the student in the school. The model has depended on a sort of volunteerism on the part of the principal or a member of the school staff. Educators, who already have full and often overwhelming workloads, are expected to provide support for these students in addition to their assigned duties.

Although in most situations students have received some degree of support in this way, I don't think this kind of "hit or miss" approach is a very sound pedagogical practice. There are indications that the already demanding workload of rural teachers is going to increase. Understandably, they will be less able and less inclined to take on additional responsibility.

Therefore, if the provision of education in small rural schools in this province is going to depend on increased reliance on distance education via communications technologies, then we have to give considerable thought to the kinds of human support young learners will need in the school. This support has to be formalized as part of the official workload of one or more teachers in the school. It must also be factored in as one of the costs of implementing distance education.

Another issue that has to be considered thoroughly is the kind of human support students need from their teacher at a distance. Since 1987 a number of distance educators in this province have developed a great deal of understanding about the kinds of pedagogical help and encouragement young learners need if they are going to succeed in this leaning environment. They have developed an expertise that enables them to reach out via the technology to provide the necessary encouragement and support young learners need. These experienced distance educators understand that this is a unique learning environment; they also believe that distance teachers have to find ways to reach out to learners as good teachers do in face to face classrooms. If we are going to expand distance education, we have to select our distance educators with some care and be prepared to educate them not only in the effective use of the technology, but also the unique dynamics of interacting with students at a distance. Unfortunately, just as we seldom have provided professional development for teachers new to multiage, we are also seeing the same problems with the assigning of distance educators.

The co-chairs of the Ministerial Panel, Len Williams and Ron Sparkes were guests recently on CBC Radio Noon's Cross Talk program. They were taking calls from people interested in making comments and suggestions regarding the Panel's Activities. At one point in the program, Dr. Williams commented that a number of students they have spoken with are "less than enthusiastic" about their experiences with distance education. They would much prefer to have a live teacher in the classroom, he reported. He went on to say that, nevertheless, in his view, the "virtual school is the way to go." He then acknowledged that "a great deal of maturity is needed by students taking distance courses."

I don't know if Dr. Williams' comment that "the virtual school is the way to go" is an indication that the Panel has already made up its mind on this issue. However, his comments on the student's "lack of enthusiasm" and the need for a "great deal of maturity" are worth noting.

Most of the adults I have spoken with about their experiences in distance education, regardless of their age or level of education, would prefer learning in a face to face encounter with a teacher and the other learners. Most of those who endorse distance education value its accessibility and convenience. Not having to travel all the way to a university or college site is high on their list of positives. Many people also value the asynchronous nature of distance learning which allows them the freedom to learn when they choose. This is why distance learning is very popular with people who actually live near the university but whose work or life style makes it difficult to attend classes in person. These adult advantages are perhaps not as meaningful for younger learners.

During the radio program Dr. Williams did not elaborate as to why the students whom the Panel spoke with were less than enthusiastic about their experiences with distance education. From my conversations with rural parents, educators and students, it is clear that one of the primary reasons for the frustration is the degree of independence demanded of rural students enrolled in distance courses. They have to take a great deal of responsibility for their own learning.

We do not make similar demands on students taking courses in traditional style classrooms, *in urban or rural settings*. Why do we assume that rural students can or should be able to manage on their own in this kind of technological learning environment? Why do we assume or demand a level of maturity of our rural distance education students that we do not of other students?

The fact is that many rural students cannot manage in this situation and many others find it very difficult, as would their urban counterparts. Investing a significant amount of money in a method of delivery that is accessible to only the more able and most mature students doesn't make much educational or economic sense, unless of course our educational philosophy is to "educate the best, ignore the rest."

I don't know if the virtual school is "the way to go." I do know that the existing and emerging communications technologies have great potential for enhancing the educational experiences of students in rural schools. But I firmly believe that we have to develop models of distance education and telelearning that serve the needs of all the students in the school, not just the few. A creative and imaginative use of information technologies will enable us to develop such models. But first we have to stop thinking in terms of discrete courses and start thinking in terms of mediated educational experiences reflecting a continuum or curricular outcomes.

We can create a more viable and useful model by listening to what rural students, educators and parents have to say about the current model and responding to the obvious need for more human support for learners in the school. Only if we combine the technical *and* the human dimensions of distance education will we realize the full potential and possibilities of telelearning in rural schools.

There is one other issue that needs some critical attention. Inherent in many forms of distance education, regardless of the nature of the technology, is a particularly conservative educational ideological, the main tenet of which is the notion that education is something of a commodity that can be pre-packaged and transmitted or "delivered" to a learner. Whether that package arrives "in a box," via the coastal boat as in an earlier time, or emanates from a box that sits on a school desk and is linked to the internet, it is still what Friere (1976) describes as the "banking approach to education." All we have changed or updated is the technology.

If we really want to use the possibilities of the internet for education in rural places we have to incorporate a constructivist, critical and emancipatory view of education into our vision of distance education and telelearning. Then rural students, teachers and parents can make the process of education truly responsive to their needs and aspirations. As Friere (1976) writes,

Authentic education is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B," but rather by "A" with "B," mediated by the world - a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it. These views, impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes, or hopelessness, imply significant themes on the basis of which the program content of education can be built. ...We cannot ...in the banking style, ...give [learners] "knowledge" or impose upon them the model of the "good man" contained in a program whose content we have ourselves organized (p. 86).

Conclusion

Although it is not explicitly stated, there is no doubt that the primary focus of the Ministerial Panel is rural education and schooling. Rural parents, educators, students and other members of the community must take the opportunity offered by Dr. Williams and Dr. Sparkes to make their views known regarding the issues being investigated. The true rural education experts in this province do not live in or work out of St. John's. Those with the most knowledge and understanding of the issues are the people who live the reality of rural life and education on a daily basis. It is they who must take the responsibility for shaping the future of education in rural places. Get informed on the issues and voice your views.

After the Ministerial Panel finishes its work and presents its finding and recommendations, rural educators and parents must critically examine these and decide if indeed what is being suggested will improve the quality of education for their children.

Endnotes

- i. See "Structuring the Educational System: A Report of the Ministerial Consultation Process." <http://www.gov.nf.ca/publicat/educate2/educate2.htm>
For an analysis of the consultation process see also "Critical Perspectives on Educational Reform" (Mulcahy, 1999) in the Morning Watch (Vol. 27, Nos. 3-4) <http://www.mun.ca/educ/faculty/mwatch/win99/mulcahy.htm>
- ii. "Teachers, programs will be panel's focus," Evening Telegram (August 20, 1999).
- iii. Almost 1000 teachers have been cut since 1994/95 (Department of Education Statistics, 1998/99).
- iv. Declining enrolment is not a new problem. The student population in the province has been in a serious decline since 1971/72. At that time there were 162,118 students. Since then we have lost approximately 2,500 students a year. Since 1991/92 the average decline has been 4,000 students. The lowest fertility rate in Canada has been a major influence in this decline, arguably, with the greatest impact in the rural areas. Since 1991/92, the social and economic conditions in rural Newfoundland have also had a major impact as many families have left.
- v. For example, in the US, schools with a significant student population with an "at risk" socio-economic profile would receive extra teaching and material resources. Many of our rural communities and schools would qualify for such assistance if they were situated in the US.
- vi. Small Schools Newsletter, (Vol. 12, No. 2).
- vii. Evening Telegram (May, 1999).
- viii. Warren. P.J. (1967/68). The Report of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth. St. John's: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- ix. I wish I had a dollar for every time someone has said to me on learning of my interest in small schools, "Oh, do we still have small schools and multi-grade classrooms? I thought they all had been closed."
- x. Riggs, F. (1987). The Small Schools Study Project: Final Report. St. John's: Faculty of Education, MUN.

- xi. Williams, L. (1992). *Our Children Our Future: Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary, Secondary Education*. St. John's: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- xii. Mulcahy, D.M. (1992). *Learning and Teaching in Multi-grade Classrooms*. St. John's: Faculty of Education, MUN.
- xiii. Callahan, R. (1962). *The Cult of Efficiency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- xiv. Department of Education press release (August 19, 1999).
- xv. Ministerial Panel web site: <http://www.edu.gov.nf.ca/panel/default.htm>
- xvi. The Panel consists of Dr. Len Williams and Dr. Ron Sparkes. Research support is being provided by Dr. Robert Crocker. Dr. Williams headed up the Education Royal Commission of 1991/92; Dr Crocker was in charge of the Royal Commission Secretariat.
- xvii. Department of Education press release (August 19, 1999).
- xviii. This URL, <http://www.essentialschools.org/> takes you to the CES national web site.
- xix. Terms of Reference
 1. Examine current educational delivery model and consider alternate approaches;
 2. Conduct consultations to ascertain views on appropriate methods for allocating teacher resources and supporting the delivery of education in the classroom;
 3. Examine current research, allocation procedures used in other jurisdictions, and methods of delivery;
 4. Recommend changes to program offerings and current method of allocating teachers, program delivery methods and issues associated with teacher training and professional development.
- xx. "Each day of the school year, about 80,000 students travel to and from school by school bus. Student busing is provided through a combination of district-owned buses and contracted services. During the 1995/96 school year, the cost to provide these services was \$30,794,000 or an average of about \$400.00 per student. This amount is almost triple the level of funding provided for instructional materials and equipment and triple the level of funding provided for maintenance of school buildings." Source: *Structuring the Education System: A Consultation Paper for Educational Change in Newfoundland and Labrador*. <http://www.gov.nf.ca/publicat/educate/busing.htm>
- xxi. It may be worth noting, if only for historical purposes, that Recommendation 48 of the Warren Royal Commission Report stated: "We recommend that consideration be given to provision of school hostels and dormitories for pupils from very isolated areas."

- xxii. It should be noted that some individual school districts did some very good work in this area on a local level.
- xxiii. The most common example of this was with French.
- xxiv. Personal interview English Harbor West (1998). Bud also told me that at the senior high level he and several other students had to complete the math course on their own. Their teacher, the legendary "Teacher Tom Farrell," who had spent fifty years teaching in the one-room school, really wasn't capable at that point of providing the necessary instruction.
- xxv. For an excellent description of this aspect of rural education see, Noseworthy, R.E. (1997). *The School Car: Bringing the Three R's to Newfoundland's Remote Railway. Settlements. Whitborne, NF: R.P.N. Publishing.*
- xxvi. These are excerpts from an excellent presentation given by Mr. Parsons at the Small Schools Conference in St. Anthony, NF, this past summer.
- xxvii. Wednesday, October 20, 1999. When you stop and think about it, what kind of person, given an open choice, would actually prefer to learn or to teach in any other way?
- xxix. At least one rural principal suggested that I should look into the drop-out rate in distance education. It is the more able students, generally, who take distance courses. The fact that a number of these students are dropping out, is an indication that the model is somewhat flawed in its assumptions about the learners. His point was if the brighter students are finding it difficult how can we possibly extend it to less able students.
- xxx. Friere, P. (1976). *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

**VIEWS OF POST-SECONDARY INSTRUCTORS AND THEIR
EMPLOYERS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-SERVICE
TEACHER TRAINING**

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Introduction

The positive effects of outstanding curriculum, excellent administration and management, and above average students may not be realized if the classroom instructor does not provide the learners with quality instruction; quality learning may not occur (Hansen, 1993). Teacher preparation has long been viewed as a vital component in the teaching-learning continuum in all educational endeavors, including post-secondary education. Indeed, those teachers who are seen as having a clear understanding of the teaching-learning process themselves are better equipped to improve the process. The literature that describes the relationship that exists between teaching and student performance for post-secondary education was reviewed by Walker, Gregson, and Frantz (1996). They indicated the existence of broad agreement that student performance was closely linked to the quality of teaching and "the quality of teaching will not improve without dramatic improvement in teacher education" (p. 19). Such findings have not been unnoticed by representatives in the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education who reported curriculum delivery as an essential component of a high quality education program (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1998, p. 89).

Background

Newfoundland and Labrador post-secondary instructor certification differs from that required for elementary and secondary school teachers. Typically, post-secondary instructors are selected because they have acquired expert status in any number of technical fields. They tend to be recruited directly from training schools, colleges and universities or from business and industry, largely because they had been employed in any of the many programs that are reflected by offerings in the Province's post-secondary schools. Where the former group, K-12 teachers, have been typically drawn to the profession with a host of post-secondary academic courses and acquire teaching skill in a post-baccalaureate teacher training program, the latter group - technical trades persons- are recruited to teach technical content in post-secondary programs offered in colleges, and their technical skill is viewed as the mainstay requirement for employment as a technical instructor. For many of these post-secondary instructors, unlike their K-12 counterparts, teacher preparation is more likely to occur after they have been engaged in employment in teaching and this is the source of a problem. Indeed, Meikle (1991) observed, with amazement, that unlike K-12 school teachers, training of college instructors is often not seen as compulsory (cited in Griffiths, 1993).

While it is generally necessary that college instructors possess sufficient knowledge and skill in a technical area, it is also considered advantageous that they are

also aware of, and can use, methods that utilize the elements of the effective teaching-learning processes to better relay their technical expertise (Osgood and York, 1992). To better understand the needs of such instructors, preliminary interviews were conducted with beginning college instructors. These interviews quickly provided evidence that a fair degree of frustration existed regarding their perceived lack of knowledge regarding appropriate use of instructional techniques and expressions that they needed instructional orientation before entering the classroom. Instructors stated that they found it difficult to complete the required courses that were available to them in teacher training, while they themselves were struggling, preparing and teaching lessons for their students, particularly during their initial period of employment as instructors. Difficulties in accessing teacher training was also evident for those instructors who resided in an area where courses were not easily accessible. The preliminary interviews indicated that for some instructors, teacher education requirements were "forced" upon them by their employer who attempted to comply with the Provincial Policy Document #6 (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1989). Most indicated that a large gap in time existed between starting teacher employment and obtaining teacher preparation courses.

Statement of the Problem and Design of the Study

The problem that this study sought to investigate was the view of two groups of individuals, instructors and their employers, regarding the importance of pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors prior to the commencement of teaching.

A sample of instructors and college administrators who were involved in post-secondary college instruction was drawn using a systematic sampling from four geographical sectors: east, central, west, and north. This was done to insure that both rural and urban instructor and administrator views were represented in the data. They were provided with a survey instrument designed to yield data on the types of training they believed would be most beneficial as the expansion of post-secondary education continued in the Province. The two groups that comprised the sample from which data were collected were as follows:

1. instructors: those who had been teaching in the post-secondary education sector for five years or less; and
2. employers: those who had jurisdiction over the hiring of instructors in both public and private colleges.

These two groups were chosen since they had first hand knowledge of the needs and difficulties associated with pre-service preparation of teachers in the post-secondary system. Essentially, they would have knowledge of their professional teaching preparation relative to what is needed, or is perceived as important in preservice training of post-secondary instructor. Also, they were considered the groups most likely to have had a forceful opinion regarding the requirements for effective delivery of pre-service needs of new instructors in the post-secondary education sector.

Delimitations of the Study

In a study of those institutions that employed post-secondary instructors, it was decided to exclude Memorial University of Newfoundland. This decision was made

because "all instructors hired to teach university courses and who are approved by Memorial University of Newfoundland are not required to complete the requirements for the Technical and Vocational Instructor's Certificate" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1989).

Secondly, it was decided to focus on those instructors who had five years or less teaching experience in the post-secondary education sector because the main focus of the study was to obtain the perspectives of beginning teachers.

Limitations of the Study

Since the questionnaires were administered by each college's administrative personnel, designation of those instructors who had, or did not have, pre-service training was viewed as a potential limitation. As well, the political climate at the time of the survey may have affected the outcome of this study. At the time the survey data were being collected, Dr. Phil Warren, commissioned by the Provincial Government, conducted a review of legislation and registration governing private colleges. These potential limitations were addressed with the use of an optional provision for a telephone interview beyond the mail-out survey.

Methods Used in this Study

A total of 26 colleges, which included 116 instructors and 18 employers, participated in the study. The population of this study was all 1152 post-secondary instructors in Newfoundland and Labrador (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1998, p. 89), this included both public and private college instructors, along with the population of all 83 private college employers and public college campus/site administrators (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1998, p. 3) who had overseen the hiring of those instructors.

A geographical cluster method was used to select the sample surveyed from the above population. It started with a clustering of the population in the four geographical sectors of the Province. From these clusters 20 percent of the population of those involved in teaching in a college was drawn, both from the instructor and employer populations. A sample of 235 instructors was drawn in the following manner in all four geographical sectors of the Province:

- East(Avalon/Bonavista/Burin Peninsulas) sector had a sample size of 58 percent (n=135);
- Central (Gander to Grand Falls-Windsor) sector a size of 22 percent (n=51);
- West (Corner Brook to Port aux Basques) sector a size of 13 percent (n=34) and
- North (Northern Peninsula and Labrador) sector a size of 7 percent (n=15).

For the employer survey, it was decided that each college that was randomly selected using the process described above would also receive an employer survey.

The resulting sample of employers, which totaled 31, corresponded to a sample size of approximately 37 percent of the total population (n=83) of employers and was dispersed across the geographical sectors in the following way:

1. East Sector - 17 employers;
2. Central Sector - 7 employers;
3. West Sector - 4 employers; and
4. North Sector - 3 employers.

The Survey Questionnaire

A questionnaire was the survey instrument. The instructor questionnaire contained a total of 53 items and the employer questionnaire a total of 47. The questionnaires were composed of ten open-ended items, six closed items that elicited demographic information (on the instructor questionnaire only), and a series of 37 items that asked the individual to respond on a five-point Likert-type scale. The 37 items were broken down into nine major sections or areas of teacher training, which had been identified through the literature review. The nine sections were as follows:

1. Teaching Methods;
2. Use of Instructional Media;
3. Lesson Presentation Skills;
4. Communication Skills;
5. Positive Reinforcement and Motivating Skills;
6. Managing the Learning Environment;
7. Evaluating Student Performance;
8. Questioning Skills and Techniques; and
9. Preparing Evaluation Reports.

Included at the end of the questionnaire was an option for a voluntary follow-up in-depth interview. This last option was included for any needed clarification among participants as well as for use in the event of a poor questionnaire return rate. The personal interviews, however, were in fact never requested by the researcher.

The total return of instructor surveys was 116 (49%) and employer surveys was 18 (58%). This resulted in a combined (instructors and employers) return of 134 (50%) surveys. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 8.0 for Windows (Norusis, 1998), was used to analyze both the Likert-type items and closed-ended items.

Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha and the chi-square test were used in an effort to see if "non-respondents" would have had an effect on the overall results had they responded. This was applied to the surveys received prior to the deadline and those received after the deadline following prompting and reminders, with the idea that the "late responders" would be similar to "non-responders". The two groups were then cross-tabulated for any significant variations in responses at a significance level of .05. With this procedure it was determined that there were no significant differences in reliability between "on-time responders" and "late responders", and with the exception of one item, item 22, which had a significance level at .05, no significant differences on the chi-square test.

Cronbach's Alpha, the internal reliability statistic, was applied on each of the nine major sections that contained Likert-type items. A reliability coefficient of .70 was

chosen to signify internal reliability within the sections. All nine sections produced a reliability coefficient $>.70$. Following this, the Likert-type items on both the instructor and employer surveys were analyzed by calculating frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations for each response. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the chi-square test were applied to the two main groups being studied, that is, the instructors and the employers, and the sub-groups and the geographical sectors, to determine if a significant difference existed between the groups and sub-groups. A significance level of .05 was used.

Descriptive statistics (frequencies and means) were generated from items 48 to 53 on the instructor survey. These were then used to compile a profile of the instructor survey respondents.

The data were analyzed using the following independent variables:

1. instructor;
2. employer; and
3. geographical location (east, central, west, or north) of instructors and employers.

The dependent variable for all analyses was the respondents' views regarding the importance of pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors.

Findings and Their Implications

There were essentially two main research questions for this study:

1. Are there any differences between the views of instructors and those of employers across the Province with regards to the importance of pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors?
2. Are there any differences among the four geographical sectors in the views of both instructors and employers (combined) with regard to the importance of pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors?

The data indicated that there were no significant differences between the views of those instructors and employers who participated in the study. Overall, it appeared that both instructors and employers, who reside in the Province and participated in the study, had the view that pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors has importance. The means for both groups, instructors and employers, were consistently <2.5 , indicating positive views regarding the importance of pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors. The implication of this finding was that some type of formal requirement for post-secondary instructors and pre-service teacher training, acquired prior to the commencement of classroom teaching, is viewed as beneficial.

The following are areas of pre-service training viewed to be most important, ranked by means:

1. Lesson Presentation Skills ($X=1.76$)
2. Evaluating Student Performance ($X=1.79$)

- 3. Teaching Methods (X=1.82)
- 4. Positive Reinforcement and Motivating Skills (X=1.85)
- 5. Questioning Skills and Techniques (X=1.93)
- 6. Communication Skills (X=1.98)
- 7. Managing the Learning Environment (X=1.99)
- 8. Preparing Evaluation Reports (X=2.18)
- 9. Use of Instructional Media (X=2.31)

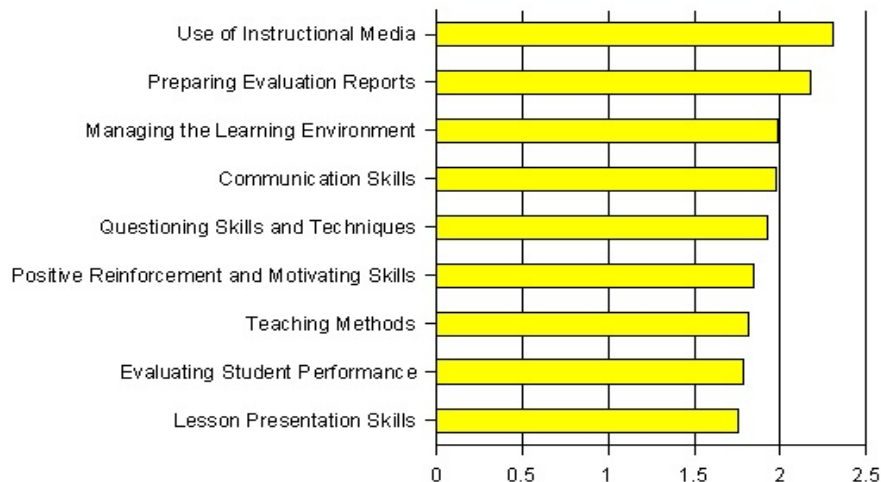
Figure 1. Areas of Pre-service Training and Means

Note that a lower mean indicates higher importance placed on the pre-service training area.

From these findings, it would appear that there is a high level of consensus on the importance of these training areas and that they should be addressed in a pre-service training program for post-secondary instructors. It follows that they should be made a part of core and formal requirements used to obtain entry into the field of post-secondary instruction.

There was a significant difference, however, in the views of instructors and employers (combined) from the different geographical sectors towards pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors. The west sector instructors and employers generally placed less importance on pre-service teacher training than their counterparts in the east, central and north sectors. The five areas of pre-service training where a significant difference was found are as follows:

- 1. Teaching Methods (p=.019)



- 2. Lesson Presentation Skills (p=.003)
- 3. Communication Skills (p=.033)
- 4. Managing the Learning Environment (p=.013)
- 5. Evaluating Student Performance (p=.050)

The other four areas of pre-service training, Positive Reinforcement and Motivating Skills, Questioning Skills and Techniques, Preparing Evaluation Reports, and

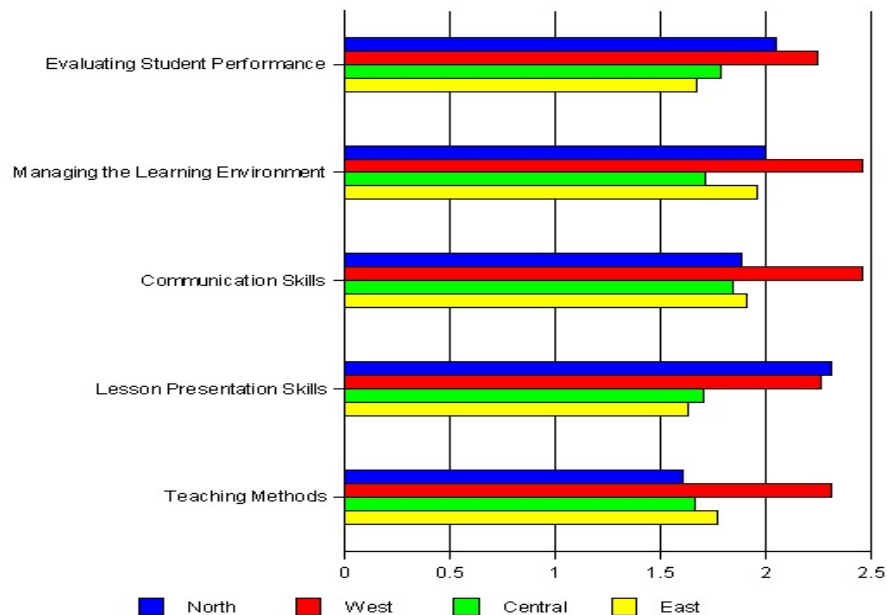
Use of Instructional Media, displayed no significant difference on the variable of geographical location. Figure 2 is a graphical representation of the variations in means for the four geographical sectors in each of the pre-service training areas where a significant difference existed.

Figure 2. Means of Geographical Sectors in Pre-Service Training Areas Where a Significant Difference Existed

Note that a lower mean indicates higher importance placed on the pre-service training area.

In reviewing these findings, the availability of pre-service teacher training was seen as having an effect on the views of participants as a whole. For example, sector differences were seen as attributable to difficulty that teachers have in accessing teacher preparation courses, due to remoteness or other factors that might include less stringent requirements or monitoring for teacher certification.

The research literature indicated that poor quality instruction may be attributed to a lack of teacher preparation (Stone, 1990; Boyer, 1991; Osgood and York, 1992; Tsunoda 1992; Kort, 1992; Davis, 1993; Dallat and Rae, 1993; International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction, 1993; Wolverton, 1994; Ashcroft, 1995; and Shannon, Twale, and Moore, 1998). Further review of the data in this study indicated that although 38 instructors (34% of those surveyed) had been teaching for four to five years, 90 instructors (81%) did not have a Newfoundland Technical and Vocational Instructor's Certificate. The implication of these findings is not only that some degree of instability exists regarding the availability and utilization of teacher training and that this is likely to affect the quality of the instruction offered in the



colleges, but also that such phenomena are somewhat more evident in particular geographical sectors of the Province.

As a result of this, it would appear that more efforts to promote deliverable teacher preparation courses should be made in the geographical areas where the greatest need is evident. Although Policy Document #6 (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1989) allows instructors to teach for a maximum of four years (three years plus a one year extension with extenuating circumstances and written approval from the Minister of Education) before being required to have this Certificate, it appears that this policy has not been strictly enforced. This also raises questions regarding the overall quality of instruction received by students who attend colleges in which instructors continue to teach in their classrooms without obtaining the required, and in the case of this study, recommended teacher training.

Further analysis indicated that 71 (62%) of the instructors surveyed were not involved in any program of study intended to either upgrade their content knowledge or teacher training. As well, of the 41 instructors who had not had any prior teacher training in the four areas listed on the questionnaire, 19 had still not undergone any teacher training in those four areas since their employment.

Interestingly, the findings that college instructors generally do not participate actively in professional upgrading were consistent with those findings of Boice (1991), Wise (1991), and Berry, Filbeck, Rothstein-Fisch, and Saltman (1991). These reports revealed that the overall attitude of instructors towards teacher training was generally poor, as "most people resist being taught what they already think they know" (Eble, 1983, p. 134).

The data collected in the study led the researcher to conclude that there was consensus over the need for teacher training but that there were inconsistencies in the demographic information collected from the respondents. Their actual take-up on teacher training was now reflected in their views. There were a number of reasons for this seemingly inconsistent pattern, namely access to courses and geographical remoteness. There was also an indication that the view of what constituted quality classroom instruction for Newfoundland and Labrador's post-secondary students was unsettled. It would appear that the term "qualified instructor" was used to denote one who has achieved technical capability with additional competence in teaching, as evident with completion of required teacher training courses. There were few indications of alternative means of obtaining the requisite courses or of attempts to upgrade personal and professional skills in particular specialties.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions that were drawn from this study and the subsequent recommendations were as follows:

1. Pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors has importance. Therefore, it is recommended that instructors obtain formal training in the following core areas, in order of importance, before entering the classroom
 - lesson presentation skills;
 - evaluating student performance;
 - teaching methods;

- positive reinforcement and motivating skills;
 - questioning skills and techniques;
 - communication skills;
 - managing the learning environment;
 - preparing evaluation reports; and
 - use of instructional media.
2. Research on ways and means of achieving or deploying teacher training of these core areas needs to be conducted, in particular into the ways and means of deploying teacher training to remote areas.
 3. Although employers and instructors across the Province view pre-service teacher training for post-secondary instructors as having importance, there existed a significant difference in the views depending upon in which geographical area the instructors and employers resided. The instructors and employers in the west sector generally placed less importance on pre-service teacher training than their counterparts in the east, central and north sectors. It is, therefore, recommended that further research into the reasons why this disparity exists be conducted. As well, research into whether or not there is a difference in the quality of instruction between geographical sectors should be conducted.
 4. Even though Policy Document #6 is in place, the majority (81%) of those instructors surveyed were teaching without a Newfoundland Technical and Vocational Instructor's Certificate, some even after the maximum four years had elapsed. It would appear that compliance with Policy Document #6 is not working to the benefit of the post-secondary school system. This is an indication that Policy Document #6 is not adequate to ensure post-secondary instructor qualification since it appears that it is not being enforced and, therefore, not doing what it was set up to do; it is necessary to ensure that post-secondary instructors achieve the teacher training they require. As the general literature has pointed out, and the data from this study supports, post-secondary instructors are neither enthusiastic about, nor actively involved in, obtaining teacher training once they have been employed in the post-secondary system. It is therefore recommended that policy regarding the minimum teacher qualification requirements for entry into the field, prior to entering the classroom, be reviewed. Alternately, and in this regard, it would appear that means to promote voluntary compliance may be beneficial. Perhaps the creation of a professional association, along the lines of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association, would be effective in this regard in that it would act as a voice in the regulation of licensing procedures and requirements for post-secondary instructors. Such an association could also have an active role in advising on professional development training needs for post-secondary instructors. It would appear that dialogue regarding voluntary compliance - through the development of a professional association - or enforced compliance - through the Department of Education - is needed in relation to post-secondary education and its educators.
 5. Monitoring, at the level of the Department of Education, to gather information on the level of adherence to Policy Document #6 would appear to be desirable. It is therefore recommended that further research into means to ensure adequate monitoring of post-secondary instructors in Newfoundland and Labrador be conducted. As well, research to determine why instructors are not availing themselves of teacher training should be conducted.

6. The majority (62%) of instructors surveyed were not actively taking part in any type of professional training or upgrading, be it teacher training or subject area training. It is therefore recommended that colleges explore the development of in-house professional development programs that include teacher training as well as upgrading in subject matter knowledge. This last recommendation could be implemented most vigorously through collaboration among Memorial University of Newfoundland's Faculty of Education, the Department of Education, and a post-secondary instructor's professional association.

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Endnotes

There are a number of ways one can enter the post-secondary system as an instructor in Newfoundland and Labrador. Instructors can have a degree, a diploma, a certificate, or extensive experience in their specialty field. Typically, instructors who hold a certificate or diploma and have six years of training and experience in their field of instruction can obtain the licence to teach (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1996).

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CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RURAL EDUCATION REFORM

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Introduction

On September 10, 1996 the government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced that the promised⁽ⁱ⁾ public consultation on educational reform would begin on September 16. Just prior to the first scheduled meeting, which was to be held in Port Aux Basques, the government circulated a document entitled *Structuring the Education System: A Public Consultation Paper for Educational Change in Newfoundland and Labrador*⁽ⁱⁱ⁾. On the first page of this document, the [then] Minister of Education, the Hon. Roger Grimes, stated the purpose of the consultation process:

The education of our children is something we value greatly. That's why the Government is asking for your advice before making decisions that affect you, your children and your school community. The purpose of this consultation process is to determine how we can best work together to organize our schools and our student transportation system for the future.

Following⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ this statement the Consultation Paper then proceeded to outline the "structural" changes the government felt were needed to improve the education system. Of primary concern for rural citizens was the government's long standing view that small community schools should be closed and the children bussed to larger consolidated schools. In effect the government viewed the consultation process as an opportunity for the people of the province to express their views as to what criteria would be used in determining school closure as well as which schools would actually be closed. There seemed to be the assumption, on government's part, that everyone accepted the logic and necessity of closing a certain number of small schools as part of educational reform. As I shall attempt to illustrate in this paper this was not exactly how rural communities viewed this consultative opportunity. The government also used this document to present selected data regarding declining enrolments and what it referred to as the "economic realities of the nineties." Parents were invited to review this information as it "sets an appropriate context," in the government's view, "for this (consultation) process and provides the key indicators that we need to discuss structural matters."

In the first part of this paper, entitled *The Official View*, I will review, briefly, the government's position regarding its proposed "structural reforms" as stated in the Consultation Paper. I will describe the changes the government believes must be made so that the students in the province will be ready to compete on the "world stage" with the best students from other provinces and countries^(iv). I will examine the rationale used to justify and support these changes. In the second part of the paper, *The Grass Roots Perspective*, I will provide an overview of what occurred during the series of 19 public meetings that were held in various parts of the province. Approximately 5,000 people attended these meetings and 250 presentations were made to the minister. In addition many informal questions were asked and comments made during the sessions,

some of which lasted as long as 5 hours^(v). I will attempt to summarize some of the views expressed and the questions raised by rural parents and educators participating in these public meetings.

The Official View

School Closure and Consolidation

From the very beginning of the current round of educational reform^(vi) one of the primary objectives of the provincial government has been the closure and consolidation of small community schools. Such action has been advocated as a structural change needed to make the system of education more effective and more efficient. *Our Children Our Future*^(vii) introduced the term "school viability" into reform discussions and recommended that "non-viable" small schools be "targeted" for closure^(viii). To a large extent the *Consultation Paper* being discussed here simply reiterated the government's fundamental position since 1992. In the name of educational reform, non-viable schools should be closed and consolidated. This restructuring will improve the educational opportunities for the children of the province and allow the government to make the best use of dwindling economic resources. The only outstanding issue as far as the government was concerned was settling on the criteria for determining viability.

A previous attempt by the government to define viability criteria had failed badly. The "School Viability Regulations" publicized in December of 1995^(ix) had defined viability simply in terms of class size. For example, at the k-6 level, a minimum enrolment of 20 students was required for a school to be considered viable. This meant that a k-6 school with less than 140 students was considered non-viable and could be, in the Royal Commission's words, "targeted for closure." These regulations placed in immediate jeopardy as many as 180 rural community schools. The public outcry and protest over this simplistic, quantitative approach to determining viability forced the government to withdraw these regulations^(x).

The tack taken by the government in the *Consultation Paper*, in terms of defining school viability, was at once a more vague and general yet in some ways a more powerful argument, and one definitely more difficult to criticize directly. This time around the government did not fall into the trap of putting a specific enrolment figure as a minimum size for a viable school. The government's position, simply stated, was that in order to be considered viable a school has to be capable of providing a quality program:

Regardless of where they live or where their children attend school, parents in the Province should be confident that the school is able to offer a quality program^(xi).

This position of course begs several questions: what constitutes a quality program? From what or more importantly whose perspective will quality be defined or determined? The government's position paper leaves these questions unanswered. There is no indication what it has in mind in regards to a "quality program." There is a suggestion, however, that a quality program means more than being able to provide core or minimum requirements. Furthermore, the government asserted, it is difficult for small schools to provide the kind of quality programming that is needed or desirable:

In many cases, small schools can offer only the core program, while other larger schools are able to offer a broader, more varied program of studies to the students.

No indication is given by the document as to what size of school is to be considered a "small school." Declining enrolments over the last few years, however, have created a situation where:

...schools that were once viable are left with so few students that it is unreasonable to operate them. This means that the human and physical resources necessary to offer our students the best possible education are being spread out over more schools than can be sustained. For example, additional building maintenance costs take away from money that could be channeled to educate students in the classroom. We have to do something about this. The issue is a financial one yes, but more importantly it is an issue of educational quality^(xii).

From the government's point of view the "something" that must be done is very clear, given the "economic realities of the nineties" and the fact that we have to prepare our children to "take their place on the world stage."

Government believes it is inappropriate to provide additional resources (to maintain a small school in a community) when a *better learning opportunity* for students is available nearby^{(xiii)(xiv)} with more than one school, "we have to examine busing options to bring students in small schools to larger ones which will offer them *greater opportunities*." In the final analysis, parents will have to make a choice. Insist on maintaining their small community school with its limited program options or agree to close their community school and bus their children to "a larger school that is able to offer a wider range of program options which would provide better opportunities for students^(xv)."

Isolated Schools

The *Consultation Paper* acknowledged that no matter how many small schools communities agree to close there will continue to exist certain isolated schools that will have to be maintained because it would not be possible or feasible to close them. Such schools may be located on offshore coastal islands or be too distant for bussing to another community. These schools - and only these schools - will be provided with additional resources so that they can provide at least a "core program^(xvi)."

A significant change is being proposed here. Previous government policy provided for additional resources, human and material, to be allocated to all small schools. The new policy being proposed would see only those schools that could claim isolation status qualifying for supplemental provision. Location and degree of isolation, not size, will now determine allocation. New policy guidelines will see all schools regardless of their size receiving the same allocation based on a per pupil basis. To gain any extra provision a school will have to prove its status as a necessarily existent school.

The policy increases the pressure on a community to agree to close its small school if it cannot prove its isolation status. If, in the government's or school board's

view the bus ride to another community and a larger school is a "reasonable distance" the school will be targeted for closure. If the parents do not agree to close the school, then the government will not provide that school with any extra funding regardless of how small it is.

Student Transportation

In order to "rationalize the system" the *Consultation Paper* proposed a number of changes to the student transportation system. School closures and consolidations will necessitate two changes: 1. Students who currently attend a community school will have to be bussed to a another community; 2. There will be an increase in time and distance for some students who are already being bussed. Parents, according to the *Consultation Paper*, should accept having their children spending a "reasonable time" on the bus since this will enable them to avail of increased educational opportunities. A "reasonable time" is not defined but the alternatives are made clear to parents: accept the need for an increase in bussing or condemn your children to an inferior form of education.

In addition to wanting to increase and extend bussing as an necessary consequence of closing and consolidating schools, the government also proposed a number of other changes in the name of economy:

- Enforcing strictly the current regulation of the bus only making four stops within the 1.6 km.
- Adopting a system of staggered opening and closing of schools, where practical, in areas where several schools exist. That is, schedule the times schools open and close to permit the same bus to make double runs. This may require some schools to open earlier or close later. For example, one school might open at 8:45 and another at 9:15. This would reduce the number of buses required to transport students.
- Bussing would be provided only to the closest school. (At the time of the consultation process, bussing was provided to the closest denominational school of the parent's choosing).

In addition to these proposed changes the Consultation Paper asked people to consider the following:

- whether it is reasonable to increase the distance for school bus eligibility beyond 1.6 kilometers;
- whether the distance for school bus eligibility should be increased for high school students in favor of keeping the distance at 1.6 kilometers for primary and elementary students;
- whether it is reasonable for the taxpayers of the Province to continue to pay the full cost of school bussing or whether users of the system should pay some portion of the total cost;
- what should be considered a reasonable bussing time (with declining enrolments and the larger geographical areas to be covered, busing times may increase and some students may have to be on a school bus for over 60 minutes); and
- whether parents would choose a longer period of time on the school bus for students to attend a larger, well resourced school

or a shorter bus ride for students to attend a smaller school with fewer teachers and resources.

School Designation^(xvii)

At the time of this consultation process Newfoundland and Labrador had a rather unique educational system in North America. The system was a publicly funded totally denominational school system. There were no public non-denominational schools in the province. All schools in the province were officially designated as either Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal, or Integrated (a combination of Salvation Army, United Church, Anglican, and Presbyterian). Although it rarely happened, students could have been denied access to a school because they did not adhere to the particular designated Christian denomination of that school. Students were in fact entitled to bussing to the nearest denominational school of their part faith.

As part of its restructuring plans, the government proposed that all schools in the province would be re-designated, in the first instance, as inter-denominational. All children, regardless of their denominational affiliation would be entitled and in fact forced to attend the school closest to where they live. This proposal would in fact eliminate the need for bussing for some children. It would also end the duplication of schooling in a number of communities. Historically, each denomination had a right to establish a school if a sufficient number of adherents lived in a particular community. However, there would also be a provision for the creation of uni-denominational schools. A uni-denominational school would be a school that had a specific denominational designation. (Such schools would in fact be the same as they were before the proposed changes). The issue for discussion was how to decide which schools would be designated uni-denominational. What criteria and mechanism would be used to make this decision?

The public consultation process was the opportunity for people to give their views as to how uni-denominational schools would be created (or more accurately, re-created). The government offered their view as follows:

Parents of children who will attend school in the 1997/98 school year and who wish to have their children attend uni-denominational schools will be given the opportunity to advise the School Board of that preference. If the parents of a sufficient number of students indicate that they wish their children to attend a uni-denominational school, the School Board will be required to establish such a school, provided the following conditions are met:

- the uni-denominational school meets the criteria for a viable school, and
- the creation of the uni-denominational school does not cause another school to become non-viable.

To summarize the "official view," the government came to the consultation process with a simple agenda. Education reform dictates the closure and consolidation of small community schools. Small schools are educationally deficient and a drain on the general resources of the province and the education budget in particular. Students will have to be bussed to larger schools in other communities where they will be able to

avail of "better educational opportunities." Parents should accept these changes because they are in the best interests of their children.

The Grass Roots Perspective^(xviii)

It was clear from the very first public meeting held in Port Aux Basques that rural communities across the province were not going to buy into the government's reform agenda. The public consultation process was going to be their opportunity to continue the fight to save their community schools. Although the government had attempted with its consultation paper to set the agenda and define the parameters for discussion, rural citizens came to this first and all subsequent meetings with their own agendas. They asked questions and raised issues that were important and significant to them, their children and their communities.

As far as rural citizens were concerned this was simply one more battle in the ongoing struggle to save their schools and possibly their very communities and way of life. The successful protest effort earlier in the year (January and February 1996) had been a valuable rehearsal for this public consultation process. Consequently, they were more prepared and ready to express their views that they might otherwise have been given the shortness of the notice given for the meetings^(xix).

Participants were generally critical of the government's reform agenda and their actions thus far. There was a strongly felt and articulated view that closing small schools, increasing student bussing, and rescinding long-standing policies that provided special allocation for small schools could not in any way be characterized as improvements. Many were convinced that what the government was primarily interested in was saving money and cutting costs. Improving the quality of education was decidedly secondary. Many people at the public meetings reminded the Minister that the government had already reneged on a commitment to keep any money saved through restructuring in education.

Fighting to save their small schools was nothing new to the people of rural Newfoundland and Labrador. The history of rural education tells many stories of emotionally charged meetings where people expressed their feelings about losing their school. However, one very noticeable difference this time around was that feeling and emotion were supplemented with research data, critical questions, and well-argued and articulated positions. The rural schools the government was attempting to close had produced a generation of parents very different from the previous one. There may have been less shouting and tears but there was a lot more facts, figures and informed opinion^(xx). They felt strongly about the issues as they have always had, but this time around their feelings were informed by research.

School Closure and Consolidation

Community Schools

Preserving their community schools was the most important and central issue for rural participants in the public consultation process. The government entered the process with the assumption that the way to improve rural education and cut costs was to close and consolidate small schools. Rural parents and educators came to the process to convince the government that small schools were not only viable but also

valuable and that the foundation of reform should be the preservation and enhancement of community based education and schooling.

When it came to school closure and consolidation issues the official approach had always been to focus exclusively and narrowly on school viability. The decision to close or keep open a school was always made with reference only to the school. No other issues were judged to be either legitimate or relevant. The *Consultation Paper* followed the same line of argument. Rural communities, however, have always insisted that a more comprehensive, a more ecological perspective is required. Closing a school has far-reaching social and economic implications, not just educational ones.

The people of rural Newfoundland and Labrador did not come to the consultation meetings to do as the Minister asked them: agree with him to close their small community schools so that their children could have a "better educational opportunity" a "reasonable distance" down the road in another community. They came to convince him that he was wrong. They attempted to do this by arguing the importance of the school to the community and the community to the school. The relationship is reciprocal, interdependent and mutually beneficial. Therefore decisions about closing a school cannot be made with reference only to the school or schooling issues. The impact of the closure on the community must be considered and the costs to be paid by the children and their parents who would have to travel by bus out of their home community.

Many rural citizens tried once again to convince the Minister of Education how important a school was to a rural community^(xxi). As one presenter explained:

Taking a school out of a small community is like taking the heart right out of it. If you have no school, you have no children, no town. Government must realize that in rural Newfoundland, the school is a central institution, and as such, should be developed to impact our communities in a positive way towards the future of Newfoundland. The operation of a school provides a focal point for the community, a source of pride.

The anguish that is felt and the outrage that is expressed by rural citizens at the possible loss of their community schools has little to do with nostalgia or sentimentality, as some would prefer to believe. Presenters made clear that their concerns were grounded in a number of very significant social and economic realities. In a rural community a school is not just a place of instruction, meaningful only to the students and their parents. In small rural communities schools continue to function as social and cultural centers for the whole community. School concerts at Christmas time and on other occasions, are eagerly anticipated and attended. This may seem like a small matter in the larger scheme of things, but in a small community it matters a great deal to everyone^(xxii).

Communities, the Minister was told, take pride in their schools; many were built by volunteer labor. In rural Newfoundland and Labrador the whole community supports and assists the school in myriad ways. The school helps define the community and give it an identity. It is a connection to the past and represents a hope for the future. Most importantly, a school is a sign of the community's viability as a place to live, a place to stay, and a place to move to. The presence of children and the sounds of their play throughout the day are signs of life and vitality sorely needed by our rural communities. When community leaders claim that the loss of the school will lead to the death of the

community they know what they are talking about. If they have a choice, families with school age children will not move to a community that doesn't have a school.

For rural presenters the issue was simple: we can choose to sustain and develop rural education and rural communities by building on the intrinsic strengths and advantages of small scale, community based schooling or we can choose not to. The choice we make reflects our commitment to rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Many community leaders expressed the view that the current attack on small community schools is just another aspect of the general erosion of services reflecting the government's attempt to force another round of resettlement^(xxiii).

Presenters claimed that rural communities make many valuable contributions to their schools. Because the school is a source of pride to the community, there is a vested interest in its success and upkeep. There is a sense of ownership and responsibility on the part of the whole community, not just those with children in school. Consequently, many communities support their schools in concrete ways in terms of upkeep and repairs and material resources.

In addition, the people of the community are often used as resource persons for special projects and school activities. This moral and financial support from the community is a significant factor in the success of rural schooling. If the school is removed from the community, the school will lose this support to a significant degree. This will be to the school and the students' detriment. Parents do not and will not support a school located in another community to the same degree or in the same way even though their children attend that school.

Having the school in the community greatly facilitates contact and interaction between parents and teachers, in both formal and informal ways. Contact is easier, and often occurs in the daily routine of community life. When the school is not in the community and parents have to travel some distance this contact is diminished. Given the demonstrated importance of this kind of interaction to student achievement, closing a community school is not a good idea. A principal speaking on behalf of her small community school addressed this issue:

St. George's Primary School is a proud school, which enjoys the support of the community. We may not have all the resources, programs or teachers, as larger centers have, but we do have teacher-pupil contact because we are small and we are a community school. Education is built on a community of human beings. It seems like a simple concept but I think we've forgotten it along the way.

Several parents pointed to the apparent contradiction in government's policies. On the one hand they were advocating a more active role for parents in the school through the creation of schools councils. On the other hand, they seemed determined to make parental participation, at least in rural areas, more difficult.

Pre-school literacy and orientation programs were used as examples by a number of presenters to make the case for community based education. These early intervention programs have been developed to combat the traditional problems with literacy. The most successful programs in terms of attendance, it was claimed, were those that operated in a single community. It was further claimed that those schools

servicing a number of communities found that the further away a family lived from the school the less likely they were to participate in the program. One reason for this was that not all parents in rural areas have access to two cars. So, if one parent is working away from the community the other cannot attend. Rural parents do not have bussing and taxi options as do urban parents^(xxiv).

Small Schools Are Viable And Valuable

The "official view" of small schools was primarily a re-play of the traditional "conventional wisdom" (Sher, 1997) regarding solving the "rural school problem" Nachtigal (1982): small schools are neither academically nor economically viable. They weren't academically viable because they could not deliver quality programs; they were not economically viable because the per pupil operating costs were much higher than in larger schools. In the interest of improving educational opportunities, not to mention cutting costs, rural education reform dictated but one course of action: closure and consolidation.

The grass roots perspective on the viability of small schools was fundamentally different from this official view. First of all, people in rural communities questioned the notion that small schools cannot be viable. Their position was that not only can they be viable but they are in fact quite valuable, especially so for particular student populations. Many people seized on the government's suggestion that small schools cannot provide a quality education program. They noted that "quality" is a very relative term and can mean different things to different people. Individual communities pointed with pride to the achievements of their small community schools to demonstrate that small schools can be quality schools. Examples were offered of small schools in the province whose academic achievement record, degree of retention and post secondary participation demonstrated their worth. They equaled or surpassed provincial standards. These were offered as proof that small schools are capable of quality education.

The government's claim that small schools were not economically viable was also questioned and criticized. People were very critical of the government's notion that closing small schools would save significant amounts of money. They pointed to the increased costs of bussing and the costs of repairs and renovations for the receiving schools. There were suggestions that the economic viability of a school be determined on an individual basis and be carried out by an independent assessor^(xxv). There was also strong criticism of the government's emphasis on economic viability. As one presenter protested:

Schools are not corporations, they are built on people, values, and morals. When looking at schools in terms of closures or reductions, don't look at them in terms of dollars and cents, because I'm still waiting to see a document that says school closures will save money.

The case was also made for the intrinsic value of small-scale schooling^(xxvi). Small schools were not just viable but were in fact very valuable in terms of their capability in providing a certain kind of education. The smaller number of students in the school and the generally smaller pupil teacher ratio were very positive things. Small schools have or represent a particular set of educational values that should be cherished and built upon. Small schools, because of their size, create a unique, nurturing, and supportive learning environment that enhances children's learning. Small schools provide an opportunity for child and student centered education and schooling.

Small classes and smaller overall student population allows teachers to get to know the students and their parents in a way that does not happen in larger schools. It is rather ironic, noted several presenters, that at a time when in other parts of North America people are starting to realize that small schools rather than big ones are to be preferred we seem determined in this province to close as many of our small schools as we can.

The emergent research which indicates that for socio-economically "at risk" students smaller schools offered them their best chance of academic success was also cited as a reason for keeping small schools. Small schools are particularly valuable in rural areas with a significant number of "at risk" students. A number of presenters made reference to the emergent body of research that indicates that small schools represent the best chance that "at risk" students have^(xxvii).

In addition to rejecting the notion that small schools are not viable and asserting the notion that small schools are in fact to be valued and preserved for their own sake, rural participants maintained that the question of school viability cannot be addressed without reference to community schooling. If we are committed to sustaining and developing rural Newfoundland and if we subscribe to community based schooling, then we have to accept the fact that this will mean the necessary existence of small schools. But the necessity of their existence isn't because they are so remote and isolated they cannot be closed. They are necessary because in rural areas of the province small scale schooling makes the most sense. Larger schools might make economic sense in urban areas with high levels of population concentration; but in rural areas with a dispersed and distant population, particularly in areas with large numbers of "at risk" students, small schools are required.

From this perspective questions about the viability of a particular school are asked and answered very differently. If a small community school is determined to be non-viable because it lacks the capability of providing quality education, the response should not be to close it but to provide it with whatever resources it needs to become viable. Reform efforts should set out to make small schools viable, not to close them. We make them viable because we value them as necessary for the education of rural children and the future of rural communities. By taking this tack, rural citizens turned the government's argument on its head: the government wanted to target for closure any school classified as non-viable; the people suggested that non-viable schools be targeted for extra funding and provision.

Distance Education

Distance education and other forms of information technology were suggested as ways of making small community schools viable by making up for any real or alleged programming deficiencies. As far as participants were concerned, "The distance education program currently operating in a number of small schools has been a good example of how we can use technology to help schools offer a broader spectrum of courses. This type of program should be expanded." Other participants pointed out that the information technologies that now exist make the size and location of a school irrelevant to its program capability. Many people found it curious that there was no mention of distance education in the government's *Consultation Paper*. Some took this absence as an indication of a lack of interest in sustaining community schools^(xxviii).

Student Transportation

As noted above the government's *Consultation Paper* contained two general proposals regarding student transportation: 1. More students will have to be bussed longer distances in the name of improved educational opportunities; 2. Existing bussing services for some students will be reduced in order to cut costs.

The "grass roots" perspective on student transportation was once again very different from government's. The primary concerns of rural parents and educators focused on issues to do with safety and the negative impact of the current degree of bussing on children and their families. Their basic position was that too many students were now being bussed too far, and often on dangerous roads. They rejected the notion that increased bussing was necessarily the appropriate or the only way to improve educational opportunities for their children. They were critical of the proposed cuts to bussing services describing these as government's way of trying to save money by imposing hardships on rural children and their parents. The issues and concerns raised by parents related to government's plans to increase bussing included:

- A number of safety concerns were raised, including the lack of adult supervision on school buses and the need for seat belts and two-way radios. Many parents were concerned by the reduction in road maintenance and snow clearing they were noticing. The Department of Education should work closely with the Department of Works, Services and Transportation to ensure that bus routes are cleared of snow in the winter and that these routes are assigned priority for maintenance. Several presenters related examples of bus routes not being cleared in time for buses to reach schools before morning classes begin.
- In several areas of the province, over the last several years, school boards had promised to provide lunchtime bussing in order to get people to agree to close their community schools. This offer was made in the face of parental opposition based in part on the fact that the receiving school did not have proper lunch room facilities. Recent cuts in bussing provision had forced boards to renege on lunchtime bussing. Several parents expressed their concerns about the safety and health of children eating at their desks. Many people felt that lunchrooms should be provided or lunch hour bussing be continued or re-established.
- There was concern expressed about younger children being so far from home. If they became ill, it might be difficult for parents to go and get them. Parents of children with special needs were especially concerned about the possibility of their children being bussed to distant communities. Several parents expressed the concern that mixed busloads of older and younger students had a negative impact on younger children. Older students often exposed younger children to ideas and language that their parents did not feel they were ready for.
- Bussed children do not have the option to linger after school to chat with a teacher or play with a friend. They do not have the opportunity to seek help from their teacher with something they are having difficulty with in one of their classes. Bussing negatively affects the quality of a child's life and the nature of

his/her participation in the school. Because they are bussed, they may not be able to take part in the extra-curricular life of their new school. Sports teams, clubs and organizations, drama groups, and school choirs provide valuable educational experiences for our children. It is little wonder they lack a sense of belonging and ownership for the school.

- It was felt that longer bus rides would have a negative affect on student learning and, therefore, guidelines should be developed with the goal of keeping bus rides as short as possible. Many presenters noted that bussed students had reduced access to teachers and the fatigue factor from longer rides often inhibits their learning^(xxx).

Rural citizens were generally critical of all government's proposed changes to the student transportation system. They saw them all for the most part as being primarily concerned with saving money for government at the cost of imposing hardship on students and their parents. With specific reference to proposals put forward by government in their *Consultation Paper*, rural citizens proposed:

- In general we should work towards reducing bussing not increasing it.
- Late busses should be available to all students who are forced to attend consolidated schools outside their home communities, so as to enable them to fully participate in the academic and co-curricular programs of the school.
- Staggered openings, according to some presenters, wreak havoc on the lives of families with more than one school age child. Parents, for example, with children in different levels (i.e., primary, elementary and high school) could have children starting school, leaving school and having lunches at different times.
- User fees for busses were rejected by rural participants. The government had closed community schools and created the need for school bussing. Therefore they should pay for it.
- Rural parents pointed out that it is inappropriate to have a single set of guidelines or regulations for the province. Road and weather conditions have to be taken into consideration when considering student bussing^(xxx).
- Parents were very critical of government's earlier proposals for bussing times which would have seen primary children spending 90 minutes a day on the bus and high school students 2 hours.
- Maximum bussing distances/times should vary depending on the age/grade level of the students. While opinions varied, most presenters suggested a 45-60 minute maximum duration for a bus run carrying high school students. Younger elementary children should be bussed for no more than 30 minutes and Kindergarten/primary students should be bussed for a maximum of 15 minutes.
- Several presenters suggested that the length of the overall school day be considered when examining maximum travel times. They suggested that waiting periods due to staggered openings and closings, be factored into the total school day.

- Local school boards should have the power and flexibility to set maximum bussing times so that conditions and circumstances can be taken in to consideration.

Finally, several participants linked their concerns about bussing directly to their argument for maintaining small community schools. The more community schools we have and maintain the less need there is to bus children. Community schools enable children, especially younger children, to be educated close to home and not have to endure long, tiresome and sometimes dangerous bus rides. Spend money on resources for community schools not busses to take children away from the community.

School Designation

For rural residents school designation was generally a secondary issue to the primary one of maintaining their small community school and keeping bussing times and distances as short as possible. Quite a few communities had in previous years demonstrated their willingness to give up their individual small denominational school in favor of a single inter-denominational or "joint services" school which would serve the educational needs of all children in the community. It was clear from the consultation meetings that as long as the community could keep its school and/or keep bussing times and distances at a minimum for their younger children, the majority of rural residents would accept the re-designation of their denominational schools. They would accept an inter-denominational school for the community to which all children could go.

Some Pentecostal and Roman Catholic parents in selected areas^(xxxi) of the province, however, were very concerned about the school designation issue. Nevertheless, there was no consensus evident from the consultation meetings as to how to decide on school designation. A wide variety of opinions were expressed on issues such as who in a community or an area should be allowed to have a say, what the process should be like, what percentage of persons expressing a view would be needed to have a school designated as uni-denominational.

Conclusion

The public consultation process in Newfoundland and Labrador clearly revealed a wide chasm between the official and the grass roots views as to how to improve education and schooling in rural communities. The official view insisted that the progress of rural educational reform dictated the closure and consolidation of small community schools. Such a structural change was needed, the government claimed, in order to improve educational opportunities for rural children. Small schools cannot provide the kinds of quality programming that rural children and students need to "take their place on the world stage" and "successfully compete in the 21st century." Parents should accept the need for more and longer bussing as a small price to pay for a higher quality of education for their children. A restructured system would also be a more efficient system enabling the government to realize substantial savings from closures and reductions to some bussing services. To some extent this position, claimed the government, was a necessary response to the tough "economic realities of the nineties;" however, the primary goal, insisted the *Consultation Paper*, is to improve the quality of education.

The "grass roots" insisted that the foundation of rural educational reform should be a commitment to sustaining and strengthening community-based education. Rural citizens suggested that an ecological perspective needs to inform any proposed changes or intended improvements. The focus cannot be just on the school or the children. The interdependent, mutually beneficial, and reciprocal relationship that exists between a rural communities and their schools must be considered. The closure of a school has social, economic and cultural implications for the community and all its residents. A community school provides a connection to the past, a sense of continuity, and a sign of community vitality and viability.

Community schools facilitate the important relationships and interactions between parents and teachers. Community schools enable children to be educated close to home, thus avoiding long, tiresome, and sometimes dangerous bus rides.

Students develop a connection with the school and a sense of ownership; they have a greater opportunity to fully participate in the academic and co-curricular life of the school.

The grass roots view insisted that small schools are not only viable but also valuable as places of quality education. The official view as to what constitutes "quality education" was questioned and criticized; examples of high quality small schools were offered to make the point. Rural citizens rejected the government's notion that significant economic savings may be realized from closing and consolidating small schools. Such savings, such as they are, have to be measured against the impact of such closures on children, families and communities.

From a rural perspective, if some small community schools are found to be lacking in resources, the appropriate response in the name of improvement is to provide them with the needed resources to make them academically viable, not to close them. Distance education and emerging information technologies were viewed as potential ways of maintaining and increasing viability of small community schools.

Finally, the grass roots perspective questioned government's motivation and ultimate agenda. Rural citizens felt that the proposed changes by government had two goals. The first was to cut spending on education regardless of the effects on the quality of education or the quality of students' lives. The second was to reduce the provision of services such as education to rural areas as a way of forcing people to abandon their small rural communities and move to larger "growth centers."

Post Script

The consultation process proved to be a disappointing exercise as far as rural parents and educators were concerned. They (and I share this view) continue to be disappointed in the way that educational reform is being played out in this province. Increasing numbers of people, especially rural educators and parents, are feeling either bewildered or betrayed (sometimes both) by what is happening in many places. Educational reform should be the impulse for improving the quality of education for our children who, we are constantly reminded, are our future. In too many instances, unfortunately, reform has become little more than a mean spirited exercise in reducing educational spending regardless of the costs to be paid by rural children and rural communities.

Two years after the consultation process it is increasingly difficult to find thinking persons - parents or educators - who feel positive about the general progress of educational reform. If anything, the number of disenchanting educators and parents is growing. I think people are starting to realize that the changes being made are looking less and less like improvements. Many small community schools have been closed. Promises made to convince communities to close their schools are not being kept. More students are being bussed and many are being bussed longer distances. Schools are becoming more distant from children's communities. Larger schools, parents are discovering, also mean larger and often overcrowded classrooms, lunch rooms and schools. Individual communities (Harbor Grace, Belleoram, St. Albans, Grand Bank, Seal Cove, White Bay, Isle aux Morts) around the province continue the struggle to keep their schools. A number of school Board trustees have resigned as a result of the tensions generated by reform, three from Avalon West alone. District personnel continuously have to point out to government how yet another policy or

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directive is not workable. Finally, classroom teachers and school principals are experiencing increasing levels of frustration, stress and tension. It is they who have to make this new "improved" system work with fewer resources, more demanding teaching conditions, and ever increasing expectations. The educational system cannot take too many more "improvements" of this kind.

Endnotes

- i. In January 1996, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador committed to consulting the public on educational reform. This promise was communicated through the Liberal Party's election "Red Book" entitled Ready for a Better Tomorrow: Platform of the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador. This document stated that "The new Liberal government is committed to dialogue and discussion on all elements of implementing education reform before decisions are made," and went on to say that "There will be extensive public consultation before any new school viability rules are adopted."
- ii. In addition to circulating this document through community newspapers and the post, the government made it available on the internet. It may be viewed at: <http://www.gov.nf.ca/publicat/educate/educate.htm> For the sake of brevity I shall shorten the title of this document in the rest of my paper to the Consultation Paper.
- iii. Structuring the Education System: A Public Consultation Paper for Educational Change in Newfoundland and Labrador (1996) [Government Document].
- iv. Ibid.
- v. The original schedule called for 16 meetings but 3 extra ones were added because of demand. The public sessions were generally conducted in a fairly informal manner with plenty of opportunity for questions and comments. The Minister of Education has to be given credit for taking the time to tour the province in this way and being willing to stay and listen until everyone who wished to had had his/her say.
- vi. The current round of educational reform in Newfoundland and Labrador began in 1991 with the establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry.
- vii. Our Children Our Future (1992) was the official published report of the government's Royal Commission of Inquiry.
- viii. Our Children Our Future (1992) Recommendation 8 (p. 229).
- ix. In December of 1995, the government released a draft version of a new schools act, Schools Act, 1996. Included in this act were these "school viability regulations."
- x. The rural protest against these viability regulations was greatly assisted by the coincidence of a provincial election. School closures became a critical election issue and when the incumbent Liberal government realized that these viability regulations could cost them many rural seats, they quickly rescinded them and promised the consultation process which is the subject of this paper.
- xi. Structuring the Education System: A Public Consultation Paper for Educational Change in Newfoundland and Labrador (1996) [Government Document].
- xii. Ibid.

- xiii. Ibid.
- xiv. "...communities or areas" There is a considerable difference, unacknowledged or not understood by the author(s) of this Consultation Paper, between closing one of two or more schools in a community and closing one of two or more schools in an area. Most rural communities would accept the former suggestion since it would leave the community still with a school. The later suggestion, however, is much more problematic since at the very least it means leaving at least one community with no school. Also depending on what is to constitute an "area" there are important implications regarding bussing.
- xv. Structuring the Education System: A Public Consultation Paper for Educational Change in Newfoundland and Labrador (1996) [Government Document].
- xvi. Does this mean they are not prepared to provide a "quality program" for these isolated schools?
- xvii. The issues surrounding the designation of schools are very complex and making sense of them is beyond the scope of this paper and the interest of its author. I am providing only the briefest overview here because the designation of schools was part of the consultation process. As I indicate elsewhere in my paper, this issue was not of primary importance for the majority of rural residents.
- xviii. In this section I am presenting a synthesis of the views and arguments presented at the 19 public consultation meetings that were held around the province. In developing this section I have drawn on a number of sources: a number of individuals and groups have made available copies of their formal presentations; community newspapers reported on each of the public sessions and these were supplemented in a number of cases with editorials and "letters to the editor;" I have also drawn on the extensive network of rural educators from around the province whom I know and who attended the public sessions; I have also made use of the government's own post process publication on the proceedings; finally, my research assistant and I attended several of the public sessions. I cannot claim that this section reports on everything that was said; for the sake of brevity I have had to be selective. However, I can claim that this section is an accurate representation of the views of rural parents and educators regarding the most important issues. For the sake of continuity I will use the same headings in this section that I use in the earlier section, The Official View.
- xix. The first public meeting took place less than a week after the consultation process was announced. People at the first meeting did not in fact see the Consultation Paper until the meeting where it was distributed just before the meeting began.
- xx. The activities of a parents group, as reported in a local paper, from the Baie Verte community of Ricketts to save their school illustrates the point. Parents wrote letters to government and put together an information package that pointed out research showing the benefits of keeping small, community schools open. "We don't think it will save any money," Karen Blake, head of

the parent-teacher's association was quoted as saying. "It costs \$12,700 annually for the schools heat, light, water and sewer bills," Blake said, "but it will cost \$35,500 to add another bus. The school has only four and a half teaching units," she added, "which would likely have to be added to a Baie Verte school if the students moved there." The parents had also done some investigation of multigrading, which traditionally has been used as weapon to convince rural communities to close their small schools. "We couldn't find any convincing evidence that sharing grades is a bad thing," she said. "We know from our personal experience that it can be good." (Feb. 18, 1996 E.T.)

- xxi. Perhaps the best expression of this view came from Maurice Tarrant of Lawn, a small rural town on the Burin Peninsula. In the school wars of January and February, 1996, he wrote: In rural areas our schools are the very heart of our community. What happens if the provincial government rips that heart out? As with any living entity, it will most assuredly die. Those who think that this is simply an education issue should consider what will happen if families decide to start moving out of a community to be closer to a school that their children attend. Houses will be left vacant. Who will rent when the trend is to move from the community? Property values will drop. Businesses will most definitely feel the negative impact as whole families move away... We are systematically being forced out of our communities to satisfy a government agenda to resettle rural Newfoundland. Our very way of life and culture is now being threatened like no other period in our history. If we neglect to make our voices heard, our silence will spell certain death for our communities. It's time that our government saw the human face of our people, not just the statistical value.

- xxii. It has always been difficult for some to understand and respect what the loss of its school means to a rural community. Rarely will an educational authority legitimate this issue as being relevant to the discussion about a school closure. This uniquely rural perspective is either ignored, dismissed as irrelevant or mere sentimentality, or treated with contempt by our educational leaders. This lack of understanding is most clearly seen when the community as a whole is not permitted to take part in school closure meetings or to vote on the fate of their school. In many situations only those parents with children in school get to participate. The assumption being that other members of the community have nothing at stake and therefore have no right to express their views in the closure discussions. Forgotten is the notion that it takes a whole community to educate a child. Ignored is the fact that everyone in a rural community experiences a sense of loss when a school is closed.

- xxiii. In the 1960's the government of the day coerced many small rural communities to "re-settle" in designated growth centres. There is a wide spread view in the province, among rural people, that the government would like to see the same thing happen again, but lacks the temerity to say so overtly. Instead, there has been gradual erosion in the services provided to rural communities such as: highway maintenance, ferry services, postal services, and policing.

- xxiv. Although not appreciated by many urban based educators, many rural families have no car at all.

- xxv. Charisma Collegiate Principal George Chaulk, speaking on behalf of the local school committee pointed out to the minister that the operation of schools

should be based on more than a balance sheet. "Efficiency is fine if you're talking about TVs or stereos," he said. "In this case of viability, there should be some sort of external assessment to give a facility a chance to prove its worth." (The Nor'Wester (Springdale), Wed., Oct. 2, 1996.)

- xxvi. Many presenters criticised the general belief of the government that bigger was necessarily better: Sheldon Kirby of Norris Arm told the Minister: "Bigger is not always better, Mr. Minister, sometimes it's just bigger." (The Lewisport Pilot: Sept. 25, 1996).
- xxvii. This was one of the issues I spoke to when I made a presentation to the Minister of Education, at the public meeting held in Mt. Pearl on December 15, 1996.
- xxviii. Current government policy is that funding for distance education will only be provided for small schools that are "necessarily existent": schools on islands, with no road connection to another community; and those existing too far from another school to make bussing feasible.
- xxix. Given the numbers of rural children everywhere in North America who ride the bus to school, many for up to two hours, it is astonishing how little research has been done to investigate the relationship between time and distance and academic achievement.
- xxx. Time and again during this consultation process the wide chasm between the official and the grass roots perspective was demonstrated. The official view seemed always to be grounded in either an ignorance or indifference to the complex reality of the issues. The government wanted simple straightforward answers to what rural folks kept indicating were complex questions. The diversity of rural contexts was seemingly lost on government officials. The government has always wanted to set a single set of regulations for bussing, ignoring totally local conditions. Rural people have always insisted that local conditions have to be considered. A 30 km ride on a straight stretch of paved highway in a built up area is not the same as a 30 km ride on a winding narrow dirt mountain road.
- xxxi. To some degree this issue reflected a number of divisions within the province. For example school designation generated considerable heat and interest in the capital city of St. John's. This reflected a urban/rural split on this issue. With a few notable exceptions rural areas were less interested in the denominational issues. They had "bigger fish to fry." There were also many suggestions that this was an issue more important to church leaders and officials, situated in St. John's than it was to ordinary parents and educators.

TEACHER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

TEACHER TRAINING VERSUS TEACHING REALITIES IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR SCHOOLS

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Fall 1992**

There is a growing awareness today of the gap that exists between educational theory and practice at the university level and the realities that surround those who work in the school system. In this study, I examine the relationship between the areas teachers are required to study at university and the content they are expected to teach once they go into the classroom. Specifically, I address the similarities and differences between preparation and practice as provided by the Faculty of Education at Memorial University and as outlined by Provincial Department of Education. I argue here that, although subjects like fine arts and religion are allocated a slim slice of the pie within Newfoundland and Labrador, this slice will be without substance until the Province's teacher-training facility provides greater strengths in these areas. Furthermore, I argue for a reconsideration of process and content in teacher training and suggest that content deserves far more attention than it presently receives.

To approach implicit assumptions of process and content, I weigh the program requirements at MUN against courses teachers are expected to teach, as prescribed in the provincial Program of Studies. I do not designate the intent and in-depth content of each course as descriptions are accessible through the MUN calendar and Department of Education curriculum guides. Neither do I "declare the problem to be an everlasting mystery" and will, therefore, bring the problems to the forefront and propose specific changes. These proposals, dealing here with only primary and elementary levels, are made within the time-frame limitations of present teacher education programs.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS (IN TRAINING AND IN THE SCHOOLS)

Primary Teacher Training

An analysis of the degree requirements for students in primary education shows that the twelve required courses consisting of English, science, mathematics, psychology, and sociology are generally introductory courses and are prerequisites for further study in these academic areas. The University calendar (1991-92: 204) indicates that in primary teacher training, a strong emphasis is placed on a required 23 professional courses. Three of these are related to children's literature and language arts. The sociology of education appears to be next in emphasis, along with human learning and child development, math and science. There is also a required internship which gives student teachers an opportunity to experience the roles they will hold once they begin work as teachers. Its function is to develop that Clifton and Long (1978: 12) term the "anticipatory socialization" of students so that when they go into the work force they hold a better chance of having the "knowledge, skills, values, norms, and self-concepts which would allow them to function with a relatively high degree of success."

Such areas as interpersonal relationships and communication, principles and practices of teaching, music, curriculum development, child assessment, art, philosophy of education, and educational administration require only a one-semester course.¹ This means that, in each of the aforesaid areas, a student teacher may graduate with one

course, each of which demands three fifty-minute periods per week over twelve weeks (a total of thirty hours). By comparison, one possibly devotes two hundred and twenty hours to language arts or one hundred and twenty hours of tuition relating to school and society (under which title I include two education courses and two of either sociology or anthropology), math and science. There is course selection which allows for further study (a minimum of six courses and a maximum of nine) in the areas of art, science, English, folklore, French, geography, home economics (not available at MUN), history, linguistics, mathematics, music, physical education, or religion.

While this provides an opportunity for a student teacher to accumulate six more courses in art, music, and physical education, it also allows for more courses in science, English, and math, which are already heavily represented in the degree program. Obviously more time is spent on the three R's because they are seen as fundamental components in education.

Primary Teachers in the Schools

Those trained in primary methods are eligible to teach any grade from kindergarten to three. According to the provincial Program of Studies (POS), teachers working with primary children should provide an individualized program that meets the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and moral needs of the growing child. It is the teacher's responsibility to lay a "solid foundation for all future learning in the different curriculum areas: language, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, physical education, and religious education" (POS, 1991-92: 1) as these grades are the first "great formal force in the education of children" (Ibid: 13). The stated expectations include the explanation that "Language is the major medium through which children learn" (Ibid: 22). This statement places an importance on language arts that begins in kindergarten and continues throughout the education system of Newfoundland and Labrador.

According to the Department of Education Program of Studies, the function of primary schooling is to teach children to learn and to think through active inquiry. This "hands-on, minds-on" approach to instruction helps children meet each learning situation in such a way that it will have meaning for them. Methods calling for an integration of subjects through learning centers and resource-based teaching are also encouraged, as they are purported to deepen children's understanding of concepts, values, and skills. Each subject, however, maintains its own identity as each has its own core objectives. Subjects are divided into five categories. The first, practical and fine arts, has a recommended teaching time allotment of 20%, sciences (including math) has 25%, language arts has 25%, self and society (social studies, health, religious education) has 20%, and 10% has been left to the discretion of local boards and schools. This time allotment, on a six-day cycle, leaves approximately 22 thirty-minute periods to be divided amongst art, music, physical education, religion, health, and social studies; 14 periods for math and science; and 14 periods for language. Although 5 periods have been left as optional periods, I hold from personal observations that often these are being used for language arts and math. I realize that organizational and instructional strategies employed by teachers make it difficult to determine exact percentages of time spent on various curricula. However, one can still see the high percentage of time allotted for language arts and math.

Primary Training Versus Primary Teaching

From this description, one can assume that there is a positive relationship between the number of language, math and science courses being studied in University and the percentage of teaching time required for these subjects in primary schools. The emphasis placed on school and society, human learning, and child development at the University level corresponds to the emphasis placed on meeting the physical, social, emotional, intellectual and moral needs of children in the schools.

Differences emerge between University accreditation expectations, however, and teaching requirements in school for the remaining subjects. Student teachers in University are only expected to do one education course in art and music and yet are expected to teach these subjects using approximately 10% of their instructional time. Because student teachers have to select only two from courses on drama, religion, social studies, physical education, or French, it is highly possible for them to come into the classroom without any training in four of these subject areas. In other words, teachers could be expected to spend as much as one-quarter of their instructional time teaching courses for which they have no preparation.

Elementary Teachers in Training

Candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Education in elementary school education must complete the same requirements as those already discussed under Primary Teacher Training. The only differences rest within the realms of art, music, learning resources and social studies. For primary teachers one course in each of art and music is compulsory in their training while learning resources and social studies are among eight categories from which two may be chosen. In contrast, prospective elementary teachers must complete both the learning resources and the social studies courses in order to meet graduation requirements, while music and art become optional from among a listing of eight (MUN Calendar, 1991-92: 206).

Elementary Teachers in the Schools

It is the responsibility of the elementary teacher to provide a stimulating and challenging environment for students. "Grouping practices, the functional management of furniture, independent work activities, resource-based teaching, unit study, learning centers, and a general approach to learning that emphasizes the child as a thinking, doing, and feeling learner' (POS, 1991-92: 47) are the methods to be used by the teacher. The recommended teaching time allotments are approximately one and one half hours for each of art, health and family life, music, and physical education; two hours for religion and science; two and one half hours for French and social studies; four hours for math; and six hours for language. Where all subjects, excluding math and language arts, receive an equal amount of teaching time in primary school, one sees a significant change in time distribution in elementary, commencing with one and one half hours or three periods for some subjects and increasing to six hours or twelve periods for language arts. Thus evolves the hierarchical line of subject importance - language arts-math-French and social studies-religion and science-art, health, music and physical education - that is maintained for the remainder of children's schooling.

Elementary Training Versus Elementary Teaching

As previously noted, a positive relationship is found between the number of language and math courses required for the prospective teacher's study and the percentage of teaching time (24% for language and 16% for math) required as s/he teaches those subjects within the elementary school system. Because emphasis is placed on elementary children beginning their initiation into the world of adult reasoning, concept formation, communication, and symbolism, the prescribed University training in such areas as school and society, human learning, and child development also parallel teaching requirements as indicated by the Department of Education.

However, differences are found in the emphasis placed on other subject areas. For example, student teachers are required to take one social studies course (thirty hours of lectures) in University while teachers are expected to spend 10% of their instructional time teaching this course in elementary schools. French is given the same amount of instructional time but is not a required course for student teachers in training. As 80% of the prescribed teaching time for French (POS, 1991-92: 50) must be devoted to aural-oral practice and use of French, general teachers may face serious problems if they have failed to select optional French courses. This situation presents several scenarios of action. It could mean that an "untrained" teacher is teaching the course. Another possibility is that one teacher in the school, with the required French training, must teach this subject. Yet another possibility is that a French specialist may teach all grades. In the latter case, many of these teachers have been trained as Bachelor of Arts (French majors) who have little or no training in elementary education. One final prospect presents itself; possibly French is not taught at all. Similar scenarios exist for music, art and physical education.

Let us examine the training requirements for religion and science, both compulsory in the Newfoundland school system and taught by regular classroom teachers. All elementary teachers in training will have taken science courses at the university level but may not have been exposed to religious education; science is compulsory for a Bachelor of Education degree while religious education remains an option. Despite this variation in preparation, teachers are expected to spend 8% of their teaching time in each of these subject areas.

All remaining subjects (art, music, and physical education) are given 6% of the teaching time. These courses, although encouraged or made mandatory by many school boards, are optional courses of study at the university level of teacher training. Again, many teachers without training attempt to teach these courses in schools while in some instances the courses are not offered.² In other cases, teachers with degrees in those areas, are hired to teach a particular course in all grades or become itinerant teachers within a school district.

Summary and Conclusions

To summarize, I have outlined positive relationships between the content of teacher preparation and the roles teachers must play upon entry to a classroom. There is balance at the primary and elementary education levels regarding the importance placed on child development, language arts and math. It appears that the University has also attempted to accommodate the Province's Program of Studies mandate by placing music and art (with a minimum number of courses) in the required primary education section and social studies in the elementary division. Basically, Memorial has maintained what many consider to be the four basic components of traditional teacher training: the academics, which provide student teachers with some training in these disciplines; foundations of education, which prepare professionals through the study of philosophy, psychology, history and sociology; curriculum studies, which furnish an

analysis of teaching and learning in a particular subject area and may include instructional methodologies; and practice teaching, which gives student teachers an opportunity to put theory into practice. There are, nonetheless, deficits which this writer believes should be addressed.

Disparities appear in the areas of physical education, religion, and French, for both primary and elementary levels, social studies in the primary, and music and art in the elementary section.³ One possible reason for the neglect in training in these areas is that they are considered specialist areas and, in more heavily populated areas of the Province, enrollments warrant the hiring of "special" teachers. For most districts, however, especially with the present decline in student enrolment followed by teacher lay-offs, these subjects are left in the hands of classroom teachers. The outcome of such a situation could be effective teaching, mediocre teaching, or no teaching at all (Harris, 1990). As one teacher reported in another study, "I am not a dance teacher, nor do I have any background in this area. To say whether or not I teach [dance] would be misleading. I do what I can in the area of music and dramatization" (Barter, 1988: 32). This is not an unexpected response from teachers who find themselves responsible for a subject area for which they are unprepared. What, then, is the solution? If university training and classroom teaching are to be harmonized, three factors have to be considered as pertinent thrusts of any possible reform.

First, teacher professionalism needs to be increased. Authority is the freedom to make final decisions within the framework provided by policy and law. It allows one the opportunity to act within one's area of professional expertise. According to Frymier (1987: 14) "Authority, freedom, and responsibility are intertwined". Therefore, teachers need to take an active role in developing theory and research in addition to contributing their essential practical experience and technical skills. Unless teachers in training contribute creatively to the future of education, both technically and culturally, there will be no improvement within our schools (Erikson, 1963; Kotre, 1984; Weber, 1990). Those who direct professional education courses, including teachers who supervise student teachers, need to be qualified for those roles. University professors, responsible for preparing prospective teachers, need to be involved in scholarly activities, provide community and institutional services and, keep in touch with existing Provincial school systems. These things are necessary to enable university teachers to go beyond their own experiences. Teachers, selected to supervise student teachers, need to be prepared for their roles as mentors and managers of interns. Institutions need to work cooperatively with local schools in the overall improvement of education at all levels. Furthermore, as Weber (1990: 151) suggests, educators will more directly affect what goes on inside schools as they become less concerned about graduating students who know how to fit into "the system" and more concerned about graduating people who really think critically about a situation, and are both creative and imaginative. This cannot happen as long as school officials continue to reward blind obedience to authority above creativity and excellence. If policy makers wish to put education back into the classroom they must give back the locus of control to the teachers. Teachers have to be regarded as people who are capable of making sound professional judgements.

Secondly, administrators need to assess their hiring practices in order to attract competent people into the teaching profession. Those responsible for hiring often want to know how much technical training a potential teacher has in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but less frequently ask potential primary teachers, for example, if they can sing, play games, and role play. Were teachers in the primary grades to possess

knowledge and skill in most areas of the curriculum, children might more closely achieve the goal of education.

If one operates under Goodlad's (1988: 109) assumption that no human enterprise "that depends for its effective conduct on the infusion of knowledge can be conducted successfully without an ongoing process of inquiry fed by relevant knowledge", one must also assume that those subjects which are least experienced by teachers, need to be increased in course number at the university level. Knowledge relevant to teaching does not enter prospective teachers by osmosis. Presently, most teachers entering the work force bring with them an artillery of the 3 R's and very little training in such areas as the fine arts. By increasing the number of required courses in areas in which potential teachers are less apt to be experienced, such as physical education, foreign language, music, movement, drama and art, the university would be ensuring that teachers obtain a broad foundation of knowledge in subject matter "on which the professional preparation of teachers should rest" (Guthrie & Clifford, 1989: 385). Weber (1990: 149) indicates that there is a relationship between a teacher educator's own learning and his/her teaching. A person who is exposed to 2000 hours of language arts and 400 hours of fine arts cannot comprehend the importance of a balanced education between the two, let alone justify it. In other words, how can a teacher with very little music experience take a one semester course in music at University and expect to be knowledgeable in that field, or teach it to others? How can we expect children to receive a "well-rounded" education from classroom teachers who are not competent in all subject areas? It is the responsibility of the administration to seek out and hire those competent in all subject areas that they are required to teach. Such a basis would enable teachers to practice and bring mastery.

Thirdly, the Canadian education systems would benefit from national coordination. As Guthrie and Clifford (1989: 384) suggest, if professional standards are set sufficiently high, there would be enough leverage to upgrade the curricula of all schools of education "by defining, with the advice of teachers, the minimum levels of knowledge, skills, and research ability that teachers must master. Enforceable national standards for certification would have [universities] little choice but to alter their course offerings, requirements, and instruction". These standards would not rest solely on a candidate's completion of a prescribed set of courses but would also require national written examinations in order to assess subject-matter knowledge and information regarding important pedagogical principles in such areas as testing, human development, and classroom management. In lieu of - or in accompaniment with national certification boards could use a variety of assessment formats such as oral interview panels, role playing, case analysis, videotaped simulations, and other types of problem-solving exercises. In other words, individual appraisal (screening) of professional competence is needed as a post-requisite to education degree accreditation. Personal characteristics, professional commitment, and attitudes toward school and students need to be among the criteria for admission into teacher education programs.

When one visits a medical doctor, one expects competence. If we treated education like the medical profession we might create some good general practitioners who could enhance the profession of teaching, raising it above the mundane. Therefore, an effective general education for undergraduates is central to the preparation of effective teachers. Schools staffed by autonomous teachers who have knowledge of a wide range of educational and noneducational fields related to their areas of expertise should be able to function more effectively and efficiently for the greater benefit of all.

Obviously, this call for change is not new; it is probably as old as education itself. Before this paper is published there will be another idea to try, another reform to be written about, studied, discussed, and implemented. The job is enormous. Do we become paralyzed by the perceived enormity of the task? Whatever the answer, one point bears out in strength: there can never be a true profession of teaching until teachers demonstrate that they can be trusted with the job of educating. And that will not come to pass until teachers are well-prepared within their teaching domains. The university is entrusted with that task.

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NOTE:

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NOTES

1. A semester means a period of approximately 14 consecutive weeks during which the University is in regular session and which provides at least 12 teaching weeks.
2. See Apple (1980: 15) and Efland (1988: 136) regarding the de-skilling of teachers whereby technological tools are designed to replace the knowledge and skills of teachers. Also, see Harris (1990: 93, 145-168, 200) for empirical evidence of the negative effects of teacher de-skilling.
3. Having to teach subjects for which one is not proficiently trained causes a disparity between teacher ability and school expectations. However, it is not the intent of this paper to argue for a "balanced" program within our education systems. But, the seed is planted.

**THE TEACHING INTERNSHIP AT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY
A UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP**

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Fall 1997**

For many years the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland has relied extensively on the teaching internship as a means of affording prospective teachers an opportunity to integrate theory and practice in an educational setting. More recently within the Reflective and Critical Internship Programme and resulting QUAD relationship of cooperating teacher, intern supervisor, intern and subject matter, efforts have been undertaken to enhance and facilitate valuable educational experiences through which interrelationships among components of the university program might be brought into focus through the teaching experience. This exercise of facilitation has assumed different formats over the past decade leading to development of the present internship delivery model.

Brief History

Notice from Government on July 1, 1988 concerning introduction of a compulsory internship as the prerequisite for teacher certification mandated that all student interns spend one semester (approximately thirteen weeks) in a school setting engaged in teaching activities. To meet this demand faculty members, normally as part of their teaching responsibility, were encouraged to assume supervisory roles -- undertaking the supervision of some five to ten students as the equivalent of one instructional course section within their workloads. The difficulty with this arrangement was that there were simply never enough faculty members available to supervise the large number of student interns. To overcome this situation efforts were undertaken to second practising teachers to the supervisory role on both a per school and regional basis with very positive results. However, two major problems emerged at this stage of evolutionary development -- minimal intern placement in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, and spiralling financial costs.

Under this supervisory arrangement a majority of interns were placed in schools within St. John's/Mount Pearl and surrounding areas resulting in too few students being located throughout rural Newfoundland and Labrador simply because intern supervision was difficult to arrange. As a result many schools and school districts were being denied an opportunity to participate in the professional development of future educators. Along with this logistics shortcoming the sheer cost associated with supervisory secondments exceeded the ability of the Faculty of Education to finance. As a result, attention was turned to exploring alternative delivery modes.

There is an old saying that necessity is the mother of invention! Certainly forces at work within the Faculty of Education served as a catalyst for the need to seriously pursue the issue of an alternative mode of internship supervision. To begin with the Faculty underwent a radical downsizing from 91 members in 1986-87 to 48 members in 1996-97. This sizeable decrease in staff complement dictated that with fewer bodies to cover existing programmes, insufficient faculty were available for supervising interns. Moreover, the total faculty budget was continuously being pared, thereby eliminating any possibility of continuing with teacher secondments or realizing faculty expansion. And

so the stage was set for some very serious decision making. Since the very existence of the Faculty of Education hinged on the preparation of teachers, and since the preparation of teachers necessitated undertaking a full semester of internship, a bold and innovative solution to the existing dilemma had to be created. The result has become what we now refer to as the University-School District Partnership.¹

The initial building blocks for the current model of internship delivery lay in the very essence of the internship QUAD. Clearly both the field and the Faculty of Education were active participants in the professional formation of student interns, with the former serving as cooperating teachers and the latter fulfilling a supervisory role. Why not consider the possibility of forging a partnership between school district and Faculty whereby the district would be paid to orient, place and supervise interns while the Faculty would fulfil an overall coordinative role? If the Faculty would supply each district with all necessary placement and evaluative material relative to the student interns, why couldn't the district in turn assign intern supervisory responsibilities to competent and capable educators -- principals, central office staff, teams of teachers, etc.? Thus the stage was set in the Fall of 1993 to launch this delivery mode in five Newfoundland and Labrador school districts. A legal contract duly signed by each participating party -- district and Faculty -- formalized the undertaking of responsibility for internship supervision by each district partner.

From the outset the University - School District partnership proved quite popular with those districts involved. Student interns who otherwise could not have been directly supervised by the Faculty in the more rural areas of this Province were now able to be placed in their home districts. Each district assigned a central office staff person to the task of placing, orienting and ensuring that each intern was supervised and evaluated according to the expectations of the Faculty of Education. Each school in turn assigned the intern to a cooperating teacher. For the most part school principals acted in the role of intern supervisor. While this input from principals has been appreciated it has proven to be a restrictive factor of the model which is only now being addressed. It was never the intention of this partnership to have principals assume supervisory responsibility unless that individual wished to do so. The reason for this was quite obvious -- role responsibilities of principals simply precluded the contribution of time required for effective intern supervision. Yet, despite concerns of principals of being overburdened and the best efforts of this Faculty to encourage teachers, vice-principals, department heads and/or central office coordinators to assume this supervisory role, many school principals still view their supervisory participation as essential to the success of this model and are therefore determined to remain so involved.

Throughout the first years of operation this partnership model both the Faculty of Education and districts were frustrated by a lack of procedural consistency regarding intern observation and evaluation. This was a fair criticism but interestingly the model itself was not the problem. Instead it was obvious that the plethora of forms used to observe and evaluate interns were in need of revision in accordance with the new delivery model. In fact these forms were so poorly received that some districts began to create their own instruments -- something that was not allowed under the terms and conditions of the contract entered into by the district and the Faculty. The message was again loud and clear: districts were asking this Faculty to re-examine the evaluation and observation instruments with a view to developing new formats and create instructional guidelines for their use. These newly designed instruments and handbook are now being piloted during Fall 1997.

Achieving standardization in practice required the Faculty of Education to follow further advice from districts to improve the presence of the University in school districts over the duration of the semester long internship. To accomplish this two additional roles were created, namely, district liaison officer and internship professional development officer. Again, it can be seen that this partnership has thrived on the responsiveness of each participant's requests for refinements -- the Faculty to requests for improving standardization in practice and improvement of communication, and the districts to requests for improved communication between central office and schools along with improved clustering of interns throughout each district to facilitate district liaison. Through continuous monitoring by the Office of Undergraduate Student Services, this partnership model has expanded in usage throughout the Province, becoming more effective and user friendly in the process. Currently nine of the Province's ten school districts are involved in this partnering process.² The large urban district of Avalon East with its close proximity to the University has not yet participated but is considering the possibility of doing so in the near future once a piloting process has been put in place.

Current Scene

The current University-School District Partnership is predicated on the underlying assumption that an extended practicum is necessary to the training of teachers. Delivery of the teaching internship through this model has greatly assisted the Faculty of Education in affording prospective teachers an opportunity to acquire already critical teaching skills while interning in various provincial school districts. Clearly this partnership has already exhibited a number of strengths, some of which include an opportunity for students to return to their home districts during the internship; an opportunity for students to be placed within districts so as to maximize their contact with district resources; and the opportunity for school districts to observe potential employees. Too, this partnership has enabled experienced teachers in rural Newfoundland and Labrador to pass on their expertise to interns.

This internship partnership operates across the semester in a manner similar to many other teaching internships throughout the country--the difference being the extent of school district involvement in the supervisory role. The district assigns each intern to a cooperating teacher and also identifies a supervisor to work with both the intern and cooperating teacher over the 13 week internship period. Formative and summative evaluation of intern performance is conducted through the use of university-approved evaluation instruments. As usual the cooperating teacher and supervisor prepare individual reports on each intern's progress.

University assistance is provided to each partner district throughout the semester. The district liaison officer has responsibilities for meeting with cooperating teachers, interns, supervisors and principals in individual school districts within the first three weeks of a semester; facilitating at a further point in the semester a reflective session for interns in each district to focus on topics of general concern such as teacher welfare matters, reflective journal writing, evaluation, etc.; maintaining communication links with intern supervisors in the school districts to ensure procedural standardization; serving as a troubleshooter; and liaising with the coordinator of undergraduate programs. The internship professional development officer is a faculty member who is responsible for the development and delivery of professional in-service for cooperating teachers and supervisors as deemed necessary. A major initiative in this regard took place in the Fall of 1997.

Successful operation of this University - School District Partnership has required the Office of Undergraduate Student Services, as that arm of the Faculty of Education directly responsible for undergraduate programs, to assume an active role in the overall coordination of the internship experience.³ This Office answers questions pertaining to all aspects of the internship program; advises on matters of attendance, unprofessional conduct, intern performance, etc.; arranges for all required materials to be sent to the districts; trouble shoots; liaises with the district liaison officers; and updates the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs on all ongoing internship matters.

The very nature of this partnership model requires each district central office to assume critical role responsibilities. These include selecting cooperating teachers and supervisors; providing (and updating) the Faculty of Education with details of the placement and supervision arrangements for interns; briefing school personnel about the internship program and distributing material provided by the Faculty of Education; providing information to school personnel regarding the professional background of interns; working with cooperating teachers and interns in designing a program of activities; arranging an orientation session for interns at the beginning of the semester; whenever possible including interns in district professional development activities; holding discussions with cooperating teachers, supervisors, and interns; keeping the Faculty of Education informed of any problems in the intern's program; compiling and returning the district grade report (to contain grades for all interns in the district) to the Faculty of Education as soon as possible following the end date of the internship; and ensuring that the Faculty of Education receives a complete evaluation file for each intern.

Role responsibilities assigned to cooperating teachers, interns, and principals follow on those traditionally ascribed to these positions. However, in those instances where the principal is also the supervisor he/she assumes the following supervisory responsibilities: observing the intern teaching at least once every 6-10 school days; assisting the intern in the critical-reflective analysis of the relationship between theory and practice with the intent of improving practice; conferring with the cooperating teacher regarding the intern's progress; preparing reports of the intern's progress and discussing these reports with the intern; and monitoring the overall professional development of the intern.

The Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland remains confident that the University-School District Partnership will continue to provide an effective avenue for encouraging increased school district involvement in the formation of prospective teachers. To this end the Faculty is committed to providing opportunity for professional in-service of cooperating teachers and supervisors. Whereas this has been a long held goal of the Faculty, the first such undertaking occurred in October, 1997. During this time a two-day pilot seminar was held for representatives from four Newfoundland and Labrador school districts. Each participating district sent two experienced cooperating teachers (one primary/elementary and one secondary) along with the central office staff member responsible for district internship coordination to an intensive two-day session at Littledale Conference Centre in St. John's. Participants lived in residence during the two day seminar during which critical-reflective pedagogical presentations were made by members of the Faculty of Education. While attending this Professional In-Service and Strategic Planning Seminar, participants dialogued with members of the Faculty of Education to accomplish two major goals: a critical examination of the pedagogy underlying the role of the cooperating teacher in a critical-reflective internship experience, and collective development of a strategy for

meeting the ongoing professional needs of cooperating teachers and supervisors in all districts currently participating in this partnership model. This two-day experience was designed to contribute to improved communication between the field and the Faculty as well as pave the way for district identified lead/master teachers to assume, in addition to their cooperating teacher role, greater prominence in the supervision of interns. Given that the Faculty of Education bears ultimate responsibility for the teaching internship, this session represented one of the few occasions when representatives from the faculty and the field were able to sit down together in a "think tank" environment to communicate and improve upon an already successful partnership venture.

Challenge

The future of the University-School District Partnership is promising. Born from a need to deliver an internship unique in its innovative outreach to provincial school districts, the partnership model is rooted in the strong belief that the pre-education of teachers is a jointly held responsibility of the Faculty of Education and the profession. This belief has not been based on any desire to shift or deny the responsibility of the Faculty of Education for initial teacher education but on the firm belief that the best teacher education programs in the country are those with active participation by practising teachers. The real benefit has been to interns who can now be totally supervised by current practising teachers. Under this approach, interns can become more fully integrated into the school and thus the profession at an earlier stage.

Considerable work remains to be done to hone the effectiveness of this model. Partnerships by their very definition require continuous attention to the needs satisfaction of participants. That there remains those who are somewhat skeptical regarding the long term viability of this venture is understandable. Change is a phenomenon affecting individuals, groups and organizations in a variety of ways. However, time, effective communication and increased opportunities to become involved in the operation of this partnership are essential to the garnering of individual/group support and ownership. While there are those who may feel that the Faculty has given up control of the internship, there is every opportunity to demonstrate that rather than losing control this Faculty has gained a partner in delivering a more effective internship experience and, in the process, has experienced a sharing of control. There never has been nor will there ever be any attempt to move the internship away from the Faculty of Education whose responsibility it is by legal mandate. Rather this model has provided a professional working partnership with the field which many say is long overdue. It remains for this Faculty, through ventures such as the Professional In-Service and Strategic Planning Seminar this Fall, to provide ongoing guidance and direction to the field regarding internship delivery and, in return, be receptive to advice received. After all, is this not the very essence of an effective partnership?

Notes:

1. For further information on the University-School District Partnership please consult the Internship Handbook (All Districts Excepting Avalon East). May, 1997.
2. Participating Provincial school districts include:
 - Labrador School District #1
 - Northern Peninsula/Labrador South School District #2
 - Corner Brook/Deer Lake/St. Barbe South School District #3
 - Stephenville/Port aux Basques School District #4
 - Baie Verte/Central/Connaigre School District #5
 - Lewisporte/Gander School District #6
 - Burin School District #7
 - Clarenville/Bonavista School District #8
 - Avalon West School District #9
3. To date the University - School District Partnership has functioned effectively in the following school district locations outside of this Province: British Columbia; Alberta; Ontario; Quebec; New Brunswick; Nova Scotia; Harlow, England.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?**

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The Need for Staff Development?

It was Socrates who said, "I believe that we cannot live better than in seeking to become still better than we are". That sentiment has been echoed over the years by many theorists, philosophers and educators alike. It is the ideal guiding the numerous calls nationally and internationally for the reform of schools and school systems. For state administrators, doing better might be translated as being more efficient, with making better use of public dollars. However, for teachers, doing better means improved student achievement, better instruction, and enhanced learning environments for all students. For teachers and administrators, the challenge of becoming better emphasizes their own needs to learn and to grow professionally, or in other words, the need for staff development (as it is most commonly called in the United States), or professional development (as it is often referred to in Canada).

The need for professional development has been well documented. Research conducted in 58 schools in Newfoundland, with 1059 teachers in all districts, revealed that promotion of professional development was the most significant single leadership activity that was related to increased levels of teacher commitment (the degree to which teachers are supportive of and committed to the school and their colleagues); professional involvement (the degree to which teachers are concerned about their work, are keen to learn from one another, and committed to professional development); and innovativeness (the degree to which variety, change, and new approaches are emphasized in the school) (Sheppard, 1996). These findings were confirmed in another provincial study of school improvement, in which data were gathered from 19 districts, 155 principals, 279 teachers, 223 parents, and 69 students. Responding to a mail-out survey, principals and teachers were consistent in their perception of the most important activities which motivated school improvement in their schools, indicating that the most influential were professional development activities sponsored by the district (Brown, Button, Noseworthy, & Button, 1997).

This is consistent with the recognition of the need for staff development across North America. Guskey (1994b) states that "never before in the history of education has there been a greater recognition of the importance of professional development. Every proposal to reform, restructure, or transform schools emphasizes professional development as the primary vehicle in efforts to bring needed change" (p. 42). A number of theorists, notably Fullan (1993) and Guskey (1994b, 1995) link teacher development with improvements in student learning. Guskey (1995) states that: "If we are going to have improvement in student learning than staff development is an essential prerequisite to that." Similarly, Fullan (1993) concluded: "To restructure is not to reculture", that "changing formal structures is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs" (p. 49). In other words, if teachers are to change teaching practice, or if the culture is to become a better one in the sense of improving student

learning, teachers and administrators must be provided opportunities to learn. Fullan (1995), reviewing the evidence on site-based management, concluded, "restructuring reforms that devolved decision making to schools may have altered governance procedures but did not affect the teaching-learning core of schools" (p. 230). He also cited Sarason who made the point even more forcefully: "Yes, we expect teachers to give their all to the growth and development of students. *But a teacher cannot sustain such giving unless the conditions exist for the continued growth and development of the teacher* [italics in the original]" (Sarason, cited in Fullan, 1995, p. 234).

It is because of the existence of such evidence and claims, that Brandt (1994), as editor of *Educational Leadership*, the journal of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), issued a challenge to North American educators "to make continuous learning an integral part of every educators' professional life" (p. 2). As well, this appeal is recognized in the mission statement of the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) in the United States which broadens the role of professional development in respect to continuous learning as it is not only directed at professionals, but also students and the school. It emphasizes (1) ensuring success for all students, (2) improving schools, (3) advancing individual and organizational development (Sullivan, 1997).

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the central importance of professional development is highlighted by the significant proportion of the total educational budget that is used to pay teachers' salaries. In 1995-96, of the total revenues, \$552.6 million, received by school boards, \$418.6 million was spent in teachers' salaries (Newfoundland and Labrador, 1996). If one accepts the assumption that the essence of successful instruction and good schools comes from the thoughts and actions of the professionals in the schools, the sensible place to look in order to improve the quality of education in a school is the continuous education of educators through professional development. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (1995) used an analogy to automobiles. When a customer purchases a new car costing upwards of \$20,000, he or she brings it in every 8,000 kilometres for routine servicing. In order to protect the investment, the customer is willing to put additional money into the car to prolong its life and performance. In this analogy, the authors identify the school board as the customer who purchases an educator. "Without resources for maintaining, fine-tuning, and reinvigorating the investment, the district will run teachers into the ground. This is far more consequential than a neglected car. The district will lose teachers, physically and/or mentally. The real losers will be the students of these teachers" (p. 334).

The above analogy becomes particularly salient when one considers the aging teacher workforce in Newfoundland and Labrador. A statistical report of Educational Indicators, Profile '96 (Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997), reveals that in the 1995-1996 school year half of the teachers and in-school administrators were over 42 years old with 18.5 or more years teaching experience. The report correctly indicates that "as the age of teachers increases, the importance of frequent and meaningful professional development opportunities will be increasingly important in order to keep teachers abreast of recent advances in theory and practice" (p. 51).

The Changing Face of Staff Development

Sparks (1996) contends that while professional development is essential if teachers and administrators are to avail of the findings of research on teaching, learning,

and leadership, it must be considerably different than past practice. He observes the typical practice in the past was:

Educators (usually teachers) sitting relatively passively while an 'expert' 'exposed' them to new ideas or 'trained' them in new practices. The success of this endeavour was typically judged by a 'happiness quotient' that measured participants' satisfaction with the experience and their assessment regarding its usefulness in their work" (Sparks, 1994, p. 26).

This "expert" model has been widely criticized, in business and in education. Ryan (1995) rejects it on the grounds that it assumed there were the "experts" -- "the people who "knew" the "right" answers to our questions", and then there were the "learners" -- "generally assumed to be ignorant, passive, empty vessels who can be effectively filled up by the expert expounding knowledge" (p. 279). Similarly, Joyce and Calhoun (1994) note inadequacies of past practices: "Brief, slick workshops were constructed and ratings went up, but implementation did not" (p. 4). Dillon-Peterson (1994) depicts the perspectives of other researchers (Brandt, 1994; Fullan, 1994; Guskey, 1994a; Joyce & Calhoun, 1994; Louck-Horsley, 1994; Schmuck, 1994, Wood, 1994) in the field of professional development regarding past and current practices as she reflects on 25 years of professional development. She notes the following shifts:

- [1] *From Emphasis on Deficit to Emphasis on Growth/Change.* Originally, most 'inservice education' (as it was then labelled) was designed to fix teachers.... Most current staff development is driven by...the need to improve schools as total learning communities.
- [2] *From Emphasis on the Individual to Emphasis on the Group/Organization.* ...Such movements as restructuring, team teaching, and organizational development...emphasize both the importance of the individual and the essential contribution she or he can make within the group if both the individual and society are to prosper.
- [3] *From Random Selection of Focus to More Systematic Delivery of Instruction Incorporating Principles of Adult Learning and the Use of Technology.* The preferred format of staff development activities ...was the "smorgasbord". Several times a year, the ambitious staff developer would line up 50-100 "one-shot" activities an hour or two in length. Topics may or may not have been related to the curriculum or the employee's assigned responsibility. Today, there is evidence that staff development is coming of age in terms of clarification of mission, goals, and objectives. (p. 3)

Professional Development and Change

Hixton (1991) states that "Staff development must help schools move beyond simply improving what they have to developing new understandings of what they need, new visions of what is possible, and new strategies of how to 'get there from here'" (p. 4). If professional development is to serve the purpose identified by Hixton above, then professional development activities must be based on current change theory (Nowak, 1994; Shroyer, 1990). One of the most comprehensive summaries of what we know about change has been summarized by Fullan (1993)¹ as eight lessons of the new paradigm of change:

- LESSON 1: YOU CAN'T MANDATE WHAT MATTERS

"The more complex the change the less you can force it" (p. 22). The only changes that can be mandated are things that do not require thinking or skill and that can be easily monitored.

- LESSON 2: CHANGE IS A JOURNEY NOT A BLUEPRINT

"Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty, and sometimes perverse" (p. 24). A group with whom Fullan was working in the Maritimes, likened change "to a planned journey into uncharted waters in a leaky boat with a mutinous crew" (p. 24). Given such uncertainty, a risk taking mentality and climate must be fostered.

- LESSON 3: PROBLEMS ARE OUR FRIENDS

"Problems are inevitable, but the good news is that you can't learn or be successful without them" (p. 25). As we search for solutions we need to recognize that "conflict is essential to any successful change effort" (p. 27), that "change is learning" (p. 27) and that we need to value the process of finding a solution, not just the solution itself. "In short, problems are our friends; but only if you do something about them" (p. 28).

- LESSON 4: VISION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING COME LATER

"Premature visions and planning can blind" (p. 28). Visions should be worked on but should be open-ended and provisional. Bear, Eisenstat and Spector (as cited in Fullan, 1993) concluded from their study of 26 plants over a five year period that change efforts beginning by a corporate plan to alter the culture of the management of people are inherently flawed. Attempts to change people through the building of mission statements or training programs are based on false assumptions of how people change. Fullan does not support vision developed by leadership teams. Also, strategic planning is called into question in complex change. Louis and Miles (as cited in Fullan, 1993) contend that we should take an evolutionary perspective where strategy is viewed as a flexible tool.

- LESSON 5: INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM MUST HAVE EQUAL POWER

"There are no one-sided solutions to isolation and group think" (p. 33). Collaboration is recognized as beneficial in bringing together the most intelligence possible to solve complex issues. However, we must be cautious of "group think" as we are all aware that one of life's greatest difficulties is to stand out against one's group. Solitude has a place in change. "Isolation is bad, group domination is worse. Honouring opposites simultaneously -- individualism and collegiality--is the critical message" (p. 36).

- LESSON 6: NEITHER CENTRALIZATION NOR DECENTRALIZATION WORKS

"Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary Centralization errs on the side of over control, decentralization errs towards chaos" (p. 37). Needed is a two-way relationship of pressure, support and continuous negotiation. The "best way" will depend on the context. For example, if there is an accepted knowledge base that teachers should know it would be quite ineffective to have an "expert" do a presentation in 17 different schools. It would appear to be wiser to bring people together in one group. When we move to implementation; however, we know that it must be done at the building level.

- LESSON 7: CONNECTION WITH THE WIDER ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL FOR SUCCESS

"The best organizations learn externally as well as internally" (p. 38). Individual moral purpose must be linked to the social good and teachers must seek opportunities to join forces with others while they focus on working with individual students. Also, the organization must contribute to and respond to the environment.

- LESSON 8: EVERY PERSON IS A CHANGE AGENT

"Change is too important to leave to the experts" (p. 39). Individuals need to assume responsibility within their own environments if there is to be substantive change; they cannot leave this responsibility to others. Fullan's views are forcefully stated by Senge (1990): "All my life, I assumed that somebody, somewhere knew the answer to this problem. I thought politicians knew what had to be done, but refused to do it out of politics and greed. But now I know that nobody knows the answer. Not us, not them, not anybody" (p. 281). In a learning organization, everyone must strive for personal mastery, be a team leader to develop shared vision, think systemically, challenge his or her own and others' mental models, and in so doing contribute to organizational learning.

Fullan notes that the pattern underlying the eight lessons is that each is a paradox unto itself:

simultaneously pushing for change while allowing self learning to unfold; being prepared for a journey of uncertainty; seeing problems as sources of creative resolution; having a vision, but not being

blinded by it; valuing the individual and the group; incorporating centralizing and decentralizing forces; being internally cohesive, but externally oriented; and valuing personal change agency as the route to system change. (p. 40) **Professional Development Knowledge Base**

After having conducted an extensive review of studies and reports on staff development programs, Glickman et al. (1995) concluded that there exists a considerable knowledge base regarding successful professional development programs. They summarize the characteristics of this knowledge base in a staff development checklist:

- Participants involved in planning and implementing
- Long-range planning
- Integration of individual and school improvement goals
- Based on principles of adult development and learning
- Released time for participants
- Incentives, support, and rewards
- Small-group learning activities
- If skill development: concrete and specific
- If skill development: demonstration, trial, and feedback during workshop
- If skill development: classroom coaching following workshop
- Experimentation and risk taking encouraged
- Regular participant meetings for problem solving and program revisions
- Instructional and school leaders participating in activities
- Ongoing, part of school culture. (p. 338)

Guskey (1994, 1995) contends that the problem with attempts to identify elements of successful professional development programs is that the success of these practices is contingent upon the context. What works in one context may not work in another. In spite of this caveat, however, he proposes a list of guidelines for success that he states are derived from research on both the change process and staff development. Guskey's six major guidelines (1994)² reveals the implications of the research on both change theory and staff development, and the discussion of each reveals how the conclusions are supported by Fullan (1993) and Stoll & Fink (1996).

1. Recognize that change is both an individual and organizational process.

Research has clearly shown that the culture of the organization limits the impact that excellent people can have on the organization. Many have interpreted this finding as the need to focus on the culture of the organization at the exclusion of the individual. In fact it is this direction that has created difficulties for school improvement processes that have been employed in schools throughout the world (Stoll & Fink, 1996). If professional development and change efforts are to bring about improvements in schools then all efforts must focus on the classroom, with the realization that the school culture must value experimentation, be supportive of risk-takers, and provide opportunities for collaboration.

2. Think big, but start small.

While it is essential that all professional development occur in the context of a grand vision, it is essential that specific initiatives are small enough that they can be accomplished in a reasonable period of time, that they are realistic and clear, and that changes are measurable. Guskey (1994) states that there is one truism related to this issue of attempting changes in manageable steps: "The magnitude of change you ask people to make is inversely related to the likelihood of making it" (p. 44). It is important that teacher see that what they are doing makes a difference since teachers will only change practices when they see that they work.

3. Work in teams to maintain support.

Professional development efforts will be most successful if they occur in a context of a learning organization where norms of continuous learning and teamwork are established.

4. Include procedures for feedback on results.

If new practices are to become institutionalized then teachers must be convinced that they contribute to making a difference in student learning. Therefore, it is important that monitoring and evaluation is a critical component of professional development. Action Research is one professional development format that provides for the required feedback as it allows practitioners to become involved in systematic inquiry.

5. Provide continued follow-up, support, and pressure.

Progress toward implementation of something new is not a smooth linear process. As individuals experience the learning curve which is inherent in doing something new, they want to revert back to the tried and true practices of the past. An excellent example of this can be found through observation of people attempting to keep pace with the rapid changes in computer software. Just when they have begun to master one version of a word processing program, another more advanced program is released. Many resist moving to the newer, improved version because they know that the learning curve will be painful and, in fact while they are learning, they will be less efficient. Many who do not perceive themselves as software pioneers need some pressure to move from one program to the next. They only move to the next program either when someone else can convince them that it is indeed an improvement or if they find that their program is no longer compatible with programs used by others and is beginning to cause them difficulty. Those that have easy access to support systems and are expected by peers or by organizational expectations progress to each new advancement much more readily.

6. Integrate programs

Fullan (1993) contends that "...the main problem in public education is not resistance to change, but the presence of too many innovations mandated or adopted uncritically and superficially on an ad hoc fragmented basis" (p. 23). To avoid a perception that each new initiative introduced is yet another passing fad, it is critical that they are introduced as a component of an integrated school development plan. Improvement must be perceived as enhancement, rather than replacement. **Staff Development in a Restructured Environment.**

There is little doubt that performance and accountability are watchwords of the nineties (Louis, 1994; Newfoundland and Labrador, 1997; Sheppard & Brown, 1996; Stoll & Fink, 1996). While governments throughout the world remain committed to performance indicators and a means of external assessment and accountability, to structural reform, and to improvements to efficiencies of their educational delivery, unfortunately, there is very little evidence to support that such changes result in substantial improvements in student learning (Cranston, 1994; Fullan, 1993; Murphy & Hallinger, 1993; Sarason, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1995).

In light of uncertainty created by reform efforts, the concept of the learning organization provides the basis of a promising theoretical framework for the development of improving schools. Louis, Kruse and Raywid (1996) contend that,

the current reform movement focuses on structural and curricular changes as the main ingredients of effective schools, but pays less attention to altering the day-to-day work of teachers. When schools are seen as learning organizations and professional communities, however, attention is focused on teachers' work as the key instrument of reform. By emphasizing needed changes in the culture of schools and the daily practice of professionals, the reform movement can concentrate on the heart of the school--the teaching and learning process. (p. 7)

Fullan (1995) contends that if we are to succeed in bringing about meaningful improvement "schools must become learning organizations" (p. 234). Handy (1995) argues that:

In an uncertain world, where all we know for sure is that nothing is sure, we are going to need organizations that are continually renewing themselves, reinventing themselves, reinvigorating themselves. These are the learning organizations, the ones with the learning habit. Without the habit of learning, they will not dream the dream, let alone have any hope of managing it. (p. 45)

The concept of the learning organization is grounded in the five" learning disciplines -- lifelong programs of study and practice" expounded by Senge (1990):

- Personal mastery -- learning to expand our personal capacity to create the results we most desire, and creating an organizational environment which encourages all its members to develop themselves toward the goals and purposes they choose.
- Mental models -- reflecting upon, continually clarifying, and improving our internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape our actions and decisions.
- Shared vision -- building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there.
- Team learning -- transforming conversational and collective thinking skills, so that groups of people can reliably develop

intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents.

- Systems thinking -- a way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding, the forces and interrelationships that shape the behaviour of systems. This discipline helps us to see how to change systems more effectively, and to act more in tune with the larger processes of the natural and economic world. (Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994, p. 6)

Empirical research (Brown & Sheppard, in press; Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1993) has convinced us that in schools as learning organizations all educators must function both as members of teams engaged in organizational learning and also as leaders of leaders. The success of such a shift in the teachers' role (from an individualistic approach to active engagement in collaborative models of leadership which will require continued learning) is dependent upon teachers assuming a professional leadership role. In such a redefined role, teachers must have a critical professional knowledge such as knowledge of child development, and multiple teaching and assessment strategies; they must also develop norms of collaboration and continuous improvement. Stoll and Fink (1996) note that "Many teachers and others say they do not want to 'be developed'. In other words they are not looking for other people to be responsible for their learning" (p. 164). In a learning organization, "ultimately everyone, supported by colleagues, is responsible for their own learning" (p. 164).

Alternative Staff Development Formats

While professional development is inherent within a learning organization, the shift in professional development formats that must occur in such an organization will represent a "paradigm shift" (Sparks, 1996). Such a shift requires that we move away from the era when professional development usually meant either a presentation by an outside consultant or a "one-shot" inservice day. Professional development will be based on "three powerful ideas that are currently altering the shape of [our] schools" (Sparks, 1994, p. 26): results-driven education, systems thinking, and constructivism. As a consequence of results-driven education, the goal of staff development must be directed at student outcomes. As educators begin to recognize the interconnectedness of all parts of the system, staff development must not be approached in a piecemeal manner. And if educators accept the constructivist assumption that knowledge is constructed in one's mind, rather than simply transmitted from one person to another, then:

Constructivist teaching will be best learned through constructivist staff development. Rather than receiving 'knowledge' from 'experts' in training sessions, teachers and administrators will collaborate with peers, researchers, and their own students to make sense of the teaching/learning process in their own contexts. (Sparks, 1994, p. 27)

Among the most important of the shifts that must occur are:

an increased focus on both organizational and individual development; staff development efforts driven by clear and coherent strategic plans; a greater focus on student needs and learning outcomes; an inquiry approach to the study of the teaching/learning process by teachers; an inclusion of both generic and content specific

pedagogical skills; and greater recognition that staff development is an essential and indispensable part of the reform process. (Sparks, 1996, p. 260)

In an extensive review of models of professional development, Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) identified five models of professional development that revealed movement towards constructivist staff development:

- *Individually-guided.* Teachers plan for and pursue activities they believe will promote their own learning.
- *Observation/assessment.* Opportunities are provided for classroom observation by a peer or other observer. This provides teachers with objective data and feedback regarding their classroom performance.
- *Involvement in A Development/improvement Process.* Teachers engage in developing curriculum, designing programs, or engaging in a school improvement process to solve general or particular problems.
- *Training.* Teachers attend sessions to acquire knowledge or skills through appropriate individual or group instruction (May be synonymous with professional development in the minds of many educators).
- *Inquiry.* Teachers identify an area of instructional interest, collect data, and make changes in their instruction based on an interpretation of those data. An example is action research.

Although the potential is there to incorporate Sparks' (1995) ideas on results-driven education and systems thinking, they are implicit and not at all emphasized. More recently, Glickman et al. (1995) identify a variety of new formats for staff development which have emerged over the last several years. Some examples follow:

- *Mentoring programs:* An experienced teacher is assigned to a novice for the purpose of providing individualized, ongoing professional support.
- *Skill-development programs:* This consists of several workshops over a period of months, and classroom coaching between workshops to assist teachers to transfer new skills to their daily teaching.
- *Teacher centers:* Teachers can meet at a central location to engage in professional dialogue, develop skills, plan innovations, and gather or create instructional materials.
- *Teacher institutes:* Teachers participate in intensive learning experiences on single, complex topics over a period of consecutive days or weeks.

- *Collegial support groups:* Teachers within the same school engage in group inquiry, address common problems, jointly implement instructional innovations, and provide mutual support.
- *Networks:* Teachers from different schools share information, concerns, and accomplishments and engage in common learning through computer links, newsletters, fax machines, and occasional seminars and conferences.
- *Teacher leadership:* Teachers participate in leadership preparation programs and assist other teachers by assuming one or more leadership roles (workshop presenter, cooperating teacher, mentor, expert coach, instructional team leader, curriculum developer). The teacher-leader not only assists other teachers but also experiences professional growth as a result of being involved in leadership activities.
- *Teacher as writer:* This increasingly popular format has teachers reflect on and write about their students, teaching, and professional growth. Such writing can be in the form of private journals, essays, or reaction papers to share with colleagues, or formal articles for publication in educational journals.
- *Individually planned staff development:* Teachers set individual goals and objectives, plan and carry out activities, and assess results.
- *Partnerships:* Partnerships between schools and universities or businesses, in which both partners are considered equal, have mutual rights and responsibilities, make contributions, and receive benefits. Such partnerships could involve one or more of the previously described formats. (p. 340)

In these formats too, the emphasis is on teachers having opportunities to learn, but there is no mention of linking professional development and student outcomes. Again, as with the earlier five models identified by Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), there is the potential for systems thinking, particularly through networks and partnerships, but the emphasis is on the use of these formats in order to provide opportunities for teachers to learn rather than on the need to integrate the parts into the whole, or to see the big picture. The concept of the school as a learning organization allows better integration of the various components of professional development and incorporates Sparks' three powerful ideas of results-driven education, systems thinking, and constructivism, noted above. The Learning Organization Project is an example of how it was developed in one school district.

One Example of Professional Development in Schools as Learning Organizations

Two researcher at the Faculty of Education, a school district, and several schools have developed a partnership in research and development and engaged in an Organizational Learning Project. The objective is to collaborate to develop the district and the schools as learning organizations and to thereby enhance the level of student learning (Sheppard & Brown, 1996a).

As part of this project, the university researchers play the role of "critical friends" and the school staffs assume a critical-reflective role which actively involves them in the research process (Lieberman, 1995, p. 3). A "critical friend" is "a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work" (Costa & Kallick, 1993). The staff provides the closeness necessary for greater depth of understanding of practice, whereas, the university researchers are more able to distance themselves in interpreting what is happening. The district and schools get the support of two critical friends who help with data collection and analysis, collaborate in change initiatives, assist in specific professional development activities, and share current theory. The faculty researchers gain access to schools and the district for research, access to data, and access to practitioners as action researchers.

In all participating schools, a leadership institute was provided for school leadership teams at the beginning of the project (Sheppard & Brown, 1996a). Following the institute, on-going support has been provided to leadership teams in each school through both a district support network and the faculty researchers. The Learning Organization Project is consistent with the conceptual framework of the learning organization. It accepts Sparks' (1996) contention that "to become learning organizations schools must engage in organizational development activities...based on continual data collection, analysis, and feedback, focusing on the development of groups and individuals to improve group functioning" (p. 262). Schools who are participating in the project must therefore engage in action research which requires ongoing research on student outcomes, school culture, leadership, professional learning, and classroom practices. In this action research process, they gather and use new information to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate in a continuous learning cycle. Additionally, to assist in the implementation and evaluation components of the cycle, all school are provided with a problem-solving implementation tool, in the form of a district framework for implementation, based on current principles of change theory (Sheppard & Brown, 1996b).

How is this different than past efforts?

The Learning Organization Project builds on the strengths within the district, particularly the work begun in school improvement and the expertise in the district office. However, it is a different model for professional development in that it:

- recognizes that implementation is a process that occurs at the school level and requires on going support for teachers and administrators;
- engages professionals in both theory application and theory building at the same time -- teachers and administrators construct new meaning;
- focuses on classroom issues and challenges traditional approaches to teaching and learning;
- is driven by research and particularly student outcomes;

- recognizes that training is but one component of professional development;
- represents a global, comprehensive approach to professional development that requires new images of leadership and school organization -- team leadership and professional learning;
- provides a role for "insiders" and "outsiders" that is understood by all and which facilitates systems thinking;
- requires that teacher and principal supervision practices be tied to professional development in a meaningful way.

Results of the Learning Organization Project

After only one year in one school, a comprehensive analysis (teacher surveys, observations and interviews) of this approach to school growth and professional development revealed remarkable success relative to both teacher growth and changes in the classroom practices (Sheppard & Brown, 1996b). This rural Newfoundland high school had been engaged in school improvement initiatives for a number of years, but had witnessed a steady decline: Student attitudes toward school were generally poor, enrolment in advanced classes were quite low, mathematics scores were lower than the provincial average, student behavior was problematic, and classroom practices were primarily large-group and teacher-directed. The following comment by one teacher is indicative of the professional growth that occurred in the school after adopting the new approach:

It has led to the professional growth of the staff; it has created an air of excitement that did not previously exist ... it has brought about collaboration among staff members; it has ensured a more concrete connection between the school and district office; and has given a focus to professional development efforts. (p. 5)

Another comment reveals the changes in classroom practices that are occurring within the context of this emerging model:

I find it quite difficult to put a percentage on the number of teachers using cooperative learning, but what I can tell you is that there is enough use to make me feel uncomfortable about my limited amount of use. It is forcing me to get serious about cooperative learning as a practice that can improve my teaching. (p. 4)

Similar findings were revealed in another study (MacDonald, 1997) of an urban elementary school with a staff of 24 teachers, most of whom were mid-career and beyond. Like the school described above, this school had been engaged in school improvement within a learning organization framework for a period of one year. Results of this study revealed that it led to renewed staff emphasis on seeking a better education for all students through teacher leadership and collaborative decision-making. One teacher commented that the new approach contributed to readiness for innovation:

You have to always be looking for ways to improve yourself and be ready for any new programs, technologies, and ideas. This process

readies the school by looking for new ideas, getting parent and student input to provide the best school environment. (p. 68)

Another stated that efforts at the development of a learning organization in the school led to improved teacher efficacy:

I feel the leadership team has made a big difference. Being on the team made me feel that I was truly a part of hashing out what we were going to do and deciding if it was worthwhile to take back to everyone. I really felt that I was a big part of the staff this year, more so than before. Everything has become better this year, even our discipline. We are all more in consensus than previously. We tried to let everyone in on everything before, but we have really made a conscious effort this year. (p. 69)

In respect to decision-making, a mid-career teacher that had spent most of her career in this school noted a dramatic change:

Our principal brought her personal experiences to her role but over the year this position, I think, has changed dramatically. Now there is less authoritarianism and less decision-making centred in the office.... (p. 71)

Findings from a district wide study conducted at the end of the second year of the learning organization project revealed that the new model of professional development provided the methods and tools that facilitated the exploration of new ideas (Sheppard & Brown, 1996a). These new ideas resulted in changes in the traditional structures, and over time began to change aspirations, skills and capabilities, attitudes, and beliefs. These changes illustrate the claim of Senge et al. (1994) that such "surface movements" lead to change that really matters.

Finally, in addition to the findings reported above that support this as a viable model of professional growth in schools and school districts, results reveal that the following must be considered if this model is to be most effective:

- School Team leadership appears to work best when the principal is recognized as a significant source of leadership as well.
- Leadership is often perceived as administration. If professional development is to occur from a constructivist perspective, it is essential that new images of leadership be developed throughout all levels of the system.
- A desire on the part of senior administrators to shift from an "expert" model to a "constructivist" model of professional development is not readily accepted and may be viewed with some suspicion by other educators throughout the system.
- Institutes directed at team leadership training must include the presentation of methods and tools that assist in the application of theory and must allow practice time in their use.

- On-going support and follow-up with high expectations for change in professional development approaches are essential.
- Administrative structures which limit teacher flexibility, and inhibit collaboration and team planning can be major obstacles to the development of newer models of professional development that are consistent with the continuous learning cycle of a learning organization.
- Student outcomes must drive the entire process.

Conclusion

If educators are to accept the lessons related to professional development presented herein, they must be committed to both individual and organizational learning. While it is clear that individuals can learn without any contribution from the organization, it is also apparent that learning can be helped or hindered by the organization. Additionally, because schools are human endeavours, it makes intuitive sense that organizational learning will not occur unless individuals are learning. This interactive model of learning in which individuals and the organization are interdependent requires a new constructivist approach to professional development that has its foundation in research and theory. Also, it requires systems thinking and a focus on student outcomes. Our current mental images of professional development must be challenged, and new images must be constructed in order for our schools to become centres of continuous learning that will serve our students in the new millennium.

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NOTES

1. The headings are direct quotations from Fullan's "Eight Basic Lessons of the New Paradigm of Change" (pp. 21-40). The descriptions are extracts from and summaries of the main ideas.
2. The headings are taken directly from Guskey, 1994, pp. 44-46, but the discussion summarizes the main ideas of Guskey, and integrates ideas from Fullan (1993) and Stoll & Fink (1996).

**THE REFLECTIVE AND CRITICAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
(RCIP MODEL) AND THE QUAD RELATIONSHIP**

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Winter 1998**

The general purpose of this paper is to underscore the need for reflective and critical internship programs in teacher education. To this end, the underlying premise of the Reflective and Critical Internship Program (Doyle, Kennedy, Ludlow, Rose & Singh, 1994) is described briefly, and each of the four main components of the internship experience (intern, cooperating teacher, university supervisor and context) is examined in light of its unique role in, and contribution to, a reflective and critical internship experience. As part of this examination, I raise a number of issues regarding the very complex relationships that exist between these individual components, and propose that this Quad Relationship (Rose, 1997) is a critical feature of a reflective internship program. In this regard, many basic issues and practices surrounding the development, administration, and evaluation of internship programs, might be clarified by first examining the fundamental nature of each of the individual components of the Quad, and then exploring the many and varied interactions that occur between them. As a starting point in this process, it is my intention in this paper to raise questions surrounding the general development and delivery of an internship program that strives to be comprehensive, meaningful and effective for all participants and stakeholders.

In putting together this paper, I have drawn upon research undertaken by a research group established in the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, a number of years ago. Both as a member of this group, and as a Faculty member still actively involved in working with music education interns, cooperating teachers and supervisors, I am reminded continuously of the exciting possibilities that the internship program holds as it is identified as being the most important experience of the teacher education program (Doyle et. al, 1994).

It has been the belief of our research group that, in order for teachers to be productive and transformative in their practice, they need to have developed a critical pedagogy (Doyle, 1993; Giroux, 1989; McLaren, 1989; Weiler, 1988; Kirk, 1986; Apple, 1982b). Such a pedagogy stems from a social and cultural consciousness that encourages both self and social knowledge, political awareness, educational relevance and productivity. It is our belief such a consciousness requires reflection, analysis and critique.

One of the most important facets of teacher preparation has to do with the development of both personal and professional knowledge. This includes awareness as to how individuals, e.g., interns and their students, fit into a super-structure of educational, political, cultural and social ideals. A basic premise of our work with interns is that the development of such awareness stems from the process of reflection and continuous critical examination of the various components of education, culture and society (Rose, 1994).

We have found that an excellent opportunity to nurture the process of critical reflection in teacher preparation exists within the internship program (Doyle, Kennedy, Ludlow, Rose and Singh, 1994). The internship experience can serve as an important step toward the bridging of theory and practice, the formation of teacher identity and the

development of social and cultural consciousness. It is our contention that such a step is vital to the ongoing development of a critical pedagogy.

At the heart of the internship experience is the intern. This particular experience represents a crucial and transitional time for interns in that they are juggling many pieces of a very complex whole. They are asking questions and seeking answers, testing theory, discovering rules, expectations, traditions and beliefs, developing new values and meanings, searching for roles and identity, and attempting to build a practice that is relevant and meaningful for them and their students. Given the complexity of this experience for the interns, our research group identified a need for, and ultimately felt a responsibility to develop, a context for the internship experience that not only allowed for but also nurtured the process of acquiring personal and professional knowledge and skills toward the development of a critical pedagogy. Our overall goal was to facilitate and nurture interns' personal and professional growth primarily through the enhancement of both self and social understanding. Through structured and pedagogically devised sessions involving dialogue, sharing, examining, viewing, questioning and analyzing, the interns, as well as all the other 'players' involved in the Internship Program, e.g., cooperating teachers, supervisors and administrators, were actively engaged in the process of reflection and analysis. We felt that this process provided the framework for a comprehensive 'program' for interns that was supportive and facilitative, yet challenging in nature and design. The need for such a dialectical process in the development of reflective and critical practice is pointed out by Kemmis (1985). He states, "Reflection is an action-oriented process and a dialectical process... it looks inward at our thoughts and processes and outwards at the situation in which we find ourselves... it is a social process, not a purely individual process in that ideas stem from a socially constructed world of meanings" (p. 145).

The Reflective and Critical Internship Model (RCIP)

The primary outcome of our research to date has been the development of the Reflective and Critical Internship Model (Doyle et al., 1994: 10-15). Building on the work of Smyth (1987, 1989) and others, the basic framework of this model includes five pedagogical categories, or forms of action, through which pre-service teachers travel in their construction of knowledge, skills, identities, beliefs, values and practices. Specifically, these categories provide a lens and a means through which teacher educators and students can examine the development of teacher thinking within a broad context of educational, socio-cultural and political ideals and practices.

These five pedagogical categories or forms of action are:

- *Describing/contextualizing*, e.g., what is the context, case, situation, orientations and realities of a particular practice? These questions include the elements of who, what, when, where, and how.
- *Bringing and recognizing cultural capital* (Bourdieu, 1977), e.g., what do the various partners bring to, and ultimately come to value throughout the internship program? What theories, ideologies, practices, prejudices and taken-for-granted realities are brought to the process of teacher professionalization?

- *Engaging in communication*, e.g., what are the various forms of engagement involved in the internship process? How do we recognize different voices, communicate effectively with self and others, and reflect on the political and social nature of schooling?
- *Problematizing dominant practices and discourses* (Phelan and McLaughlin, 1992), e.g., is there a willingness and ability to ask questions, entertain doubts, be disturbed about teaching and learning worlds and the discourses that pervade them? How do we create a process of meaning-making in which teachers infuse dominant discourses with their own purposes and intentions?
- *Functioning as transformative intellectuals and cultural workers* (Giroux, 1988, 1992), e.g., how might we transform our practice in a fashion that marks a real difference between being an educator and a trainer? How do we come to view pedagogy as a form of cultural production, as opposed to basic transmission of information and skills? Do we encourage interns to examine the relationships between schooling, pedagogy, cultural practices and social power? Do we strive for a language and a practice of possibility and change?

The Quad Relationship

It is within the context of the RCIP Model, briefly described above, that I now discuss the underlying issues that comprise the Quad relationship in the internship program. The interconnected and interdependent relationship(s) between the intern, cooperating teacher, intern supervisor and local context are at the heart of an internship experience grounded in critical pedagogy. These four 'players' are in constant engagement and interaction. The success of the individual internship experience, in its design, development and facilitation, is very much dependent on the nature and quality of the interactions between each player in the Quad relationship. It is when the intentions and actions of these players are fused in conscious, well planned and organized ways, that the potential for a reflective and critical internship experience may be realized.

As a starting point in understanding the complexities of the Quad relationship, I have outlined some of the primary roles and/or issues surrounding each player in a reflective and critical internship program. These roles/issues stem from the needs of the RCIP Model as it may evolve into practice:

The **INTERN** is:

- exploring, observing, examining and critically analyzing teaching practice
- searching for, and attempting to establish, a professional role and identity
- seeking to work safely and effectively within inherited spaces and practices merging personal and professional philosophies and theories with practice (toward praxis)
- developing skills in fundamentals of teaching (communication, classroom management, methodologies, evaluation...)
- attempting to operate 'successfully' within a very complex environment of expectations, traditions, values and beliefs (often involving conflict and contestation)
- making connections between, and developing understandings of, teaching and learning
- recognizing the influence of past experiences and knowledge on current practice
- learning to value the cultural capital of self and others
- striving for success and excellence (e.g., evaluation/recommendations).

The **COOPERATING TEACHER** is:

- providing a context and setting for the internship experience
- demonstrating expertise in teaching (i.e., knowledge and skill)
- facilitating hands-on teaching experiences for the intern
- nurturing the intern's development of professional practice
- providing consistent feedback and general support for the intern's developing skills and understandings
- encouraging and assisting the development of reflection-in-action (e.g., cycle of observation-reflection-action; turning awareness into action)
- encouraging the intern to incorporate own ideas and experiences into the teaching experience (e.g., experimentation, trial and error)
- raising critical questions and challenges about issues and practices inherent in the teaching/learning process (i.e., to aid in the development of critical thinkers and doers)
- assisting the intern in his/her development of understandings about the schooling process (e.g., culture of school, teacher-student relationships, connections to parents and the community, political considerations, economic realities...).

The **INTERN SUPERVISOR** (university-affiliated) is:

- operating as the main link to the University (Faculty of Education)
- guiding both the intern and cooperating teacher through the various process-related and administrative details of the internship program
- working with both the school and university to provide a supportive, safe and meaningful environment for the intern

- assisting the intern in his/her connecting of current teaching experiences with existing knowledge in various educational, social, cultural, political theories and paradigms
- providing safe spaces/sites for the intern, through pre- and post-conferencing and reflective group seminars, to work through and 'make sense of' issues, practices and experiences as they arise
- facilitating opportunities for quality interaction between the cooperating teacher, intern and supervisor (i.e., planning, goal-setting, ongoing evaluation, analysis...)
- nurturing and guiding the intern in his/her formation of teacher identity and professional practice
- providing consistent, appropriate and relevant feedback to the intern regarding teaching experiences throughout the semester (e.g., relating to current issues and practices of a particular subject matter and/or context)
- engaging the intern in critical and reflective analysis (e.g., raising critical questions and challenges about ideologies, belief systems and practices; helping the intern to locate his/her work within both subjective and objective frameworks).

The **CONTEXT** considerations are:

- nature of the site (e.g., rural/urban; large/small)
- history and traditions relating to the context (e.g., values, beliefs, expectations...)
- individual and collective personalities/cultures existing within the context
- the philosophies, concepts, skills, practices, beliefs, traditions and value systems associated with the particular subject area
- the interconnectedness of subject matter with the teaching and learning process (i.e., philosophies, pedagogies, methodologies...)
- the context and setting in which the subject matter is being experienced (e.g., social studies classroom, music/mini/multimedia/computer workstation, biology lab, choral rehearsal)
- the expertise required of all participants (intern, cooperating teacher and supervisor) in the subject matter, in order to provide the most comprehensive, relevant and meaningful internship experience
- all that influences what teachers and learners do within the discipline or subject matter (e.g., constraints, perceptions, expectations, traditions... that may be peculiar to the subject matter and context).

Implementing the RCIP Model: Guiding Principles

Having identified the main components of the Quad relationship, I will now highlight briefly some guiding principles that underpin the fundamental nature of the RCIP model.

- The importance of the development of a partnership model involving the university, school districts and individual school communities. The partnership model must have as its foundation the realization of, and commitment to, the internship experience as an integral component of teacher education.
- The recognition and need for establishing a partnership program that has as its basis the development of critical, reflective and intelligent practitioners. Such a program would recognize and value the internship experience as more than an apprenticeship program.
- The recognition of the intern as the central figure in the delivery of the internship program. A relevant, meaningful and pedagogically sound internship experience needs to be designed and implemented for each intern.
- The need for expertise in each 'quadrant' of the internship experience - intern, cooperating teacher, intern supervisor, and context. Expertise in this instance would be characterized for example by such elements as appropriate intern preparation and background (intern), identified excellence in teaching and subject area competence (cooperating teacher), appropriate academic preparation regarding the nature of the internship experience (intern supervisor) and, appropriate school/community placement (context).
- The need for the development of a 'system' of partnerships that recognizes and values the contribution of each participant to the success of the internship program. Such a system would require regular consultation, communication, interaction and program evaluation.
- The recognition of the important role of, and need for, ongoing research at the core of the internship experience (e.g., classroom pedagogy, the pedagogy of supervision, the nature and development of teacher thinking and practice...).
- The need for an efficient and effective administrative component in the Faculty of Education that would serve primarily to support the academic and pedagogical nature of the internship program.
- The need for ongoing professional development for cooperating teachers, intern supervisors and administrators involved with the internship program. The establishment of a standard of academic, pedagogical and administrative excellence would provide the foundation and rationale for the establishment of an

agenda for professional development designed to meet the needs of a reflective and critical internship program.

- The need for a renewed commitment to excellence in education, and particularly to teacher preparation.

Summary

Underlying the RCIP Model and Quad relationship are some very important questions about issues such as personnel, expertise, administration and program evaluation that need to be explored and analyzed by all parties involved in the internship program. Some of the questions I pose here will serve to stimulate this process as we strive continually to refine and improve current internship programs. As we realize, some of these questions may not be new, but they do represent the complex issues surrounding the development of an internship program that is grounded in critical pedagogy.

- Who is the intern? What are his/her particular needs and interests?
- Who are the cooperating teachers?
- Who are the intern supervisors?
- How is the expertise of all 'players' identified? How, and by whom, are cooperating teachers and supervisors selected/appointed for their role in the internship program?
- Is there consistency in the delivery of the internship program between urban/rural, small/large school contexts?
- What is an appropriate system for intern placement? (e.g., how are issues relating to expertise and appropriate context accounted for in placement procedures?)
- What is the role(s) of the Faculty of Education? How might the university contribute to professional development programs, research, university-based supervision when possible and/or appropriate, and the overall administration of the internship program? How might an appropriate balance be struck between academic and administrative needs and agendas?
- What is the role of school districts as they partner with the university to provide appropriate and excellent internship experiences for interns and their supervisors.
- How should we deal with the complex issue of intern evaluation in a manner that is fair, consistent and meaningful?
- What are the needs of each partner in the internship program? For example, is the intern matched with a cooperating teacher who has identified expertise? Is supervision occurring on a regular basis? Is there a clear understanding about the pedagogy of supervision? How are workload concerns addressed for both cooperating teachers and intern supervisors?
- Are cooperating teachers and intern supervisors provided adequate time in their general workload allocations, as well as adequate resources, to meet the needs of the internship program generally, and the individual intern specifically?
- Is there a system in place that provides for ongoing professional interaction between all key players in the internship program? Is

there time devoted to professional development in the form of seminars and workshops that focus on the various aspects of the internship experience?

- Is it possible to establish a formalized system within the teacher education program that addresses the issues and questions raised above? Such a system would include for example, provisions for a) the selection of cooperating teachers and supervisors, b) the formation of appropriate partnership connections involving 'official' affiliations, and designations, c) the recognition of excellence within the educational system as it relates to the internship program, d) the development of connections between the internship program, teacher certification, and general professional development plans and policies within professional teacher organizations (e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association).

Conclusion and Implications

The internship program plays an integral part in teacher preparation. The Reflective and Critical Internship Program can provide an effective site for the nurturing of aspiring educators, as well as for the continued nurturing of many individuals who are already involved in the educational system. The overall goal of the RCIP is the creation of teacher education programs generally, and internship programs specifically, that are focussed on, and engaged in, the development of conscious, knowing, and active participants in the educational process. A critical form of this engagement involves reflection, analysis and critique. A process of engagement that is structured to encourage and facilitate such activities can be a very powerful means toward individual and collective empowerment, leading ultimately to change and transformation.

It is my hope that by exploring the RCIP Model, in conjunction with the Quad Relationship, that we will be encouraged to address, with some urgency, some of the issues and questions raised in this paper. As mentioned earlier, some of these issues are new, others have been with us for awhile. Ultimately, I hope to challenge all participants and stakeholders in teacher education to work toward the continuing development and delivery of internship programs that are characterized by intellectualism, creativity, open-mindedness, flexibility, responsibility and systematic reflection, analysis and evaluation.

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PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION: THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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All educators, at one point in time, were required to complete a student teaching and/or internship program. In previous years, students attempting to complete internships in the rural areas of Newfoundland would be supervised by a member of the Faculty of Education. Unfortunately, the distance between the University and the individual schools created problems with the frequency of supervision. Not wanting to deny students the opportunity to have experience with the smaller school and/or teaching closer to home, the Faculty of Education at Memorial University proposed that supervision of the interns be the responsibility of the cooperating teacher(s) and the school board officials in the district where the intern was placed.

In October of the 1997-1998 school year, cooperating teachers, school board officials, past supervisors and interns came together with members of the Faculty of Education to discuss the Reflective and Critical Internship Program. It was an attempt to define the roles and expectations of the partners more succinctly as well as to make suggestions for the future.

The present internship program is based upon a "quad" model. There are four major partners in the model: the intern, the cooperating teacher, the internship supervisor, and the subject matter. There was some indication during the institute that students should be included in the partnership because they can influence or be influenced by the intern. For the internship to be successful for everyone involved, all partners must work together as a cohesive unit. In this article, I will be focusing on the suggestions that were proposed for the partners in the internship program.

1. Choosing the Cooperating Teacher

The first step in any internship program is to choose the cooperating teacher. This is affected, of course, by the area of training for the intern. It was agreed that the cooperating teacher should have at least 5 years teaching experience, have a positive attitude towards teaching, be devoted to the job and to the students, and perform other duties such as extracurricular activities. Generally, the best person would be one who could contribute to the overall experience of the intern, not one who would take advantage of having "someone to do the work." The cooperating teacher should see the intern as someone who can contribute to his/her knowledge of new teaching methods, current curriculum information, and variety in the classroom. The two should exist as a cooperative unit where team teaching can take place, but also individual teaching on the part of the intern. It is important to realize that the internship is an opportunity for a new teacher to explore teaching methods to determine which one(s) work for him/her, not to emulate or copy another person.

In many schools it may be possible for the intern to have more than one cooperating teacher. It was believed that the intern would benefit greatly from such a situation because he/she would be exposed to different teaching styles, perhaps other courses in his/her field or possibly other fields, as well as different types of student personalities and learning styles. This situation can also help the cooperating teacher(s)

as well. It is very difficult to grade a person who has been team teaching with you on a daily basis. A panel of cooperating teachers makes that task less intimidating.

2. Timing of the Internship Program

The interns who participated in the institute believe that September would be a better time to begin their teaching experience. Currently, internships begin in January and are completed in April. The intern then has to complete another semester before he/she can graduate. The interns at the institute stated that this prevented them from applying for some jobs. It would also be easier for the intern to come into the school at the beginning of the school year rather than the end because there is a disruption in the students daily routines and it may be easier for the intern to integrate into the school community.

3. Cost of the Internship

The cost of the internship to education students is a major concern. Many students want to experience teaching in the larger schools in larger communities away from home or they may have to leave their community because of a lack of opportunity to teach in the area. Therefore, the cost of the internship increases for these students when the cost of tuition, travel, accommodations and living expenses are taken into account. It has been a longstanding argument that the internship should be considered a work term as it is in the Engineering and Business faculties. However, there is opposition to that suggestion. One idea proposed at the institute in October was to require the intern to pay for only one course/credit. This would substantially reduce the financial burden of the intern, especially when you consider that they are actually WORKING as well as learning during their internship.

4. Role of the School Board, Administration and Cooperating Teacher Prior to the Start of the Internship

Prior to the start of the internship, the school board should meet with the administrators involved and the cooperating teacher(s) to devise an information package for the intern. This package should include details concerning such matters as who will be evaluating and the dates for the evaluations, when videotaping of lessons taught will be done, the dates for submissions of daily journals and units of work, the dates the intern will be spending with resource and specialty teachers, and the amount of teaching the intern should be accomplishing at each stage in the internship. Not only will this help the intern, but it will also help the cooperating teacher(s).

5. Role of the Intern Prior to the Start of the Internship

It was also suggested that opportunities for the intern to meet the school board officials, administration and the cooperating teacher(s) of their assigned school be made the week before the program begins. At this time the information package should be provided to the intern as well as any information regarding the courses the intern will be teaching, school policies, discipline codes, extracurricular activities, etc. In many schools teachers receive such packages at the start of the school year; therefore, the intern, who will be a staff member for a number of months, should also receive this package.

6. Interview of Intern on Completion of the Internship

The school board, it was suggested, could enhance the experience of the intern further by conducting a mock job interview for the interns placed in their schools at the end of the internship. The interns would apply for the job(s) and receive an interview. This process is a very important one for any person leaving school to enter the job market. The intern can get help with job applications and resumes, preparation for interviews, and the types of questions to expect during an interview. After the interview, the interviewer should discuss the results with the intern, pointing out positive aspects of the interview as well as aspects that the intern should improve on. If there are problems, the intern can "fix" them before he/she has to apply for jobs in the real world.

7. Grading Suggestions

One problem that exists with the internship at the moment is the fact that a mark has to be given to the intern by the cooperating teacher (and any others involved). There are many negatives associated with this. For instance, interns may not want to criticize the person who will be contributing to their mark; therefore, they may not ask questions of their cooperating teacher or they may not explore alternative teaching methods. This will also influence their journal entries where they are supposed to be reflecting critically on what they have done and seen because they know that the cooperating teacher has to read it. Another problem with grading is the pressure that interns place upon themselves relative to their performance. Any intern will tell you they feel that they have to receive at least an 80% in the internship to be competitive in the job market. Unfortunately, an 80% for one individual may not be equal to the 80% received by another. Two alternative grading schemes were proposed. One alternative would see either a pass or fail given to intern, the other would assign letter grades. The interns involved in the discussions suggested that they would have been satisfied with the pass or fail alternative. Personally, I believe a letter grade would cause some of the same problems as did the number grade; therefore, a grade of pass or fail would be acceptable. However, there are pros and cons associated with each alternative and competition relative to performance will still occur. The only way to avoid variations in the way different supervisors and cooperating teachers grade interns is by having in-service sessions conducted by the Faculty of Education explaining what is to be expected and what constitutes certain grades, that is, a checklist of sorts. Consistency is the buzzword in education today and we must learn to be consistent with the marks given to our interns if they are to remain one of the ways employers will distinguish between exceptional and good teachers. Letters of recommendation completed by the cooperating teacher and supervisor should also help identify the strengths and weaknesses of new teachers in relation to job performance.

8. Acknowledgment of the Partners

Upon completion of the internship, the contribution of all partners must be acknowledged. There were several suggestions made by the group as to the appropriate reward that would show the value of the contributions made by each person. There is a monetary stipend given to the school boards for each intern in the district. It is up to the discretion of the school board how that money is divided. Some boards give money to both the intern and the cooperating teacher; some boards do not give anything. For any program to be effective there has to be consistency among boards as to the monetary rewarding of those involved with the program. Cooperating teachers and interns who discover that someone else received money when they didn't may not feel valued.

Instead of making monetary rewards, the University can offer the cooperating teacher (and the intern) a free course. Teachers are constantly upgrading their education to keep up with the changing dimensions of the education field. If one of the purposes of the internship program is to bring new teaching methods to individuals already in the field, then it would make sense to reward their efforts with an opportunity to keep learning and improving in their chosen career. This appears to be a solution that would benefit all parties involved. At the very least, a letter should be sent to the intern, cooperating teacher(s), and supervisors thanking them for their contributions.

Conclusions

It is obvious that the internship is a very valuable experience for any new teacher. The experiences of that internship can be negative or they can be positive. If all the partners involved in the program collectively work together to ensure that there are positive results from the internship, then the new teachers graduating from Memorial University may feel as if they are adequately prepared for their chosen career. They must be given the opportunity to explore their own personalities and teaching styles or they will not be able to bring any individualism to a school staff. They must feel that what they are doing actually is contributing to the staff and to the students of that school. It must be disappointing when the intern walks away from his/her learning experience feeling jaded about the teaching profession. Therefore, the key to any successful partnership is, of course, communication. If the partners do not communicate effectively with one another the intern may feel that he/she did not learn anything or did not contribute anything. Some of the suggestions put forth in this article address the issue of communication and collaboration among all the partners.

We must ask ourselves, "What should the intern learn from the internship?" and "What did he/she learn?" If the two questions have different answers then we did not correctly do our job. If the purpose of the internship is to promote reflection about actions and consequences in the intern, we must all accomplish this same task. In effect, isn't it a reflection on us, the partners, if the intern's experience is negative?

**THE PRINCIPLES OF THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND
THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

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Winter 1998**

Introduction

The principles of the collaborative partnership between school districts and the Faculty of Education were discussed. The following principles were reaffirmed:

- the partners share in the responsibility of the preparation of teachers through the internship program;
- the University serves in a number of functions, e.g., placement, liaison, research;
- the school district collaborates in placements and monitors the overall delivery of the internship in its district;
- the school district has responsibility for the selection of cooperating teachers and supervisors.

One of the goals of the two-day session was to focus on the cooperating teachers' role and provide direction for future professionalization of cooperating teachers in all provincial school districts relative to their work with interns. The following were advanced:

Attributes/Qualifications

- Has completed 3-5 years of successful teaching;
- Demonstrates excellence in teaching;
- Demonstrates interest in continuing education and professional development;
- Has indicated interest in the professional development of student interns;
- Is committed to the principles, roles and responsibilities of the internship.

Responsibilities

- Preparing students to accept the intern as a professional colleague and not as another student or an aide;
- Establishing good working relationships as early as possible, introducing the intern to other school personnel and clarifying their roles;
- Helping and encouraging the intern to explore school records, test materials, teacher resources, and special services, and to ask questions about the students, the school, and the community;

- Presenting to the intern an outline of the long-range goals and the organization of the grade or course;
- Demonstrating good teaching and helping the intern to analyze and understand why it is good teaching;
- Assisting the intern in the critical-reflective analysis of the relationship between theory and practice with the intent of improving practice;
- Facilitating the development of independence of the intern by taking an inconspicuous position in the room while the intern is in charge;
- Conferring with the supervisor regarding the intern's progress; and
- Preparing reports of the intern's progress and discussing these reports with the intern.

The supervisor, along with the cooperating teacher, is responsible for summative evaluation of the intern. Supervisors should ensure that interns are given the opportunity and time to reflect on their teaching practice. This can be done in collaboration with the University district liaison person.

Supervisory responsibilities are essential to the internship. The University and school districts will continue to dialogue on this critical aspect of the internship in the upcoming year.

REFLECTING ON WHAT WAS BEING REFLECTED

Cindy May-Follett
Winter 1998

Looking back on what was reflected in the Internship Workshop in September of 1997, I can now see a different reflection than what came to me at the time. Sometimes we educate teachers to work in the ideal situation. The "What ifs..." are discussed to pieces but do not always become a reality for most teachers until they are on their own.

What type of work force are we preparing our interns for? Let's consider for a moment the number of graduates from the Faculty of Education. Based on that number let's answer three questions out of a possible hundred:

- How many of these graduates wish to move into the teaching profession?
- How many get permanent positions in their chosen field?
- How many become substitute teachers?

I fear that, out of those who wish to continue in their field, a large number become substitutes. Some have the success of moving into a permanent position immediately, but they are few.

In view of this situation, should we be preparing our interns to be substitute teachers first? I am not trying to be negative but to be realistic. Substituting and being in a permanent position are two different jobs. Permanent teachers know their classes. They know what happened yesterday, where they are today and what to expect for tomorrow. Substitutions would mean stepping into someone's domain for one day. Keeping in mind the importance of delivering the best education possible, in line with our philosophy of education, the substitute could be given an ideal prepared plan for the day or as little as a blank sheet. When a teacher walks into a class, whether it is someone else's or his/her own, a plan may not always work out. They must be prepared for setbacks and build on the positive experiences.

I recommend to the interns that, just as doctors on house calls are prepared with a doctor's bag, they, too, should have a teacher's bag. When packing, they should think of being a substitute first; then, if they later find themselves in a permanent position, they should use it to help themselves and their classes grow. They should never count on someone else to be prepared for them. They should prepare themselves to be their own particular kind of teacher and use the rest as a gift.

The following are a few ideas for a teaching bag:

- Letters from a scrabble game (language can be so much fun in large or small groups).
- A list of large words in which one can derive smaller words.
- A Knock...Knock book.
- Two packs of playing cards (lots of Math and Science already built in).
- A few hit CD's.
- "The Important Book" by Margaret Wise Brown (ideal for Health, Religion, Social Studies or Art at any grade level).

- Space for more things.

As Educators, we should reflect not only on teaching itself, but on the types of teaching we are preparing our interns for. In completing an internship program, substituting should be a major part of the course requirements.

REFLECTIONS ON AN INTERNSHIP
(From the point of view of a cooperating teacher)

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Winter 1998

One of the never-ending truths in teaching is that "**nothing** is never-changing." Indeed as I look back on the occasions that I have had to "play" this role, and as I prepare for the third time to take on this challenge, I find myself once again reflecting on the truth of this phrase.

For what is teaching but the constant quest for a new approach, a better, more relevant way to present material, to encourage students to find out the truths of life for themselves? How many times have we thought ourselves all prepared for the year ahead because we have been given no new courses only to find that in reality we have more work instead of less, since each year we must "revise and edit" what we accomplished the year before? These statements also apply to the cooperating teacher who tries to guide the intern through his or her thirteen weeks in the school setting while, all at the same time, must juggle other expectations - those of their students and their parents, their school administration, and, of course, their own. All this must be accomplished while trying to ensure that the intern gains "some idea" of the "job." I use the expression "some idea" purposely. After thirteen years as a classroom teacher, I am still not sure that I have a total comprehension of the intricacies of the "job." Education is constantly evolving, the skills required by both students and teachers always changing, the students we teach never exactly the same as the year before. As we ourselves struggle to cope with these changes, we must at the same time anticipate what to pass on to our interns.

They say that "doing is learning," and for that reason the internship, or better-expressed, *practice teaching*, is all-important. Nothing in the preceding five years of university course work can possibly totally prepare an intern or new teacher for the realities of the classroom. As a cooperating teacher, this presents a dilemma. There are certain pieces of information vital to the interns success, knowledge that will be needed as of the interns first lesson taught, as of his or her first interactions with students. Since in teaching, *doing* is learning, how can this information be imparted or its possession verified **before** the interns put themselves in front of thirty students ready to examine and test their every word, movement, glance, decision?

This is what makes the internship unique. An accountant knows his/her accounting skills, a dentist masters his/her dental care procedures. In the case of the apprehensive intern, however, (of whom a *lack* of apprehension would illustrate exactly my point - that no amount of book learning can actually illustrate or explain to a prospective teacher the *extent* of what (s)he is about to face), there are so many secondary factors which can negatively influence his or her even getting the *chance* to pass along the accumulated knowledge of twenty-plus years of living, so many factors which can effectively destroy *any* plan that any teacher (not just the intern) may have for a particular learning session.

For these reasons, a cooperating teacher must "tread softly," must ease the intern into this all-important exercise. An enjoyable internship experience can make all the difference between an intern ready to take on the challenges of his/her own classroom, or one who questions if (s)he is even cut out for the career into which (s)he

has already invested so much time and money. It is through discussion and reflection regarding everything the intern observes and experiences, from the seemingly unimportant details such as who sits where or whether students should be allowed to go to the washroom to the seemingly more important, such as curriculum and teaching and questioning techniques, that the intern will grow to be ready to face the challenges ahead. No incident is too minor to be insignificant.

I must mention what I believe to be one of the most important lessons of the internship - the realization on the part of the intern that the school experience will not teach her everything there is to know, will not show her everything there is to see. An internship is, in large part, an unrealistic experience. Never again during her career will the young teacher have someone to "hold her hand," someone to have already established classroom and behavioral expectations with the students, someone to help her to prepare each and every lesson plan, someone to help her manage her classroom merely by his or her authoritative presence. What must be gained through the practice teaching is the ability to "roll with the punches," and the realization that he or she has chosen a rewarding career, but one in which there is **nothing** that is "never-changing."

REFLECTING ON TEACHING

Wayne Williams
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Winter 1998

What am I doing? Why am I doing it?
Are there other ways of doing it?
Simple questions but where are the answers?
Will the art of reflection provide insights?

When a teacher engages in reflection...
She interrogates herself, questions her everyday practices;
She quarrels with her beliefs and her views;
She re-evaluates her instructional methodologies;
And boldly, courageously, redefines her philosophical paradigms!

She poses questions...she embarks on a quest for solutions.

Who creates the curriculum?

Curriculum committees, bureaucrats and educators?
Institutionalized knowledge experts? Textbook publishers?
Teachers, parents, all who search for truth?
Students seeking to construct personal knowledge?

Which statements are true? Which are false?

All teaching is intrinsically political?
Schooling is unnatural?
True learning evolves from motivation?
Educational labels become reality?

Who occupies my classroom?

Unmannerly children who need to learn the value of discipline?
Empty vessels who require knowledge?
Curious learners with their own opinions and perspectives?
Fellow learners seeking to build their version of the world?

Why can't Adam read?

Does he see the same print I see?
What transaction is taking place between Adam and the text?
How is he responding internally to the print?
Is the experience a meaningful one for Adam?

Writing - what is it?

A boring, onerous, communications task?
A time consuming, recording procedure?
A method of clarifying ones representation of the world?
Thinking on paper, a unique form of learning?

What is mathematics?

A set of numeracy skills essential to modern life?
 Boring, repetitive exercises - the domain of the calculator?
 A logical, reasoned approach to problem solving?
 An exciting, creative way to explore and make sense of the world?

What is testing?

An evaluative procedure to assess student progress?
 A public relations scam to congratulate the educational system?
 An accountability tool to ensure teachers do their jobs?
 A discipline tool to keep students in line?

Perplexing questions?

What are the different kinds of literacy?
 What does it mean to be mathematically competent?
 Science, technology and media - Where will they lead?
 How do the arts enrich the lives of students?

Monday morning questions?

Will I use the prescribed text or the weekend sports stats to teach average?
 Will my students participate in meaningful reading and writing activities today?
 Will I bring the 'real world' into the classroom so my students can be "in the know"?
 Will I engage individual students in conversation?

A teacher needs to reflect...
 to think quietly, to question,
 to write critically, to dialogue thoughtfully, to ask

What kind of teacher am I?

LINKING THREE CULTURES IN TEACHER INTERNSHIP

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Winter 1998

The Context and Introduction

Several recent reports on educational reform in this province provide a discourse on school improvement. The reports suggest the need for developing a positive school culture, since such a culture is necessary to attain the following outcomes:

- educational excellence
- high retention rate
- high graduation rate
- high achievement
- high employability of graduates, and
- school accountability.

The reports also talk about transmitting to students a set of personal, spiritual, cultural and critical values for citizenship and democracy. They also suggest that the school improvement process should be student centered and should take the developmental needs of students into account. For an in-depth review of the reports one should read Katherine Dundas' Master's thesis in which she critically evaluates many other points in those reports.

Following the discourse presented in the educational reform reports, I suggest we can talk about the need to develop reflective and critical internship cultures to attain goals set in the reports. Not only should the focus be on developing reflective and critical internship cultures, but such cultures should be built on the real and anticipated needs of teacher interns. After all, the internship exists mainly, if not solely, for teacher interns.

The way I see it, there are many internship cultures, and therefore I suggest that we should not think or talk about the culture of internship or a culture of internship. I say this because it is obvious that teacher interns grapple with multiple contextual and situational realities which constitute the total internship process.

For the purpose of discussion in this paper, I would like to mention three predominant cultures which the teacher interns and those who work with them during the internship process need to fully understand and learn about. These three cultures are:

- the culture(s) of partnership
- the culture(s) of collaboration
- the culture(s) of reflective and critical internship in teacher education.

It should be noted that each culture identified above can itself be conceptualized as having many sub-cultures, and so on. This is so because the total internship process and teacher education themselves are embedded in multiple and complex social, cultural, political, economic and organizational realities.

Before I discuss these three cultures, a few more general comments on the interns, the internship process, the school, and the society are in order.

Teacher Interns, the Internship Process, and School Improvement Initiatives

Both our own research and other research in these areas show that teacher interns will sooner or later inherit complex school and classroom cultures. In these contexts, as the reform reports points out, they at least would need to know the following:

1. How to translate provincial learning objectives with practical learning experiences in the classroom
2. How to prepare instructional plans
3. How to prepare lesson plans
4. How much time to spend on different tasks in classrooms
5. How to manage the classroom
6. Different teaching practices and strategies
7. The prescribed curriculum content
8. How to build a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy skills
9. How to persevere
10. The effort and time required for high achievement.

Preparation of programs for school is a very important task. Therefore, teacher interns should be able to prepare programs to be used in schools. The structure of these programs must provide their students a structure of intellectual skills which will include inquiry, inference, reflection, critical and creative decision working, analysis and evaluation. Moreover, these programs should enhance students' technological competence and prepare them as good citizens. Similarly, teacher interns also are expected to learn how to address and nurture students' physical, emotional, social, spiritual and moral needs.

In the final analysis, the school and the internship process are expected to produce educated persons in this province. The educated person, according to Learning for All: The Foundation Program Report (1996), is

. . .one who is equipped to respond appropriately to the intellectual, social, aesthetic, emotional, moral, spiritual, and physical dimensions of life, such that he or she is enabled and motivated.

The reports suggest several school improvement initiatives in order to produce educated populace. For example, the Challenge for Excellence Reports (1990) states:

A school improvement initiative should not focus solely on enhancing academic achievement but should also focus on a continual transmission of personal, spiritual, and cultural values, values which have enriched the lives of Newfoundlanders for many years.

A change process can be evolutionary or revolutionary. In democratic societies, an evolutionary change process is often more effective. This is accepted by the above report as it points out:

It must be recognized that change is a process which is carried out over a period of time. All initiatives cannot be effectively implemented at once.

And it should also be realized that

School improvement initiatives are not a top down, or bottom up exercise, but form a shared responsibility which requires a shared response.

The report recognizes important roles played by educational personnel and other partners in the change process. It states:

Educational personnel involved with the school improvement process must receive adequate time, personal and technical support, and the encouragement to undertake the tasks required to improve conditions for students.

The discussion presented above clearly leads us to conclude that it is obvious that teacher interns have to learn an integrated approach to curriculum which allows them to do all the things mentioned above in the context of the school. These expectations held for the teacher interns clearly put great responsibilities on the shoulders of cooperating teachers, internship supervisors and school personnel. All these people, as partners, are expected to enable teacher interns to learn a lot. To meet this immense responsibility, a great deal of thinking, talking and doing is required. For it is through conversations with each other that we are able to resolve our problems critically, creatively, imaginatively and reflectively.

The Three Cultures of the Internship

A. The Partners and Their Cultures

I return now to the discussion of three internship cultures: cultures of partnership, cultures of collaboration and cultures of reflective and critical internship in education.

As discussed above, our schools are expected to produce well-rounded educated persons to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and beyond. Such educated persons can not be produced without the help of various partners involved in creating, managing, implementing and evaluating the curriculum in schools and the internship process. Who are these partners? These partners are (the list is not meant to be exhaustive or in order of importance):

- The Department of Education and Training
- Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards' Association
- The schools
- The school councils
- The school districts
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and its various interest groups including SAC
- Memorial University
- The Faculty of Education

- Educational consultants from the Department of Education and Training
- Newfoundland and Labrador Home and School Federation
- Newfoundland Association of School Superintendents (SAC)
- School Administrators' Council
- Teachers and internship cooperating teachers
- Parents and their organizations (school councils)
- Program specialists.

All the partners have their own groups, organizations and cultures. There is a need to understand their cultures in a systematic way, if the goal is to improve our schools and educate the populace in a desired direction. This will require, among other things, creating new forms of institutions and communication networks so that we all can have pragmatic, open and endless conversations with each other. For it is through unending interactions with each other that we develop our self. The self in turn enables us to create new forms of knowledge. Based on new awareness we are able to imagine new societies and hope to create them through our actions.

B. Cultures of Collaboration

I have just identified many partners involved in the internship process in the previous section. Many of these partners regularly collaborate with each other to achieve certain educational outcomes in this province. For example, the school districts, the schools, the cooperating teachers, the internship supervisors, the teacher interns and the Faculty of Education collaborate in the delivery of the teacher internship program.

The point is that collaboration, as a form of interaction and conversation, creates its own culture. A great deal has been written in this area and the research is extensive. We have reviewed some of the research in this area and have produced "local knowledge" which shed light on what it means to be a cooperating teacher, internship supervisor and teacher intern in this province and what it means to collaborate with the Faculty of Education as the only institution of higher learning in this province. These meanings become part of the total internship culture, which in turn affect the degree to which the internship program in this province can be implemented successfully.

Therefore, we need to understand various elements of cultures of collaboration. We have, like many others, come to realize that any collaboration is based on trust, give and take (exchange), respect, care and continuous dialogue among all parties involved on an equal basis. It is based on a sense of humility among the participants, acceptance of differences and tolerance of many previously unheard voices. The "global village" built on the foundation of collaboration is not a village built on the unified voice of the people who live in it. This village defies any single true common canon. On the contrary, it is a village built on people's ability and skills in recognizing and incorporating into their daily actions the contradictory voices and experiences of many people who live in it. Collaboration is based on reciprocal exchanges in which participants feel empowered, enabled and socially mobile. It is based on a set of attitudes which encourages inclusion of all partners rather than their exclusion. Collaborative practices and life styles thrive on democratic principles of participation, fairness, justice and equality.

C. Cultures of Reflective and Critical Internship

Similarly, much is written on reflection, reflective and critical education and internship. A rich and extensive literature also exists in this area which links reflective education and internship to larger issues of social policy and nation-building. We have reviewed some of this literature and how it impacts on the locally generated internship process in this province.

Briefly, cultures of reflective and critical internship thrive on conversations of hope and possibilities. These cultures are capable of transcending discourses of despair, gloom and doom. Dooms day talk characterizes many of the education reform reports produced in this province and elsewhere. The reports use piles of statistics to create a profile of the educational system in this province in which very little good is seen to be happening. The numbers are used to create images of crises in society, rather than positively portraying the life styles of people in this province. The reports are more interested in creating an image of Newfoundland society which corresponds to the self-images of those who have produced those reports. Instead of re-affirming the self-images of many people in this province, the reports just do the opposite. More often than not they have become instruments of social policy which undervalues the self-confidence and self-concepts of people in this province.

On the contrary, cultures of reflective and critical education and internship aspire to build a democratic society and to encourage democratic living. These cultures do not shy away from the radical meaning inherent in the idea of democracy by adopting a cynical set of attitudes which re-inforce the idea that issues related to inequalities - social, political, cultural, economic and gender - are unproblematic, and therefore, need not be taken too seriously in education policy formulation and implementation.

In addition, cultures of reflective and critical thinking in education encourage continued conversations among all members of society. They encourage unchecked (except for extreme hate speech) freedom of speech and communication in all forms, specifically they encourage previously unheard and unrecognized voices to be heard and recognized through creating new safe spaces and rights.

Not only this, these cultures encourage all partners involved in the internship process to raise critical questions which challenge the existing status quo or one-dimensional thinking, e.g. schools should be changed to meet the demands of global economy and nothing else. Instead of seeing downsizing and school closure as the only solutions to problems created by a global economy and technological changes, reflective and critical cultures empower people to think in terms of the possibilities of creating new forms of communities, sets of relationships and desired goals.

The Need for Systemic Thinking

In order to understand these three cultures in a meaningful way, we need to resort to systemic thinking as a perspective. Through this perspective we can attempt to comprehend institutional and organizational contexts of the three cultures of the internship discussed above. A series of questions can be raised in achieving this goal. For example, we can start by asking the following questions:

- Are the organizations, where these culture are located, learning organizations?
- Do these organizations promote authentic dialogue?

- What kind of culture do these organizations, in fact, create, maintain, promote and perpetuate?
- What kind of cultures do they discourage?

As we all know, the internship process in this province has undergone a fundamental change. Dennis Treslan has presented the historical account of this transition in his article in an earlier issue of *The Morning Watch*.

The new model of the internship which has emerged in this province is called the Partnership Model of the internship. Andrea Rose discusses some of the characteristics of this model as they relate to reflective and to critical perspective in teacher internship.

My point is that we know very little of this new model. Therefore, we need to learn more about this partnership model through research and candid observations. We will be better served if we produce "local knowledge" about this model. In order to achieve this, cooperating teachers, internship supervisors and school personnel ought to make their observations of the internship process public. This they can do either through presenting their ideas at conferences, in-service programs or through writing in journals.

In addition, we should know the following:

- What kind of studies have been done by others about those three cultures, if any;
- What form of knowledge is available in linking those three cultures;
- Who has access to what form of knowledge, in relationship to various partners involved in the internship process?

For example, what do we publicly know:

- about cultures of the Department of Education in this province;
- about cultures of the school councils;
- about cultures of the NLTA;
- about cultures of program developers;
- about cultures of consultants;
- about cultures of school administrators;
- about cultures of teachers at various levels in this province;
- about cultures of the Education Faculty at Memorial University and other faculties at Memorial University;
- cultures of schools in rural/urban areas of the province.

Linking the Three Cultures: A Proposal

We can build an effective internship process in this province by linking various cultures - cultures of partnership, cultures of collaboration and cultures of reflective and critical internship. This can be done through team building. If done properly, a team building process will create "locally" produced "cultures of teacher internship." This internship culture will enable us to produce an educated person in our province, as articulated in many recent reports on education reform published in this province. Some

points made in those reports were discussed in this paper for the purpose of making this proposal.

A huge amount of research exists in the area of building teams. We have reviewed selected studies relevant to constructing a reflective and critical internship through team building in our article which was published in a previous issue of *The Morning Watch*.

Basically, as we all know, you cannot make people work together by just putting them together in a group. Team building requires systemic thinking and doing. Team building should be based on the experience of people who have tried to build various types of teams in the process of their professional work, as well as on the research done in this area.

In the final analysis, I believe we desperately need to be talking with each other endlessly about whatever we desire to do in our province. Patience, tolerance and an evolutionary perspective on change should be the central focus when we converse with each other. And we must always remember that it is mostly through conversations that we learn how to live together, how to build democratic communities, positive self-concept and caring relationship.

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RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

DANCING WITH PARADIGMS

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Fall 1994

"I cannot argue for the superiority of any single paradigm for considering the complexities of schooling. Each intellectual tradition provides a particular vantage point for considering social conduct".

Thomas Popkewitz

In many ways the claim made by Popkewitz echoes the sentiment of many educators who are interested in educational research. There is little doubt that there is increased diversity in how social research is approached and conducted. This diversity has led to vastly expanded options for framing and carrying out educational research. A quick glance at the titles for papers presented at research conferences gives some indication of the array of approaches to educational research. Paulston (1990), in referring to the 1989 American Educational Research Annual Meeting, listed action research, causal modeling, community action, conflict coping, construct validity, critical theory, emancipatory research, ethnography, multiple regression, neopragmatism, and reflection as some of the framing options used by presenters.

There is little doubt that the methodological and theoretical debate in education parallels a similar reassessment of dominant research approaches and methodologies underway in other academic areas. The blurred genres Anderson (1989) refers to are characteristic of the paradigmatic borrowing that is happening across social sciences, humanities and education. What is behind all of this is the understanding that different modes of educational research involve different ways of examining the links between educational theory, practice, and change (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Packaged in with this examination is the realization that there are many ways of knowing and therefore many ways of approaching educational research. A growing number of educational researchers are no longer willing to be limited by what Elliot Eisner calls the politics of method (Guba, ed., 1990).

Guba is also emphatic in his claim that no one research paradigm is the best for all occasions. Habermas reflects this pluralist approach in claiming that scientific, ethnographic, and critical modes of investigation each offer a valid type of understanding (Holb & Margonis, 1992). The main premise for all of this pondering is a search for "representations of social reality capable of providing social explanations sensitive to the complex relationships between human agency and social structure" (Anderson, 1989, p. 251). This is where a critical approach to educational research can be helpful.

There is little doubt that social scientists in general have become more and more attracted to visions of social research which are informed by critical theory. This attraction to a more critical approach is certainly true in education. It is part of a growing realization that the attempt to dispense with values, historical circumstances, and political considerations in educational research is misguided.

"Our understanding of an educational situation depends on the context within which we encounter it and the theoretical frames which the researcher brought to the observation. These ideological frames are the glasses through which we see the world...The explicit rules which guide our generation of facts about education are formed by

particular world views, values, political perspectives, conceptions of race, class, and gender relations, definitions of intelligence-i.e. ideology. Research, then, can never be non-partisan, for we must choose the rules which guide us as researchers: critical theory's disclosure of the hidden ideological assumptions within social research marked the end of our innocence" (Kincheloe, 1991, p. 61)

At the outset it is important to realize that critical theory is not a research methodology. A critical theory is the product of a process of critique. It is not the process itself. Critical theory may inform the specific research program but it is not the program. Part of the exercise in discussing research paradigms has to do with examining the relationship between theory and practice. As far as critical educational research is concerned the relationship between theory and practice cannot simply be that theory prescribes practice. It seems crucial to realize that theory and practice are interrelated. One is embedded in the other. This topic is explored elsewhere in greater depth (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Eagleton, 1990; Harvey, 1990; Kincheloe, 1991). As far as educational research is concerned it is important to develop theories, critical or otherwise, that are grounded in the realities, problems, and perspectives of educational practice. Part of the risk in doing educational research is in allowing formal theories to effectively predetermine what will be studied and how it will be studied.

In our discussion concerning the place of critical educational research it should also be noted that Jurgen Habermas, the leading proponent of modern critical theory, gives great importance to both "interpretative understandings" and "causal explanations" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). However, critical educational research should seek to move beyond understanding and describing in order to provide a systematic critique of the conditions under which particular educational practices occur. If critical educational research is to lead to any real transformation or institutional change then all the factors that effect schooling must be critiqued.

One of the first steps in any critical educational research is to recognize that such research is human, social, and political. In short the nature of educational life must be seen as problematic. Nothing is taken for granted. Critical education research tries to dig beneath the surface of appearances. "The totality is taken as an existent whole...the critical analysis must go beyond the appearances and lay bare the essential nature of the relationships that are embedded in the structure" (Harvey, 1990). As far as Harvey is concerned critical research assumes that the world is changed by reflective practical activity and that therefore it is necessary to go beyond identifying and indicate how change can be brought about. In other words critical education research should not be content with pointing and naming. Material solutions need to be offered.

Part of the agenda of critical education research is to explore the relations among knowledge, power, and domination and realize that schools, for example, are cultural and historical sites (Giroux, 1981). It is not easy to decide what methods should be used to critique such complex relationships in education research. As Hannibal said in Silence of the Lambs "crude little instruments" will not readily penetrate the hard crusts of ideological and hegemonic actualities that often work their way through school practices. For example, if we wished to examine the many facets of the "restructuring" and "reform" activities going on in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador where would we start and what research means would we use? Would we be content to research discrete problems about the education system as if such problems were not somehow linked to the bigger factors of social, political, cultural, and economic realities? Lee Harvey's (1990) distinction between method and methodology could be helpful here.

Harvey sees methodology as the interface between method, theory, and epistemology. Methodology is the point at which method, theory, and epistemology come together in a way that allows the researcher to investigate some specific educational moment. As far as method is concerned I am referring to the various ways that empirical data can be collected. Theory refers to the set of propositions that offers the researcher a coherent vision of education. Epistemology is concerned with the presuppositions about the nature of knowledge that will inform the research. As indicated above method and methodology are not the same thing. I believe this distinction is an important one for us as we struggle to navigate our way through the various research approaches. Harvey is also helpful when he states that "no method of data collection is inherently positivist, phenomenological or critical" (Harvey, 1990, p. 1). This is helpful as we explore the nature of critical education research and select methodologies that are appropriate to critical dialectical analysis of educational instances. This is also a reminder that there is no simple method, formula, or recipe for doing critical education research.

Critical education research should always begin with the notion that knowledge is structured by existing social relations. It should also be noted that educational instances cannot be observed without reference to the shared educational values and beliefs of those involved with the critical research. We can only make sense of our research findings if they are placed against the background of a shared educational framework of thought. This is one of the reasons that solutions to educational problems must be produced and presented in their social, cultural, historical, economic, and political context. In addition to this critical educational research should concern itself with the values, beliefs, judgments, and interests of the people involved with the particular research project. We have to remind ourselves that knowledge is never the product of a mind that is detached from the realities of daily concerns. Knowledge is produced out of human activity that is motivated by natural needs and interests.

From the point of view of critical education research there needs to be a "systematic understanding of the conditions which shape, limit, and determine action so that these constraints can be taken into account" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p.152). In light of this claim it makes sense to suggest that teachers, students, parents, principals, and education professors should be involved in the process of critically analyzing their own educational situations. If improvements, changes, or transformations are the real goals of critical education research then it follows that the people most involved with the situation are in the best position to understand the practical realities of schooling. Those closest to the research site are the ones to best appreciate the patterns, practices, and nuances of schooling as it fits in between education and society. One of the traps associated with critical education research is that it can become quite abstract and removed from the realities of actual practice. This type of research can be helped by grounding it in a drive for educational, social, and political change. One of the ways to short-circuit the tendency toward abstraction is to do collaborative work in concrete settings with people involved with the practice of education.

If part of the mandate of critical education research is to burrow beneath the surface of institutional practices and structures it is necessary to ground such work in empirical material. According to Harvey:

"Critical social research requires that empirical material is collected. It does not matter whether it is statistical materials, anecdotes, directly observed behaviour, media content, interview responses, art work, or anything else. Whatever provides insights is suitable. But

whatever it is, it must not be taken at face value ... data are important in order to ground inquiry but data must not be treated as independent of their socio-historic context" (Harvey, 1990, p. 7).

The work of Willis (1977) in Learning to Labour; McLaren (1989) in Life in Schools; Weiler (1988) in Women Teaching for Change; and Doyle (1993) in Raising Curtains on Education offers examples of the diverse use of data in critical education research. What these references show is that the use of data is intrinsically linked to the epistemological concerns about educational values and issues. What these studies and others like them have in common is a dedication to the notion that educational problems must be seen as part of the social, political, cultural, and economic patterns of schooling. As Popkewitz (1987) points out schooling must be seen as a socially constructed enterprise that contains continual contradictions. Critical education research cannot ignore this claim. Critical education researchers are also aware that there are different ways of knowing, different forms of knowledge, and therefore there are different approaches to research. The process of research is not neutral. The knowledge that such inquiry produces is never neutral. Critical education researchers need to "reveal their allegiances, to admit their solidarities, their value structures, and the ways such orientations affect their inquiries" (Kincheloe, 1991, p. 36). It should also be remembered that values are seen as a basic dimension of the research process. We have to admit that what is selected to be investigated, the methods employed, and the conceptual categories used for interpretation are value driven. For example if we look at terms like "effective", "dropouts", "control", "reform", "high expectations", "minimum standards", "achievement", "quality", "ability", "required body of knowledge", "centralized", "core", or "development" we have to admit how ideologically loaded such terms are. Therefore in any critical approach to investigating these educational terms, and the research questions which surround them, there would need to be a critical examination of such terms. As Cherryholmes (1988) points out, where the origins of discourses are ignored the way in which power precedes and invades speech is often ignored. In this way it is very easy for the ethical and ideological aspects of speech to be glossed over and the true significance of terms to be missed.

Using the above listed terms from Adjusting the Course 11 it is very easy to see how these words, and their significance, can so readily be determined by current agendas, interests, commitments, and power relations. As far as critical education research is concerned it is essential to begin by interrogating the discourse used in and around the investigation. Part of the interrogation is to place such terms and concepts in a more holistic context and realize that they represent interests that benefit from certain definitions. In fact we are referring to the cultural construction of meaning and that such construction is inherently a matter of political and economic interests. For example the terms used as examples above come out of a document that openly informs and supports a given mind-set that sees education, in part, as a tool for economic development. This is not the place to examine the particular concern about the purpose and role of public education in this province but to use it as an example to underline the fact that terms and concepts cannot be always accepted on their common-sense surface. How do we guard against this while doing critical education research?

As with other research paradigms there are many ways to do critical education research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Guba, 1990; Harvey, 1990; Popkewitz, 1984). Lee Harvey offers some guiding principles when he claims we help the trustworthiness of our research by respecting the basic elements of critical research. These elements are abstraction, totality, essence, praxis, ideology, history, and structure.

In relation to *abstraction* critical education research begins with abstract generalizations and investigates them. For example if we use a concept like achievement, taken from Adjusting the Course 11, it would be necessary to investigate the taken-for-granted underpinnings of that concept in order to get beneath the common-sense notion that appears on the surface. In other words the notion of achievement would be deconstructed.

In dealing with the element of *totality* the implication is that the various components are interrelated and that they only have meaning in terms of the total structure. Once again in using the example of achievement it would need to be investigated in relation to the context in which it is found; the human value put on achievement; the criterion used to judge achievement; or the interests served by advocating certain types of achievement. In such an examination critical education research would attempt to relate empirical detail to a structural and historical whole.

Praxis is a key term in critical research in so far as it refers to practical reflective activity. Behind this operational term is the responsibility to not only find out about the educational situation but also to suggest ways of changing it for the better. It is not enough to claim that achievement, as it is used by current government documents, is meant to serve certain interests. It is also necessary that the critical researcher suggest a form of action that would have the common-sense notion of achievement serve a wider student population or refer to a wider scope for the use of that loaded term. As Harvey states "we live our knowledge and constantly transform it through what we do, as much as it informs what we do" (1990, p. 23).

Ideology is another one of those elusive words that dominate critical pedagogy and critical education research. Yet it seems to be a term we need to come to grips with in order to be involved with such pedagogy and such research. I am referring to ideology here as a mode of consciousness and practice that is related to specific formations and movements while fully realizing that this is only one understanding of the term (Giroux, 1981). If we see ideology as all-persuasive and grounded in the social relationships of material production then it is necessary to examine those social relationships "through a process of dialectical deconstruction and reconstruction" (Harvey, 1990, p. 25). Going back to our example from Adjusting the Course 11, it would be necessary to identify the values, beliefs, and practices that surround the concept of achievement from the point of view of those who write policy documents, those who teach students to achieve, and those who strive to achieve. In other words the concept of achievement should not be taken for granted because its use is ideologically driven. Any data collection and analysis concerning this term would have to be tempered by its ideological representation.

History in critical education research is not accepted simply as factual. As Harvey put it, "history is not just lying around waiting to be unearthed by the historian" (1990, p.26). Within critical education research history is seen as an interpretative process. This interpretative process is done by a person who brings certain expectations, values, and methodologies to the activity. History is reconstructed, not discovered, and it needs to be done through a critical analysis of the social, cultural, economic, and political structure of the time and place. Once again history is never accepted as a given.

The final element noted here is *structure*. Structure refers to a complex set of interrelated elements which are interdependent and which only make sense if they are seen as part of larger structure. For example a critical view of achievement would want

to do more than break down achievement into a system of tasks. For example achievement would be more than the system of studies, evaluation, grades, or certification that would constitute part of it. Such a view would ignore the place that achievement has in its wider social, cultural, and economic structure. It would also ignore the political questions of achievement for what, in relation to whom, and for whose purpose. Once these critical questions have been asked it might be fine to go on to lay out a discrete criteria for judging achievement.

One of the more difficult aspects of doing critical education research is in having a mindset that will allow the researcher to abandon lines of thought and method which are not getting beneath surface appearances. This is not easy for us because we like to seek out methods that will carry us where we believe we should go. What really is important here is the process of critique that allows for a deconstruction and a reconstruction of the educational incident or moment. Critical education researchers are less concerned with the manner of data collection as they are with the approach to the evidence. It is what is done with the data that becomes important. If the data is treated in a taken-for-granted manner then little has been gained as far as critical education research is concerned.

It is important to remember that "a critical stance does not disregard the cognitive interests of empirical-analytic and symbolic sciences" (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 198). The important thing for critical education research is to have a breath of understanding, a recognition of history, and a detail of the setting that pays attention to the complexity of education. Once again Popkewitz is helpful when he claims that the "ritual and creative quality of science is not in technical proficiencies per se, but in the playfulness and imagination that combines with a detailed attention to the empirical" (p. 200).

Before closing this paper I will point to certain approaches that can be helpful in doing critical education research. For this purpose I will make some brief comments on Critical Ethnography in Education while underlining that critical research is open to many approaches.

Gary Anderson (1989), in a masterful paper on critical ethnography in education, discusses its origins, current status, and new directions. He claims that critical ethnographers look for research accounts that are "sensitive to the dialectical relationship between the social structural constraints on human actors and the relative autonomy of human agency" (p.249). What Anderson is seeking here is some middle ground between the traditional doom and gloom of earlier proponents of critical theory and the place of hope and resistance in a research that allows for transformation.

The ethnography movement began in education during the late 1960s and the early 1970s and resulted in a wide range of studies. At the same time a number of theorists, with a critical thrust, were doing exciting work that would soon make its way into education. Much of this work centered around asking serious questions about the role of schools in modern society. Many of these questions were, and are, pointing and uncomfortable. In a short time there was a loose marriage-more of an arrangement-between ethnography and critical studies. Paul Willis (1977) tells how ethnography allowed him to get at critical questions in his seminal work Learning to Labour: How working class kids get working class jobs. "The ethnographic account, without always knowing how, can allow a degree of the activity, creativity, and human agency within the object of the study to come through into the analysis and the reader's

experience" (p. 3). This use of ethnography gave Willis the opportunity to see his "lads" not only as cultural informants but as rational social actors.

Willis built his critical ethnographic study around a main case-study group and a number of comparative groups. They were intensively studied during their last two years in school. Willis used participant and non-participant observation in classrooms, around the school, and during leisure activities. The direct observation was supported by regular group discussions, informal interviews, and diaries. In addition to this Willis, in his role of critical ethnographer, taped long conversations with all parents, and teachers of the main group. Willis also went to work with them, after they completed school, for short periods of participant observation. He further taped interviews with the "lads" and their foremen, managers, and shop stewards.

Willis reports his research findings in two parts. Part one is basically an ethnography of the school. He places the oppositional culture of the "lads" in the wider context of general working class culture and he examines how the culture subjectively prepares them for a working class job.

The second part of the report turns the ethnographic account into a classic example of critical research. It is at this stage that Willis seeks to get beneath the surface of the ethnography. In this section of his study he "offers an analysis of the inner meaning, rationality and dynamic of cultural process revealed in the ethnographic study and considers how these processes contribute both to working-class culture in general and the maintenance and reproduction order" (Harvey, 1990, p. 68). What Willis is really trying to get at are the structural features which inform his investigation. For him, at this critical stage, the ethnographic material is only useful in so far as it helps answer the question of why working-class kids get working-class jobs. Willis' work is critical ethnography only in so far as he is willing to go beyond the ethnography. If Willis had been content with reporting his observations this would not have been a piece of critical education research.

Another example that might be helpful here is the one of Reflexivity in Critical Ethnography. In this form of research the critical ethnographer attempts to integrate self-reflection and reflection on the dialectical relationship between structural historical forces and human agency. In order to do this type of research it is necessary to examine (a) the researcher's constructs, (b) the informant's constructs, (c) the research data, (d) the researcher's ideological biases, and (e) the structural and historical forces that informed the social construction under study. Critical education research along this line is being done locally with teaching interns, university supervisors and cooperating teachers (Doyle, Kennedy, Ludlow, Rose & Singh, 1994).

I am sharing an amazing grip on the obvious when I claim that education itself is very complex. How could we expect less complexity from educational research? A simple reading of *Adjusting The Course* 11 indicates the complexity of current questions for schooling in this province while offering a gold mine of research problems that need to be addressed. It is my contention that many of these questions and problems have to be investigated in a critical fashion. As indicated above I believe it is necessary to place many of these questions and problems in the larger systems of society, culture, politics, and economy. It is also obvious to see that claiming any one research approach can fully investigate all of these questions is to invite the wrath of Kuhn. It seems then that for the meantime we are left dancing with paradigms

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**"HOW DOES IT GET INTO MY IMAGINATION?":
INTERTEXTUALITY AND ALTERNATIVE STORIES
IN THE CLASSROOM**

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Introduction

"Sometimes [stories] mean something that's incredibly true. That was true, that really happened to people. Maybe not exactly that way, but explained in different words." (Valerie)

"[Stories] could actually teach you lessons." (Sarah)

"... I'm really really wondering... I'm still thinking about that. How does it get into my imagination?" (Sarah)

"'If we never heard stories, we wouldn't have an imagination.' 'And if we never had an imagination, we wouldn't have dreams...' 'And then we wouldn't make up stories!'" (Anastasia and Emma Lina)

"Could you tell us true ghost stories in the bathroom with the lights out?" (Lucy)

"Did you ever almost die?... Could you tell us a story about it?" (Michael)

This article, drawing on a classroom based study of children's engagement with stories, looks specifically at one aspect of the engagement process, the notion of intertextuality and its relevance for using stories in the classroom. I am using the term intertextuality to refer to the reader's background knowledge and understanding of texts, and of how the stories used in the research fitted into a broader textual framework. A key finding of the study under discussion concerned the importance of intertextual knowledge in how children read and interpret texts ("text" being used in the broadest sense of "what the respondent responds to", including films, for example, as well as written texts). Response to texts can take place only in the context of previous knowledge and experience. Readers respond not only to the text itself in a "live circuit" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 14), or to each other in a "thought collective" (Bleich, 1986, p. 418), but to the multitudinous voices of their own culture and history. These constitute the imaginative background that enables children both to understand, and to take pleasure in stories or other texts. Intertextual knowledge is a key factor in the constitution of this imaginative background.

We use stories to make sense of the world. Perhaps it is safe, in this case, to use a universal "we" -- for can there be anyone *in* the world who does not use some form of story to explain, explore, understand their own lived experience? Or any society that does not use stories to explain its origins and values? The above quotations, all taken from the transcripts of the study under discussion in this article, indicate how aware the children who took part in the research were of the importance and pleasure of stories. From Sarah and Valerie's comments on the educational and moral value of stories, to Emma Lina, Anastasia and Sarah's emphasis on the workings of the

imagination, to Lucy's sense of entertainment and drama, to Michael's intuitive rephrasing of Labov's well-known question, "Did you ever think you were about to die?" (Labov and Waletzky, 1970), the children's comments show a clear sense of the key roles stories played in their lives.

The study was set up to investigate the use of "disruptive" stories in classrooms -- stories that, in some way, challenge the world as it is and suggest a better world that *might* be. The stories used disrupted conventional and constraining European storylines about race and gender through presenting unexpected characterizations, plots or outcomes. Examples are stories where girls are adventurous protagonists, the beautiful heroine is black, or the outcome of a fairy tale is *not* "... and they married and lived happily ever after". It was hoped that these stories would function to surprise the readers/listeners into questioning some of their previous assumptions about how the world works.

Parents, schools and school boards receive many recommendations regarding the creation and use of non-violent, non-racist and non-sexist books and teaching materials. Assumptions are made, based partly on research, partly on "common sense", that the use of such texts will influence children in such a way as to contribute to the building of a more peaceful and egalitarian society. On the other hand, books and materials depicting certain kinds of violent acts and/or stereotyped images are often assumed to have the opposite effect. Because of such recommendations and assumptions, books are added to, or removed from, classrooms and library shelves and intense debates take place in schools and communities.

There is a considerable body of literature on the use of non-stereotyped and non-violent texts in schools. However, children's response to texts is a complex process, and little of the writing on the topic deals with actual case studies of how these kinds of texts are interpreted and integrated into what I refer to in this article as the imaginative background of the readers. Through a case study and analysis, this research project began to examine what children actually say and do when engaging with "disruptive" stories.

Although the study was done in a multicultural classroom in a large urban centre, an understanding of the central role intertextual knowledge plays in children's reading and response should be equally relevant for teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. The knowledge and experience of children here may in some ways be very different from that of the children who participated in the study. However, because of the dominance of certain forms of media and certain kinds of storylines, their intertextual knowledge is likely to be remarkably similar.

Review of the Literature

The study draws on the diverse analytical frameworks of reader-response, critical pedagogy and developmental psychology. The complexity of the intersecting theoretical areas is echoed in the complexity of the analysis which looks at race, culture, social position and gender as factors in children's response to alternative stories. Both the children's lived experience and textual factors present in the stories are taken into account and seen as parts of a continuous dialogue in which meanings are negotiated and re-negotiated, and dominant discourses in the community are upheld or challenged.

Developmental psychologists and others in the field of language and literacy contribute a great deal to understanding literacy in the context of culture and community. Such researchers as Lev Vygotsky (1978) and Jerome Bruner (1986) in developmental psychology and Gordon Wells (1987) and Shirley Brice Heath (1983) in language and literacy all agree that teaching to read, write and answer questions "correctly" is not enough. They point to the collaborative nature of learning, in which learning takes place within a community of learners through mutually supportive interaction and dialogue, and to the importance of critique and creativity as elements of literacy.

Critical educational theory and critical pedagogy, unlike other theoretical frameworks for analysing educational practice, do not take the existing society in which the school functions as a given. Rather, the school is seen as an important site of struggle for social change, and education as centered around the critique of existing social structures and the envisioning of new possibilities (Weiler, 1988). In this view, literacy is seen not merely as a set of life skills, or even as the "literate thinking" described by Wells (1981) et al., but rather as offering an end to passivity and powerlessness, and a means of re-thinking and re-shaping society. This process begins with the lived realities of students and teachers and their own hopes and strengths. It builds on this knowledge to critique and to re-build.

Reader-response privileges a view of the reader as active constructor of meaning (Rosenblatt, 1978). There are numerous studies of children's response to stories and articles on the use of stories in classrooms. However, most such studies, while viewing reading as an interactive process, nonetheless see it as an essentially private act, or as one taking place within a closed community of readers. The relationships between/among readers and texts are not viewed as problematic. Those studies that *do* acknowledge the ideological nature of reading still tend to see texts as offering examples and role models to which children will respond in a unified fashion, or at least in ways that can be analyzed quantitatively.

Researchers who both take an ideological stance and recognize the complexity of the reading process are Walkerdine (1984) and Davies and Banks (1992). Both of these studies deal with children's understanding of storylines of gender. As well, both conclude that traditional gender equity programmes relying on non-stereotyped role models are ineffective because they discount the contexts that make texts intelligible, and the role of the conscious and unconscious desires of the reader. However, their conclusions differ from one another in one important respect. Davies and Banks recommend that children be taught critical analytical reading skills as a more effective approach to gender equity. Walkerdine concludes that, because the fantasies currently popular with young girls are so enticing, there is a need for equally appealing alternative fantasies.

My study, like those of Walkerdine and Davies and Banks, sees meaning as socially constructed, and engagement with texts as central to this process. The study conclusions corroborate some of the findings of Walkerdine and Davies and Banks, for instance the power and pervasiveness of certain traditional storylines in children's interpretations of *non*-traditional stories. My study adds to theirs in that theirs deal specifically with gender whereas mine examines the intersection of various factors including gender, culture, race and social position. My study also makes suggestions as to what might be some of the characteristics of "potent [alternative] fantasies" (Walkerdine, 1984, p. 184), and to what a methodology for teaching critical analytical reading skills (as Davies and Banks suggest) might look like.

Description of Study: Background and Methodology

The research for this study was done in a Grade Four/Five classroom at Charles Street Public School¹ an elementary school in Toronto. Charles Street School draws on a very diverse population, both in terms of culture and ethnic origin, and socio-economic situation. Thus the children in the class represented a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. The children, in small groups, listened to selected stories intended to generate discussion through disrupting more conventional storylines, and participated in follow-up activities and discussions. In so doing, they talked extensively about their interpretations and their own lives in relation to these texts, and also frequently made references to other texts they were familiar with.

The three stories referred to in this article were chosen, in part, to disrupt the conventional storylines that heroines are white and fair haired, and that they must marry princes to find happiness. Outlines of the stories are as follows:

To Hell With Dying by Alice Walker (1967): A picture book, illustrated by Catherine Deeter. Large, detailed and realistic colour illustrations to complement an autobiographical story of childhood in the rural American South. The child Alice Walker lives next door to a warm, loving, talented and eccentric old man. When the old man drinks (which he does frequently), he gets depressed and threatens to die, but the children always bring him back to life -- until the end of the story when he really does die. The story deals with racism, alcoholism, illness and death and yet is sensitively and lovingly told. As its own jacket description puts it, it is about "someone who erases the boundaries between children and adults, whose faults gentle us into tolerance and charity, whose praise makes us strong and proud -- and whose love helps us to understand what love really is."

The Talking Eggs by Robert San Souci (1989): A picture book, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Based, apparently, on an old European fairy tale but told traditionally among African Americans in Louisiana. The characters have become Creole and the story now takes place in rural Louisiana. There is a magical solution to the trials of a poor, oppressed, but good and brave young girl. It is a version of the Cinderella story, but with important differences: The illustrations show the characters as nineteenth-century farming people of African descent. All of the main characters are women. There is no prince and the selfish sister and mother are no uglier than the good sister.

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: written and illustrated by John Steptoe (1987). A Zimbabwean folk tale similar in theme to *The Talking Eggs* and *Cinderella*. The younger sister is oppressed by the older but is eventually rewarded for her goodness with riches and power. Unlike the good sister in the other two stories, she takes revenge on her cruel sister.

The children most frequently referred to in this article are Marilyn, Monique and Sarah, three grade four girls, of African-Canadian, Chilean and French/German backgrounds respectively. All three were average students and all

demonstrated a broad and perceptive intertextual knowledge, despite the fact that for Sarah and Monique English was a second or third language.

Intertextuality and Engagement with Stories

Toni Morrison writes that "[r]eaders and writers both struggle to interpret and perform within a common language shareable imaginative worlds" (Morrison, 1992, p. xii). Identification with textual characters is central to how children participate in this shareable imaginative world. Characters, however, like real people, do not exist in a vacuum. The stories they inhabit have geographical and historical backgrounds and are organized into significant sequences of events that can be used to give coherence and meaning to the lives of readers/listeners. In responding to texts of all kinds, most school-age children already have a wide repertoire of story "frames" to draw upon. They know certain kinds of people and certain situations and resolutions from their own lives and the retold lives of friends and family, others from films, books and so on. They make sense of one text by reference to others, or to previous readings of the same one. In other words, they have a great deal of intertextual knowledge.

A good example of this kind of knowledge (although she was baffled by it herself at the time) came up in a conversation with Sarah. We had been talking about the role of illustrations in response to stories, and I had asked her if the pictures were sometimes different from the way she had imagined the characters:

Sarah: Yeah, like when I saw the movie of "The Little Mermaid" I also read the book of it and the king was even more different than in the movie.

Elizabeth: Different from the way you imagined him, or from the story?

Sarah: I imagined him just like in the movie and the little mermaid, she's not as pretty in the book as in the movie or in my imagination... and I don't know how the pictures got in my imagination 'cause I never even saw the movie yet.² 'Cause my imagination was more like the movie and just a teensy bit of the story... and there's quite a question cause I'm really really wondering. I'm still thinking about that. How does it get into my imagination? Cause no one ever told me about the little mermaid. I only heard the title about it and nothing about the story.

Although Sarah did not feel that she understood the process, her question, "How does it get into my imagination?", expresses a sense of intertextuality. She knew that her ideas about characters and stories came from somewhere, although she did not know where. Her comment that her imaginings were closer to the film version than to the book plausibly indicates a greater familiarity with the Disney animated genre of illustration and/or a preference for it over other types of storybook illustrations. Most of the children in the study made quite frequent intertextual references to Disney versions of stories.

There are many references in the study transcripts to resemblances among texts, to recognition of the "rules" of various genres and so on. Sometimes intertextual references were made to similarities that I had not been aware of myself until the

children pointed them out. For example, we discussed three different versions of the Cinderella story, the Perrault one (or a Disney re-writing of it) and two others, *The Talking Eggs* (San Souci, 1989) and *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* (Stephoe, 1987). These two stories are both "black" versions, the former from Louisiana, and the latter from West Africa, of the familiar "oppressed youngest daughter goes from rags to riches" story. However, there are important differences among the three which led to different kinds of responses to them. One difference is the "circumstantial detail" (de Certeau, 1980) of the Cinderella figure being black in the two alternative versions, another is in the details of the outcome.

In choosing stories and organising activities, I had not really thought about the connections among these three stories. Marilyn was the one who recognized that they were all Cinderella stories and pointed this out. During one of the response activities, I had read *The Talking Eggs* aloud to the children and asked them to draw the characters as they imagined them, without looking at the illustrations in the book. When I had done this activity with children in the past, they almost invariably drew white characters, no matter what race they were themselves, and usually drew a blonde heroine, sometimes expressing surprise when they saw that the "real" illustrations were of black characters. As Marilyn was drawing, she talked about this and about the connections among the various versions of this story. She said that Blanche, the heroine of *The Talking Eggs*, reminded her both of Cinderella and of Mufaro's beautiful daughter, but that she had chosen to draw her as the Perrault/Disney Cinderella. Her illustration shows a blonde young woman dressed in rags and tatters (rags and tatters are not mentioned in the text of *The Talking Eggs*) and standing at an ironing board. Although she herself is African-Canadian, Marilyn said that she found it easier to imagine Blanche as the European Cinderella than in some other way. Some extracts from a group discussion highlight this issue:

[I had just finished reading "The Talking Eggs" to the children.]

Calvin: I didn't draw the girls. I just drew the farm.

Elizabeth: Could you try to draw one of the girls? I'm interested in how you imagined the characters.

Marilyn: I imagined that Blanche was wearing rags and her hair was really blonde and she was doing all this ironing...

Calvin: I'm going to draw Rose on a motorbike!

...

Marilyn: I read a story once called *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and the sister, named Mayara, she was really mean and the father would say "I want both of you to clean up the yard" and the sister would say... "You have to clean up the yard because Dad said" and she would be the queen and her sister would be the servant...

[At this point the tape ran out. Marilyn was commenting that she wanted to know what people in stories look like, so she liked to have descriptive details given in the text or shown in the illustrations.]

Elizabeth: Marilyn, you drew Blanche all in rags before she got rich. Since the story didn't give you details of what she looked like, how did you *decide* what she looked like?

Marilyn: Well, I got some stories from *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters...* well, she wasn't dressed exactly in rags but... she had smudge marks all over her and she was ironing and all that so I thought of Blanche as in rags and old shoes like Cinderella.

Elizabeth: But you drew her more like Cinderella than like the illustrations in *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters...?*

Marilyn: Well, in *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* she was ironing and all that stuff and Cinderella she's always in rags and always ironing... [group discussion of how the three stories ended]

Marilyn: I mostly thought she would be like, you know how Cinderella is? And I mostly thought she would get married and live happily ever after.

The above illustrates an important point about the intertextuality of children's stories. Marilyn had a wide range of possible texts and images available to her and she recognized relationships and resemblances among several of them. Despite this, the Perrault/Disney version of Cinderella remained somehow dominant in her imagination, just as Disney heroines seem to have been so dominant for Sarah that, although she knew several versions of the story, she *imagined* "The Little Mermaid" like the Disney character before she even *saw* the film.

Repeated exposure to certain images and themes does seem to have a cumulative effect. This was also expressed by Monique. As she drew Blanche, she commented, "I imagine her dark but I'm drawing her blonde." I asked her why but she said she didn't know. Both Marilyn, an African-Canadian, and Monique, a dark-skinned Chilean, drew the heroine as *unlike* themselves, even though Marilyn saw Blanche's resemblance to an African character as well as to a European one, and Monique stated that she *imagined* Blanche differently from the way she was drawing her. Why should it be that, even with a wide range of physical images to choose from, including their *own*, and even though both girls were aware of other possibilities and of discrepancies, the ideal of a blonde heroine remained dominant? How does it happen that certain versions of stories, often ones carrying limiting and hegemonic meanings, come to take such an important place in the imaginations of children?

In linguistic terms, for many North American children, the white is the unmarked, or the "norm", while the black is the marked, or "different". This view of the world is constantly reinforced in children's literature and film. Despite improvements in the availability of alternative images in children's literature and other cultural forms, the black remains marked as less beautiful, less heroic and as "other". I cannot think of any other reason why these two girls (and others in the study) would have responded as they did. The black remains marked, in part, simply because white images of goodness and beauty are still so much more pervasive. As well, it may be because such influential institutions as the Disney studios actually work with and exaggerate hegemonic image forms that function to reproduce racism and sexism. (For example, although there are no black *mermaids* in "The Little Mermaid", the sea witch is black and sings a calypso song.) Through such ubiquitous cultural forms, bloneness (especially for females) and

certain kinds of bodies, clothes and so on, maintain their powerful associations with goodness, comfort, beauty and romance. Darkness, on the other hand, is still equated with the exotic, the occult, and, often, with evil.

In the course of an earlier study, one girl had exclaimed, on seeing the illustrations in the book, "Oh, she's dark! I gave her yellow hair!" When I asked her why, she answered without hesitation, "Well, she was good so I wanted to make her pretty." If good equals pretty equals blonde, then how do children of all races learn to see themselves? Images *are* important and their cumulative effect even more so. The examples I have given here deal with the negative impact of certain dominant kinds of texts and images -- and I would argue that this impact is just as harmful and limiting to white children as it is to those constituted as "the other". There were also a few more positive examples of children responding pleasurably to the less stereotyped heroes and heroines in the "disruptive" stories used in the study. My own daughter, Ilse, had expressed intense pleasure on seeing the cover illustration of the child Alice Walker in *To Hell With Dying*, another book I used in the study, exclaiming "She looks like me!" Donald Bogle discusses the impact of changing images in his analysis of why so many black women responded so positively to Stephen Spielberg's film version of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*:

...you have never seen Black women like this put on the screen before. I'm not talking about what happens to them in the film, I'm talking about the visual statement itself. When you see Whoopi Goldberg in close-up, a loving close-up, you look at this woman, you know that in American films in the past... she would have played a maid. She would have been a comic maid. Suddenly the camera is focusing on her and we say, 'I've seen this woman someplace, I know her' (Bogle, quoted in Bobo, in Pribram, Ed., 1988, p. 92).

Obviously, the children who participated in the study were able to make connections between texts and to recognize similarities in characters without being shown or guided in this process. The transcripts reproduced here are typical of other discussions in which intertextual references, sometimes quite sophisticated ones, were made without any expectations or prompting from me. Probably the most important finding here is the dominance of certain kinds of texts and particularly of certain images, despite the children's exposure to and knowledge of a much wider range of possibilities.

Implications for Teaching Practice

While it is true that certain limiting storylines remain dominant, and are constantly reinforced through cultural forms such as Disney films, it is also true that the availability of alternative stories of various kinds has had an impact. In the course of the study I found that, despite the dominance of Disney, the Charles Street School children, unlike the children in the Davies and Banks (1992) study, were well able to understand, take pleasure in and create alternative stories. I attribute this difference in large part to the efforts of the Toronto Board of Education and, more particularly, to those of their own teacher. The Toronto Board has invested a great deal of time and money in multicultural, anti-racist and anti-sexist work, no doubt making an important contribution to Toronto's being named "multicultural city of the year" by the United Nations last year. Marie, the children's teacher, believed profoundly in the importance of stories and in the anti-racist and anti-sexist stance of the board. Over the course of the two years the children were in her class, she had exposed them to a rich variety of alternative texts

and response activities. The teacher, then, through providing alternatives, may play a key role in developing children's ability to critique limiting stories and to understand and create new ones.

Based on the findings and analysis of the study, and on previous work by other researchers (Walkerdine, 1984; Davies and Banks, 1992), suggestions can be made for the development of a methodology for an effective pedagogy of justice and equity at the elementary school level. This methodology would be based on the provision of appealing and challenging alternative texts for children, and the use of these texts to foster the ability to critique more traditional texts, to "read against the grain", and to broaden children's "discursive imaginations" (Bogdan, in Straw and Bogdan, 1993, p. 3). It is, thus, a two-tiered approach, taking into account both the importance of desire in response to texts, and the necessity for the development of critical analytical skills in young readers/listeners/viewers. An understanding of what kinds of stories are most likely to make a strong impact is helpful in recommending alternative reading for children. Virtually all of the Charles Street School children emphasized a preference for intensely dramatic themes and a need to identify with a believable and realistic character. Textual characters form an important part of the imaginative background of narrative and visual resources on which children draw so as to give meaning to themselves and to the world. Circumstantial details surrounding the characters are probably one of the most effective ways of presenting new possibilities for change in the imaginative landscape that is central to children's view of the real world and their own lived experience. Probably the most important circumstantial details in written texts and illustrations are those regarding race and gender. For a white child, to identify with a black character means to recognize commonalities of human experience while at the same time acknowledging difference. It means to broaden the range of possibilities of who can do what in this world and to develop empathy. For a child who is not white, identifying more frequently with strong and beautiful characters of their own race or ethnic group might mean a changed perception of who they themselves can be in a historically white dominated world. As to gender, girls need heroines who are beautiful, who lead dramatic lives, but who are also strong, brave and adventurous and of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. Boys need heroes who have these same qualities and who are kind and gentle.

As to activities, it is important, first of all, to build a community of critical readers. One way to begin doing this, even with older children, is to read aloud. An oral story offers possibilities for a more immediate response and interaction. Follow up activities like re-writing endings or details of stories, dramatising, illustrating, debating outcomes, comparing written, oral and filmic versions of stories and so on can foster critical reading and the development of critical analytical skills if they are oriented in this way.

Conclusion

One of the Charles Street School children, Valerie, said that she loved "books about the creation of new beings and new worlds". In the end, the point of this research was to examine what kinds of books these might be, and how children might understand them. Stories are central to children's practical understanding of the world. They can both contribute to the reproduction of hegemonic meanings and challenge them in an ultimately liberatory language of possibility and hope.

Children need to make difficult moral decisions and to realize that all points of view do not necessarily have equal value. As well, they need analytical tools for understanding their own situations, and aesthetic models for broadening their narrative resources. While the roots of a better world are in critique, the art of the teacher as storyteller lies in fostering hope by enabling students to imagine and tell their own stories in new ways. In so doing, they will learn to challenge the way reality is shaped and their own lives constrained.

Author's note: The research for this article was done before I came to this province. I welcome any comments pertaining to its relevance for Newfoundland and Labrador classrooms and communities, or suggestions for future work in the area of stories in the classroom.

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ENDNOTES

1. The names of the school, teachers and students have been changed to protect the anonymity of the subjects. Most of the children chose their own pseudonyms for the study.
2. Presumably she means she had imagined the characters before seeing the movie since she *had* seen it at the time of this conversation.

**COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND THE VOICES OF SECONDED
TEACHERS AS INTERNSHIP SUPERVISORS***

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Winter 1996**

Introduction

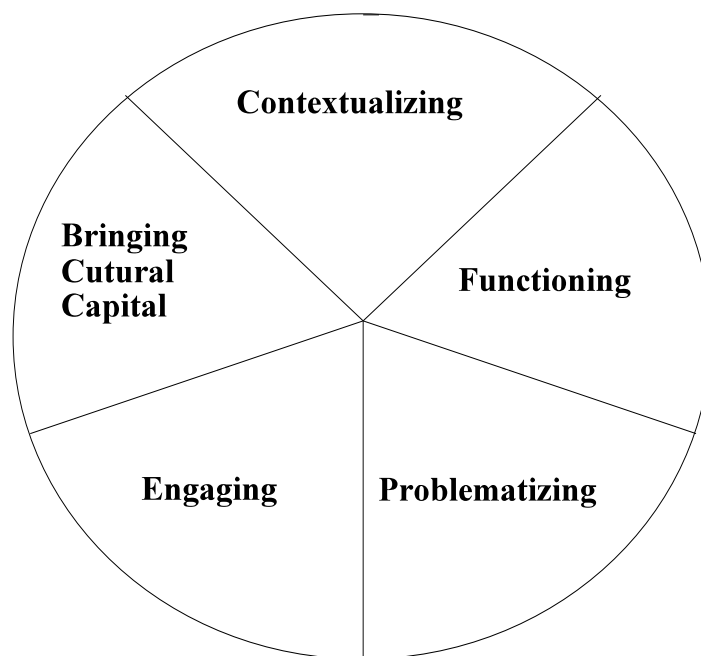
The purpose of this paper is to describe ongoing collaborative research concerning the internship program at the Faculty of Education, Memorial University. In particular, we wish to focus on one aspect of this research involving seconded teachers who supervise interns. This research is done within the context of educational reform in the province generally and of the development of various delivery models for the internship program within the Faculty of Education specifically.

An underlying premise of this paper is that the teacher internship experience, as one component of the teacher education program, can be examined within the framework of an interdisciplinary education team development process. We believe there are a myriad of issues related to this conceptual framework and process that can inform the development and implementation of an internship program. Teacher internship programs are constantly changing in response to new developments in educational methods and research, as well as to new instructional and developmental models. Therefore, the focus of this paper is on the emergent values of team interdependence and collaboration as they relate to our efforts in developing a Reflective and Critical Internship Program: The RCIP Model (See Figure 1). At this stage of our work, we are attempting to test the efficacy of this model in the field. Specifically, our aim is to explore more fully the potential of the RCIP Model to resocialize students, cooperative teachers, supervisors and school personnel into the norms of interdisciplinary team-work. Hence, we are interested in issues relevant to the formation and continuation of an interdisciplinary and collaborative service and/or research team.

This paper makes no attempt to classify the numerous issues related to the conceptual framework for interdisciplinary education, interdependence and collaboration. Instead, the paper is organized in the following way. First, we review selected literature on collaborative action research as well as selected conceptual, theoretical, and practical approaches to the development of interdisciplinary teams. This type of work is being done in health care fields

**THE RCIP (REFLECTIVE AND CRITICAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM)
A MODEL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION**

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- Describing/Contextualizing
- Bringing Cultural Capital
- Engaging
- Problematizing Dominant Practices and Discourses
- Functioning as Intellectuals and Cultural Workers

Figure 1 - RCIP Model

to achieve comprehensive and coordinated geriatric care by bringing professionals in many disciplines to work collaboratively. As Toner, Miller and Gurland (1994) have pointed out, "the structure for this collaboration is often the interdisciplinary team, and the collaboration itself is called interdisciplinary team-work" (p. 53). Secondly, we briefly describe our own involvement in collaborative and interdisciplinary action research (Doyle, Kennedy, Ludlow, Rose and Singh, 1994). Thirdly, we highlight one aspect of this research as it relates to issues surrounding seconded teachers as university supervisors. The voices of these seconded teachers point to the complexity of the

internship program as well as to the need for the development of collaborative research models as part of ongoing development and delivery of the internship program.

Collaborative Action Research

Collaborative action research has been conceptualized and practiced in different forms (Sagor, 1992; Calhoun, 1994). This section reviews ideas from selected research which informs our view of collaborative action research in the field of education.

As Oja and Smulyan (1989) have pointed out, action research (a term first used in the 1940s by Kurt Lewin), has recently emerged as a method which addresses both researchers' needs for school-based study and teachers' desires to be involved in more effective staff development. Both university researchers and teachers were looking for an alternative to linear models of research and development in which theory and practice remained unrelated to, and therefore unaffected by, one another: "The participation of both teachers and researchers on an action research team was expected to lead to a connection between theory and practice through which theory would be enriched and practice improved" (pp. 203-204).

This research methodology suggests that participants who take part in the research process be involved from the very beginning in the planning, implementation and analysis of the research and that each participant should contribute his or her unique expertise and unique perspective to the research process. It suggests also that participants recognize that the purpose and value of collaborative research is to learn about those actions which would improve one's school or classroom. We relate to this particular approach because it encourages us to work with school-based educators and continue the development of a reflective and critical internship program. Further to this, such an approach may well improve communication and collaboration between various educational personnel and institutions. This in turn will allow all of us to be actively involved in ongoing educational and reform agendas.

According to Oja & Smulyan (1989), action researchers have realized that "it may be difficult to produce traditional educational theory and change classrooms or school practices all within the same project. However, the two goals are not mutually exclusive, but they may be difficult to achieve simultaneously. Perhaps some of the difficulty lies in our approach to educational theory" (pp. 205-206). They suggest that a first step in addressing the theory/practice issue may be to redefine educational theory to include teachers' understanding of the problems and practices in their classrooms and schools (Cummings and Hustler, 1986; Street, 1986). At present, as Carr and Kemmis (1986) point out, much educational theory is produced by people outside the school community who use the "straightforward application of the scientific disciplines to educational problems" (p. 124). Elliot (1985) describes this as research for products rather than understanding; Carr and Kemmis (1986) claim that it produces a body of knowledge unrelated to practical situations. Action research, in particular, offers a different kind of educational theory, one which is "grounded in the problems and perspectives of educational practice" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 122) and made up of insights, and practical methods to address their concerns. Oja and Smulyan (1989) claim that if this theory is recognized as legitimate, then action research will be closer to meeting its goals of both improved practice and educational theory.

It is interesting to note that besides generally recognizing the power of the action research methodology to connect theory and practice, many researchers in this area have sought alternative ways of evaluating the outcomes of collaborative research. For example, Kemmis (1980) points out one potential outcome regarding the development of critical communities of practitioners:

Preliminary analysis suggests that the theoretical prospects for action research are only moderate, if 'theoretical' payoff is measured in terms of the literature of educational researchers...If the theoretical payoff is defined in terms of the development of critical communities of practitioners, then the results are more encouraging. (p. 13)

In our own efforts to develop the RCIP model, we have sought to develop critical communities of practitioners through working collaboratively with cooperating teachers, teacher interns and university-based supervisors. We have attempted to incorporate their understanding of the problems and practices in their schools in our analysis of the educational practices in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our focus has been on encouraging teacher interns, cooperating teachers and university supervisors to participate in the reflective and critical process in order to build a more effective internship program in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. For the purpose of this paper, we will highlight some of the reflective and critical processes involving seconded teachers as they work as university internship supervisors.

Collaborative Interdisciplinary Team Building

Researchers in the health care area (DePoy & Gallagher, 1990; Hagle et al., 1987; Sweeny, Gulino, Lora & Small, 1987; Whitney, 1990) have defined team work as an in-depth cooperative effort in which experts from diverse disciplines, clinical experiences, or settings work together to contribute to the study of a problem. In effective collaborative teams, experts from the same or different disciplines are linked together in such a way that they build on each other's strengths, backgrounds, and experiences and together develop an integrative approach to resolve a research or educational problem. This integrative approach enhances the capabilities of members of the team to examine and understand issues from many perspectives and develop innovative solutions to the multiple and complex health issues of older persons (Kapp, 1987; Selikson & Guzik, 1986).

Many people have come to recognize the benefits of, and need for, collaboration. However, researchers show that the structure of many educational institutions may not facilitate cooperative approaches to research, education, and service. According to Gitlin, Lyons & Kolodner (1994), this is so because "traditional educational models tend to foster individualism and competitiveness and create a gap between knowledge and development" (p. 16). Their work is based on the major key constructs of this social exchange theory: exchange, negotiation, role differentiation, and an environment of trust. In regard to exchange, for example, the theory suggests that individuals join work groups because of the benefits available to them as a result of membership. These benefits vary greatly and may include social support, help in solving a particular problem, or professional advancement (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961; Jacobs, 1970; Thibault & Kelly, 1959).

Gitlin et al. (1994) suggest that an individual must assess his or her willingness and ability to work cooperatively with others. Flexibility in thinking and work style, the

ability to relinquish or take control in a group process, and an openness to the ideas of others are "just some of the characteristics an individual must possess in order for an environment of trust and successful collaboration to emerge" (Bergstrom et al., 1984; Singleton, Edmunds, Rapson, & Steele, 1982).

They suggest as well that "through ongoing negotiation and role differentiation in shaping the research question or educational project, a culture should emerge that promotes and rewards collaboration" (p. 25). They call this a "culture of collaboration." According to them, such a culture is characterized by an environment that supports:

- flexibility and respect for differences of opinion;
- mutual trust, respect, and cooperation;
- open, relaxed communication;
- conflict and disagreement centred around ideas rather than personalities and people;
- decisions derived through consensus; and
- clearly defined and agreed upon tasks (McGregor, 1960, p. 26).

The collaborative learning approach to education focuses on the importance of community, not individualism. Consequently, many new collaborative learning models and methods have been developed and a variety of challenges have emerged. Frameworks such as role theory and role conflict (McKenna, 1981), cognitive maps (Petrie, 1976), models of professional functioning (Qualls, & Czirr, 1988), and small group dynamics (Kane, 1975) have been developed for understanding these challenges.

Toner et al., (1994) state that "self-education in the interdisciplinary team setting is best achieved in an environment that is informal, encourages face-to-face interaction among members, and uses a structure that is determined by consensus" (p. 57). Further "the purpose ... is to improve communication and facilitate more effective interdisciplinary team relations. Team members are most often not strangers to one another. They share a history as staff at their work site and bring to the team meetings their perceptions of that history. In fact, the team members' perceptions of their shared history are bound to influence their actions and interactions in the team. The team members also come in contact with one another outside the team meetings, and the team facilitators are most often totally unaware of these external interactions. Another fact to be understood is that team members are not accountable and responsible only to themselves; they are accountable to the larger group, the institution or organization. Consequently, some members arrive at team meetings with authority, power, and status. This can exert an overwhelming influence on the functioning of a team, depending on team types" (p. 58). They state also that

Although there are numerous types of teams, including unidisciplinary, intradisciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary (Takamura, 1983), the influence of history, power, and authority is less problematic for the well-functioning interdisciplinary team. (p. 58)

The RCIP Model: A Case in Collaborative Action Research

As mentioned earlier in this paper, collaborative action research assumes self-education and cooperative learning. The Reflective and Critical Internship (RCIP Model) also assumes that reflection is a social process and not purely an individual

process. The reality is that prospective teachers, supervisors, cooperating teachers, seconded teachers and administrators are all active learners. Hence, in terms of the data we examine in this paper, we want to learn from the voices of the seconded teachers. We want to identify aspects of their particular interests, motivation and general ambitions at this stage of their professional development and careers. Our overall objective is to identify windows of opportunities and conditions that might enable us to collaborate with those in the field in building interdisciplinary teams for the development and delivery of a reflective and critical internship experience, as one aspect of the teacher education program.

As part of our effort to build interdisciplinary teams, we were required to develop an environment of trust and respect so that various participants involved could feel safe to voice their concerns. We knew that participants bring their own histories and specific concerns to the interactive settings, and that incentive to participate in team-work varies from participant to participant and is, of course, connected to their past experiences. Also the participants' willingness to participate in interdisciplinary team work is very much dependent upon the structure of the institutions in which they work, the stage of their career development, and their future plans as individuals and professionals. These and other factors influence participants' willingness to relearn new roles in order to become team players.

In the long run, the RCIP Model aspires to engage in the development of critical communities of practitioners. Given the changing nature of the delivery of the internship program in the Faculty of Education, it is envisioned that such communities would be developed through the building of interdisciplinary teams in various school districts and regions. The role of collaborative interdisciplinary teams would be to reflect on, and deal critically with, current issues and dilemmas faced by teacher interns, and those who work with them, during the internship period. The overall goal is for all participants involved with the delivery of an effective, reflective and critical component of internship programs in teacher education in this province to be engaged in both individual and collective professional development. For example, interdisciplinary and collaborative team work may improve conditions in which teacher interns work by improving the teachers' work place in general. It is within this context that we now describe our efforts to build an interdisciplinary team in the Faculty of Education.

On the Nature of Doing Reflective Interdisciplinary Team-work in the Faculty of Education

As an interdisciplinary research team, we realized from the beginning that it would be unrealistic to think that our work could be carried out in any meaningful way without others, i.e., we needed external collaboration. We invited cooperating teachers, seconded teachers, interns, administrators and our colleagues in the faculty, whose responsibility it was to deliver the internship program, to participate in this project. We never underestimated the fact that each category of people brought its own cultural capital to the internship program and had much knowledge to offer about the culture of schools. Our own orientation was to establish reflective sites in which we could share, dialogue, listen to others, examine what they had to say, and ultimately learn from their experiences. We realized that respecting others' local theorizing, and genuinely trusting their insights about the complex nature of schooling, were the key factors in establishing good communication and working relationships.

One of our focus areas was to specifically work with seconded teachers. To this end, we contacted twelve seconded teachers and discussed our intention to build a Reflective and Critical Internship Program in the Faculty of Education. They cooperated with us by consenting to let us interview them in depth regarding their reflections and perceptions about the internship program based on their own perceptions about, and experience in, the Newfoundland school system. Each interview lasted approximately two hours. In the informal setting of our offices or theirs, we explored issues pertaining to their roles and experiences as internship supervisors. We recorded their responses and made extensive notes. Our purpose was to sensitize ourselves about how seconded teachers analyzed dominant practices and discourses concerning not only the internship program, but also the larger issues of teacher education. We learned how each of us, through the process of dialogue, questioning and reflection, was able to add a critical aspect to our respective involvements with the internship program.

Another way we attempted to make the internship critical was to function as cultural workers. We tried to insert in the ongoing conversations our own concerns about the difference between teacher education and teacher training. We saw the internship program as a site not only for learning classroom management techniques, although we fully realized the fact that these techniques formed the overriding concern of many teacher interns and seconded teachers. We asserted that pedagogy was a form of cultural and political production rather than simply a transmission of knowledge and skills. Part of our intention was to share with others our understanding of pedagogy. We wanted to share how pedagogy helped all of us to recognize our own relationships with each other and our environment. How else could we establish working, collaborative relationships with all those involved in teacher education in this province? How else could we understand the relationship between schooling, education, and the dynamics of social power? How else could we understand the consistencies or inconsistencies between what we say and do? How else could we understand what we agree to exclude or include? How else could we accept the authority of some experts and deny that of others? How else could we accept the privileging or legitimizing of one form of vision about the future of this province over another?

Yet another way we attempted to insert a critical aspect towards building the Reflective and Critical Internship Program was to encourage others at the interview sites to produce local knowledge and a language of possibility through the process of local theorizing. Our interviews with the seconded teachers, the cooperating teachers, and

the teacher interns are filled with local theorizing on various aspects of the complex nature of schooling and classrooms. Learning to conceptualize one's own everyday life experiences in one's own voice is a step toward becoming a reflective and critical person. Recognizing that one has the ability, the linguistic resources, and above all, the courage and confidence to theorize, is another step in opening windows of possibility.

Our transcribed material revealed to us that, to an extent, we were successful in creating safe spaces for the participants who were then able to create a language of possibility for themselves and others. This form of practice enabled participants to create sites where they could imagine the possibility of achieving their desires and fulfilling their wishes. The seconded teachers, for example, saw the Reflective and Critical Internship Program as a site where they could genuinely contribute to the advancement of teacher education in this province. These experienced teachers could see their roles and visualize structural changes that could be brought about in the existing educational system so as to build bridges between teachers in schools and professors at the Faculty of Education... bridges that could lead to a stronger linking of theory and practice. Specifics of these ideas can be found through the voices of seconded teachers.

We also involved the cooperating teachers in these mini-reflective sites. Inviting the cooperating teachers to share extensive notes on teacher interns, we opened ourselves to the critique of the practising cooperating teachers. How else could we find out what the practising classroom teachers bring to the internship? In our orientation seminars, and in reading the literature in the area of teacher education, we heard repeatedly that university-based supervisors often have little knowledge of real classroom situations and that what they often have to offer as advice is too theoretical. We compared and contrasted our notes, recognizing and respecting each other's situational authority as experts at different levels of the schooling process. The teacher interns and their cooperating teachers also compared and contrasted their notes separately. Then at the mini-reflective sites, we entered into the reflection process. Our intention was to accord recognition to the different voices, privileging each of them in their own authentic ways.

Besides creating the mini-reflective sites in the school settings, we created other sites for reflection in the Faculty of Education, e.g., group sessions with interns and supervisors. We saw these reflective sessions as sites away from school routines. The main purpose for using the group setting was to create a site and opportunity where the teacher interns could voice their experiences of the internship, reflect together on those experiences, and also share their experiences with others at different levels of reflectiveness. We conceptualized the reflective sessions as being sites in which we would be enabled to practise reflection-in-action. These reflective sessions have since become a regular feature of the internship program in the faculty.

The Voices of the Seconded Teachers

In this section we describe the results of one of the areas from our research with the Internship Program. In our reflective sessions with seconded teachers as supervisors (ST's) and cooperating teachers (CT's), we focused primarily on listening to their assessment of the unfolding nature of teacher education generally and the teacher internship program in this province specifically. We now share some of their ideas and concerns about these areas.

It is clear from data collected that the supervising teachers and cooperating teachers perceive the internship experience to be a significant element in the professional and personal development of all parties involved in teacher education. Following is typical of the statements ST's and CT's have made in their interviews:

I think it's invaluable to any intern to get some practical experience before they launch off on their own careers on their own. Because they do develop some idea of what it takes to plan and I mean what it takes to deal with classroom management, what it takes to deliver a lesson, what it takes to evaluate homework and to evaluate exams and so on. This is all practical experience and the advantage of doing it through an internship is that if they make mistakes there's two or three people available to help bail them out...There's the cooperating teacher and there's the university supervisor. (D-35)

Generally, these teachers recognize their contribution to the continuing development of the internship program. For example, this seconded teacher said:

Well, I think the internship programme is definitely one of the most important things that students do in becoming teachers... I worked on this last year with six teachers and at that time, we did really put a lot of thought into how we felt the internship programme could be developed, you know, in the way that it would suit the schools and the teachers and the interns best. (M-1)

The seconded teachers' perception of their role in the internship process is a very positive one. They believe strongly that they have something very special to offer, i.e., the skills and competencies which the university-based professor/supervisors and the cooperative teachers, may not be able to offer. They believe they bring a unique perspectives from teaching experiences in the school system. The following quote from ST's typically represent this type of perception held by them:

I think the very nature of the two experiences [teacher vs. professor] makes the difference and I'm going to say that my view is that the active teacher who is seconded, to be a supervisor might have the edge over the university professor who hasn't been in the classroom situation for some time. I feel very strongly about that as a matter of fact. (D-4-5)

The ST's claim also they have a sense of classroom realities which the university professors and interns do not seem to have. Following are some typical statements made by the ST's during the reflective interviews we conducted with them:

I think they [seconded teachers] have acquired a lot of insights through their experience. And the experience is not just contained, or limited to a school. Many of us have been on Department of Education meetings or committees and many NTA committees and special interest councils... I've given conferences, I've been involved in curriculum development. These are all the things that you do that are sort of high - level things, and yet at the same time you've got to learn how to deal with the menial tasks of everyday life within the school. (P-29)

These [seconded teachers] are the people who know where it is at. These are people who are not at arm's lengths from the education of children in whatever level you're talking about. They haven't been distanced from it and therefore they know exactly what you talk about when you talk about the stress of having somebody in your class who may be a behaviour problem, you know. (A-5-6)

The ST's also believe their relationship with school-based cooperating teachers can be more objective than the relationship between cooperating teacher, university professors and interns. They feel their ability to be objective enables them to reduce the tension that often exists between cooperating teachers and teacher interns. The belief of ST's is that, in many cases, both teacher interns and cooperating teachers prefer supervisory involvement by the ST's over that of university professors.

The ST's also attach some degree of status, prestige and pride to the position of seconded teacher as university supervisor. They seem to view this position located somewhere between the cooperating teachers who are still in the classroom and the university-based supervisors who are structurally located at in Faculty of Education, Memorial University. To summarize briefly, they seem to believe they were selected as internship supervisors because in the eyes of their school boards they were the most effective teachers, a "model" or "master teacher", in terms of personal and professional abilities and competencies. They were the best suited teachers to carry out the role of supervising interns at the University level. They also felt ethically responsible to correct what they perceive to be weakness in the pre-service programs offered to students in the Faculty of Education. Following are typical statements by ST's conveying this type of perception:

It's nice to be recognized for your contribution and they can say and they can look at you and say you're good, you're a very effective teacher. You've been involved in many aspects of with our board and we're, here's a little bonus for you... We're giving you four months in at the university. Again the staff looks at it ...as status to know that you're going in there, you've gotten this opportunity, you're working at the university. All these things mean a lot to other people on staff. (P-3 2)

It gave me some recognition... to the extent that other people asked my advice on different things that came up within the school and that sort of thing. Well right now the seconded teacher and the university supervisor are playing the same role basically. (C-4-5)

In this role of supervisor, you have more autonomy as compared to in the schools... You probably would not be looked up as closely and

watched... You have been given this intern because you are perceived as being a good role model and so on. (J-18 -19)

The ST's envision a valuable role for experienced teachers in the internship program. They believe recent initiatives surrounding current educational reform in this province can provide new vistas or windows of opportunity for creating new roles for school-based experienced teachers. However, throughout the interviews, they have addressed a number of issues that underscore the complexity of their potential involvement in the internship program as supervisors. These include the selection process, teacher evaluation, defining a "good" or "master" teacher, and ongoing professional development.

Regarding the selection and acceptability of seconded teachers as university supervisors, the following claim was made:

I'm going to assume that when a teacher is seconded to become supervisor of interns that he has been selected very carefully and that he's reputable... when the seconded teacher comes to somebody else's school with an intern there's no question if he comes to them, with a poor reputation that precedes him, I don't think he's going to be well accepted. Well let's assume a good reputation precedes or no reputation at all and he's given the benefit of the doubt. My experience is then that he is accepted quite readily. They seem to like the idea that, "Oh, here's an active teacher, somebody who just got pulled out of the classroom to do this job, coming in now to watch this intern as he attempts to become an active teacher. (D-8-9)

So do I want my effectiveness...as a teacher evaluated? Who do I want to be evaluated by...who do I feel is suitable to evaluate me? I don't know. I've had real problems with that. (M-21)

In relation to defining a "good" or "master" teacher, these comments were made:

So what I perceive as being a good model for supervising internship programs is to have the school board identify so called master teachers, teachers who have shown effectiveness in the classroom, who have good classroom management skills and just seem to be able to deal effectively with the students and with the teachers in the school because it's all part of the whole dynamics of what goes on. And it's part I feel of being a master teacher, not only being able to get along with your students but , you know, to be an active part of the whole school system. So you have your school board identify your so called master teachers, teachers who are effective in many aspects. (C-1)

I would suggest that if you asked six people for a description of a good teacher you might get six different things. And then I might suggest that the good teacher might fit into all six categories. He might be all six of these. I'm not sure if you know when you ask an individual what does a good teacher do, if they listed down all of the characteristics of the good teacher. If each of the staff members and let's suppose there were ten staff members involved, and if they listed

all of the characteristics of good teacher then I believe you would have some common things but if you asked them for one or two, you might find that they'd all give you different ones. I think there is, there is some consensus. (D-11-14)

Some seconded teachers envisioned that their experience gained through the role of ST's would have an impact on their future practice and ongoing professional development. These comments reflect some of their ideas in this regard:

I'm going back to a classroom when I finish this job in April, and I'm going back with some good ideas. I'm going back with some new combinations of pieces of literature that I have never put together before, some new insights... I think I'm going back a little bit revived. I believe, too, when the school board selected me, or when my principal selected me, they may have had that in mind. It's not exactly been retraining, but I think it has been a source of revitalization and so it's been good for me, as I hope it's been good for my interns. (D-28-29)

Seconded teachers are aware of the dialectical relationships between university supervisors, cooperating teachers and interns. Such an awareness is an essential component of effective collaborative and team-work. This seconded teacher states:

Now, cooperating teachers are sometimes very hesitant because that they don't feel comfortable in telling the intern that they think what they were doing was really wrong or really shouldn't have been done... It's almost like a buddy relationship develops between them, between the cooperating teacher and the intern whereas I have no difficulty... So I think the supervisor has a different relationship with the intern in that it's not this buddy-colleague thing that's going on between the intern and the cooperating teacher. So I think that we, coming in from the university, I don't know if you could call it more of a detached relationship than they already have. (J-10-11)

We have a hands-off policy. It wouldn't be professionally ethical to approach you and say, excuse me, have you ever thought about... We very much respect the autonomy of teachers in their classrooms with their students, and I think sometimes that carries over in our relationships with teacher/interns. We find it easy to praise the strengths. We find it very difficult, somehow, to address the weaknesses and find ways of changing that behaviour. And sometimes that's what causes a lot of cooperating teachers stress, I think. Even as a teacher/supervisor, a teacher/intern, that's the one thing I find myself that I struggle more with. When I see a need that should be addressed, I really have to think about it a lot and try to determine what is the very best way of approaching that particular thing so that it is a positive experience. (M-10)

While the above quotations from seconded teachers are revealing, it is important to remember that these perspectives represent a limited portion of the complete data. This data are rich and, as indicated above, speak to the complexity of

the internship program as well as to the challenges of working within collaborative research models.

Conclusion

In this paper we have described briefly the nature of collaborative research as it applies to our work with the internship program at the Faculty of Education. Specifically, we focussed on that part of our collaborative research efforts which involved seconded teachers as university supervisors. Data from this research informs us of some of the attitudes, perceptions, understandings, experiences, beliefs, and values that this sample of seconded teachers bring to the internship experience. This data also indicates a myriad of issues related to the nature of collaboration and team-work that can inform ongoing development of the internship program. Such data highlights the need for team interdependence and collaboration as a means to further developing a reflective and critical internship program.

As noted above, seconded teachers are fully aware of the contribution they can make to the continuing development of the internship program. Further to this, they perceive the internship experience to be a very significant aspect of their professional development. They see their involvement in a very positive light and believe they bring a unique perspective to internship supervision. These seconded teachers indicate that there is some degree of status and prestige given to the position of university internship supervisor. They see these positions as windows of opportunities for creating new roles for school-based teachers. This is very much in keeping with transformative aspects of collaborative action research as outlined by Oja and Smulyan (1989).

It is important to note that, in addition to feelings of pride generated from their involvement with internship supervision, there are also some concerns. These stem from insecurities as expressed through comments and questions about the selection process. Many seconded teachers were, in fact, unaware of how they themselves were selected to be supervisors. They note the potential for politics, as well as the realities and challenges surrounding teacher evaluation, in the selection process. However, these seconded teachers realized that the experience gained through supervising in the internship program would have a positive impact on their own teaching and professional growth.

Seconded teachers indicated to us that they are very aware of the delicate relationships between university supervisors, cooperating teachers and interns. Given the nature of these complex relationships and working arrangements, it is incumbent on those of us working in the Faculty of Education to take responsibility in building a "culture of collaboration" (Gitlin et. al, 1994) between all parties involved the development and delivery of the internship program. In this way, we can help develop critical communities of educational practitioners.

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ENDNOTES

*This paper is a shorter version of the paper we presented at the 5th Atlantic Educators' Conference, October 13-15, 1995, St. John's, Newfoundland. See, A. Singh, C. Doyle, A. Rose and W. Kennedy, Interdisciplinary Education Team Development, Collaboration and The Reflective Internship, pp. 1-76. Also, see Kennedy, W. (Bill) and Doyle, C. (1995).

MISCELLANEOUS

**IS IT JUST ME? SELF-DOUBT AND DELUSION IN MOVING
TO SHARED DECISION-MAKING: THE CASE OF
RED RIVER ELEMENTARY**

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Introduction

Leadership studies have a long tradition. O'Toole (1995), in reviewing and comparing ideas about basic philosophies of leadership, begins with the ideas of Plato and Confucius. He draws the conclusion that one model of leadership, that of the "strong leader", has dominated the thinking of society and that model has become part of our cultural conditioning. He affirms:

The idea that leadership is a solo act - that it is a privilege, in Plato's words, reserved for "one, two, or at any rate, a few" - has been part of both Western and Eastern philosophy for two and a half millennia. (p. 88)

He argues that although society has tolerated and endorsed other forms of leadership, "when push comes to shove, the two-thousand-year-old attitude about the superiority of strongmen emerges from the collective unconscious" (p. 90). If that assessment is accurate, then it is little wonder that schools intent on implementing team leadership and moving to shared decision-making and collaborative work cultures are experiencing difficulty.

This paper is a description of one school's attempt to move away from the model of the principal as "the solo act" and "the strong leader" to one in which shared decision-making is emphasized, where teachers are expected to assume the role of leader, and formal leaders therefore to act as leaders of leaders. The findings of this study support O'Toole's conclusion that such a movement is difficult, forcing participants to challenge their old mental models of what leadership is and how it is practised. This is understandable for it challenges the cultural norms that determine the role and function of both administrators and teachers.

As Brown (1993) discovered in her study of ten secondary schools, there is a major division in schools between administrators and teachers. Classroom teachers, departments heads, guidance counsellors, special education teachers, other curriculum resource teachers, and teacher-librarians, all see themselves as teachers, not administrators. The use of the terms "leader" or "leadership" is problematic in educational research, in that teachers also tend to associate these terms with formal leaders (administrators) and administration (Brown, 1993). Therefore, teachers, regardless of their role, do not tend to identify or to describe themselves as leaders. In this paper, an attempt is being made to close the gap between these two major divisions, to examine and discuss the roles of both formal (administrators) and informal (teachers) leaders.

The Case Study

The Context and An Overview of Red River Elementary

Red River Elementary School¹ is a kindergarten to grade six school with 450 students and a staff of 28 teachers, with one full time administrative unit which is shared between the principal and the vice principal. It is next door to Red River Junior High School, a modern building which draws approximately 470 students for grades 7 to 9 from various schools. The school is served by a district office that is responsible for a large geographical area based in the town of Red River. Recently Red River Elementary has experienced a large turnover in staffing with 60% of the staff having taught there less than three years. Students range in socio economic background from upper middle class to poor. The school is located in a town that is also the local area service center.

Red River Elementary² has made substantial gains in moving towards a collaborative work environment. The principal, Mrs. Senior, described how, ten years earlier, there were two distinct staffs, primary and elementary, who did not even talk to one another:

No one talked to each other, there was no staff room, teachers stayed in their own room, and the primaries got together in one room. It was primarily a bitching session.

Mrs. Senior, who was the vice-principal for most of these ten years, worked hard with the principal at the time and several other staff members, to bring teachers together. It began with social events, such as brunches, cross-country skiing outings, and supper parties. Staff meetings became opportunities to share coffee and muffins. As soon as space became available, a classroom was renovated to make a large staff room, big enough to accommodate the whole staff. Mrs. Senior reflects:

We worked hard at doing something special together every month to bring everyone together. The principal was very people-centered and made it easy for people to work together. We learned a lot from him. I would say that was the beginning of it but it has evolved over time.

In the previous two years, the school had been involved with multiple initiatives. The main ones were:

A new student evaluation program. This was mandated by the district and involved a great deal of work by teachers since it involved testing (Pre & Post), conferencing, and individualized objectives.

Reading recovery program. This program was initiated by the school in response to test scores which revealed that some Grade Three students were as much as 18 months behind their appropriate reading level. Through teacher cooperation in class at locations, primary teachers provided extra help in remedial reading by adding an extra period for the end of their day and instituted a Home Reading Program.

Global Education. The school was selected as one of a number of provincial global schools. Out of five possible global education themes, the school selected Peace Education and Recycling for special emphasis. Peace Education was seen as tying into the school's focus on school discipline, specifically on conflict resolution.

Recycling was aimed at recycling paper collected in the school. Global Education was seen as part of enrichment, integrated across the curriculum, rather than an add-on.

Computers. The school identified the need to update computer resources for students, and within the previous two year had raised \$44,000 through external funding and community fund raising. A teacher was hired who could work with the school's half-time teacher-librarian to support classroom teachers attempting to integrate computers into their curriculum. In the first year, the emphasis was on teacher training, in the second year it moved to students. The school had a modern computer lab, entirely networked.

Enrichment. The school was concerned about challenging gifted children and teachers were trying a variety of approaches: an accelerated mathematics program was tried in grade five, contracts were available for independent work, some students were pulled out for special attention by a resource teacher. As well, enrichment clusters (using teacher and community volunteers) allowed students to pursue special interests in a variety of areas (for example, ceramics).

Multi-age groupings. This type of class was offered as an alternative approach for students and teachers. One class already operated in the school, another was being planned.

Discipline. After consultation with the school community, the staff had adopted a school-wide discipline policy and enforced standard rules for lunch supervision.

Mathematics. Due to declining test scores, Mathematics Achievement was placed at top of a list of initiatives. Meetings were held with the district program coordinator for mathematics and action plans developed.

Stage One: New Beginnings for Leadership

The school had already experienced a failed first attempt at a formal School Improvement process a few years earlier. One teacher commented that it never really got off the ground, so a new approach was begun after a four-member Leadership Team (vice-principal and three teachers) attended a district sponsored Leadership Institute in the last week of August, just prior to school re-opening. When school began in September, an invitation was extended to other teachers to join the Team, and two volunteered. With the addition of the principal, a seven-member Leadership Team was formed in the school.

The staff decided to become part of the Team Leadership project, a continuation from the August Institute. In a staff leadership survey administered at that time, 92% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement: "Teachers work in teams with colleagues across grade levels in our school" and 100% described their school as participatory, democratic, and collaborative. Eighty-four percent of the

respondents attributed "a lot" of leadership coming from a committee composed of administrators and teachers. With such results, it was felt that the school was a likely site for successful team leadership. There was considerable evidence of the existence of a culture that would support such leadership, illustrated by this remark by one teacher immediately following the Leadership Institute:

Just attending the week long institute made me feel more of a part of a school team. I learned more about my teaching peers over this week than I did over the past three years. I'll always feel a closeness to them that wasn't there before.

Therefore, at the beginning of the new school year in Stage One, Red River Elementary appeared to be positioned to move towards a decentralized leadership approach and shared decision-making. The principal, who described herself as a collaborative leader, demonstrated a commitment to shared decision-making and an enlarged role for the Leadership Team. Although she had missed attending the Leadership Institute due to a prior family commitment, she was briefed by her vice-principal and independently read all the reading material from the Institute. She was willing to try new forms of leadership, including the use of a Leadership Team, and had agreed to the idea that the chair for Leadership Team meetings would rotate (a suggestion made in one of the Institute readings). The principal, vice-principal, and two of the teachers on the Team, kept journals for the first four months after the Leadership Institute. An examination of entries made by all four in the first two months reveals contrasting views between administrators and teachers, a significant finding which will be explored more deeply in this paper.

Although the principal had endorsed the Leadership Team, she was sceptical about the idea of a rotating chair. She was willing to give it a try, but she was doubtful about its potential -- in her journal she noted that it may "possibly" work, but "I think we will find that 'the Principal' will have to act as the chairperson continually out of necessity. But we'll see." Six week later, in her journal, she was sceptical about the whole concept of a Leadership Team and questioned its applicability to a school:

The leadership team concept appears to be built upon an industrialized concept. But unless I take a different approach than what we are doing, this is not going to work. I cannot call a board meeting at 10 o'clock in the morning. The only time for us to meet is after 3 o'clock -- not exactly the best time for decision-making. We seem to be working in isolation, not even discussing our journals. Time is the reality we are working under. Should I refocus team?

To add to her problems, the members of the Leadership Team had made a decision that their only committee work would be that of being a member of the Team. Mrs. Senior was forced to soon question the wisdom of that decision.

We decided one committee only in this case, the leadership team, but I don't know if this is best scenario. This is ineffective, another layer. I seem to be doing more, but going nowhere. Let's examine what we are about. How to make this work? WHEN??

The problem was that there were numerous other school committees but all her best leaders were on the Leadership Team. She began to be plagued by self-doubt,

seeing herself as less effective as a leader. She began to question the whole Team Leadership initiative:

Feeling really constrained -- my decision making and action time have really slowed down it seems. Whether or not its true, I perceive myself to be less effective in "time taken to getting things done" -- Is it just me? Every time I talk to another principal, they seem to have moved on. Are they involved in this "Leadership Team Initiative"? How will this team fit in with school councils?

Nor was she alone in her concerns. The vice-principal, also a member of the Leadership Team, had similar concerns:

In looking at the agenda for our meeting tomorrow "Examining our roles", I am questioning the whole idea of what is the role of the leadership team & of its individual members. Are we the facilitators for getting things actioned? Is it our responsibility to carry the brunt of the workload? We are full-time teachers. In primary/elementary schools we do not get time like department heads at the high school level. Often the staff will come up with novel ideas, but few take the initiative to act upon them. Once a "leader" steps onto a committee, it seems that the "leader" also ends up doing the work.

She was also feeling overwhelmed:

As far as the leadership team is concerned, with my other three hats (Kindergarten - half time, but because Kindergarten day is a half day, I'm still responsible for a full program; remedial teacher and vice-principal). I'm feeling pressure to take even more responsibility and I haven't yet found a way to make 25 hours out of a day!!

However, the teachers were seeing things differently. A teacher on the Leadership Team was much more positive: "Our principal also said we will all take turns chairing our committee meetings. I really feel a sense of being an active participant in decision making." At the end of two months, when the two administrators are questioning the whole process, the same teacher observed: "Our voice truly counts in these meetings and all sides are weighed. Our principal really does sit back, listen and value our input." Another teacher on the Team who kept a journal was also positive about the whole process and had begun to assume responsibility outside her own classroom. After having attended a conference on global education on behalf of the school, she commented that school-wide leadership for this initiative would work, that leadership "will filter down from the leadership team."

Stage Two: Leadership Roles Stabilize

By Spring, the Leadership team had worked out their roles and Team members were assuming a major leadership role in the school. The idea of a rotating chair for the Team had been dropped by the previous Christmas. There was agreement for this move. One teacher member of the Leadership Team recorded in her journal that much of the work of the Committee was driven by "directives" from outside the school, and therefore it made sense to have the principal assume the chair permanently:

It was decided by the team that in the interest of time (of which there is precious little) the chair will not rotate. The principal will chair Leadership meetings because so much of what we do/discuss comes out of Board/Department directives or initiatives. The principal is first in line to hear these things. She would have to meet with the chair each time prior to a meeting to explain the agenda. Neither party has the time to expend at this.

Time was indeed a concern, for the school was a busy place, with a complicated committee structure coordinated through the Leadership Team. The way to have ongoing consultation with teachers and involve them in the decision-making process was seen as through committees. Separate committees were already in existence from previous years for: Primary, Elementary, Global Education, Enrichment, Extra Curricular, Student Evaluation, Public Relations/Yearbook, Social, Learning Resources/Technology, Mathematics, Science, Health, and Spelling. Each of the seven members of the Leadership Team were chairing one or more of the school's major committees. The Principal expressed satisfaction with the coordination through the Leadership Team, because she felt it provided good communication between the Team and all the Committees. However, scheduling in order to accommodate the members and also to allow the principal to attend as many different meetings as possible, became complicated. The first Monday of each month was for staff meetings, the second week was used for committee meetings, with different committees meeting on different days, allowing the principal to attend them all. The third Monday of the month was used for an extra staff meeting if needed, and the fourth Monday was for grade level meetings (as needed). The principal and vice-principal devised a committee reporting form designed to record the actions undertaken and decisions made for every committee meeting. These forms were to be passed in to the principal, who would read them all (to keep herself informed) and then file them in a section of the School Profile binder.

The Principal, aware that the members of the Team were full time teachers and received no release time to undertake extra responsibilities, thought it ought to be her role to undertake actions that were necessary but would be extra work for teachers. The result for the principal, and many of the teachers, was that almost every afternoon was blocked with after school meetings. To catch up on administrative work, the principal admitted that she was back in her office most nights: Monday to Thursday evenings until 10 or 11 p.m., except for two Tuesday nights a month which she and the vice-principal took off to attend a Women's Group, and she usually also worked a half-day on Saturday and/or Sunday, depending on the amount of work piled up. The work was such that seldom, she explained, was she the only one back after hours; often the vice-principal was, and some other teachers.

Some teachers felt that there was a change in the leadership approach in the school. One teacher commented: "There has been a move away from top-down leadership to consensual decision-making where all staff are involved." Although teachers generally felt that their voices were being heard and they were included more in the decision-making process, this was especially true for those teachers who were on the leadership team. One such teacher, when asked if she saw herself as a leader, commented:

That depends on the definition of "leader". But I certainly feel that I am participating in decision-making, contributing ideas, am listened to, have opportunities to be involved. I think that I affect the decisions that are made. If that's being a leader, then I'm a leader. But I don't

ever pretend to be on the scale of the principal or VP or other very competent teachers who are breaking new ground. I don't see myself as a leader in that way.

The role of the principal was seen by a staff member as changing with the introduction of a Leadership Team:

Over the year this position, I think, has changed dramatically. Now there is less authoritarianism and less decision-making centered in the office... Very solid direction, great deal more consultation, openness, a notion of principal as leader. [There's a] notion of collaboration and co-workers but this does not diminish the recognition that this person is the chief manager in the school.

A veteran teacher in the school commented, "There is not as much one-sided information sharing. It has been more collaborative and getting concerns from the staff."

Stage Three: Coopted Team Leadership or Shared Decision Making?

A year later, an interview with the principal revealed that committees were still functioning and the Leadership Team, meeting twice a month, coordinated the committee activities. The principal still tried to attend all meetings, for as she explained: "I do go, I like to keep my finger on things, that's my option though. They go and take care of it. I don't feel obligated to go to all of them. I do try, but they know it's their responsibility." No new initiatives had been introduced, although the principal had undertaken to work closely with parents, attempting to establish a school council. Parents and students were involved with the school council steering committee, the discipline committee, and the global education committee. The principal explained that the Leadership Team had been trying to decide where to focus their energies. The members of the Team had developed a democratic way to choose "which initiatives to keep an eye on" (through chairing the appropriate committee).

There was no doubt but that the principal was proud of Red River Elementary. She took pride in the fact that the school tried "a lot of things because we're interested in breaking with tradition". One such example was the global education initiative which was wanted by all the staff, Mrs. Senior felt, because "We are constantly looking at such things." She concluded, "I would say we are probably the most nontraditional school" in the district.

The question of concern in this study, however, was whether or not the leadership initiative had made a difference in leadership approach and in shared decision making in the school. To obtain an answer to that question, the principal and one teacher were asked, during separate interviews, to sketch a diagram to show how leadership looked in the school. The principal's sketch revealed that collaboration and shared decision making existed, but only within the parameters of the traditional hierarchy. Although her illustration was that of an interactive web which included parents, students, teachers, and administrators, the principal's role was shown as traditional, for as she said: "I'm the ultimate decision maker, I have to be. I'm part of the team, but eventually I'm the one who has to make the decisions. The buck stops with me." She placed herself in the center of the Leadership Team's circle. She noted that the vice-principal's role was important in making decisions but it is interesting to observe how the vice-principal's role supported the traditional role of the principal:

When it comes down to making that final decision, she's my sounding board and she shares with me her thoughts and we take into consideration what the total Team is saying to us.

The vice-principal had no problem with this role, for as she explained, while discussing the use of consensus in staff meetings, "Regardless of the procedure, the Principal is ultimately accountable and has final say."

Within this traditional role, Mrs. Senior explained that she consulted with the Leadership Team, that when items came across her desk, "Then I'll go to the Team and ask what they think." This, she explained, was a change in her way of consulting with teachers: "Now I bounce it off the Leadership Team but before I would bounce it off the entire staff." The new process, then, was seen by the principal as one in which there has been an extra step created between her and the staff. That extra step, she felt, caused her to be frustrated during the previous fall, when she was trying to understand and introduce the concept of a Leadership Team in the school. Prior to this, her leadership approach was to first discuss things with the vice-principal, then take it directly to the full staff. Now she consulted with both the vice-principal and the Leadership Team prior to taking matters to the full staff. Therefore, she concluded that a Leadership Team was probably not necessary nor needed. She felt she could "live with" such a Team since, as she explained, "I think they've helped me do what I normally would have done." Although she recognized a slight shift in leadership approach, she did not see that it contributed to better decision making: "I felt we were there before we ever went to a Leadership Team Approach. I really did."

Teachers, however, did not see it this way. In sharp contrast to the principal's perception, another member of the leadership team, a teacher leader, interviewed at the same time as the principal, saw leadership as more equalitarian. In his discussion of schoolwide leadership, he limited his discussion to leadership for curriculum delivery. In his sketch of leadership in the school, curriculum was placed in the centre, surrounded by a group of co-workers (principal, teacher-librarian, classroom teachers, special services teacher), all of whom delivered the curriculum to the students who were placed in an outer circle. The co-workers within the circle were closely connected, although some individuals were more closely connected to some colleagues than to others. He saw leadership being provided by "a group of equals working to deliver the curriculum" with the emphasis on the student:

We all have little roles to fulfil that are a little different but it is an equivalent role. We come into significant play at certain times, just as the special services teacher, the classroom teacher, and the principal do at certain times. That's how I see most of my day-to-day role as we work to address the needs of this larger student body.

Analysis and Interpretation

Incompatibility in Perception of Shared Decision-Making

This close examination of implementation at Red River Elementary reveals that team leadership is much more complicated than it first appears. One of the most serious problems for educational researchers seeking to understand the process of implementation of such a concept is that of incompatibility in the perceptions of the degree of shared decision-making actually taking place. There is no doubt but that the

principal was a key player in introducing the concept, and that she has struggled and worked hard at trying to understand it and to implement it. What is noteworthy, however, is that she was never convinced of a need to change the leadership structure in the school, nor did she seem to question her own conception of her role as principal. Describing herself as a collaborative and consultative leader from the very beginning, she did not appear to see a contradiction between that image and the other image she later paints of herself as "the ultimate decision maker". In fact, she has never really challenged the old ways of making decisions in the school. Why then did she participate in the Team Leadership Initiative? In her interviews, she provides two reasons: first, she wanted to cooperate and be involved with what is a district endorsed initiative, for she wanted her school, Red River Elementary, to be on the leading edge of innovation in the district; and second, as a professional, she wanted to be the best principal she could be, and was willing to try new leadership approaches. Although she was doubtful about its use and potential, she did put a Leadership Team in place, but as she herself admitted, it was initially a source of frustration. At the end of the first year, a Leadership Team was in place and its role mainly revolved around the coordination of committees within the school. In the principal's view, it had strengthened and reinforced the old way of doing business, which was making the committees work better. However, the principal felt that nothing had really changed except that, before going to the whole staff, the Leadership Team advised her rather than her having to rely solely on the advice of the vice-principal. Mrs. Senior remains, at least in her own view and that of her vice-principal, the ultimate decision-maker.

Yet, many of the teachers see things differently. Throughout this process, in their survey responses, their journals, and their interviews, they revealed that they perceive the teachers' role in decision-making as having been enlarged. Eight of the ten teachers interviewed reiterated the same message, that they were consulted, that they did have "a great deal to say over those matters which our school controls". Of the two who expressed negative views, one teacher responded, "In some areas, all teachers are given a chance to voice their opinion; other areas not, it seems that administrators decide what gets opened up for discussion." The other, when asked if decisions are reached in a collaborative matter, simply answered, "No, top down."

What can we make of the differences in the perceptions of the administrators and teachers? Are teachers influencing the decision making process as much as they think? Is the principal really the ultimate decision maker in the school? Is she collaborative and consultative? Can she be both? What, if anything, has anything really changed in decision making in the school? There was increased teacher involvement through membership on the Leadership Team, but most teachers' input continued to be through committees, the same as it had been before the Leadership Team was formed. The teachers on the Leadership Team, because they were better informed and met with the Principal regularly, felt that they were influencing decision making in the school. Whose perceptions are accurate?

Two Different Interpretations

At least two different interpretations can be offered. It can be argued that rather than a decision-making role, the teachers on the Leadership Team have been coopted by the administration to assume a monitoring and administrative role, as they monitor committee activities, report back on it to the principal, and generally facilitate the committee work as chairpersons. Although everyone is working extremely hard and feeling the time pressures from all the committee and Leadership Team meetings, this

would suggest that the power relationship between the administrators and the teachers have remained basically unchanged. Now, instead of one vice-principal acting as a "sounding board" between the principal and the whole staff, the Principal can use the six people on the Leadership Team for that purpose. The difference between being a "sounding board" and a genuine participant in shared decision-making is immense. The result is that the principal remains the "ultimate decision maker." But this interpretation does not appear to consistent with the survey data, in which 100% of the respondents described this school as "participatory, democratic, and collaborative."

But maybe there is another interpretation that could explain this difference in perception. Maybe Mrs. Senior believes that as "the principal", the formal leader, she ought to be "the ultimate decision maker", and is uncomfortable admitting even to herself, and certainly to outsiders (in this instance, university researchers) that she depends on others to help her make the best decisions. Maybe Mrs. Senior is, in practice, actually "collaborative and consultative" (as she claims to be) and maybe she does, in fact, rely on shared decision making with the Leadership Team and the rest of the staff to a greater degree than her responses in this study would suggest. Mrs. Senior, like many other formal leaders, may very well hold, buried deep in her unconscious mind, an unexamined, tacit view of leadership such as the model described by O'Toole and quoted in the introduction of this paper: the model of leadership as "a solo act" by the "strong leader." Perhaps Mrs. Senior's own self-doubts about leadership are being revealed in her responses in this study. Can it be that, wanting to give the appearance of being a strong leader to outsiders, she feels compelled to draw on the notion of being the strong, solo leader, the ultimate decision maker? If this is the case, then the teachers' perceptions may indeed be more accurate, and shared decision making may indeed be stronger in the school than the first interpretation would suggest. The inconsistency between administrators' and teachers' perceptions might therefore be explained as the difference between the principal's explicit theory (in which the principal describes herself as collaborative and actually acts that way in practice) and her tacit theory (in which she sees herself as the ideal principal: the ultimate decision maker; the strong, solo leader). This explanation is more consistent with the responses in the staff survey.

There is insufficient evidence to strongly support either interpretation. What is clear is that understanding such a process requires intimate knowledge of the context: the people, the process, the culture. It reveals that implementation and change of leadership approach is a complex process, not transparent even to those involved. This single case study raises interesting questions that can guide future work. Such questions include:

- Are teachers who normally do not see themselves as leaders easily coopted into a facilitative rather than a decision-making role? Or is the facilitative role a valid form of leadership and instrumental in shared decision making? How do teachers define genuine decision-making? Do teachers have low expectations for their role in school-wide decision-making, willing to settle for less than full participation, since they do not see themselves as leaders? What does full participation in school wide decision making look like in practice? What images do teachers have of teacher leaders engaged in shared decision making?
- What images do principals have of shared decision making? Are principals bounded by traditional, tacit models of leadership, of

leadership as a "solo act" of the "strong" leader? If so, what support do they need to challenge their traditional, tacit view of being the ultimate decision maker? Are there differences between principals' tacit and explicit theories of leadership?

- How do school practitioners (administrators and teachers) find the time to engage in genuine shared decision-making?

Conclusion

It is clear from the case study of Red River Elementary that moving towards team leadership and shared decision making is complex and extremely personal. If Red River Elementary is to engage in genuine shared decision-making, Mrs. Senior and the teachers on staff must re-examine the role of committees in decision-making, and discuss frankly the expectations of administrations and teachers surrounding leadership roles. It appears that there is a strong interest in collaboration and shared decision-making in Red River Elementary, but an uncertainty of what this looks like in practice. This case reveals that we cannot assume that those who are willing to explore the potential of team leadership will be able to make such shifts in leadership approach without effort or difficulty. It illustrates that such a leadership model will require participants to challenge their old mental models of what leadership is and how it is practised. Understandably, successful implementation of shared decision-making and team leadership is difficult for it challenges the cultural norms that have determined models of leadership in schools for the past century.

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NOTES

1. Red River is a fictitious name. To protect confidentiality, names have been changed.
2. This case study was conducted over a two year period, with site visits, i institute interventions, interviews, observations, and document analysis (including journal analysis).

STARTING A THESIS, FOLIO, PROJECT OR INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL

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Fall 1998**

Many graduate and undergraduate programs require students to demonstrate their research knowledge by having them complete a major research paper, usually in the form of a thesis, folio, or project. In programs involving a field experience or an internship, candidates are often asked to prepare a similar paper though on a smaller scale. All of these papers start with a proposal. Suggestions for initiating and carrying through the writing of a proposal are offered below.

Several features are common to the development of all proposals. These include finding a legitimate area, identifying a specific topic within that area, identifying a researchable question or a legitimate need, developing a plan to address the question or need and, finally, the formal writing of the proposal. The final document thus states the problem or need, explains its importance, gives an overview of the supporting literature, and outlines your 'proposed' way of dealing with it.

The Starting Point - Understanding the Reasons for the Task

Your research paper is not intended just to offer you one more learning experience or just to test you one more time! While the learning and testing aspects are certainly there, so is the goal of adding to the corpus of knowledge owned by your discipline. Your paper should be an original work that makes a contribution to your field. Your research focus must thus be legitimate or, in other words, recognized by others in the field as adding to the useful knowledge of the field.

Your paper may contribute in various ways. In papers addressing a "question", the work may be of an exploratory, descriptive or hypothetical nature. Exploratory papers seek to identify or perhaps support the existence of phenomena and novel, not understood situations, patterns or relationships deemed to be of potential importance or significance. Here the research explores the phenomenon to determine if it is 'real' and not a mis-perception, hoax or some type of error. Descriptive papers follow closely on exploratory papers. In these, the effort is to describe phenomena and catalogue the attributes of those events which have been delimited. In hypothetical papers, one seeks theoretical (i.e., constructed) explanations for the information or data gathered through descriptive research. Here, one might alternatively seek to identify predictive relationships that exist within the information described.

In "need focused" papers, the effort is toward the clarification of issues, the development of theoretical positions or the summarizing and integration of information. "Need" focused papers (i.e., projects) can also be aimed at solving problems through developing intervention strategies or perhaps the creation of new resources or services. In both "question" and "need" focused papers, an original contribution is offered.

A Closer Look at the Goals for Each Type of Research Paper

As suggested, differing types of papers have both shared and more unique, goals. All demand scholarship and all use an academic or scientific methodology to address their target. A folio might explore a question by organizing information, clarifying or identifying issues, summarizing or encouraging policy development or perhaps critically assessing and/or suggesting new directions or initiatives. A project is a need focused paper which typically collects together background information and, based on this information, creates or proposes a new way of meeting that need. A thesis usually seeks to answer a question by verifying and supporting positions, by demonstrating or refuting the existence of particular hypothesized relationships or by testing the legitimacy of a position, explanation or model.

What is done in any the above papers overlaps with what is typically done in an internship. The difference rests primarily in the more limited scope of the work. While it is the goal that an internship study address a need or question of interest to the discipline, this paper is often aimed at meeting a situation specific to a particular setting.

Finding an Area and a Specific Topic or Question

A common question proposed by a candidate is: "What will I do my paper on?". Many people find it hard to narrow down their broad interests to a single specific focus. It is common for a student to say: "I know I want to work in the area of ____ but I don't know exactly what should I focus on". Finding an area, then a topic and finally a focus (i.e., question or need to address) within that area are three somewhat discrete tasks.

(a) Finding Your Area

Finding an area must be your first priority. This task requires you to answer questions like "What would I like to work on for the next three to six (and often more) months?" The most common route begins with your pursuing an interest or topic which is of personal relevance or is a source of genuine curiosity. Perhaps some topic based on your background, a major event in your life, or even a chance comment might offer a start. Some students go to faculty members and ask about areas within the discipline that are current and worthy of in-depth study. Some have the good fortune to find a faculty member whose suggestions "match" what is of interest to the candidate. When a faculty member's interest aligns with yours, you often can skip the next step!

(b) Finding a Topic

Once you have identified an area, you will virtually always find many topics or aspects of that area which could be further researched. There is no known single, quick and easy way to identify a topic. Finding a topic involves addressing questions like: "What do I want to know more about within the area?" or "On what aspect or specialization within the discipline and profession do I want to become more expert?" The topic you pursue will be one about which you will become very informed and one on which you will become a specialist. Often the specific topic you focus upon will follow closely from the same background interest that guided you to the broader discipline or area in the first place! Sometimes a professor or a faculty advisor will alert you to topics or situations that need addressing as you proceed through your program.

The typical routes to identifying a topic involve reflecting on your growing professional interests, talking to professors, scanning texts in the area and learning about what others (both faculty and peers) are doing. Occasionally topics of discussion in special interest or "chat groups" which are found on the World Wide Web might provide a stimulus. Sometimes, a faculty member, recognizing an aspect of your interest or a personal strength, will encourage you to join his or her research. You must be open to a range topics.

If you do not find a topic of personal relevance and personal interest to you, you are likely to find the completion of a major piece of research quite difficult. It should be noted that it is common for a student's interest in a topic to grow as a result of becoming immersed in that literature.

(c) Finding a Question or a Need

Once you have identified your area and a topic, you need to continue to narrow your search and to identify the very specific aspect of the topic that you will focus upon. This focus is the question or need that you will address in your research report. Making your focus clear and explicit usually involves a great deal of writing and redefinition and, of course, thought! It also often involves some false starts and the need, perhaps a number of times, to read just your focus. It is common to start with a question or focus which, while important, is too broad or too comprehensive to be dealt with within the confines of your program. You may find, as you work along, that your question has been largely answered, that the need you identified has been met or that the interest within the field in your focus is low and hence the legitimacy of your effort is questionable. Often, even though the question or need is legitimate, an original or practical way to address your concern simply cannot be found!

Some students are initially disappointed when they are encouraged by their advisors to focus on a need or question that is much more narrow and specific than was their original aim. It is often difficult for students, early on, to appreciate how important (and time consuming) it is for scholars to take the many small steps associated developing new knowledge. There is an immense effort invested in each of the many individual references cited after a single statement in an article or paper!

Advisors usually assume, when you approach them, that you have identified an area and probably a topic. Many assume you already have a research focus or question and that you are seeking ways to address, refine or make operational your question! It is usual for you to be asked to supply a two or three page draft of your ideas which outlines what you are seeking to study and how you plan to go about the task. From these early steps and after much discussion, critical thinking, redefining, planning, literature review and rewriting, you will eventually draft your proposal.

(d) Suggestions If You Have No Topic and No Question

If your question is "Where do I start?", there is no single easy answer or no formula that is guaranteed to work. There are, however, some strategies that might help. Assume that looking for a focus will require you to be very active and very focused. When starting out, it can be useful to read early and late chapters in recent books in your area that are focused on issues. Look for the questions, needs or unresolved issues that these identify. Often ideas will come from the conclusions of recent theses and research reports wherein your predecessors have identified areas needing further work. It can be useful to start by identifying the key journals publishing in your area and reviewing the types of studies and topics that are current.

If you choose to follow the journal route, try photocopying the tables of content for the past one to two years from four or five key area journals. In studying these you will find what questions and topics are being currently researched and quite likely find certain papers and topics that draw your attention. Mark the most interesting article(s) in each issue and collect, as a separate list, each of these "more interesting" articles. Prioritize this list to form your own personal "most interesting" list. Next read these articles and, perhaps with the help of an advisor, reflect on both these questions or needs and ways to address them.

It is highly recommended that, as soon as you begin framing your question (i.e., drafting your proposal), you force yourself to write a title for your final paper (and of course, your proposal). If necessary, actually create a list of possible titles you develop. These titles are extremely important as they will both direct your thinking and impose limits on what you are doing should your start, as most pre proposal writers do, to wander inappropriately!

What to Do Once You have a Topic

A proposal is a clear statement of your focus, a sample of the literature supporting the legitimacy of that focus, a sample of the background literature on your specific topic and, finally, a detailed description of the activities you propose to carry out to address your specific question or need. Early drafts of your proposal must be carefully reviewed to ensure that what you are doing is within the scope of your time and resources and that it meets the expectations of your advisor and the applicable regulations.

It is suggested that the following steps be taken once you have an area or a possible topic identified:

- (a) Meet with your advisor to more clearly delimit the topic. (This is when you draft what might be the title of your document and when you likely will be asked to write a brief statement of your ideas.)
- (b) Initiate a literature review to determine if your topic has already been extensively researched. Here is where you begin to identify possible supporting literature.
- (c) Start drafting your actual proposal. Keep in mind that your proposal tends to gradually become your final paper. In other

words, if you do more work at the beginning, you will have less to do at the end!

(d) Consider adopting the following proposal format:

For all Proposals:

Title Page
Table of Contents
Introduction

- Statement of problem/focus
- Significance of study
- Background of question
- May include aims, hypotheses or research questions
- May include definitions
- May include limitations of study/folio/project
- Summary of Relevant Literature

For a Thesis:

- State research method or procedures to be followed
- May include: participants/ sample, instrumentation, procedure to be followed, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures

For a Folio:

- Include tentative individual paper titles
- Include an overview of each paper as well as its goal and a clear statement of the issues addressed in each
- Include a tentative sub-topic and/or headings list
- May include statements on the style and format you plan to use

For a Project:

- Include a verbal description of the actual product you plan to develop
- Include how you plan to go about creating the product (i.e., consultation, field testing and evaluation strategy)
- May include information related to a need assessment

For an Internship:

Note: It is useful to see your proposal as having two parts, the first dealing with the professional experiences you will engage in during the internship and the second a description of the embedded research component.

- May include a statement of the regulations and university expectations associated with an internship
- Include a verbal description of your setting, your supervision, duration

- Include a detailed listing of your goals and how you propose to meet them
- Include, often as a final general goal the completion of a study aimed at...
- Include (perhaps as "Part 2") a mini-proposal outlining the research you plan to complete. Usually interns complete a thesis-like or project-like type of paper. The contents of this component will depend on the type of study you plan to do. Suggestions for each type are found above.

References

Appendices (instruments, parent permission letters, etc.)

A useful strategy for developing a proposal involves your first reading and developing an overview of an area, second (without making detailed use of the previously reviewed literature) drafting an outline of what you want to do and why, and third returning to the literature to seek support for and clarification of what you proposed.

Getting an Advisor

Early in the process, perhaps when you are seeking an area and certainly when you are specifying your focus, you should be seeking an advisor. Getting an advisor typically means first going to the chair or academic administrator of your area and seeking advice as to policies and procedures that you might follow. This person may suggest individuals to contact. It is also useful to learn about what might be expected of Faculty and about how many students different advisors are working with. Getting the advice of students further along in the process than you is also highly recommended. Next it is necessary to begin beating on doors and seeking support. Keep in mind that advisors want and need students! They are especially interested when the work you wish to do complements or builds on work the advisor is already doing.

When seeking an advisor, be prepared to be flexible. While it is good to have thought through some ideas, the more detailed and firm your ideas are, the greater you run the risk of the advisor not being interested or not agreeing with what you are proposing to do.

Also bear in mind that you will need to spend a lot of time with your advisor. Pick someone you feel you can work with. Also pick someone who will have both the skills and the time you need.

A Closing Thought

Gaining expertise is a key personal reason for doing research. What you learn about your area and what you learn about thinking critically and actually doing research contribute very significantly to making you an expert. The effort is worth it!

Realize that writing a proposal and designing a good piece of research is typically much more difficult than actually carrying through your plan. You can succeed

at both. Although the acts of writing your proposal and finally finishing your paper together probably represent the biggest academic task you have ever taken on to date, by taking one step at a time and trusting both yourself and the people around you it will get done. When in doubt, look at all the other students who have made it!

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