Comprehensive Secondary Schools

A Pilot Study of Two Ontario Schools Fifty Years After the Introduction of Comprehensive Programming

Principal Investigator – Ron Hansen
Research Assistant - Beth Gurney
Report and Analysis - Kate Carter
Literature Review - Margaret So

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For further information on this study please use the following email address: hansen@uwo.ca

Figure 1

Comprehensive School Student, Birmingham (Lowe, R. 1989)

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Acknowledgement

This preliminary research is possible thanks to a grant from the Dean of Education Office at The University of Western Ontario. The grant program is set up to give faculty members the opportunity to formulate larger research grant proposals as well as investigate issues related to policy and planning in formal education. In this instance I want to pursue a historical and present day analysis of the comprehensive secondary school as an institutional form in Ontario. Comprehensive schools (often referred to in Ontario as Composite Schools) are schools designed to balance a practical and academic curriculum so that the diverse learning styles and interests of students can be met. My interests are professional as well as personal in that I am a product of the Ontario schools. As an institutional analyst, however, I am becoming cynical about schools as instruments for public purposes. How is it that policy and practice in school systems has a momentum impervious to rational and critical ideas/change? Disappointed that I could not study two reputable and intriguing schools in London, Ontario I turned to two I didn't know that well, one in Paris, Ontario, the other in Brantford. Ironically, one of the alumni vignettes in our study features a student who attended one of the London schools.

The locations turned out to be beneficial in an unexpected way. I met and recruited two partners local to those communities – Beth Gurney, a town newspaper editor and Kate Carter, a professor of literature at Laurier University. Both are professionals in their own right who brought different frames of reference and fresh perspectives to the project. At this time period, coincidently, I was teaching a graduate course on research methods at the university. Re-familiarizing myself the research methods literature required that I study, among other things, the advantages and disadvantages of ethnographies in education research. The result was the confirmation of two important critical insights that guide the research and reporting. First, most quantitative research in the educational sciences over the last forty years has been undistinguished (Wolcott, 1988) in its impact on theory and practice. Second, a relatively little utilized qualitative research methodology from the field of anthropology may have the potential to overcome the first insight/problem. It should be noted that the report is formally structured when, in fact, this is a preliminary study only. A more formal case study of a school or series of schools would take a year or more to complete and will require a follow-up project.

Thanks to Margaret So, a graduate student who capably conducted a literature review on the history of the comprehensive secondary school and the ethnographic research method, I was able to bring a number of thoughts/strands together for the critical analysis of schools and schools research that I wanted to pursue. This research and report is, as such, both subjective and objective, or, using the jargon, interpretive and functionalist. My thanks to all of you on the research team! I hope the process has been one of those worthwhile experiences.

R. Hansen

Introduction

The comprehensive secondary school is one of the foremost colonialist-like initiatives to be exported from England and seeded in Canada. Colonialist policy involves transplanting the expertise and experience from one society or people to another – the latter usually perceived by the former as being in need of civilizing or modernizing. This happened in the post-war years when secondary school expansion in Canada adopted the Comprehensive Secondary School model initiated and institutionalized in England. At this time massive numbers of secondary school students sought a high school education. Prior to this institutional reform secondary schools took a variety of forms and sizes. The two most prominent forms were the technical institute and academic high school. The comprehensive secondary school, structurally, combined these two former entities into one. The result was that a number of practical and academic subject areas were re-situated and re-distributed under one umbrella. The term 'comprehensive' comes, in part, from this joining of institutional types and programs into one composite. What this preliminary research does is study, fifty years later, the impact of this little analyzed reform.

The development of the comprehensive secondary school in the middle part of the 1900's was characterized by considerable debate in Britain particularly, but also in Canada (see annotated bibliography for details). The broader social context was a post-war period in which class issues were prominent and very much a part of the political scene. Books like 'Landscape for a Good Woman' (Carolyn Steedman, 1987) speak to the equity issues that characterized the times. This British invention/concept was widely adopted in many industrialized countries, necessitated in part by a quickly expanding adolescent population as well as by notions of egalitarianism. It succeeded, especially during the 1950's, in solving some systems policy problems, e.g., the need for a 'one size fits all' institutional school model that would meet student needs and demonstrate public policy accomplishment. Extensive public expenditures on education following the war would require a quality rationale. System-wide adoption of something new and better would hopefully capture the confidence and support of parents, governments, and educators. Figure 1, taken from a 1989 book analyzing forty-five years of the comprehensive secondary school, is particularly poignant. It typifies what education leaders and government officials needed to know – that working class values and an emphasis on practical learning would not be overlooked in the model school. A more cynical interpretation of this policy direction is also possible. To counter public unrest in England with class-based schools some policy makers might have been attempting to create the perception of comprehensiveness rather than the reality of it, an irony which emerges later in this report.

Five decades have now passed since those very productive days when post-war enthusiasm for democratic ideals set the patterns for secondary school institutional viability. Yet critical questions about the reform are seldom asked. For example, have the learning needs and development of adolescents been served well by this institutional form? What is it about these schools that gave them the label 'comprehensive'? Have they [the schools] lived up?

The following research and analysis is based upon two typical secondary schools in southern Ontario. - Paris District High School and Brantford Collegiate Institute and Vocational School. Both schools have a sufficient history to claim legitimate selection in the study. Brantford Collegiate opened its doors in 1911, Paris District High in 1925. The goals of the study are a) to identify and summarize research on the topic of comprehensive secondary schools, b) to explore how institutions serve our needs as human beings but also regulate and homogenize us, and c) to present case studies that begin to question the ambiguous and often contradictory nature of institutional purposes. As researchers we were struck by the amount of literature (national and international) associated with attempts to increase the standards achieved by schools, mostly attending to curriculum priorities and student achievement levels. By contrast very little attention seemed to be given to the state of the schools themselves, and to student learning tendencies and preferences. As such we were prompted to explore a better understanding of schools as an institutional form, as well as the intended and unintended outcomes of its curriculum

The methodology used in the study is taken from ideas and traditions used in anthropology, namely ethnography. We wanted to get a 'picture' of life in these two institutions - a Margaret Mead and/or Clifford Geertz kind of analysis. In Mead's (1962) case she calls for unfettered and logical analysis. Geertz (2000) advocates a reflexively subjective methodology in which someone can be a product of the system and still contribute to a critical analysis of it. How do you critically study an organization that had a hand in making you? Geertz would argue it is possible to be a detached observer and be an insider at the same time. In fact, sometimes it would be desirable. The result is a textured rather than cause and effect analysis. In order to determine 'change over time' we would need to understand the evolution of the school from its beginnings to the present. We did this by looking at the literature on the development of comprehensive schools in England and Canada and by reviewing school archival information from BCI and PDHS. Teachers and graduates, from the past and present, were interviewed. Finally, we wanted to 'report' in a way that avoided the mixed reviews and skepticism associated with education research generally. Margaret Mead, in one of the few pieces she wrote about schools asks: "Why can't we be honest in our praise and criticism of these institutions that play such an important part in our human evolution?" We [the research team] are curious too. Can we situate schools in a larger historical and sociological context that either validates or challenges their purpose?

The Problem in a Wider Context

> As modern technological societies have expanded, children have become increasingly isolated from the important affairs of the adult world, and deliberate means of enculturation were assigned to specialized institutions called schools. (Miller, p. 20)

The comprehensive school is the institutional form Canadian society chose to transmit and secure the beliefs and values espoused during the 19th and 20th centuries. Those values included, for example, a reliance on experts and advanced societies for ideas and the means of utilizing them to solve perceived social problems, e.g. illiteracy. Schools, as such, are places in which study occurs but they are also ideal objects of study. As public sites, schools are seldom free from controversy. It is common knowledge, in the public policy context, that values differ across classes and that some values dominate over others. The interesting thing about Canadian schools as sites of controversy is that they are not always open to criticism nor are controversies transparent. Schools, above all else, are supposed to be egalitarian places. They may need to learn that serving multiple purposes and egalitarianism are complementary not exclusive notions.

In this context our preliminary research tries to relate current developments in secondary schooling to their historical antecedents. What are the things that Canadian society cherishes? What were the justifications and rationales advanced fifty years ago for adopting comprehensive programming in schools? Was this shift driven by a government need to rationalize public expenditures after the second world war? Was the pedagogy one of 'learning to labour' (Willis, 1977) 'scientific mindedness'? 'social conformity'? What assumptions and premises were made when choosing such directions?

Our assumptions as researchers are a) youth opinion is not sought in education policy development in Ontario, and in Canada for that matter; b) institutions, rhetoric aside, typically serve themselves as well as those interned by the institution; c) the process of becoming educated and becoming schooled is a fascinating and complex phenomenon that is poorly understood by the public.

The evolution of any modern society is, in large part, a story of institutional design and survival. In the case of our education system in Ontario the institution known as the 'comprehensive school' is a particularly good example. Hargreaves (1982), in his book *'The challenge for comprehensive schools: Culture, curriculum, and community'*, explains that the school has two curriculums. The first consists of formal subjects. The second is a hidden one, which is what students learn about power, praise, and people. This is the curriculum, Hargreaves argues, that most effectively prepares the young for the world beyond school. According to Commons (cited in Hargreaves, 1982) though, most of us may not be that well served by either curriculum.

> Most of us are unable to survive being educated in schools. For pupils today [1950's], school is a series of very dull television programmes which can not be switched off. Occasionally when the volume is at a very high level, they [students] listen. Each class is part of a serial, with the teachers providing recapitulations of earlier episodes at the beginning of each lesson, like repeated broadcasts. Since the students cannot 'switch off' these programmes, they treat the lesson as background noise. Commercial breaks are made the most of – first to leave, and last to arrive. This is a marvelous anticipation of their adult roles, where these features of school will be replaced by the noise of a factory, and the

> intrusions of the supervisor's exhortations, the monotony of the unwanted routine jobs (p. 3).

The similarities between school and factory life, while exaggerated, are useful in forcing a more critical analysis of our often unchallenged and sacred views of institutional life and our all too easy dependence/acceptance of programmatic solutions. Too often we accept the momentum associated with our government initiatives. Policies become obscure, purposes ambiguous, and our behaviours standardized.

Illich, in his book 'Deschooling Society' (cited in Hargreaves, 1982), is even more scathing in his attack on the latent function of schools.

> Everywhere, the hidden curriculum of schooling initiates the citizen to the myth that bureaucracies guided by scientific knowledge are efficient and benevolent. Everywhere this same curriculum instills in the pupil the myth that increased production will provide a better life and everywhere it develops the habit of self-defeating consumption of services and alienating production, the tolerance for institutional rankings. The hidden curriculum of school does all this in spite of contrary efforts undertaken by teachers and no matter what ideology prevails (p. 10).

In other words student reaction and action to social control is the essence of the second or hidden curriculum. This 'conflict' model perspective on what schools do or should do was the centre of a lively debate on schools in the middle 1900's (Hargreaves, 1982). Many issues framed that debate. Against what should student achievement, for example, be measured or judged? The language used in popular literature today is telling. Reference to 'inclusive' schools and programs is very prominent. We wonder if students and perhaps cultures are defrauded when some programs dominate and others are displaced. Can a culture be dominant and diverse at the same time? Could it be that Ontario secondary schools are masquerading as comprehensive institutions? To carry the metaphor further, what is being disguised?

Research Methodology

The pilot study design involved three sources of data collection. A literature review on the history of the comprehensive secondary school was conducted. This information helped place currently collected information and observations about people and schools into a historical context. An architectural and curriculum chronology of each school was also created to give us a picture, over time, of how structural and curricular changes related to one another. Personal interviews with former students, and teachers (former and present) constituted the second data source. In this case we developed vignettes on selected interviewees. We were interested in hearing and recording student and teacher experiences. The vignettes that follow represent our efforts to collaborate with each participant in such a way that the vignette is authentic and connected with the essence of the study. How did/does the school curriculum impact on student lives? How was the

curriculum perceived by teachers, then and now? Finally, data about the schools themselves was collected and recorded. What is it about the history of these schools that make them unique and/or similar?

The research questions that directed the study included the following: from a socio-historical perspective, how is comprehensive school reform to be understood and has it had an impact? What lessons can be learned regarding the relationship between curriculum evolution and institutional structures? What theoretical and practical knowledge will support school ethnographical research and vice-versa?

The purpose of ethnographic research is to seek clarification and better understand a problem or perceived problem. One of the main proponents of school ethnographies is Wolcott. He advocates the use of ethnographies in education but with caution. "It is hard to imagine that ethnography will ever wring educational research from the iron grip of the statistical methodologists, but it is comforting to note the current receptivity among educators to other ways of asking and other ways of looking" (p. 187). The problem, according to Wolcott, is that educators really don't understand what an ethnographer in anthropology does. "I want to suggest that the real mystique surrounding ethnography, as any experienced ethnographer will attest, is not in doing fieldwork but in subsequently organizing and analyzing the information one gathers and in preparing the account that brings the ethnographic process to a close" (p. 188). Ethnography means, literally, a picture of the 'way of life' of some identifiable group of people, in this case teachers and students. One of the keys is to understand that the outsider to the group being studied, the ethnographer, is trying to know more about the cultural system he or she is studying than any individual in it. A detachment is required that is not emotional or physical but psychological. Wolcott describes it as follows: "Successful ethnographers resolve that tension between involvement and detachment; others go home early." (p. 189).

The tension is an interesting one because most people (researchers included) have spent a good deal of time in school. Ethnographic research, traditionally, was thought to require observation as if in a new setting. To be successful in school ethnographic research would seem therefore to require a Martian detachment. The research team in this instance had a range of school experience from which to compare and contrast but had to think 'ethnographically' in order to investigate, analyze, and write. "We are ethnographic observers when we are attending to the cultural context of the behaviour we are engaging in or observing, and when we are looking for those mutually understood sets of expectations and explanations that enable us to interpret what is occurring and what meanings are probably being attributed by others present." (Wolcott, p. 193). The vignette titled "I still have clear memories of drawings I drew," is an example of how we combined the best of our observations as researchers with an informal life history. The tension between involvement and detachment is resolved in the researcher's narrative. The interview with David involved some preconceived questions that we thought might prompt certain responses. More often they did not. Instead, they served to begin a dialogue that was documented as a collaborated story. The collaborators were David and Beth, both products of the same school system, reflecting on what happens to students in

schools. The school experiences and subsequent stories involving Edith, Mr, Black, and Mr. Mann are equally compelling and reflective.
It should be noted that drawing conclusions or inferences from anecdotes and from archival data of two institutions is not possible. Case study research does not aim to generalize to larger populations, in this case students or schools. Its purpose is to probe for understanding and raise questions for further analysis and consideration. It would be foolish to draw conclusions about the purpose and performance of these two schools much less a larger group of schools they might or might not represent. The alumni and teacher anecdotes provide insight into the successes and problems experienced by four participants in the pilot study. It is not our goal to generalize from this material. Rather, the aim is to gain insight into and frame questions to better contextualize their experience while in schools. The purpose of our inquiry is to begin penetrating the reality and perceptions of the participants. The perceived problem in this instance is the secondary school – its shifting purpose, its track record as an institutional entity, and the adjustments that students and teachers do or do not make. As researchers we hoped our interview anecdotes would serve as moments in the chronological bios of two institutions. If they do, it is because readers found some element of truth in the telling. What they represent is moments in the lives of two former students and two teachers working in collaboration with a research assistant and within the confines of the secondary school milieu.

" I still have clear memories of drawings I drew…" David

David's story is a classic one in the sense that the school he attended did not meet his needs. According to the literature about thirty percent of high school students drop out without gaining a grade twelve certificate. We do not know what percentage complete their studies and receive certificates. Some education scholars have suggested that about half of all students entering high school do not have a good experience. The phrase 'The Forgotten Half' is used to describe these two categories of students. How does a school with public backing miss meeting the needs of a large group within its population? What happens in schools so that students like David are unserved?

Subject profile: PDHS Alumni, male, age 54, background as an illustrator, currently proprietor of a highly successful design company.

When David transferred from a traditional secondary school to an arts school, it was a pivotal moment. In fact, he says the change may have saved his life.
Growing up in a rural community, David often felt like an outsider. He was artistically talented, and hated farm life only second to The torment involved in attending gym class daily. His primary interest was drawing. "As soon as I could hold a pencil I drew," he said. "I still have clear memories of drawings I drew. That's when I was happiest."

A bright child, David entered high school at the young age of 11.

There his youth, smallness, and artistic tendencies only served to marginalize him. Physical education also served as a blow to his ego through his grades. Usually an A student, David received failing grades in physical education, because students were judged on achievement and not effort. Grades as low as 8% and 9% in physical education were disastrous on his overall average, and provided an emotional blow for a student who came from a home where grades were regarded as very important. He recalls becoming physically ill every day before the class, and eventually, he simply refused to participate in gym at all. He says the experience put him off sports and competition, and it was only later in life that he came to enjoy individual sports on his own terms.

Agriculture was also a required class, which forced him to repeat the tasks of planting and harvesting which he had already grown to despise on the family farm. David's only interest in high school was art, and this option was not offered to him. At the time, only female students were permitted to study the subject.

In Grade 11 David experienced the turning point that he feels was the make or break moment in his life. He learned from his family that the government gave a grant to schools for each student. He wondered if his grant could be transferred so that he could attend H.B. Beal in London, which had a top notch art program. He pushed for the change, and at the age of 14 moved to London to attend Beal.
David likened the feeling he had when he started at Beal as suddenly being able to breathe again. The department head said he would be watched over because he came in late in the term, but David achieved top marks. He said it was incredible for him to get out of the restriction of the traditional system.
When he completed school at Beal, David returned to Paris and was hired by a local textile manufacturer. This job gave him hands-on experience that would prove an important foundation for his later work. One year later he was hired by a national retailer as a sketch artist. Subsequently, he has established his own design firm, and received world-wide recognition. David sees his switch to Beal as a major turning point in his life.

"Badminton is my life…." Edith

Subject profile: Female, age 70. Married, three adult children.
BCI almunus.

Lifelong success came to Edith after a high school phys. ed. teacher put a badminton racquet in her hand.
Edith, who has now coached over 120 national, regional, provincial and OFSAA badminton champions was first introduced to the sport by teacher Mrs. Sandison. Born with a severely disfigured hand, Edith says she was stigmatized, and never considered for extracurricular sports teams she tried out for, such as volleyball.
However when Mrs. Sandison taught a lesson on badminton, Edith recalls thinking to herself, "that's something I could play."
Edith says that at first she was "hopelessly spastic," but that her

perfectionist nature made her continue trying to master controlling the shuttle. When the class unit on the sport ended, Mrs. Sandison (an accomplished athlete herself) came to Edith and suggested that, since she had already developed such a natural passion for the game, she should continue to play at the local YMCA.

That Saturday she sat from seven in the morning until eleven, watching others play the game. When she finally had her chance to play, she was terrible, exhibiting her yet undeveloped spatial perception. Week after week she continued going to the YMCA; sometimes playing, but often watching others as they played, searching for clues to improving her technique. "Badminton became my life," she said. "It is my life."

As a student, Edith described herself as happy, but not a great studier, and a bit of a social outcast. She enjoyed chemistry, but says overall, academically speaking she "crammed and passed."

After high school she became a lab technician, married and raised three children. She now has 50 years of badminton coaching to her credit, and has trained with the best coaches from England, China, Malaysia and Canada. She is Ontario's sole Master's course conductor, a recipient of the 3M coaching award, and has trained the majority of the top players in the sport in Ontario.

"They don't have to win," she says of her students. "They have to have good technique."

She believes that both teachers and coaches play vital roles in the lives of young people. "They can make or break a student," she said.

"Recognizing effort over achievement…" Mr. Black

Subject profile: Age 58. Retired secondary school music teacher (began teaching science). Taught at BCI for better part of his career (1970-2000).

Mr. Black knew that September was a month that would inevitably bring headaches. As a high school music teacher, his approach to instrumental music was simple: put the instruments in the kids' hands, and let them learn.

"It was God awful," the now retired teacher mused. "But there was no way around it. I'd just try and give them a month to have fun with it. Misery likes company- they were all in the same boat...It is a game of constant encouragement, even though they sound[ed] ghastly."

Black began his career as a science teacher, and maintained the belief that, in all fields of study, kids learn better with experiments. Maintaining their interest, he says, is also crucial. Popular music, no matter how technically difficult it was, would be learned by the students through sheer determination to be able to play a piece they like.

"The purpose of schooling is to provide an environment for the growth of young people," Black said. "Teachers are there to stimulate."

Black believes that students must have the opportunity to follow their interests. He referred to a young female student who was completely uninterested in school. Eventually she became involved in the school band-- a choice that resulted in her choosing to continue her education, and to attend university following her graduation.

"She never would have gone on without extra curricular involvement," he said.
Black believes that as a music teacher, he had more opportunity to provide positive reinforcement to students than teachers of "critical" subjects have.
"It [music] is much more flexible and encouraging and allows me to reward effort instead of accomplishment. You're not always able to do that in English and math."
For Black's students, there was no such thing as a "final" exam when it came to performance. "They were able to play their exams as many times as they want," he admitted. "If a student didn't get a ten out of ten, it was because they didn't keep trying.
For Black, the joy of learning music is lost if students do not have the chance to fail and try again. He sympathizes with shyness and nervousness and feels that if a student must play an exam three times in order to experience success, then he should be there to hear them play it three times. However in the years preceding his retirement, he felt increasing pressure to create results, and focus less on individual effort and growth.
The focus on academic success, says Black, does not serve the children or society in the long run. When academic achievement is the focus, students "are not team players," he said. "It becomes about self-preservation and self-promotion, and not necessarily about making a positive influence on society."
He feels that subjects like the arts and physical education offer diverse opportunities that cater to the needs of diverse student populations.
"To support only interests that are geared toward jobs should not be imposed on the education system," he insists. "If that happens, music will only be for the rich."

"Operating under the radar…" Mr. Mann

Subject profile: Teacher, male, age 41, teaching for 14 years, background in Environmental Studies

As a teacher, Shayne Mann found that the conventional secondary school curriculum did not offer the kind of practical learning experiences he felt his students needed. Rather than be boxed in by requirements of the conventional curriculum, he exploited the requirements in order to offer a unique program, based on community involvement, and experiential learning. Shayne developed this unique program based upon his own philosophies about learning and education. He says that as a teacher his job is to teach his students how to think critically, and to offer each pupil a chance to feel success by tapping in to their varying learning preferences and tendencies, and offering them different opportunities. He also feels a duty to connect with his students and to connect them with each other so that their decision making becomes founded on a regard for community and environment, rather than selfishness. Shayne believes that the current curriculum and school standards have, under the influence of globalization, reduced the emphasis on values, and moved toward a knowledge and skills based set of expectations. He believes that which can not be measured is not deemed important under the current system.

Adhering to his personal belief that part of teaching is to create responsible, contributing members of society, and believing that the experience of feeling success is essential to nurturing students, Shayne worked within the confines of the composite school system to create a unique program which would satisfy the basic requirements of administration, while bending the rules enough to suit his motives. He created a Community Environmental Leadership Program (CELP) at Paris District High School.

In the context of a student's transcript, the CELP programs appears as three credits; a mix of social studies classes, including history, geography, etc. However students do not participate in the conventional composite school timetable. Students enrolled in CELP spend one entire semester together. Their timetable is not broken down by class. Rather, they spend the whole day together, completing a range of hands-on activities that offer practical experience in areas that touch on science, history, geography, civics and environmental studies. The students also complete service work in the community, allowing them to visibly see the impact they can make. They spend time researching projects, hearing guest speakers, writing journals and completing outdoor challenges, including camping and canoeing trips. Mr. M believes that a mixed approach between the practical and the academic best serves students.

In its genesis, CELP was met with some resistance from parents. Shayne says that the first year was a tough sell, and that maintaining the program was tough on him as a teacher because he was creating it for the first time. However the program has subsequently gained a great deal of respect from parents, and interest from students. Mr. M says that parents now view the program very positively, and several have remarked that they wish such a program existed for them when they were in school. Shayne has also seen a second wave of students whose older siblings participated in CELP registering for the program, showing that the program has developed a strong reputation. Strong ties have also been made between the students and the community organisations and businesses they work with through their placements.

However Shayne noted that a certain segment of the student population has expressed an interest in CELP, but feel unable to participate. Many academically focused students do not register because they simply feel that they can not spare the room in their timetable to commit three credits to a non-academic program that will not contribute to their ability to get into the post-secondary school of their choice.

Shayne explained that the "low profile" of geography and history in the school system has contributed to his ability to implement the CELP program. When education comes under scrutiny, he said, it is the three R's that come under the spotlight. When it comes to social studies, the content has not changed much over the years. Through CELP he is able to satisfy the requirements of the curriculum, while staying true to his own philosophies of education. Mr. M says that his program gives students more latitude to try again. If a project is done poorly, he allows his students an opportunity to improve it and re-submit their work. He believes that other subject areas are lacking opportunities for students to improve and learn from their mistakes.

Analysis

David and Edith's stories do confirm our assumption that needs as expressed by youth are not valued in school policy and practice. Neither David nor Edith were asked if he or she had preferences and tendencies for learning that could be better met. The comprehensive model was not encompassing enough to include the kind of instruction they both needed. Both persisted and survived the experience, one thanks to a change of school, the second to a teacher who encouraged physical accomplishment. These stories do not offer a critique of these two schools per se. What they do is provide a way to penetrate the amorphous nature of the institution, generally. They raise questions and awareness of a subtle issue – the importance and place of our secondary school models. To some extent BCI and PDHS measure up but not as comprehensive secondary schools, however narrowly or broadly defined. Had the voices of students who learn from practical rather than academic studies been a part of public policy development, would the result be different? The rhetoric in comprehensive schools is that all students are allegedly served. The problem is that few ask about or know what it means to serve all students.

The two teacher vignettes are also revealing. Schools are complicated and contested places. Both teachers were successful in spite of the norms for teacher instructional behaviour. Mr. Black and Mr. Mann had teaching philosophies that worked but they had to operate 'under the radar', i.e., under the radar of normative teaching practice. They persisted in placing student needs ahead of institutional needs. Their instructional strategies were to enhance student self esteem through practical success rather than academic achievement. Through a 'student-first' philosophy they helped their students find ways to define themselves in relation to the school and community around them. The prescribed curriculum was of less importance.

What emerges from these educational histories themselves are two themes. One has to do with the academic versus practical endeavour; the second with schools themselves as public and purposeful institutions. Both teachers, for example, shared a passion for student growth and development over academic standing. One might also say they condoned rather than embraced academic achievement as a school purpose. Mr. Black felt students' learning was best achieved through experimentation and practice, with the interests of the students always being paramount. He felt 'student effort' was more important to a student's development than perfection or grades. Learning from one's mistakes is a good thing. Mr. Mann creatively interpreted the curriculum as a cross-disciplinary exercise growing out of needs in the community surrounding the school. He could see how the prescribed curriculum needed to be adapted in order to make it meaningful and effective for students.

The absence of an experiential learning ethic in these secondary schools, some Canadian educators would say, was quite predictable. Academic endeavor is an essential and exclusive assumption in most secondary schools. This assumption goes unchallenged in school literature and policy/practice. In the case of the two former students, David and

Edith - their passion for artistic and athletic technique respectively were overshadowed by the formal institutionalized norms of the 1960's. David was stigmatized for his learning preferences. He preferred drawing over writing and memorizing (See appendix C). His early high school experience at Paris District High School was almost demeaning. Without a comparative experience at a different school, he may never have found his niche. Edith was inspired by athletic accomplishment and technique. She was encouraged by athletic excellence rather than academic rigor and standing. She persisted. Their stories are compelling in terms of personal development. Self-esteem was crucial to their growth and development. Learning for them seemed to make sense when it had a practical or physical component to it – in Edith's case athletic achievement, in David's, artistic expression.

The second theme revolves around public misunderstanding of the unintended consequences associated with the comprehensive or 'one size fits all' philosophy of secondary schooling. One of our authors met a woman during the pilot study who graduated from a comprehensive school in England during the 1960's. When asked about that experience she commented: "It was an education in social stratification". More recently a career counselor, during a guest appearance in a graduate class, lamented about how many displaced workers (from both the occupations and the professions) tell of a less than positive experience in secondary school. How pervasive are the unintended consequences of secondary schooling? What is the residue of this experience for adults?

David and Edith would appear to be expressing similar sentiments leading the authors to ask: What is it about this picture that isn't clear? Hargreaves helps us understand. He directs our attention to the traditional subjects of the academic curriculum, the core of which we have inherited from the 19th and 20th centuries. Although curriculum cannot be constructed out of the obsession of young people, there is a way out, he argues. "The most important preliminary consideration is to ask what we are educating young people for….. The initial step is to formulate such admirable abstract aims as 'the realization of pupils aptitudes and abilities" (p. 82). Mr. B and Mr. M, it appears, were exercising these aims for their students as were David and Edith's 'turning point' teachers and schools. Are parents and school leaders blind? How is it that such student sentiment fails to result in a correction within the system? What happens to adolescents as they mature into parents themselves? Many are disappointed with their secondary school experience but as soon as they become parents they want more of the same for their children. What is best for the student's development gets deferred in favour of a socially sanctified treatment best described as 'being schooled'. Student learning preferences are contorted around the kitchen table at home. How are we to interpret this widespread conundrum?

Phillip Jackson (1968) is often credited with revealing the resulting culture of the secondary school. His book 'Life in Classrooms' describes school experience through the eyes of the student. Widespread acceptance of his student sub-culture accounts exist but become invisible and unreconcilable when public policy is formulated. Hargreave's (1982) metaphor equating school classes with dull and repeated television programs that cannot be switched off by students is dramatic and powerful. His reference to teachers

who provide recapitulations of earlier episodes like repeated broadcasts, further completes the picture. Students, who are unable to switch off these programs, i.e., .classes, treat them as background noise and shut them out by leaving at the commercial break, i.e., the break between classes. The picture is clearer, thanks to the metaphor, but is not reflected in school practices and behaviours. Mr. Mann achieved some success combating the pattern by having the students together for a day at a time, often out in the community, so they could escape the bells and structure.

Hargreave's characterization of the school as a preparation site for adult work roles, is interesting. These features of schools, he argues, will get replaced by the noise of a factory and the intrusion of the supervisor's exhortations, the monotony of unwanted routine jobs. John Holt, a reflective teacher and author of 'How Children Fail' (1968) defines students' reality as one of fear rather than boredom: Fear of failing in an institution that has been socially sanctioned and fear of disapproval from teacher and parents. One of the basic lessons is that the pupil must learn not to betray his fear to the teacher, who will be upset that a pupil should be afraid. In short, social control is an invisible and sleeping giant. Schools, Hargreaves asserts, don't prepare students for the workplace, they prepare them for their 'place' in the workplace (p. 14). His position is that 'our present secondary school system, largely through the invisible or hidden curriculum, exerts on many pupils, particularly but by no means exclusively for the working class, a destruction of their dignity which is so massive and pervasive that few subsequently recover from it. This damage is unintended and only part of a complex educational story' (p. 17).

The Importance and Place of Institutional Ethnography

A third and telling outcome/theme from this pilot study is institutional change. The secondary school as an institution seems to most education researchers and change agents to be impervious to reform (Aoki, 1982; Pratt, 1989; Fullan, 1992). In the hierarchy of institutional bureaucracies, secondary schools in Ontario and Canada are regarded by the public as almost sacrosanct places. What would one possibly want to criticize? One of the purposes of the pilot study was to probe this perception and suggest options for addressing it. Our conclusion is that school life will not change until the general public better understands both the schools' formal and informal functions, its intended and unintended consequences. Moreover, the one hope for exposing a full understanding of these functions and consequences is ethnographic research like that of Jackson, Wolcott, Hargreaves, Holt, and others, but made available to adolescents and the public in everyday language.

Traditional educational sciences research for this kind of systems inquiry, as Wolcott (1988) points out, obscures rather than clarifies the issues. Why does ethnographic research hold potential for change? Wolcott provides the answer: "At the centre of its [ethnographic research] intent: It must be oriented to cultural interpretation" (Wolcott, 1985, p. 191). Ethnographic research, according to Wolcott, does not directly address

issues of improvement that researchers typically want to address. Its aim is to understand "how schools remain so remarkably the same in spite of persistent and well-intentioned efforts to change them." (p. 202). In short, ethnographic research, as a methodology, holds promise for a fresh analysis of schools and school life because it not only dares to be critical but it does so in the educational sciences framework. The results may not be what some parents and students want to hear. So what? The authors, in this instance, believe wider understanding is possible through such research and that a broad based study of schools in Ontario would not only inform policy and practise but reveal that schools are masquerading as comprehensive schools.

Other themes that a full ethnography would address include the relation between school architecture and program offerings. What impact did the addition of vocational wings have on the comprehensive school curriculum? Can anything in the life of comprehensive schooling in Ontario be traced or attributed to this widespread structural change from the 1960's? Were practical subjects more prominent in those early days of the comprehensive schools? Did they balance, or deter from, the prevalence of academic achievement? The advantage of ethnographic research is that it asks logical questions that other social science research does not ask. For example, should the learning preferences and aptitudes of a diverse student body be met by an equally diverse group of teachers, programs, and schools? These kinds of questions, explored more fully, may help uncover what comprehensive schools disguise and why.

Appendix A

School Bio I

Official School Name: Brantford Collegiate Institute and Vocational School

Architectural History: 1911 – 18 rooms complete with gym, domestic science, and technical work departments
1928 – Industrial shops
1947 - Wilson Memorial Auditorium
1963 – 3 Storey Vocational Wing
1973 – 2 Storey Library

Institutional Type: Composite

cDemographics: 80 % Urban/ 20 % Rural

Student Population: 1150

Teacher Complement: 64

Number of Teachers in Academic vs. Practical Subjects: 60/15

Annual Expenditure: Not available

Evidence of Formal Curriculum Strengths:

a) current – science, arts, french immersion, history,

b) past – tech, art, physical education, music

Evidence of Informal Curriculum Strengths:

a) Current – library, sports teams,

a) Past – public speaking, night school, library club, glee club

Evidence of Community Service Accomplishment:
- Junior Achievement (Kiwanis Club)

Sources of School Identity:
-academic excellence (High % of Ontario Scholars, university prep courses for Laurier Brantford)
- learning about social stratification first hand
- sports

Appendix B

School Bio II

Official School Name: Paris District High School

Architectural History: 1923 – original building on Grand River St. N
1953 – four room addition plus gym
1958 – two room addition plus shop
1968 – vocational wing

Institutional Type: Composite

Demographics: 60 % Urban/ 40 % Rural

Student Population: 1108

Teacher Complement: 61

Number of Teachers in Academic vs. Practical Subjects: 41/20

Annual Expenditure: $ 180,000. (non-salary only)

Evidence of Formal Curriculum Strengths:

a) Current – geography, physical education, computer programs,

b) Past – music,

Evidence of Informal Curriculum Strengths:

a) Current – students' council, sports teams

b) Past – sports teams, community events (annual antique show – 20 years)

Evidence of Community Service Accomplishments: - attention to local environmental issues and needs (CELP – experience/practical); tech students build mannequins for local museum; annual food drive; Gardens adjacent to School; Largest contribution to Sept. 11th red cross drive.

Sources of School Identity: consistent community service projects; students driven projects (seniors Christmas dinner, antique show); student heart/independence/social conscience.

Appendix C

Nov. 7, 1968
Paris Star

ITS ABOUT SCHOOL

by Stewart Geen

Funny things you hear at a Headmaster's Conference. Like Ernie McTavish, principal of London's Beal Tech, telling how an inspector, startled to encounter a real live nude model in a senior art class, blurted out much to his own future embarrassment, “Uh, aren't you cold?”

David Powell, a former P.D.H.S. student, should be able to tell us if that story sounds authentic. He studied art for some years at Beal Tech after leaving our school.

Some Of David's work was displayed not long ago in the Paris Public Library. I particularly liked what I think was an egg tempera of a bleak landscape seen through the window of a deserted farmhouse. I'd like to see that one again.

I was also interested to see in last week’s Paris Star a sample of the sketches David has done for a new series of hasty-notes depicting four historical buildings in Paris. We'll soon be buying this stationery at one of the downtown shops.

STAR ADS
BRING RESULTS

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annotated Bibliography
History of Comprehensive Schools

Introduction

The following compilation of data represents a review of research on the topic of comprehensive schools, their history and contemporary form. The goal of this part of the project was to identify and summarize research on the topic. Annotations are given for works that appear to be informative and relate to the topic. These annotations provide the reader with a general understanding of what is contained in the articles, and are simplified. Often, there will be direct quotations from the original text best used to articulate this intent. The annotations should not be used in place of the original article, but as a guide to what the article conveys. The list of entries consist first of the annotated books on the topic, which is further subdivided into 4 categories – those dealing with the English comprehensive experience, the Canadian experience, sociology of schools and lastly, on methodology. The second part consists of annotations of journal articles, and the final part is a complete citation of all books and journals surveyed.

BOOKS

On the English Comprehensive Experience:

Aldrich, R., & Leighton, P. (1985). *Education: Time for a new Act?* Institute of Education, University of London. Surrey, UK: Heinemann. Chapter 8.

Chapter 8 is entitled "Curriculum." Traditionally, for centuries, grammar schools had taught reading and writing to young pupils or had responded to local needs by adding subjects such as mathematics. In secondary schools, a central authority controlled the curricular. However, even when plans for secondary school reforms were laid to produce 3 ideal types of curricula for 3 types of secondary schools – grammar, technical and secondary modern, it still did not produce any major re-thinking of the curricular. By the early 1960s, such ignorance was causing concern. In the 80s, it was thought that the time has come for the central authority to reverse the decision of 1944 and to re-enter "the secret garden of curriculum." What remains is the belief that there is a major problem concerning curriculum control, stemming directly from the inadequacies of the 1944 Act.

Ball, S.J. (Ed.) (1984). *Comprehensive schooling: A reader*. London: The Falmer Press. Introduction: Comprehensives in crisis?

> The chapter outlines the problems facing comprehensive schools: a crisis in confidence, cutbacks, and gradual re-centralization of school curriculum by the government. The rest of the chapter outlines the case studies and papers to follow in the reader, which addresses whether comprehensive schools are truly in crisis, which Ball questions. The chapter addresses the continuance of the comprehensive school system. It briefly traces its beginnings to Circular 10/65 in 1965, and shows us that the origins and implementation of the comprehensive system has been a meandering process, surviving political changes of fortune to arrive at its present

form. Of interest is “the concept of the comprehensive education (which) has no commonly agreed meaning either for its advocates and opponents” and consequently, its development lacks direction and definition.

Barker, B. (1986). *Rescuing the comprehensive experience*. Milton Keynes England: Open University Press.

The writer’s premise is that “the comprehensive experience has to be rescued from its own meritocratic assumptions about children and teaching before it can be saved from politicians, falling rolls or shrinking finances.” A distinctive comprehensive learning programme must be devised to establish the common schools as the hub of an educated and democratic community. This rescue bid proposes a reform of teaching methods based upon a revised set of ideas about children’s learning and delves into theories of learning, school management, curriculum, teaching methods, assessment and exams.

Bellaby, P. (1977). *The sociology of comprehensive schooling*. London: Methuen.

This small volume discusses the sociology of comprehensive schooling in 6 chapters. Chapter 1 places the development of comprehensive schools in a historical context and offers an overview of some of the debates surrounding its creation. Chapter 2 explains the relationship between capitalism and the emergence of comprehensive schooling, 50 years after the US experience. Chapter 3 looks in detail at the powers that control the development of comprehensive schools. Chapter 4 examines the nitty-gritty details of the size and management of the schools, discipline and the trends in school organization on pupils’ attitudes and conduct. The fifth chapter offers a sociological appraisal in looking at the claims that drove reform in the comprehensive direction: decreasing wastage and abolishing academic differentiation. Equity is also addressed. The final chapter observes that there has been more glaring, the “absence of a theory of how the comprehensive reform has emerged and where it might evolve.”

Holt, M. (1980). *Schools and curriculum change.* UK: McGraw-Hill. pp. 1-7 & 25.

This short excerpt contains a section that asserts that there was a lack of comprehensive rationale in reforming the school system.

Lowe, R. (Ed.). (1989). *The Changing Secondary School.* London: The Falmer Press. Introduction and Chapters 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12.

The book is a collection of readings which attempt to examine some of the key issues confronting secondary schools and to place them in the context of the recent history of secondary education in England. The context chosen for this analysis is the development of secondary schools since the second world war, and this is explained in the first chapter written by Lowe himself. Chapter 5 discusses the impact of comprehensive reforms as selection practices at the point of transfer to secondary school, on access to facilities and resources of the “grammar school” curriculum, and on “educational attainments as

measured by exam qualifications." Chapter 7 looks at teacher racism and the construction of black underachievement while chapter 8 looks at the issue of gender. Chapter 9 focuses on technological and vocational education and its relationship to the National Curriculum. It also looks at the historical place this has in British education since the 1970s. Chapter 11 is on managing secondary schools in the aftermath of the 1988 Education Reform Act and the power play between school heads, teachers and governing bodies that emerge as a result of the reforms. It also examines the new forms of partnership in governance and management of secondary schools. The final chapter follows in this vein with an analysis of the configuration of power in secondary schools. In the discussion is control by regulation and competition vis a vis the National Curriculum and its assessment, local management of schools and funding, grant maintained schools and controls by finance, supervision and professional commitment.

Moon, B. (Ed.) (1983). *Comprehensive schools: challenge and change*. Windsor, Berks, UK: NFER-Nelson. Chapters 1 & 8.

The introductory chapter gives a quick overview of the discussions in educational research that have pertained to secondary education in comprehensive schools in England since the 1944 Butler Education Act. The British experience has been termed as "one of the most significant changes in the institutional fabric this century." The focus of the rest of the book is "towards ways of making secondary schooling a more successful experience for young people and for the community at large."

The final chapter sums up the 6 case studies dealt with in the book and pulls together some of the key issues discussed. These include understanding change and the school's place in the community, curriculum change, support for change, the new style of relationship between students, parents, community and teachers, and of sustaining innovation in education.

Weeks, A. (1986). *Comprehensive schools: Past, present, future.* London: Methuen. Chapters 1, 8& 10.

Chapter 1 traces the rationale, policies and politics behind the reorganization of comprehensive schools. He suggests that comprehensive reorganization was an opportunity for social engineering, but it is unclear whether it was for social mobility or for social equality. Chapter 8, entitled "The Egalitarian School," focuses on a few exceptional schools that have gotten away from pure meritocracy. These are, however, the exceptions rather than the norm. The chapter also deals with race and multi-ethnic programmes and pupils with special needs. The final chapter attempts to point the way to the future of comprehensive schools in their need to address and reconcile the conflicting flash points both on micro as well as macro levels.

The Canadian Experience

Heyman, R. D., Lawson, R. F., & Stamp, R. M. (1972). ***Studies in educational change.*** **Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Chapter 3: Industrialization and secondary school curriculum.**

The chapter traces the development of technical and vocational education to the industrialization of Canada at the turn of the century. Much of this change was wrought by the pressures exerted by the local boards of trade. Curriculum reform was not for esoteric educational or cultural purposes, but for the specific economic purpose of assisting Canadian industrial development. The chapter is centred on the developments at the onset of the Industrial Revolution. With changes from the traditional apprenticeship system of the medieval craft guilds to one of machine workers who only performed a specific function in the manufacturing process, the semi-skilled worker ceased to be the responsibility of the employer, but that of the state (and schools.) "The implication for Ontario education was clear: make provision for vocational and technical education or be prepared to accept a tail-end position in the world-wide industrial and commercial race." Yet, the early running of the technical schools were no smooth (see Toronto Technical School.) Whitney's Industrial Education Act of 1911 proved to be the most important piece of provincial legislation in this field in the entire history of the province, while the appointment of John Seath to the position of superintendent of education proved to be the most important move in the history of technical education in Ontario. His advocacy of technical and vocational education, and the publication of his report, culminated in the passing of the 1911 Act, which was the first comprehensive legislation outlining a provincial policy for technical education. The chapter concludes that the beginnings of technical education in Ontario owes its beginnings to actions of the provincial government.

Johnson, F. H. (1968). ***A brief history of Canadian education.*** **Toronto: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 14: Education for all.**

The chapter examines the changes in Canadian secondary schools from the 1920s. Much of these changes take the lead from those that occur in the United States. Of interest is the section Vocational-Technical Education in the 1950s and 60s. It attributes the growth and expansion of vocational and technical education within secondary schools and in separate institutions in this period to the increased funding offered by the Federal government from 50% to 75% of the costs of vocational training. High schools in Canada in the 1960s can be divided in 3 classes: the large composite schools, the small local school, and in the middle, the regional high school. Ontario has a long tradition of vocational education dating back to its Industrial Education Act of 1911. By 1938, there were 62 daytime vocational schools enrolling 36,000 students. Unlike Quebec and Newfoundland, Ontario's development of vocational training "took place within the framework of the secondary school."

Wilson, J. D. (1982). From the swinging sixties to the sobering seventies. E. B. Titeley, & P. J. Miller (Eds.), ***Education in Canada: An interpretation.*** **Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Detselig Enterprises. pp.197-208.**

The article traces some of the key developments in education in Canada from the 1960s to the 1970s. The 1960s was characterized as a decade of hope and the Hall-Dennis report in 1968 epitomized the educational climate of the day. Expenditure in education was growing and there was faith that education was a panacea for society's ills. Students left school at a later age and teachers' status ad pay rose. The sixties also saw the advent of a parent power as well as student power. The "free school" also made an impact on education in Ontario and B.C. Ivan Illich proposed a radical alternative to education, which was to abolish schools altogether. However, this period soon gave way to an atmosphere of disillusionment in the 1970s. In the face of economic pessimism, recession and the uncertainty of the 70s, schools have clearly not delivered on the promises of the sixties. "Education has failed to live up to the extravagant promises made for it in the previous decades to cure social ills", while "unemployment and underemployment cannot be solved by more or different schooling." The backlash was a call for a "Back to Basics" education to counter the apparent chaos of the flexibility and lack of credibility of schools.

Wilson concludes his paper by pointing out that the main education question facing Canadians today is whether education is to be seen primarily in terms of its cultural or its economic benefits. He points out that the core curricula in both B.C. and Ontario "while speaking interminably about goals, have nothing to say about the philosophy underlying these goals."

Sociology of schools

Ford, J. (1969). ***Social class and the comprehensive school.*** **London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.**

This book attempts to discover if comprehensive reorganization of schools can work towards the ideal of the eventual destruction of the system of stratification which exists in contemporary Britain. The first chapter examines the notions of Justice and the Comprehensive Ideal. In comprehensive reorganization, early selection of children into groups with differential education and occupational prospects is removed and consequently result in a greater development of talent, equality of opportunity, a widening of children's occupational horizon and a relative increase in interaction across such strata. Chapter 2 looks at the Development of Talent as more children are given the opportunity to benefit from an academic education.

In chapter 4, Thinking about Work, the focus is thrown again on how the choice of a child's occupation confers upon him the economic advantages and powers associated with it, and whether he reaffirms or denies the rank provisionally assigned to him on account of his father's occupational position. The chapter concludes on a pessimistic note that there is little hope that comprehensive reorganization will result in a widening of children's

occupational horizons due to their own assessment of their chances of attaining them, and these assessments are largely shaped by other people's definitions of their ability as mediated to the children through the school organization.

In the Epilogue, Ford explains her vision of how non-selective schools might be developed. Her vision includes the removal of examinations as exit standards, and where schools were to be only concerned with education, not selection.

Hargreaves, D.H. (1982). ***The challenge for comprehensive schools: Culture, curriculum, and community.*** **London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. Chapters 1, 4, 6 & 8.**

This article reviews in particular four chapters from the book.

Chapter 1: The two curricula of schooling.
In this chapter, Hargreaves explains that the school has two curriculum. The first consists of formal subjects, but the intended curriculum is a hidden one, which is what students see and feel. This is the curriculum that most effectively prepares the young for the world beyond school. Jack Commons (Kiddar's Luck, 1951) describes how "most of us, however, are unable to survive being educated" (p.1) and the point of education is to enable students to accept boredom and endure it in training for the boring jobs they will endure later in life. "For pupils today, school is as boring as it was for Jack Common's contemporaries, notwithstanding the objective improvements that have been made over the last half-century."

Hargreaves also uses the metaphor of school lessons as a series of "very dull television programmes which could not be switched off." On occasion when the volume rose to a very high level, they listened." Each class is part of a serial, with the teachers providing recapitulations of earlier episodes at the beginning of each lesson, like repeat broadcasts. Since the students could not "switch off" these programmes, they may treat the lesson as background noise. "Commercial breaks" are made the most of – first to leave, and last to arrive. This "is a marvelous anticipation of their adult roles, where these features of school will be replaced by the noise of a factory, and the intrusions of the supervisor's exhortations, the monotony of the unwanted routine jobs."

John Holt, a reflective teacher and author of "How Children Fail" defines the second or hidden curriculum as one of fear rather than "boredom." One of the basic lessons is that the pupil must learn not to betray his fear to the teacher, who will be upset that a pupil should be afraid.

Social control is the eventual outcome of the second or hidden curriculum. This is supported by Commons and Illich. Illich (1971) in *Deschooling Society*: (p.10). Everywhere, the hidden curriculum of schooling initiates the citizen to the myth that bureaucracies guided by scientific knowledge are efficient and benevolent. Everywhere this same curriculum instills in the pupil the myth that increased production will provide a better life. And, everywhere, it develops the habit of self-defeating consumption of

services and alienating production, the tolerance for institutional rankings. The hidden curriculum of school does all this *in spite of contrary efforts undertaken by teachers* and no matter what ideology prevails. [Italics – Hargreaves]

Schools don't prepare students for the workplace, they prepare them for their 'place' in the workplace (p. 14) The 'conflict model' of schooling refers to the fundamental conflict between what teachers and pupils want and expect from schooling. In the end, "… it is they who are to become the docile work force." (p. 15). "The perpetuation of the class structure requires that the hierarchical division of labour be reproduced in the consciousness of its participants." Bowles and Gintis *Schooling in Capitalist America*.

Hargreaves position is that "our present secondary-school system, largely through the hidden curriculum, exerts on many pupils, particularly but by no means exclusively fro the working-class, a destruction of their dignity which is so massive and pervasive that few subsequently recover from it." This damage is unintended and only part of a complex educational story. But he does not advocate removing schools, as Illich does, which he terms throwing out the baby with the bath-water.

There is a counterculture of dignity that springs up among these ordinary working-class boys… one which authority can't destroy. It expresses itself in pupil misconduct and active hostility to school and teachers, and depends, paradoxically, on the teachers' attempts to eradicate it. For teachers, in averting criticism from themselves, they sustain their own interests and avoid the need for any self-analysis.

In general, pupils in British schools are judged against a measuring rod in which mental qualities are regarded as superior to manual qualities. Yet, the focal concerns or values of the lower working class are seen to be *trouble* and *toughness* as portrayed in the cinema by Clint Eastwood. (p. 25).

In understanding schools, "the teachers' voices are usually granted credibility. When pupils are defined as deviants, their accounts are double suspect." But there are always two sides to every story. In understanding schoolings, Hargreaves urges us "to listen to the other accounts, albeit with a proper skepticism. But before looking at school from their point of view, our most difficult task, we must consider some more of the ingredients that comprise the perspective on school on those who join the counter-culture."

Chapter 4: The Culture of Individualism
The chapter focuses on the re-organization of secondary schools.

"Almost every aspect of secondary education has been the subject of dispute, bitter fighting and (too often) uninformed debate." Some issues dealt directly with educational decisions – such as the raising of school-leaving age, or with more responsive attitude to industry, public criticisms about a decline in academic and behavioural standards in schools. (p.77).
But these appear like fragmented attacks, and it is difficult to keep one's eye on the total picture. "Our loss of focus on the whole picture was not entirely caused by the many

social changes to which I have referred; a principal cause was the lack of any generally agreed set of aims or purposes for the new comprehensive schools." (p. 78). Some guidelines for a sense of direction are as follows: 1) keep the total picture in mind; 2) retain the best practices, i.e. not 'de-school' as Illich proposes, but not damage the cognitive intellectual aspects of education irreparably in searching for more balanced curriculum; 3) to look backwards for inspiration and not be naively reactionary; 4) consider the feasibility of reform. "Educational dreamers are not to be despised, but too many of them will only create a nightmare." (p. 79).

Hargreaves comments that the reforms "took too much of the present selected content and structure of the present curriculum as unquestioned and unquestionable." He sees the cardinal error "was to see most curriculum reform in terms of subjects and to organize curriculum development among teachers committed to the same subject." "The inevitable consequence is that the major achievements of curriculum reform and development have been too often to put old wine into new bottles."

In reform, he claims that "any adequate curriculum reform must be prepared to challenge the traditional subjects of the academic curriculum, the core of which we have inherited from the last century and from the early part of this." Although curriculum cannot be constructed out of the obsessions of young people, there is a way out of this artificial choice. "The most important preliminary consideration is to ask what we are educating young people for."

"The initial step is to formulate such admirable abstract aims as 'the realization of pupils' aptitudes and abilities' or 'the preparation of the young for active participation in a democratic society' as first principles." "Curriculum content can then be evaluated to test how far the objective are being achieved in practice." "The practice is not, as so often in education, in accord with theory." "There is a real risk that the eventual syllabus would not correspond to the content that the teacher is trained, qualified and used to teach; the 'subject' might disappear. It is a risk that most teachers, for understandable reasons, cannot afford to take." In recognizing this conundrum, "at least we avoid the hypocrisy of pretending to have aims that we know are not being, and cannot be achieved."

It is difficult to construct aims that are concrete. In redressing schooling as damaging dignity, a school might make it a principal aim to promote dignity – but dignity is abstract – "sense of being worthy, or possessing creative, inventive and critical capacities, of having the power to achieve personal and social change." "That it emphasizes a personal state in the pupil and the possession of skills rather than knowledge makes it remarkably vague as a definition."

Essentially, Chapter 4 deals with the culture of individualism. In this century, the balance between individual and social ends for education has changed dramatically. The consequences of the culture of individualism are profound. It leaves the teachers with the false impression that they do no need to ask the 2 key questions – what kind of society do we want, and how is education to help us realize that society – and can instead ask only –

what kind of individuals do we want and how can education help to create such individuals. Durkheim's sociology of education is extensively used as a framework of analysis for the rest of the chapter.

Chapter 6 is a proposal for some radical rethinking by teachers about the content of the curriculum and the organization of the school's teaching programmes, together with educational authority and school will. Hargreaves is aware of the objections that might be raised against his proposal and addresses these too. Of interest is the following quote:

> The comprehensive school had a difficult birth. It was always an unwanted child for some, who impatiently awaited an opportunity to commit a discreet infanticide. For others it was an infant prodigy which needed to be carefully nurtured and to be defended against envious enemies. It survived. We must now plan its future, for it will not grow and develop naturally without more care and thought and agreement from us. A clear and assured future for the comprehensive school, from the closing years of this century into the early decades of the next, can be provided only if we think out an agreed set of goals and purposes for it and take seriously the old questions: what kind of society do we want, and how is the education system going to help us to realize such a society?
>
> (P. 161)

The final chapter gives a neat summary of Raymond Williams' chapter on *Education and British Society* and points the direction for the future. It calls into play all the parties involved in education and concludes with teachers, whose outlook and occupational culture is not conducive to reforms. He suggests that if reforms are to come to pass, teachers must take a role through union action, if only because the power for educational reform derives from politics and political will.

Holt, J. (1969). *The underachieving school.* New York: Pitman Publishing.

John Holt's book is a pithy statement against the stultifying effects of school. He claims that they are anti-educational and does little for the children who attend them. He asks what true education is, and in asking, determines that schools have failed in their intended purpose. He contends that schools are bad places for kids, and in effect, "children in prison" describes the state of school attendance, and the cruelty that is exerted on children everyday. He advocates experiential learning for children to learn about the world first hand and to bring knowledge of the world to them in schools, not through teachers who talk too much, but through people from the world which we want them to know about. Children must be allowed to make mistakes and learn from them so that they can trust themselves to manage their own lives, which schools don't allow. He suggests that if what we want to raise isn't docile, easily driven or led sheep, but free men, our mindset of what education is has to change.

Musgrove, F. (1979). ***School and the social order.*** **Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 1 & 9.**

Musgrove does not mince words. He condemns the shoddy application of sociology in the study and practice of education and claims that the possibilities for education are not socially pre-determined. There is a deliberate and purposeful role for education that requires judgment and political will if it is to challenge the given social order as it now stands.

Compulsory schools are "barbaric," and he claims it is senseless to make all adolescents follow a broad course of study. But education is, nonetheless, crucial for effecting change, and the means by which working class children can be helped. They shouldn't be promised general education, but target that which have traditionally sustained the privileged in professions such as law and medicine. He goes on to suggest radical means by which the effects of class can be counteracted – the abolishment of public schools, redistribution of teachers and students and financial support for the preliminary stages of a wide range of careers and undertakings. The problem with comprehensive schools is precisely their lack of it: the social class bias in a particular comprehensive school reflects the class bias of the neighbourhood it serves. He refers to Holly's (see below) study of London comprehensive schools and deems it useless for explaining the relationship between social class and academic attainment within a particular school. He claims that comprehensive schools can be skewed either positively or negatively, and it is this "skew" that determines the outcome of the schools.

Williams, R. (1961). Education and British Society.***The long revolution.*** **London: Chatto & Windus. (Part 2, Chapter 1.)**

The chapter traces the history and development of education in British society. It shows how the culture of the people and the class divisions on which society operates is played out over the long history of education in Britain, which is still in the process of being revolutionized as history unfolds. He posits three aims of education for culture, which is: to accept the behaviour and values of his society; to be taught the general knowledge and attitudes appropriate to an educated man, and third, to acquire a particular skill by which he will earn his living and contribute to the welfare of his society. In his analysis, we see how the training of social character shades into specialized training for particular kinds of work, and the definitions of general education taking their colour from both.

Methodology

Pelto, P. J., & Pelto, G. H. (1978). ***Anthropological research: The structure of inquiry.*** **(2nd Edition). Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 3- 6.**

The chapters are concerned with methodologies in anthropological research. Chapter 1 examines the domain of methodology. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with Operationalism in anthropological research and units of observation. Tools used in research is examined in Chapters 5, for instance, Participant observation, key-informant interviewing, the collection of life histories, interviews and surveys. Non-verbal techniques are dealt with in Chapter 6, such as content analysis of literature, archives and other written records. Proxemics, kinesics and other ways of recording data is also included, as is using physical traces and technical equipment in field work.

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Brandt, E. A. (1982). Popularity and peril: Ethnography and education. Review Journal of Philosophy and Social Science. 7(1,2). pp. 139-153.

Brandt addresses the need to make ethnography better understood as a research method in this paper. She asserts that it should not be seen as a "quick and dirty" method to produce a piece of research in a short time. She explains how ethnography has been excised from its context as a part of social and cultural anthropology and severed from ethnology, which is the careful, comparative, cumulative work of theory building, to become a totally theoretical enterprise, and an ascientific mode of enquiry. There is therefore room to make the method better understood as is becomes increasingly used in Educational research.

Holly, D. N. (1965). Profiting from a comprehensive school: Class, sex and ability. ***British Journal of Sociology*** **Vol. 16, pp. 150-158.**

Holly's paper concludes that middle class children benefit from the comprehensive experience. He claims that social class seems to be a variable in nearly all aspects of "profiting" from the school. Streaming by ability within the comprehensive school does not seem to result in producing a new elite based on attainment or intelligence quotients: it seems merely to preserve the traditional class basis of educational selection.

Giddens, A., & Holloway, S. W. F. (1965). Profiting from a comprehensive school: A critical comment. ***British Journal of Sociology,*** **Vol. 15, pp. 351-353.**

Their paper criticizes Holly's methodology and findings and challenges the conclusions inferred in it. What they think is more relevant for discovery is whether or not comprehensive schools serve to eliminate class differentials in education success altogether. Are comprehensive schools relatively more effective than the tripartite school system which preceded it?

Holly, D. N. (1965). A rejoinder. ***British Journal of Sociology,*** **Vol. 15, pp. 354-357.**

Holly defends his first article and gives additional information on the data collected and the reason for the way data is "compressed" and presented in the first article.

Millar, P. (1989). Historiography of compulsory schooling: What is the problem? *History of Education,* 18(2), pp. 123-144.

This paper has as its subject compulsory schooling. However, it is the way in which it attempts to place it in historical perspective that is of interest to our project. The writer asks if there can be some systematic explanation crossing national boundaries for the remarkable coincidence in the introduction of systems of mass compulsory schooling in different countries, and whether a similar theoretical framework can be used to analyze the effects. Is it possible for us to look at the development of comprehensive schools or vocational and technical education in Canada in this light as well?

Raywid, M. A. (1997). About replacing the comprehensive high school. (Editor's Foreword). *Educational Administration Quarterly*. Vol. 33, Supplement. December 1997. pp. 541-545.

The foreword addresses the articles that were received in preparation for this issue. The editor was surprised by the contributions which dealt largely with critiques of the current secondary education structures, but few had visions for new models or policy for a new day in spite of the fact that innovative models do exist. The editor wonders if it is because i) few authors think that high schools need/or should be replaced or ii) none of the models to date are desirable alternatives or iii) most of us are entrenched in the assumptions of the prevalent professional culture as to be unable to entertain alternatives, or iv) that change of such magnitude is simply unthinkable, with the consequence that high schools are here to stay. (See Wraga's article below.)

Wraga, W.G. (1999). Repudiation, reinvention, and educational reform: The comprehensive high school in historical perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly.* 35(2). April 1999. pp. 292-304.

Wraga claims that the articles in the December 1997 issue of EAQ were uninformed by a historical perspective on the American comprehensive high school. He supplies this perspective and explains that the manifestation of the high school today is at best, only half implemented from it's original, intended purpose. He responds to Raywid's call for alternatives by suggesting that the answer to replacing comprehensive high schools is ironically, the comprehensive high school itself, and that it is time to review commitment to the implementation of the comprehensive high school model, by both correcting past mistakes and building on past successes, rather than reinventing the entire system.

Wolcott, H. F. (1982). Differing styles of on-site research, or, "if it isn't ethnography, what is it?" *Review Journal of Philosophy and Social Science.* 7(1,2). pp. 154-169.

Wolcott's paper presents a graphic representation (a chart) of where ethnographic research stands in relation to other types of on-site descriptive research. He claims to be on a crusade to save the fair name of ethnography to ensure that ethnography remains, at the end of the day, the purview of anthropologists who are concerned with cultural interpretations of human social life. In this respect, the hapless educational researcher must be content to concede that they are only borrowing ethnographic techniques unless their concern is entirely about cultural interpretation.

Wolcott, H. F. (1985). On ethnographic intent. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 21(3), pp. 187-203.

In this paper, Wolcott explains what makes a piece of research ethnography. At the centre is its intent: it must be oriented to cultural interpretation. Therein lies another conceptual difficulty, which is the core concept of culture being in itself "intriguing but elusive, all encompassing and conceptually weak." The ethnographer's task is thus to render a "theory of cultural behaviour." Wolcott takes pains to address the use of ethnography in educational research in the final section and claims that is isn't useful for education for the most part because it doesn't answer the kinds of questions and gives the answers that educational researchers are frequently look for – improvement. But it has its place and use. He concludes the paper by suggesting that educators should pay heed to ethnography and culture if they wish to understand "how schools remain so remarkably the same in spite of persistent and well-intended efforts to change them."

Ontario Department of Education. Press release on 10th September 1962 for John P. Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario and Minister for Education.

The press release gives information regarding the growth in school enrolments, building programmes and the reorganization of secondary schools in 3 distinct and equal branches – Arts and Science, Business and Commerce, and Science, Technology and Trades. Of interest is Section 4, on Vocational Education. It links the development of Vocational education to industry and business demand for more practical educational qualifications for students who have no intent of proceeding o higher education. The plan is to accommodate about 90% of the students in vocational courses with the remaining 10% in the traditional Arts and Science programmes. Section 5 and 6 mention plans for new technical courses offered. Section 7 is on teacher education and supply. On page 5, it addresses how the increased demand for technical, commercial and occupational training course teachers will be met, and the qualifications required for teachers who intend to teach these courses.

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