UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The Role Of 'Culture' In The New Alberta Social Studies Curriculum

by

DOUGLAS CAMERON BROWN ©

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF 'CULTURE' IN THE NEW ALBERTA SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Alberta is a province serving a diverse student clientele. It is the promoted responsibility of the school in this province to maintain that all students are accorded the highest standards of service possible given realistic social and fiscal constraints. The effective design and implementation of curricula is an important component in meeting this challenge. Alberta Learning, in current program releases, advances a curricular focus more directly answerable to student diversity within the classroom. Recent changes in the province's social studies program support this initiative.

This study examines these changes, namely, the new Social Studies Program Document K-12 Front (program preamble) and the Social Studies K-9 Program of Studies, as released by Alberta Learning (draft - 2002). The project reviews the curricular program as well as respondent data extracted from the interview transcripts of ten educational professionals. A discourse analysis is employed to further interpret program content and participant response.

This project gauges potential curricular effectiveness (program success). The question is phrased; does this document represent and accommodate the backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences of all learners in recognition of difference, e.g. social class, gender, ethnicity and race? The findings indicate that, despite claims to the contrary, Alberta Learning's new social studies program document

(as above) endorses distinct regimes of social organization and group identity, underwriting what the analyst has titled an 'official culture.' Alberta Learning's revision process has largely been unsuccessful in incorporating an authentic and critical 'pluralistic' approach to classroom diversity.

Furthermore, significant variance is demonstrated on the part of the educators interviewed in assessing program merits. It is advanced that a greater practical and theoretical understanding of diversity (culture, representation, identity) could prove beneficial to both program and practitioner in successfully meeting the needs of Alberta's future learner.

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INTRODUCTION – CHAPTER 1

SCHOOLING AND THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY

Canada's schools are frequently heralded, albeit erringly, as institutions that advance individual and group choice coupled with the freedom to sustain or pursue diverse identity associations and\or lifestyles. Here educational policy borrows from an overarching federal initiative to promote and incorporate multiculturalism and basic human rights into the under girding social, political, cultural and economic institutional web of Canadian society. In upholding the spirit of the Charter of Rights and Freedom, human rights decisions predicated on that authority of the charter, Canadian Multicultural and Human Rights policy endorses an initiative to recognize the individual, cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society, adamant that all individuals receive "equal protection and treatment" under the law (Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, 1998).

Dovetailing with other federal legislation (the *Official Languages Act*, the *Citizenship Act*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*) the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* places legal restrictions on the conduct of public bodies and citizens, and officially

recognizes cultural and racial diversity, and the rights and privileges associated with that diversity, in Canadian society (Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, 1998).

Public policy in Alberta has been directly impacted by federal multicultural and human rights initiatives, the Individual Rights Protection Act (1972), developing into the Multicultural Commission Focus for the 1990's promotes:

> Canadians as comprising many cultures, reflecting the diversity of family origins, (as) Canadians live together, unified in building a strong and peaceful nation ... equal, each enjoying the same privileges and opportunities. (Alberta Multicultural Commission, 1989)

In recent years the repeal of the provincial Multiculturalism Act and the disbanding of the Multicultural Commission in favour of the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multicultural Act has been defended as a bringing together of "human rights and multicultural issues and initiatives" in anticipation of recognizing the links between them (Alberta Community Development, 1998). The evolution of official multiculturalism in Alberta is marked by this July 15, 1996 piece of legislation, and although criticized on several fronts,[1] continues to emphasize multiculturalism as a priority. Markedly, "everyone in Alberta has the right to be treated with dignity and equality." Albertans then are protected from discrimination on definable and defensible grounds (e.g. race, gender, age, religious beliefs, marital status, ancestry, colour) (1998). Included here are the rights of those citizens with exceptionalities, as policy and law draw upon a firm judicial and legislative protocol.[2] The physically, or

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[1] One example of citizen dissatisfaction with the act surrounds an apparent reluctance on the part of legislation, and the current provincial legislative body underwriting the act, to address the issue of "gay rights," specifically, to acknowledge *sexual orientation* as a legislated right of protection within the province of Alberta. The imminent decision as to whether, or not, to invoke the notwithstanding clause, to block expansion of gay rights and benefits, in reaction to a recent Supreme Court decision, holds interesting ramifications for human rights legislation in this province (Greddes 1999).
Another example of consideration marks the refusal on the part of the Klein government to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Johnsrude 1998).
[2] In recent years provincial administrations have altered or adapted legislation regarding the treatment of exceptional persons within specific jurisdictions. Tantamount to these efforts are the changing attitudes and administrative directions affecting schooling (K-12). Indirectly, changes initiated internationally, particularly within the United States (1975) towards a more *inclusive* and *appropriate* education, have aided in facilitating more positive attitudes concerning the needs of the exceptional child. Directly, the April 17, 1982 unveiling of the Charter of Rights and Freedom, specifically sections 2 and 15, imposes accountability upon the relevant parties concerning the appropriate educational

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mentally "disabled" Albertan citizen then is acknowledged fair and equal treatment in areas of employment, public accommodations, tenancy group membership, general services, and education (1998). In illustration, an amendment in the Alberta School Act section 29 (1-3) underscores the rights of any child to a special and "appropriate" education in this province, "if by virtue of the student's behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics, or a combination of those characteristics," a student is in need of a special education program (School Act, 1998).

It follows that provincial assertions are reinforced at the municipal level as board policy and by-law reiterating province wide movements towards equality. This is promoted in recognition of individual and group difference, although frequently without acknowledging either the degree of intervention required, or the specific regional and local needs of those affected. Edmonton Public School District provides "programs and services which make it possible for exceptional students to receive an education appropriate to their abilities and needs" (Edmonton Public, 1998). In addressing socio-cultural diversity the same board adheres to the ethic of accommodation so prominent in super-ordinate jurisdictions, acknowledging that the board:

> Believes in the promotion of the individual and group relations in which ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic similarities and differences are valued, respected and exchanged. (1988)

Certainly efforts to accommodate and recognize diversity in Canada have sustained much controversy and misrepresentation, dating back to 1963 when the federal government first established the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, a project, at least in part, to better house a shifting and changing population demographic, involving significant resource dedication, overarching

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treatment of individual students (Dranoff 1997: 139). Numerous judicial challenges, ostensibly directed at local school boards, have also been brought before the courts and\or human rights commissions over the course of the last ten years, and have aided in the larger project of facilitated educational fairness, while concurrently establishing a guiding jurisprudence. The Supreme Court decision in the case of Eaton v. Brant Board of Education provides an example here (Anderson 1996).

program administration planning and implementation. [3] Changes in public policy and practice as a result of these initiatives (introduced coextensive with a more traditionally sponsored ideology of assimilation), are frequently promoted as a tool for the reshaping of a public consciousness towards a climate of accommodation.

With the majority of educational responsibilities falling under provincial jurisdiction, and with schools viewed by many policy makers and stakeholders as performing an important function in promoting programs embracing diversity, like *multiculturalism,* the classroom has become an important vehicle from which to launch efforts for reform. However, provincial authorities, public bodies, programs (e.g. conferences, publications, advisory committees, grants), as well as instructional staff are all seen as contributory factors to these ongoing initiatives.

So how successful are institutions (schools) in implementing programs like *multiculturalism* or *anti-racism*[4] - programs pitted against a given level of opposition prevalent at various levels of society? Admittedly, not all groups or individuals will agree upon a larger unifying purpose or achievable product with regard to schooling. Programs, drawing upon a short and disputed history of institutional redress, often labour under the weight of their intentions, *viz.* to recognize the distinct histories and identities of all of the students participating within a classroom environment. One criticism offered is that by politicizing the classroom, in ways that draw attention to the differences of others, we risk invocating change within a controlling context of conflict and cooptation.

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[3] Burnet questions the effectiveness of past federal policy given the numerous complexities and variables involved, i.e. hanging immigration trends, settlement demographics, the Quiet Revolution of Jean Lesage in Quebec, urbanization, advances in technological development, a renewed awakening of ethnic identification and nationalism world wide, political opportunism (1979, p. 45).

[4] It is recognized here that in referring to the terms "multicultural" or "anti-racist" one is accessing a vast and disparate literature with regard to theory and practice. I will endeavour later in this paper to highlight and refine specific differences where applicable. However, it is not my project at this juncture to identify with or introduced a specific approach or understanding but merely acknowledge that "multicultural" and "anti-racist" programs are introduced in school settings, and are as frequently resisted by students, parents, staff, and administrators in both multifarious and varying degrees. Furthermore, even in such cases where official programs do not directly contribute to curricula and pedagogical development, the spirit of these ideals, i.e. "multiculturalism" and "anti-racism" inform a more generalizable pedagogical practice; a practice frequently coopted or resisted by those whom might reject such a missive.

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Issuing such a caveat Bullivant comments upon what he titles a "Multicultural" education, denouncing the lure of pluralism:

> From the point of view of adult members of ethnic groups within a pluralistic society, programs of "multicultural" education that cater to their lifestyles and cultural maintenance have an obvious attraction, which might even be shared by some of the children. However, the components that make up these programs, their place in the school curriculum, and the way that curriculum is devised provide almost unlimited opportunity for the dominant knowledge managers...to exercise hegemony over the life chances of children from ethnic backgrounds. (McAndrew, 1991)

Bullivant's comment underscores the potential for contradiction as endemic in program design and implementation, (e.g. administrative and student/teacher mediation and/or resistance), despite a collective effort on the part of policy makers to attain a stated goal. For theorists like Bullivant, efforts to provide a more equitable *playing field* for those legislated, or at least compelled, to attend a classroom can be viewed as ennobling. But they can also be problem laden and unrealistic given the difficulties involved with regard to policy design and implementation.

However, to claim that one must remain politically vigilant is not to say that the same should not strive to develop a more equitable and just form of schooling. Arguably, current classroom practice is informed by a revised and more progressive provincial and federal statute, by-law, and jurisprudence practice. But, the cracks within these frameworks are significant if not gaping, harbouring sentiments of ambivalence and abuse. Recent changes in law and case law, intended to accommodate a more informed and sophisticated reading of contemporary society, remain insufficient, quixotic and misguided[5]. The movement towards curriculum reform has been offered as a solution to past inadequacies.

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[5] It can easily be argued that many recent court decisions and government policies serve to entrench the disadvantaged positions of identifiable groups in Canada. The argument may follow that very little has actually been accomplished in terms of recognizing diversity, both in terms of negative and positive rights. Brodie's book *Politics on the Margin* would support such a position, noting that recent government and state restructuring schemes have eroded and undermined the already tenuous social and economic positions of many Canadians, i.e. women. However, the policy myth concerning gradual amelioration remains intact, i.e. that diversity and difference is to be accommodated where possible, whether, or not, the position can be supported in fact.

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In Alberta, the adoption of many of the recommendations of the Western Canadian Protocol (WCP), a common curriculum project involving intergovernmental cooperation across several administrative jurisdictions, stands as an example[6], *viz.* the production of a curricula program more relevant to the "lifeworld" of the student. The objective of producing a more equitable and relevant classroom environment (a message gathering sufficient political and legal attention in recent years) is echoed in the protocol releases of this project - a project reflecting the willingness on the part of its members to acknowledge the challenges of diversity (i.e. ethnicity, race, language, spirituality), albeit while appeasing the interests of those whom would not sacrifice "classroom efficiency" or "established practice" in the process.

My interests here in introducing and underwriting the parameters of this research project demands an acknowledgment of the significance of this task, particularly in examining the WCP claim to better accommodate diversity/difference/multiculturalism within the classroom. For the WCP not only marks a departure from the past in a way that curricula has been conceptualized and processed, it provides the basic *tour de force* for Alberta Learning's present Social Studies Framework – the subject of this thesis. While this project is not a review of the WCP, but the Alberta Learning Framework that evolved out of WCP cooperation, it must firstly acknowledge WCP influences in curricula and policy design.

THE WCP SOCIAL STUDIES COLLABORATIVE PROJECT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESENT PROGRAM OF STUDIES

This study is not a review of the WCP social studies initiative – although it started out that way. The decision by Alberta Learning in 2001 to break with the WCP program is credited with an effort to accommodate a workable curricular project for this province with acceptable time lines. The break with the collaborative project marked a divergence that would find Alberta Learning pursuing its own directions

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[6] The program, affecting core subjects from K-12, is part of a larger project ratified in December 1993 by the respective minister responsible for education in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia (observer status), Yukon Territories, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories.

after literally years of participation in the WCP Social Studies Common Curriculum project.

This study is a review of Alberta Learning's new Social Studies Front and Program of Studies K-9, released as a first draft in the summer of 2002. The purpose of this study is to review this draft document in terms of its overall potential in advancing multicultural/intercultural curricular interests in the province of Alberta for the relevant age groups affected. This review and critique is administered along two main lines of focus and interpretation. Firstly, the analyst's review of the document, assessing its acceptability and potential in advancing multicultural/intercultural cause in this province. Secondly, educators and persons with vested interests in education in this province are interviewed and questioned on the contents of the same document. Attention is given later in this study to reviewing and defining issues and concepts associate to the multicultural/intercultural concept[7]. Also reviewed in this chapter is the direction and process of this study in terms of its philosophical intent, research parameters and intended outcomes.

It serves to recognize, however, from the outset that Alberta Learning's social studies review project (i.e. the development of this Curriculum Front and Program of Studies inclusive of Alberta Learning's new Social Studies Program of Studies document - 10-12) is reflective of an ongoing process of refinement and development with its roots in the WCP project. So in terms of revealing the foundation for Alberta Learning's new social studies curricular project – which ultimately is my intention - the WCP initiative represents a nascent force in the research and development of the social studies draft Front and K-9 curriculum program of studies.

The WCP social studies project, not unlike the larger WCP program, in general, represents a partnership of interested parties seeking to underwrite a common curriculum structure, informing curriculum design and operation at a multitude of jurisdictional levels. In Alberta curriculum input design and revision evolved under the direction of Alberta Learning (Curriculum Branch) in consultation with teachers,

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[7] Interview participants will exhibit much greater latitude in interpreting and defining the concepts and processes involved in this an effort to better understand potential of this new curriculum project

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administrators, and other stakeholder groups. Curriculum design then was of both a professional/bureaucratic and voluntary nature, with the Curriculum Branch of Alberta Learning serving a liaison role in keeping Albertans apprised of WCP progress.

The project then endeavours to meet the philosophical and political objectives of the agreement while providing a vision for the social studies discipline:

- ❖ Articulating a vision for social studies;
- ❖ Specifying the role of social studies;
- ❖ Providing guiding principles;
- ❖ Supplying background information necessary to inform the developers of the Common Curriculum Framework. (WCP, 2000b)

To achieve this, WCP writers have engaged in an extensive project of research and review, within the overall goal of constructing a common curriculum framework. This framework is to be utilized by each province, or territory, in designing the necessary curriculum resources necessary.

Work on the *WCP Social Studies Common Curriculum Framework* began in the spring of 2000, a venture to be completed for group levels K-9 in the spring of 2001 and for group levels 10-12 in the spring of 2002. For the province of Alberta, programs of study were to be structured and developed from the *Framework,* with an initial draft scheduled for release in spring 2002, K-9, and spring 2003 for the group levels 10-12.

In refining the finished product, Alberta Learning endeavoured to seek the advice and criticism of a number of concerned parties as the process of writing, consultation and refinement is a theme followed to varying degrees of success throughout the design and implementation process. For example, the *WCP Foundations Document - Draft*, an attempt to generate an overarching project philosophy and focus, released in April 1999 (WCP, 1999), was followed up by the *Alberta Response to the Draft Foundation Document for the Development of the Western Canadian Protocol Social Studies K-12 Common Curriculum Framework* (November, 1999). This response document was prepared as a review of the Foundations draft, with the data collected primarily through the use of a common *Response Form.* The effort here was to

produce a response field from a wide variety of interested parties, to capture areas of agreement and areas of concern" using a combination of comments and numerical data (Alberta Learning, 1999, p. 1). Suggestions and insights gleaned from the response were then employed in modifying the initial Foundation Document draft. The *Foundation Document for the Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies K-12* the result, was released in February of 2000, a significant contributing resource to the eventual drafting of the *Common Curriculum Framework*[8].

The Social Studies Common Curriculum Framework then must be seen as a product of significant research and collaboration drawing extensively, in terms of its philosophical groundwork, from the WCP Social Studies *Foundations Document*. Certainly, there are some potentially interesting ramifications for specific groups. For interpreting the WCP mandate, proposed changes to the existing school curriculum in northern and western Canada, advocate, at least at a policy level, an approach which encourages the kindergarten to grade 12 learner to explore his\her personal and Canadian heritage, with a declared focus on heightening positive identity markers of self and other. The developing citizen then is to retain a critical awareness of human change and development, both domestically and abroad, as spatial and historical products of "culture," with each individual viewed as both unique in him\her self yet affected by specific socio-cultural variables which affect attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (WCP, 1999).

Looking forward, society's members are to remain cognizant of the challenges facing the "active citizen", as communications technologies, the politics of culture, and environmental externalities place accelerated demands on the individual confronting the next millennium (WCP, 1999).

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[8] Significant attention has been issued in the research and development of this WCP framework including the preparation and publication of a number of research and framework documents instrumental to program development and preparation. Amongst these some examples are An Overview of Related Research: to inform the development of Western Canadian Protocol Social Studies (K-12) – Common Curriculum Framework for Francophone Education (1999), Aboriginal Perspective on Education: A Vision of Cultural Context Within the framework of Social Studies – Literature/Research Review (1999), Reshaping the Future of Social Studies: Literature/Research Review (1999), The Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs - kindergarten to grade 12 (2000).

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The Foundations Document, then, provides an example of how diversity as a concept occupies the creative imagination of curriculum planners, while for the greater part reinforcing "common educational goals". The program stresses a need to celebrate the specific traditions of western Aboriginal and Francophone communities, along with supporting a greater consciousness of differing cultural perspectives and backgrounds, which underwrite human interdependence.

Arguably, the program provides an interesting backdrop for the intersection between cultural representation and curricula; curricula that are ideally entrusted with the task of transferring prescribed knowledge components, while establishing a direct relevancy to the interests and experiences of the student. The WCP social studies program proposes to reinterpret the specific methods by which issues of individuality and group identity are addressed. Importantly, diversity of cultural representation and group difference is seen as a significant reality of classroom learning as well as the larger social networks in which schools are located and operated.

Alberta Learning's break with the WCP program has left the province with an adaptation of the above goals and objectives. The revised program, as promoted, is anchored in the established foundations of the *WCP Foundations Document* and *Common Curriculum Framework*. Other WCP documents like the *Common Curriculum framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs - kindergarten to grade twelve* is arguably influential in the development of Alberta Learning's present social studies project.

Thus, in referencing this research study, what initially started out as a review of the WCP *Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies,* now becomes an analysis and review of a K-9 program of studies and the accompanying Front (rationale and scope of the K-12 project). Notably, the K-9 Program of Studies was invoked in the absence of a prefacing Framework Document (notwithstanding the WCP accomplishments).

It is my position that the K-9 Program of Studies (draft) moves away from the larger philosophical and political tenets of the WCP. Alberta Learning has not developed a resource educational content and approach capable of providing an

inclusive environment for Alberta's social studies learner. This claim will be rearticulated and supported later in the document.

Existing social studies curricula programs in Alberta prescribe an approach that tempers common outcomes with respect for the dignity of individual difference and exceptionality. For example, the Alberta Social Studies 10, 20, 30 Program of Studies bolsters appropriate skills and attitudes "respecting the dignity and worth of self and other (Alberta Education, 1990, p. 3)." These monographs denote the need to meet required components of the program (80 percent), but also establish that:

> The elective component provides enrichment and remediation consistent with the content and objectives of the required component and provides opportunities to adapt or enhance instruction to meet the diverse needs and abilities of students. (p. 4)

The programs acknowledge the need to establish "positive attitudes," requisite requirements for responsible citizenship in all facets of instruction, "with respect, tolerance and understanding towards individuals, groups and cultures in one's community and in other communities." The formation and respect for both community and diversity is then, promoted as a positive expectation of the educational process (Alberta Learning, 1990, p. 5). I promote elsewhere (Brown, 1996) that the promotional tenor of this language has not been played out in reality.

Interestingly, the Alberta Learning declaration to move beyond the mandates of the existing program in providing a more inclusive learning environment, has failed. Certainly concessions are forthcoming for specified groups. However, concessions are gratuitous in nature and/or issued at the expense of a broader more equitable approach to student difference. As stated the purpose of this research is to determine exactly where the potential lies, if at all, and if the exigencies of a more critical and relevant curricula will advance the interest of the Alberta social studies learner. This includes a more expansive explanation of where specific shortcomings lie.

The new social studies project is the chosen area of review here for several reasons. Firstly, the project is ongoing. So with a finalized (and in the case of the 10-

12 component – a draft document) program yet to materialize, this appears an opportune time to provide feedback. It is certainly an exciting time to be involved in the examination and interpretation of a program, reaching forward, yet with a significant history in terms of its design and implementation.

A second rationale for choosing this specific core discipline looks to social studies as a rich multidisciplinary field of study encompassing a vast range of issues, concepts and events, communicated and reviewed as a discursive project through the employment and interpretation of written text, visual images and oratory narratives. In this WCP Foundation Document (2000b) quotation:

> The study of people in relation to each other and to their world. It is an interdisciplinary subject that draws upon history, geography, economics, law, political science, and other disciplines. Social studies focuses on people's relationships with their social, physical, spiritual, cultural, economic, political, and technological environments. Social studies help students become active and responsible citizens within their communities, locally, nationally, and globally, on a complex and changing world. (p. 6)

Positively the social studies classroom marks a negotiated space where signification and ultimately meaning making become political, social and thereby cultural acts. Thus, stratagems that welcome openness and diverse perspectives are most certainly received and recognizable within the discourse laden social studies classroom.

Thirdly, the author\analyst has previous experience in curricula review in this specific subject area (e.g. previous research experience in reviewing social studies programs and textbooks within the province of Alberta).

THE RESEARCH STUDY

So what does this research study look like? And is there an argument for establishing a more versatile, sophisticated curriculum program, one accessible, to all grades, for all learners?

Firstly, there exists a recognition - by the WCP program and subsequent developments in Alberta Learning curricula - that education must become more

answerable to diversity, specifically Aboriginal and Francophone learners, but multicultural learners in general. This has been indicated above in the official communications of the WCP and Alberta Learning.

Secondly, this study supports this proposition. In citing two former studies by the author (1) Text *As Discourse* – (Brown, D. 1996), and (2) *Curriculum and the classroom: Private and public spaces* – (Brown, D., & Kelly, J. 2001), it is my assertion that present curriculum programs are inadequate. Furthermore, a preliminary review, by this author, of existing Alberta social studies curriculum (as conducted for this study) supports this position. Present social studies curricula in this province carry a limited value in broaching the challenges of diversity. Arguably, moves have been made towards greater inclusion in the design of social studies textbooks and curriculum packages, but the process merely reflects a piling on of information onto an existing mainstream citizenship theme. At best we see a cursory attempt at conveying culture, an approach acknowledging difference, but not disparity, as a factor in Canadian life:

> Underpinned by commonplace socio-cultural understandings, harnessed as discourses and transcribed in familiar ways, these texts promote distinct regimes of social organization and group identity... perpetuated as code\discourse and transmitted, as components bolstering other discourses, in a collaborative package, signified by and signifying distinct reality interpretations. Drawing on an intersubjectivity accessible through the interpretive repertoires of the Western subject, meaning is engendered commensurate with the world of the actor. Created within the contours of the flowing text, discourse patterns move between binary polarities, i.e. good/evil, right/wrong, rich/poor, happy/sad. The text effectively becomes an instrument of inclusion and exclusion in ways which accent difference, while silencing alternative points of view. Citizenship, thus, becomes familiarized within a specific ritual of acting and believing. Development becomes an objectified intent, a materialistic, consumptive, and paternalistic, process, undermined by product. The political becomes redundant and disempowers as personal growth and constructive change smother under the foundationalist weight of the status quo (Brown, 1996)

Multicultural curricula cannot be distinguished from multicultural learning. It is the recognition that:

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a. Multicultural curriculum learning is a dynamic process with meaning and knowledge construction taking place on site at the level of the classroom.

b. In multicultural curriculum learning must accommodate diverse backgrounds, cultural differences and needs. Therefore, curriculum programs must provide the knowledge support and pedagogical space for diverse learners.

c. Multicultural curriculum must grant teachers the autonomy to adjust curricula and instruction to the diverse needs of the students. The creation of a public space where needs can be interpreted and facilitated requires a curricular approach which is teacher friendly.

d. Multicultural curriculum must encourage citizenship archetypes, which are inclusive or open to all Canadians. Students should not have to learn to be someone else before they can engage curricula content.

Existing curricula and the philosophies underwriting the application of those curricula are limited and inadequate when one addresses true diversity or multiculturalism, as it exists in Alberta. While attempts have been made to introduce content in terms of textual material, the incorporation of that text into a stronger multicultural educational theme has been poor. It is, therefore, the position of this study, in terms of identifying a policy problem that, *the present Social Studies curriculum program does not provide an acceptable multicultural program in terms of curricula production and implementation.*

Moreover, the demands made upon our schools are increasing. Immigrant arrivals are bolstering the already "pluralistic" temperament of Canadian society. Cultural diversity, a significant element in Canadian schools, ushers a greater call for tolerance and openness in the acceptance of others. According to Stats Canada (2002) the percentage of immigrants arriving in Canada continues to increase yearly. The number of residents born outside this country has reached its highest level in seventy years. Calgary, a centrally located Alberta city, now boasts a "visible minority" population of 164,900 people (17.5 percent), with the Employment Equity Act defining visible minorities as "persons," other than Aboriginal peoples, "who are non-Caucasian in

race or non-white in colour" (Minorities, 2003). In Calgary, nearly 52,000 people (5 percent) are of Chinese origin, a figure up from 34,700 in 1991. South Asians (people from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) are the second most frequently reported visible minority in Calgary making up four percent of the population. Filipinos are the third biggest group, 16,240 people (2003). In comparison, 21,915 Aboriginal peoples live in Calgary (McGinnis, 2003).

As the door swings open, pressures on the school systems to adapt are significant. Calgary Board of Education (CBE) statistics show there are 56 languages and cultures represented in the city's 200 public schools, all requiring the services of translators and interpreters. Today in Calgary, 11,057 ESL students obtain services from the CBE[9]. In contrast to the 1185 ESL students enrolled in CBE schools in 1982 (Knapp, 2003).

The data above not only demonstrate that Calgary (Alberta) is increasingly becoming more culturally diverse, but that the traditional founding peoples formula seems no longer applicable. Changes to curricula content and process, then must be inclusive of a variety of groups, cultural practices and histories. This is a normative claim I make here and defend throughout the document. The need to better facilitate the demands of new Canadians in Alberta, with institutional challenges of language and culture providing barriers, is promoted.

The failures of the past should concern our school systems. Recent statistics show that 40 to 60 percent of young Aboriginals finish high school compared with 75 to 80 percent of the general population (McGinnis, 2003).[10] Is this a direct product of curricula failure? Arguably not, at least we must consider a great many contributory factors. Other minority groups in this province perform well academically. However, it does highlight areas where greater efforts (by all) are required. Curricular sensitivity and a call for greater relevancy are advocated here as a positive in the effort to alleviate such disparities.

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[9] This figure represents about 11 percent of CBE enrolment. This group is also considered at risk as traditionally drop out rates are high.
[10] Although this deplorable statistic is gradually improving.

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Dokis, states in a recent interview, that educational systems which test students in one question, one answer and memorization models work against Aboriginal students who grow up with a broader understanding of teaching and learning (Summerfield, 2003). In quoting 24-year old Metis student Jessica Cardinal, "it was very difficult for me to get through high school just because the curriculum did not relate to my lifestyle. There wasn't a lot of Aboriginal content" (2003). Aboriginal students stand as a challenge for Alberta Learning in terms of educating minority students, but they are not alone.

Income disparity and poverty are commonplace in this province. The silencing of poverty and its effects in the classroom restricts student access to valuable information and represent a conscious decision to defraud the public. Curricular knowledge is more than a middleclass obsession with progress and consensus. The sociological literature has clearly indicated a strong correlation between class and student success, as curriculum, hidden curriculum, and teacher expectation favours middleclass and upper middleclass ways of acting and being (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, students of all class associations are taught to misinterpret their social realities in a process of mystification which eliminates contours and convections of social life constructing a discourse of material and cultural normalcy falling somewhere around the socio-economic mean. Eliminated are not only the potential for praxis (intent upon ameliorating those material and social disparities) but the awareness of difference as a socially significant occurrence. Here the poor and indigent cease either to exist, or in extreme circumstances, never have. By writing a broader cross-section of community life into curricular text the effort is made to assist all students in better understanding the causes and effects of material disparity gaining greater understanding and perhaps an enhanced sense of personal efficacy.

A normative push towards greater societal equity undergirds this project. It is not my position that schooling alone produces overt forms of material austerity. Although I support that curricula systems can and do reproduce, sometimes unwittingly, the culture of inequality in symbolic ways. Furthermore, the apparent invisibility of class issues in curricula content denies a subjective status to those most effected.

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In Canada, almost 1.5 million (17 percent) of Canada's full-time workers earned $20,000 or less in the year 2000, a rate of less than half of the national average ($43,231) - 138,000 more low wage earners than in 1990. Eleven percent of this group hold university degrees (Stats Canada, 2003). These are people trying to find adequate jobs that the market cannot provide.

Concomitantly, governments in Ontario and Alberta have been cutting social assistance and like services for more than a decade. Exacerbating things further, these same families are forced to absorb dramatic increases in the price of fuel oils, electricity, gasoline and natural gas as well as other inflationary pressures (cost of food). At $5.90 per hour, Alberta has the lowest minimum wage in Canada with a full-time rate of approximately one-quarter of the national income average. Interestingly, Alberta enjoys the highest per capita growth of high-income earners with over twice the number of people earning over $100,00 in 2000 than in 1990. In Calgary 4.9 percent of the city's 218,400 workers enjoy incomes of over $100,000 per year[11] (Stats Canada, 2003).

The ranks of the high-powered and high-salaried workers have increased dramatically since 1990. In the year 2000, Statistics Canada (2003) reported that almost a half-million people Canada wide earned more than $100,000 a year, an increase of two-thirds from 1990. A full 20 percent of this group did not work full-time. Men accounted for 84 percent of this group with wealthy women predominately occupying the professions as lawyers and family doctors. Men, however, draw high salaries from a number of vocations and disciplines including computer and information systems jobs, sales and marketing, lawyers, doctors, managers. The invisibility of class, gender, and ethnicity as it affects the future of worker's chances at providing a stable material living remains one of the most exaggerated yet amazingly disguised components of Canadian life. This type of knowledge is something we do not teach in schools in any meaningful way.

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[11] It should be noted that this information references income only derived from employment, with income derived from investments "sweetening the pot" further. Canada's wealthy enjoying significant capital by which to invest and draw income.

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The apparent invisibility of poverty, or socio-economic disadvantagement, further burdens existing, as well as newly relocated cultural groups, and women, with many enduring the triple stigma of race, social class, and gender. In Canada (year 2000) Canadian born women only make 64 percent of every dollar Canadian born men earn, this figure is up marginally from 52 percent in 1980, however, one can possibly attribute this gain to issues of necessity and not equity as women are forced to become more aggressive in the marketplace. Immigrants in this country make only 63 percent of every dollar that Canadian born men earn (Tsang, 2003). The reality of the numbers is that Canada is not a "just," society despite well-worn and adopted discourses that make pretences to this effect, some of these untruths the product of our social studies curriculum. Consensus based curricular products that deny power and conflict, and curriculum that purposefully hides knowledge of material and cultural disparity serve to underwrite the validity and sanctimony of the status quo. This is unacceptable. Distributive justice then underwrites both an ethic and rationale for this study. I promote that the strength of a given curriculum program is to be measured in that program's ability to accuracy and truthfully convey these challenges to the student. But this is about more than addressing challenges. Multicultural societies, like Alberta, need to celebrate and represent student and societal diversity in ways that more accurately review the historical development and significance of those differences. This leads me to my most serious charge against the new Alberta Learning program as developed from and of the WCP experiment. This document is charged with promoting an 'official culture' behind a veil of state neutrality and impartiality. This Program does not serve to accommodate multiple group interest or even provide the apparent pretence to do so as measured through the, at times, contradictory messages of the WCP. Both documents may be accused of avoiding the larger multicultural theme of diversity, instead choosing to promote the interests and histories of those groups whose stories are already constitutionally, legally and socially enshrined within the Canadian fabric (i.e. Aboriginal groups, Francophone, and British charter groups). This new adaptation however, through the elimination of distinct outcomes, the focus on differentiated delivery, and localized control, surrenders all pretence. We are

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confronted with a reactionary curriculum form, in many ways less dynamic than the programs delivered in the 1980s.

I advance that Curricula policy solutions, however, are attainable given a more appropriate program serving a more broadly defined citizenship type:

❖ With a content more reflective of Canada's diversity in terms of historical development and present day realities

❖ With a philosophical and sociological commitment to a critical multicultural agenda, one inclusive of classed, gendered, and sexed, typed identities

❖ With a focus moving past curriculum design towards policy implementation; to encourage diversity as a classroom presence rather than a demographic abstraction

❖ With a commitment towards teacher autonomy and site based learning: knowledge concepts promoting reception as well as production granting the latitude for student ownership and learning to occur

This study then looks to address the explicated need for redress, endeavouring to construct an enhanced understanding of student diversity – given the challenges of recognizing culture and identity differences through representation. It attempts to apply this knowledge in building an understanding of education that is "multicultural" in terms of its origin and execution, an understanding against which the proposed social studies program may be measured.

Does Alberta Learning offer the student a laudable product? Is the potential for change and improvement present? Does the program communicate means by which we may bridge the social distance between the histories and lifestyles of the student and the education expectations of the state? Is the goal met, to render a curriculum relevant to the student world while maintaining a common educational focus throughout the cooperative area - establishing a system that is not antithetical to student standards and success - No! Yet this is as valid an expectation for the White middleclass urban male as for the Aboriginal rural female. That schooling and curricula have historically located and served the interests of the former in this

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province, oftentimes at the expense of the latter, does not alter the validity of the claim. For all students are socially and culturally located somewhere and are affected by and in the process of building identities or ways of being as citizens in the world.

Drawing upon a sample of experienced educators (10 respondent interviews), I weigh my own findings against the positions of others in the educational field. These respondents will provide feedback as to the value of this program in terms of; (1) perceived need for a multicultural approach in education; (2) the judgement as to whether the new program document will meet or exceed those needs. The second interrogative is intended to ascertain the effectiveness of the program as a potential vehicle for recognizing equality and developing educational opportunity for all groups within the larger jurisdictional mandate. The first question asks something different. *Even given that perceptions are such that Alberta Learning's new Program of Study K-9 takes dramatic steps in asserting curricula relevancy, can it be said that in practical terms it is the opinion of the respondent that real educational opportunities will be positive in nature?* Differently stated, a program may accommodate cultural and linguistic difference where possible while integrating this approach into a cohesive package stressing common educational goals. Thus, a curriculum program can both build upon distinct understandings of group identity while accommodating a necessary standard. However, in the opinion of the respondent what changes to the program are appropriate in terms of the overall needs of Alberta students? In answering this question, the educators chosen were asked to consider the possibility in terms of their own experiences or *reading of the world*. It is understood that the respondents speak from their own personal social location. It is acknowledged that respondents, at best, may simply interpret larger social goals and demands or misrepresent the program document itself. The second question concerning the ability of the project to represent perceived needs of all students demands some interpretation on the part of the subject. Understandably the responses varied between participants.

By weighing my own research demands with those of the interview group, it is my position that (1) this study has derive a more sophisticated and complex

understanding of multicultural education and curriculum as a classroom need, and (2) evaluated the potential of the new Social Studies curriculum in meeting those needs.

CHAPTER BREAKDOWN OF THE STUDY

This study has been organized and recorded in a series of chapters. The first chapter is intended to give an overview of the study itself. The forward progress of Alberta Learning's Social Studies reform changes has not been seamless. There have been a number of changes and delays affecting the project and it should be anticipated that more are to come. However, as outlined, Alberta Learning has released a Draft Program of Studies from K-9 with the release of the high school curriculum 10-12 imminent. It is on the strength of this document (K-9) and the relative progress contained within that my analysis and critique and the participant interviews will be based.

The second chapter of this study is intended to provide a theoretical and relatively comprehensive review of the concepts and literature as reviewed in the context of this project. This chapter links the process of knowledge production and power, knowledge reception and identity construction and representation and reviews the nature of culture and its importance to schooling. It also addresses the influences of state and society in curriculum production, learning expectations and overarching definitions of citizenship. The significance of bodily markings and identity features (e.g. sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, etc.) are discussed in the larger context of knowledge creation and reception, the classroom, and citizenship.

The third chapter of this study is dedicated to the project of creating a Critical Multicultural theory of education. The intention here is to erect a model, drawing upon specific educational and sociological theory (as reviewed in the second chapter) through which a more detailed analysis and critique of the program document can be undertaken. Utilizing both structural and post structural arguments, the Critical Multicultural model presented here moves beyond "official multiculturalism," and its influences, approvingly recognized and practiced in Canada. It is recognized that

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multicultural curriculum, as defined and reviewed in this chapter, incorporates the dynamisms of teaching and learning, moving beyond the static text.

Chapter four provides a methodological review and validation for, (1) the analysts review and analysis of the program document, and (2) the interview component through which other educators are issued a voice. Timelines, guidelines and procedures are examined. A theoretical framework is provided in support of the methodologies chosen. Finally, the parameters and rationale for document analysis are supplied.

The fifth chapter is committed to the structural positioning and explication of the interview data as collected from the participants. Participant input (i.e. values, opinions and observations), are accessed, categorized and cross-referenced. Evolving themes and commonalities will be developed and critiqued. A discourse analysis is used in an attempt to unearth spurious misapprehensions facilitating hyper-convention, discrimination, and stereotype, embedded signification of social and ideological effects.

The sixth chapter is reserved for an analyst's review and critique of the program document. Accomplishments and merits of the new program are weighed against the tenets of Critical Multiculturalism as developed in the third chapter. The program is examined in proviso of its potential to facilitate interest and relevancy for all students in inclusive ways. A successful curriculum project then is one engaging the *lifeworld* of the student. At no point in this study will the analyst support a content only curricular approach. Does this plan provide the impetus and space for a heuristic Critical Multiculturalism, a knowledge-enhancing project incorporating the dynamics of site based pedagogy, representation, and power?

The final chapter of this study addresses issues covered in the previous six. Observations concerning collection and application are recorded. Evolving themes and paradigms as correlated to respondent and document data will be examined. The question, begging the appropriateness of the program document in facilitating a more progressive and critical means of multiculturalism in the Social Studies discipline, is

re-examined. Finally, analyst recommendations, as applying to the future progress and development of Alberta Learning's new Social Studies curriculum, are reviewed.

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CHAPTER 2 - CULTURAL DIFFERENCE AS AN AREA OF POLICY CONCERN

Curriculum planners frequently target cultural difference as an area of policy concern. For acknowledging that a school jurisdiction is not culturally homogeneous, maintaining that those settling a region bring with them distinct histories, social meaning systems, and language practices, is to recognize *diversity* as a conditioning factor in curriculum planning and implementation. Certainly, if fair and equitable representation is expressed as a policy concern, effort need be taken in addressing the distinct needs of those involved.

However, words like *multiculturalism, cultural diversity*, and *pluralism* frequently engender an indeterminate and often divergent reaction, as design specialists, teachers, parents and other stakeholders debate the value and scope of any school program intended to accommodate student difference. Explanations are numerous and readily accessible with some rejecting outright the call for more aggressive reforms in curricula design, reaching as far back as the Coleman Report in deprecating the calls for compensatory education for disadvantaged or culturally disenfranchised children.[1]

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[1] The Coleman Report was commissioned under the directive of the U. S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 as social psychologist James S. Coleman, under a stringent deadline, undertook the massive effort of

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But acknowledging the contributions of nearly four decades of sociological and psychological research in the educational field we are pressed, albeit sometimes reluctantly, to at least play lip service to diversity. Children do hail from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Schools do attempt to instil in the same specific values and knowledge that validate or denigrate accepted values, belief systems, and ways of being.

And educators have responded. Certainly school jurisdictions, governing bodies, and curricula designers have come forward advancing programs and reforms targeted at this now recognizable "other" (i.e. that child which cannot readily conform to the "commonly conducted" practices and content of the mainstream classroom).

For example, the Alberta Social Studies 10, 20, 30 Program of Studies advocates "respecting the dignity and worth of self and other" (Alberta Education, 1990, p. 3). The monograph enforces the need to meet required components of the program (80 percent), but:

> The elective component provides enrichment and remediation consistent with the content and objectives of the required component and provides opportunities to adapt or enhance instruction to meet the diverse needs and abilities of students. (1990, p. 4)

Responsible citizenship is advanced, "with respect tolerance and understanding towards individuals, groups and cultures in one's community and in other communities." The formation and respect for both group and other is then, promoted as a positive expectation of the educational process (1990, p. 5).

The Western Canadian Protocol (WCP), a common curriculum framework introduced as a collaborative project in several jurisdictions in Western and Northern Canada pushes the envelope further. The program, affecting core subjects from K-12,

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collecting data from more than 3000 schools, involving 650,000 students and 60,000 teachers, in grades one, three, nine, and twelve. The study ridden with methodological shortcomings concluded:

1. Per-pupil expenditures, books in the library, and a number of other facilities and curricular measures show very little relation to achievement if the social background and attitudes of individual students and their schoolmates are held constant.
2. The effect of a student's peers on his own achievement level is more important than any other school influence. (Levin & Bowles, p. 4, 1968)

is part of a larger project ratified in December 1993 by the respective minister responsible for education in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia (observer status), Yukon Territories, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories.

With the fanfare of marking a significant departure from existing policy practice, cultural diversity (based upon identifiable racial and ethnic group associations), specific group histories and language, become instrumental components in the design and implementation of curricula objectives and anticipated outcomes. Requiring that curriculum planners, administrators and teachers recognize specific cultural and historical differences within their own jurisdictions the WCP is foremost an effort to seek common ground from which to project a workable standard across the six jurisdictional areas targeted in teacher education; student assessment and standards of student performance; Aboriginal (Native) education (including Aboriginal teacher education and certification); curriculum in the French language; distance learning and technology; curriculum in languages other than English or French; and special education.

Notably, the emphasis remains on the larger canons of economy, efficiency and standardization, yet, as referenced above, significant efforts are forwarded in developing and implementing curricula that directly address learner difference in cultural areas like ethnicity and language. Specific to this cause is the preparation and advancement of several appurtenant documents intended to both support and elucidate these efforts: the Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Cultural Programs K-12; the Common Curriculum Framework for International Languages K-12; the Common Curriculum Framework for Bilingual Programming in International Languages; several accompanying resource lists acknowledging specific linguistic and cultural demands.

The claim then is made that effort be been taken in recognizing the specific historical and cultural demographics of the region, concedes that demography (i.e. a jurisdiction's location, size, tradition, and ethnic and/or cultural base) is a relevant issue in curriculum design and implementation. The knowledge that Canada has

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always embraced this position is certainly a more tenuous boast, although historically concessions have been accorded specific minority groups. [2]

The WCP (2000) foundations document reports that:

> In Canada, provincial responsibility for education was established at confederation to recognize regional differences and to place a high value on developing and adapting policies responsive to local needs and conditions, and administration of programs at the local levels. (p. 2)

Whether one chooses to accept this interpretation, the pretence is to enrich the experiences of the learner by informing a curricular product, which in terms of its expectations, content, and outcomes, better integrates with the linguistic, and cultural requirements of the community, that is, under the larger umbrella of centralized control and standardization.

Alberta Learning's operative decision to proceed with a new social studies program independent from the WCP general guide initiatives and timelines need not entail that curricula relevancy has been dislodged as an instrumental component of the revised program. The stated goals and outcomes of the program draft document would seem to imply that this is not the case. We again witness here an acknowledgement of a diverse and demanding demographic and the called requirement of making what is taught in the classroom more relevant to the lives, histories, and desires of this same group.

However, it is one thing to call for remedial action in terms of better adapting a curriculum to the relevant needs of the student and quite another to adequately identify and recognize those requisite needs, differences, and carry them through. If a curriculum is to account for, in terms of its flexibility, the diverse backgrounds and demands of a clientele, then there must be exercised the potential for internal revision

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[2]Section 93 of the Constitutional Act handed jurisdictional authority for schooling (with exceptions) to the provinces while imposing restrictions on anticipated antecedents of forced assimilation, and in doing so honoured the needs of the individual and community in exercising substantive control over the schooling. The unique linguistic, religious, regional, and cultural diversity of the country were thus recognized, as well as the potential role schooling was to play in reinforcing or mitigating these differences. Thus, denominational schools, established prior to confederation, remained protected under the act, with the Catholic and Protestant learner (threatened in areas where he/she would be deemed a minority), maintaining a principal right to dissent (Young & Levin, 1998, pp. 27-29).

and change. A curriculum must present a culture of opportunity that articulate beliefs, values and identities are recognized and respected. It must withstand the institutional pressure of *instrumental reason*, or the move to crowd and rigidify content, dictate pedagogical methods and evaluative criteria, a reason directly aligning knowledge forms within an administrative regime of control under "late capitalism.[3]" Stated another way, the production, circulation, and consumption of reproductive and intensely centralized information, or for Luke and White (1988), "the one-sided rise to dominance of cognitive-instrumental aspects of rationality through which everything else is driven into the apparent realm of irrationality" (p. 27).

If it is acknowledged that schooling is ostensibly a social process, that is that identities are to a degree fluid, that content presence come at the expense of absence, and that power undergirds strategic and incidental choice, then arguably no curriculum can answer up to the demands/needs of all stakeholders. But saying this is not to say that there is such a thing as a good or bad curriculum given a specific social context and need. The task is to judge the effectiveness of those planners and advocates who claim to have got it right? Certainly a more detailed examination schooling and its place in society is required. An understanding of the relationship between society and schooling is essential. Furthermore, we must position curricula within that larger model. For example, when we speak of curricular knowledge what do we mean? Who produces and constructs that knowledge? As indicated earlier, other questions revolve around the issue of curriculum relevancy and client diversity. Whose needs are to be met and how? Are we meeting those needs? Are epistemological concerns intricately connected with ontology? Whose identities are reproduced and represented within curricula? If curricula issues are also identity issues, in terms of who and how we represent, then what are these decisions to be made. This chapter is intended to look more closely at the role of curricula, not only in understanding curricula as a culture

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[3] By "late" or " advanced" capitalism here I am referring to recent changes in the economy of Western nation, and in a more general context, the larger global economic systems, e.g. significant developments in technology, information, and communications practices, changes in the structure and operations of modern transnational corporations, and the displacement of a production oriented economy with a demand focus (a consumption culture), or as Schiller indicates, the intrusion of commercial values (consumption) into all "spheres of human existence" (Webster, 1995, p. 95).

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force, and the relationship between curricula, the state and civil society, but in understanding curricula as an official culture, a discourse explaining and circumscribing ethno-cultural, class and gender normalcy and acceptability.

CURRICULA AS KNOWLEDGE

Antonio Gramsci, the late Neo-Marxist theorist has argued that political dominance in a society is tantamount to ideological dominance by specific classes in the control of knowledge institutions. Conflicts over competing cultural and political forms are played out in moments of hegemonic dominance, acquiescence and consolidation. The struggle over knowledge preservation and dissemination then becomes a struggle over control over societies cultural apparatuses, with civil society, and its various organs (like the school) and satellites of knowledge selection, storage and distribution. These institutions assume an important place in the *war of position* - a war of retrenchment, an "appreciation of the need to wage war at the cultural and ideological level, rather or as well as at the political and economic" (Strinati, 1997, p. 239).

Work by neo-Marxist theorists (and others), on the nature of the hidden curriculum for example (Willis & Apple 1979, Apple 1976, 1979, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1993; Aronowitz & Giroux 1983, 1991, 1993; Giroux 1979, 1989,1996, 2000; McLaren 1989, 2000, Wexler 1976, 1987, Darder 1991), have centered on the effects and manifestations of ideologies embedded in the structure and discourses of curricular knowledge as potential contributors to regimes of social control. Other phenomenological approaches, propagating inquiries into knowledge maintenance and construction under the umbrella of the *New Sociology* (Young [Ed.], 1971) have informed social criticism and inquiry on the strength and nature of controlling movements and forces in curricula production. For both, the supposition stands that curricular material carries and enhances ideological systems of representation *visa vie* educational thought and action. The message generated in much of this early evaluative sociological work (Neo-Marxist and Phenomenological alike) retains the

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ethic that knowledge production and circulation occupies a relationally contested and politically circumscribed frontier.

As Apple (1975) argues:

> We need to examine critically not just "how a student acquires more knowledge" (the dominant question in our efficiency minded field), but "why and how particular aspects of the collective culture are presented in school as objective, factual knowledge." How concretely, may official knowledge represent ideological configurations of the dominant interests in a society? How do schools legitimate these limited and partial standards of knowing as unquestioned truths? These questions must be asked of at least three areas of school life: (1) how the basic day-to-day regularities of schools contribute (student learning) to these ideologies; (2) how the specific forms of curricular knowledge reflect these configurations; (3) how these ideologies are reflected in the fundamental perspectives educators themselves employ to order, guide, and give meaning to their own activity (pp. 354-355).

Curriculum knowledge retains that which positions itself on a variety of issues and understandings concerning ritualized content labeled necessary and important. Presuppositions on student competence, attitude, and social positioning, intersect with "commonsense" understandings on work, play, normality, deviance, smart, and stupid. The qualification that all students will not obtain the same knowledge, or in the same way underwrites a relational dimensionality broaching student-teacher interaction, social class, race, and gender:

> Knowledge is not produced in the intentions of those who believe they hold it, whether in the pen or in the voice. It is produced in the process of interaction between writer and reader at the moment of reading, and between teacher and learner at the moment of classroom engagement. Knowledge is not the matter that is offered so much as the matter that is understood. To think of fields or bodies of knowledge as if they are the property of academics and teachers is wrong. It denies equity in the relations at moments of interaction and falsely privileges one side of the exchange and what that side knows over the other. (Lusted, 1986, pp. 4-5)

But to bracket against prejudicial assumptions over larger epistemological claims to truth is not to deny discursive and executive power wielded as establishing repertoires of pedagogical and curricular practice, and "the fact that the principles governing the selection of transmittable knowledge" will reflect this power (Apple, 1975, p. 214). Moving past the phenomenological manifestations of established

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knowledge is to avoid a relevancy that ignores societal structure as a relational instrument of formation as indicated by Gramsci above and Whitty below:

> The overemphasis on the notion that reality is socially constructed seeks to have led to a neglect of the consideration of how and why reality comes to be constructed in particular ways and how and why particular constructions of reality seem to have the power to resist subversion (p. 125).

That students learn a certain thing in the classroom and in almost the same breath choose to accept or reject that thing, forget it or remember it, feel comforted by it or trepidatious, and arguably do so *en-mass*, would tend to indicate a need to look past the specific, despite the instrumental value in never losing sight of this context. *Critical theory,* not dissimilar to the type employed by Apple above, provides some direction here - avoiding overly essentializing principles - acknowledging the increasingly significant role of culture in dispelling and reinforcing knowledge forms.

> Interestingly, we see resistance of the left as growing out of this idea of symbolic colonization as observed by Habermas in his analysis of technical rationality rather than old materialists ideas speaking of a material crisis as needed to introduce contradiction and social action. "The information revolution thus brings with it new and potent ways of systematically distorting communication. As consumers and clients accept their pre-processed choices they simultaneously accept their status as colonial subjects." (Luke & White, 1988, p. 40)

An increased role for culture in knowledge construction, reproduction and resistance then avoids partial explanations, either overtly deterministic or interpretive, leading instead in the direction of that intersection point between our physical worlds and the dispensation of meaning. It is this idea of curriculum as knowledge that is validated, not as a terminus of realization, but as an inchoate stream of resistance and negotiated meaning.

Recognized by Habermas in later work are the relevant "phenomenological contributions to critical theory," as contrasted against "the uniquely Western goal of science based emancipation" (O'Neil, 1988. p. 60). This recognizes the critical function of the lifeworld (folk culture, village, family, and neighbourhood values and knowledge), or the ethical problems of responsibly introducing critical

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"*communicative* competences into a colonized *lifeworld* in which mind, self, and society have been brutalized" (p. 60). Whether this is in fact the case requires further analysis but the introduction of Habermasian speech competence begs the question of an appropriate regime of curricular knowledge. O'Neil notes that not dissimilar to Habermas, both Fanon and Freire call for a review of assumed curricular adequacy and relevance as mass education cannot fail but result in a "bureaucratic and administrative discourse furthering the process of social control" (p. 71). The temptation to endorse larger curricular programs and initiatives as sufficiently divorced from the local where meaning is structured and reviewed in relation to material and cultural *lifeworlds* then circumvents the larger issues of *communicative competence*, or dialogical methods of appraising, evaluating and naming a language of authentic possibility (testing the existential experiences against the objectified world).[4] It is in acknowledging this requirement, *sine qua non*, to serious interpretation and critique of curricular knowledge that progress is necessitated. Establishing the larger relevancy of that product, in the search for a democratic educational practice, borrows from such an interpretation. Reviewing those forces and structures (more thoroughly) which come into play at the intersection point of student and curriculum, will inform any subsequent analysis.

Foucault's ideas on power/knowledge and discourse have something to offer here, challenging our ability as subject to distinguish between knowledge that is oppressive and knowledge that serves to liberate, and the role of reason in making this determination:

> Relying on Enlightenment philosophy to curb the modern state is like putting reason in charge of itself—trusting its capacity to reach for the truth. Foucault asks: "Shall we try reason? To my mind, nothing would be more sterile. (Corlett, 1993, p. 210)

Foucault concurs with Habermas that western reason and rationality have dominated from the period of the Enlightenment (eighteenth to twentieth century) subjugating and normalized ways knowledge. But the issue of control and domination is not abuse

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[4] For both Freire and Fanon the claim that culture is political, is not so much an acknowledgement that culture is ideology but that culture involves competences and resources that are unevenly distributed.

and excess but is qualitatively aligned with the growth and recognizable function of knowledge and the knowledge industry totally infiltrating the everyday lives. Domination, control and the power of selection and exclusion are built into each social formation. The state moves from a historical role of dominance and autarkic control to one of facilitation, as power becomes concomitant to knowledge and knowledge power. [5] The struggle that Foucault describes are those that question the status of the individual. The struggles of modernity give us the right to be different. Through enlightenment reason we underlie what it is to be individual, autonomous, separate, and yet this same discourse attacks everything that sets us apart.[6] The subject then stands at the impasse:

> the modern anthropological figure of man as a living, working, speaking, sexual being who is always an object to himself, is a mere episode in the history of human subjectivation. And this, in turn, enabled Foucault to argue for the death of man in his modern anthropological form. (Bennet, 1993, p. 38)

However, Foucault's project is not about knowledge, rather the (1) control of the subject and (2) how such a disciplinary society has come to pass.[7] In education his approach generates some interest, although it is not our intention here to adopt the entire metaphysic and the bleak landscape it represents for modern pedagogy. For

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[5] "Whereas many political theorists are accustomed to viewing the state as a threat to individual liberty—and thus speak of the tension between the individual and the state—Foucault uses his dual treatment of *subject* to make and add the point that the state looks after the interest of the totality and at *the same time* individuates the subjects, carves them out of an amorphous mass. Just as the Roman Catholic church concocts pastoral power by allowing people to discover souls (which gives the church access to their innermost lives), so the modern state exercises pastoral power by allowing people to develop an individuality (which requires state interference for protection). In devising this "tricky combination" of being "both an individualizing and a totalizing form of power" the state has accomplished a most subtle domination. And, according to Foucault, the practice of everyday life unknowingly conspires." (Corlett, 1994, p. 213)

[6] Modernist theorists impute how the individuated subject might either come to terms with collective attachments, or reject these terms. But no one can resist collective attachment, as collective attainment is responsible for the objectification and refinement of modern individual practice. Modern power structures are totalizing and modern power structures individuating.

[7] Foucault's subject then resides in dynamic 'field' of interrelations. The subject is a product of diverse relationships of power as he/she conforms to the normalizing influence of modern reason as practice. Power is everywhere and comes from everywhere. Our 'shape,' or 'technologies,' then is a product of these forces and our resistance to them.

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under the blanket of modern power/knowledge the subject can neither make a stand under of defiance or complicity without validating modern discourse and interpretation, an intertwined labyrinth combining the confusion of Gramscian hegemonic networks and the endless interpretation and reinterpretation of modern discourse. As the subject is the creation, in all contexts (unable to move alone, oppressed through the social),[8] then that person retains a sense of internal regulation under the gaze of modern discourse.[9]

However, Foucault does have something to offer the curricula analyst. Firstly, as stated, knowledge represents that which has been reworked by the human sciences permeating all enclaves of modern society and can be viewed at micro levels in the ways that we organize our lives. Whereas we might normally regard knowledge as providing us with the power to do things that, without it, we could not do, Foucault argues that knowledge is a power over others, the power to define others. Here knowledge is synonymous with power as the bearers of that knowledge "have the ability to fix the flow of meaning and define others" (Craib, 1992, p. 187). [10] Thus those who create discourse are those who hold power.[11] Foucault's understanding of power/knowledge breathes a sophistication into existing theoretical approaches (e.g. Habermas) which follow top-down hierarchies of power dissemination and execution

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[8] "The people' have no life of their own outside the hegemonic order, no culture or practices other than those imposed on them by the various technologies of power, no traditions of otherness, no dialects or habits of speech or forms of humour, no means of giving Caesar his due while using Caesar to their own advantage, no capacity for living simultaneously in different cultural orders. Even criminals and delinquents are denuded of their distinctive social and discursive practices and presented only as they appear under the panoptic eye of hegemonic institutions." (Bennet, 1993, p. 38)

[9] The power that empowers the critical theorist to critique the nature of society and government, also underpins the regimes of knowledge, or discourses, which legitimates the critique, which may exclude or mislead. For Foucault it is an impossibility for the critical theorist to possess the knowledge devoid of the accompanying power which validates the rightness of the act, a regime, which in it self, is open to criticism. As Leslie Gore reiterates, *all things are dangerous*, even emancipatory things. (1993)

[10] Note the reversal of the commonly understood conception that knowledge is power because it is a commodity of some fixity and permanence.

[11] It must be acknowledged that although Foucault acknowledges, no specific hierarchy to discourse production, (the fodder from which knowledge is constructed), and that power is capillary and ubiquitous, some play a more significant role (e.g. social scientists) in discourse production in society than do others.

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by associating knowledge with power rather than truth.[12] Furthermore, thinking of the curriculum as power forces us to focus on the ways in which power operates and ways in which we confuse power, naively accepting oppressive discourses and situations.[13]

Secondly, by employing the concept of discourse we sidestep the approach by some to advocate the normal neutral nature of classroom language. For Foucault meaning making is inseparable from social power and language production. In constituting the lives of individual subjects, it should be noted that discourses are always relational in nature:

> They are subject to a variety of interconnected power relations that sustain each other; the stronger their mutual connection, the more stable their foundation with the most powerful discourses in society having firm institutional and legal bases (e.g. family, welfare, the organization of work, racism, sexism, classism).[14] (Henry, Tator, Mattis, Rees, 2000, p. 35)

Discourses overlap, contradict and run parallel to other discourses. By reviewing textual knowledge as discourse we are better able to trace dominating ideas as knowledge/power networks. Controlling and constituting aspects of meaning then can be understood as interpolative effects (hailing) reflecting in text a power/knowledge nexus, rather than truth. Said's (1978) example of Orientalism lends credence to such a proposal, with all that is good and just in the West contrasted against a disreputable and questionable binary, the Orient.

Discourse as a tool of analysis enables a critical inquiry into language, as that which can carry a number of meanings concurrently. Meanings that elicit cognitive, and

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[12] Foucault's work comprises studies of the knowledge/power relations in the growth of different sciences, psychiatric medicine, in criminal law, and in theories of sexuality.

[13] From a poststructuralist view of gender, one can see that masculinity and femininity are discourses which are imbued with power/knowledge relations and act upon individuals within particular societies as individual males and females behavior involves an enactment of gender roles, as interpreted by them in their social context "The distinctions between masculinity and femininity that are current today have their roots, like so much else, in Enlightenment thought. They are built around a series of parallel dualisms that were seen as particularly important in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but whose effects remain today" (Paechter, 2001, p. 48).

[14] Foucault understands discourse as an organized complex of statements, terms, categories and beliefs structured in relation to historical, social and institutional specificities (Scott, 1988, p. *35)*. Discourses appear and affect the nature of the body, mind and emotional life of subjects.

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emotional responses in the subject also produce responses of both resistance and compliance. However, both need not of necessity equate to an act of normalization and social compliance. Resistance to suggestions of Occidental dominance, engendering a resistance of mobilization and action, must be interpreted as a strategic reaction with material consequences of value. Foucault is frequently read as accommodating discourses of resistance and human agency. Remembering that power is infinite, discourses of resistance frequently accompany oppression.

However, discourses are inextricably tied to power relations; one is not free simply to choose which discourse is more accommodating. Some discourses are more powerful than others (an understanding not dissimilar to Gramsci) as resistance does not grow out of a vacuum, or an utterance. Social movements advocating change are frequently quashed or simply dismissed. Discourses are tied to the physical world. Curricular language without a convincing pedagogy, relating to the world of the student, may fall on "deaf ears."

By recognizing the relative nature of discourse we then do two things. One, we remove from the author the last word in meaning construction promoting the significance of contextual information and subject positioning over intended meaning. Thus, what may be construed as a "progressive" discourse (e.g. anti-racist education), may have limited impact on a racist learner. This is an important consideration, as a curriculum specialist must do more than formulate text. He/she must anticipate how that text will be read. Two, information gleaned from the pages of a text and meaning constructed from that information affects how " we behave at very visceral and physical levels" (Paechter, 2001, p. 43). The pre-eminence of the social in gender practices provides an example here (Frye, 1998).

A final application for Foucault's notion of power/knowledge and modernism concerns practice. Foucault's critique of modern normalizing power offers the educator and analyst the tools to question everyday practices and knowledge components of the classroom, components that we may validate as enlightening or positive in nature, or not. For example, as a teacher, when I test a student I ask her to do more than she knows or understand. I normalize this individual and govern her in

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techniques she will learn, as discipline, in the future. For this student is en-route to becoming self-governed individual. By assigning her a mark I objectify that person, as belonging to that mark, and offer her subjectivity as the possessor of that mark (Marshall, 1989). For Paechter (2001):

> It is not enough to say that science is a set of procedures by which propositions may be falsified, errors demonstrated, myths demystified, etc. Science also exercises power: it is, literally, a power that forces you to say certain things, if you are not to be disqualified not only as being wrong, but, more seriously than that, as being a charlatan. (p. 42)

Networks and practices of the classroom that seem to embrace an ethic of critical pedagogy may under closer examination reveal oppressive mechanism of normalization and compunction. Discourses that emphasize equality frequently mask the reality of difference. Discourses, which convey the accomplishments of women, carry with then conflicting discourse that requires women do so. Discourses on nationalism frequently engender other racist, sexist, and class-based discourses, as historically the nation state, and its accompanying institutions, has protected the interest of the propertied white male.

Foucault's post-structural analysis has something to offer an analysis of curricula. Knowledge is dispensed between subjects in a material universal with affectations on physical bodies and relationships. Although I promote in opposition to the spirit of Foucault's work, that resistance can be executed at communal levels.[15] For while Habermas and the ideals of communicative action ignore to a significant degree the insidious nature of power/knowledge configurations, it would seem that to erect a curricular practice of advancement and reform, based upon knowledge/power networks, one need first engender a praxis of community (teacher, student, stakeholder).

Foucault's post-structuralism brings with it the benefits of challenging what are extremely powerful discourses that structure many of the commonsense ways we think

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[15] Foucault's overemphasis on the "technologies of the self" and the "care of the self" see power as that which is engaged and resisted at the level of the individual escaping, through the gaps and cracks, societal forms of normalization and oppression. But this is to remove from the project any legitimate notion of the collective, social action, and meaningful communal change.

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about the world. It is not to ignore the role of ideology and structure in the production of knowledge and knowledge discourse. It is to realize a greater complexity in the interrelationships of human subjects as they engage discourses that pretend to read the world. Our understandings on gender, race, ethnicity, immigration, childhood, education, pedagogy, learning, and living to a significant degree are products of knowledge/power relationships as meanings are superimposed on bodily ways of acting. The marriage of knowledge and identity become inextricably connected. The ability to develop a self-reflective critique of curricular knowledge, then, is a requirement.

CULTURE, HEGEMONY, AND TRANSFORMATION

Stuart Hall (1996b) writes, "we would get much further along the road to understanding how the regime of capital can function through differentiation and difference rather than through similarity and identity if we took more seriously this issue of culture, social, national, ethnic and gendered compositions of historically different and specific forms of labour" (p. 438). What Hall is advocating here is an understanding of social formation and domination within a society that moves beyond a simple economist definition, or the coupling of a materialist economic base with a compliant superstructure. That is, social formations within a modern capitalist society bear significant relation to historical antagonisms and associations of gender, race, ethnicity, as well as class.

Theories devised to explain these historical antagonisms and associations tend to fall into two groups. A theory will either work from the end of (1) *political economy* — economist theories that hold economic relations and structures to command an overwhelming determining effect upon social relation, or (2) *cultural primacy* - the tendency to hold social categories, like race or ethnicity as autonomous, not to be explained away as by-products or surface modalities of deeper economic relations or what Hall would reference as sociological approaches (Strinati, 1995).

The drawbacks familiarized through the first position are easily apparent. If we adopt an economist position, that is, to explain away something, like racism in

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schools, as that which cannot be sufficiently understood outside of specific economic relations, then we cast aside a valuable body of sociological and psychological theory required in better understanding abuses of privilege within the classroom. Concomitantly, we submit to reductionalist reproduction and/or correspondence regimes (e.g. Bowles & Gintis seminal work – *Schooling in Capitalist America* [1976]) by neglecting to imbricate critical education, the possibilities for social change, and larger societal (economic) structural determinants. Materialist understandings of culture, as that which underwrites and reproduces existing economic relations within the larger society, then, can fall into a paradigmatic trap, as the predeterminined relationship between society and culture renders culturally initiated change ineffectively. This is to say meaningful curricular reform is inextricably tied to the rather daunting challenge of economic reform. Moreover, if inequities in social relations are directly reducible to economic relations, then any change in an assumed economic determinant should result in a comparable change at cultural levels in civil society (i.e. schooling). The continued presence of racism, gender discrimination and ethnic antagonisms in jurisdiction undergoing radical economic reforms would tend to indicate that this is not necessarily the case.

If the weakness of the first paradigm is to reduce all to a compactly assembled and explainable model of base superstructure correspondence, then the error of the second lies in its confusing plurality; the tendency to ignore political economy, inadequate theorizing, and a model more descriptive than explanatory (Craib, 1992).[16] Hall acknowledges that if one is to understand the creation or perpetuation of racism within a given modern society it is necessary to transcend simple economist interpretations that ignore or supplicate the cultural to the determining role of economic structure. Why it is that racism has been associated with or overdetermined by "certain capitalisms" at specific stages of development. Certainly differing articulations of

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[16] It should be recognized that this division is crude at best and that many theories do not readily adapt to such a bifurcation. Many structuralist and poststructuralist explanations (Levi-Strauss, Freud, Lacan, Foucault) are non-economist yet complex and highly deterministic. However, the spirit of the distinction survives, viz. that neither excessive theoretical regimentation nor diversification is to be advanced if social action is the goal.

specific antagonisms, like racism, with differing structures of social formation, reflect historical events, and are at most epiphenomenal, not determinate. Racism provides an example:

> One cannot explain racism in abstraction from other social relations...one is required to show how thoroughly racism is reorganized and rearticulated with the relations of new modes of production... (Hall,1996f, p. 51).

> One must start, then, from the concrete historical 'work' which racism accomplishes under specific historical conditions – as a set of economic, political, and ideological practices of a distinct kind concretely articulated with other practices in a social formation. These practices ascribe the positioning of different social groups in relation to one another with respect to the elementary structures of society; they fix and ascribe their positionings in ongoing social practices. (Hall, 1996f, p. 52)

The articulation of non-capitalist events and modes of social organization within capitalist societies then must then be examined as both product and purveyor of social formation, and not as determined extensions of capitalism.[17]

> Articulation requires ... the existence of non-class contents-interpellations and contradictions-which constitute the raw materials on which class ideological practices operate. (Hall, pp. 49-50)

However, one cannot assume that culture operates or is articulated independent of material influence. For example, the *unite and fight* campaigns of some racial groups are theoretically unsound as, historically, 'white' and 'black' labour stand in differing relations to capital, and, in turn, to society.

Classrooms are areas of cultural expression, cultural invention, and resistance. Classrooms are also penetrated and conditioned by material culture. Classrooms do validate, and legitimate dominant class interest. Classrooms do effectively mystify this connection in promoting democratic conventions (Apple, 1986). However, classrooms also maintain a cultural independence from material modes of production (i.e. that

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[17] Many theorists assume the complete penetration of capitalist modes (e.g. Frank) into what may initially appear as non-capitalists modes of productions, or societies.

social relations within and outside of the school are historical and articulated products), and social action can and does frequently result in positive change.

Therefore, while one cannot explain racism, or the inability of curriculum content to directly confront racism, without explaining class antagonisms within given social relations, the function and product of the classroom cannot be reduced to some denotative explanation of material correspondence. Curricula and learning is more than reproducing the stories and knowledge of those that dominate a society.

For Habermas, the Marxist distinctions between substructure (economic and productive relations) and super structure (the state and its ideology) cannot be maintained as advanced industrial society has "destroyed the particular constellation of institutional framework and subsystems of purposive-rational action which characterized liberal capitalism" (Farganis, p. 495). What Habermas argues is that the state and state institutions under modern capitalism intervene in economic (base) activities through a number of fiscal and monetary practices, making the base accountable for a wide range of political interests.

> A point of view that methodologically insolates the economic laws of motion of society can claim to grasp the overall structure of social life in its essential categories only as long as politics depends upon the economic base. It becomes inapplicable when the base has to be comprehended as in itself a function of governmental activity and political conflicts. (p. 496)

However, material relations remain a conditioning element that must be confronted if curricula are to represent the life histories, beliefs and desires of those not directly served by the status quo. Curricula reproduce inequitable material relations and practices (Anyon, 1979), but also denote inelastic regimes of national and cultural citizenship, advocate oppressive gender roles and assume ethnic alliances.

Drawing again from Habermas, curricula advance policies of the state independent of direct material correspondents complicating Marx's base/superstructure model, or a strict "labour theory of value" approach. Proliferating knowledge regimes, "instrumental" or scientific in nature are furthered through state intervention and complicity in scientific research and distribution as "science becomes a leading

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productive force, rendering inoperative the conditions for Marx's labour theory of value" (p. 496).

But while overwriting the assumed direct role of economy in ideology production and distribution, recognizing the more active role of the state in incorporating scientific methodologies, charting information flows, social indicators, and applications of systems analysis, Habermas does not assume the dissolution of institutional/material related control but instead recognizes the same. For science and technology have adopted the role of ideology blocking avenues of free symbolic exchange, transforming the social *life world* as discourses of exchange (curricula) are coopted by technocratic models of seeing and framing that world.[18] But, as with many revised Marxian interpretations, Habermas does not presuppose scientific/instrumental rationality to dominate completely,[19] as ideologies collide and contradict new discourses of thought and action are created.[20] Nor should we view theories about state executed and sanctioned hegemonic institutions as innocuous in contrast to base driven counterparts relying upon a compliant state.[21] Any curriculum that re-circulates

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[18] We understand the society as social-cultural lifeworld when we address it with reference to the rules of discourse that establish social relations as relations of communication among societal members who also know that they partake in these relations. Habermas uses these distinctions for identifying the problematic features of rationalization in developed industrial (or late capitalist) societies. Their major conflict is the clash between social action systems have become independent from the generally shared lifeworld and the lifeworld itself as the ground for the communicative organization of commonly held beliefs. These action systems are formed on the axes of increasingly successful intervention in the environment (technologies, economy) or of increasing efficiency in the coordination of social interaction (economy, administration). The rationalization of these action systems is a partial rationalization of the lifeworld at best. At worst it may be destruction of the lifeworld because this process may tend toward making the communicative organization of social interaction superfluous. Thus the terms *lifeworld* and *system* serve as a contrast. A theory that has this contrast as its theme is committed to showing the difference between types of rationalization. (Misgeld, 1988, p. 95)

[19] Unlike Horkheimer and Adorno, Habermas acknowledges the value and need in both rational and strategic forms of communication. The issue is one of quantification rather than qualification as systematic excesses lead to the colonization of the lifeworld and democratic forms of speech.

[20] Habermas is, however, concerned with how and where public discussion can accommodate dissenting views. It is modernity's (late capitalism's) relative role in quashing avenues for public debate that challenges diversity, or the free flow of ideas (Misgeld, 1988).

[21]This would seem to include much of Althusser's post-structural approach despite the proclaimed attempt to develop Marxism as a science and rid it of economic determinism. Althusser presents the school (as a part of the *Ideological State Apparatus*) as an institution that reproduces ruling class ideals - institutionally aloof from the economic base yet answerable to it in the "last instance." The school then functions ideologically to secure the reproduction of the relations of production by interpolating compliant subject positions, articulated well by Strinati here:

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en-mass the "commonsensical" conventions,[22] beliefs, and values of a society is undesirable (whether we are constructing compliant workers, or scientists). For when curricular production and dissemination retains autonomy from societal reinforced structures, classrooms can act to empower minority concerns and combat oppressive judicial/legal, bureaucratic and ideological inequity.[23]

Focusing on capitalist hegemony and culture, Raymond Williams emphasizes that the dissemination of the modern subject is attributed primarily to the workings of the

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(1) What people represent to them in ideology is not the real world, but rather their relationship to the real world. - the relationship an imaginary one.

(2) But ideology is not simply an imaginary relationship of ideas, or a question of mental states or consciousness – but a material practice carried out by institutions and individuals. It is the product of actions by people living the imaginary relationship defined for them by that ideology.

(3) Ideology ensures that people live an imaginary relationship because it forms them as subjects. (Strinati, 1997, p. 153)

Unfortunately, to avoid internal contradiction, Althusser must place ideology as something which functions in the interest of the economic base despite the claim to "relative autonomy" (Craib, 1992). Education, then, becomes something that distributes people into various determinist social positions, not as something arising out of class struggle.

[22] Gramsci 's idea of *hegemony* replaces reductionist deprecationist models on ideology that relied upon false subject interpretation and identification. Hegemony represents those shifting set of ideas by which dominant agents attempt to secure compliance through class struggle. Success can result in the influence of commonplace ways of knowing and feeling, generating what Gramsci calls "common sense" notions of being and acting. *Counterhegemonic* movements grow out of movements in civil society as intellectuals (leadership), seek to produce, distribute and interpret information within a given societal context in an attempt to reinterpret social and physical phenomena at cultural levels.

[23] Now Habermas's emphasis on the uncolonized lifeworld is relevant here: Misgeld says it well claiming Habermas:

suggests the shared understandings (including and understanding of conflict) that societal members achieve though discourse and action. By claiming and expressing a distinctive identity of one's own based on the competence and readiness to give reasons for one's actions and beliefs, one calls on a similar expressiveness and display of identity and competence by others. One can also legitimately expect their respect for one's competence and one's concern to be a distinctive "I". The normative concepts of identity and competence thus belong to a characterization of what is required of people if they are to engage in dialogue (communication). (1988, p. 103)

An ethic, as suggested earlier, not far removed from Freire's in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in emphasizing communication and deliberation as a prerequisite to authentic pedagogy. Habermas's invasion of technology and science as ideology and his theme of the colonization of the lifeworld do not fall far from Freire's ideas of *"cultural invasion"* and *"banking."* Expertise at any time is tenuous and alienating, existing outside of the lifeworld experiences of the student, and for Freire can be entered into the common knowledge of a cultural group under two conditions: "the appropriate vehicles of translation and interpretation must be available and those possessing special knowledge must be accountable to the cultural group with which they work," concentrating on "the awakening and practical acknowledgement of the cognitive beliefs, affective dispositions, and existential attitudes needed for the community to have a critical sense of its existence and its capacities." (p. 108)

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capitalist economy and the dominant forms of economic rationality, although we must not assume that cultural production is by necessity a determined product of this relationship (Stevenson, 1995).

> We have to think of determination not as a single force, or a single abstraction of forces, but as a process in which real determining factors – the distribution power or of capital, social and physical inheritances, relations of scale and size between groups – set limits and exert pressures, but neither wholly control nor wholly predict the outcome of complex activity within or at these limits, and under or against these pressures. (Williams, 1974)

In building an analysis of political economy into a concern for hegemony and fractured forms of consciousness, William's recognizes that media cultures and culture production in general has an under-realized democratic function (Stephenson, 1995, p. 130), and while Williams views identification formation as a class matter, he does acknowledge that cultural products can and do overwrite these influences. Established identity is relevantly determined through history:

> That the distribution of power, capital, social and physical inheritance, relation of scale and size between groups, all create and maintain pressures and limits which can not be wholly controlled or predicted (p. 1974).

Certainly to make the claim that particular knowledge forms are selected and disseminated as strident artifices of public policy is to ignore the relationships harboured by the indices of government, state and civil society. Expanding the terrain further, the intricacies of recent technology, globalization and late capitalism all add up to a model of some complexity evolving far beyond the theoretical parameters of state and economy.

It is Gramsci's interpretation of hegemony as a historical process, always shifting, (i.e. not systematic in its formation) which informs Williams, as hegemonic practices can either be dominant, residual, or emergent – with no social order ever incorporating the whole of human experience. The hegemonic is a combination of traditions, institutions and formation. Traditions are constantly invented and reinvented by nation states, while being presented as fixed, final and neutral. Material production and reproduction then are dependent on mass media and other institutions to propagate

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ideals uncritically. Formation occurs when movements, like early modernism, influence culture (Stevenson, 1995, p. 17).

With Williams (1995), the culture which prevails in a society at any one time can then be seen as a product of hegemony, not because people are coerced into compliance, nor that they accept false consciousness, or are brainwashed, but because they accept these cultural values and ideas for reasons of their own. Gramsci (1971) writes:

> The fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed – in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic corporate kind. But there is also no doubt that such sacrifices and such a compromise cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decision function exercised by the leading group in the decision nucleus of economic activity. (p. 161)

State power and leadership are thus incorporated into the process of consent, as a form of learning, and brandished in the discourse, need, value, appeal, and interest of the subject learner. Thus hegemony continues to shift in a struggle over competing views and conceptions of the world (i.e. what it is and how it should be). Gramsci illustrates that a *ruling bloc*, or way of thinking can only emerge through this pedagogical and political struggle, a struggle that will ultimately result in a dominant group position (i.e. class) of hegemony that incorporates specific interests, beliefs, and values of subordinate groups. Two things seem pertinent here. One, that schooling as a practice of civil society (or the larger community), need not be directly dominated by the state, despite the enormous control state institutions enjoy in administering education over a jurisdiction. Two, while schooling, and learning, does not directly correspond to state will and structure, ideological regimes (ways of thinking about something) can and will attain legitimacy by incorporating world views familiar with the thought and actions of the student. Thus, while curricular content and themes may at first glance appear equitably disposed to all learners (e.g. Aboriginal), a more thorough examination may reveal that efforts to accommodate the values and interests

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of certain group is cursory at best, as middle class, 'white' discourses can remain centred and dominant. The

> Culture of subordinate groups never confronts the dominant culture in either a completely supine or totally resistant fashion. In the struggle to open up its own spaces for resistance and affirmation, subordinate cultures have to negotiate and compromise around both the elements it gives over to the dominant culture And those it maintains representative of its own interests and desires. (Giroux and Simon, 1989, p. 8)

Gramsci's writings have significantly influenced Althusser and alongside Althusser, Stuart Hall. It is then Hall and his indebtedness to Gramsci, and perhaps to a lesser extent Althusser, who offers us a model required in analysing, a dimension of cultural production and the workings of power that is not available from Williams and his emphasis on political economy (i.e. the freeing up of culture as an instrument of social formation and change). What interests us here is not so much what Hall has borrowed from structuralists like Althusser, [24] a critical concern of the means by which capitalist society reproduces dominant institutional relationships, but what he has thrown back. Hall rejects Althusser's idea that structural dominance of the ruling class ensures the dominance of certain ideas. For, as discussed above, Althusser provides an overly integrated account of production and reception of ideology.

Hall (1996b) draws attentions instead to the shifting ground of the ideological terrain, as one engaged in a battle over *common sense*, or the "taken for granted" (Ng, 1993, p. 52). The acceptance that this is the way things are. Beliefs, values, and priorities - say informing the development and dissemination of curricula - are always contested, even given the recognition that a *historical bloc* can occur.[25]

The battle for Hall is one waged as much over control of the signifier (the symbolic), as the boardroom. Political reform (e.g. as a greater respect and recognition of cultural diversity) then, is an offensive fought in the trenches of civil

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[24] Althusser is credited above for his work in post-structuralism, given his work on interpolation and the formation of subjectivity. However, not dissimilar to Foucault, Althusser's attempts to refine and clarify Marx's work gathers an over-specificity and complexity which draws him back in a modernist direction. The charge Althusser frequently seeks to avoid is informed by his constant need to erect structures around the issue of economic primacy.

[25] Gramsci's; hegemonic consolidation frequently associated with various dominant class interests.

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societies institutions – schools, churches, and mass media, as the state. Decentering the state apparatus, central to Althusser's understanding of cultural reproduction, Hall promotes that revolutions can be won and lost in civil society and despite their differences joins Habermas in an appeal for greater openness and communication as a public-democratic process.[26]

Hall does not move as far away from modernism as to deny the role of material history in the creation and maintenance of specific cultural forms. Incorporating a degree of political activism into his *postcolonial* narratives he advocates that culture is more than a construct of shifting markers and signifiers; we are the socio-political history of the those markers – that is, how these histories play on material and discursive realities (Wallace, 1993, 259).

Advancing this cultural materialist position Hall ventures towards structural linguistics for theoretical support. His position that the signifier and the signified are connected through "relatively durable cultural conventions" is an adaptation on Saussure, (Stevenson, 1995, p. 39) and the focus on the arbitrary relationship between the signifier (word) and it's signified (concept).

Hall incorporates Barthes's strategy of denotative and connotative referencing, acknowledging that meaning is composed and constructed of the influencing effects of wider cultural and material associations. The reference of the sign then is tempered by culture codes colouring denotative meaning or discourses, while assuming that there is not an infinite number of meanings as social products of the text. For example, the continued curricula associations of the black face with slavery can spin off a number of ancillary discourses that may or may not further dominant class interests. Certainly a student may associate such an image with oppression and abuses in coercive power,

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[26] It should be noted that Habermas has been criticized from both the side of feminism (Fraser, 1989) and post-structuralism for an unnecessary rigidity in his theoretical analysis maintaining the institutions of modernity in erecting a model for "communicative reason." For Fraser, Habermas' system itself can be challenged as eurocentric and patriarchal. The problem here occurs with Habermas' systemic interpretation. Claiming that a discourse must exist as a negotiated outcome, Habermas locks the process into a rule governed system which is contradictory. There is no evidence that such a system advocates equitable discursive relationships. There is good argument to suggest it does not (Fraser, 1989).

which might be the intention of the author. But the reader may also internalize harmful and inaccurate stereotypes assuming an implicit connection between the skin colour black and slavery, or between slavery and the skin colour black. The sign may in the bigot reinforce misappropriations, in the neophyte misinterpretations, in the African-Canadian embarrassment. Culture is then more than a reproductive mechanism by which we name the world; it is a glass through which we read that world (e.g. as ideology, multivalent and indefinite).

When addressing the nature of culture and the modern identity model as a product and progenitor of that culture, Hall then integrates his understandings of semiotics and post-structuralism into an approach which never totally divorces its materialistic background. This remains an important consideration in any accurate investigation. Importantly, modern subjectivity is never simply the effects of state apparatuses, as it is the result of the fracturing effects of repression and plurality of social discourse. Social identity is not a simple cast of the social order. Hall's emphasis on things ideological therefore, divorces him from interpretations that recognize structure as the primary contributing force to cultural production and dissemination.

In positioning oneself it is recognized that identities change and shift. Political and economic forces contour modernist categories like gender, ethnicity, and race. In Gramsci's idea of the *war of positioning*, Hall recognizes identification and change as historical processes, affected by culturally normalized institutions of power. Hall avoids the trap of *determinism*, with his focus upon culture, an organ distinct and autonomous from direct economist reproduction.

As Mercer (1994) writes:

> No one has a monopoly or exclusive authorship over the signs they share in common: rather, elements from the same signs are constantly subject to antagonistic modes of appropriation and articulation (p. 292).

Hall (1991a) incorporates a position on hegemony that is historically dispensed and managed, accepting antecedent forces and movements (e.g. *globalization*) as influencing factors in social change and identity definition. Globalization is said to push the actor two directions at the same time, penetrating nationalist and ethnic

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concepts of group endogamy and solidarity,[27] while generating conservative movements associated with suspicion, reactionism and xenophobia.

But there are complications in moving too far away from the neo-Marxist reliance upon the economic structures that undergird the modern nation state. By sidestepping a sustained discussion on political economy furthered by Williams (1982), moving instead in the direction of the formation of culture as the incorporating power of ideological strategies, and counter strategies, Hall (1991a) downplays the substantive role of economy and state in the formation of cultural institutions.[28] However, theorists like Hall, and other British cultural theorists (Mercer, 1996; Diawara, 1996; Carby, 1996; Gilroy, 1996; Mercer, 1990, 1994, 1996) offer us a multi-perspective approach acknowledging the relative autonomy of culture as a precursor to dynamic ways of being and seeing; recognizing that cultural formation is a lived process.

Student identity characteristic and knowledge are forged out of political struggle and contestation for symbolic ownership and while signification to a significant extent remains fluid the context is historically embedded in mechanisms of power, social structure, and human action, contouring understandings of self and other. It is a dynamic event, a semi-autonomous culture of choice, of contradictions and alternative possibilities, offering substitute histories of who we are and where we have been (1994, p. 292).

For if we are to reject economism as a guiding ethic, then culture becomes the wild card as an institution of material reproduction (ideology); culture as that power/knowledge component which enslaves and emancipates and as a fluid and multivalent flow of beliefs, values, curricular practices and interpretations of those practices. A more detailed examination of the practice of culture and its influences on student knowledge and the construction of the learner of that knowledge will provide

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[27] Hall dedicates significant effort in articulating a transcription of a planet rife and interpenetrated by late capitalism, post-colonial migration, and mass culture. His unsuccessful attempt to unveil the quintessential "Englishman" serves as one example here.

[28] Possibly at a cost, in recognition of the normalizing impact "strategic" forms of thought and action may exhibit (at cultural levels), or the oppressive spin-offs of political economy, i.e. institutional control and practice.

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greater insight into the potential for curricula in better serving the needs of a given student population.

THE QUESTION OF CULTURE AND LEARNER IDENTITY

Raymond Williams (1983) acknowledges that culture is one of the "two or three most complicated words in the English language," in part due to the historical development of the word (in several European languages), but more accruing to its ubiquitous referencing, as used in several academic disciplines and systems of thought (p. 87). With Williams cultural practices are made up of material elements which are signatory, giving culture a two dimensional makeup:

> An emphasis on the informing spirit of a whole way of life which is manifest over the whole range of social activities but is most evident in specially cultural activities – a language, styles of art, kinds of intellectual work: and (b) an emphasis on a 'whole social order' within which a specifiable culture, in styles of art and kinds of intellectual work, is seen as the direct or indirect/product of an order primary constituted by other social activities. (1982, pp.11-12)

Culture is then both an " informing spirit" and a "social order," a product of social activities. Individuals and societies within a given social context acquire it, but it is also interpenetrating, dynamic, and flexible. An understanding of culture accommodates social change, disparities in power, and resistance (e.g. the processes of curricula production, student self-identification, and group representation).

Human conduct then is "culturally mediated, the everyday and the esoteric, the mundane and the elevated, the ridiculous and the sublime" (Rosaldo, 1993, p. 26). We can think of cultural processes as learned processes, acquired as we live and grow within a social context. Accepting this, that is, if we are to see culture as something that is learned, then we must realize that culture will vary between groups given differences in settlement or main political and economic institutions, to a degree, stabilizing where these differences are not as pronounced (Smolicz, 1981, pp. 17-18).

Certainly in nation-states, like Canada, groups share identity characteristics with others of that group (language, history, ethnic origin). However, this is not to deny that

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difference and disparities exist as well as shared qualities with other Canadians. They are ubiquitously and accorded in a similar social location.

But there is a need to recognize a vision of endogamous culture as more than a distinct and original enclave, for culture is also compiled of porous networks - interpenetrating and overlapping. Thompson (1990) indicates that a high order of specificity is required to avoid ambiguity, and to more fully realize the workings of culture in modern capitalist nations.

Thompson (1990) claims that significant distinctions grow out of past anthropological interpretations married with more recent cultural theory and denotes the importance of two traditions: (1) a descriptive understandings of culture, (2) and its *symbolic* counterpart. The *descriptive* conception references a surfeit of varied conventions, customs, values, habits that might be associated with a society during a specific historical period. The *symbolic* component discerns a reading of cultural phenomena oriented in accordance with society's interpretation of symbolic action, and symbols (p. 123).

It is arguably towards the symbolic conception that recent theories in cultural studies move. Here we have something that more directly identifies with the *sociological model* illustrated above. However, as discussed above, symbolic conceptions of culture, enacted without suitable recognition that culture production, maintenance and change is also a material process, frequently issue insufficient attention to material relations (i.e. political economy) within which symbolic action and symbols themselves are embedded. Thompson's (1990) solution - labeled the *structural* conception of culture:

> Cultural phenomena... may be understood as symbolic forms in structure contexts; and cultural analysis may be construed as the study of the meaningful constitution and social contextualization of symbolic forms. (p. 123)

What one then attempts to understand, using this conception, is the "meaningful constitution" of symbolic forms and the "social contextualization" of these forms. To examine the production of symbolic cultural forms as something that stands in relation to structured social contexts, an analyst may then better interpret specific proclivities

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surrounding cultural reproduction and change. Certainly, such an approach provides the necessary hardware to examine the emerging transformation to (and as accounted by) mass culture and the electronic media, a format incorporating mediums of symbolic expression while affected by powerful material forces of production and transmission involving significant monopolization and control. Culture, and culture production here retains a specifiable autonomy detached from material forces and structures, while remaining exposed to the material givens of a particular economic environment, *viz.* as society changes culture is negotiated within historical circumstances. As noted, curricula provide examples of such culturally produced and disseminated forms. Symbolically produced and transmitted, interpenetrated by other cultural forms (i.e. mass media, contested and renegotiated), curricula remain susceptible to pressures from a multitude of influences inclusive of state and civil society.

Cultural identity, or that to be formed at the "unstable point where the "unspeakable" stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history" (Hall, 1996c, p. 115), is then firstly a symbolic distinction, one sensitive to, but not by necessity a reproduction of, material relations and specific social context. Identity markers, signifiers that contribute to specific group and individual archetypes, are negotiated at complex levels, constantly shifting and exhibiting multiple facets. As Hall (1991b) maintains, questions over identity are always questions about representation. That is, the process of identity selection and articulation involves a selective memory, promoting the validity of one characteristic, event or memory at the cost of another that is silenced. So:

> Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cinematic discourses then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a "production," which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (Hall, 1996c, p. 210)

Silencing as well as remembering identity are about power, about producing in the future an account of the past, about narrative, the stories which cultures tell about who

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they are and where they come from (James, 1999, p. 23). Identity typification then is a political process, an act of selection, emphasizing one thing over another. The individual, or group becomes raced, gendered, or classed,[29] in ways that are different. This typification process references directly that pool of articulated social relations so influenced by economic and cultural factors. Thus while, in the short run, an individual's evaluation of self may bear little relevancy to how that person is received by others, whom may selectively edit these markers to comply with specific predetermined understandings, in the longer term the role of group or society carries significant impact. The recognition of difference (vs. similarity), then, is as much a project of the social/symbolic as that determined by physical difference. As Park (1997) writes:

> It is not that Canadians (visible minorities as well as whites) have chosen not to deal with differences it is more a matter of which differences are engaged. (p. 131)

Which individual and group qualities teachers, curriculum planners, or even students choose to acknowledge as significant, and which they do not, remain intricately tied to social understandings and perceptions that are primarily cultural in distinction. Why one characteristic is recognized in an individual at the expense of another is a question of some interest. The autonomy these same actors possess to act freely in such an act of signification is another. How these differences when recognised are administered to is another.

There seems, a willingness, on the part of the curricula planners to target diversity, and the affectations of diversity, in the Canadian classroom, implicating the same as both extenuating and attenuating factors in overall student happiness and success (i.e. meaningful growth, and development for the student across a variety of learning repertoires and social situations).[30] A curriculum selected then should reflect the

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[29] While social class is conditioned by material relations within late capitalist societies, the signifiers, discourses, or interpretive characteristics which underwrite class and distinctions are symbolic orchestrated, executed and renegotiated at cultural levels.

[30] The willingness, on the part of Alberta Learning and other curricula planners to hedge against what can be construed to be the shortcoming of the *homogeneous approach* has been documented above, acknowledging that the scope of this initiative is limited. In the past the focus has firmly focused upon

historical context and importance of those affected. Exercising a specific sensitivity towards what is to be taught, and why, hinges upon what knowledge sources one feels to be relevant, and to whom. Student diversity or difference, then invites inquiry into group and individual understanding of identity markers (e.g. race, ethnicity, religion, gender and class,) as well as knowledge orientation and meaning, determining how these understandings dovetail with curriculum design and implementation. Pinar (1993) advocates that debates over curriculum are at in part debates over identity, as:

> Curriculum debates about what we teach the young are, in addition to being debates about what knowledge is of most worth, debates about who we perceive ourselves to be and how we will represent that identity, including what remains as "left over" as "difference". (p. 60)

For Pinar (1993), understanding formal schooling means understanding curriculum as a mechanism for underwriting shallow and incomplete interpretations of who or what we really are. Identities become splintered as subjects are raced, gendered, ethnicized, sexualized and classed. Directing his argument at the racialized American social milieu, Pinar notes that curricula circumvent the multiracial historical characteristics of the American scene (particularly the American South), as the experience of the American white is disaffected, split from his/her African-American counterpart. Curriculum becomes a "racial text" (p. 69).

Curricula, and arguments over curricula, then, can demonstrate ways of how we choose to be viewed, or represent ourselves. For Pinar (1993), we split off the excess and the undesired, or the embarrassing and the forgotten, as difference (p. 61). Institutionalized identity structures are the result, as weighed against the oppositional qualities of the other, which we are not.

What Pinar is suggesting is that, to a significant degree, specific ways of seeing and being, including those ways passed on through official discourse forms (i.e. school curricula), are derived and transferred discursively. We create and sustain (in

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Canada's charter groups, i.e. Anglophone and Francophone distinctions. Therefore, a broader understanding of difference as examined and reviewed in mission statements and foundations documents has been somewhat underplayed.

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curricula) identity archetypes, which need not convey significant correlation to the empirical world, and the actors that make up its legions.

One example of this is the concept of *Whiteness*. *Whiteness*, contrary to what may be accepted as given, is not a unified homogenous culture. Instead when one speaks of *Whiteness*, or the claim of being white, that individual references a social position. Whiteness is privilege. For without the privilege attached to it there would be no white race and fair skin would have the same significance as any other body characteristic. Gender, class, race are conditioned through the advantaged position of whiteness, assisting those who are and resisting those who are not (Ovando & McLaren, 2000). Nayak (2001) writes that while a significant body of research and literature has been devoted to *blackness*, the idea of what it is to be white remains a much more rarified commodity. Roman (1993) agrees:

> Why after all does so much of the current literature written from a post-modern and feminist postmodernist perspective on the politics of difference, identity, and voice nonetheless fail to locate whiteness and Westernness within the studies of women's experience of differential power and lived culture. (p. 77)

The need then is "to deconstruct how whiteness informs, and becomes informed by, real classed, ethnicized and gendered realities… to write the white into the matrix, to question privileged existences and to better understand the multiple facets of identity" (Nayak, 2001).

Bedard (2000) in the interest of promoting antiracist forms of education in the Canadian milieu indicates that this may be a task easier conceived than carried forward, as the formation of White bodies begs of histories of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism and continues today under the veil of multiculturalism. Whiteness remains firmly established in the centre with difference relegated to the margins of social experience. Racism then lingers in the human imaginary as historically established oppression manifests itself at both conscious and subconscious levels of the subject, culture occurring at the intersection point of self and other (race, class, ethnicity, gender). Bedard (2000) states that we define ourselves and conceptualize the world around us through racialized images. How people define

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themselves is a very strong reflection of how they define others. For Canadian history whiteness became invested in an identity that tied with power and dominance. Racial images then formulate information about the world (p.41-42). "It is only when whiteness de-invests itself from an identity of power and domination that White pedagogues can begin teaching in a true multicultural and thereby anti-racism framework" (p.41).[31] Anti racism is important here in understanding the conflation of multiculturalism and Whiteness. For arguably outside of an antiracist approach Whiteness predominates rendering multicultural approaches ineffective. Dei (1996) furthers this thought by stating, "power and privilege work together in mutually reinforcing ways to construct social reality for groups in society" (p.28). To clearly understand Whiteness then is to move beyond strict material correspondences into a psychology which knows White people against another, [32] another marked apart through the racial *imaginary*, set the other off against the imagined self (Bhabha, 1996).[33] Therefore, to adequately appreciate the connection between human

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[31] Antiracist theorists like Dei and Bedard promote that true multicultural classrooms, are antiracist classrooms or forums for identifying, facing and accepting differences among people whether they be racial, ethnic, gender or physical ability differences. Here teachers have the opportunity to help students reflect on how they address differences; what attitudes they may hold; and challenge attitudes that impede others to achieve their full potential.

[32] Following from the theoretical perspective developed in this chapter, social class intersects with race (or gender) in ways that oppress and isolate. That culture enjoys a degree of autonomy from economy invites review at social-psychological levels facilitating a complexity required. An analysis predicated only upon material relations is inadequate, unable to explain a wide range of social phenomena.

[33] Wilden claims that we do not generally perceive and understand our relations to the many different people in Canada on the basis of real images or concepts. *Imaginary* images and concepts are used, socially defined and accepted fantasies which commonly assume to be real. In the process other people can be changed through dominant social and economic values into "the others", or *Imaginary* others, or stereotypes who can conveniently assume responsibility and blame for those affects of the real which are not desirable. *Imaginary* projection is a social and ideological process associated with paranoia, or feelings of inadequacy and persecution, scapegoating and stereotyping. Thus we make the other (frequently a recognizable group of less empowered individuals) "responsible for aspects of our selves and our behaviour that we cannot bear to recognize; and what we fear in them is what we fear about ourselves." *Imaginary* identification then is defining the image of the other as other than the reality that that other occupies, either positive or negative. The oppositional other then is objectified in the closing of one's self away, pushed off, alien, raced, gendered, deviant, non-rational – the "worst image of our strangled hope or distorted fears." The layering of these images overlap, accumulate and represent an imagined reality that will crumble if exposed to the *Real*. Using examples of racism the *Imaginary* image of self is constructed to represent all that the oppositional other is not in a splitting of the self which denies and deceives. This splitting would be impossible in the non-symbolic non-binarized *Real* which is historical and context related. Language, i.e. metaphor, then is constructed out of the imagined as groups are penalized and oppressed through signification (hysterical). To expose the *Real* is to flatten

experience, race and societally structured school programs must endeavour to deconstruct hundreds of years of social practice and history. Critiques hinging on White privilege must accompany serious attempts at structural, institutional and social-psychological change. Characterizing, commodifying and reifying racial or ethnic difference does little to address serious disparities in opportunity and recognition, particularly if effort is not made to dethrone Whiteness as a centring principle:

> Although improving self-concept through a better learning environment can help we are climbing a slippery slope by pathologizing the egos of non-white students instead of examining the institutional structure of the educational system. (Bedard, 2000, p. 54)

Colour blindness, or the tendency by many in the educational field to ignore the colour white and the privileges associated with it, is:

> To "celebrate diversity" without, at the same time, analyzing the differentials of power of those same groups positioned by the racial categories, the white culture assumes a hidden normalcy to which all other racial groups are measured. Firstly, the result can dictate the ideal that racially subordinate groups are groups of a single experience as measured against the norm; secondly, it implies that whites are colourless, without subjectivities, interests, and privileges. Thirdly, and most dangerously, it can convey the idea that whites are free, or exempt from the responsibility to challenge racism. In cases, without examining the structures by which racism occurs, white defensiveness may occur - given the relative assertion that whites are oppressed subjects of racism. (Bedard, 1993, pp. 72-73)

Whiteness in an attempt to understand the other historically has simply, misinterpreted, appropriated, or destroyed the same, what hooks (1992) would call "eating the other":

> Currently the commodification wherein whatever difference the Other inhabits is eradicated, via exchanges, by a consumer cannibalism that not only displaces the

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out, or the depthlessness of the *Imagined* – which denies socio-economic precursors to the scapegoating or stereotyping.

Occupying the realm of the *Imaginary* the subject remains blind to the multifaceted nature of the societal actor ignoring difference as it occurs across classed and gendered axes. Thus a white person will be read as just another person, even though that person occupies a dominant position over another non-white individual, e.g. a (doctor in a hospital) socially useful authority, and the dominating Other (dustman) oppressive authority (Wilden, 1980, pp. 65-90).

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Other but denies the significance of that Other's history through a process of decontextualization (p. 31)

The objectification of that which is by nature fluid and contextually relevant (i.e. race) then serves to accommodate preconceived ideas on the nature of that difference (stereotyping, typecasting) and those whom would stand to profit by the exercise. That identity and representations of self are *bottom-up* processes is ignored in mediated perspectives (e.g. curricula) advocating us-and-them understandings.

When dealing with the attributed qualities surrounding a racial identity type, it is false to assign objectivity of presence (the idea of a race being an objectifyable thing) in direct denial of the performative aspects of race and racial identification. Omi and Winant (1993) move that objective attempts to essentialize racial understanding and racial archetypes fail on three levels:

> (1)   They cannot grasp the process-oriented and relational character of racial identity and racial meaning.
> (2)   They deny the historicity and social comprehensiveness of the race concept.
> (3)   They cannot account for the ways actors, both individual and collective, have to manage incoherent and conflictual racial meanings and identities in everyday life. (p. 7)

Certainly such approaches fail to view race as that interpenetrated by crosscurrents of gender, class, age, and a number of other life-qualities.

Issuing a caveat, however, race, ethnicity, gender, are frequently represented as nothing more than the discursive productions of the sign, exhibitions of symbolic value with no actual correlation to the events or realities of an empirical world. Thus identity becomes discourse, an ideology or mythology that we create and, just as easily, jettison.

For example, many post-structural interpretations of "identity politics" exhibit an understanding of culture-based differences, and in turn, identity, that is highly arbitrary, free floating, and ephemeral. Postcolonial theorists like Bhabha or Trinh, Ming-ha provide illustration here. For Ming-ha (1995) the project of decentering begins with our concept of the subject, and the relation of that subject to the social:

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There can hardly be such a thing as an essential inside that can be homogeneously representative of all insiders in there, an absolute reality out there, or an incorrupted representative who cannot be questioned by another incorrupted representative. (p. 216)

Homi Bhabha (1994) reinforces Minh-ha's views on identity positioning and the shifting nature of social location. Bhabha (1994) critiques "traditionalism", or the idea that a person can possess definitive identity markers, an intrinsic self, subjectivity, or essence in this context. Thus, modernist notions of identity categories (i.e. class, or behaviours, "false consciousness") are disjunctive, as:

The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of "pre-given" ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, ongoing negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation (p. 38).

Thus identity is fluid and hybrid, knowledge constructed and reconstructed, as volition, the body engaging and discarding understandings on self, other and world. Arguably, modernist identity structures are continuously breached, [34] with assumed identity lying at the intersection point suspended between the body and social location, or a "third space." In a *Third Space* our sense of historical identity of culture as a homogenizing force is challenged. In a *Third Space* signs/symbols of culture have no timeless unity or fixity and that even the very same signs and symbols can be appropriated, translated, rehistorized, recreated, rewritten and/or reread (Bhabha, 1995). For instead of conceptualizing culture as diversity we view it as hybrid. Then by exploring this hybridity (in the Third Space) we can slip away from the politics of the two opposites (Self and Other) and emerge as the others of our selves.

But, if culture, cultural identity, and representation are always in the process of formation, then school curriculum or pedagogy also occupies a totally fluid landscape, devoid of structures, or value executed positionality. Yet everyday understandings of identity (e.g. race) are played out in empirical surroundings, underwriting primary

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[34] During the *Satanic Verses* affair in England women from various racial and ethnic backgrounds banded to protest the appropriation of authoritarian state power by religious groups, against assumed alliance and tenancy.

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mechanisms of social and identity formation. Identity can and does become an almost permanent part of self-reference (e.g. Whiteness), and is worn in ways that can both reward and punish those who cross over commonplace understandings of individual roles and practices (Omni and Winant, 1993, p. 5).

The frequent claim that student performance in the modern Canadian school environment is in no way affected through personal markings associate to race or colour is refuted by Brown and Kelly (2001) writing:

> Blackness becomes a performance feature within the school context, as discourses on blackness become shared and disputed intersubjectively within society and school. A person's skin colour then stands as a distinguishing feature, as viewed by the other, a connotative marker that can elicit historically derived and sustained beliefs, stereotypes, and curiosities. Colour then becomes a relevant feature, as identity is filtered and interpreted through the mask of difference, with the potential to influence and affect the ways in which a student views a school and schooling. (p. 10)

Decentring or ignoring definable representation seems as pronounceable of oversight as attempting to objectify or essentialize the same. To do so is to capitulate in the wake of those established identity markers and knowledge forms that have historically dominated. Ignored are affectations of market, racism, and patriarchy. Racial time is suffused under the atemporality of discourse, while the slow inscriptive process of phenotypification places roles and restrictions upon the body of the advancing generation (Omni and Winant, 1993, p. 9). Gender offers another example:

> Although power relations are multiple and specific to local interactive environments, inequalities according to ethnicity, gender, social class and so on continue to exist at a macro level. These general differences may be less straightforward than we have previously supposed, but this does not mean that they do not exist...The poststructuralist concept of the self as lacking coherence and agency... holds consequences for the feminist project: struggles for emancipation and rendered pointless if we actually have no control of our lives. (Francis, 2001, p. 69)

Carby (1996) writes that, at best *black* woman's history has been viewed as one of oppression. In addition white women are at least partially responsible for much of it. For Carby *white* women fail to acknowledge their role as colonizers, the ways that

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class punishes black men and women, the presence of racism or patronization. *Third-Worldism* serves as illustration:

> The metropolitan centers of the West define the questions to be asked of other social systems and, at the same time, provide the measure against which all "foreign" practices are gauged. In a peculiar combination of Marxism and feminism, capitalism becomes the vehicle for reforms, which allow for progress toward the emancipation of women. The "Third World," on the other hand, is viewed as retaining precapitalist forms expressed at the cultural level by traditions that are more oppressive to women... Feminist theory in Britain is almost wholly Eurocentric and, when it is not ignoring the experience of black women "at home," it is trundling "Third World Women" onto the stage only to perform as victims of "barbarous," "primitive" practices in "barbarous," "primitive" societies. (p. 66-72)

Or in the words of hooks (1981):

> The force that allows white feminist authors to make no reference to racial identity in their books about "women" that are in actuality about white women is the same one that would compel any author writing exclusively on black women to refer explicitly to their racial identity. That force is racism ... It is the dominant race that can make it seem that their experience is representative. (p.138)

The politics of representation then must stop somewhere, as we engage in what Hall (1996c) would call "arbitrary closure," to do service to a personal praxis which denies others the control of both "our" history and future. Thus feminist thought and critical analyses of racism employ the concept of identity in revealing how gendered and racialized subjects are "constituted in social processes that are amenable to historical explanation and political struggle"(Gilroy, 1996, p. 227).

It (the politics of representation) begs the question of self as a player in historical roles engaging "labour, language, and lived interaction."[35] Analysis and counterhegemony, as expressed by authors like the British Cultural Theorists and cultural studies, demand accompanying critical accounts of the roles of knowledge and representation in the development of European imperial power, nationalism, and patriarchy (Gilroy, 1996, p. 6). The contributions of cultural studies are firstly this, to dispose of the ideal that identity is an absolute, and secondly, recognize the formative processes (inclusive of gender and body markings) responsible in, identity

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[35] Undermining invariant psychological schemes on "human nature."

construction, alliances struck between others, and the forms of resulting representation. Collectives can then be better thought of in terms of Anderson's (1994) *imagined communities* employing culture as a symbolic force in forging alliances and forcing rifts.

Omi and Winant (1993) advocate that when examining the context of race in today's society:

> It may be possible to glimpse yet another view of race, in which the concept operates neither as a signifier of comprehensive identity, nor of a fundamental difference, both of which are patently absurd, but rather as a marker of the infinity of variations we humans hold as a common heritage and hope for the future."
> (p. 9)

The dimensions of identity are as varied as the potential perceptions that may contribute to their signification, manifested as qualities that are rejected or accepted on the merits of the same. However, objections by groups or individuals that they are adversely affected in the acceptance of, or over-identification with, specific identity characteristics, cannot be of itself accepted. For James (1999) tension and conflict is not the product of difference, but rather weighs with the "value, understanding and interpretation of difference" and how in turn our actions are informed (p. 268). Introduced here is the normative element as promoted in conjunction with all emancipatory discourses (i.e. the ethic that recognizes the rights and dignity accorded a body by virtue of his/her birth),[36] and that any claim to redress through ameliorable action must be done so in recognition of the rightful claims of others. Distinctions then are value distinctions. Difference may be infinite in possibility, but political in orientation. As Hall (1996d) has indicated, democracy is a noisy business.

One of the challenges of anti-racism, feminism and class struggle is to demonstrate how those in the privileged position benefit from the dominating and hegemonic role of culture, or to assist the individual in perceiving inequality as more than the product of a few troublemakers and dogmatists operating out of a generally value neutral

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[36] It is to be acknowledged that it is in principle of this study that human actors/bodies are to accorded and recognized as such that is accorded maximum respect and dignity of existence.

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society. Gender equality is more than a discourse on the needs of women, and race identity and ethnicity addresses more than those minority members that are "assumed" raced – white a non-colour subsumed under the vellum of normalcy. At fault in any *reactionist* understanding that endeavors to downplay visible, material, or historical differences in the classroom, is a perceptive that chauvinism, class elitism and bigotry can be solely attributed to deficiency of character.

However, race, not unlike gender, is all too frequently associated with the concerns of the minority, the other. The problem is their problem, isolated, diminutive, a group at ends with the "dominant" position of the majority. Needed is an understanding of difference and discrimination that interprets the larger picture within society. *Institutionalized* and *structural* discrimination are then two theoretical by-products of an analyst's attempt to explain the greater malaise that delimits and handcuffs a significant number of the Canadian population. Institutional discrimination, sometimes referred to as systemic discrimination, occurs where:

> The established policies, rules and regulations of an organization or institution systematically reflect and produce differential treatment of various groups within that organization or institution and in society generally. These regulations are used to maintain social control and the status quo in favor of the dominant group. (Dobbins and Skillings in James, 1999, p. 135)

Structural discrimination, as defined by Hughes and Kallen, in their attack on racism in Canada, operates quietly yet effectively as existing inequalities in a society result in the allocation of specific groups in that society to explicit roles (James, 1999, p. 135).

Certainly both models reinforce the need to view discrimination and disparity of opportunity as societal problem, moving beyond the realm of the personal. Unfortunately, it is frequently the same individuals that benefit from systemic discrimination that proclaim oppression, (e.g. racism) as "an all embracing, relativistic, and ubiquitous category of experiences" affecting one groups in a like manner to another (Roman, 1993, p. 72).

In race relations "white defensiveness" grows out of such "mis-recognition" (i.e. denouncing "affirmative action" programs within the workplace). But to mandate that

the preferential liberties (via policy) acknowledged "black" citizens in some way countervails the liberties formerly issued the "whites" ignores the histories of those specific groups with identities and boundaries forged under historically oppressive situations. Any accusation of "revered discrimination" ignores the larger issues of power and analysis affecting the ultimate validity of those claims. Racial privilege develops out of historical and often structural situations that render identity markers real and stigmatic, regardless as to whether these markers, in and of themselves, are interpretive of *real world* physical or psychological qualities as exhibited by the group in question. The signifiers "black" and "white," "male" and "female," are not interchangeable qualities in our society as demonstrated by Derrida in his examination of metaphor, slippage in signification, and *logocentrism*[37] (Sarup, 1989). Social relations dictate word/knowledge facilitation so that in Western capitalist nations the signifier "male," or the color "white," are difficult to strip of their connotative reference of dominance. Racial slurs are painful acts of violence, not because the one who utters them does so with a malefic passion - or accruing to the negative denotative value of the signifier itself - slights the *other*. Racism, or sexism, demeans, as lived histories are superimposed upon susceptible subjects, histories of misrepresentation, disparagement and pain. Turning the racist, or sexist utterance back upon a perpetrator ignores this; it ignores the lethal combination of power, ideology and the past injustice.

ETHNICITY, RACE, GENDER, AND CLASS

> Race and, gender, and class are relations, which have to do with how people define themselves and how they participate in social life. They are not theoretical categories... relations of race, gender, and class converge, diverge, and change over time as people's relations to productive and reproductive activities change within a given society. These are real and concrete relations, not just abstract and imaginary categories... racism and sexism... point to systems of domination and subordination that have developed over time as taken for granted societal features. (Ng, 1993, p. 51)

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[37] Derrida claims that associative employment of metaphor in language decries neutral access or employment of any signifier field, the result are meaning carriers given up to dominant and subordinate statuses.

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With Ng (1993) racism and sexism, or reactions to specific identity forms, do not represent the "same phenomena at all times" – as the processes of identification and definition are historical in nature (p. 52). Ng points to historically specific ideological and economic pressures which structure societal interaction, or how people relate to one another in a specific circumstance. While denying that identity (e.g. race) is not an objectified thing that can be read in the empirical world, we must acknowledge that perceptions and interpretations on race have real consequences and are debated in political surroundings. Classroom knowledge and identity transference and formation are about more than just class and not simple products of the culture of racism or sexism.

Thus we must weigh a group's "subjective claim" in provision with an "adequate structural analysis," to wit: their "objective social locations," and without "falling in to the trap of objectivism or universalism" (Roman, 1993, p. 73). Roman advocates a shift from "identity politics" she claims is popular with post-structuralists, towards a "politics of coalition", comparing:

> The agendas emerging from postmodernist scholarship on the *politics of identity, voice, and difference* merge with those of postcolonialism and anti-racism – in an attempt to forge an anti-racist postcolonial feminism. (p. 73)

Designating her approach *critically socially contested realism,* the author examines ways in which material and ideological interests affect individual and group notions of identity and representation. It is simply insufficient to appropriate the rhetoric of the socially disadvantaged. Any claim to annoyance or assumed parity must be evaluated in submitting that subjective claim to an "adequate structural analysis." Disadvantaged or disaffected groups remain such not on account of specific visible markings, or a resounding shibboleth to distinctness, but because historically that group has accumulated a diminutive positional bearing (in opposition to other societal members), a bearing directly associated with the markings or history of the group itself. For this reason one is more apt to find a man discriminated against for the colour of his skin rather than his height.

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Difference becomes a distinguishing and relevant feature as difference becomes politicized. And if physical categories and identity oriented markings are the social products of history, a history contested and advocated, then one can not simply move in and out of social categories, viewing culture as a frontier where boundaries are blurred, if non-existent, and signifiers free-floating. Furthermore discourses on difference overlap. In Canada, racism and discrimination, sexism and class privilege, all survive and exist in seeming compatibility with liberal democratic principles of fairness, justice, and equality, in modern societies (Henry et al. 2000). The facility of the individual to sustain two or more conflicting value systems is not by necessity (as one may assume) contradictory. Belief systems are rarely 100% cohesive, even in "traditional" social relationships.

Modern forms of information production, mediation and distribution accommodate a diversity of discursive transference with discourse of a colliding, intersecting, and contradictory nature. Given this, culture does correlate in intelligible ways reflecting, at least in part, material/historical relationships. Cultural production and dissemination cannot be reduced to a veritable free-for-all - where anything goes.[38] Yet, the production and reading of curricula is far from a predictable process, whereby discourses are reducible to a set number of knowledge categories and ways of representation. Nor can we in sound conscience reify and target student difference as a definable teachable category or approach in abeyance of teacher input and local participation (e.g. Aboriginal studies). Students reside in social locations that cannot be assumed.

Common to the world of all students is the intersecting nature of their representative universes. Economic systems are frequently racist systems. Ethnic alliances precede class discrimination. Labour unions often incorporate sexist structures and institutions. Esman (1994) writes that even granted fundamental disagreement on most issues, liberals and Marxist theorists deny the legitimate claim to ethnic solidarity, "predicting its waning relevance in capitalist and post-capitalist

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[38] The two positions reviewed above – sociological and political economy – are combined in an analysis which allows for the complexity of discourse production in culture and the relative autonomy that production enjoys from material relations.

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societies"(p. 13). However, the conflicts over scarce resources, recognition and validation are unmistakable, as the stakes that divide communities are negotiated. Ethnic concerns can and do supersede class alliances as bodies organize against perceived state and societal abuses. But class relations are not to be denied. Smith witnesses how the liberal goal of equality is the victim in the reunion of Germany, as economic liberalization exercised in the reunion resulted in wide scale discrimination and inequality of opportunity.[39] Thus to understand class one need understand ethnicity. To critically analyze gender it is necessary to review class. Identity (class, ethnicity, race, gender) characteristics are coextensive and must be recognized as such.[40]

If racism or sexism is insidious and frequently wielded in contradictory ways then counterhegemonic networks must read through the complexity in thwarting the resources available. Schools that promulgate multicultural programs and cooperation frequently employ pedagogies, institutional structures, and curricular resources that alienate and punish the students they set out to assist. For rather than forging agreements and understandings on ideologies and oppressive actions of power the task is to construct coalitions in socially transformative stances that challenge abuses of privilege and control. The interpenetrating discourses of one's classed, gendered, or raced statuses can illicit responses from classmates and teachers of either privilege or

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[39] The reunion was a natural act divorced of the politics serving the best interests of economic subjects. Women moving back into the domestic sphere surrendered up their subject positions formally issued in the GDR. Immigrant workers, now superfluous as an ethnically pure reserve pool became available through unification with the labour rich GDR, were cast off as German subjects, divorced of property or job, and susceptible to racial acts. Multicultural attempts in the new Germany have failed to a significant degree colliding with the political motivations of capitalism, or the formations and ideologies that are essential to its development. Interestingly, the accompanying racism and gender inequality are viewed as primarily cultural issues, perhaps political, but not economic, that is capitalism continues to provoke a culturally graduated structure of otherness. That for capitalism to succeed there must exist a whole other category of subject, an other devalued and disenfranchised, an ethnic other, and a feminine other. Resistance, however, is a result in the failure of capitalist models to proffer a totally hegemonic subject structure and thus nations, like Germany, are continually forced to politically legislate a "subject of value" as weighed against that propertyless other – the black, the poor, the immigrant. (Smith, 1996)

[40] Satzewich (1989) argues that racism is an ideology imposed from above by those who own the means of production on those who do not. Writing about racism in Canadian immigration practices, Satzewich acknowledges that specific racialized groups are exploited for their labour power by virtue of their racial orientation. Racism is engaged in an act of mystification that allows class based exploitation.

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persecution, or both.[41] The frequently cited interrogative - "why are all Blacks men and all women White" – illustrates concern over the cryptic nature of ideology as discourse. Multiple layering upon the body forge combinations of oppression and advantage that cannot be comprehended through the act of centering or isolating one or another of the bodily markers. Curriculums that pretend to do so (e.g. writing in a component on Aboriginal spirituality for all Aboriginal learners) can serve to confuse and alienate. Giroux (2000) speaks out against strict Marxist positions that reduce identity issues to issues of social class:

> Unfortunately, this critique not only fails to recognize how issues of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and class are intertwined, it also refuses to acknowledge the pedagogical function of culture in constructing identities, mobilizing desires, and shaping moral values...There is no sense in this position of the enormous influence Hollywood films, television, comics, magazines, video games, and Internet culture exert in teaching young people about themselves and their relationship to the larger society. (P. 57)

The assumption is that race and gender considerations cannot contribute to a general notion of emancipation. However, for Giroux (2000), it is because of the "smothering of difference that social groups organized to articulate their respective goals, histories, and interests outside of the orthodoxy of class politics" (p. 54). Isaac and Mercer (1996) concur recognizing the shifting process of identity representation:

> We would argue, on the contrary, that critical theories are just beginning to recognize and reckon with the kinds of complexity inherent in the culturally constructed nature of ethnic identities, and the implications this has for the analysis of representational practices... Representation is possible only because enunciation is always produced within codes that have a history, a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time. (p. 195)

The project here is not to discard a critical approach to identity and society, but rather to rule out analyses that unduly isolate and confine social phenomena, realizing

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[41] In Kehily's article *Issues of Gender and Sexuality in Schools*, students develop an understanding of the meanings and implications of sex-gender categories and also create their own meanings in a range of informal encounters that reward and punish in accordance with specifically intersubjectively shared understandings of male and female roles and performances. These students draw intertexually upon discourse and popular culture as frameworks in reviewing and discussing sexuality and sexual roles. (Kehily, 2001)

that identity is not fixed by nature in some rigid and deterministic way but rather turns back upon nature as a politically and culturally constructed category played out at the levels of language and representation. The decentring of prescriptive identity types or knowledge forms accommodates an interpretation that invites critical appraisal. Thus the raced or physically coloured (this includes white) are issued the opportunity to act, know and communicate in multifarious of ways, to be rich or poor, male or female, master or slave. For example, the over association of the skin colour black with slavery in the consciousness of the *White* ignores a history of slavery instituted against all colours and ethnicities under "supremacist capitalist patriarchy" (McLaren & Munoz, 2000).

In feminism an emphasis on gender identity rather than equity has emerged (Dillabough, 2001) with resulting forms of theorizing in projects based on gender as relational, incorporating ideals of difference and agency as they pertain not specifically to outmoded notions of female deprivation but feminist and masculine perspectives of empowerment and oppression (Skelton, 2001).[42]

In the relational sphere of class, race and gender,[43] the student sits at the intersection point of identity and representation bearing a personal history of events, beliefs, and meaning, but also a public one. For much of curricular theory the educator assumes an effective transference of knowledge, a receptive vessel not excessively desirous, narcissistic, acrimonious, resentful, militant, dominated, obsequious, frightened, arrogant, confused, hungry, assertive, regressive, absent. However, curriculum which originates as a centrally administered bureaucratically controlled product, which underwrites "commonsensical" ways of being and learning, which assumes to know the learner by virtue of their skin colour, sex, group

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[42] Another Canadian approach to this area is represented by Calliste (1989, 1992). Calliste's review of Caribbean immigrant women reveals that historically they have been used as cheap domestic labour. The exclusion of black women from nursing in Canada before the late 1940s (Calliste, 1996) was justified under the terminus of white middle-class femininity. A racialized value unreproducable by Black female subjects.
Razack (1998) and Shakir (1995) point to the impact of gendered racism in the treatment of Aboriginal women and immigrant women of colour in the justice system. (Henry et al, 2000, p. 51)
[43] Class, race and gender are far from exhaustive in terms of the categories that may be constructed here but provide references by which to ground (Hall's arbitrary closure) the always slippery task of talking about identity.

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background, ignores the complexity of the challenge in curricular design and implementation. A more sophisticated form of review and understanding is needed to that to which we have been provided in this province in recent years. Required is the execution of a truly *multicultural* approach in recognizing diversity as both multifarious and fluid, and interpolated. This approach then must endeavor to promote the active construction of knowledge at local levels, and recognize the overriding need for understanding culture as both the source of control and resistance. Appreciating schooling as a historical product will help.

But it serves to articulate what in many ways defines and explicates a critique, as developed above. That is that curriculum attempts (in this province) have repeatedly promoted the process of schooling as a 'liberal' progressive discourse, a text on 'nation building' assuming the neutrality of an artificer and process. By opening up the process to all, schooling is said to be 'inclusive.' By recognizing the need to remain tolerant of difference we promote pluralism. Cultural difference then is defended through the apparently 'neutral' role of the state apparatus. But it is my contention that this is not true with the present Framework, nor has historically been the case in this province. Real difference is given no pretense here. Nor are the darker shades of political economy explored.

Arguably these two positions can be viewed as contradictory and difficult to merge in a common curriculum project, as one seeks to preserve and recognize authentic difference while erecting a common opposition to a state hegemony. But it is my argument here that these contradictions can be kept in check against an apparatus that will only accommodate difference as long as that difference does not challenge the 'neutrality' of state hegemony. It is here that I formulate my critique for this project – that is - efforts need be introduced in better accommodating actor and group difference. In doing this we must resist any momentum produced towards accepting (1) an excessive relativism, or the spiraling messiness frequently attributed to 'identity politics,' and   (2) the temptation to welcome any and all 'to the table' as equals. For discourses formed upon the conceptual tenets of hatred, exploitation, are subject to

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restriction as indicated in both provincial statute and federal charter and are rejected here.

These provisos then both inform and temper my external or normative critique of this document. Guidelines are established which form limits upon both the camps of state/civil societal control and reader relativism. One cannot consider the implementation of a *multicultural curriculum,* or a curriculum that challenges central/bureaucratic monopolization without lending attention to a greater understanding of *multiculturalism,* acknowledging the intended goal of providing greater flexibility and equity in the classroom. In chapter three I define and explicate a multicultural model that is then referenced against stakeholder claims to representation. The question persists - what constitutes an equitable and fair curriculum? And if Alberta Learning is not producing this product, with the introduction of the new Social Studies Framework, where do the major difficulties lie?

CHAPTER 3 – A PEDAGOGICAL THEORY OF CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM

This project is about representation. That is to say those textual sources reviewed in this document, in terms of how Albertans are identified and represented, are subject to review and criticism. As indicated the challenge affects Alberta Learning's inability to accommodate societal diversity. The discourse analysis employed in this study validates this claim in empirical terms. Normatively, I emphasize a need to promote a more sophisticated and equitable model for diversity within the classroom. Within the scope of this thesis the focus remains primarily symbolic – what is being said (curricula). I promote that this abuse, that is the pretence of a fair and equitable presentation and representation of a given student's ontological interests is a symbolic violence perpetrated against that person who does not fit the mould of this hidden 'official culture.' However, to claim this begs of a model that serves to articulate those same interests, a model that one can then promote as an acceptable standard. This chapter will endeavour to do this. But I must first serve to refine and identify an emancipatory politic, one refined and developed through more 'critical' modernist approaches. To do this I return to the 'new sociology.'

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The Social Theory and Critical Transcendence?

To formulate a critique of contemporary curriculum practice and a broader understanding of the role of diversity in informing that critique it seems essential to draw upon Curriculum studies, grounded in the tradition of the sociology of knowledge, are credited as emerging some thirty years back concomitantly with what has come to be called the "new sociology of education" (e.g. Michael Young & Nell Keddie in phenomenology, Basil Bernstein and Pierre Bourdieu representing structural inquiry). What constituted the focus of the *new sociology* was "the belief that knowledge is socially and ideologically constructed". The school held that any sociological approach to education must firstly then wrestle with this social fact (Sadovnik, 1991).[1] But the *new sociology* is hardly a unified corpus of critical inquiry. The school itself must be seen as a fusion of several conceptual traditions and sociocultural dynamics plying new research emphases and divisive methodological approaches and readings of self and society. Nor can it be recognized as the inchoate expression of the British Left, a least not until the mid-seventies when the influence of Marxism became more established engendering a critique of the early movement as ahistorical and subjectivist.[2] Then the new sociology arose in defiance of former assumptions on school and society. The study of the school as an egalitarian respite and channel for individual mobility and meritocratic social order, then gave sway to a redefining of school function as a social and cultural reproduction of regimes of inequality. Ideology, reproduction and resistance have then emerged as organizing conceptual themes in the new sociology of education, the new sociologist witnessing ways in which school knowledge and practices construct meaning within the classroom. Ideological critique stands as that which has conceptually informed various

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[1] The phenomenological approach borrowed from the work of Berger and Luckman (1966) as well as interpretive sociology of Giddens (1977). The focus was on how subjects (students and teachers) construct knowledge through interaction with others. Structural approaches inclusive of neo-Marxist positions view curriculum and pedagogy as emerging out of material relations, drawing upon issues of political economy.

[2] The later fusion of American revisionist theory (Katz), British new sociology and critical social theory combined to form the early course of the sociology of education (Wexler, 1987).

stages in the movement, a movement of shifting emphasis, from ideology, to cultural reproduction,[3] and finally towards internal contradiction and resistance:

> Ideological-critique, which in its simplest form is debunking, is a practical struggle against solidity, against the successful displacement of historically specific social relations into transcendent and naturalized 'knowledge'. (Wexler, 1987)

Cultural reproduction draws upon ideological critique utilizing concepts like *hegemony* and *cultural practices* in projecting structurations of school inequality. The division of cultural reproduction theory into two schools, structuralists and cultural theories of reproduction further distinguishes the processes by which reproduction occurs. Althusser provides the school of new sociology with a representation of ideology as a material practice, while the Frankfurt theorists in reapplying work by Marx (commodity fetish), [4]and Lucas (reification) work at the socio-psychological level through culture in demonstrating how the subject is no longer driven by economic and structural contradictions, but rather becomes integrated by culture into commonplace ways of thinking and doing which are alienating and disempowering (Craib, 1992).

Cultural reproduction theorists promote the idea that the class-culture of dominant groups is transferred through curricula and pedagogies to students as universal knowledge systems and claims. The stratification of both knowledge and student then results in the perpetuation of existing social relations. Student culture becomes a conditioning factor in student success and accommodation, as school knowledge dovetails with dominant class interests. But the movement is not, and should not be, limited to the restrictive structures of political economy, with social praxis credited in manifesting acts of school resistance.

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[3] Despite the significant conceptual development of the Bourdieu term "cultural reproduction," the focus maintains a strong focus upon ideology, or how the powerful control the powerless through the denial of their own natures and opportunities, as well as the inevitable cover-up cast in the mis-recognition of the neutrality and timelessness of knowledge.

[4] "Though this critique of advanced capitalism is shared with neo-Marxist research, it is not based on a general theory of modes of production and does not assign to the proletariat a privileged role in dealing with the current forms of crisis. Further, the classic theory of economic crisis is relocated in relation to a series of other levels in which the political rather than the economic is held to be decisive in the 'last instance' — at least in the contemporary situation of advanced liberal democracies." (Morrow, 1985)

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The new sociology was not to be delimited by ideological control and the development. The concept of resistance (a product of the early 1980s) incorporates a new language of contradiction, contestation, and collective identity formation. The study of conflict, political opposition and change engendered a spirit of culturally autonomous subjects pitted against curricula control and those knowledge institutions that would serve to diminish and oppress the potential for change as theorists remanufactured and renegotiate knowledge in meaning structures that denied the direct correspondence to the capitalist relations of production. The movement, however, neglected to look past its own enveloping ecology of social democracy as the *new sociology*, engaged in the prevailing act of cultural resistance has been usurped by the legions of the "new right" - an ethic reborn. The old adversary of progressive liberalism is now in retreat itself under attack from the right. Both liberal policies and radical criticisms are being overwritten in a text of reaction and restoration as the right has descended upon public institutions, erecting structural and institutional barriers that have proven surprisingly resilient to the language of resistance and change. The boasts of uniformity and praxis have faltered in the wake of reactionary transformation. In addition, critical educational sociology appears to have developed specific limitations in effectively explaining contemporary social relations, leaving those most affected by recent advances of the new right, vulnerable. Wexler (1987) writes:

> The ideology of the new sociology of education was that in trying to systematically understand the role of education in social domination, it had adopted some of the ahistorical theories and terms more appropriate to the classes and social order that it aimed to oppose. (p. 78)

This is the *problem of opposition* which Williams (1977) claims affects "all initiatives or contributions," even when radically alternative in development, to remain tied to the hegemonic (p. 114). What is indicated is the objectification processes which result out of a strategy which engages the abstract classification of reproduction and resistance in reducing class to a set of attributes while removing larger historical and

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political meaning.[5] Similarly, Wexler adds that the goals of social change are levelled against an equally functionalist notion of social transformation devoid of the actual social processes and complexities which shadow and inform formation, reifying and removing class from social movement, from historical processes of conflictual formation. Historically emptied, many modern theorists write from under the umbrella of critical pedagogy in which education and liberation are to assume the chosen paths towards stages of *transformation, mobilization, or revitalization*. However, the effect can appear a further distancing of the theorists, through the incorporation (in their work) of abstract stages and subjective qualities, further apart from the movements involved themselves, to blind in generality the social understanding and specific consideration necessary in combating legitimate organs of power and control within a societal context. Foucault (1979) warns against the hazards of reform as they (1) may hold unintended results; (2) hold little emancipatory value. The critical theorist that holds to reform and directly engage formative and normalizing discourses of disciplinary power, offers as replacement technologies of self-accepted obedience. It is the promoted picture here that critical pedagogy tenders the explanatory view of social life as that engaging systematic reproduction and individual resistance in a statically issued understanding of society and practice:

> Nothing can be further removed from this self-production of society than the image of reproduction... A society has neither nature nor foundations; it is neither a machine nor an organization; it is action and social relations. This idea sets sociology of action against all the variants of functionalism and structuralism. (Touraine in Wexler, 1987, p. 88).

> To put it bluntly: classes do not exist as separate entities, look around, find an enemy class and then start to struggle. On the contrary, people find themselves in a society structured in determined ways... they experience exploitation... they identify points of antagonistic interests, they commence to struggle around these issues and in the process of struggling they discover themselves as classes, they come to know this discovery as class-consciousness, Class and class-consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historic process. (Thompson, 1978, p.149)

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[5] This is the case with Anyon's now famous study of class distinction and school knowledge. (Anyon, 1981)

The image of a group of students in a classroom disassociated, disordered and victim to the ensuing juggernaut of cultural reproduction may not be an apt description of classroom life and misinterprets the political nature of the social project of learning. As a subject the learner is not fighting against the state, or some economic substructure, they do not view themselves as members of some definable oppressed class, victims of exploitive relations of production. Rather one witnesses what Melucci titles "new movements," movements of bodies, forging and reforging identity structures against that which would attempt to appropriate the freedom of such movements. Lived experiences that in return provide meaningful perceptions of self and other. The historical development of the Feminist movement from first to second wave and beyond, is a development forged in identity and knowledge. That the movement progressed from a mandate promoting equal representation to the more critical view emphasizing the politics of gender as a register of performative hierarchal and capillary power indicates the need to place any understanding of resistance within a specific social context and timeframe. Sex, class, and gender are not unified categories brought to bear simultaneously upon some inner logic of capitalism or reproduction of oppressive racial relations. Movements of resistance are better recognized as that, incipient reaction to what may equate as little more than a feeling. It is not that social movement must be that which originates on a factory floor or a classroom. Political education as organization begs of our ability as subjects to mobilize politically. Critical pedagogy may have a part to play in this as the teacher must be seen as a potential resource in the process of forming or reforming active subjects, students engaging in self-definition and socially organizing meaning as knowledge. Critical pedagogy and the new sociology may play a role in formulating positive leadership. However, it can be argued that the new sociology blocks the re-formulation and adaptation of identity and knowledge in the unintended hegemonic action of a rather rigid and over defining discourse. It is not such an easily definable product. As Marable (1981) writes:

> Each little formulation was so concerned and involved with meeting the reformist needs of its primary constituency that most neglected to raise issues that transcended the narrow boundaries of ethnicity, sexual preference, neighbourhood

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control etc. Thus the politics of participation and self-interest in the 1970s inevitably became the politics of chaos in the 1980s... (p. 176)

For Ellsworth (1992), critical pedagogies consistently address issues of empowerment in "ahistorical and depoliticized abstractions"(p. 99). It means little to thread a discourse on empowerment in sweeping maxims. By couching student empowerment in broad humanistic terms we fail to focus upon identifiable events, situations or groups in "contortions" of rhetoric which are dictorial and paternalistic:

> Emancipatory authority is one such contortion for it implies the presence of, or potential for, an emancipated teacher. Indeed it asserts that teachers can link knowledge to power by bringing to light and teaching the subjugated histories, experiences, stories and accounts of those who suffer and struggle. Yet I cannot unproblematically bring subjugated knowledges to light when I am not free of my own learned racism, fat oppression, classism, ableism or sexism. No teacher is free of these learned and internalized oppressions. Nor are accounts of one group's suffering and struggle immune from reproducing narratives oppressive to another's. (p. 99)

For Ellsworth, there is little point in advocating that a teacher can know more than a student on what it is to be raced or classed or gendered in contradiction of lived experiences and struggles that that individual confronts from one day to the next without drawing on that teacher's power of authority within the classroom context. Utopian moments therefore are indefinable and unpredictable in abstract terms as oppressive structures and inequities of power cannot be "theorized away". The concept of critical pedagogy implicates the role of the teacher as facilitator and artificer of student liberation despite that person's tendency to gravitate towards understandings and interests in and of themselves unique and self centered. At issue is the kind of knowing advocated by some critical schools, that is a knowing to which objects, situations and others are perceived to be knowable, understood and explainable. However, knowledges of others are at best partial and conflicting and are not reducible to any master narrative or discourse to larger notions of social justice. Ellsworth (1992) advocates instead "you can't know me/I can't know you" ethic:

> Identity in this sense becomes a vehicle for multiplying and making more complex the subject positions possible, visible, and legitimate at any given historical

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moment, requiring disruptive changes in the way social technologies of gender, race, ability, and so on define otherness and use it as a vehicle for subordination. (p. 114)

What Ellsworth is advocating is not to underplay distinct realities and the experiences of a specific group or to depoliticized oppression as that which happens to us all but rather to prevent "oppressive simplifications" and to introduce the idea of contextuality.

> If you can talk to me in ways that show you to understand that your knowledge of me, the world, and the right thing to do will always be partial, interested and potentially oppressive to others and if I can do the same, then we can work together on shaping and reshaping alliances for constructing circumstances in which students of difference can thrive. (p. 115)

Borrowing from Foucault, Gore suggests that empowerment must occur in sites of practice. This would circumvent any notion of curriculum production or pedagogy that expresses methodology and practice in absolute terms regardless of intention, interpretation consistent with a critical presentation that denies pedagogy as instruction and focuses upon knowledge as production. For Gore (1992) empowerment must be linked to pedagogical practice and the productive capacity of power for both the student and teacher. For empowerment within much of critical and feminist pedagogy is wielded as some form of property towards a desirable and idealized end state, with the teacher entrusted with the liberating role (p. 66).

But for Gore (1992), liberating power is linked to practice in an ethical commitment to breaking down the disciplinary practices of regulation and surveillance. Thus curriculum planning and implementation or critique, as the case may be, represents an engagement of teacher and student in a public forum:

> In pointing to the nexus of power and knowledge, regime of truth highlights the potential dangers and normalizing tendencies of all discourses, including those which aim to liberate... for example, feminisms may have their own power – knowledge nexuses which, in particular contexts or a particular historical moment, will operate in ways which are oppressive and repressive to people within and/or outside of that society. (p. 67)

Discourses are not emancipatory because they challenge dominant discourses but because they hold qualities of liberation for people or groups. Empowerment thus

forms when teachers question their own practices and ideals as well as their students. Interestingly, Gore never questions the need or ultimate good, in terms of value, accompanying a pedagogy that is both critical and emancipatory. Nor do I here. The danger resides in approaches that have been ritualized and layered in discourses formulated and distributed as recognizable axioms. Giroux (1990) emphasizes the need to write students into the curriculum:

> The group controlling economic and cultural apparatuses of a given society largely determine what meanings were considered the most important, what experiences are deemed the most legitimate and what forms of writing and reading matter. We must view knowledge in the context of power, and consequentially, we need to understand this relationship among writers, readers, and text as sites where different readings, meanings, and forms of cultural production take place. In this case reading and writing are productive categories, or forms of discourse that configure practices of dialogue, struggle, and contestation. (p. 367)

However, in accordance with what we witness above, acting in good faith the educator must become more than the "organic intellectual," providing example and leadership, as no discourse or procedure is inherently liberating or oppressive if held in abstraction.

But it remains essential that one does not lose sight of what a critical perspective offers us in way of identifying and challenging '*hegemony* and *cultural practices* in projecting structurations of school inequality.' Truth is not relative when we examine a given truth claim in accordance with the impacted affects of power. For McLaren (1989), statements considered "true" are dependent upon history, cultural context, and relations of power operative in a given society, discipline, institution. "Teachers need to recognize that power relations correspond to forms of school knowledge that history understanding and produce what is commonly accepted as 'truth'" (p. 182). The criticisms of critical positions developed above ignore attempts exercised by teachers to facilitate a broader understanding of power/knowledge, the experiences of that individual through the so called development of the 'technologies of the self,' and the need to see contemporary social and school practices as historically signified and established.

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Critical discourses can hint of indoctrination, and racist literature is frequently used against itself. However, Ellsworth is inaccurate, in her address to 'critical positions,' in suggesting they are qualitatively immobilizing. A similar warning can be leveled at poststructuralist approaches that ignore the power/knowledge nexus through culture as dominating regimes.

The 'new sociology' of education retains relevance, as it remains instrumental to a greater understanding of the sociology of knowledge. A larger ethic of critical pedagogy then does inform this study, and a generated critique of Alberta Learning's project, as this effort advocates firstly to support emancipatory goals. While the rigidity of the cultural reproduction model (socialization approach) can prove problematic the project embraces and legitimizes the modernist project as relevant and defining. [6] The issue is not one so much of denying the prominence of material relations, culture, or acknowledging the need to incorporate an analysis on gender, ethnicity, and race, but rather the need to exercise caution. Thus while the appeal to embrace a given curriculum, pedagogy, or activity on the merit of some "progressive" principle is real and is supported here, one must remain cognizant of the inherent danger in doing so.[7]

Notwithstanding the challenges to the 'critical' school, and it is acknowledge that significant generalization is required in making the criticisms offered above, I have provided both a proposed need and desire to engage in an emancipatory politic. That is given the difficulty in identifying and articulating what specifically the interests, penchants, and demands of others may be, it is necessary to position oneself if meaningful change, or even critique, is expected. A model for critical multiculturalism then is the active study of conflict, political opposition and change.[8] This model engenders a spirit of culturally autonomous subjects pitted against curricula control

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[6] In that it invites confining and reified assumptions on culture.

[7] Gore warns us that in the words of Foucault, all things are dangerous. For example, by placing our students desks in a circle we break with more traditional approaches to pedagogy emphasizing teacher centrality and authority. Yet cooperative groups hold their own oppressive surprises for disquieted students now having to endure the gaze of their peers as well as the teacher.

[8] An emancipatory politic promotes the need for what Freire labels 'authentic reflection' or the need to identify and cast 'man' in a relations with 'the world.

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and knowledge institutions serving to influence the potential for student representation, and ultimately, change. The federal introduction of a multicultural initiative in Canada, now more than 30 years young, arguably could serve as a model/standard in guiding curricular innovation across provincial and territorial jurisdictions. Official Multiculturalism, however, at least as entertained in this country, defines and legitimates an official state culture more so than deconstructing the same. The following section will expand upon this criticism in formulating a *multiculturalism* that is both antiracist yet sensitive to a need for more equitable representation across diverse contexts and groups.

CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM AS EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE
Multiculturalism and Nationhood:
Laine and Sutton (2000) in a three country comparative study of the politics of multiculturalism involving the United States, Australia and Canada, proclaim that the United States remains the only member of this predominately Anglo-settler states grouping to be lacking in a Federal policy that explicitly addresses multiculturalism. All three states are said to contain minority indigenous populations and recent immigration by non-Anglo emigrants. All are federal states transferring significant authority over education to provincial and state jurisdictions, while at the same time classifying and identifying citizenship and rights. These authors, however, denote a more pronounced federal commitment by Australia and Canada with the establishment of ministerial positions organized in part around the theme of multiculturalism in Australia, a minister of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, and in Canada, a Secretary of State housing portfolios for both Women's Affairs, and Multiculturalism (p. 84). One of the author's considerations in conducting this comparative analysis is the promotion of multiculturalism as an active federal strategy in coming to terms with the contemporary demands of cultural pluralism, shifting the focus, in terms of public debate, away from assimilation towards a greater respect, in real terms, of difference (p. 84-85). Examples of government initiated multicultural policies (as introducible within an American context) then might include:

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1. Official recognition in law by all public bodies of the cultural attributes of ethnic groups;

2. Public support for autonomous cultural institutions;

3. The use of public space – the media for example – to accommodate all cultural groups;

4. Teaching multiple cultures in public schools;

5. Elimination of the link between poverty, lack of education, and ethnicity. (Rax, 1994, in Laine and Sutton, 2002, p. 85).

Presented here is an official multicultural policy introducing a transformative multicultural education, or an education that is both multicultural and reconstructionist in exposing relationships of power dominance and subordination as downloaded upon ethnic and racial members of society. Required then is a framework which moves beyond the teaching of tolerance or appreciation for minority groups promoting a redistributive ethic, one deconstructing concentrations of economic, political and cultural power which serves to advantage dominant groups (Laine and Sutton, 2000, p. 86). The goals and objectives are said to borrow, at least in part, from protocols and procedures actively in place within the Canadian context. Arguably they do not.[9]

Certainly, even given a 'liberal reading,' multiculturalism, or the official recognition of multiculturalism by the Canadian Federal system is to be distinguished from an understanding of multiculturalism as a historical pattern of settlement within pre-confederated Canada.[10] For, debatably, Canada has always been a multicultural

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[9] Multiculturalism, as many critics argue, is a state ideological mechanism used to manage the difference and dissension that are to be expected in any society, and, of course, within a diverse society (Ng, 1993; Bannerji, 1997; Walcott, 1997; James, 1998). Further, scholars argue that the current multiculturalism policy is the re-conceptualization of an old Canadian policy of assimilation of minority groups. Historically, policies have articulated the "assimilation" of First Nations people and "other" Canadians. Now the word used is integration (Leslie and Maguire, 1978; Jaenen, 1977; Driedger, 1989). P. 203

[10] Settlement here dates back to the first build up on North American soil of European settlers as French and British fisherman occupied the shores of present day Maritime Canada in the sixteenth century. As within the jurisdictional boundaries of the United States, Native Canadian and Inuit populations were culled, co-opted and contained within the active desires of the colonists leading to an increase in diversity and ethnic complexity on what would become Canadian soil. European settlement and development of 'Canada' serves as an addendum to these earlier movements, as British and the

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entity, a distinction represented in settlement patterns. For example, notwithstanding the recognition of historical French, British and Aboriginal interests in Canada, as early as 1900 Canada was composed of significant non-French, non-English, non-Aboriginal minority interests including Germans, Scandinavians, Ukrainians, Russians, Australians, Italians, Poles, Bukovinians, Galician, as well as Japanese, Chinese and other East Asian immigrants.[11] However, assimilationist initiatives were forged out of the hegemonic necessity to deny the legitimacy of these cultural claims. Thus while Canada remained highly multicultural, the political/ideological entity of Canada retained a monoculture associative status promoting one primary official culture and history. Official multiculturalism, introduced as a policy initiative by the Trudeau administration in 1971, can be validated only by embracing this second version or narrative - that depicting nationhood as sustained through 'popular memory' as an 'imagined community.'[12]

In Canada state and dominant societal memory then have effectively rejected this story of diversity. Historically, administrations moved to assimilate and normalize what were generally viewed as inferior cultural and economic practices. Currently, we ignore the abuses. For Canada's First Nations peoples, from the passage of the Indian Act of 1876 until the 1960s, child welfare and First Nations' policy in general was motivated from an attempt to change both culture and character into a demeanour more commensurate with the evolving European norms (Armitage, 1995 p. 100).[13] A legacy of Japanese internment, and Chinese head tax, reflect a similar distrust of those

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United States settlers were gradually replaced by European immigrants from other nations pushing West as far as the cordilleras regions of British Columbia.

[11] Between 1901 and 1911 the population of Canada rose from just over five million to over seven million with Canadians of French and British descent occupying 83 percent of the population, a shift downward of 9 percent from 1871 (year of the first census) (Laine and Sutton, 2000 p. 413).

12 Social artefacts and practices reinforce public memories – e.g. Remembrance Day poppies, beer commercial, and stories. Public memories reinforce ways of defining who we are and where we came from. Public Memories in turn formulate Imagined Communities (Benedict Anderson) or identity frameworks, as some things are accepted as belonging, e.g. Canadian, and some things are not. As imagined communities stress commonalities over differences, in-group membership is contingent upon shared characteristics. Thus those thousands of miles away can be judged to be eligible while those up the street may not. These symbolically formed aassociations then become normal and natural.

[13] Historically the separation of indigenous children has been used as a strategy in seeking the dissolution of native societies with the subsequent assimilation of native peoples into the dominant colonizing culture.

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other than the anglicized norm furthering the systematic exclusion of non-white immigrants and the subsequent discrimination affecting non-white Canadians to the present.

An immigration policy affecting Black settlers was consistent with Canada's attitude towards non-European immigrants. Blacks were restricted because they were "unassimilable," or in the comments of then-Deputy Minister of Immigration (January 14, 1955):

> It is from experience, generally speaking, that coloured people in the present state of the white man's thinking are not a tangible asset, and as a result are more or less ostracized. They do not assimilate readily and pretty much vegetate to a low standard of living ...; many cannot adapt themselves to our climatic conditions. To enter into an agreement which would have the effects of increasing coloured immigration to this country would be an act of misguided generosity since it would not have the effect of bringing about a worthwhile solution to the problem of coloured people and would likely intensify our own social and economic problems. (James 1999, P. 182)

The requirement that new Canadians or immigrants must be capable of assimilation is a sentiment of some long standing within a Canadian history. Thus visible minorities and minorities of Asian extraction were discouraged from crossing Canada's borders well into the 1960s. While Canada has always sought to admit immigrants who would benefit Canada economically, racial stereotyping and racism has governed Canadian sensibilities in a *de facto* policy seeking to reward those most familiar to Western cultural practices and appearance. The recent re-addition of Asian and African immigration reflects as much a policy of economic need, on the part of Canadian society, as one of justice. [14]

Interestingly, while youth and earning potential are significant factors to admission, ethnicity and visibility are not (James,1999, p. 171). The focus is on an individual's potential in terms of his/her contributions to the Canadian socio/political and economic norm. Canadian immigration thus continues to bolster the wealth and

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[14] With a birth rate of 1.7 and an aging population, there are more Canadians dying than being born (James, 1999, p. 170). The emphasis is then shifted with a focus on youth, although economic and educational factors are still instrumental to admission, with over three-quarters of all immigrants admitted in Canada during the 1980s under the age of forty.

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opportunity of those Canadians with long-term standing, or more accurately, in control.[15] Arguably, nothing has changed. Why then is Canada now recognized officially as a multicultural nation? The argument is formulated from an apparent discourse of need. The following two paragraphs reinforce that need.

For example, the reality of the multicultural nature of Canadian society has never been more relevant than the 'here and now.' The number of Canadian residents who are born outside of Canada has reached its highest level in seventy years. In 2001, 5.4 million people or 18 percent of the population were born outside of Canada. Only in Australia at 22 percent is this number higher. In comparison the United States houses 11 percent of the population who are foreign born in 2000. Across Canada 13.4 percent of people identified themselves as members of a visible minority, an increase from 11.2 percent in 1996 (Minorities, 2003).

And it continues, as Aboriginal peoples also represent a growing population in relation to the Anglophone and Francophone norm, or charter groups. A total of 976,305 people identified themselves on the 2001 census as being North American Indian, Inuit, or Metis. Aboriginal peoples now make up 3.3 percent in Canada's population in comparison with 2.8 percent five years earlier (McGinnis, 2003). [16]

But I promote the strong multicultural nature of this Canada is not a recent phenomenon despite the indisputable claim that it is now. Why then should a nation organized around Charter group hegemonic dominance, sporting an official state culture, history, and ideology, suddenly embrace some form of compromise? I promote that we have not.

Official Multiculturalism:

Multiculturalism emerged as a concept in policy in the 1960s with the development of French and English bilingualism. The Royal Commission on

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[15] All immigrants have been assessed in accordance with qualities of age, education, training, occupation, employability and experience

[16] While Winnipeg has the largest urban population of Aboriginal people, Edmonton is second, followed by Vancouver and Calgary. Significantly the medium age of Canada's native population was 24.7 as compared to a non-Aboriginal mean of 37.7 years. Almost half of this group resides in urban areas in Canada, with that proportion representing over 50 percent in the province of Alberta (McGinnis, 2003).

bilingualism and biculturalism was created in 1963 under the leadership of Prime Minister Lester Pearson. Its mandate, that:

> Measures be taken in order that the Canadian Confederation may develop according to the principle of equality between its two founding peoples, taking into account the contribution of other ethnic groups to the enrichment of Canada. (Rocher, 1984, p. 42).

With the recommendations of the Commission and the rights of Francophone Canadians outside of Quebec, the Official Language Act was passed in 1969 recognizing the legitimacy of English and French in government business. However, the first official reference to the word multiculturalism came when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau addressed parliament in 1971. With the introduction of the fourth volume of the Report of the Royal Commission completed a year earlier, cultural and linguistic needs of non-Anglo, non-French populations of Canada were addressed (Alberta Community Development, 1998). With the submission of this volume to parliament, Canada created a new policy of multiculturalism within bilingualism:

> Although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian and all should be treated fairly. The Royal Commission was guided by the belief that adherence to one's ethnic group is influenced not so much by one's origin or mother tongue as by one's sense of belonging to the group, and by what the Commission calls the group's "collective will to exist."   The government shares this belief. A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians (Laine and Sutton, 2000).

The decision by the Trudeau government engendered opposition from many camps. For Francophone the fear that a multicultural policy would dilute Francophone interests and gains outside of Quebec. For some Anglophones the move was seen as one acrimonious to the greater interests of Canada as a unified nation (Fleras & Elliot, 1992). Aboriginal groups protesting a *White Paper* (1969) that supported assimilation

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demanded redress, while fearing the loss of their distinct status claims within a larger Canadian context. [17]

The initiative, however, preceded garnering modest support. The push for "heritage" languages moved beyond First Nations or Aboriginal concerns as immigrant linguistic minorities lobbied for support of their own language in education. The "multiculturalism within bilingualism" policy moved forward with the backing of these same ethnic linguistic minorities, as over 200 million in funding was dedicated to the program between 1971 and 1987 (i.e. "specific initiatives in language and cultural maintenance") (Flerus & Elliot, 1992, p. 74). With the passage of the Constitution Act in 1982, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, significant leverage was granted Canada's charter languages (English and French) in recognition of the right of Francophone and Anglophone Canadians to educate their young in either English or French.

In the Western provinces, Federal policies of bilingualism and/or multiculturalism have been used to further the process of facilitating Aboriginal languages and culture of First Nations people. The focus upon heritage languages remains a persistent and compensatory strategy on the part of school jurisdictions to accommodate the linguistic demands of ethnic groups. In Alberta, schools frequently offer heritage or second languages programs to accommodate both need and demand of a diverse population. For example, Catholic Central High School (2003) in Lethbridge, Alberta offers five credit courses in French 20, French Language Arts 10 (Immersion), Blackfoot, Japanese, Spanish, as well as a program in Aboriginal studies. Alberta Learning promotes that the importance and significance of language and language education in cultural enhancement and preservation is acknowledged in recent curricula projects. Schools that cater to Aboriginal students are encouraged in

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[17] These concerns resulted in the release of *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972), calling for greater responsibilities and control by Indian bands in the role of educating Indian children. A demand was made for Indian schools to revert back to the vernacular or education in Indian language (National Indian Brotherhood in Laine & Sutton, 2000, p. 141).

incorporating resources that dedicate attention to Aboriginal heritage perspectives.[18]

In accommodating Alberta Learning's (2001) policy on Aboriginal education:

> All students in Alberta should be aware of Native cultures, lifestyles and heritage...
> (and) may be explored in art, drama, science, social studies and other areas of the
> curriculum... Students, teachers and administrators may also explore Aboriginal
> issues in Alberta through a locally developed and/or authorized Native studies
> course.

The 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act reinforces the preservation and enhancement of languages other than English and French – strengthening the focus on French and English as Canada's official languages:

> The preamble acknowledges that Canada is a signatory to the International
> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and states
> that the government recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national
> or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian
> society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and
> enhance cultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all
> Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada. (Chapter
> c/18.7 in Laine & Sutton, 2000)

This Act provides for the support at Provincial levels to provide educational and cultural programs in the interest of "heritage" and heritage languages across Canada. The formation of Canadian Heritage "a portfolio responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content," foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life, and strengthen connections (Government of Canada, 2003).

The effectiveness of this program in its thirty-year history – moving from a nascent emphasis on charter languages through to a more ubiquitous recognition of diversity in supporting heritage groups and language components - can be questioned. Official multiculturalism, given a sympathetic reading, is not multicultural, better understood for its attempt to balance the nation's interests with those of social justice and cultural diversity. A stronger criticism marks official multiculturalism as interventionist by

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[18] The Native Education Project has developed the Alberta Language Programs.

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definition, born as a means for the state to preserve the status quo - still serving that end.

Theorists have emphasized change and growth in multicultural policy:

- o The "ethnicity multiculturalism" of the 1970s seemed intent on neutralizing ethnicity to ensure minority involvement in society;
- o The "equity multiculturalism" of the 1980s focused on eliminating racism and discrimination at the level of the institutions;
- o The "civic multiculturalism" of the 1990s/2000s promotes inclusiveness through a shared civic identity (Fleras and Elliott, 1999).

However, the initiative remains one of consensus, building society by promoting integration. Official multiculturalism then contains ethnicity by setting limits on what is acceptable in society - and what is not. Official multiculturalism is not multiculturalism and is subject to serious criticisms.

Multicultural Education:

For Gabriel Bedard (2000) multiculturalism in Canada may have become a discourse within Canadian national identity, however as an educational ethic, it has been used to silence the voices of "those less desirable people" in accommodating the political climate of the day. Bedard offers instead a more 'critical' antiracist approach promoting that the multicultural approach we have come to accept has serious flaws. The acknowledgement is that multiculturalism does differentiate Canada from the Untied States as purported by Laine & Sutton but the real differences are negligible, as "what is Canadian" remain White and European. "Multiculturalism is a trope to satiate non-White peoples while relieving White anxiety and guilt about their colonial and imperial past" (p. 48). Thus those knowledges that are "easy to swallow" will be allowed into the classroom as long as the status quo is not challenged.

❖ Education of culturally different groups. This is designed to sensitize and prepare teachers to meet the needs of minority and culturally atypical students. Here we find programs such as English as a Second Language or Transitional Programs.

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❖ Education promoting the understanding of cultural difference. Programs of this sort emphasize the responsibilities of educational institutions to understand the positive contributions made by culturally diverse groups.

❖ Education stressing cultural pluralism. These programs recognize ethnic and cultural diversity and accept the rights of citizens to retain their cultural identity.

❖ Bicultural education. These programs recognize two cultures and are designed to teach and prepare students to function in those two cultures.

❖ Cultural/intercultural education. This approach highlights every aspect of multicultural education, namely the concerns for cultural and linguistic continuity, issues related to ethnic and race relations. Aboriginal peoples' rights, integration of immigrants, bilingualism and human rights. (Bedard, 2001, p. 50)

Bedard's (2001) first approach is commonly used in facilitating programs intended to help students adapt to a new country or cultural situation. ESL programs could be used as an example here as students are prepared to fit in to what Bedard would call a mainstream white society. While multicultural in orientation, assimilation is the focus where cultural and social norms are downloaded upon diverse groups or actors. Unfortunately, non-white or racialized bodies cannot be transformed introducing the paradox of "colour-blindness," a myopic institutional reaction isolating subjects in bodies and performative roles devoid of recognizable identity or difference (Brown & Kelly, 2001).

The second approach promotes the understanding of cultural difference, an advancement on the first, in the hope that minority and majority interests will align in a greater understanding of age. Approaches like this are frequently used in Alberta classrooms as students are encouraged by schools or even boards to celebrate their distinctness and cultural background. However, these rather vague attempts fail to deconstruct mainstream white power monopoly and instead present a somewhat cursory and essentialist representation of a culture, in terms of minority interests, which may bear little resemblance to the lifestyle and histories of the very students thought to occupy that identity position. Aboriginal cultures provide an example here as the "Dances With Wolves" (see chapter six) effect reduces student "life worlds"

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into cultural simulations with nostalgic images and grotesque stereotypes ruling the day (Bedard, 2001, p. 52).

Bedard's (2001) third approach stresses cultural pluralism, as students are encouraged to field universal respect for the individual cultural, historical and linguistic backgrounds of others. Again a sense of pride in one's cultural differences is promoted but the approach lacks the necessary critical appraisal of social context and power relations within a given environment or educational system. The focus of this approach continues to bolster a meritocratic mentality while denying the realities of racism, structural violence, and gate keeping as affecting students. As Bedard writes, the idea that the labour market "will absorb qualified minority youth ignores the racism practiced everyday" both in the school and the workforce (p. 54).

The fourth approach stresses the importance of all students becoming multicultural (Henry, 1999). Here, a legitimate attempt is executed in educating not only minority groups, but an entire student population into the realities of divergent cultural interests and practices. Again according to both Bedard and hooks, the mainstream culture of Whiteness is never challenged so that any knowledge gained linguistically or otherwise of the other group is merely ancillary. This practice is conducted in neglect of material and cultural structures of Whiteness that skew and overwrite any meaningful attempt to gain knowledge of the other. Hooks (1992) refers to this process as eating the other (p. 31), as whites or mainstream society surrenders up little in terms of their own advantaged perspective or hegemony as the other is held at arms length from what is known to be normal and real. The concept of "mainstreaming" is vital in understanding this process. Mainstreaming recognizes the legitimate ascension of re-enforceable values, beliefs, histories, discourses, etc. as that "commonsensical" (in a Gramscian sense) to societal and cultural understanding. Thus in Canadian society the politic of Whiteness enjoys the mainstream advantage of never having to identify itself as other, as colour, as dynamic. Conversely, visible minorities within a Canadian context are disallowed the privilege of mainstreaming as they retain the distinction of other conveying hyphenated identities and raced and/or ethnicized pasts (Park, 1997).

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The fifth approach to a multicultural curriculum emphasizing cultural/intercultural education, according to Bedard highlights concerns for linguistic, racial and cultural continuity and introduces a rights based discourse, a study on race relations and power, and a recognition that prejudice and discrimination contours specific structural challenges to diversity within a Canadian context. However, Whiteness is never totally deconstructed or seen as problematic to positive advancements. Thus Whiteness continues to operate through bodies both as social technologies, conditioning and regulating the imprints of the self (Foucault, 1980), and as hegemonic forces that align problem recognition, social movement, and goal state with accepted and recognized societal practices. Thus individual group accomplishments as viewed through the cooptive lens of Whiteness (e.g. Aboriginal accomplishments are celebrated in the patterned attempt to simulate white European bureaucratic social and political conventions).

In Alberta, heritage language programs incorporate French, Spanish, Ukrainian etc. bilingualism into the school curriculum and Francophone first language programs are offered, in way of instruction to schools (as prescribed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms) with significant Francophone populations. First Nations languages are also provided for bilingual instruction. Furthermore, significant attention has been given with regard to cultural components of Aboriginal and Francophone education as both in WCP and Alberta Learning foundations documents, curriculum frameworks, and programs of studies.[19] However, while one might argue that attempts are being made to, at least in part, meet intercultural criteria as introduced through Bedard's fifth approach, all institutional expectations remain under the larger umbrella of student competency and normalcy as outlined practiced over decades in the province's schools.

Bedard's criticism speaks to the uncertainty involved in prescriptive attempts to introduce multicultural processes within the classroom. Fleras and Elliot (1992) suggest that the very nature of the definition process is partly to blame, as definitions

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[19] Common Curriculum Framework for Bilingual Programming in International Languages (K-12) provides one example here. The WCP frameworks for Aboriginal and Francophone culture and language instruction provides others.

will vary in terms of function, structure and process. The meaning of multicultural education, furthermore, varies according to the context, activities and perspectives of those involved. Certainly as Gay (1994) writes, some definitions focus more on specific cultural characteristics while others emphasize power and structure as overriding prerogatives in any analysis of society. For example, multicultural education is used in connection with all of the following propositions:

- ❖ A set of processes by which schools work with rather than against oppressed groups (Sleeter & Burnett, 1994).
- ❖ Comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students challenging forms of discrimination, examining instructional techniques and interpersonal relations in the classroom and democratic principles of social justice (Niepo in Gay, 1994).
- ❖ Approach to teaching based upon democratic values fostering cultural pluralism. In its most comprehensive form committed to educational equality, curricula development, and the greater understanding of ethnic diversity (Bennett in Gay, 1994).
- ❖ A blanket term encompassing a wide variety of approaches to managing diversity within the school system. Multicultural education may range from compensatory type programs for minority students to radical efforts at restructuring our school system in the hope of empowering minority students (Fleras & Elliott, 1992, p. 317).
- ❖ Multicultural education is at least three things:
  - o It incorporates the idea that all students regardless of gender, social, ethnic, racial, or cultural characteristics require an opportunity to learn in school.
  - o Is a reform movement designed to enact changes in school, in other educational institutions so that students representing these groups are issued an equal opportunity to learn?

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o Is an ongoing process towards which educational equality and improved academic achievement are goals (Banks and Banks in Howell, 2002)?

❖ Multicultural education refers to educational practices that recognize contributions and experiences of diverse groups, and is regarded as a developmental stage that provides teachers and students with skills to examine racism critically in a move to incorporate a better anti-racist understanding (Coelho, 1998, p. 195).

Although the above form a cross-section of conventionalized approaches and sensibilities I promote that a multicultural education is also antiracism education. Thus teachers can engage in ... "active intervention to enable children to develop positive attitudes about people of different races and physical abilities" (Derman-Sparks, 1989, pg. 5). It is not enough that children are exposed to differences, but rather to meet the goal of changing discriminatory practice, the teacher promotes practices that challenge discriminatory attitudes, demonstrates behaviours that are accepting of difference and creates environments where "difference" is a norm. Antiracism provides a way out for multicultural processes that in the past lack a meaningful class and ethno-cultural analysis.

Antiracist Multiculturalism:

Antiracist Multiculturalism of the type advocated by Bedard and Sefa-Dei incorporates a more aggressive/critical ethic oriented at the managing of diversity within the school (Fleras & Elliott, 1992, p. 195). For multicultural education is frequently criticized for a refusal to engage minority grievances, the failure to examine domination and discrimination within the learning environment and a lack of vision in terms of restructuring the classroom environment (1992). Anti-racist education focuses on power as well as culture in an attempt to confront the power structures that underwrite forms of racism in the school. Massey describes six stages from laissez-faire to anti-racist multiculturalism (Coelho, 1998, p. 200). However, central in anti-racist multiculturalism is the need for critical inquiry in pedagogy. Students are empowered to deconstruct discourses and ideologies of privilege with the

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understanding that power favours the socially dominant (Giroux, 1990). Dei (1996) identifies ten principles that are at the foundation of any anti-racist practice:

1. The social effects of race must be recognized in that people carry racial and are given racial identities within a societal context.

2. The social effects of race must also be seen within the larger picture of social oppression. Social oppression is based not only on race but on gender, class and sexuality as well.

3. Anti-racist education represents the need to question White power.

4. Anti-racist education challenges the validity of knowledge and which knowledge is chosen to be distributed in school.

5. Anti-racist education appreciates the holistic of the human experience.

6. There is a link between identity and the process of schooling.

7. Education institutions need to address the issue of diversity within schooling in Canada. Schools can model mutual respect and integrity when dealing with all students.

8. An anti-racist education acknowledges the role theory plays in understanding the education process.

9. Schools are ecological places. Anti-racist education is contextual in that students live in both temporal and spatial environments.

10. Anti-racist education rejects theories of pathology that focus on family without regard for a larger social context.

Thus anti-racist education challenges perceptions that schooling is an ahistorical and neutral process promoting a commitment to power sharing between student and teacher in deconstructing existing regimes of oppression. Racism is that which is historically created, institutionally embedded and symbolically expressed within society (Giroux & Fleurs & Elliott, 2002). Inequities are then addressed at both individual and institutional levels in recognition that schools must engage in power sharing furthering individual dignity thus confronting issues of power and privilege within the classroom.

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For Tater and Henry (1994), anti-racist education must confront institutional racism within the educational system (Kehoe, p. 355). Fleurs & Elliott (1992) credit anti-racist education as that anchored in a notion of race and racial discrimination as those products and effects systematically embedded within the policy and practices of institutional structures. For unless students are brought to understand these barriers the status quo will remain the norm within the school and the community (p. 195). For Dei (1996), anti-racist education must be action oriented addressing systematic institutional change in the attempt to combat social oppression (p. 25). For McGregor (1994), anti-racist education incorporates cognitive approaches as students learn to confront prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination in society. Anti-racism exposes the economic, structural and historical roots of inequality (Kehoe, p. 355).

Anti-racist education views race and racial discrimination as embedded within institutional structures and policies. Furthermore, anti-racist education unearths the nature of inequality as that relating to an equal status of social groups. The trick is to modify firstly our perception and secondly engendering a call for action or praxis in addressing inequality and systematic oppression. Bedard maintains that the scope shifts from the individual to the institution and the structural. Whereas, discourses of cultural pluralism and appreciations of difference tend to accommodate cooperation, anti-racism challenges and confronts social relations within the classroom in the effort to transform both student and curriculum.

Anti-racism then is an inherently political discourse, advocating that the status quo is inappropriate and that all diversity in terms of race and ethnicity encompass regimes of power within a dynamic that must be constantly monitored to affect responsible pedagogy of fairness. Whereas some multicultural approaches assume a static view of culture, anti-racist education acknowledges change, conflict and conciliation as a by-product of social existence. Antiracism conforms to the critical methodology advocated above. Symbolic violence within curricula reinforces many of the stereotypes and prejudices which antiracism education seeks to erase. The discourse of Whiteness serves as an example here.

Multiculturalism is not a commonly used term in Alberta provincial curricula (just over a hundred hits in the search of the Alberta Learning Website), antiracism education almost non-existent (although a more popular term with some of the larger school boards – Calgary and Edmonton). When used the term – multiculturalism – is used to express difference/variety devoid of internal criticism or analysis on power. The failure, however, to present a strong critical position by which to adjudicate social, cultural and material realities is hardly new. As I have stated earlier the lack of a more critically informed analysis undergirds many of my criticisms against social studies curricula. In their review on multicultural education and schooling, Bruno-Jofre et al. (2003) trace historical forces serving to reify or disconnect multicultural education from the larger questions of social structure:

> In its early years of intellectual formulation, scholars writing about multicultural education mostly treated the multi-ethnic character of Canada as a discrete and self-contained social category that could be analysed without taking account of class and gender. John Porter's seminal work, The Vertical Mosaic, was always referenced, but his discussion of the mal-distribution of power in Canadian society was largely overlooked by multicultural educators.

An expanded multiculturalism incorporating an anti-racist focus, however, deconstructs the projected ideals of liberal tolerance in terms of power and social structure. The focus moves beyond groups to society where discrimination is produced and perpetuated.

Required is a critical review of the social, of Whiteness, of institutional and structural impediments to equality. The aim is to break down societies' barriers to full participation and respect. Markedly different than a simple focus on diversity, an anti-racist multiculturalism remains critical and interpreted. While the Canadian experience has in some ways facilitated a more openly 'multicultural' surface environment, policy progress has very specific and definable limitations. Alberta's role in terms the active promotion and defence of diversity is less than impressive.

In Alberta centrally funded Head Start programs are restricted to students with serious physical and, in some cases, learning disabilities. Discourses on community development and human rights replace more controversial initiatives focusing on

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diversity and multicultural interests (Community Development, 2003). Where multiculturalism is introduced as either project or concept, it is consistently associated with the more restrictive and apolitical interpretations as outlined above. *The Safe and Caring School Program* under the stewardship of the Alberta Teacher's Association and Alberta Learning has attempted to incorporate a more critical voice in confronting the problem of disruptive behaviour and violence in a school context (Safe and Caring Schools, 2003), but with limited success. Moreover, the future of this program is now in question as government funding remains day-to-day.

Federally funded multicultural school programs are limited and superficial in terms of addressing deeper structurally related problems, such as poverty, racism, and student alienation:

> The promise that multicultural education, premised on the multicultural policy, does nothing to challenge the structured barriers such as racism, sexism, and classism. These operate as barriers to the educational participation and success of minority students. The promise that multicultural education can provide equal opportunity, address educational underachievement and improve individuals' self image will not be realized within the current context that ignores the hegemonic nature of the dominant culture, based as it is on compounded privileges accrued from class, race and gender (James, p. 215).

While it is beyond the intended scope of this thesis to formulate connections between symbolic forms of misrepresentation and the larger structural concerns informing issues of distributive justice, knowledge systems that deny the authentic relationship between the student and the world deny that student the opportunity to enact change:

> Education as the practice of freedom-as opposed to education as the practice of domination-denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from men. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without men, but men in their relations with the world. (Freire, 1972)

Curriculum must communicate the complex and hegemonic nature of culture. Equitable opportunity does not mean conformity. Indoctrinating in the education, mannerisms, language and laws of the mainstream is unacceptable - that is,

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acknowledging difference only under very rigid and isolated circumstances that pre-empt the role of history and power in the subordination of that difference. Without recognizing the systemic nature of oppression, ignoring barriers to participation in institutions like schools, *multiculturalism* whether as policy, or personal ethic, is destined to fail. It is not my claim that kids will necessarily fail academically. Academic success hinges on a number of factors. The state's provision of material and symbolic resources – yes, but also resources directly associated with the individual and group (e.g. ability, desire, perseverance, class background). It means as educators, we have failed to provide an appropriate mentorship for our students.

According to Gordon and Newfield (1996), many policies of multiculturalism seem "torn between demanding and avoiding the full conjuncture of political, social and cultural elements that affect our racialized everyday lives," celebrating diversity while preserving a "political core" seemingly unaffected by that diversity (p. 6). However:

> Curricula and materials must reflect our diverse population and present all groups as Canadians... We must recognize that we are all cultural, racial and ethnic beings (just as we are gendered, classed, sexual and abilitied); we produce culture and we are affected by culture... Racism and discrimination, as social mechanisms that are rooted in our Canadian history, must be acknowledged and addressed directly. They affect us all. Issues and situations that are racist and discriminatory must be identified explicitly as such. (James, 1999, p. 269)

In an article examining multicultural education in the United States Lawrence Blum (1996) criticizes the *California History – Social Studies Framework* for tailoring its view of American History to its own civic goals, goals that constrict past and present realities of racial oppression and victimization in the interest of accommodating a multicultural perspective emphasizing common identification and celebration across ethnic lines. With the focus upon consensus this perspective actively avoids the production of a "psychic ill" manifested through the unwelcome introduction of disturbing material (p. 42). Without grounding a curriculum of discovery in what Blum describes as the "dishonourable facts of our racial history"

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(US), then history cannot serve in revealing embedded ways of perceiving each other and the world (p. 42).

The ideals of multiculturalism cannot be trotted out as curricula components and then shelved again. In Alberta we require a more sophisticated understanding of cultural difference, and representation of diversity. I choose to promote antiracism multiculturalism as an acceptable model as it aggressively seeks to inform and critique power imbalance at symbolic levels, a knowledge/power configuration employable as both a critical mechanism for review and formula for change. The following model of Critical Multiculturalism builds upon this model. Ideally, curricular knowledge is antiracist in product and configuration. The Alberta Learning Social Studies Framework reviewed for this project, unfortunately, falls somewhat short.

Critical Multiculturalism:

Critical Multiculturalism is an adaptation on the theme of multiculturalism intended to provide the theoretical background by which curricula can be adjudicated. Critical Multiculturalism is also a theory of pedagogy in accepting the teaching process as an extension of curricular knowledge. It is an expectation on the part of this document that educators and the material that is taught recognize diversity and the underwriting power mechanisms that condition social relations within the classroom as substantive challenges to educational process. Critical Multiculturalism is the recognition of individual needs, identities and differences of a given student population. It is the realization that educators represent the interests and divergent "life worlds" of students fairly. Most importantly Critical Multiculturalism, as presented here is a model informing a needed practice of education carrying a relevancy not only for those identified and labelled as visible, minority, or other, but for all students. Critical Multiculturalism is finally the theory of education and in turn pedagogy that will direct my efforts in this study.

(1) Critical multiculturalism is firstly Critical Pedagogy. Critical Pedagogy empowers teachers as knowing intellectuals to:

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- Recognize *oppressive situations* in classrooms (biased curricula, unfair teaching practices, etc.), as knowledge acquired in school – or anywhere, for that matter – is never neutral or objective but is ordered and structured in particular ways benefiting the knowledge makers
- Raise the *consciousness* of both student and staff as to the problem - inequality of opportunity – and the ideological smokescreen which disguises the presence of the problem
- Help students *transform* their lives and school environments into forums recognizing the contributing values, beliefs, practices, of all - as groups who live out social relations in subordination to the dominant culture are part of a group whose interests, beliefs, and values are frequently under represented (McLaren, 1989)

In saying this, there is recognition or an activism that moves beyond the ideal of multiculturalism as racial or as ethnic difference. Schools fail students. Drawing from an expansive sociological literature of critique and exploration, Critical Multiculturalism calls for an ongoing review of educational practice. We may focus upon either the cultural and intellectual autonomy of the individual student within the classroom context or the emancipatory role of education in empowering that person to resist oppressive classroom and societal structures. But the reality remains that schools can be sites of material and cultural disadvantagement, racism, and gender inequality.

In *Campaign 2000: a report on a decade of child and family poverty in Canada* (2002), it is demonstrated that since the House of Commons Resolution during the U.N. World Summit for Children in 1990 the number of poor children in Canada has increased by 39 percent. According to the Canadian Council on Social Development, Alberta had 16.3 percent of its children (121,700) living in poverty in 1999. It is suggested that this figure is now approaching 20 percent (2002). Furthermore, this phenomenon does not affect all equally as specific groups are deemed to be at risk. Age and gender, marital status, education level, geography, and even ethnicity are factors in the effects and perpetuation of poverty within Canada. Single parent families headed by women are often thrust into impoverishing situations with the effects downloaded upon their children. Chapman (2001b) indicates that many single mothers are either unemployed or not in the labour force at all. Aboriginal women

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and women aged 55 to 64 are particularly at risk, about half of women aged 55 to 64 living on their own have low incomes. Aboriginal women are frequently faced with the additional barriers of racism and geographic isolation and lack of educational opportunities. Although there is no official measure of poverty in Canada, the Statistics Canada measure of low–income-cutoff (LICO) is best known and widely used. The present LICO level of 54.7 percent, or the amount that the average family must spend to maintain food, clothing, and shelter is seen as the poverty cut-off within Canada (Statistics Canada, 2002). But as Ross and Roberts (2002) indicate in *Income and Child Well-Being: A New Perspective on the Poverty Debate,* the greatest effects of poverty are not borne out in direct material ways but rather affect through environmental factors family, home and community in complex ways. Thus childhood development and educational attainment are influenced via the very psychological and social artificers of a child's world. Family functioning, parental depression, chronic stress, exposure to tobacco smoke, school changes, sub-standard housing, access to home computer, community, neighbourhood safety are all factors in determining a child's life chances and all factors dramatically affected by poverty. Therefore, a child growing up in an inner-city neighbourhood, frequently shunted about between schools with poor parental guidance is more likely to develop psychological and behavioural problems affecting their capacity to learn than a child raised in a middleclass neighbourhood.[20]

Materially disadvantaged children engender culturally and academically disadvantaged students. It is not sufficient for Critical Multiculturalism to negotiate change at the level of culture. Children living under "straightened" circumstances or children occupying working class or underclass niches in society are faced with challenging paths to success within the White middleclass school environment. Well-

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[20] For the first time in Canada there is abundant and compelling evidence that a wide range of child outcomes and living conditions are affected by family income levels. Using data from two longitudinal surveys – The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) and the National Population Health Survey (NPHS) ... children living in families with lower incomes are found to be at a greater risk of experiencing negative outcome and poor living conditions than those in higher income families... Children begin with their own basic genetic makeup but along the way, environmental influences enhance or detract from their ability to optimize their potential. (Ross and Roberts, 2002)

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worn functionalist appeals to meritocracy hold little explanatory value in addressing the problems schools face. However, frequent appeals to cultural deficit models or even "status orientation" explanations are equally inaffective. If anything was learned from the United States War on Poverty during the 1960s, it was that the issues of disadvantagement are difficult to explain away in culturally reducible terms (i.e. deficit, segregationist, or dependency models). Rosenthal's (1968, 1973) and Rist's (1970, 1977) seminal contributions indicated the "self-fulfilling prophecy" of poverty, perpetuation and failure. Bernstein (1970) correlated class language codes with school success while Bourdieu indicated that a certain level of cultural preparedness could hold in the balance school success or failure (Swartz, 1977).

Inability of schools to effectively engage and reward some students of working class, underclass and impoverished groups is too well recorded in literally decades of literature to simply ignore. The effects are real, the risks are high and little is provided in terms of compensation. The decision by an aggressively tough U.S. Republican administration to preserve the decades old Head Start program indicates the recognition, even by those with interests most antithetical to those of the poor, that material disadvantagement translates into missed in-school opportunities. But the Head Start failure has also shown us the inadequate nature of deficit explanations that ignore deeper material structures (Ellsworth, 1998). As Manicom indicates, schools consistently fail the poor. Frequently, particularly at elementary levels, teachers assume that someone else (the mother at home) has already done some type of prior work with the child in preparing them for the school environment (Olson, 1995, p. 285). Manicom illustrates that the evaluation and sifting taking place in tracking, although allegedly based upon natural variation, is instead based on a reading of behaviour and cultural preparedness. Often elementary teachers judge a student's ability on a differential involving time, failing to realize a student familiar with the task, expectations and material involved will naturally lend that child the advantage. Interestingly, the term 'single parent' is applied as a signifier of negative recognition within many classroom and staff-room contexts:

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In official records Griffith determined, that one did not need to use the term "single parent" as a tacit way of signalling to other professionals "this one is trouble" if one had other, even more powerful, coding labels such as "working class," "poor," "native," "disadvantaged," "visible minority," "special," or the like... "Single parent" only came to the fore as a blame the victim strategy when gender (and single parenting) were the only aberrations from the social ideal-in this case, the spoken belief/role/code that children should live in traditional two parent families like those of the 1950s American children" (Olsen, 1995, p. 286).

A recognition of the in and out of school effects of material disadvantagement is the first pillar of a Critical Multiculturalism (Olson, 1995, p. 283). The poor, working class or underclass student has a greater chance of being labelled as a special needs child particularly if they are a member of a visible minority. Curtis, Livingston, and Smaller (1995), document that in Toronto 34.6 percent of all Black students surveyed were enrolled in special education classes, as sections designed for the learning disabled were used to hide ESL students, students with behaviour problems and those behind in their studies. Curtis, et al. also report that in the early 1990s those families on welfare benefits were 60 times more likely to have their children lower streamed than those from professional families. Children from disadvantaged or working class backgrounds are consistently punished within the school system for the language that they use, their cultural practices and behaviours, their means of managing time, the lack of familiarity with an institutional content that at times seem alien, the background of their parents, their willingness to accept blame for their situation. Critical Multiculturalism challenges classroom, policy makers and administrators to better facilitate the needs and desires (at least partially) of all students.

As mentioned material disadvantagement, ethnicity, race, class position, first language spoken, does not necessarily correlate with school failure. Equally relevant the failure of curriculum to represent the interests, beliefs, and backgrounds of a given student need not lead to school failure, poverty, or arguably cultural reproduction. But the knowledge industry is employed in - formulating stereotypes, discourses of hegemonic control, and legitimating political-economic systems of gross societal inequality and neglect. Curriculum which does not acknowledge student difference, ethno-cultural or even class variation and the potential material disparities associated

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with these social positions denies actors what Freire would label authenticity, or knowledge of a subject position other than that of the 'oppressors.' This is symbolic violence, as it denies opportunity for conscientization and meaningful praxis. Is this a curriculum without a meaningful class analysis? Learning situations, in this province, are tempered by the ideology of *meritocracy,* perpetuated as an instrument of normalization and validation of less than fair school and societal practices against those very students most adversely affected. Self-blame and resignation are poor substitutes for a more emancipatory discourse which accurately explains and motivates. Curriculum can be a valuable tool if that text honestly explains and relates to the true challenges of the student.

Critical Multiculturalism is also a developmental education, in making Canadians feel at home in the world, but also seeing their place in the world as one which is underwritten by inequities of power and material advantagement. Developmental education is the education of the classroom; it is also global in the perceived need to address injustice and inequity across jurisdictions and national boundaries. To present students with ahistorical or consensus based models of global settlement, colonization, or even domination is to lie. To bury these concerns in the economism of "globalization" promoting an ideology of expansionism above one of social responsibility is to perpetuate, through symbolically disseminated discourses, material abuses.

(2) Critical Multiculturalism is anti-racist education. Critical Multiculturalism as anti-racist education establishes merit in gaining insights into the differences brought into the classroom by students and teachers. Furthermore, an anti-racist position focuses upon race and racism as matters of power and inequality, moving beyond multicultural definitions recognizing only difference. An anti-racist education questions societal and school practices that lead into a mono-cultural interpretation of curriculum, pedagogy and schooling in general. Critical Multiculturalism by embracing an anti-racist position challenges the status quo by encouraging political and social activism in preserving the rights and dignities of all students. An antiracist

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curriculum is one that articulates racism and other inequality as institutionally, structurally and culturally perpetuated and therefore not isolated or random.[21]

(3) Critical Multiculturalism recognizes that race or ethnicity must be viewed within the larger consideration of group and individual identity. Race and/or ethnicity cannot be seen as an isolating category or identity feature devoid of context. Gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, and exceptionality are all considerations in understanding the process of schooling and the larger link between identity and schooling. It is making a connection between the individual self and the groups to which that individual is a part. As mentioned, gender, age, family arrangements, religion, ethnicity, education and geography are all key determinants of one's material status in society. Understanding discrimination, prejudice and forms of in-school oppression is deeply connected with the structuring of identity through representation in schools. Racial stereotyping borrows from existing discourses pertaining to gender and class as well as race or ethnicity.

Alberta's Aboriginal population serves as an example here as some impoverished and under classed existences are frequently disguised and reworked under the category of race. Therefore, social problems connected with alcoholism and drug abuse, truancy, violence and neglect can be promoted as racial characteristics. Furthermore, Aboriginal women and children can occupy a station in an invisible culture of ignorance and abuse as systemic oppression is downloaded upon the most vulnerable link. Some Aboriginal people are also acting members of the urban poor. Transient and misrepresented, such individuals find it difficult to live up to the promotions and cultural fetishism of a mainstream discourse celebrating the spiritual and cultural achievements of a Plains culture, one hundred and fifty years buried in the past.

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[21] Institutional racism generally encompasses overt individual acts of racism to which there is no serious organizational response, such as discriminatory hiring decisions based on the employer's bias. It also includes organizational policies and practices that, regardless of intent, are directly or indirectly disadvantageous to racial minorities, such as the lack of recognition of foreign credentials or the imposition of inflated educational requirements for a position. Cultural racism is sometimes difficult to isolate because it is deeply embedded in the society's value system. It consists of the tacit network of beliefs and values that encourage and justify discriminatory practices.

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Equally relevant, the children of some immigrant groups excel in the classroom with average aggregate test scores well above the mainstream norm. Some promote that minority student success then defends Alberta Learning's position that classroom are equitable and fair outlets of knowledge and that criticism, not dissimilar to the one developed in this project, are hypersensitive and possibly spurious. However, by holding ethno-cultural factors constant, considerations of social class, family structure, psychosocial factors, must firstly be considered as possible explanations.

A recent "Fraser Institute Report on Elementary Schools" in Alberta provides another example. In celebrating the achievement of upper middleclass schools, many of them private, the report effectively 'others' those Albertans living, in inner-city neighbourhoods, and in poor and more remote rural locations. The achievements of cultural schools like Ben Calf Robe, St. Clair are devalued, receiving a rating of 0.0 as compared to the perfect 10 issued Strathcona-Tweedsmuir (Making the Grade, 2003). No explanation of class is forthcoming.

Critical Multiculturalism examines how identity is constructed and represented within the context involving the life characteristics of the student. Social oppression and a resulting drive for an emancipatory politic interpolates through a realization that power intersects in meaningful and political ways with the possessed qualities of gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, exceptionality. While racism continues to be a concern of this perspective it is a practice tempered by other socially recognized categories such as social class.

(4) Critical Multiculturalism draws from both structuralist and post-structuralist theory in reviewing the construction and distribution of school knowledge. Critical Multiculturalism serves to adjudicate existing knowledge practices, questioning strict technical or instrumental explanations. Knowledge production and use then is inherently an ideological/hegemonic process, a practice linked to a determinable politic as executed in classroom relations. Critical Multiculturalism suggests that cultural hegemony is supported and promoted through the language of the classroom, a language representing complex historical processes. Classroom language then sustains both hierarchical and capillary sources of privilege, pathologizing that falling

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outside. Cultural works to underwrite a belief in the normative or neutral nature of standard language or school knowledge.[22]

Incorporating Foucault, we learn that power emanates from everywhere and is inextricably accessed in the micro-relations of the classroom. Knowledge then follows discursive practice by which discourses are formed, governed and accepted, that is what is to be said and what remains unsaid. Dominant discourses or "regimes of truth" as reinforced through "disciplines" overwrite and when adopted, condition the personal, formulating the pedagogical approaches we take, the curriculum we use, and the rules underwriting non-academic classroom management (McLaren, 1989). Meanings are instrumental in the definition and interpretation of the self, our social institutions and political practices. Foucault interprets discourse as an "organized complex of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs structured in a relation to historical, social and institutional specificities" (Scott in Dei, 2000). Thus discourses effectively organize the nature of body and mind in terms of engendering subjectivities and personal identities. Discourses remain relational in nature to their power/knowledge structure, that is they draw upon their own presence in language

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[22] In claiming that curricula is never neutral in that knowledge is ordered and structured in specific ways (as influenced through social relations and intersubjective meaning), what is taught, and how it is taught then invites a more meaningful appraisal of classroom content. For Habermas the distinction is illustrated in the communicative forms of knowledge distribution. The deceptive qualities of *technical knowledge* (not unlike Giroux's *productive knowledge*), a regime based upon the ideological strength of the natural sciences and the hypothetical-deductive method, masks the function of knowledge/power as students are represented and sorted in accordance with instrumental forms of regulation and control. *Practical knowledge* aims to engage students in their daily lives, analysing knowledge communication as socially situated and developmental. The force of the qualitative movements in the 1960s stand as example here (Rosenthal, Jackson, Rist), as students are placed within social contexts and numerical represented.

Emancipatory knowledge (Giroux's *directive knowledge*) moves beyond the thesis/antithesis nature of the other two forms in serving to understand social relations as both progenitor and affect of power relations, thus empowering actors in transformation through deliberate, collective, communicative action. Curricula truth then is that which denies emancipatory regimes, a product of a power/knowledge politic with a world symbolically constructed, replete - culture, context and content. It is not so much that this world is untrue, but rather is held forth in set circumstance as the only reality circumscribing culture, practice, ideology and value (McLaren, 1989). For Foucault:

> Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, Power/Knowledge 1980, p. 131)

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both underwriting and accessing those interconnected power relations as promoted through specific disciplines in modern society. Critical Multiculturalism views all curricular knowledge, including the curricular knowledge of the teacher as text, as inextricably tied into those historical relations of power issued within society as the classroom. Critical Multiculturalism employs that whether one views these relations as, "commonsensical" in terms of a larger self-governing hegemony,[23] as created and sustained through the language of the classroom, or a product or self-layering of discourse, manifested through "the technologies of self" the connection between power and knowledge is undeniable. Thus discourses on the nature of family, the stigmas of welfare, the proper organization of work, race, gender, class, appropriate behaviour, image, fashion, manners, etc. are tied to specific historical moments.

Critical Multiculturalism then views the hegemony or power/knowledge component in the classroom as that which transcends a given curriculum or textbook, as students and teachers operate within a living institutionalized text of propriety and impropriety, acceptance and unacceptability, and success and failure. Critical Multiculturalism recognizes the need and ability for students and groups to exercise personal power, the critical educator and student then wielding what Habermas calls emancipatory knowledge - Giroux's *directive knowledge* (McLaren, 1989). Emancipatory knowledge is a specific knowledge/power configuration recognizing self-knowledge or identity as relational. Here is Freire's (1996) process of "reading the world"[24]. The student then understands that to be different is not to dispense with larger directives of equality, to be female is not to be non-male, to be raced (other than White) is not to be that falling outside of the mainstream (Said, 1978, 1993), and to be successful in the classroom is not to exercise privilege over others who are construed to have failed. Critical Multiculturalism then uses knowledge/power as a vehicle of both acceptance (the decision to learn) and resistance (the decision to understand) in an extensive

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[23] The means by which dominant groups in society maintain their dominance by securing the "spontaneous consent" of subordinate groups through the construction of political and ideological consensus of both the dominated and dominant groups (Strinati, 1997, p. 165).

[24] Freire's critique of professionalism (as developed in applicable to the situation in North American education) as "cultural invasion" resembles Habermas's critique of technology and science as ideology and his theme of the "colonization of the lifeworld."

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critical literature aimed at deconstructing the myth of meritocratic subordination within a classroom context.

(5) Critical Multiculturalism is a non-essentializing practice. This model does not to replace one narrative (e.g. racism, with another, e.g. an emancipatory politic). [25] Critical Multiculturalism acknowledges the importance of social context in terms of organizing any policy involving critique and action. When applying these tenets to education then one becomes immediately confronted with the difficulties in formulating larger value or belief propositions. Discourses on discrimination and oppression can be worn like albatrosses around the necks of students forcing the stigma of failure upon the unwilling recipient (Brown, W; 1996). It has been my position in this document that universally introduced curriculum and standardized forms of evaluation associated with that curriculum superimposes scientifically rigourous and equal formulation upon extremely diverse and unequal population. The Fraser Institute release provides testimony to this effect as huge disparities grow out of seemingly innocent attempts to standardize what is learned. Critical Multiculturalism then is a site-based phenomenon growing out of the classroom. The teacher then becomes one of the most important resources available to the learner. Social context becomes the operative pedagogical tool in implementing and disseminating

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[25] Many critical schools of inquiry within education are thought to empower students in a quest to overcome oppressive environments. But it is noted here that such models can superimpose rigid theoretical abstractions in terminology upon a given population in a rather ubiquitous fashion. As reviewed above it is essential that resistance grow out of context rather than the context grow out of the language of resistance. For Morrow:

> Critical Theory stressed the increasing superstructural dominance characteristic of late capitalism as a crucial aspect of the incorporation of the working class. Paradoxically, one of the features of subsequent work within the Frankfurt tradition has been a partial abandonment of the more extreme theses regarding the 'one—dimensionality—' of modern culture, whereas structuralist Marxism has popularized hyperfunctionalist theories of cultural reproduction (including proclaiming the 'death of the subject' two decades after Adorno). In contrast, those working within the Frankfurt tradition (e.g. Frederick Jameson, Stanley Aronowitz, Alvin Gouldner, Habermas, etc.) have stressed the tension between cultural production and forms of resistance that generate emancipatory practices. Complementary developments include the British tradition of cultural Marxism (i.e. Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson and certain tendencies within the 'Birmingham School') and its reception of Gramscian cultural theory, as well as, in France, Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism and Foucault's discourse theory (Morrow, 1985, p. 16).

departmentally prescribed knowledge regimes. Extreme demographic variance from region to region and from school to school accentuates the absurdity of any other approach. Critical Multiculturalism is site-based learning. Therefore, the attempt to review or critique a given curriculum package on its tendencies to be correct or complete is absurdity of equal value. The question becomes can this curriculum provide the necessary space in facilitating the desires and needs of all learners. Relevancy is a commodity administered at the local level. But the need for a curriculum package to be relevant is a policy problem. The trick is to provide content and outcomes, which may then be adapted to the specific demands of the group or learner. Assessment then reinforces this desire to provide a valuable and authentic education. Carol Ann Tomlinson's (2001) work with differentiated instruction provides a relevant pedagogical example of how one could dovetail a given curriculum with the recognizable needs of a group. While still assisting students in developing such classroom necessities as ground rules for behaviour, directions for activities, and a sequence of events in learning experience, Tomlinson introduces a differentiated approach which allows the teacher to modify and adapt the learning process to the needs of the student. This method has proven effective with teachers working with special needs requirements, disadvantaged kids and kids from divergent cultural backgrounds. Tomlinson (2001) writes that differentiated instruction is:

1. Proactive as a teacher must remain constantly vigilant in adapting and facilitating learning;

2. More qualitative than quantitative, as differentiated instruction is not giving students more work or less to do, but adjusting the nature of the assignment to match the student's needs in a qualitative way;

3. Rooted in assessment, as assessment is ongoing and utilized in a variety of ways. Teachers access readiness, interest and modes of learning to design experiences based on their best understanding of the students;

4. That which provides multiple approaches to content, process and product. By differentiating these three elements, teachers offer different approaches

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to what students learn, how they learn, and how they demonstrate what they learn;

5. A style of learning that is student centred. Differentiated classrooms operated on the premise that learning experiences are most effective when they are engaging, relevant and interesting;

6. A blend of whole class, small group and individual instruction;

7. A style that is ostensibly organic. In a differentiated classroom, teaching is evolutionary as teacher and students are learners together. Teachers monitor the match between learner and learning and make adjustments as warranted. The teacher is aware that this interaction can reveal ways to make the classroom a better match for its learners.

Critical Multiculturalism acknowledges the need to match the content to the learner as well as the learner to the content. Critical Multiculturalism also offers the caveat to critical educators that ultimately the purpose of any critical intervention is to further the interests of the student rather than the theorist. A differentiated approach speaks to the need in accommodating students from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Language is obviously a concern in terms of providing a relevant education to Alberta's children.

For example, according to Learning Minister Lyle Oberg, Calgary has the largest English as a second language (ESL) student population in the province. To address the demands of enrolment the CBE has established six ESL Centres of Excellence within the jurisdiction. These centres are designed to facilitate the entrance of ESL students into the mainstream population. Centre programs vary according to age, focus, and perceived needs of the student; however, the initiative is administered with the intention of bringing recent Canadians "up to speed" in terms of their eventual absorption into the mainstream population (Knapp, 2003).

The Horizon School Division servicing Taber and Vauxhall in Southern Alberta provides another example with the second largest ESL program in the province. This district has experienced a significant influx of immigrants in recent years. One illustration is the German-Mexican Mennonite (Kanadier) student, as Canadian

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Mennonite families repatriate after an absence spanning decades. A drought, crop failure and political change were all quoted as reasons for the return of these families to Canada. The challenge for the Horizon school system is significant as Mennonite students, many of them attending class for the first time, are adopted into the school system. With Kanadier parents fearing assimilation and the loss of their culture and autonomy, truancy is a significant problem faced by the school district. As a result the Horizon School Board under the supervision of Alberta Learning has responded to these challenges by incorporating/integrating alternative programs into existing program. In a one-room school environment across a grassy field from the existing elementary school, siblings and even parents receive a specialized and differentiated educational experience. There are no specific grades assigned and students engage in a wide variety of activities. Attendance can be sporadic, ability levels diverse. Here flexibility is the key to integrating a diverse population, many of them in the mid-teens or older, learning to read and write in English for the first time. Alberta Learning curriculum is used but adapted to the specific requirements of the program. Many students attend this program while at the same time attending classes in mainstream schools. Assessment in terms of integration is made on a case-by-case basis with the goal of integration key to program operations (Knapp, 2003).

Both of the above cases speak to the enormous challenges and some of the successes in contemporary Alberta as school try to meet the needs of children everyday. They address the need to provide more context orientated and differentiated approach to education given the social, political and economic costs of ignoring change. These programs are touted by advocates as innovative and progressive and serve as an example of curricula flexibility in meeting the needs of diverse subjects. Curricula here are not something just taught, they are engaged at the local levels and in consultation with the *lifeworlds* of these students - learning processes, not stuff to be distributed.

(6) Critical Multiculturalism is an emancipatory project. It promotes the ethic of empathy rather than sympathy, of collaboration rather than control. The task is to engender a generation of learners. To engender a body of content and means of

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presenting that content to recognize individual values, beliefs, backgrounds and futures. To work against top-down assimilationist programs and ethics is a purported task of this philosophy and one worth defending.

CHAPTER 4 - METHODOLOGY

THE STUDY

The research for this study is of two types. The first concerns a series of interviews conducted between August and December of 2002. The interviews were conducted with individual participants in response to a recently released Alberta Learning framework document concerning the new Social Studies curriculum. The second a critique of the same document and some ancillary material as published by Alberta Learning around the same theme and time.

INTERVIEW DATA

A THEORY OF DATA COLLECTION

The data collected, and reviewed for this study are qualitative in nature, that is the data are not measured or calibrated against some accepted norm or standard in an effort to quantify a given claim. The research aims are not designed to extrapolate and predict, but instead seek to advance the specific testimonies, understandings, experiences of the respondents chosen. This is not to argue that patterns will not occur within the data, or that information gleaned from the interviews cannot inform

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professional practice. The process, however, lends itself to recording and understanding social phenomena without reducing those data to a definitive quantitative measurement, acknowledging that any method of research or inquiry will reveal both qualitative and quantitative dimensions.

It is recognized that respondent reaction varies. Testimonies convey biases, as they unearth deeply held beliefs and experiences. The use of open-ended questions can bridge and expose such biases. Tabulation and excessive mathematical quantification, however, engenders compartmentalization of response, satisfying a set of categories to which an analyst either corroborates or contradicts. As the production and interpreting of culture and culture based phenomena is not simply a process of some objective correspondence, between phenomenon and interpretation, at least given this understanding of the word, any pretension along this axis is reductionist.

Formulaic precision may offer the analyst significant utility. The advantages in predicting/controlling the occurrence, divergency and/or repetition of natural phenomena is not to be underestimated, and the researcher is availed of a number of "proven" mathematical propositions in the collection and analyses of data. The "received view" or *Positivism* serves as an example here. But this approach, used extensively by the "hard" sciences in the past, has experienced less success when applied to social phenomena where *Verstehen* (understanding) is the goal. "Hard" scientific explanation (*Erklaren*) is not the objective of the researcher here but rather understanding "meaning" in social phenomena.

Excessively dualistic (the investigator and investigated objects are assumed to exist independently) positivistic methods of inquiry are summarized in the language of time and context-free generalizations; that is the findings are not grounded in the local. Reality then is reducible, determinable and discovered or revealed to the researcher – the impartial spectator (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 109). Such an approach carries severe transferable limitations given the requirement of context specific data for this project. Furthermore, this approach denies the unavoidable role of the researcher (findings are created in the interaction of the inquirer and the phenomena) in the construction of meaning systems and context by which knowledge is constructed

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(Schwandt, 1994). Facts then are not revelatory, assuming the independence of theoretical and observational languages, but created and sustained within value laden theoretical contexts.

Postpositivist adaptations of the *received view* recognize the reality of the *positivists* as "imperfectly apprehendable" but maintain the basic premises underwriting the models ontological claim of a "real" and decipherable social universe to be made known (at least attempted) through value free inquiry using mathematical precision (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Again such an approach tends to invocate an ostensibly quantitative approach. However, "method does not give truth: it corrects guesses" (Polkinghorne in Lather, 1991, p. 51), as "fact/value dichotomies simply drives value underground" (p. 51). It is the supposition here that research findings are both theoretical and value laden. Methodologically, then, value and context play a significant role in the production of knowledge.

Alternative inquiry paradigms, founded upon more accessible qualitative forms of measurement, place the interviewer within the project of knowledge refinement and meaning production. Alternative programs, like *critical* approaches, recognize "historical realism" – or the notion that reality, and interpretations on that reality, are shaped by both material and cultural factors within transactional, subjectivist and value-mediated epistemologies (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994). These methodologies are thus dialogical and dialectic, recognizing the interdependency of interviewer and knowledge production. *Critical* paradigms embrace inquiry formed as a dialogue between investigator and respondents, with the intention of transforming "ignorance and misapprehension" into a more informed consciousness (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 110).

Other paradigms embrace more relativistic hermeneutically derived tenets, e.g. *Constructivism* – noting the variable and personal nature of social constructions (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.109). *Constructivism* stands as an example of more relativistic approaches casting a broad theoretical and ontological net of inquiry (intramental), knowledge production refined in the interactive process between interviewer and respondent through hermeneutical technique, and dialectical interchange.

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Constructivists as anti-essentialists, embrace the view that what we determined to be objective knowledge and truth remains the result of perspective. The question of which constructions are true, or more true, remain socio-historically relative, with the "best informed" and most sophisticated construction supported, and revisable, through consensus (Guba and Lincoln 1981; 1994). The researcher can never be "disentangled" from the observed or solicited data; inquiries themselves are literal creations or constructions of the inquiry process.

Incorporating the strengths in *critical* and *constructivist* approaches, some feminist paradigms, integrate *poststructural* critique with a collaborate message of *praxis*; recognize the "evocative power" in the dialectic. Lather, in her *postmodernist-feminist* approach to emancipatory, or "praxis-oriented" research stands in illustration. For Lather (1991) the discretion of the researcher is employed in striking a balance between the liabilities surrounding "false consciousness" and the hazards of "researcher imposition" (p. 52):

> Researchers are not so much owners of data as they are 'majority shareholders' who justify decisions and give participants a public form of critique... I propose that the goal of the emancipatory research is to encourage self-reflection and deeper understanding on the part of the researcher at least as much as it is to generate empirically grounded theoretical knowledge. (p. 60)

Interpretivism represents another attempt at extracting "deeper understanding" from the research field. Preceding *Constructivism*, and other poststructural schools, in its development, *Interpretivism* maps a marginally different ontological and epistemological position from that of *Constructivism*, and *Constructivist* based theories (conceived in reaction to the effort by Social Scientist to develop a "natural science of the social). The focus here concerns human inquiry and "what we are about when we inquire into the world (Schwandt, 1994, p. 119). [1] The *Interpretist* paradigm advocates "interpretation is not simply a methodological option open to the social scientist, but rather the very condition of human inquiry itself" (p. 119). Language and history are both the limit and condition of *Verstehen*.

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[1] *Interpretivism* marks a variation on this relativist theme. *Phenomenological* and *Symbolic Interactionist* methodologies provide example here.

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Although briefly reviewed, these approaches/paradigms lend example to a methodological advance premised on the blurring of the lines between science and the art of interpretation, as a theoretical and philosophical assumption about the world and the ways in which we may see it. Where that blurring occurs, what we can know and promote as acceptable knowledge, and how acceptable "meaning" is revealed, can mark areas of departure. But the acceptance is in the message that the social remains the unfinished product of human interaction and does not stand apart from the observer, *viz.* that which can be empirically measured and recorded.

The approach employed for this project straddles the frontier between the *Critical* paradigm and *Constructivism* recognizing that what can be known or discovered remains inextricably linked to the cultural and material products of a historical reality, while remaining cognizant of the interviewer's own reflexive awareness, of that person's constructions, and the social constructions of the respondent. The inquiry encourages dialectical reciprocity between the interviewer and the respondent and views the same as "transformative intellectuals." Respondents are actively involved in the interpretation and construction of meaning (i.e. the deconstruction and interpretation of textual material), meaning understood to be contoured through historically established and maintained hegemonic networks – both material and cultural - affecting how it is we represent and understand the world, as it is, and how it should be. It is, therefore, an expectation that the interview process will expose our deeply held political and ideological beliefs, or "social technologies," as teachers.

However, promoting that there is no one template from which one can gauge the fallibility of curricula or the perceptions of respondents (e.g. *false consciousness)* transformative goals cannot be measured against an agreed upon or imposed understanding of a morally valid historic appropriateness. The expression of cultural value and articulation, in terms of how we represent and view others (i.e. gender, race, ethnicity) remains a defining quality of the research process, accepting that the role of researcher and respondent value is instrumental to the process of review. The respondent feedback cannot be measured or judged in terms of its appropriateness, weighed against some imposed external recognition of value. Lather (1991) warns

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against interview *intimacy* without *reciprocity*, and advocates *dialectical theory-building* over analyst *theoretical imposition* (p. 61).

Issues of research quality therefore reach beyond the solipsistic parameters of *critically* imposed structures. Equally supportable, conventional *Positivist* and *Postpositivist* understandings of quality (i.e. validity and reliability) are exchanged for guidelines that recognize the volatility of the phenomenon as:

> These criteria depend on the realist ontological position; without the assumption, isomorphism of findings with reality can have no meaning; strict generalizability to a parent population is impossible, stability cannot be assessed for inquiry into a phenomenon if the phenomenon itself can change; and objectivity cannot be achieved because there is nothing from which one can be "distant." (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 114)

Two distinct sets of criteria have been proposed under the umbrella of *Constructivism* can help here. The *trustworthiness* criterion promotes *credibility* rather than internal validity, *transferability* over external validity, uses *dependability* parallel to reliability, and *confirmability* against objectivity (Guba and Lincoln, 1981).

The *authenticity criterion of fairness* employs *ontological authenticity* (enlarges personal constructions), *educational authenticity* (leads to the improved understanding of the constructions of others), *catalytic authenticity* (stimulates to action) and *tactical authenticity* (empowers action) (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 114).

Lather (1991) supports a form of qualitative system involving *triangulation* (utilizing multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes), *construct validity* (a self-critical attitude towards the construction of meaning, categories and theory), *face validity* (recycling description, emerging analysis, and conclusions back through at least a sub sample of respondents), and *catalytic validity* (the degree of reorientation focusing and energizing of participants towards understanding "reality" and transforming it) (pp. 67-68).

Other schematics of quality measurement have been proposed by various theorists in the interest of providing "standards" in an area of inquiry that seemingly deny objectification of the same. Certainly, research and analysis must remain grounded within the body of the social being evaluated (Strauss & Corbin 1991,

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Strauss 1987). Furthermore, *praxis* remains a significant component of any research. The employment of a "quality restraint" is promoted (for this study) as a requirement, whether focusing upon regimes of *trustworthiness* or *authenticity* (or other). Interviews conducted for this study incorporate an ordered and consistent method, engaging multiple data sources, and dialogical opportunities through which constructs and references are reviewed, corroborated, and sometimes, rejected, thus signifying a necessary point of entry for further research and analysis. Efforts have been taken to periodically refocus, conscientize and energize, denoting a call for *catalytic validity* and transformative growth.

Qualitative interviews for this project unearth differences in respondent reaction, tabulate commonalities, and encourage personal development. Even under a relatively formalized interview schedule, the interviewer employs follow up questions and/or strategies in an attempt to flesh out biases, while expanding upon meaningful perceptions. The promoted review and critique of data, as collected in the interview process, remains an instrumental focus. The project remains, to encourage an open dialogue and reciprocal rapport in a meaningful praxis. The accepted task, prompting a greater consistency in data construction, underwrites the methodological status of this study, offering participants the opportunity to be heard, critique and discuss deeply held convictions and beliefs, while allowing the personal space by which growth can occur.

THE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

The document chosen for review for this study is the Social Studies K-12 Front, or program preamble along with Social Studies K-9 Program of Studies as released by Alberta Learning in draft stage during the summer of 2002. The release of this document was beset by a number of delays and alterations. Originally issued as a working draft under the Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies (WCP), in February 2001, the project was placed under considerable adaptation with Alberta Learning's decision to "go it alone". What was then the WCP Common Curriculum Framework is now the Alberta Learning's Draft Curriculum Program for the new

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Social Studies program. Thus, delays occurred as the department scrambled to make up for lost ground. Administrative changes and preliminary review and consultation processes consumed time.

The anticipated need to adjust the old WCP document into its current form then has resulted in a delay of over a year and the evolution of the WCP Framework into the current program of studies. It should be noted that while Alberta Learning is now promoting its own program, changes to the old WCP Framework, in terms of the larger curricular subject focus, have been minimal.[2] The present program reviewed for this project, then, has been significantly influenced by the WCP Foundations Protocol Document and in turn, WCP Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies.

The participants chosen for this study were asked to review the Social Studies Front K-12 as well as the K-9 curriculum material. The respondent was asked to examine the document carefully and when possible, weigh this program against the curriculum currently in place. However, as not all participants were currently Social Studies teachers, this was not always possible. Ultimately, participants were asked to draw on their own policy, administrative or teaching background in reviewing and critiquing the monograph. The document totalled 86 pages and was given to the participants at least three weeks before an interview was to be scheduled. It was clearly indicated to the respondents that they were to focus their attentions on those portions of the document, which dealt with multicultural, inter-cultural, or concerns of human equality, as the questions would be structured around this area. It was also communicated that this document marked, to a specific degree, a departure from past approaches, in that significant attention has been issued multicultural and human rights concerns. The initial stage of the document is organized around an introductory program rationale indicating program objectives and learning outcomes. The second section covers the levels kindergarten to grade six with segmentation by grade level. The third section reviewed grades seven to nine. The program portions of this

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[2] As developed later in this document, the changes that have been enacted carry some significance.

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document focuses on themes as well as skills and processes for each grade level (see appendix).

It should be clearly illustrated that this program provides the foundation for the forthcoming program of studies to be released in the near future. However, the draft document used for this study is specifically that and a specific period of consultation and review is requisite before a finalized program is developed. The respondents were asked to review this document in the effort to monitor Alberta Learning's direction with regard to the new Social Studies curriculum, not critique a finalized or implementable program.

CHOOSING RESPONDENTS

For this component of the study, the data have been collected from individual respondents through a series of interviews. Many of these participants are acting teachers and will find themselves on the frontlines when the new Social Studies curriculum program is introduced. The remainder of those interviewed have taught at one point in their career and are currently working in a related field. All of the participants interviewed are currently working in the Edmonton area, a consideration in their selection.

Selecting ten candidates for the study proved challenging given the vast number of individuals working in teaching in Alberta's educational system. The selection process was not random but rather focused upon individuals with backgrounds in multicultural or inter-cultural education at instructional, administrative or policy levels. All ten candidates had experience here. Two of the ten have taught overseas. Several are currently (or have been in the past) active with global education projects and/or committees. Several have worked with non-government organizations (NGOs) or human rights organizations. Four of the respondents are currently teaching or have recently worked with Metis and Aboriginal children. Others have worked with institutionally coded children (e.g. fetal alcohol syndrome [FAS], oppositional defiant [OD], learning disabled [LD], behavioural disorders and other special needs situations). Many of the candidates have worked in underprivileged school

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environments. Virtually all the respondents have taught Social Studies at one point in their careers. Of the ten respondents, seven would identify themselves as White, one visible minority and two Aboriginal/Metis.

Over three-quarters of the respondents have either worked as curriculum consultants, on curriculum committees, or in curriculum policy and design. Of the ten, five are currently teaching in Alberta's classrooms, one is working as a school administrator, one is a university professor, and two in professional organizations associated with education in the province. One individual has presently left the education field after twenty years of service.

This group represents virtually all grade levels. Four have taught at the elementary level, five at junior high level, three at senior high and two at post-secondary levels. Of the ten individuals interviewed, only one has taught less than five years, with all but three possessing more than ten years classroom experience. Most of the participants interviewed have taken classes along intercultural/multicultural themes. All expressed an interest in this field. If there is one common thread, it concerns this issue of equity and diversity within the classroom.

The selection of the candidates was made from a larger pool of names as forwarded to the analyst. Professional associations, Social Studies committees, Global/Intercultural Associations were contacted for a list of individuals who may be interested in participating in this study. Other candidates were contacted directly from a list prepared in advance. All were guaranteed their anonymity and all were asked to volunteer their time. All the candidates selected understand that they possess the option to withdraw from the project.

It is the position of this study that the group selected for interviews will provide a better informed and more critically focused feedback (given their collective backgrounds) than a simple random sampling could generate. The invaluable experience that these participant's house is arguably necessary if the project is to engender and informed and empathetic response. Current classroom involvement is balanced against work in non-profit organizations, professional associations and academia. While there is no magic formula in terms of blending these dynamics, I

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have attempted to create a needed balance to gain a broader perspective. Arguably, however, the years of classroom experience along with multicultural and intercultural involvement by these candidates creates the critical mass necessary in generating an informed response.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Two separate questionnaires were designed for this project, An Interview Guide for Social Studies teachers and a document titled An Interview Guide for Curriculum Planners. The interview guide for Social Studies teachers was used for six of the ten candidates with the other document employed for the remaining four interviews. Both guides are set up so that the interviewer asks the participant twenty questions. The guide for Social Studies teachers is in many ways similar to its counterpart with the exception that some questions more specifically target the classroom milieu. Most questions are carry a number of probes used in assisting the participant in isolating and identifying the key elements for issues involved. The questionnaires are designed to grant the interviewer significant latitude in conducting the interview. The objective here is to move beyond the surface, gaining deeper insights and understandings. Lather's quality assurance practices of establishing *construct validity* and *face validity* were instrumental in the design and development of these instruments. Test interviews were held in the attempt to isolate and eliminate potential problems. Furthermore, a continued vigilance was exercised throughout the interview process to attain a more positive product. The interview guides are subdivided into several sections. The initial segment is designed and asks that participants provide background information with regards to their credentials, interests and experiences. The second segment, Diversity and the Classroom, contains a series of questions on perceived state of today's classroom. Participants are asked to reflect on the nature of diversity and its role in the present day Social Studies curriculum. The third segment, concerning The Alberta Education Draft questions, are more specific to the program draft itself. Participants then are to examine this document in light of the comments

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and discussion evolving out of the previous section. Are the changes as reflected in this document significant?

The final segment, The Future Direction of Curricula, is as much an evaluation of value as it is fact. Participants are asked to consider future directions of curricula in this province. The signifiers "should or ought" are frequently exchanged for "does or is." In reinforcing a desire to subscribe to Lather's quality assurance model, the document is designed, in conjunction with the interview process, with the intention of reorienting or focusing the respondent upon specific questions of need and fairness. The process then carries the intended consequence of transformation *(catalytic validity)*.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Each respondent was interviewed privately at a time both convenient, in terms of their schedule, and expedient, in addressing the need of the participant to possess a solid grasp of the document content. Interview sessions were between one hour and one and one half hours in length with the questions used to facilitate an open format response. The use of the probes enabled in depth questioning with a minimal of direct intervention. The attempt was to challenge the respondent in to considering alternative interpretations of forgotten material. The analyst's role, therefore, was to encourage the respondent to build upon deeper and more expansive interpretations and responses devoid of excessive stereotyping or idiomatic awareness. It is the understanding of this project that the dominant discourses familiarized at a societal level through mediated channels, frequently interpolate to our actions, thoughts and opinions. The effort to avoid cursory and superfluous responses frequently resulted in a more openly frank interview. It should be noted that while the goal was to break down discourses of habit and conventionality, resistance sometimes forced an impasse and at such a time the interviewer moved on to the next question.

The interview process then was referential in that respondents were ask to explain or legitimate in self critical ways the inter-subjective erection of meaning, category and theories demanding that positions be recognized and validated. As disclosed earlier it

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was never the attempt to work from the position of mastery or authority but merely to ask the subject to challenge his or her own responses. For the praxis interrogative is a foundational principle in this study, growth is to be encouraged, and the analyst expected to concede theoretical ground as the situation demanded.

The pool of respondents was selected with intention of furthering the goals/methods discussed above. It is not my intention to boast representative sample of some larger vocational horizon, but rather challenge those selected to formulate genuine responses and interpretations. These respondents are speaking from an area of significant involvement, on a subject matter with which they are familiar, suggests that this group is a credible source. It is expected that those interviewed did so to further the practice of education and schooling, as no remuneration was provided. It also accepted that the same group frequently acts in the interests of Alberta's students. It is the opinion of this study that supportably, fraudulent transcriptions will be avoided as the data supplied by the respondents both accredit and confirm the experiences and understanding of the group questioned. *Trustworthiness*, in the sense reviewed above, is therefore maintained, *transferability* inferred.

Interviews did not involve direct classroom observation and therefore the process was conducted at arms length from school activities and the school itself. However, the respondents involved were very familiar with the challenges of the classroom, and the faces of the students within. It is therefore purposed the response is an authentic one, not because it pretends to speak for all educators but because it speaks for some.

DATA REVIEW AND PROCESSING

The data collected from the ten interviews for this project will be examined and processed on two axes. The first, or a denotative axis will result in interview items (questions) being reviewed for the responses issued by the participants. For example, the Interview Guide for Social Studies Teachers question four asks "as a teacher how do you acknowledge or promote the understanding of difference within the classroom?" (see appendix). This question generates responses which then can be examined in terms of the specific claims or values introduced, while lending the

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analyst a direct response to the inquiry. The responses of participants can then be reported in the attempt of shedding light on the overall value of the new program as specific to the multicultural/intercultural focus emphasized. The denotative content of the participant responses provides a valuable body of data by which to review the program.

However, there are limitations to simply accepting the text at "face value." The connotative or vertical axis then is designed to probe deeper into the discursive text. Participant responses will be reviewed in terms of emergent themes or ideologies, or conventionalities present. By employing a discourse analysis, as developed by the author in a former study, a more detailed and sophisticated review of the data is possible. Metaphor, stereotype, exnomination, [3] tautology, are all techniques or methods present in language, processes imposing connotative influences, as specific discourses are accessed to translate, change or affect meaning. For example, some respondents in this study claim that race or ethnicity is an invisible marking, that is, children perceive themselves as "all the same" in terms of their identities, and in school treatment by teachers, students and administrators. This comment is of a believable nature with a specific denotative value. But when several respondents utilizing a similar language access the same discourse, then we have here an invitation to probe deeper into the utterance itself in determining an alternative explanation.

The guidelines I am employing here are helpful in doing this, the supporting argument, that all text draws upon power/knowledge regimes and are historically situated. Textual production, therefore, is a definable outcome as specific historical forces, e.g. persons and events, shape discursive product. Central to this understanding is the interplay of discourse in any textual reference, discourse that intersects and disperses in a multitude and multiplicity of perspective.

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[3] Exnomination is a term developed by Barthes (1973) that is a discursive power to make commonsense of a class-based sense of the real, a power held by the same group who exercise economic control. Exnomination disguises the political origin of discourse, disguising issues of gender, race and other differences. It is similar to Gramsci's idea of commonsense as a subordinate makes sense of their world and of themselves through a dominant discourse of the controlling group. (Fisk, 1997, p. 42)

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Moreover, we must understand that discourse can be of a chaotic and complex nature. Given that discourse is a product of power/knowledge in that it is political in nature (we say and represent specific ideas and arguments), we can reasonably expect a significant divergence in discourse use. Discourses on the inevitability of war are always accompanied by other discourses promoting the absolute necessity of peace. Moreover antithetical discourses are frequently present within the context of the same utterance. For example, the proposal that "our way of life is too valuable to let go."

In deciphering textual meaning a reader is confronted by a rift separating what is claimed discursively to be true or valid, and the extra-discursive or connotative associations that contradict those explanations and meanings - alternative or conditioning interpretations or discourses. Burton and Carlen (1979) posit that truth claims through text are always expressed at an expense of their own qualification or contradiction. That is "Other" perspectives or conditioning discourses are present in any symbolic communication, thus providing extra-discursive explanation or meaning within a text's symbolic order. By recognizing this "Other" analysts force a crisis in textual legitimation questioning the plausibility of a straight denotative (if possible) response. The reliance by authors and readers on *commonsensical* understandings of gender roles, class associations, and societal values condition meaning in what can only be deemed hegemonic or ideological ways. We see the alignment or prevalence of specific discourses in silenced others.

Every discourse at some point confronts a potential crisis in legitimacy. A deconstruction of commonsensical understandings, metaphor, exnominated signifiers, reveals alternative discourses or ways to which meaning can be constructed. Dominant discourses are often prevalent in discursive arguments; expository veins seeking to legitimate argumentative constructs through closure. But closure itself is a difficult and precarious process for any text as it confines a reader to one conceptual area or perspective at the expense of another (e.g. "I think all kids regardless of background or colour, are just kids and see the world that way"). Particular methods or techniques serve to conceal the Other, but also can expose it as well. The deconstruction of text then can reveal the contradiction in attempting to finalize any

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knowledge claim, for to operate to conceal one ignores multiplicity of meaning. Legitimation is subject to this countervailing semiotic power and exists as testimony to the unequal relationships that exist within a social setting - or the power/knowledge nexus. The text is a product of these power/knowledge relationships. Meaning resulting from the deconstruction or re-reading of the text is also a product of this power/knowledge relationship. The methodology chosen here is intended to expose a latent and contradictory meaning within a source. Alternative understandings then become possible. The attempt to understanding a discourse then provides the researcher with alternative ways of reading the product, increasing the value of the research material to the study. The goal here is to expose and isolate the influences of respondent belief, conventionalized understandings, and prejudices.

Furthermore a deeper reading of the interview responses exposes generalizable discourse approaches or organizational speech practices which are highly ideological in orientation. In way of illustration here are some examples.

1. The conditioned, or programmed response. We are all aware of the token beauty pageant shibboleth concerning the "wish to feed the world", the wish for world peace. That is, a question is reduced to a discourse, a discourse devoid of complexity, sophistication, or deeper contradiction. Are all students the same?

2. These respondents habitually address moments of indecision or uncertainty by accessing their own biography. But as the lifestyles and experiences of many students are significantly different from our own these attempts could prove misleading and harmful.

3. The appeal to universality. We do as much injustice when we "treat unequals equally as when we treat equals unequally."

4. The assumption of common understanding, "you know what I mean."

The above examples are simply that and far from complete. What is demonstrated is the complex nature of signification as attempted by language users to enact meaning? By providing a vertical access to textual material the opportunity to expose the undetected (dominant discourse practices, or hegemonic structures), becomes more

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exaggerated. Themes and commonalities will emerge from this process with the hope of deriving a deeper and more revealing critique of the document.

ANALYST REVIEW OF THE PROGRAM DOCUMENT

One chapter of this study is dedicated to an analyst view of the program document. As with the interview portion of this study, the analyst review represents a formalized examination and critique of the new Social Studies Program Document as released by Alberta Learning in the summer of 2002. As with the participant interviews, the attempt is to affect a deeper reading of the program document.[4] However, the analysis is restricted to the program of studies, as a policy document communicating future program direction, philosophy, and intention. The review will, therefore, abstain from evaluating the present curriculum program in terms of its past progress or limitations. Personal value judgements, with proviso of future curriculum needs, will also be avoided.

The analyst's review of the program will occur with some historic qualification in terms of the document design and release. The Western Canadian Protocol project will be reviewed as an incipient force in the program design and administration. Therefore, an overall analysis of the WCP social studies generative philosophy, content and goals will be examined with the intent of providing a foundation from which to review Alberta Learning's program of study. A number of WCP supporting documents will be examined. The general content and value of the WCP initiative will be weighed against the mandates of the present Alberta Learning program of studies under review.

In reviewing the program proper, as with participant responses, the program will be examined for its direct denotative contents and message. A more in-depth connotative reading in the form of a discourse analysis will be implemented in establishing relevant themes, rhetorical techniques and dominant narratives. The discourse model used in reviewing the interview responses will also be utilized here. The analyst's intention, in terms of a methodology, is to highlight specific areas of discourse

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[4] Given the specific epistemological constraints as promoted earlier in this chapter.

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production where choice, on the part of the authorship, is exercised in terms of text creation (i.e. whose voice or authorship is present in this text, who in terms of a readership is this document produced for, what is the object [message] of the text and how is this object shaped and legitimated). To wit: what discourses have been effectively silenced in the production and validation of this object (the question of the "Other")? Subsequent questions focus upon the historical influences of textual production, the ideological layering of textual discourse in the interest of legitimizing knowledge claims, the role of power in knowledge production, and the application of the discursive text in providing a coherent document[5]

The second segment of the study chapter, dedicated to the analyst's review of the program document, will focus upon the value of the program itself in terms of the normative standards explicated in chapter three. Can the Alberta Learning program advance the cause of Critical Multiculturalism (as reviewed earlier) in the classroom? The proposed tenets in terms of structure and application of Critical Multiculturalism will then be superimposed upon the extra-discursive - narrative/discourses - as communicated through this document.[6] Thereby the project of Critical Multiculturalism will be tendered:

1. Will this program work towards a better understanding of material/structural inequity within society?

2. Will this program work towards the recognition of racism within society and the classroom? What are the challenges as related to diversity and cultural diversity in Canada? Does the document advocate the centrality of

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[5] For further clarification on these methodological processes see the document Discourse Analysis-Methodological Guideline in the appendix of this document.

[6] It is proposed here that my critique of the document will move beyond the direct denotative claims as administered through the flow of the text. Extra-discursive information (i.e. connotations or associations, counter discourses, hidden agendas, hegemonic regimes, over-coded signifiers) are all references for this, the story told but not directly explicated in the authorial text.

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Whiteness? Is institutional colour blindness promoted? Is the practice of othering prevalent vs. a mainstream norm? [7]

3. Does the program recognize that those potential consumers of knowledge are bearers of complex identity characteristics (e.g. gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, ability)? Are connections made between individuals, groups, and larger societal features? Is the process of learning understood to involve both knowledge production and reception? Is that interaction between the writer (curriculum) and the reader (student) understood to involve rituals of acceptance and/or defiance on the part of that learner, as consent on the part of the same requires the requisite acceptance of this information as relevant, valuable and pleasurable?

4. Does the document work towards the clarification and elimination of inequities related to power/knowledge configurations within society and the classroom? Are there assimilationist discourses present here? Are groups silenced or misrepresented? Does the text assume a dominant mainstream or subject position?

5. Does the document attempt to accommodate the interests, needs and differences as reflected in the local? Is there a pretension that all administered jurisdictions, schools, and student bodies are the same? What powers and autonomies are granted classroom teacher? Does the document mistakenly promote uniform standards, in terms of content and evaluative outcomes, that will be enacted and administered on a group of learners with diverse and sometimes divergent needs and desires?

6. Is this an emancipatory document or a treatise on assimilation and control?

The analyst review and critique of the program will be included in the larger body of content of this study. The intent is to complement not overwrite the values and opinions of the interviewed participants.

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[7] It should be noted that the lower case other, as used here, is to be interpreted differently from its uppercase counterpart. Both, while similar is interpretation, are not identical in meaning. Both, however, borrow of Lacanian theory in terms of their construction and use.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS- METHODOLOGY GUIDELINE

AN ANALYTICAL FORMAT

It is necessary in outlining a methodology to highlight specific areas of discourse production where choice is exercised. Included here are both the paradigmatic and syntagmatic areas of text creation. The term paradigmatic refers to discourse as substance, or what is said or written. Paradigmatic components are always selected at the expense of other discourses.

The term syntagmatic refers to discourse as a sequentially organized medium. It is through this specific ordering that the text gains power as a discursive mechanism. Particular techniques incorporated in text are entrusted with the task of creating plausibility in a rhetorical quest to legitimate a discourse. Even the seemingly absurd achieves normalcy in this manner. More importantly, however, is the role of the syntagmatic in maintaining a familiarity within discourse, as underwriting currents of power are reinforced and perpetuated.

Observing both the paradigmatic and syntagmatic realms as zones of discourse creation and recreation, an applied methodology must endeavour to account for both, remembering that these spheres are integrated within the production process, with any conceptual division remaining an artificial one. However, particular areas can be targeted within each of these divisions providing a structure to the process of analysis. Accompanying Burton and Carlen's 1979 work *Official Discourse* this guideline is indebted to Parker's (1992) text *Discourse Dynamics* in providing example from which the following model has grown. Other theorists (e.g. Saussure, Barthes, Chomsky, Foucault, Fiske) have made contributions. A conceptual breakdown appears in the following. Evaluative criteria used in this model are provided in the appendix.

PARADIGMATIC

A. THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

To determining authorship, it is necessary to note the formative arrangements between the reader and addresser. These relationships can be better understood as products anchored through the text rather than the author, as the discourse flows out of

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a historically integrated medium. When reviewing the "question of authorship" the researcher must treat a text as the articulation of perspectives that can be traced back to a specific source or "authorship" construct. Specific inquiries can take the form of questions directed at the text. The following questions were used in the course of this analysis.

B. THE QUESTION OF READERSHIP

Again one is not targeting a specific individual or subject here, but a derived persona. Determining the readership is not about exposing the reflexive self that internalizes a discourse but rather constructing subjectivity, one sharply in contrast to the alternate "other" (Burton and Carlen, 1979). All text presupposes a reader. However, what or who that reader should be transpires in the act of signification. For example, how does the text manufacture ideal types, on gender, love, marriage, masculinity? By reflecting on how subjectivity is created symbolically through the text one can possibly better understand the text itself.

C. THE QUESTION OF THE OBJECT

The object of a discourse is, firstly, that which is shaped and legitimated through discursive means. But by its nature the object of a discourse, a signification limited in breadth or perspective, is underwritten, extra-discursively, by the silent "other". The object of any text, even when discursively supported, exists as its own potential contradiction. Thus attempts will be made to legitimate an object exposing for the analyst both the nature of that object and existing contradictions, as evidenced through alternative discourses.

However the object can also be viewed as the articulated "desire" by the authorship to engage a text, politically, in a particular way (Burton and Carlen, 1979). Here the object is both supported discursively and extra-discursively. In official discourse, a report may in appearance advance itself as a resounding indictment of institutional abuse, while its more accurate undisclosed *raison etre* is to quell and disguise a more meaningful critique. The object not only represents the act of deception but the political will to deceive.

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The object of any discourse and thereafter, text, need not be the one specifically and overtly stated in the text itself. Both connotative and denotative mechanism is used in establishing object and one needs to remain cognizant of such difference (e.g. sarcasm, satire and other forms of irony, techniques using binary opposition, tautologies and outright deception).

D. THE QUESTION OF THE OTHER

All dominant discourse confronts a discursively absent other. This "other" remains as the nemesis to the successful legitimation of the object, at the same time making the object possible, for while a discourse avoids, or attempts to excise, the "other", the "other" silently incorporates its cause or desire. A text that is produced to sanitize or mitigate an alleged injustice is silently motivated by its reason to do just that. Such can be the intended fate of the *Royal Commission*, although not stated or understood as such publicly.

Exposure of the "other" can bring on a crisis situation whereby a discourse can lead to its own nullification. The other, while part of the symbolic fabric of the text, retains an extra-discursive presence, incommensurate with the discursive text. Discourses that are contradictory to the object of a text exist at this level of signification and are detrimental to the legitimation process of a text. As meaning is symbolically created so it is recreated.

The "other" in its purest state is simply the conception of an opposing or contradicting signification by which a discourse or text loses logical credibility. The "other" need not stand in opposition to the stated claims of the text but merely reinforces the "object" of that text through its silence. Determining the "other" as an alternative perspective is to expose contradiction, bias, and political will within the legitimation process. For, if the discursive text is promoted as the ideal image, the other is the material reality (Burton and Carlen, 1979).

In the process of determining what in terms of inclusive and exclusive elements signifies meaning in a discursive text it is necessary to review specific factors that directly condition paradigmatic discourse production and reproduction. Discourse

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layering, historical circumstances and the influences of power are three such conditioning elements.

E.   LAYERING OF DISCOURSE

Any discourse or paradigm borrows from other discourses in establishing its position (Parker, 1992). Other existing discourses also contradict dominant discursive modes and expose weaknesses in paradigms. Text is thus both layered and crisscrossed with discourse forms that condition meaning. The act of exposing contradiction within a text is commensurate to revealing such alternative discourse forms. All text should be reviewed and scrutinized in acknowledgment of discourse layering.

F. DISCOURSE AS A HISTORICAL PROCESS

Discourse evolves into and disperses from other discourses, historically expressing a dynamic that can significantly alter meaning in written text over time. It is, therefore, required that both a chosen discourse and the resulting discourse analysis be reviewed in a historical context and seen as a conditioned product of lived processes. Past events and sensibilities are often reviewed through text ahistorically, superimposing values and definitions that are alien to the historical context. But significant contextual variances also occur across spatial dimensions as different historical processes contour socio-cultural realities. Thus, meaning and meaning systems may change markedly between one societal reference and another.

G.   THE ROLE OF POWER

The role of power in discourse production is significant as a conditioning element in that its effects dramatically influence those of the other two. All discourse, discursive or otherwise, brandishes the effects of power as an interactive mechanism. The creation of a discourse, its exclusion or inclusion as a resource and the weight or status that is attached to it, is contingent upon the relative dispensation of power mechanisms within a society. Of particular issue here are disparities in power that can

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lead to, or surface from, hierarchical power structures within that society, but not limited to this understanding.

SYNTAGMATIC

A. TAUTOLOGICAL FALLACIES

A discourse will sometimes restate an issue, objective or problem for the purpose of review or clarification. If this process is carried out without significant equivocation other discourses can result which promote or enhance the ability of that text to convey meaning. However, meaning is often altered or distorted through the process of tautology. If this is the case meaning can be manipulated and an inductive fallacy has been committed. The tautological fallacy is often committed when a research question is reworked into other question forms that vary significantly from the original. The new target questions can then be researched and answered, circumventing the original subject of inquiry.

B. DISCOURSE AS A SYSTEM OF COHERENCY

The notion of coherency here is premised on the idea that (Foucault) discourse forms exhibit a particular logic structure or coherency that promotes the conveyance of meaning. Coherency, however, is underwritten by the dynamics of social organization and is, therefore, specific to particular socio-cultural parameters. Discourse thus structures meaning in repertoires explicit to categorical "world views". This can render a discourse intelligible, providing that an individual possesses the needed "interpretive repertoire" to establish "coherency" (Parker, 1992). Coherency, therefore, is a manufactured product. To achieve coherency a specific readership is required, one that possesses the necessary interpretive repertoire. Coherency for some can then mean incoherency for others, resulting in a discourse of exclusion.

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APPLYING THE METHODOLOGY

The above methodology is designed to disclose meaning in discourse forms. I promote the advantages of this system over a quantitative method, like content analysis. The methodology revealed above examines discourse at the extra-discursive as well as discursive levels. However, unlike other qualitative methodologies the above systems offers a structure unavailable in straight narrative procedures and have proven effective in deconstructing the texts reviewed in this project. The next chapter gives the first evidence of this process, but first I must present the interview data, as collected from participants.

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CHAPTER 5 – INTERVIEW DATA

INTRODUCTION

An interview guide was designed and used for all the participants of this study. There were two separate interview formats administered; one, an interview guide for social studies teachers and two, an interview guide for policy planners. The focus, however, for both guides is similar with the questions altered marginally to accommodate the present status and diverse experiences of the participants. The guide for social studies teachers focuses more directly on the events of the classroom. Each instrument moves progressively through a series of contexts. A participant then is asked about his/her background, questioned as to their understandings and insights on diversity in the classroom, queried on the benefits and needs of a current social studies program in Alberta, before commenting on the potentialities of a new Alberta program based on their reading of the draft document. The interview guides contained twenty questions each with ancillary probes to aid in the interview process. The responses were recorded as specific to each question and its numeric sequence.

For the purpose of arranging and reporting this material, I have adapted seven main interview themes encompassing the focus and direction of the interview process. The first theme focuses upon the perceived need for a culturally diverse curriculum. Here a respondent comments upon diversity in the classroom. Does the respondent

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view the current classrooms as culturally diverse? Does he/she view cultural diversity as an important theme in the process of teaching and learning? What is cultural diversity? How is cultural diversity promoted (should be) in the classroom?

The second theme addresses the perceived successes of the present social studies curriculum in catering to interests (cultural diversity) of Alberta students. Does the existing curriculum, as administered by Alberta Learning, adequately address the cultural backgrounds, beliefs and concerns of the students within the classroom? Does the curriculum contain middleclass, racial or gender biases?

The third theme focuses upon changes that could or should be made to the current social studies program to facilitate a more culturally relevant and fair classroom curriculum. Respondents then may critique the current program in the process of overriding weak course or inappropriate material.

The fourth theme focuses upon the new Alberta draft document. Are there alternative understandings and approaches facilitated in this document? Does this document accommodate cultural diversity in this province? Does it mark a departure from its predecessor (i.e. the current Alberta curriculum program, what changes are being initiated)? Are these changes sufficient? Do these changes affect cultural groups differentially? Are the interests of all minority interests recognized and maintained?

The fifth theme outlines the limitations of the new Alberta social studies program as reviewed and explicated through the program draft document. Has Alberta Learning responded appropriately to the criticisms and shortcomings of the existing program? Is this program workable given the pragmatics of the classroom? Is this program reactionary or have serious attempts been made to conform to the needs of the Alberta student? What is missing in this new program?

The sixth theme addresses the curriculum design process as undertaken by Alberta Learning with the incentive of reviewing and drafting a new social studies curriculum program. Has the power to design and implement curricula been divested amongst specific stakeholders? Does the policy design and implementation process

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accommodate a mechanism of review and redress? Who is being consulted here? Whose input should count?

The seventh theme targets future curricula issues and refinements. Given everything you have read tempered with your experience, what direction are we to take in the future if curricula in this province are to represent the interest, beliefs and backgrounds of the student cohort? Have we done enough in producing a more culturally relevant and fair curriculum? Should we do more?

In the first section of this chapter, respondent comments are recorded and reviewed as narratives organized and divided under the seven themes outlined above. While not all participant responses are published here, a significant body of material has been made available to the reader unaltered from the interview transcripts. The published responses are placed under specific associate headings denoting the chronological progression to which these responses are issued. The motivation is to provide, as sample, a representative cross section of the research material.

This chapter also includes a vertical assessment of the published responses. Data is reviewed for dominant narratives or discourses, that is commonalities of assessment relating to the chosen themes or interrogatives. While respondent background and residual input varies, commonalities, in terms of discourse use and association do occur and are reported here. This chapter endeavours to disclose a critical body of participant response. The attempt is also made to qualify or better understand this information. The vertical analysis, utilizing a discourse analysis model (appendix), then begs the question - "what is being said."

A REVIEW OF PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND THE NEED FOR CULTURALLY DIVERSE CURRICULUM

Is there a need for a curriculum that promotes multicultural perspectives, one that delves into the histories and differences of minority groups, class differences and gender? Are Alberta's classrooms culturally diverse, requiring a greater commitment

on the part of teachers and curriculum planners to provide a current relevant program that recognizes, where possible, the histories, values, beliefs of all students? Yes and No.

The respondents interviewed maintain that cultural difference is a reality in the Alberta learning scene and that we must recognize that difference in schools if our goal is to reflect the interests and background of our students. This is evident in the response data:

> Brad: Quite. Really. Yeah, much more than it was say when I started teaching. You know, St. Albert is not particularly diverse but most certainly Edmonton has changed a lot.

> Karly: Extremely, I teach in a large K-9 school in Hillside, almost 700 children and we have a very ethnically and culturally diverse, even though it's a Catholic school, So, and we have children, our classrooms, every single one of our classroom looks like a little United Nations, we have children from all parts of the world. I'm hard pressed to think of a part of the world that's not represented in our, in our school.

However, demographically, significant variation occurs between region and between schools. Many, evaluate the presence of cultural diversity (or not) by measuring against a homogeneous norm, or the direct cultural composition of their classrooms, rather than a larger mainstream standard. More than one respondent indicates that his/her classes are not culturally diverse despite a cohort overwhelmingly represented by one visible minority group.

> Katherine: No, they're for the most the majority of them are Cree and I think there's maybe one or two who may have a Metis background.

> Helen: Well, because its St. John school, most of my students, well actually all of my students are Aboriginal, either Metis, or Cree or different types of native culture but they're all just native.

For many, diversity was that which is measured against a mainstream white norm. Students were then referenced against this standard rather than each other. This was not always the case however, although those participants who did recognize diversity

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as more than some ritual of othering against a mainstream norm were nevertheless constantly wrestling against the strength of the discourse:

> Greg: But yeah, it was a, it was, even though that the class ethnically was, was not diverse, they were diverse Aboriginally. They were Metis, Inuit, Dene, and all different types of Aboriginal cultures, but outside the Aboriginal cultures, ah, there were literally none except maybe some of the teachers that were not natives.

A student's claim to his/her cultural heritage or identity is supported, but for many this claim must be weighed against a need to identify and engage deeper human similarities between all students. Almost all view cultural diversity as strength rather than a weakness but at the same time a challenge:

> Helen: I think, um, the teaching of culture is absolutely imperative. Um, our world has all kinds of cultural conflict and if we don't develop some kind of way of being with each other culturally, then we continue to increase those chances for conflict. And, I believe very much that we are fearful of other cultures because of differences and there's not enough that we can do to understand differences but also understand those deep human similarities among cultures.

> Beth: I think it's important to look for commonalities in culture. By the same token we can't ignore that there are differences because that's what, you know, causes conflict quite often, or whatever. So, you know, it's a little, I think there needs to be, personally I think there needs to be some balance in that.

Some contradiction occurs in reporting cultural difference. Nationalism, ethnicity, visibility features, all are used as significant indicators of difference. Respondents almost exclusively appear to be weighing these differences against some invisible, exnominated Canadian cultural norm:

> Helen: Ah, when I attended um, the Social Studies conference in Calgary, it was an international conference a few years ago, um, several speakers talked about the importance of cultural education and I couldn't have agreed with them more. I couldn't have agreed with them more

> Greg: (Laughs) Yeah, but it's extremely important, like they um, ah, and they actually understand more about who they are as, as Canadian citizens if they can see all different types of cultures and learn about all different cultures...

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Furthermore, difference when measured against a norm was only acceptable if a standard of normalcy was maintained, *viz.* the perpetuation of some 'Canadian' norm which must be preserved in our schools:

> Katherine: I did it actually last year teaching China, um no actually Greece, sorry. Um, you know that when you teach ancient Greece and the ancient Greeks were um you know a lot of heavy homosexual overtones to the culture, so that is something I didn't even touch on. I thought they're grade six, that's something you learn at university when you have the mental ability to focus it that yet when you're dealing with pictures and they're showing guys hugging in compromising positions, kids are smart, they know.

But not for all respondents:

> Brad: But there is an assumption if you're Canadian, you like hockey and you know and the certain holidays, you know basic holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas and so on, if you want to do Hanukkah or if you're a Wiccan and you like to dance around a fire at the solstice or something, those kind of things are still marginal and they're just kind of not talked about. And you know, so I think ah it's mostly just assumed that you live within these borders, you are a citizen and you behave this way and there's still a little startled reflex or surprised that some others are now starting to speak out that they are different, they see it differently, see themselves differently than, sorry, mainstream Canadians.

With the exception of three respondents, connections between cultural differences, educational opportunity and social class are weak, or non-existent. Thus, material disadvantagement, and the challenges inherent in that disparity, is related primarily through cultural/ethnicized variation. Indigency is brought on or associated to the student's cultural background. A teacher making this assumption is then hard pressed to explain 'success' in another child of a different ethno-cultural background except in a language specific to that ethnicity. "They seem to be doing better." Others view the phenomenon of student difference as primarily individual or idiosyncratic in orientation.

This was not universal, however, and social class did sneak into the discussion with specific respondents:

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Brad: There are communities I think like Brooks and some that are into agricultural food processing, where they brought people in from various places in the world to work for whatever kind of wages they're giving, you know.

Ron: It very typical in the sense that all the people who design the curriculum and the vast majority of teachers all come from a middle-class background and, therefore, have a middle-class student in mind as a mental image.

James: let's look at high school graduation rates and look at this SES effect, social economic status, why the completion rate for grade twelve is a disaster, it's somewhere in the low 40's, low 40 percent range (Aboriginal).

Class, however, continues to lead an invisible existence in the hearts and minds of these educators. One respondent when asked responded with candidness difficult to paraphrase.

Karly: That there's no doubt that that message is there, that through education you can, you know, have a good job and I guess what the goal is middle class. I mean nobody wants to teach a child to be poor.

SUCCESS OF PRESENT CURRICULUM IN CATERING TO DIVERSE INTERESTS

Does the present Alberta social studies curriculum accommodate the diverse interests, beliefs, backgrounds and values of Albertans? Are minority students forced to assimilate, that is adopting a mainstream "readerly position" in able to understand and reproduce curricula narratives?

Participants vary in terms of their interpretation of these questions, as do the political positions of those responses - variances from the passionate to the pragmatic. For example, one individual promotes that a more in depth study of ethnic and cultural groups might be nice but that considerations, in terms of time and resources must take precedence and that in general the curriculum is doing the job for all students:

Karly: ... when you look at the students who do well on those exams and get the awards at school, there are kids from all over the world. You know, they're, I remember when my daughter graduated, the top students were Polish boys and Asian children. So, you can't say that those students are not achieving so therefore

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the curriculum is for everyone. And it seems that, thinking of the top achievers at my school last year in grade nine, were children from Asian background... So obviously the curriculum is, is being absorbed by all cultural groups.

Karly: I think, for example, from a personal, because of being involved in global ed. so much I like to make it, bring it as local as possible, bring in my own examples of, you know, people that I know and experiences that I've had. I do that but I don't find that I really need to criticize the curriculum in those areas.

The claim is that students are achieving from a number of ethno-cultural groups, even as other groups are not. If this is the case, can you accurately indict curricular message and form? It is unknown as to whether those students feel comfortable with the curriculum or simply have been able to adapt to its demand.

Other responses, however, are more ambivalent. This group indicates that there is substance here, although the curriculum may be lacking in a number of areas:

Sharon: The one that we were currently using – um I think there was an attempt there to try to give information in terms of knowledge to who we are as native people. Ah, ah, I think also to that what was lacking in there is um and I think what's still in here is the contributions that native people have made.

Helen: Um, I've been happy with the multiculturalism, bilingualism and culture units in grade seven and they're not in the new curriculum.

A third group of participants express that the ideas and concepts affecting ethno-cultural group histories and identity associations are not dealt with honestly. Curriculum is given the "brush over," that is briefly reviewed in a limited context and then left isolated as aberrations or "other" when the program marches on:

Greg: Cultural terms, um, well, instead of representing a very diverse country and looking at different cultures, they brushed over a lot of different cultures. They've literally just brushed over very, very briefly

Brad: Not currently, no. No, there is very little ability to talk about where people have come from, some of the struggles with language, you know. Why do your grandparents speak Ukrainian and you don't, you know, or Polish or whatever. Pick any language, kids tend to lose that, you know they, there's that pressure to

conform. Um, and I think that whole process of change hasn't been talked about, I don't think very much at all.

Arguably, if curriculum does not effectively address the lives of all Canadians, that is if group histories are left out or Canadian society misrepresented, that curriculum is inadequate. The participants, however, and perhaps as expected, are not in total agreement as to who is left out of the program, if anyone. It must be reinforced that again there was no consensus here, although some would like to see a greater Aboriginal presence in the present social studies curriculum:

> Sharon: ... that there's a meaning behind a lot of this work that native people do, that's definitely not in the curriculum. Ah, and I think that if there was a bit more in terms of what have native people brought to this country, to this society and I think if that can be more expressed, especially with elementary students, I think that they would be able to connect a little bit more and say and maybe go from there and find out little bit more about native people.

> Beth: Yeah so I mean if you have students of African descent in your, I mean, I think they'd feel fairly marginalized by this in the curriculum.

> Greg: Like the main culture would be more European or British typified, the main culture, but you literally learn very little about the Francophone or the Aboriginals or the Japanese or the Ukrainians, especially here in Alberta, the Ukrainians ...

The question of neutrality was also posed, that is, do respondents perceive the curriculum as neutral in terms of discursive positions and biases? Again responses vary however, many identify ethnicity as a problem here, that is some ethno-cultural groups are underrepresented or cast in a less than complimentary light. Aboriginal groups again have been identified as underrepresented or prejudiced:

> Helen: Yeah, definitely. Where you see, I know we live, live in the multicultural society where you have everybody and they're always, you see videos and you see books of you know Chinese people, African people, whatever, whatever. But, it's very rare that you'll see that native people in a video or in a book.

> Brad: I think so. I think in an awful lot of classes, individuals tend to overlook ethnicity.

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However, one respondent views the identification and representation process as fair and representative. For this person significant improvements have been made to the Alberta curricular project for social studies, and this should be acknowledged:

> Karly: Oh, I just sort of remember one of the resources that I used in the last couple of years and I think guess it was in social studies and it was, did try to, in fact, one of the children in my, it was in the grade two curriculum, and they had a girl from southern Saskatchewan, and Italian boy from Toronto, and it was an attempt to include all of the people who might come to Canada. I'm not specifically mention Filipino family but certainly the idea was created that all people are welcome in Canada and all people have different possibilities, they come from different backgrounds but they all have possibilities to succeed, of course, this is at the grade two level but the resources were very good in that area, very inclusive. Um, and very well presented, very interesting for the children. I can't remember the name of the book, it's one of the texts that's used in grade two.

With gender, the story is somewhat different, as the majority of the respondents do not identify gender as either a defining nor particularly troublesome subject when it comes to representation. For these respondent gender representation has a tendency to be associated with straight inclusion of women – pictures, achievements – rather than contextual issues of gender typification and stereotyping:

> Karly: but I don't think that gender, I think that the curriculum is there for both, obviously both genders and it's not, I don't see it as an underlying issue. I think curriculum is, is ah neutral in that way.

> Helen: Um, there's certainly pictures of both female and male so I haven't detected any bias that way, no.

Curriculum crowding is a concern that does garner significant attention by respondents, regardless of their position on issues of diversity in curriculum and instruction. Almost all participants stated a greater need for openings in the curriculum to allow one to perform his/her job:

> Helen: Um, well again you know all I can speak for is seven and eight, grade six. Um, I mean I certainly think more time, um, well because the curriculum is quite crowded in grade eight, it restricts the amount of time in dealing with the

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Aboriginal issue. You know I want time to have… the Aboriginal speaker into the class; I want the time to go to Powwow or sweat lodge or something like that.

Helen: There, there's been so much in it, that there's, what happens to the two or three periods where you can just teach the whole skill of asking questions, of posing questions. Um, or what happens to the you know, the three, four, five lessons where you talk about Iraq and um, the states and the rest of the world, somehow in relation to that curriculum. You know, we've been asked to integrate current affairs in, and teach this, that and the other thing, but, there is so much in there. I, um, there needs to be less so that we can relax a little and just chew on these issues, otherwise you're turning out students who just, you know, are working at the lowest level of rose taxonomy. They can recall information but are they, yeah, can they do the critical analysis.

Some promote that the dictates of the provincial exams, and other standardized components of assessment, exacerbate already stretched timelines. Again this mandates a form of institutional compliance, as the interests and values of "others" are left on the cutting room floor. Some participants admitted to teaching to the exam, others expressed reservations over exam structures:

Karly: So what you select is, you select what you know is gonna be on the achievement exam. I mean obviously.

Helen: And that's what you find um when you do your exam, like provincial achievement exams or whatever, they're very culturally biased in the sense that these kids don't know what um, there's this, what was it, I, certain words for a sense or something like that, and they just, they don't understand what that is because they've never seen it before.

Given the challenge of curricular coverage tempered with the desire to increase area coverage respondents are at a loss to explain the benefits of adding information to an already crowded program. One respondent questions the practice as "tokenism," given little understanding (diversity interests) is produced in terms of human representation. Others agree, claiming that curricula representation is fractious and incomplete at best, as indigenous groups are postured and isolated in historic discourses. The "objectification of culture," then offers difficulty, as individuals are reduced to essentializing stereotypes, beliefs and practices. One respondent was particularly articulate in presenting the challenges here:

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James: ... well let's study as many cultures as we can fit into a year and this kind of round the world tour. This is not going to get us to where we want to go in the program and there is real danger and I think that has to do with our, our lack of understanding, appreciation for the tremendous demographic shifts that have happened in this country and this province in the last ten years.

James: let's look at high school graduation rates and look at this SES effect, social economic status, why the completion rate for grade twelve is a disaster, it's somewhere in the low 40's, low 40 percent range (Aboriginal), so that if you are going to make the claim that you are concerned as a society about those issues, don't try to do through social studies curriculum because that'll become the worst form of crass tokenism and that's where I think a lot of the suspicion comes from.

Some criticize the curriculum for its lack of initiative or innovation in encouraging teachers to examine cultural groups (multifarious lifestyles, beliefs and practices) in authentic contexts. The need for a more balanced representation of Aboriginal peoples is also seen as a problem, or the need to defy "the Dances With Wolves" archetype in favour of a more "realistic" illustration. The need for Aboriginal role models is noted:

Helen: I think they don't really address certain things like Aboriginal role models, I don't think. That's a biggie. Cause you always say or you go to different schools and they talk about the history of Aboriginal people where they're on the horses, with the bow and arrows, that's the first thing the kids always have in their heads. But I think they need to delve further into the now where there's actually dentists, there's lawyers out there. I think they need to do more of the now because everyone's image of a native people is they live in a teepee and all that kind of stuff. But they don't, most of them don't.

Interestingly, while advocating on behalf of Aboriginal right and representation, a few respondents neglect to develop and expand this critique to include other cultural groups. One individual expresses concern over the attention given other cultural groups – sometimes at the expense of Aboriginal interests. This is perhaps only presented as an aside but proves an interesting development of the study.

Most respondents scrutinize culture as an objective thing that is either included in significant proportion or missing. Curriculum and textbooks are viewed as communicative forms by which these messages are included or ignored. Culture then is essentialized or granted a static status. Little effort is taken to draft expressed

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concerns into a more sophisticated and critical matrix, one incorporating student "lifeworlds" (e.g. social class and gender).

There is one exception here:

James: Without really investigating the relations of power and privilege and status that would play out in the home, in families and how, how for women the whole idea of what it means to be a labourer in a society never really got on the table so that when one talks about something as mundane as childcare policy, a country like Sweden as compared to Canada, what could have really been a rich discussion in the curriculum, in my experience, teaching social studies 30 for two decades, very few if any teachers, really spent the kind of time looking at that whole investigation of how does, how do the choices one makes about their shopping cart, thisism versus thatism play out in different consequences for women versus men. Of course, it would be lunacy to attempt that because it's, it's getting close to Thanksgiving and we have to move on because we have to get on to looking at the rise of Nazi Germany by Thanksgiving, so again, there is huge, there continues to be huge erasure of gender politics in curriculum and it only, it reflects the dynamic that's out there in the larger society.

For this person there exists an expressed need to view culture as interpenetrated and fluid, the message, we must live and engage culture at local levels if authenticity is a goal:

James: ... The culture's a fluidity, it's a process and you know, the academic literature, the spoken language, critique of cultural appropriation project and study is well known but I'm not convinced that we have the right language yet, to begin a discussion with teachers and administrators and parents in communities, in school communities around this thing we call diversity.

Similarly, traditional forms of curriculum design and implementation are accepted as both commonplace and normal. Critical representation then is associated with review and reconfiguration rather than other dynamics of curricula engagement. Thus, the cultural process is reduced to learning on historicized groups, nationality or ethnicized events, circumventing remediation, or the critical act of cultural study and multicultural innovation. All but one of the respondents identifies curriculum

primarily with product, neglecting procedural contingencies.[1] This compartmentalization or partitioning of cultural interests sustains a form of competition amongst respondents, as individuals often promote the needs and interests of one group over another.

As noted respondents identify the role of the teacher as intermediary, recognizing that teachers are frequently required to incorporate other resources and materials into school programs in providing a more balanced and less biased curriculum. The subsidization of the curriculum then is seen as a challenge. Unfortunately, for many, the method by which the teacher is to do this is somewhat limiting, as innovation is exchanged for conventional banking formats.[2] Ostensibly, all of the respondents felt there was significant room for improvement in Alberta Learning's present social studies program.

CURRICULUM CHANGES NECESSARY (IN THE INTEREST OF MULTICULTURALISM WHAT CHANGES NEED BE MADE)

What changes are required to produce a more inclusive and relevant curricula program? Is this in fact possible? Can curriculum alone produce cultural knowledge, or is something else required? Acting on the above comments begs the question – "what now"?

In many ways the criticisms levelled in the last section infer or overtly indicate the needed measures of redress. However, there are suggestions made by respondents, in the effort to produce a more responsive curriculum that bear special attention. For the one respondent little in way of redress is advocated. For this person the current program is inclusive, in terms of the resident knowledge and activities provided. The message is of a curricula system that has arrived:

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[1] This exception indicates the need to discover culture, promoting that curriculum must allow the learner to employ culture at local levels (classroom) utilizing the student as resource.

[2] By *the banking concept*, I refer to an approach to education in which the teachers chooses content and the student tries to absorb it.

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Karly: I guess I could give you an example that might help out there. We used to have a consultant for our district who was in charge of multiculturalism. She just wasn't needed and the job disappeared. That's a good thing.

Karly: Oh, some of the, some of the resources that they've approved in the past are, were terrible, filled with stereotypical images of, for example, first nations people. Now the resources that we have now in that area are really good. Really good.

For others, changes need to be implemented. Change advocated primarily as affected through curriculum enrichment (i.e. the introduction of curricular materials which explore alternative cultures, and to some extent class experiences and histories). Participant focus upon ethnicity and race continues as respondent struggle to evaluate the larger merits of the program draft (as indicated in the last section gender and class garners little attention). For Aboriginal groups then this may involve the telling of histories, or for some, the introduction of positive role models.

Hanna: You know that kind of stuff. I think they really need to a lot more of the role modeling stuff. A lot more, a lot more of the present of that they actually live in this house and they do exactly everything that everybody else does. Um, cause I'm sure if you take a you know, a mainstream school that has you know a regular school or whatever they taught and take and see Aboriginal people actually in the hospitals and the stuff, they'd be surprised. So we don't have that image and I think they need to um, have a better, teach a better image of the Aboriginal person.

Helen: Unless you have some, so, in terms of the Aboriginal perspective, it needs, it needs to be brought more into what's happening currently and not just, okay, well let's talk about what happened back then.

Hanna: Yeah. Like I had mentioned before I think Aboriginal role models need to be in the curriculum.

Two participants promoting curricula enrichment require the integration of working class histories thereby providing students with the needed perspective to realize, respect, and perhaps work towards meaningful change. Thus critical class-consciousness is not totally absent from the discourse:

Brad: I think there is, personally there is more labour in the country than labour understands. I think a lot of people see themselves as middleclass when, when

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middleclass is still labour and I think they identify with powerful people, finance or industry as somewhere they want to be or might be just given enough time or we're gonna leave them without controls because I want to get there someday as opposed to "we are labour, we need to" you know exercise our collective rights and look after ourselves in terms of safety and working conditions and hours and certainly I want some privacy and a whole bunch of other issues. It's like, we don't want to talk about that because – we're gonna be just like them someday, you know. And so I think that aspect of socio-economic hasn't been talked about – people that labour are labour. And I don't think that's talked about at all in Alberta – the labour history is just not there. It is a little bit, I think it's mentioned once or twice in the new document. The Winnipeg General Strike, that kind of stuff just doesn't, isn't part of what people understand in terms of who's poor and who's not, you know, what, what, what are poverty levels and so on I, that might come up in terms of discussing globalization and winners and losers in terms of economic but I don't know if it, I mean kids can't work if they're hungry, if they're cold, if they're frightened, you know so those issues need to be dealt with by schools maybe more than curriculum.

James: The history of labour in Alberta, political struggle in Alberta is one small example and, and bringing together those resources and giving teachers, educators a chance to make the decisions about whose reading of these outcomes is worth bringing into the classroom.

For most, the quest for constructive change must firstly acknowledge the logistical and theoretical difficulties in promoting culture as a kind of stuff. This is difficult for some respondents who connect cultural diversity with curriculum diversification:

Karly: Well, I think that what we were discussing before about certain parts of the world, poorer parts of the world are totally left out the curriculum and they changed that, so we don't have a lot of students from Africa at our school, but we certainly have a lot of students from the Indian sub-continent and um I think it's, I think it's a disservice to the students not to include those parts of the world and all parts of the world should be mentioned. I'm not sure how valid it is for the kids to be, you know, memorizing, I know when my daughter was in junior high, she had to memorize all fifty-one states of the United States but she didn't know one single country in Africa. So, I don't think, I don't consider that good education.

However, an inclusive environment can equate to more than increasing the scope of the content. The recognition that something more is needed is not lost on two

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respondents, recognizing the challenges inherent in crowding, and attempting to produce relevant curricula:

> Brad: As opposed to trying, to if you equip a calendar with everybody's special days on it, we're gonna have Black Heritage Day and Jewish Festivals, Christian Festivals, um, whatever, you know, you fill the calendar with special days for everybody and I think that that might get cumbersome because you might not have any people from a certain group that you're busy celebrating the day for, you know, if it's kind of standardized, like I don't know if Jewish holidays or Black Awareness is something that I might have to deal with in Fairview or Manning or wherever, and some of those things might not work and yet if a person went there with a certain background, they should be able to express and be aware of what they are and be able to express it and be accepted. Like to be able to tell a principal this day what is important for us. Can you mention it on the intercom, or whatever those things might be, we're gonna bring this kind of food when we come to a Halloween party or Christmas parties and that why. And I don't even know if it necessarily needs to be specifically mentioned in the curriculum as much as the space for people to bring in what they are and celebrate it safely and be accepted.

> James: I'm absolutely convinced that the greatest resource for curriculum development right now, that we could miss, is giving teachers the space and the flexibility within the curriculum to draw on the resource in the community itself and develop kind of a case study approach to this thing called diversity.

> James: I think there's an attempt but it's part of, I think the limitations, it's part of this broader systemic problem that there is really no curricular vision in the province that looks at the K-12 system, at the level of the school. Almost at the level of what one would do with the curriculum blue print, at a staff level where you'd say, okay what is it that we can do in our high school, for example around this whole question of diversity, acknowledging difference and celebrating the fact that we are a rich community, school community, that teachers who are involved with (inaudible) in social studies could work together and make sense of the curriculum so that duplication and the culling out which is a huge complaint of teachers, that there just isn't enough time.

The need to diversify and strengthen a multicultural content leads the discussion. How we are going to go about this is uncertain given the difficulties in already covering the current material.

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THE DRAFT DOCUMENT AND ALTERNATIVE UNDERSTANDINGS AND APPROACHES IN ACCOMMODATING DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Does this document mark a departure from existing curriculum? No, not necessarily, claim some respondents. This document is not significantly different than its predecessor. For the remainder of the pool there are differences. Are the changes implemented positive and feasible? The reaction is mixed here.

For some the changes are substantive, well thought through, and appropriate:

Hanna: They're doing a pretty good job of changing it, so it's not bad, it looks pretty good.

Greg: about the whole, the new one is tremendous.

Beth: I think that the new curriculum is very positive for Native education...

Gary: the overall the framework, the whole idea of having a good foundation of, of diversity including the diversity and importance of both genders, ah is basically mentioned from kindergarten all the way up to grade nine and that's, that's a, an incredible start compared to what we had before where we really didn't, the gender issue really didn't address that much, the and a lot of the individuals that were within the textbooks were mainly male, whereas, the new books, it's gonna be very interesting, the new authors or these authors that will write up this, write up this program of studies, it'll be very interesting because we'll have a diverse look at society and how important women are within society.

The reaction for others is mixed, indicating that there are positives to the document but any promoted optimism must be tempered with some reservation. The document text represents serious attempts to improve the program – that is to provide more inclusive formats and content sources – although it falls somewhat short in some areas.

Hanna: I think it's doing a pretty good job. I was flipping through some of it and um, they really emphasizing the other cultures, um, I think they're doing, it seems if it goes through, it looks like it's a pretty good thing, except there's like I said, it's still missing certain things I would put in about the and more of the role model.

Beth: There's not reference, of course, to gender orientation anywhere in the curriculum. That'd be a complete omission, total and even though our legislation includes it now and our Teaching Profession Act includes it and, and there's

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lawsuits about it, it is still not in the new curriculum at all. I'm dealing with Alberta Learning on that issue through my other job, through my job right now, so that's a group that's, and you know even in the definition of families, they gave some stuff on families at the beginning.

Karly: Well I know, for example, in conversations with V. and she was participating, that they felt initially that it's pretty good document, except that they've left out Africa, India, you know, all the, sort of poorer, well all the countries of the South basically and um, so they're, global ed. group was really ticked off about that and that was the major focus of their complaint and their criticism of the document was that it didn't include those areas of the globe.

Not all criticism were related directly to the document's cultural compass:

Katherine: I think so. Just looking through what it's wanting to do now, gradewise, it's, like it's taking kids who are struggling with a concept at a certain grade now and moving it down a grade so that we're expecting more from our students and I think to a degree, we're still setting them up for a bit of failure.

Ron: I think it starts off in the preamble of the new curriculum sounding as though there's going to be as much weight being given to political and economic aspects, maybe sociological as to historical and geographic and yet I don't see that in a lot of the actual grade level stuff.

Karly: Um, I guess I find it a bit ambitious in some areas. For example, um they use like enable students to thrive in their evolving cultural and Canadian identity, I mean how are you going to assess that. Um, demonstrated sense of social compassion, um, I mean these are all really good notions but um, how are you going to assess that.

Others found little improvement in the text questioning the authenticity of the attempt to create a more inclusive document despite any promises or pretences as provided by program designers in the document front.

Katherine: I say it doesn't do the same level of service as the old document.

For one respondent there may be sufficient evidence that we as a province have actually lost ground, and perhaps misinterpreted its role:

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> James: Well, none at all. There are attempts to refrain some of the assumptions that we have about the world, for example. The endless gesture to globalization, but ah I'm not convinced that the program before as planned didn't have those elements. I would challenge anyone to go back to the old... 1973 program. I remember it had an orange cover. 1971, sorry and it had ten issues for grade ten, ten issues for grade eleven, ten issues for grade twelve. Do you recall that, it's quite a remarkable document and those issues that were, teachers were, I mean we look at it now and we almost laugh out of some bizarre nostalgia...how could they have done this, teachers were just invited to choose out of ten issues, three or four to engage their students.

For this respondent the problem is seemingly paradoxical (dependency of teacher on program for curricular support) as curricular diversity can only be serviced through providing greater teacher autonomy, in asking educators to create and adapt knowledge sources to specific contexts. The revised program makes little pretence to this effect as it rigidifies and further standardizes knowledge regimes, despite paying greater lip service to the area of culture, and culture diversity.

> James: For example, grade ten - to what degree you should equality be a priority in government, (inaudible phrase). Now we look at it and it's almost bizarre, there were no resources (inaudible phrase). Teachers were given support through central offices in their school jurisdictions, on and on. And where it worked it was marvellous, and where it didn't... it was just unfair to expect teachers to develop their own materials. But I'm tending to answer your question by saying that the sensibility, the critical sensibility and willingness to engage issues of the day was certainly there back in the 1971 document and certainly there in the 1983-84... yet again, rearticulated if I can use that word. Once, one gets past the slight nuances and wordships, I'd be hard pressed to say yeah, there's something different here.

A heightened focus upon *citizenship,* as a unifying theme for social studies curricula, generates significant discussion here, firstly, (a) whether, or not, the text successfully incorporates themes of citizenship in promoting a new Canadianism, and (b) whether this focus is inclusive of all Canadians. However, most agree that there is a reinforced emphasis here on the citizen as a subject of Canada:

> Ron: There's obviously the feeling that Canadian nationalism wasn't dealt with adequately, apparently, so the people producing the new one want to, now the pendulums now swinging

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Beth: So, and I think that I mean from the last document, I wished I'd saved it about two years ago one, to see what they've changed, there's way more Canadian in this one than there was two years ago, I think.

Greg: but with this curriculum, I take a look at the curriculum and, and its very similar to the WCP but it's like a pyramid where you have a strong foundation of what Canada is and if you have that strong foundation, you have less ethnocentric attitudes, less racism, more understanding of other cultures, more understanding of the history of who we are.

However, some respondents do not view the strong emphasis on Canadian citizenship as an entirely positive move. There are a number of reasons given, not the least of which, as reviewed below, the exhibited tendency to essentialize and delimit citizenship. Canadian then assumes an identity typification with all other forms of citizenship representation viewed as unCanadian:

Beth: What it is to me that, one of the things in looking at this new curriculum, I haven't really looked at in a huge detail was my worry about the emphasis on nationalism as it, as it sort of equates to patriotism, um I sort of see that running through it a little bit.

Others expressed concern that the categories as borrowed from the WCP and developed by Alberta Learning, are unrealistic in terms of Canadian demographic, and ontological realities. Do these groups, as facilitated through this document, actually exist in representative numbers to justify an entire curriculum change? This position is countered by other concerns, for example, that non-Francophone or non-First Nations minority peoples are forgotten – blended in with a larger mainstream standard.

As indicated, then, reactions are mixed. One respondent displays an apprehension regarding the lack of things global in the document:

Helen. Um, so I would say with the new curriculum there's more of an emphasis on Canada as from before and I'm all for kids knowing about their own country that I'm wondering about the connections with the rest of the world which are becoming increasingly ah important because of our interdependence.

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For some, this citizenship archetype assumes specific ethno-cultural identity formulations. Here citizenship, or belonging is defined and validated through a "founding fathers" discourse, one that emphasizes the contributions of significant groups (i.e. Aboriginal, British, French). I have argued elsewhere that such oligopic definitions and refinements of Canadian citizenship, while playing into the lobbies of these contributory groups, may be antithetical to the larger spirit of multiculturalism. Some identify this as a concern, others, if apprehensive over the possible contradiction here, never articulate this concern:

> Brent: So I think Social has done that differently, I think focusing on the rights of (inaudible) founding nations is quite a radical departure highlighting Aboriginal, Francophone and Other as a sort of organizational conceptual tool. I think that's really different, that's probably what's causing most of the consternation out there. People that you never thought of before all of a sudden have a very special place and that's shaking some folks, you know. It should you know and I think that, just by the discussions that are being brought up, I think that's different. Sort of putting identity and citizenship and practical citizenship as central I think is different. They want people to do something about their citizenship, not just learn, you know the boxes of government and how power flows, do the diagram thing but what does it mean to be an active citizen, what do you have to do to be worthy of that or take advantage of it or whatever. So I think those things, I think it's moving from sort of a passive study to more active, certainly highlighting those three groups I know interaction (inaudible).

A number of educators working in Aboriginal education applaud the heightened interest in things Aboriginal, some moving as far as to identify multiculturalism as the potential problem in usurping Aboriginal interests. One participant indicates that the document must move further in establishing Aboriginal people as distinct groups in demand of distinct recognition and outcomes. In fairness, however, the primary motivation for this group appears to be oriented around towards a creation of a fairer system overall for Aboriginals peoples.

> Helen: Well, I'm all for the Aboriginal perspective, I think, um, we have to have an Aboriginal perspective; I think we have to have a Francophone perspective. Um, I think we have to have perspectives from the other culture, that's what makes it so challenging, but that's the reality.

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Gary: But it is, it definitely is a juggling part for the curriculum designers and for authors, especially for authors because they have to figure out what exactly do they want for this program of studies and by looking at this new program of studies, it's, it's tremendous for, for the amount of Francophone and Aboriginal content, almost in every grade and there's a good foundation from kindergarten all the way up to grade six and then there's a lot of inclusion of Aboriginal, Francophone within the, within grade seven and nine.

Sharon: Um, I think (long pause), I guess so, you know um and what I did was basically just look at um any of the Aboriginal portions in there and um I think overall, I still think that it's very limited in what natives have contributed to society. Um, and any of the you know basic things, you know, like shelter, government practices.

For majority of participants the involvement of a strong Canadian identity proves a positive move. Most of this group applauded the increased emphasis on global ties and the "fact" that the document is now more "multicultural." The tenor of the document is one exercising a new language of inclusion.

LIMITATIONS OF THE DOCUMENT

Not dissimilar to the previous curricular program respondents generated criticisms as they attempted to reconcile the philosophical and procedural tenets of the program with the classroom realities (as they perceive them). Are there problems with this program? Are many of the original criticisms, as targeted at the WCP Foundations Document, of continuing relevance here? Does the focus hinge upon a practice of over-correction, that is, are we creating and promoting group and identity distinctions that are reductive, reducing diverse and dynamic groups into stereotype - into objects? Does this document promote a rich and sophisticated understanding of humanity, of diversity and diverse interests?

Participants continue to assess the realistic needs and requirements of a social studies program, many associating diverse interests and needs with the act of textual inclusion – histories, role models, and accomplishments. One respondent asks, "can the curriculum be all things to all people?" Others agree that perhaps the document is

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trying to do too (including too many groups, and group interests) much, and by doing this losing sight of some larger imperative:

> Gary: And that's one of the main problems with the WCP is that the flexibility wasn't there, people were fighting, no, no there's a French community, we should add more French input, it's the ah English or English accent or Aboriginal or other cultures.

> James: No. It's very clear that, and I'll go out on a limb here, I think part of the reason is the Western Canada Protocol created a discourse community early on in the whole redesign and the ghosts of that are still present and that's okay, you know, I'm not dumping on the Protocol but I'm just saying it had an impact on the ways that difference was constructed and this whole question of created, created a sense of well there is otherness out there and we call it by these names.

The strong focus upon Aboriginal and Francophone groups as introduced in the WCP project continues to generate controversy for this group of respondents concerning the present Program. Is this a realistically achievable demand? Are we prompting a discourse of resentment and reaction amongst stakeholders who believe that innovation comes at the expense of content? By including and emphasizing these chosen groups, others are seemingly abandoned. Moreover inclusion of these selected groups begs the question – should we be identifying and writing towards individual groups at all?

> Karly: The groups I'd represent as well in these documents are the special needs kids. Um, and I have a special needs child myself and the curriculum never deals with those kids. You know hearing impaired, we all have hearing impaired kids now pretty much in school and a lot of special needs kids including the ESL kids and those are the special interest groups that concern me.

> Beth: My worry with the way that they've got Francophone and Aboriginal right now, is that... the reaction is going to be the opposite because it's seen as pushing this agenda and that's how teachers... think I mean everybody has a thought on that and that's what I'm sensing people's reaction is, is somebody agenda's being pushed here.

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James: There, some people will claim... gosh we're sorry about all these things in the past so let's, let's add those histories and those stories into the matrix and we know from past disasters curriculum design that that approach does not work.

But even accepting that the inclusive process as endeavoured upon by Alberta Learning in this document is one which should promote the overt identification and referencing of ethno-cultural groups – what then? Non-Francophone/Aboriginal "minority" groups, for some, are simply ignored, apparently subsumed under either the mainstream category of 'Canadian' or a category referenced by the document as 'other.' Furthermore, the beliefs and values of these individuals are not represented by mainstream interests. We have merely abandoned the stories and contributions of these important Canadians. In doing this, and by promoting the interests of specific ethno-cultural groups in what has been labelled by some as a "founding fathers" approach (French, English, Aboriginal) we delimit and ignore the richness of Canadian history, citizenship, and identity.

Beth: What's so dominant in this new curriculum is the identification of Aboriginal and Francophone, so blatantly um through the entire curriculum as being groups that really require very, you know, careful examination of their histories and their contribution... I'm not sure what I think, and that everybody else is other.

Helen: Well, because multiculturalism is, appears to be missing, um, certainly the definition or identity of Canadian that I've worked with in recent years is one who has a multicultural perspective. Not that all Canadians value multiculturalism, but we are in a multicultural country where multiculturalism has been an official policy and we we're quite unique in the world that way.

For some, while perhaps supporting, at least partially, the "partnership" approach (Aboriginal, Francophone, Mainstream), greater inclusion can lead to a larger confusion of what public education is...

James: I'm one of those individuals, there's commitment to this thing called public education, public education system, a funded public education system, there's one that has a curriculum and focuses on this thing called citizenship or democracy and

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it's problematic. Can you imagine what that would look like if one has distinctive outcomes for citizenship, for different groups?

Helen: Um, and it's important to represent all points of view but you have to be really careful about not burning students out with that point of view because they do rebel. They don't want to learn about the natives any more, some of them, we've already learned that, we've learned that.

But what of the apparent conflict at times between a need to promote Canadian citizenship, and at the same time promote our (Canada's) responsibilities abroad. When examining issues of diversity, cooperation, and oppression as played out on a global scale, participants generated responses from diverse points of view. For some, as we Canadianize the curriculum we serve to compartmentalize and efface connections and issues that are global in dimension:

Karly: I guess the major criticism was that they talk about making our children global citizens, but how, how can we do that when you've left out a huge chunk of the world in their studies.

Katherine: So, here you're in this multi-cultural centre but yet you weren't really learning about the different cultures so I think, I don't know, just looking at this document and just seeing how rich Alberta's history is and Canada's history is as a whole, we should be focusing on that at the elementary level and plus I think it's a good solid foundation for when we do move to issues and globalization.

Helen: Where's Africa in all of this, where is Latin America, South America, where's as a friend mentioned to me recently, where's the Middle East in all of this.

However, the need for increased detail/focus on international matters is not held by all.

Katherine: But, I also, one of the biggest gripes I have um, at the elementary level is we don't deal enough with Canadian history. I think it's great, that yes, um, the document is trying to move to a global perspective but I don't think that our students should wait to grade ten before we deal with that.

There is a concern, with this Framework that while this document promotes the message of inclusion, the product of inclusion, in terms of providing demonstrable processes and connections, are more ambiguous. What are the actual grade level applications here? What are the expectations and outcomes of these processes? For

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example, respondent's claims that the emphasis on global connections is not followed through in terms of the actualization and formulation of curriculum and curriculum outcomes:

> Beth: Well, I was looking at the GC, you know in the curriculum they've identified the themes, the strands that run through and I was just you know, trying to look at how many times global connections are actually identified with one of the outcomes here, very, some grades they don't even have it in there once, you know, well, we study Alberta in grade five or four or whatever it is, and it's not once. So the global connections are really thin in the new curriculum. They were thinnish in the old curriculum...

> Beth: Well, I think there could be more, way more global perspective, not necessarily as measured against Canada's or in Canadian context or how we perceive, there's always, we're always been encouraged to look at everything through our own lenses rather than step out of our own lens, and that worries me so I would rather see a course being a lot more global issues dealt with. You know in the area of peace edu..., peace or and human rights and um, environment. They're not doing anything much on environment to, in the curriculum, cause they say biology does that. And we're not going to overlap Social studies with anything, other subjects. Not only are we not going to overlap, in social studies we're not overlapping to other, which to me is, like I think we should be looking for ways to integrate (inaudible) subjects, not separate

And not just global connections but the capability of the program to make connections across and through curricular disciplines in promoting a more realistic and integrated understanding of diversity and change. No more is this sensibility more evident than in the area of Aboriginal self-definition:

> Sharon: Um, this part here where I found um again using Aboriginal culture as in the present in Canada, it states that "appreciate them as an integral part of Canada identity," them being you know Aboriginal people and with the um Francophone presence in Canada, it states "an appreciation of how their presence and influence contribute, contribute to Canada's foundation and identity. But what you know, but what I don't know what it is that we're supposed to appreciate them about.

> Sharon: You know in terms of how their presence and influence contributed to Canada's foundation and identity, you know. So that tells me that as a native person that um, are we still being viewed as in the history of the past and whatever that might be.

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Further questions regarding implementation point to the already overtaxed resources of the teacher. Can teachers realistically be expected to develop and implement sophisticated models of cultural inclusion for the classroom? Who will provide the professional development necessary? This is a significant concern, not dissimilar to 'curricular crowding' by almost all of the respondents interviewed, as change usually represents greater or at least differing responsibilities and labours:

> Karly: Very ambitious and, um, some of it unrealistic. Foster creativity and encourage students to play an active role in (inaudible) and Francophone culture, values and (inaudible). Totally unrealistic in Edmonton to, to do that.

> Hanna: In the beginning it does really nicely, but I don't how many teachers actually will read that part. I think a lot of, I know my staff would go straight into the what it is they have to teach.

> Karly: First of all, I don't think most social studies teachers will read the document. Um, I think that they're in a practical sense, are so tied up with these provincial achievement exams that they look at what has to be known, will practice the old exams, they're still very knowledge based even though, you know, there are now essay questions on some of the exams where they just used to be multiple choice.

> Katherine: ... but how many teachers in Alberta who don't have a perspective of Aboriginal culture will actually focus on that? They'll be more comfortable with the French Canadians than they will the Native Canadians, and I think a lot of teachers keep away from that, it's because first of all they don't have what they feel is a background in teaching about the Aboriginal community, and second of all, I think there are quite a few who just don't care.

WHO SHOULD HAVE INPUT TO THESE CHANGES (WHAT SHOULD THE CONSULTATION PROCESS LOOK LIKE IN CURRICULUM DESIGN)

Curricula review, research and design are a long and expensive process incorporating policy decisions that dictate educational learning regimes in excess of a decade. New curricular programs are thus rare and mark a significant opportunity for stakeholders to affect future direction in education. The new Alberta Learning social studies program is no exception. Who should be consulted in researching and

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designing this program? Was the process of design and review fairly administered and executed?

Firstly, not all respondents responded to this poll on the consultation process. Inexperience and the lack of the relevant information/background in making an informed judgment was the primary reason given for abstaining. For those teachers/educators that have expertise and experience in this area responses vary from a general comment upon the consultation process to the identification of specific problems and/or issues which serve to belabour the procedure. Some respondents indicate that the process has been effectively handled given the limited resources - in terms of time, administrative support, and money - available for such a project. The process then was handled fairly and involved the input of important stakeholders:

> Karly: But felt that the consultation process, and that's what you're asking about, I felt that the consultation process was reasonably inclusive.

> Brad: I think, well the process certainly is different. For one thing there's been a lot more consultation with Social Studies than there was say in the new Health or Math where you know forty experts get together and come up with something and then present it as a done deal.

Others advocate that greater teacher input is warranted. One participant has forwarded the idea of proportional representation. Unarguably there were concerns issued over teacher input, as well as the background of those actually invited to the process:

> Beth: Couple of people wearing nametags indicated that they were from Christian groups. There wasn't anybody else there - most of the people in the room, just trying to think of ethnic minorities or visible minorities, and um, I don't know if that was our purpose or not. But there weren't representatives of NGOs, (they) didn't appear to be there at the meeting.

> Katherine: I don't think enough teachers are being consulted.

> Hanna: If you talk to a teacher on a reserve or a few teachers on reserves, if you talk to a few teachers in inner city, if you talk to, I think talking to a whole bunch of different teachers who are actually in the classroom and who know exactly what it

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is they should be teaching and what works and what doesn't work and I think that would be much better than just getting a government who just puts in their own kind of views in here.

Questions arise as to who should be consulted in the process of curricula development and what that process should be then are instrumental to the interests of those responding in this area. Who are the stakeholders in this province and how far should planners cast their nets in seeking to accommodate "special interest"?

Brad: I think the curriculum is certainly political and I think as a political, curriculum as a political document, the responsibility has to rest with the politicians, which means the department and you know, the power structures in the department of learning. If, if it was kind of decentralized to the extent that a Christian school can get a curriculum from Texas or you know, a bunch of survivalists, get something from Texas or wherever, and then teach their own little views of the world, you know, creationists and you know. If it was decentralized to that extent, I think it would be a disservice to the common good. Because you wouldn't have a common good, you'd have a whole bunch of other competing goods, so I think the process has to stay politically centred with Alberta Learning, ah, given the funding, I think it was done as best as could be, you know.

Katherine: We know that this document is in place. We know that we're gonna be told to switch our program and to relearn this whole new program. I don't think teachers who are at the frontline and having to teach this are being educated about it. There's not enough P.D. for regular classroom teachers, I don't think that the government's fully considering what they are asking their teachers to do right now with this document.

Katherine: I don't think it's good that they should come in and introduce this entire new document. I think it should be done sequentially, perhaps maybe start at the kindergarten – grade one level and introduce it, then you know, you could slowly integrate, integrate grade two-three and so on so that if you're giving yourself let's say a five or six year time line but.

Some respondents indicate that they find the process somewhat intimidating, as well as bureaucratized - with meetings and discussions held a significant distance from the world of the classroom. Greater teacher input then does not here necessarily equate to simply inviting more teachers to the table. If the legitimacy of procedure itself is doubted then perhaps Alberta Learning need review the consultation process itself, in

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terms of where and how the meetings are organized, what protocol governs the process of consultation, and whose approval is required for the project to go ahead to press. This criticism is evidenced by one respondent claiming that the process can be intimidating and disorienting for participants not familiar with the administrative process of consultation and review. Here the respondent advocates that the contributions of Aboriginal elders were co-opted by policy planners, as those consulted frequently lack the resource and knowledge base to effectively challenge the extensive and deeply entrenched hegemonic networks of policy control:

> Greg: Finally, finally I'm gonna get some information, my children will receive some information about who we are as Aboriginals in this country but with many Aboriginal elders, they don't have the, that background, the educational background to actually truly understand what the document's about. Many of them can't read and if they do read they don't really actually understand this type of lingo.

> Greg: Yeah, and that was the problem with Alberta Learning. They did that process where they consulted the Aboriginal elders, many Aboriginal elders, they told them what the document was about and they said, do you want to sign this, okay sign it then. They'd bring in the elders and then they would bring in certain groups of people and there's no way anyone's gonna go against elders and that's the wrong process. That's a process of, that's a very ethnocentric process where the British used to do that with the French and with the Metis and with the Plains Indians and so forth. That's, that's a, that's a historical way of grouping people against each other and then you can't do anything about it, you, you're basically hogtied, you hogtie a group of people. And they've done that through many, many different processes with this document and especially with the WCP.

All Aboriginal teachers interviewed however did not support this criticism:

> Sharon: Well, you know what I think there's I guess there's the politics of the elders. Um, I have no problem in making my, my views, you know if there's an elder sitting there, I have no problem with that. Because if you're gonna have an elder that's going to be a wise elder, there shouldn't be any conflict there, if at some times, ah there has been instances in some of the communities where elders are self-appointed and um they demand their status as opposed to being ah given the status and there's really quite a difference in working with elders in that sense, you know.

Another criticism involves the backlash generated by a recent teachers strike. Practicing teachers interviewed questioned the value in dedicating scarce time to curriculum consultation, particularly when these contributions are so undervalued by the board and the public at large. Certainly, teacher consultation involves a significant commitment on the part of the teacher in terms of producing the time and empathy to attend and contribute to 'round table' discussions - even if that individual is invited to participate. The series of interviews conducted here, transpired only months after a lengthy and somewhat acrimonious teacher management dispute within the city of Edmonton (Edmonton Public). The latent undercurrents of this dispute were very much in evidence during the interview process and participant response was somewhat tempered by any residual sentiments the strike may have generated. Several participants referenced the strike directly:

> Brad: The other was the strike last winter, I think a lot of teachers just shrugged their shoulders and said "heck with this process, we're not gonna take part anymore", we just don't want to talk. It was um like a response to oppression of silence, I just won't say anything, you can't make me and (inaudible) resistant and I think there still is an aspect of that out there.

> Brad: So, well and truly pressure by the government there to, to cheapen teacher's experiences last winter. You know the press always pitched the absolute maximum teacher's salary, Master's Degree, eleven years, you know as the average teacher's salary and there was misrepresentation and talk about how little teachers work and how much holidays they get and yada, yada.

Even when not overtly stated the undercurrents of disenfranchisement and patronage speak to the felt need for greater teacher consultation and respect.

SOME GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

What issues need be broached in the future if we are to work towards a social studies which incorporates the best interests standard for of all students? Can we learn from past attempts in refining a more open program, both in terms of bolstering the ongoing value of a social studies discipline, and in facilitating a more responsive system of curricula production and review?

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One respondent claims that we need to start looking at how we understand knowledge and the role of knowledge in the classroom. A question of curricula is therefore a question of education:

> James: Oh, absolutely. I'm extremely optimistic about the future. There's, I think, incredible awareness among teachers about the nature of learning and what counts as knowledge, if I can use that turn of phrase. Part of that has happened quite by accident, could be some of it was the job action in the spring, this kind of a radicalization ascending to the teachers that won't go away and the commitment to public education is, is an entity, I think, is infused in so much of what the social studies program is about, and language arts and many of, you know, just to pick out social studies, but that commitment is there and I think that's why many teachers struggle and critique the current over the emphasis on math and sciences right now in high school. It's a question of why does this kind of knowledge, math and science, count more than this kind of knowledge, the humanities. Kind of questions that people like Nel Noddings ask, and gets totally ignored.

> James: We're, we're under siege here, we have to catch the Japanese or Taliban or someone. There's always the other, you know. Many people are (inaudible) in that, right. We have to be very careful of the danger of the language and that's our greatest enemy and our greatest friend and that's I guess, one of the questions of all of the social studies teachers in the province will have to engage when the curriculum gets rolled out. What does this mean, what is it including, what is it excluding.

Others indicate that there is a need for more flexibility in curricula research, development, and implementation. The current system of overhauling a program every fifteen to twenty years is unacceptable given mercurial changes in knowledge, and knowledge demands:

> Greg: Well, overall I think it's a definite step in the right direction. I think having the flexibility. I know program studies should last ten to fifteen years on average, but (we should) have an ongoing process - not every single year, but, have it updated; some type of updated or little tweaks here and there so we don't go through a whole process after ten or fifteen years where, oh my god, this is an awful document, we have to change it altogether, completely, but if we have an ongoing process, every two or three years of getting information from professors, getting information from educators, getting information from the communities, and then what can we add to this, I think it'll, it'll creep up as a better, make it a better document

> Karly: Hm. I think that curriculum has to evolve. I think rather than, it would be my preference, rather than making this huge document every 20 years or whatever,

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that it be, you know, annotated, that it be constantly improved. You have to in the sciences because, you know, every, what is it, every 18 months it's doubled the learning in areas of science, so curriculum has to be an evolving thing and not just something that you, okay every 20 years we're gonna write a new curriculum or we're gonna do one of these documents. I think it has to be an ongoing process in order to be current and valid and um, to be taken seriously. If it's outdated, nobody is gonna take it seriously.

Others advocate a more open and honest attempt to engage a cohort traditionally treated as simple receptacles to be filled and altered. Innovative curricular and pedagogical structures are encouraged. A greater understanding of others, ethnicities, lifestyles, as schools become more open and engaging places built on trust and modelling:

Brad: I think, I think there has to be some kind of change in the schools. Um, the way grade levels or the way students are grouped, the way classrooms are constituted. I think there could be a lot more work done there to, to just examine what happens in that box in terms of you know, students in (inaudible), um, I think personally we could do some really interesting things with say grade one, the old little red schoolhouse where you had grades one to nine and they learned from others.

Sharon: Um, I guess I'd have to go back to ah if we're going to do more in terms of ah bringing some sense of sense and pride to who we are as native people, there has to be ah a knowledge base of first of all the contributions they have made, ah, secondly I think there has to be ah a more diverse understanding of who they are, not just the music and the stories, and legends and ah there's a great sense of humour that I haven't seen much um of that

Brad: There's a hidden curriculum there. It needs some examination. Yes, Yeah. And I don't know how to do that exactly, I don't know if it could be done in terms, it has to be done in terms of professional genre and maybe this review will do that or maybe it's gonna be a white wash for preconceived (inaudible) you know, it's already written and it just has to be dusted off. But there's, schools need to be, need to be shaken but shaken gently, you know. Shaken so that people have new ways of seeing without sort of hurting them.

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EXAMINING THE DATA – A VERTICAL ANALYSIS

In reviewing the response data from the participant pool of those interviewed, there are significant differences in the basic philosophies and comments as issued by these subjects. As stated earlier, these respondents find themselves in a number of varying occupational positions with regard to their vocation; represent a diversity of backgrounds and ages. However, there are similarities amongst this group, in terms of their interests, professional discipline and passions. And there are similarities in terms of the comments generated amongst the respondents. One may speculate that the respondents share similar positions, values, experiences or empathies. As members of intersubjective communities these similarities established seem important, particularly as these commonalities can create common approaches, beliefs, and importantly here, symbolic texts (discourses) as related to education. I assert that educational practitioners, as subjects in formation, are not by necessity the artificers of these texts, that is that these texts are as much the products of shared referencing, as meaning making with others within a given society, as the product of direct and hard fought experience within the classroom. Thus discourses espousing value and approach are as much interpolation as invention (e.g. value positions on rights, democracy, and justice; racisms, and prejudices).

Looking back, understandings of hegemony indicate material influences yet symbolic consequences. Teachers are citizens of physical worlds. As mentioned, these respondents all work and have worked within the educational field and are subjected to the challenges and commonality as is intrinsic to their profession. Thus members of a professional group work, talk, and listen, within that group, but as importantly, within that society.

Through the use of discourse analysis (see second chapter and appendix for greater explanation the concepts and methodologies employed by the discourse analysis) I attempt to isolate common positions/ responses. This report is far from exhaustive, however, respondents agree across many fronts. For example, many of the respondents indicated that curriculum crowding was a problem. Similarly, it seems

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safe to say that all of the respondents shared an empathy and concern for the students involved in these programs. However, I have also attempted to isolate extra-discursive or connotative convergences certainly more subtle in form and identification, but I purport evidence of a convergence in value, beliefs, or entrenched ideological orientation. What is said in some instances may not seem as relevant to the interrogative as the colouring of the response. Consider this response as issued in example of a particular position:

> Katherine: I did it actually last year teaching China, um no actually Greece, sorry. Um, you know that when you teach ancient Greece and the ancient Greeks were um you know a lot of heavy homosexual overtones to the culture, so that is something I didn't even touch on. I thought they're grade six, that's something you learn at university when you have the mental ability to focus it that yet when you're dealing with pictures and they're showing guys hugging in compromising positions, kids are smart they know.

While there is nothing subtle about this example, respondents can and do position themselves politically/ideologically in many ways. What concerns me here is how commonly held beliefs/ideologies may be firstly, shared by a number of individuals within a given pool, and secondly, how these manifest ideological positions, formulated as discourses, may influence or contour participant response.

I promote that a given text can articulate a position, in terms of meaning, relatively independent of some deeper ontological position of he/she who writes it (see discourse analysis in Chapter 4/appendix),[3] and (in terms of intended meaning) even from those who read it.[4] I promote that language is not simply an objective medium, which is, coded and decoded in sequential and objectified ways. We can better understand the role that discourse plays in meaning formation if we attempt to expose the many paradoxes and contradictions in language use (e.g. compare what one might expect to be said in a given situation and what is actually said).[5]

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[3] Not that it must
[4] This study has acknowledged the benefits an "audience research" (receptivity) approach lends to discourse interpretation and qualification, however, I have also indicated that audiences are not totally autonomous and self directing "subjects." It is my position that power/knowledge both subjugates at symbolic levels and interpolates subjectivities in affectation of material realities.
[5] As stated earlier, this does not mean that we cannot know what we or someone else is expressing, only that text can produce multiple meanings and in terms interpretations. Also this does not mean that any

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I have attempted to reposition comments and positions in terms of these connotative inferences. I first look at the narrative "authorship," or the position that the narrative voice assumes when reporting the information before turning to the "readership," the targeted audience of the narrative, or to what reader the narrative is directed. The textual "object" signifies that what which is communicated and not necessarily what is intended or said. What are these respondents saying? What messages are communicated here? I use the concept of the "other," or the means by which a discourse exposes its susceptibility to contradiction, or alternative interpretation, as a mechanism for identifying the "object (s)." Other tools for understanding the nature and means by which language functions as a carrier of discourse are employed (e.g. "systems of coherency, discourse layering, power").

For example, a narrative claim like – "don't get me wrong, but Indian kids do not seem to learn as well," exposes the "other" through the doubling back of the phrase "don't get me wrong." The "object" may now move beyond the claim that Aboriginal children are slow learners indicating discourse as something else, perhaps stereotyping or even racism. The "authorship" here is vague and issues limited context, although one might project a "readership" as sympathetic to authorial voice. "Power" is used in supporting an argument perhaps never truly aired or debated if that argument draws from wider stereotypes or cultural racisms present in society (concision). The "coherency of a discourse system" is contingent upon the "over-layering" of several discourses or communications. If the narrative continues along a similar tone one might support a coherent ideological position indicating an overtly racist discourse. If, however, the "author" (narrative voice not person) shifts ground – sympathetic overtones, open contradictions - then coherency indicates a contradictory layering, engendering other explanations (e.g. "appeasement of the readership, voice from ignorance, conventionalisation of pre-mediated or overcoded discourse," [see discourse analysis model]). But remember this is not a review of the research data but only an example using my own methodological concepts (discourse analysis) as

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explanation is acceptable, as discourses can be linked to larger power/knowledge networks (i.e. racism in discourse is linked to racism in society).

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disclosed in chapter three. Below I review several discourse forms as identified in the data.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES
THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

On initial review the authorship, in terms of the collected data, appears similar as teacher/practitioners position themselves as individuals with the greater interests of both student and society at stake. Teacher/professional thus seems an apt description of an authorial narrative focused not only upon matters of curricula, but the logistic connectedness to the application of that knowledge in the classroom. Authorial voices are concerned, empathetic, and pragmatic. Similarly, authorial narratives appear authentically motivated to affect constructive change. However, variation is evident, particularly when considering overall discourse coherency as played out against specific worldview and belief structures. Voices are raised with the intention of assisting students to succeed, but these narratives are also conserving, and at times reactionary in reinforcing power positions and social roles. Conserving discourses, as reviewed earlier, can underwrite the dominance of the status quo, the integrity of institutionalized knowledge, and the value of the school as a facility for the effective socialization and selection of tomorrow's citizens. At times discourses patronize those who would be different. At others, the differences are next to invisible as our primary function as a society is to make this thing called schoolwork. We must disseminate the correct information (efficiently), knowledge both relevant and useful in the moulding of our future citizens, workers, and academically successful individuals. For many we must teach what we are told, when it is to be learned (even if we disagree and promote that the content is excessive and the demands confining and deterministic). If this sounds overtly critical or even glib it is important to remember that to accomplish these tasks teachers need do little more than accomplish what they are asked to achieve.

However, other voices, sometimes from the same candidate, criticize government and bureaucracy for its tendency to control and dominate the minds and

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wills of not only Alberta's students, but also its teachers. Specific narratives question the inability of this program to formulate meaningful connections between lifeworld (e.g. social positioning), curriculum, and the classroom. Where is the issue of social class?

Thus authorial positions move between narratives of social change and reinforcement of social convention, between pep talks on political opportunism and empowerment, to censure of a program that reinforces the structural interests of the mainstream. One narrative, strongly issued, lends validity to alternative understandings of curricula and knowledge and system growth. While the tendency presents itself for respondents to speak openly few step out to do so. But dissention is in evidence as educators challenge curriculum planners to utilize classroom spaces as movements against Western greed and apathy. However, genuine desire for change and recognition is exchanged for a pragmatic solution to an indefinable problem. Following this pattern schools should succeed where society cannot, in the effort to accommodate difference, however by treating unequals equally. The voice remains caught in a paradox shifting from conserving narratives promoting systemic and societal value while periodically moving into more critical discourses exposing societal corruption and greed. From liberal criticisms advocating a more inclusive curriculum to poststructural caveats acknowledging the dangers of essentializing oppression - the narrative wanes. Perhaps one can claim that teachers are the least alike when they stop acting like teachers. The authorial intent of much of this narrative, however, places teachers in classrooms serving as intermediaries between those in control, and the student.

THE QUESTION OF READERSHIP

Who is the reader? By asking this, one attempts to mark a textual position on the narrative subject. Here subject positions are constructed and maintained as respondents encode insight, understanding and value into language; a language then transcribed and made available for the reader. But a readership is assumed long before this text is actually reviewed and it is this readerly position that interests me here.

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These narratives generally are not intended to address an academic reader. However some do, incorporating abstract concepts and relying upon a sophisticated readership education moves beyond blackboards and lesson plans. Others do not.

For some interviewed a reader is asked to make connections, to understand schooling in the context of educational theory. Curricula knowledge may be the product of policy decisions and instrumental goals, but the consumer is to understand that knowledge is political; knowledge is power. For others, different knowledge regimes and experience bases are to be relied upon in extracting meaning, audience decoding then a product of internalized cognitive regimes, and interpreted experiences – perhaps as products of the classroom. This challenges authorial positions as meaning is altered and rearranged around the worldview of those decoding the text.[6] Here the narrative hails only those who can understand.

Academic voices are also critical voices and remain sensitive to issues of diversity as they confront Alberta's schools. For these narratives interpolate a reader who is not only "informed" but also receptive to changes as issued under the banner of greater relevancy and equity in matters pertaining to curricula. Conserving narratives promote and defend institutional processes of curricula and pedagogy employment and assume the reader knows and understands the importance of the same.

Then who a reader must become to support strong narratives within the interview data? Certainly, narratives are aimed at other teachers. Schooling is a process, curriculum a knowledge to be taught. The reader is to identify with day-to-day classroom challenges, curriculum crowding, continual disruption, and administrative expectation. Concerned, and sometimes apathetic parents inhabit this world, as do students. But a body of students, that while seemingly diverse, retains the physiological imprint of an organism (do we really honour diversity as teachers?). The reader then is someone who may understand this - another teacher perhaps. The discourse is professional in orientation incorporating terms and jargon that while not excessive, correspond to an educational vernacular of function and challenge. The

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[6] Text here indicates the comments of the respondents

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readership is a knowing readership. Few phrases or terms are explained or qualified, discourses are restricted, meanings shared.

Educational paradigms are accessed (global education) without significant qualification. Similarly values and opinions are administered with relative comfort. There is little expectation of censure or dissention. The reader is knowledgeable in the practices and challenges of teaching, familiar with pedagogical concepts, themes and paradigms, and compliant.

There are exceptions, however, as if readership resistance is expected. Narratives concerning Aboriginal schooling provide an example. Here, voices stiffen and examples are provided in defiance of what Bedard might reference as the "discourse of Whiteness." The reader is subject to these misapprehensions and therefore to be guided into accepting alternative explanation. Democratic pluralism is not the language of Alberta's school; the invisibility of abuse is not an acceptable vanguard to equality. One respondent provides a detailed analysis of social class and its impact on Alberta's schools, that person's assumption, the reader does not know this, or perhaps is not convinced. The reader, although cognitive of and sympathetic to teacher and educational challenges, is not to be completely trusted, to understand without force of argument. But again this critical narrative voice waxes and wanes and at times disappears completely.

Other concerns are portioned out in defensive narratives that are both distrustful and cautious. The voice here apprehensive, a discourse slightly jaded and distrustful of societal conventionalities and practices that serve to unfairly target teachers and others in the educational field. The reader here is in part accountable.

If the readership is knowing friend and censuring citizen, she/he is also is sympathetic to classroom issues. Narrative voices may resent the patronizing control of educational practice in this province, but discourses also question the authenticity of educational theory as that divorced from active classroom practice. Anti-intellectual and contemptuous of academia this narrative is spun with a proletarian zeal, erecting a subject typography "conventional" and pragmatic. Gender, class, and race are downplayed as conditioning features in student representation and classroom success.

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The social studies curriculum then is a content administered independently; the readership defiant, suspicious of those who would superimpose political value upon knowledge as taught in the classroom.

The readerly process of discourse assimilation here then bears a complex and dynamic tension. But unexpectedly we observe a subjectivity evolve openly non-critical reinforcing conventional educational roles and processes. The reader modernist in representation, a reflexive subject, strongly gendered, and middle class, although this same reader is also minority and vulnerable. Strong contradictions occur as the commonplace provides the paradigmatic backdrop for educational change. With most narratives, notwithstanding positional challenges towards state or group, identity recognition, political action, and institutional function, remain firmly embedded in worldviews largely supportive of societal practices and conduct. As mentioned the narrative text is not without resistance. But the reader remains for the most part compliant, willing to work for change through politically administered channels of confrontation and redress. The liberal pluralist discourse is upheld in a majority cause as the readerly subject embraces a contemporary western archetype, at times in disagreement with those around him/her, but strongly anchored within a self-assertion ideal of society and self.

CENTRAL DISCOURSES TO THE PROGRAM DRAFT – THE QUESTION OF OBJECT AND THE OTHER

Here I look at several discourses as identified in the data field. The discourses are introduced with the intent of reinforcing respondent data reported earlier in this chapter. The advantage of standing back and creating additional perspective needs little qualification. Identifying commonalities through discourse assists the reader in decoding data within a larger social context. While respondent narrative is diverse and varied the attempt is to identify "object" claims (albeit not universally issued) as established with some degree of frequency in the data.

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The "Other" Versus The Mainstream: The Ethnocentricity Of Curriculum Knowledge and Function:

The purpose here is to expose the contradiction (double standard) as evidenced when binary positions are used to highlight difference. The overwhelming tendency to separate content curricula from extra-curricula adaptations, or in this case the introduction of a stronger curricular focus on cultural diversity exposes the nature of this contradiction and the need to reconfigure conventional understandings and positions of articulation. Consistently respondent narratives identify the need for a more culturally diverse curriculum. Actions initiated by Alberta Learning introduce Francophone and Aboriginal components to the curriculum. But as consistently narratives identify these changes as something added to or other than a social studies content. One respondent challenges the workability of an additional responsibility, which is the addition of Aboriginal, or Francophone content to an already stretched school day. Neutrality is balanced against special programs, normal against the exotic, the non-ethnic against the ethnic.

Narratives address new curricula as "cultural," as opposed to existing programs with a strong focus upon mainstream groups. "Ethnicity" is another word directed at minority groups. "Multicultural" similarly signifies a derivation from the status quo, the status quo exnominated beyond language or qualification. This exoticization of the "cultural Other" unduly isolates and labels these groups as hyphenated Canadian. Discourses focusing upon "expediency" or "implementation" represent minority group interests as optional; the majority accepted without qualification, a people without colour, ethnicity, class, or gender.

In creating a sustainable inclusive classroom the requirement is to expose all textual discourse to public scrutiny seems not a consideration. Aboriginal discourses emphasized the need to increase Aboriginal content, ignores Aboriginal diversity, or the need to understand words like Metis, British or French if we are to understand First Nations people in a contemporary context. Society as an integrated dynamic is unrealized in discourse on that society. Narratives warn of the fear from backlash against a curriculum that teaches value, spirituality, and culture in a 'value neutral

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curriculum.' By defining "cultural content" as the content of Other, respondents define and centre mainstream culture as that opposed to this Other. Unfortunately, as long as only a few groups are identified with culture or cultural diversity the interests of many Canadians will appear ancillary, appearing on the margins as alternative or innovation. While not all narratives reviewed fell into this trap, frequency of occurrence was significant and yet seemingly unnoticed.

The Objectification of Curricular Knowledge: Curriculum as knowledge:

Curriculum is frequently promoted as objective knowledge. By this the text holds curriculum knowledge as non-negotiable, a simple replication of a particular event, or a concept or principle. This is arguably the case here. Absence/presence critique, metaphor, the argument from assumption, are all demonstrative ways by which assumptions may be exposed. It is recognized that we make editorial choices, that is planners introduce and teachers instruct one thing rather than another. However, a significant segment of Alberta Learning's prescribed curriculum is simply accepted as appropriate. Moreover, the means by which we integrate and distribute that curriculum draws little attention the respondents. Again solutions to greater curricular relevancy or inclusion revolve around content enhancement, as discourses remain ostensibly hierarchical in orientation. What is the preferred reference and how much?

By reducing school knowledge to power/knowledge explications this relationship becomes clear. Power/knowledge configurations validate or legitimate present curricula approaches. The alignment of these discourses in recognizable ways provides coherent ontological and psycho-sociological positions historically locating subjects within discursive fields. The continued focus on nation building, human competition and war provides an example here.

The objectification of curricula sources also eliminates the necessary marriage between content and pedagogy, as power/knowledge is instrumental in shaping human identity, our reference of self, and our position in the world. Pedagogies that rely upon knowledge "banking", or content centred understandings position students as receptacles, validating what is learned and the inclusion of that knowledge in the

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program. That a program, for example Aboriginal education, should be initiated and supported without ample consideration of learner and teacher autonomy, serves to objectify intersubjective relationships, and works against the ultimate goal of better understanding diversity.

Argument From Whiteness – Normalization of Diverse Relations:

My deconstruction actively reveals the discourse of "Whiteness." The term Whiteness does not indicate as much phenotypic variation as it does a collection of commonplace expectations, presumptions and behaviours. Here social relationships pertaining to class, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, etc. – rich and variegated intersubjective correspondences – are coded in ways familiar with institutions of White (dominant group) power and privilege. Narratives consistently overwrite student difference, advocating "common sensical" understandings and conventions as applied to education specifically, and inter-human relationships generally.

The most common indicator here is manifested in either an unwillingness, or inability to acknowledge disparities in given cohorts. Educational, socio-cultural and even physical arrangements are referenced as both normal and inclusive, misunderstanding that these arrangements are historical in production and can provide adaptive challenges to students attempting to "fit in." I propose in deconstructing the narrative that class disparity (affective through cultural capital, linguistic codes, physical and social deprivation) remains virtually undetected with narrative assumptions that all are on "the same page."

Whiteness as hegemony is a narrative product common to many of the practitioners interviewed regardless of sex, class position or ethnicity. However, Aboriginal narratives are counterhegemonic in matters pertaining to race and ethnicity, although, interestingly, discourses connecting ethnicity to social class are absent in most responses. Whiteness appears as a discourse smothering critical awareness, as pertaining to institutional/structural barriers in education.

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Fetishism And The Construction Of The Other – Us and Them:

Respondent narrative is almost universally compassionate in terms of the declared need to recognize or at least tolerate the difference of others. A rights based discourse of justice is ever present as narratives wrestle with the greater desire of providing a universally administered education. By isolating the "raced" or "ethnicized," separating difference from non-difference, or that which is to be tolerated, from those who would tolerate, a rift is driven between minority and majority group interests. This is referenced above as the construction of the Other.

Concomitant to this distinction is the narrative practice of fetishism. As Abbot writes in a different context:

> ... whereas repression banishes its object into the unconscious, forgets and attempts to forget the forgetting, discrimination must constantly invite its representations into consciousness, reinforcing the crucial recognition of difference which they embody and revitalizing them for the perception on which its effectivity depends ... (Abbot in Bhabha, 1996, p. 102)

Fetishism invites that Other back, an object believed to hold transformative powers bridging fear and desire. And although this Other is constructed as a site of power, an object of desire, it remains aloof. To hold that Other apart as a site of fascination the narrative self reinforces this insurmountable rift in direct consequence of that desire. The fascination by the narrative self reinforces this insurmountable rift in direct consequence of that desire. The fascination with the raced cultural archetype, the 19th century Aboriginal, penetrates a discourse that refuses to allow or acknowledge difference from within, as a composite of us all. Our fascination with the Other is also a means by which we reinforce the prejudice of difference. That our narratives strengthen the presence of fetishism is perhaps an unavoidable result of attempting to define and promote our separate identities as human actors.

Colour Blindness:

Colour blindness describes the inclination on the part of narratives to over group, or amorphize group and individual interests, despite the differential treatment by those same groups within the larger society. Anchored in a Western liberal

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democratic tradition and practice colour blindness validates propositions of institutional equality and pluralism. However, the deception that schools are sites of equitable representation and treatment ignores the meaningful consequences of difference when colliding with curricula facilitating mainstream interests and ideologies. The discourse object of neutrality is exposed as narratives double back and become contradictory. Responses that serve to erase meaningful difference as affecting student identity structures choose to ignore the implications of those differences. Narratives in denial of class variation, or gender difference reinforce colour blindness, and the need for a more sophisticated understanding of identity and difference.

Classroom, Control, and the Disciplined Teacher:

Here responses attend to and promote specific regimes of practice without questioning these regimes critically. The process of schooling as technique, the corresponding physical accoutrements of school, positivist understanding of knowledge development and management, internal regulation as a product of discipline, are all instrumental in the production of discourse regimes which serve to solidify educational responses and practices. Discourses originating from mechanisms of internal/external control materialize in narratives defining school, protocol, and teacher roles within those schools. For example, the tendency for teachers to dissociate theory from practice, curriculum from pedagogy, classroom from community, are all representative examples of internalized regulation as affecting respondent discourse.

Practitioner/teacher subservience to community and state interests serves as residuals of internalized regulatory discipline. The absence of discourse critical of school processes (or at least alternative perspective), and the formalizing of teacher roles and pedagogical practice speak to a need for innovation drawing upon capillary power reserves. The similar reduction of complex social and environmental factors to oppositional demonstrations of resistance provides another example. The dispositional practice of explaining educational processes in conventions that are

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either intrinsically liberating or disempowering, both from the left and the right, demonstrates the overarching rituals of discourse internalization and reproduction.

Invisibility Of Difference and Social Class:

The absence of an oppositional class based discourse is evident. The significance of discourses on meritocracy, individualism and entrepreneurship should not be underestimated in the formation of predispositions, expectations and assessments that unduly penalize recognizable groups and individuals. Poverty, indigence and class association, while noteworthy in terms of both opportunities and successes, garner little attention from respondent narratives, even when directed to address this issue directly. With a significant corpus of respondent data examined there occurs a striking absence of discussion on the social and material implications/structures attributed to social class (wealth, poverty, occupational validation, corporate and state power, media penetration). The objective pre-eminence of meritocracy as predicated upon neutral and equitable societal relations undergirds a classroom convention heralding public education as an answer to intergenerational poverty, and racialized disparity. Given that schooling plays a positive role in the formation and liberation of the child, class issues and criticism are shunted across that dividing line separating institution from society. That the majority of respondents do not consider social class a particularly relevant quality in assessment of student difference perhaps indicates the success of recent both liberal progressive and conservative interests in confusing or at least disguising inequality within Canadian society.

The Externalization Of Difference:

This object position describes a discourse tendency to externalize difference. Diversity, dissention and disparity serve as phenomena occurring somewhere else, affecting someone else. This is a tricky proposition as practitioners are sometimes hesitant to acknowledge the role of curricula in the unnecessary isolation of learners. Thus, rather than promoting the classroom as a public space, composite of diverse and politically empowered individuals, student groups are converted to units or collectives,

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interacting and learning as groups, despite the differences amongst them. The omission here is the exceptional child, as ability driven paradigms expose distinguishable variations and identity markers.

For one, student difference is minimal in terms of prescribed classroom roles, curricular expectations, and assessment processes. Students may come in a variety of shapes and colours, but these significations hold little relevance for curricular decisions or classroom processes. Here, culturally diverse curricula may be credible concessions but then they are also, in the last word, a product for others. Aboriginal and Francophone learners serve as exception here, but then there is question as to whether these groups occupy the "difference" distinction as argued. Aboriginal classrooms are frequently referenced as culturally homogeneous by teachers of Aboriginal classes - a group in need of a more responsible curricular resource - but a group just the same. The externalization of difference then serves to strand student difference in heterogeneous classrooms that can only serve to gain by inclusion.

Oneupmanship:

A consequence of engaging participant consultation in curricula review is the outcome of oneupmanship, as interest groups scramble in the bid for representation and acknowledgement. For this reason education remains a highly contested medium. The promotion of group interests then is tantamount to knowledge inclusion, content relevancy, and, ultimately, curricula success. Narratives on the need for Aboriginal efficacy endorse Aboriginal content; global education advocates push for greater representation of developing world interests. Through curricula compartmentalization and objectification the opportunity for a more inclusive and critical pedagogical strategy is exchanged for curricula *al a carte*. As the battle over the content develops, the need for more sophisticated means of understanding the world in which we reside is exchanged for special interest and the lobby for group validation.

For example, Aboriginal educators lobby for special status orientation before multicultural interests As Fanon acknowledges, the usurping or exchange of one hegemonic enterprise for another only serves to redefine the same oppression (Bhabha

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1996). The "something for everyone" approach as advocated by some respondents is only marginally superior. As one respondent volunteers, Alberta needs something better. The war over content misses an opportunity to initiate more sophisticated understandings of difference, circumventing approaches that are at best essentializing and, ultimately, descriptive of a readership out of touch with the richness of life.

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CHAPTER 6 – A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POST-WCP ALBERTA LEANING K-9 PROGRAM OF STUDIES AND ACCOMPANYING FRONT

A critical analysis of Alberta Leanings K-9 Program of Studies and the Accompanying Front (K-12) is used in this chapter. This follows an examination and critique of interview respondent comments as performed in chapter five, which organizes and records the thoughts and impressions of the study's participant subjects as given during a series of interviews conducted in the Fall of 2002.

The question bank designed for these interviews directly petitioned the subjects to appraise the existing social studies curriculum program. The respondents were also asked a series of questions on their reading of the new Alberta Leanings K-9 Program of Studies and the Accompanying Front (K-12) before commenting on the consultation process as employed by Alberta Learning in the design and production of this document. In reviewing participant data in chapter five, I propose that significant variation occurs (of issued responses) between individual subject responses. However, commonalities – in terms of how these participants read and value the documents - are also evident. In the latter portion of chapter five, I attempt to extract and explicate

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further connotative meaning from the comments given. It is my position here that participant responses may involve and draw from a series of coded or extra-discursive meaning structures in assessing a given question. That is shared patterns, in how participants see and explain the world, can and do influence response data. I finish the chapter by identifying some of the more common discourses accessed and employed by respondents (in applying the methodological tenets of a discourse analysis to response data).

Chapter six, this chapter, is dedicated to my own reading of Alberta Leaning's K-9 Program of Studies and the Accompanying Front (K-12). Again I employ a discourse analysis as reviewed in chapter four and developed further in the accompanying appendix, the analysis, this time, turned towards the Alberta Learning text itself rather than participant responses of that text. My primary question concerns the suitability of this document for Alberta's classrooms, that is - is this a 'multicultural' document? 'Multiculturalism' here is defined and promoted in chapter three of this thesis.

I begin the chapter by looking at the WCP social studies project. The WCP cooperative project should not be downplayed as an influential force in the development and direction of the present social studies program. Thus a digression from my subject focus (Alberta Learning's Social Studies Front and Program of Studies) is defensible.

PHILOSOPHY AND THEME: MAPPING THE WCP SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Over the course of several years the Western Canadian Protocol project has released a number of significant documents, documents mapping out a foundational philosophy and politic for what would be brandished as a new direction for social studies in the jurisdictional areas considered. Significant here is the WCP Foundations Document, and the Common Curriculum Frameworks (K-9, 10-12), although a significant body of supporting literature (i.e. literature reviews, Francophone and Aboriginal overviews and language frameworks), exist in a supporting role. The program document under review in this chapter has drawn from much of this early

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policy work and it is for this reason that I begin this chapter by examining several of the principle tenets of the WCP social studies initiative, particularly regarding issues of culture and race as subsumed under an overriding ethic. As importantly it leaves a "water line" by which to chart policy revision as a program initiative moves across various stages of refinement or possibly retrenchment.

The WCP Social Studies cooperative project initially sequestered the Ministries of Education in four Canadian provinces and two territories agreed in principle to collaborate in basic education, with the resulting product projected to set common educational goals, while removing obstacles to educational opportunity for students in all participating districts. Inclusive to the project's process was an emphasis on moving towards a fairer and ubiquitous system while better accommodating student transfers from one jurisdiction to another.

Supporting a revised vision for the social studies discipline in the affected jurisdictions, the WCP Framework project claims to advance the needs of the 21st century learner, while holding the "concepts of Canadian citizenship and identity at heart" (WCP, 2000b, p. 5). The indivisible nature of the "Canadian spirit," the projected product of this new vision, then, stands in recognition of the changing demands of the learner. These demands are said to recognize the larger cultural and economic influences of globalization, as exercised in the world arena, while acknowledging the preemptive historical contexts of nationhood and geography distinguishing Canada from other western states as:

> Canada is a country of strong regional loyalties, committed to diversity and social justice, and one that is politically organized as a parliamentary democracy. It is subject to economic and cultural influences and the effects of globalization. Cultural interaction has helped define who we are as Canadians at this point in our history. (p. 5)

Being Canadian then elicits an inimitable consciousness, in recognition that historical circumstance sets Canada apart from other nations. The WCP applauds those that have contributed to the project of nation building as Canadians, promoting groups deserving of a distinctly original identity status. Displayed here is an attempt to move beyond more commonly accepted notions of Canadian identity and citizenship

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incorporated into past attempts. Pluralism and multiculturalism is advanced by this document, anticipating the "needs" of the *Other*, those whom stand apart from a larger identity structure; those whose experiences are frequently silenced. But while doing so the project begs a "Canadian spirit," a sense of nationhood, transcending the level of the group or individual.

Thus, these experiences are disclosed within the greater concern for the nation state, weighing specific group histories against those of the larger population. But ancillary to this deeper sense of altruism is the Canadian isolated and projected on another canvas, singled out for his/her difference, or contribution to the development of Canada. The Framework claims, as outlined through the WCP Social Studies K-12 Foundation Document (2000), to respect and include "diverse cultural perspectives," but falls somewhat short of determining what these perspectives are and who is to wield them

(p. 5).

The WCP Foundation Document (2000b) does endorse the contributions of "Canada's First Peoples" and "founding nations," as partners in the wider project of heightening respect diversity in the affected jurisdictional demography (i.e. the two originating charter groups, the English and the French, and Canada's Aboriginal, or First Nations' peoples):

> The Framework will reflect the historical context and importance of Canada's First Peoples and founding nations, as well as the geographic and demographic realities of western and northern Canada. The Framework will promote intercultural understanding and be inclusive of Aboriginal and Francophone perspectives. It will support multiculturalism, pluralism, and bilingualism, all of which contribute to a Canadian spirit. (p. 5.)

Other ethnically, racially, or otherwise historically distinguishable minority groups are, however, subsumed under the umbrella of "diverse cultures" without a further exhibited attempt to differentiate further along specific socio-cultural indices. The particular interests of these groups then fall within the common core of "general and specific learning outcomes." "Distinctive outcomes," however, are advanced for

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Aboriginal and Francophone students, given the desirability of setting, with the rationale, that there are "particular mandates and responsibilities that exist in Canada related to Aboriginal and Francophone populations" (WCP, 2000b, p. 4). These "particular mandates and responsibilities" are claimed to be "historical" in nature, although little evidence is provided at this point in terms of why these specific groups have been singled out (i.e. acts, documents, and decisions of a judicial or political nature).

The Foundation Document advances that the Aboriginal people (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit of Canada) of this country share a common history and purpose, despite a plethora of exhibited differences in a people comprised of diverse groups, and separated by history, tradition, and socio-cultural institutions. Emphasized here is the Aboriginal peoples' "unique" relationship with their environment (e.g. the land), relationships that are both "strong and spiritual" (WCP, 2000b, p. 13). Their original status as Canada's first peoples is recognized. They are said to be harbingers of diverse cultures, endogamous self-governing nations covering vast territories with self sustaining economies - these larger ways of being irreparably changed by the first contact with the European explorers. The Aboriginal relationship with Canada is then forged out of the metal of responsible coexistence, as envisaged by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 (p. 13), with rights and titles the matter of continued social, political, and legal negotiation (self-government a reality in some parts of Canada).

The Metis people, a combination of "European and First Nations cultures," are included in this grouping, even though it is recognized that the Metis populations are varied and to a degree dispersed within the general population of Canada and are not issued First Nations or Inuit status (Federal Government).[1]

Education for Aboriginals in the past is described as an erosive element, leading to the loss of language, values, skills, and culture with the Aboriginal history, and the peoples of the past no longer occupying a place in the communities of Canada. The rupture here is seen as severe, isolating a people from their culture and "a place in Canadian society" (WCP, 2000b, p. 13).

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[1] A recent court decisions (2003) is significant in defining Metis status within Canada.

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The Francophone community is applauded for important contributions to Canadian history and cultural identity. The specific groups selected are jurisdictionally encompassed within the larger area of western and northern Canada, a region viewed as unique in terms of its "social, economic, cultural, and political" development and conveying a growing presence on the international stage. These groups are, however, distinct (from the Quebec provincial state) in terms of a settlement history. The Francophone experience in a western and northern Canada setting is then viewed as a uniquely differentiated product of history and demanding of an original educational approach. The gradual assimilation of the Francophone community in western Canada is viewed as a loss, a loss of "language, identity, culture," a unique community with a dynamic historical and contemporary stake in the education and development of the region.

The Francophone student is said to be "immersed within a minority setting"- immersed within a "predominantly English language"- which challenges to both assimilate and efface efforts to retain specific identity and culture markers as valued within the affected enclave. Here the institution of greatest importance is language (i.e. Francophone instruction, French immersion, and the promotion of "additive bilingualism"), a bilingualism introduced such that proficiency in one language is not compromised through the employment of another. However, according to the document, the Francophone heritage, a conflation of "culture" and history, also presents an awareness of French settlement and its contributions to the area in question.

An equitable understanding of the Francophone's role in northern and western Canada then remains open to the perplexities of a unique brand of identity and citizenship, establishing the French presence in the region as that apart from and independent of other contributing forces and influences.

The "distinctive outcomes" agenda, as philosophically outlined in the Foundations Document, acknowledges specific prerogatives affecting Aboriginal and Francophone (responsibilities and mandates which exist in Canada and affect the futures of the groups in question) education in the jurisdictions referenced. It is intended to "enhance

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the development of identity, culture, and community" for those groups affected. Aboriginal outcomes then would apply to settings and students in the recognized settings as follows:

> Locally-controlled First Nations schools;

> Aboriginal-controlled schools in off-reserve or urban settings

> Provincial and territorial schools where the majority population is Aboriginal, and where the school or school district, and concerned parents or their representatives have requested that the distinctive outcomes be taught;

> Where a minority of students is Aboriginal, and the school or school district and parents or their representatives have requested that the distinctive outcomes be taught. (WCP, 2000, p. 4)

However, outcomes in terms of an applied curriculum are not limited by these considerations, given that specific situations will vary from the rural setting to the urban, from the traditional to the acculturated.

Francophone outcomes are to be applied to Francophone students enrolled in Francophone schools or programs. These outcomes are to be adapted within the defining context of Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with the intention of reinforcing existing relations of culture and community. In both applications the WCP Social Studies Framework will be adapted to accommodate first and second language instruction.

The Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Cultural Programs, released in June of 2000 stands as evidence here. This document was drafted in support of schools and regions within the WCP cooperative wishing to develop curricula, and pedagogical strategies addressing the instruction and maintenance of Aboriginal languages. The Framework attends to the specific requirements of language instruction as well as broaching the more interpretive areas of "language as culture," with the intention that teachers and administrators at the local level may adapt programs to the specific "cultural" and linguistic needs of those involved.

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Primarily these programs are to be designed as second language courses, although accommodations can be made for bilingual and immersion programs where the Aboriginal language is also the first language of the majority of the students.

The document does engender a broader and more far reaching application of the cultural component of the Framework – realizing that specific areas and jurisdictions may wish to emphasize and dovetail curriculum components (i.e. addressing demographic histories and originalities). The aim here is to encourage the integration of Aboriginal culture in specific subject areas (i.e. social studies) and to facilitate appreciation and awareness of Aboriginal culture (WCP, 2000a, p. 1).

The WCP, however, does not extend *distinctive outcome* status to other minority groups whose members resided within the agreed upon area of collaboration but are neither Francophone nor Aboriginal. The WCP Foundations Document (2000) explicitly recognizes the "economic and cultural effects of globalization" on internal notions of identity and citizenship, advances the broader policy mandates of "multiculturalism and pluralism", and claims to support "intercultural understandings" as the logical products of a large and diverse student population base. However, groups falling outside of the circumscribed areas (i.e. those delegated distinctive outcome status) are, it is assumed, to accept in general the common core of specific learning outcomes as outlined in the applicable social studies Framework. The specific needs and differing histories of other groups are then not given individual attention, as the importance of Canada's First Peoples and founding nations, arguably, distinguishes them from the larger society.

By way of comparison, the contributions of an English speaking settlement and culture are strangely absent, despite the dominant role the group played, and continues to play, in the settlement and colonization of present-day Canada. The document offers the reader instead what is deemed the "common core" of "general" and "specific outcomes."[2] One of two things is possible here. Firstly, it is assumed that the common core of curricula design, employment, and outcome is directed specifically at

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[2] These outcomes (a measure of goal expectation and accomplishment) are to be distinguished from the category 'distinct outcomes' as reserved for the special requirements of Francophone and Aboriginal learners.

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this third and largest founding group, the English speaker, assuming distinct linguistic, cultural and historical prerogatives that sets that specific community member apart from the Francophone or Aboriginal. Or secondly, this group is not viewed as ethnically and culturally distinct, a product of common histories and experiences, instead somehow equated to some institutional norm by which the others are compared.

These binaries (constructed in *either/or* fashion) ignore diverse and powerful forces at work in terms of identity construction, privilege and oppression. Francophones and Aboriginals are represented as "culturally distinct." This is not to suggest that it is outside of the parameters of the project to recognize the distinct contributions of other groups, only that these groups need draw from the common curriculum core (albeit with entitlement to "intercultural understanding"), a common core designed for those members who are not to be classified as distinct.

It is the stated intentions of the WCP (2000b) project to both emphasize "common educational goals" while "removing obstacles to the overall access of educational opportunities"(p. 2). By employing a framework that acknowledges the necessity for "distinctive outcomes" contained within a common core of general and specific learning outcomes, the WCP collaboration attempts to reconcile the requirement for a standardized curricula approach with the need to recognize diverse subject positions. Therefore, by accommodating the specific needs of the Aboriginal and Francophone in northern and western Canada, the project carries the potential of reinforcing a sense of pride in culture and community, dovetailing institutionally administered forms of knowledge with cultural expectations and experiences, while maintaining a standard by which the student may be evaluated and accredited.

The Framework goal appears to provide the learner with a more responsive curriculum and is intended to weigh the specific cultural needs of that individual against a broader standard. Significant effort, in terms of draft preparation and review, has gone into a design with the potential of offering the Francophone and Aboriginal learners unprecedented choice throughout much of the targeted area. The Social Studies Framework (with applications for both K-9 and 10-12 groups), coupled with

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applicable language and cultural programs, is said to engage those affected in a lived process of a learning which better reflects their own interests, practices, and beliefs. What this project offers students outside of these prescribed areas is perhaps not as clear. The Foundations Document does not review what, if any, leeway will be made available, within the "common core" to accommodate group interests other than those of the Aboriginal and Francophone "partners."

Given the overall goal to remove obstacles to access of educational opportunities the following questions concerning design *appropriateness* need be forwarded. Does the WCP Social Studies collaboration display adequate intent in significantly removing obstacles to the access of educational opportunities? Does the project adequately recognize self and societal as reference points of difference and exceptionality? Are the politics of representation adequately addressed in the best interests of those affected, namely, students residing in jurisdictions affected by the WCP curriculum collaboration (levels K-12), or does the project downplay the dynamisms of identity representation effectively sealing culture in a black box?

I promote an obvious concern for children from backgrounds that are not meted out specific attention in the WCP Foundations Document, or the Curriculum Frameworks (K-9, and 10-12). Included in this category are Canada's newly arrived immigrant and refugee populations, but more generally, all group members with specific interests in having their views, interests, and beliefs, at least in part, reflected in a jurisdictionally administered program of studies. I must question the degree to which the Social Studies Framework accommodates these interests, exploring histories, while underwriting unique understandings of Canadian citizenship and identity versus those of the white European majority.

In addressing the interests of specific groups (i.e. Francophone or Aboriginal learners), the WCP proposes to compromise central control in the greater interest of regional distinctness and "self-determination." Curriculum focus then is adapted strategically to local interests, shifting from one district to another, from one province to another, or from province to territory. But the WCP project is firstly a shared protocol, introducing a commonality of purpose to a diverse population. Expectations

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are that students will grow into responsible Canadians, accountable to the larger geo-political interests of the federal state (Canada), and that state's commitments to a well-integrated global community.

Current movements (e.g. trade agreements) in intra-state economies dictate the inclusion of the macro in cultural definitions of self. Concentrations of economic, political and social power, hegemonic forces weigh upon and influence the actions of even the most remote of geographical regions. As stated, culture is not an endogamous commodity. Thus any reading of the effectiveness of a given cultural or linguistic program must be accessed, or accredited, as measured against the realities of this current period in national and international development, and necessitating a second interrogative concerning the *effectiveness* of the program. So what criticisms are to be levelled here given the predilections, on the part of some Canadians, to see distinct outcomes as a long-term weakness? Is a program that offers the purposeful advantages of "distinctive outcomes"(i.e. greater local input into curricula development and assessment), even when adequately responsive and good intentioned, feasible in terms of these basic assumptions? Can it prove beneficial to those affected? Does making educational priorities and goals a more specific and local directive assuage obstacles to educational opportunities, including the ease of transfer from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, or exacerbate them - remembering that global pressures are felt at localized points?

These are all questions that may be considered in assessing the viability of the document. Alberta Learning rejected "distinct outcomes" as workable amendment – perhaps for some of the reasons listed above. Since no justification is given these reasons are difficult to assess. I advanced earlier that the social studies WCP has left at least an imprint on the newer social studies program (including significant omissions). Alberta Learning did back out of the project but borrowed from the WCP Framework heavily when designing the social studies Program of Studies. Before I turn to the Program (draft) I will examine a study conducted (using a series of interviews) on the WCP a short time before the split between WCP and Alberta Learning programs.

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REVIEWING THE DATA FROM ANOTHER STUDY

In an earlier review of the WCP approach Paul Stewart (2001) interviews a number of respondents all participating in a policy review process for the WCP Foundations project. All contributed either in focus groups, larger forum, or written responses to the review process of the WCP social studies, common curriculum initiative. Respondent observations and suggestions were recorded in narrative form with the goal of producing a definitive document of assessment of this project. I find this study to be of significant relevance to my own stated goals and practices given (1) the instrumental role that the WCP social studies protocol project has played in the conceptualization of the new Alberta social studies curriculum program, and (2) given that this theorist asks many of the same questions.

Stewart's (2001) study asks participants to review and measure the WCP Protocol Foundations Document.[3] As mentioned all of these participants at some juncture have submitted or issued input regarding the legitimacy of the project. These same participants incorporated specific areas and backgrounds of expertise in assessing the project. Not dissimilar to my own review of the program document, Stewart's study researches and develops many positive attributes of the WCP project. Inclusive here is the relatively well-supported promotion that the WCP proactively engages the need for more inclusively responsive curricula and that the best interests of the student are to be protected where possible. But the document does "come under fire" from practitioners and stakeholders in consideration of what it does not do.

In reviewing the data I have constructed three main foci of concern regarding the critiques/criticisms engendered to this discussion.

1. A number of interviewees are critical of the document's philosophical focus and thrust, finding perceived innovations and changes to be unnecessary or inappropriate:

   ❖ Specific individuals find what they perceive to be an appropriate move towards diversity on the part of the WCP planners. These individuals state that the greater focus upon Aboriginal and

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[3] Given the present understanding of the project and its implication for classroom learning in Alberta

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Francophone content and outcomes is unnecessary. Furthermore, the change comes at the expense of academic rigour as emphases involve a move towards "value" at the expense of academic content.

❖ Others challenge planners to define social studies as a discipline, again questioning cooptation of the project by what they label to be "special interests." The promotion of Aboriginal and French interests is seen as perhaps laudable but unnecessary in a discipline which is ostensibly value/culturally neutral.

❖ The continued role of citizenship education is applauded by all almost universally as participants both in support and in opposition to the program feel tolerance, understanding, patriotism, are commendable goals for Canadian students. However, there is a significant divergence in understanding citizenship. For those questioning the role of a culturally diverse curriculum, there is no necessary connection between citizenship and diversity.

2. Many respondents applaud the larger goals of the WCP program but express concerns regarding the practicality of implementing such a program at the classroom level:

❖ One area of logistic concern is the "distinct outcomes" mandate promoting a more localized focus in terms of curriculum design and assessment specific to areas of Aboriginal and Francophone education. The question, "how is this to work," is frequently asked as respondents make notice of the specific demands that such an expectation will impose. Both accessible regimes of teacher knowledge and time are questioned. Can the average teacher implement a curriculum with significant divergency in terms of teacher expectation in curriculum and test design?

❖ Many teachers find the larger project itself to be confusing and at times poorly articulated in terms of expectations and goals. Many identify that the current challenges of curriculum crowding and content

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divergency as components that can be further exacerbated by the protocol project. What we see here is another demand made on already overtaxed practitioners.

3. Others express support for the project but harbour reservations given the basic design structure of the program:

❖ The decision on the part of the WCP planners to focus upon three areas of cultural engagement has produced a plethora of critiques both from practitioners in favour of a more culturally diverse curriculum project and those who find the fractionization of the curriculum to be in opposition to the larger interest of the discipline. Many expressed concern over the decision to compartmentalize and over-essentialize three main cultural mega-groups. First Nations peoples are bunched and collected together under the distinction Aboriginal without requisite efforts to distinguish between these groups on the part of culture, history or socio-political composition. Francophone groups endure similar treatment. For some, issue is taken with the Francophone distinction. One respondent asked if there is such a group in a Western Canadian context culturally, or is it merely a linguistic variation. Key criticisms are reserved for the third category, which is intended to encompass both the white anglicized majority interests, but all other visible and ethnically distinguishable groups, white or otherwise which diverges from a mainstream norm. Are we to believe that the differences are negligible and thus justify the homogenous distinctions? Does the "founding fathers" philosophy of the document penalize other Canadians who are culturally distinct are but not earmarked as significant contributors to the Canadian landscape? Many challenge this approach as it serves to ritualize and reduce other diversity, including major contributors to Western settlement (e.g. Ukrainians), to a mainstream anglicized mega-category. This is not to say that these groups, in many ways, are not mainstream – although

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mainstreaming is a pretence-involving acceptance on the part of both actor and other with some groups certainly issued a more eligible status than others. It is important that one does not confuse the call for a greater ethic of multiculturalism, with the pronouncement that everything goes. But to construct three, or maybe four, somewhat arbitrary distinctions only reinforces the special rights and privileges of those founding groups.

❖ The objectification of culture is another strategic concern. One participant lobbies that culture and culture based curriculum must firstly recognize the fluidity of identity. Thus curriculum cannot teach culture but merely facilitate culture at local levels. The danger in attempting to itemize and define the characteristics of the stated group is that one imposes the signifier upon the individual. The reduction of the modern Aboriginal student to a historical archetype was expressed as an example of this phenomenon.

❖ Participants also found the process of cultural categorization to be demographically unsound in terms of the recent changes and demands in our classrooms.

Stewart's study identifies and reports concerns as well as commendations as expressed by stakeholders in consultation. I have focused on apprehensions here in terms of the potential problems arising from a program focus of this type. The respondents in my study (reviewing the program draft) have generated an evaluative database that can be weighed against the information reported above. Significant commonality does occur in examining discursive products in chapter five. In terms of evaluating this critique a similar interrogative tenor may be maintained.

A MOVE FROM THE WCP DOCUMENT TO THE NEW *K-9 SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM OF STUDIES* AND *FRONT*: RESPONDENT OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

CITIZENSHIP: A DISCOURSE OF ACCOMMODATION

A LOOK AT THE SOCIAL STUDIES "FRONT"

The Social Studies program covers grade levels kindergarten to grade nine. The Front attached to the document is inclusive of all grade levels offered in the province of Alberta. Significantly the vision and approach to this Program moves away from past efforts drawing attention to the significance of culture and identity to the learned and adapted understandings of citizenship vital to the Canadian learner at this stage of history. Thus citizenship and identity is at the heart of this document both in terms of its purpose and methodological arrangement. The program writers make claim to a Program that encapsulates the diverse cultural perspectives as contributing to "Canada's evolving realities" (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 1). The attempt is to engender "a sense of belonging for every student," dovetailing that membership with the demands of a "responsible citizenship locally, nationally and globally" (p. 1). The document notes that 'citizenship' and 'identity' stand at the heart of any earnest approach to learning in terms of the Social Studies curricula. The concepts are interpreted as overlapping in that responsible citizenship incorporates a deeper understanding and respect for the differences of others. To facilitate this recognition the Program adapts citizenship and identity through a *multiple perspective* (encouraging multiple perspectives in curriculum presentation and instruction) approach described as mandatory in the recognition of a pluralistic Canada. As students introduce a divergence of perspectives in terms of how they view their roles as Canadians and Canada itself, so the Program must endeavour to accommodate these differences as formed by individual and collective identities formed through "culture, heritage and history." (p. 2)

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Living together in an increasingly pluralistic world requires an understanding and appreciation of diverse view points and perspectives that arise from differences in culture, gender, class, ideology, spirituality, philosophy, values, language and experience. By exploring diverse perspectives surrounding the historical and current issues affecting society, and through grounding these issues in their own experiences and understandings, students are able to acquire through the Alberta Social Studies Program the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential to developing a sense of self, place and civic responsibility (p. 2).

The objective then is to build upon a respect for the diverse heritages of Canadians by exploring "partnerships in Canadian society" so that all citizens feel a strong sense of belonging (p. 2). This inclusive environment, however, incorporates a somewhat truncated list of members as special emphasis is given to arguably four main groupings, Aboriginal peoples (First Nation, Inuit, Metis), Francophone Canadians, "culturally diverse groups in Canada", and an other unnamed group the exact essence of which to be assumed by the Program reader. Promoting multiple perspectives (Program claim, not mine), this Program is said to be *issue-focused* in approach. The goal here is to promote "interactive experiential, authentic learning that encourages students to challenge their presuppositions and construct their own points of view" (p. 5), the task here, to encourage critical reflection, a questioning attitude and an appetite for diverse points of view. The projected result, then, is a student who becomes better informed, creative, critical, active decision makers (p. 5). As stated above, the Program is organized around the concepts of *citizenship* and *identity,* and incorporates six thematic strands. The themes for this Program are - *culture and community*; *global connections*; *the land place and people*; *power, authority and decision-making*; *time, continuity and change*; and *economics and resources.* These strands provide a focus for the content and are introduced with both general and specific outcomes, for each grade level. The intention is to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes needed (p. 5). The document broadly defines citizenship as "the understanding of relationships among needs, rights, roles and responsibilities, governance, and an awareness of one's capacity to affect change."

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Identity is seen as that which is formed by "multiple factors and processes, such as cultural affiliations, language, interaction, membership in communities, shaped historical experiences, symbols and traditions, observation and self-reflection, media, gender, religion and socio-economic situations (p. 6).

By incorporating content organized around citizenship and identity and focused through the six strands, pronounceable goals and outcomes are to be met. General outcomes are inclusive of the broader areas in terms of skills, attitudes and knowledge which students are expected to know upon completion of a grade. Specific outcomes are statements identifying the necessary components in terms of value, attitudes and knowledge that will bolster the "general" goals. Knowledge and understanding involves internalization of information, facts, concepts, and ideas derived from various sources. Outcomes related to values and attitudes are intended to assist students in becoming responsible citizens and are described as "the expression of one's values of beliefs about an issue or topic" (p. 8). Outcomes related to skills are divided into four categories – dimensions of thinking, social participation, communication, and information management – and are intended to assist students in the development of effective practice and learning from grade to grade. A *scope and sequence* is provided to assist the practitioner in envisioning the larger demonstrative structure of the program formulating linkages from one grade to the next. The themes in each grade are claimed to be components of a central theme incorporated in the grade title.

Ultimately the document is intended to incorporate a more inclusive philosophy in responding to the needs of a diverse student cohort. Similarly there is a strongly communicated intention of undoing many of the mistakes and/or misapprehensions of past curricula in terms of which histories, values and imperatives are reported and whose stories go unnoticed or remain misunderstood. Thus we witness an evolving discourse on Louis Riel, acknowledgment of the contributions of Aboriginal and Metis peoples and an attempt to incorporate Francophone perspectives into the text of living history. Presented is a re-imagining of the notion of Canadian citizenship and identity, a community of actively contributing members drawn into nationhood through their goals and perseverance. The context here is promoted in rhetoric of reinvention, an

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advancement of a new Canada. On the surface the presentation seems not so different from Anderson's notion of an *imaginary community* in that Canada is re-imagined, identities and citizenship components incorporated into a different nation - different than that Canada which for decades rigidly adhered to a British conventionality of protocol and structure. Canada now includes the province of Quebec, a multitude of Francophone communities from East to West, and a diverse Aboriginal component now worthy of recognition and reappraisal. The *imagined community* is an inclusive one, progressive in terms of a national history growing distinct in its challenges and successes in drawing upon the resources and commitment of diverse groups and actors. The recognition of Canada's peoples is an attempt to carry forward this multiple perspectival vision based upon a diverse identity and citizenship.

Unfortunately the ethic begins to break down as identity constructs become further defined and interpreted. Citizenship types fuel 'us and them' camps that recognize some groups as culturally significant while exnominating the identities and contributions of others. Aboriginal peoples and Francophones are caught in between, relegated more leverage as founding peoples than those falling under the "culturally diverse groups" category, yet still in need of recognition as authentic (or legally acknowledged equals) Canadians. The document carves up, compartmentalizes and documents identity roles while listing contributions made to the Canadian scene. The majority group however resists this essentializing discourse despite making up the bulk of the Canadian citizenship, a group, at times, peopled by descendents of British and other Northern European nations, but not always, as this poorly defined centralized mainstream swells and contracts. [4] In a rare allusion the contribution of all Canadians are said to be read through a foundational matrix of British colonization and institutionalization (that is in terms of the larger political and legal practices), the

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[4] It is important that one does not conflate this white majority mainstream with those things and peoples British, or perhaps descended from Northern European communities on the continent. This is not my intention. I promote that the document functions to differentiate things ethnic, diverse, or cultural from a mainstream norm that requires little illustration or definition. At times this centre appears somewhat small and circumscribed. Other times considerable larger as mainstream normalcy is extended to other Canadians. However, the more ethnicized (time in country, group solidarity, language), raced (especially visibility), or classed one becomes the farther one deviant's or moves from this centre.

English language and the constitutional guarantees issued to all.[5] This ethic does not exist without significant equivocation as the Francophone moves in and out of the mainstream. The Francophone is said to be integral to Canadian history, identity and culture. However, the Francophone Canadians are also "multicultural" (one of the rare times the term is used in this document) and share differing traditions and histories. French is said to be the other official language, the status supplicant, yet contributory to the Canadian personality. In the promotion of Aboriginal peoples, the reader is introduced to the idea of culture, worldview, tradition and the physical world. This group appears markedly different than the named Francophone community or the unnamed mainstream norm. For Aboriginals we engage signifiers such as 'culturally diverse,' 'culturally relevant,' 'culturally sensitive,' 'culturally responsive,' and 'holistic understanding.' Aboriginals are recognized politically through their relationships with the Canadian government in treaties and protocols. The Francophone experience is validated legally through minority language rights, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and bicultural/multicultural recognition in terms of group significance - one of the original two charter groups.

The English-speaking norm however, stands apart from such legal or institutional recognition, cultural description or substantive identification. Their existence assumed, their contributions to the foundation of Canada, that part of the whole minus the efforts of the other three parties. Tremendous diversity, however, exists for "culturally diverse groups." Their experiences differ from the 'multicultural' experiences of the French or the 'diverse' Aboriginal. With the English norm diversity is not a factor, the word immigration one associated with other "culturally diverse groups." The United Kingdom, however, is identified as a country of origin for specific members of the Canadian contingent. However, this is the first and last time this connection is made, standing in contradiction to the larger discourse.

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[5] It should be pointed out that to criticize what I promote to be an exaggerated emphasis upon the cultural institutions of founding nations like Britain is not to advocate total relativism. The criticism can be managed or stewarded in ways not susceptible to *slippery slope* interpretations. Many countries have managed multicultural approaches quite affectively without declining into some version of Babel. The either chaos or colonization argument is not inductively supportable and seems empirically as unattractive leading to a consolidations of power more oppressive than culturally identifiable.

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Minority groups are said to have made significant contributions to Canada's history, identity and culture. Significantly, the signifier's culture and identity are seldom used to reference the mainstream norm. *Culturally Diverse Groups in Canada,* however, also assume a mainstream norm, that is if the category is not to include all Canadians. Culturally diverse groups provide membership in need of multiple perspectives, may have 'immigrated' or have descendants who have, develop competencies, hail from 'diverse backgrounds,' are encouraged to 'fully participate,' display 'linguistic variance,' are pluralistic, raced, ethnic in origin, have colour, and relate to a global environment.

That these four groups can be defined and represented in such a substantively different language begs of a deeper reading. The question becomes, in terms of our popular memories and future visions, what form of 'citizenship' and identity' are we to 'imagine' for the next generation of learners in Alberta?

INCLUSION, INDIVIDUALISM, AND RELATIVISM AND THE NEED FOR A CANADIAN IDENTITY

How does this document, given the emphasis on citizenship and matters of identity, construct the Canadian identity archetype? By this I am not simply asking for a political refinement of nationhood, or historical/legal definitions of some official citizenship, rather a definition inclusive of cultural citizenship (symbolic citizenship). Anderson's idea of an *imagined community* can prove valuable here as a guide. *An imagined community is* sustained and constructed out of the collective/popular memories of a given societal group (Wilden, 1980; Anderson, 1994). Accepting this, then some direct correspondence between bureaucratic/legal status and Canadianness is not sufficient for understanding 'citizenship' (or symbolic citizenship). An example of what I call a more direct approach would be to offer an unambiguous definition predicated on a given criteria (e.g. the Constitutional Act of 1867), indicating that all that meet the directives of these criteria are Canadian, and those whom cannot, to be of that group which is other. Certainly understanding what a Canadian is should include such definitions of citizenship, and while I promote that these definitions not

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sufficient, they are contributory. But citizenship, in terms of some greater sense of belonging, moves well beyond such frameworks. However, it is an expectation that such boundaries are marked.

There is tremendous hesitation on the part of this text to define Canadian identity in 'direct' foundational terms.[6] For example, to construct a citizenship identity directly associated with the legalistic/historical distinction of nationhood it may be expected that a document would provide a given criteria concerning the meaning of the term Canadian (e.g. confederation 1867). But to use such a definition of Canadian citizenship, one would effectively delimit (de-Canadianize) pre-confederation contributions in terms by specific actors, political entities, and groups. As mentioned the document avoids line drawing, arguably to facilitate a more expansive cultural distinction of citizenship.

A direct political correspondence model might move away from attempts at stressing culture as a binding imperative in Canadian formation and maintenance. This is not the case here. The reverse seems the case, as Canada and things Canadian are carved out of an assemblage of cultural products and events.

The document promotes Canada as a patchwork quilt assembled from the desires and interests of diverse contributors. However, this approach ignores inequities and disparities in resources, status and control – both historically and in the present. On the global front diversity is held up as recognition and cooperation ignoring the deeper complexities affecting trade and politics. This indicates that erecting group interests and needs around distinguishable ethnic, class, and race lines is difficult in this porous terrain. Multiculturalism is adapted to the mandates of "pluralism," steering clear of historical identity constructions, official policies, or conflict-based understandings identifying racism or classism, or meaningful historical work based upon anti-racist models. A significant attempt is issued in constructing Canada as geography with

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[6] For example at one point the document acknowledges the importance of the BNA Act in the formation of that place which is referenced as Canada but then later in the Program (Grade 7) the importance of Aboriginal, British and French peoples are noted for their contributions to "pre-confederate Canada" (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 75). Yet Canada is not acknowledged as existing before the British-French migration. This leads the reader into associating this era of European migration as significant if not synonymous with the advent of Canada.

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spatial emphasis credited in contributing to our unique Canadian identity. The focus here is on environment as a conditioning factor (environmental determinism) with economies, societies, cultures dramatically influenced, in terms of policy and politics, by environmental/physical proclivities of land, location and climate. Technology and history are recognized as other contributing factors, as the Canadian is formed in so much environmentally related tectonics. Superimposed upon this is a history, flawed at times, but growing towards *liberal democracy* in that political precedence is given to the evolving 'Canadian spirit' - superstructural communication and interaction (Alberta Learning, 2002).

Diversity as a contributory spirit of citizenship is also idiosyncratic and ideological in dimension as the list includes the personal constructions of self. A citizenship based upon cultural diversity and multiple perspectives then falls into a relativism devoid of meaningful substantive historical analysis, and critical dialogue. Social Studies helps students define who they are in relation to those who surround them and roles fulfilled. Citizenship is carved out in wide and sweeping inclusive lines predicated upon public accommodation and, where possible, inclusive social and ideological policies that recognize all citizens as potential contributing members of Canada. In terms of engendering skills, the emphasis is on building autonomous thinkers, actors that acknowledge the role of groups, and civic maintenance. In the younger grades, themes of *home, school, and community* stress diverse points of view different from our own, tolerance, and pluralism. Conflict resolution and respect for others emphasize the need to accept all peoples residing in Canada

Individual rights are emphasized, but moving past the liberal ethic of individualism and negative rights, groups and subcultures are welcomed, recognized as realities of modern pluralistic Canada, and must be embraced within the larger national context. However, in the blizzards of acceptance, diversity and individualism that orchestrates an inclusive Canada the text makes no acknowledgment of how power (privilege, wealth, cultural capital) cuts through these notions of negative rights. We are all issued the equal recognition to express ourselves as Canadians,

regardless of how unequal we are. The minor complication that some groups or individuals are in a much more advantaged position to do that seems of little concern.

The threat of over-identification, as perceived by some critics, of over-involvement, of catering to the interests, histories, practices and idiosyncrasies of an exponentially growing collective of categories, the threat of presenting a fractioned and centerless model for Canadian citizenship and identity, then would appear to be misguided. The beneficence of citizenship ignores a significant range of economic and social diversity as impacting upon Canada's peoples. Inclusion, in terms of eligibility and the call for service, fails to move beyond the theoretical abstractions of rights based discourse (negative freedom vs. positive freedoms),[7] cultural pluralism, and universal suffrage as a formative germ in modern democratic societies. Furthermore, the text refuses to surrender up the hegemonic leverage so familiar to Social Studies programs. Thus identity is consistently paired with verbs emphasizing duty, obligation, growth, and adjustment.[8] Further syntagmatic parings link culture to minority or identity with diversity. That some invisible group of Canadians are effectively warehoused and centred beyond the connotative effects of such associations speaks to a strong, assimilationist voice - or to carry it further – a discourse of *othering*. [9] Students are consistently asked to:

- Reflect critically on variety of worldviews and perspectives
- Foster responsibility and active citizenship
- Understand values of one's own heritage and history
- Appreciate and respect the values of various individuals and groups

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[7] *Negative* freedom from something - individual freedom independent from the interference of others, e.g. freedom of speech, of movement, freedom from political restriction. Positive freedom as\to something - justice, happiness, reason, knowledge, governance.

[8] Dominant verbs: informed, critical, reflection, understanding, internalization, commitment, participation. Citizen needs: willingness to contribute, positive self-esteem, strong sense of identity, responsibility, capacity to affect change (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 1-3)

[9] Othering is referenced earlier under the terminology of the "other" but must be distinguished in kind from that Other (which appears in upper case) used in the discourse model (appendix). Both references draw from the work of Jacques Lacan. The Great Other as incorporated into the discourse analysis signifies the rule bearing conventions of language and in its adaptive form speaks to that ever pervasive artificer which when exposed introduces uncertainty in our desire for truth. The smaller case other is adapted from Lacan's "mirror stage" and symbolizes that mirror image which reflects our commonality in humanity while emphasizing the rift perpetually separating an immature self from that symbolic other (immigrant, braced, classed) who is recognized as different and apart.

- Understand cultural diversity, official bilingualism and intercultural approaches
- Understand roles, perspectives, contributions, heritage and history of diverse cultures (Alberta Learning, 2002, p.)

However, the intention here is not to reinvent a Canadianism of the past. A Canadianism that silenced and punished *others* whose dominant features and/or practices, either through appearance or linguistic/cultural variation, were inerasable and thus could not assimilate well into the accepted norm. The goal here is to *add-on* to an already sanctioned 'understanding' and 'appreciation' of what it means to be a *Canadian*; to invite others into the fold in terms of sharing in Canada's history, global stature, and identity structure. The message, tolerance and understanding by some, an active adaptation and adjustment by others. That those people of culture and identity (minority groups) are not asked to tolerate or understand the mainstream Canadian centre is not an accident given the discursive prevalence of an obfuscated status quo, the ballast by which compromise and accommodation may be executed without fear of capsizing. However, recognizing that the message here is consistently delivered at the level of the political, a society devoid of structural imbalance, oppressive class structures, or histories of group hegemony and opportunism, it may be arguably supported that any serious effort to design and implement a more sophisticated understanding of societal diversity and citizenship based upon, conflict, negotiation and compromise would fail.

CULTURAL PLURALISM, MULTICULTURALISM AND THE NEED FOR A CRITICAL DISCOURSE

In section 8.1 - Elements of Worldviews - page 91 of the Program document, nine years into the program, the Alberta Social Studies student is to be introduced to the concept of *imperialism*. Two years later this same learner is to discover the meaning of terms like *ethical* and *bias*. This program while constructed around cultural diversity on a multiple perspectival framework ignores the role of contestation, conflict and resistance in a Canada, which apparently, was formed around the mutually advantaging principles of conciliation and cooperation.

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Moving into the present, students, particularly those possessing "identity" and "culture," are encouraged to participate further in maintaining this strong and equitable nation. That the North American continent was conquered through coercion, dishonesty and violence seems of little consequence. The "Fur Trade" is promoted (in more than one grade - e.g. grade 2) as a cooperative venture beneficial to all parties – French, British, Aboriginal - both in terms of the immediate profit and the long-term goals of the peoples and the future nation involved. Our error in the past, as Social Studies learners, seems not in validating the rightness of imperialistic aggression but rather for not celebrating the many players and partnerships involved.

Quite arguably, despite the stated intention of opening up the history and identity of a nation to a more representative viewpoint, the Program continues a strong curricula tradition based upon classroom socialization and assimilation. In terms of promoted values, attitudes and beliefs, the Canada of the year 2002 seems not so different from the Canada of old. This appears an incredible oversight given the role that conflict, contestation and resistance has played in the formation of Canada, a Nation, and continent, predicated upon historically definable values and practices certainly more European than not. That 10 years worth of social studies instruction neglects to name the nature of this conquest is problematic. The learner is left acknowledging an ideal of Canadian settlement and formation periodized in popular memory as progressive, and amicable.

The *discourse of renaissance and reason* perseveres and facilitates feel-good interpretations of Canadian growth and development in contrast to polarities of aggression and cruelty that would evolve under other circumstances (not named).[10] Exceptions are provided, but with little social cost. For example, in grade eight, a review of Spanish colonization of the Aztec civilisations indicates that students need

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[10] The discourse of *renaissance* and *reason* draws upon the rightness of specific secular European ideological advancements, e.g. *democracy, reason, enlightenment, rights of man,* and holds these achievements out as evidence of both correct direction choice and accomplishment. The 911 disasters invited a renewed interest in the tenets of enlightenment as media agencies constructed binary models of us and them predicated upon pre-renaissance and post-renaissance mentalities. That Europe and European descendents used these same post-renaissance technologies, social and otherwise, to introduce the most potentially violent and controlling era in human history appears to be lost on many.

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acknowledge that Spanish imperialism brought hardships upon the peoples involved. No reference is made to British or French aggression, the selective eradication of Aboriginal groups and animal populations. The *renaissance* model remains relatively intact as these events take place in mid-latitude regions carried out by a Mediterranean nation a significant distance culturally and geographically from Britain or France (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 87).

The voice of inclusion ignores complexities of power, politics and control. It is ten years before a student is directed to seriously review the significance of Japanese internment, Chinese Head Tax, or Residential Schooling; years after accepting the Aboriginal experience in Canada as contributory, one predicated upon affability and mutually beneficial coexistence (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 102). Ukrainian internment (WWI) remains a well-kept secret and is never mentioned. The Canadian orient connection at best is advanced in isolated cells, pockets of diversity within the Canadian experiment, builders of railroads and sometimes victims issued artefactual status as atemporal anomalies illustrating the richness of the Canadian past, or as members of "culturally diverse groups" (groups to adjust around) enriching and adding to the Canada of the present. Significant Chinese settlement and expansion in pre-confederation British Columbia is acquiesced as British privilege is exnominated in a citizen construct organized around a different Canada, the Canada as European experiment. By inviting all parties to the table as Canadians, a hegemonic firewall is erected disguising a model for advancement that denies the role of relevant institutions, structures, and power in the formation and representation of group citizenship as Canadians.

By attaching an overarching culture-based model for understanding to diversity the text ossifies and isolates contributory groups, either as contributors to the past or of the present. These groups are viewed as diverse members, validated in method in kind to the majority charter groups – that is issued credit in the successful settlement and development of "Canada" as a nation. Are we to assume that Aboriginal groups (sometimes described as diverse and others serving as the unified body of the *other)*, Chinese settlers, and Galician farmers all stand historically as complicit in the

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formation of a Canada that sought to exterminate, normalize and control their presence. By ignoring structural and institutional influences, both past and present, by refusing to open a discourse on social class, racism, or multiculturalism the text silences all who might share their story. Here Canada is exposed as that country which excludes. This Canada, as optioned through the collective memories of Alberta Learning's planners, is non-representative of significant group interests and differences, indicating a need for a cultural model not locked into some *de facto* definition serving to validate an official culture, as advanced through state resources. The untidiness and diversity component of nation formation are effectively disguised under a monoculture that is only accepting of difference that does not deviate from accepted views and practices.

On the very last page of the document the student is instructed to heed the changing dynamic of labour unions, and the role that these changes might play in the future (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 105). But analysis may prove difficult for a cohort with no instruction (at least in the context of the Program) or no true knowledge of class issues, union formation, or income related disparity. The focus remains on the political-cultural that is, a societal interpretation that ignores materialist calls for distributive justice, societal restructuring, or more equitable institution treatment of the indigent. Promoting an ethic of *liberal pluralism* textual reference circumvents issues of national poverty,[11] economic and cultural reproduction, and the ever-growing need to reappraise our current policies on social justice – both at home and abroad.[12]

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[11] It is my position that although this document on the discursively advocates and defends "liberal pluralism" as a political ethic, the failure to substantively support the need or advocacy of pluralism contradicts such a claim. The document is arguably neo-liberal in approach.

[12] John Rawls in an attempt to define in impartial terms an adequate formulation for a social contract (in search for a just society) that will establish a framework from within, in terms of how just actions can be evaluated promotes two principles that must be agreed upon and struck under the "veil of ignorance":

First Principle:
- Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty of all.

Second Principle:
- Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:
  - o (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, and
  - o (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality and opportunity.

For example, in 8.2, "Worldviews: Isolation and Adaption," the reader is habituated to the need of accepting the *worldviews* of others in a superstructurally focused analysis that continues to resist more sophisticated models focusing on political-economy. Furthermore, I advocate that, even at cultural levels, worldviews do not develop ubiquitously within larger societal contexts. Understandings are struck, continuously contested and renegotiated under conditions of power.

POWER AND THE MIRACLE OF COOPERATION:

On page seventy of the Program document the reader is introduced to a focus on issues of government, self and group rights and decision-making, including pieces on Aboriginal self-government and language rights. An interesting subject matter, however, the debate seems moot and detached. There appears little acknowledgement of power as a factor in any political or social action or intercourse. That the students involved are surrounded by power, and exhibit power in their day-to-day activities speaks to the multidimensionality in human interaction. Yet, power, chosen as one of the six strands affecting content, is rarely acknowledged aside from issues directly engaging official institutional responses (i.e. legislative and executive functions of state and society). To suggest that a country like Canada created and maintained along specific geo-political principles, many directly antithetical to the interests of individuals and groups encountered and engaged in the process, and not acknowledge power and conflict is a strange narrative indeed. It is an action involving spurious analysis and a less than sophisticated theoretical structure. For Aboriginal students, or any student, to believe that for the greater measure Canadian, French and British officials struck treatise out of an ethic recognizing the greater good of all involved is to override context in favour of dishonesty. Aboriginal groups, as do many groups, exist in present day realities that are politically charged and confrontational. State

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Interestingly (in the text) the emphasis here remains solely upon the first principle advocating negative freedoms without the necessary qualification based upon a desire for a greater equity. (Rawls, 1997)

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institutions and civil society make demands on Aboriginal peoples (e.g. territorial expansion and resource appropriation), which require ample reserves of capital, culture capital (in terms of legal and institutional knowledge), and vigilance.

To suggest that all share similar political views (or as devastating to not inform students repeatedly that they do not), or that power materializes only in situations involving formal administration and executive control is to engage in bombast of an irresponsible nature. The 2002 Program draft is a document drafted almost entirely without a study of power effectively circumventing conflict and conflict oriented explanations in favour of models promoting compromise and cooperation. Never particularly strong in the WCP project, conflict is invisible here.

The text advocates that students can enhance a critical sense of self and group identity (in the effort to better understand past role and ritual) with the goal of seriously contributing to the nation of Canada and its place in the world. The document expressly indicates that students are expected to develop reflective and critical skills in engaging issues. But there is little leadership as to how these skills are to be employed or what it means to develop a critically engaged self. For this document there remains:

o A need to provide greater reference as to how student skills are to be used in a critical sense
o A need for criticism of power and abuse regarding membership roles in society, no mention of global imperialism and oppression
o A need to relate - in the development of self position, experience, group membership and history - to political/power positions within society
o A need for a discourse on imperialism, colonialism, racism (e.g. the handling of the Riel affair speaks to more than his culpability before the law)
o A need to introduce principles of conflict and contestation in any reading of the European impact (resulting in the eventual formation of Canada)
o A need to recognize that the question of identity formation and citizenship (to which this document is dedicated) is firstly a political enquiry employing both vertical and horizontal axis of power
o A need to recognize that the document itself is an instrument of power and contestation and should be handled carefully as with any instrument which can bring harm to others

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MULTICULTURALISM:

If the employment and function of coercive and institutional power (both hierarchically and horizontally) is selectively hidden from view, recent boasts in the WCP Foundations Document (2000) of moving towards a multicultural curriculum are also lost in the development of this breakaway program draft. This text religiously avoids use of the term Multiculturalism, multicultural education, or even mention of Canada's official Multicultural policy. It appears that the term pluralism has been selected as an appropriate substitute for multiculturalism although no mention is made as to why this is so. Perhaps there was the impression amongst relevant curricula personnel that the term "multiculturalism" carries with it significant connotation and would be resisted by specific groups or actors.[13] However, one would be hard pressed to explain why there is no mention of Canada's Official Multicultural Policy in a text organized around the conceptual precepts of culture and identity. References are made to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms on several occasions and Francophone, Aboriginal and "cultural" peoples are to take solace in the knowledge that their interests are protected via this document. Certainly the focus and tone of much of the Program text assumes what could be interpreted as a diversity based multicultural discourse. There is a strong acknowledgement indicating a greater need for perspective, and the pronounced need for students to read the text through their own identity positions. For example, the grade four thematic focus upon community places emphasis upon an understanding of how people live elsewhere employing:

- A study of physical characteristics
- Selections of land, places, people reflecting diverse cultures (Aboriginal & Franco)
- Methods utilizing narratives, stories and experiences
- A focus on ethnographies to build perspective – dynamics of people, place, culture. (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 47)

One is at a loss to explain how such an approach might differ from many of the multicultural approaches employed by jurisdictional bodies (school boards) across the

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[13] Note that this group can include members of Canada's charter groups (French and English) as well as Aboriginal parties – all issued special status under a number of constitutional agreements

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country. The presentation is lacking in a critical discourse, a common shortcoming of many superficial 'food, fair, and fashion' multicultural approaches. As an aside, it is interesting to discover that the methodology presented for this section (i.e. the incorporation of oral and narrative forms of presentation) does not run the full length of a document reinforcing the claimed legitimacy of Aboriginal oral traditions. Possibly, the most plausible reading is that word multiculturalism has been culled from the document (present in WCP) because the Program has no intention of acknowledging cultural diversity (pluralism a good thing if differences do not challenge a state sponsored official culture).

I must emphasize the possible benefits of a multicultural focus particularly if that focus incorporates a critical discourse. The question remains, does the pluralism model used here allow for an in-depth analysis of people/group, identity, and culture? Does it incite anything more than reductionist interpretation? Needed is a stronger theoretical background anchored in historical Canada.

The discourse of *compromise and recognition* as employed in this document promotes that Canada is and will be the greater product of community effort, compromise complete in the recognition of group and individual rights. Thus the sections on fur traders view the contributions of Aboriginal, Francophone, and British peoples as equally relevant and purposeful in striking compromise towards a prosperous trading industry (grade 2,7). *Diversity* is said to involve the coexistence of a variety of cultural groups; *pluralism* to be based upon coexistence. Generalization, equivocation and circularity surround efforts to define and employ terms such as identity, culture, and pluralism which, if not handled carefully, can be rendered down to institutionalized interpretations focusing on tolerance as superimposed upon both those deserving of acceptance, and others not deserving of recognition.[14] Are teachers certain as to how to incorporate or even interpret what these concepts mean? A

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[14] As students of society we must appraise when it is appropriate to tolerate and when simple toleration may prove educationally irresponsible (negative sense as we should not tolerate specific abuses) or inappropriate (we should affirm what is praiseworthy not simply tolerate the same). Equally true we must learn to distinguish between intolerance (a prejudicial response) and non-tolerance (the refusal to acknowledge acts and symbols of ignorance, prejudice, and hate). (DeFaveri, 1986)

tautology seems in the making here with the discourse of difference played through diversity and inclusion towards assimilation. Meaningful strategies in group expression and curricula advocacy may be lost to a language of individuality, cooperation, and "active citizenship." There is a need here for a greater theoretical development in our understandings of terms like diversity, culture, inclusion, citizenship, and identity, definitions that are historically situated and critically derived. There is a requirement that the model employed recognize class based disparities, racism, and the politics of inclusion. Do we empower through membership and inclusion or assimilate? Do we ask students to question the knowledge we offer them realizing that it cannot mean the same thing to all actors? How do we learn to differentiate between groups? Between principles? For example what do we invite when we provide theoretically weak structures and ask that:

- Students be able to name difference and see the benefit in sharing with others and groups
- Students coexist with other groups and nations through cooperation, peaceful participation – including caring for environment
- Students play a responsible, and respectful role in community life (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 15-29)

A greater understanding of multiculturalism, including its recognition, could dramatically enhance the capability of this document.[15] As it stands, the ideals of identity, citizenship, pluralism and multiperspectival, as recited and employed in this document communicate little to the novice, regardless of how well motivated intentions may be. Theoretically weak, ambiguous, and lacking a material/historical based line of critical enquiry it is with some justification that one question the true multicultural value of the Program.

GLOBALIZATION:

There is very little in the program to invite the student to more closely examine significant international issues as affected upon the themes of identity and citizenship

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[15] Recognition of a Canadian history as it evolved is simply a more honest approach than inventing a version that fits well with contemporary *isms* and ideologies. I reject the promotion that history is entirely perspective, seemingly a relativism as accessible and useful to reactionary interests as revisionists.

(e.g. trade consortiums, food cartels, free-trade, duty free zones, foreign debt, tied aid, despotism, etc). Yet the incorporation of the global sphere is important to the overall theme of the document and global themes are incorporated at several levels. As mentioned the discourse is far from critical and potential challenges are addressed in much the same fashion as with domestic concerns, that is, analyses on power are weak or non-existent with victims frequently responsible for their own austerity albeit it is recognized that overpopulation, environmental degradation, and world hunger are problems that affect us all.

For example, the Global Connections theme employed in grade three asks students to:

- Respect the equality of others
- Recognize how "their actions might affect people elsewhere" (3.2.1)
- Share environmental concerns by identifying global issues that affect the quality of life in communities around the world (3.2.3)
- Discuss organizations that support communities throughout world while determining types of actions one can take to make a difference (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 44)

However, will teachers know how to constructively use this opportunity in seeking a critical response to global forces that threaten the health and safety of all? There is no mention of war, of economic imperialism, or of ghettoization on a continental level. Third world issues are incorporated into and under the guise of environmental concern, poverty. Unfortunately these problems are not linked to causal factors such as structural adjustment, profit taking, and global capitalism. It is doubtful without meaningful theoretical development (necessary, even at the younger grades) the students of 2005 will come any closer to understanding the politics of global epidemics, poverty, and starvation than the generation that preceded them.

In terms of *globalization*, significant attention is given over to the liberalization of trade, *viz.* the exploration of trade agreements, tariffs, resource development, economic cooperation. There is further material devoted to global citizenship and understanding. However, again, the treatment is extremely limited in terms of both perspective and development. *Liberal/Neo-liberal* discourses are employed as the lenses by which students are expected to comprehend complex international histories,

events, and forms of social organization. The results promote the unfettered continuance of a tradition of First World ignorance and apathy that has so dramatically contoured the international landscape.

WOMEN:

In this text women are introduced as important. Unfortunately, through the employment of the concept women as that in opposition to other things not women the reader is left with a significant quantity of text where the group is excluded. Simply by emphasizing (in the Front) a need for educators to present an equitable representation of women across the curriculum (i.e. women are involved in all social and economic processes regardless of gender roles, historically established beliefs) greater parity could be accomplished. Grade seven, section 1.2, focuses on Aboriginal peoples with (the first meaningful treatment of Aboriginal people eight years into program) an accompanying section dedicated to Aboriginal women. The document asks us to acknowledge the role of Aboriginal women in the establishment of Canada. Are male Aboriginals then to be credited with (exnomination) Aboriginal contributions if not otherwise stated (i.e. the general social and political organization of groups involved)? Why do Aboriginal women require separation from men here? Is there a fear that the curriculum presented may not cover the histories and interests of half of a given population? If this is so, can we justify the claim that the curriculum is inclusive, or does it convey a strong male orientation? There remains an inherent danger that the reader or the instructor may misinterpret the basic motivations here (i.e. to involve a group that has historically been written out of the social studies text) if those are the motivations.[16] The overall coherency of such documents mis-positions women, marginalizing and patronizing a group that could feasibly necessarily be included on every page, goal and exercise of the project. Furthermore, to be truly inclusive the Program must permit not only the experiences of Aboriginal women or French women, but also all women, allowing for the experiences of both sex and gender to be

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[16] While one cannot control in every circumstance how a particular teacher will read a text, a more sophisticated narrative on a woman as a contributory member rather than a 'special interest' would be more instructive here.

personalized as subjective experience within the classroom context. The objectification of race, ethnicity and gender in one-package runs the risk of constructing an archetype that can symbolically alienate and marginalize those implicated (those falling within this identity position), while at the same time, given the generality of the description, capturing the existential and experiential essence of none.

Perhaps an inclusive curriculum should tolerate both boys and girls to present and/or discover specific identity associations within a learning forum rather than instruct the individual as to whom they are versus others. This is as true of historical figures as contemporary role models. The excessive patronizing of historical figures by downloading group associations on individual personalities engages in an inductive fallacy of division. Furthermore, the construction of the historical archetype as somehow representative of the contemporary actor archeologically freezes the lived and dynamic in time. To glamorize the activities of this chosen group engages a *Dances With Wolves* discourse facilitated in excessive atemporal objectification and essentialization.[17] If we are to single out women in need of study, as women and not individuals, then the inference is that the signifier women is held against that other binary to which they are held associate – men. Arguably not the entire range of purposeful human endeavour to which women are complicit and involved as people is inferred. The oppression of Aboriginal (group specific) women vs. Aboriginal men provides an example here. We cannot presuppose the assumed legitimacy of that other binary, whether titled white, men, middle-class, as central.[18] We must name it. The product of this assumption can be a discourse that symbolically marginalize, exclude, and diminish.

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[17] Dances With Wolves (1991) a tremendously successful screenplay focusing upon the 19th century lifestyles of the Lakota peoples v. American expansionism/imperialism, has been heralded by some as an accurate portrayal of Sioux life. Others criticize the film as a clever move to commodity a dead culture attired in a cultural regalia long since vanished. Interestingly a more recent release of the film includes one-hours worth of outtakes not in the original film. This originally edited material is more inclusive of the austerity, violence and pain that must have been a constant challenge to these people.
[18] As exnominated beyond name or description (see discourse analysis [appendix] on Othering)

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CANADA? THE CONSTRUCTION OF A GRAND NARRATIVE

In grade seven, theme three – "Canada up to the 21st Century," students are asked to describe how culture, language and religion have become issues in an increasingly pluralistic society (Alberta Learning 2002, p. 84). In the same segment, students are asked to assess the impacts of immigration on Aboriginal peoples. Similarly, students are petitioned to assess the impacts of immigration on Francophone peoples. The English speaking mainstream, however, seem impacted in other ways. The document questions the effect of immigration on cities, employment, as mainstream Canada is seen to occupy occupational and geographic niches rather than an identity feature hinging on culture.

I find this excerpt instructive as it contains examples of what I call the *Founding Fathers Discourse*, and of greater significance, the discourse of the *Grand Canadian Narrative*. The *Founding Fathers Discourse* evolves out of a conscious decision to focus upon specific cultural/ethnic groups as relevant to the founding and settlement of Canada. Included here are the two charter groups, the unnamed English-speaking residents mostly of British extraction, and the French, and a third, the Aboriginal peoples. Other cultural groups are supplicant to and ancillary in a text that credits specific and identifiable memberships as vital to Canadian ideals and development.

The second discourse is titled the *Grand Canadian Narrative*, conceptually, a theoretical construct fashioned after the work of Timothy Stanley. The discourse lays claim to assumptions over the channelling and reworking of 'popular memory,' through an 'imagined community.' To describe how culture, language and religion has become issue in an increasingly pluralistic society is to deny the significance of these factors (or pluralism itself) in the past. It is to imagine a Canada that only recently has been impacted by immigration or out of nation settlement.

Yet the history of the North American continent has been one of settlement, population mobility and the interpenetration of peoples. To eliminate the first 10,000 years of intercultural contact fuelled by culture, language and religious diversity requires only that we discredit North America and North Americans as harbingers of Canadian growth and institutionalization. Stanley claims that instrumental to the

notion of our present day Canada, separated from the diversity/pluralism which was the nature of North America at the time of European penetration, is a re-imagination of all things Canadian. It is to construct, or remember, a new community, one that better subscribes to the political and economic forces of the present. Arguably, this program document endeavours upon this very path with the entity Canada differentiated from the continent North America, the proliferation of Aboriginal peoples, and the subsequent Asian and Eastern European emigration.

As mentioned the document, while acknowledging the BNA Act as significant in Canadian development, references Canada much earlier (pre-confederation Canada). However, there is no reference to Canada or Canadians at any point that proceeds or deviates from those political and jurisdictional institutions facilitated primarily through the offices of British and French exploration and settlement (Alberta Learning, 2002 p. 75). Almost the entire grade seven year is devoted to a discourse on European expansionism, settlement and the development of Canada as a nation. We see Canada grow out of an era of conquest in European history fuelling a popular memory of Canada as European, British and French, a Canada relatively homogeneous in ethnic makeup. The word ethnic is never levelled at British or French citizenry but is reserved for those who deviated from this norm. The discourse of *Whiteness* then underwrites the Grand Canadian Narrative imagining a community built upon the ability to adopt and reconcile other peoples into a Canadian dream of expansion and consolidation.[19]

The project of Canada is not diverse - others made it that way. Aboriginal cultures are said to have contributed to both exploration and settlement as Metis guides, fur traders and providers of the staples necessary for Europeans to survive the winter (both in grades two and seven). There is no reference to the ignorance, greed, incompetence and aggression of the Western European vanguard in their attempts to explore and navigate the Northwest (Wiebe, 1994). No acknowledgement of the toll which Western European expansion exacted from the Aboriginal populations

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[19] I use the term 'Whiteness' to indicate a relation of power and not race. Therefore, Ukrainian settlement and Chinese immigration share commonalities – at least historically – in that both groups experienced significant difficulty in the fight for recognition, and at times, liberty.

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confronted with famine, disease and at times a genocidal indifference towards their existence. Aboriginals rather are treated as *add-on* Canadians credited for their contributions in the conquest and settlement of Canada. In grade nine, students learn both Francophone and Aboriginal contributions to Canadian identity and citizenship. Aboriginals are credited with forming a unique relationship with the land (9.2.1), or formulating strong oral traditions (9.2.2). Students are asked to demonstrate an understanding of "First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples in Canada, to appreciate them as an integral part of Canada's identity " (Alberta Learning 2002 p. 103).

In ten years of academic study the era of colonialism is not mentioned. If one is to appreciate the role Aboriginal cultures play in Canadian history and development, then one must acknowledge the instrument of power, conflict and contestation as instrumental to Canadian growth. The grade nine section thematic title "Aboriginal Cultures and Presence in Canada" reinforces the precept that Canada is something alien to these North Americans albeit something that has enveloped them and their way of life. Are these peoples here on work visas? Would this explain their presence in Canada? What of substituting this for the title 'Aboriginal Peoples, the Canadian State: A History of Uncertainty, Conflict and Adjustment?" Would such a thematic focus only serve to deconstruct the Canadian Narrative so carefully assembled over ten years of study? In grade seven, theme one deals with intercultural contact between groups. Here the Metis are mentioned for the first time. There is also an outcome here that suggests that ethnic and cultural groups existed pre-confederation. This would seem to contradict suggestions elsewhere that ethnic and cultural diversity is a 20th century advent. But then the outcome is buried in the surrounding discourse of expansion and dominance. Seemingly, some European groups are not ethnically or culturally unique.

Grade seven, theme two, focuses upon the movement towards the West. Immigration and economic development are focused upon here. Fur trading and agriculture are important commodity markets. Immigrants, those needed workers brought to Canada to further this development, again, a significant disparity between this Canada and Canadian people that pre-exists the *other* (e.g. the Aboriginal, the

immigrant, and the culturally diverse). The West is something these people came to in search of citizenship and work, denying the reality of the prairie experience as the birthright of the Metis, the Bukovinians, the Black settler or French fur trader. Again in grade seven, students learn about Louis Riel and Sifton's hierarchy of institution and discrimination, but the episodes are isolated as aberrations, as embarrassments in an otherwise promising tale of conquest and cooperation. Through the discourse of victimization Aboriginal, Metis or cultural groups are seen as suffering sporadic periods of trauma in the Canadian/European quest for progress and development. Yet the losses here appear as contrived as the contributions. These groups magically pop in and out of the curricula as titles, labels, and add-ons not to be forgotten in terms of the Grand Canadian Narrative. Students are reminded not to ignore "the Francophone presence in Canada" again an uncertain status at best (p. 105). Canadians are asked to distinguish and explore Francophone origins as contributors to the Canadian project.

Culturally diverse groups, sometimes referenced as ethnic groups (7.3.4 – p. 84), are seen as important contributors to Canadian unity and diversity. These groups are distinct and *other* to the Aboriginal and Francophone founders and are rarely mentioned in the text. Furthermore, the term ethnic is seldom used if ever with the Aboriginal and Francophone component and never to indicate difference in the White English speaking majority. If the majority is without colour or ethnicity the same cannot be said of culturally diverse groups, as their linguistic, ethnic and racial markings carry their primary source of identity in the Canadian scene. Always ancillary, these groups embellish and flavour homogenous tones of Canadian society. At one point in the grade nine program, culturally diverse groups are studied alongside artistic communities, seemingly as exotic flavours of Canadiana.

As indicated, lacking are the contributions Eastern Europeans make to Western settlement. The principle founders of Western agriculture are effectively occluded and stigmatized as diverse. Directly, these settlers are never mentioned in the document. Apparently the *Grand Canadian Narrative* leaves little room for such qualification, an introduction that may prove dangerous in exposing the Other of the discourse. Grade five, theme three, focuses upon "celebrations and challenges" in Western settlement

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but again while celebrating economic successes verging upon boosterism this document does little service to the cultural histories and values of many of the people who brought it about. When introduced, these groups are positioned in archaeological service with the reader instructed to examine the evidence in terms of a greater recognition of the contributions issued (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 60). With contributors seldom referenced by name or affiliation we are left to our imaginations presupposing the exotic, a marginalized addition up until this juncture unrecognized yet somehow significant in the building of Nation.

THREE TIERS OF STATUS ORIENTATION
THE CANADIAN CENTRE:

A number of discourses coexist and are layered or overlap frequently thwarting attempts to engender a consistent reading of the positional representation involving the contributory peoples of Canada as represented through this document. However, it has been demonstrated above that Canada as an identity type, that is the Canadian, adheres to a narrative which places the contributions of the British and French charter groups (particularly Britain) as primary in understanding the imaginary citizen. The historical importance of British colonization and control, the significance of British institutions (e.g. the English language and the culmination of political legitimation, the BNA Act), speaks to the primary importance of one cultural or ethnic group in the settlement, growth and recreation of the country Canada. British charter groups exist for this document beyond culture identity or the need to be named as contributors to the Canadian dream; arguably they are the Canadian dream. Distinctions, however, are not so finely honed as mainstream acceptability expands to include other contributory groups (not institutions), primarily European, never Asian, African, or Aboriginal. The discourse of Whiteness places both racial marking and language beyond the scope of analysis. This dominant group, identified above, is exnominated and occupies the *first tier* of Canadian membership. The group is recognized as one of the founding groups although never truly identified in terms specified; however, we know what it is not. This group is not Aboriginal, nor is it usually French (although it can include French

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contribution without the French language). This group does not include immigrants or historical add-ons to the Canadian imagination. This group is not surgically cut away and examined from the mainstream or isolated atemporally for a specific deed or act of victimization. For this group is historically situated within the entity Canada and attributed with the dynamic growth and develop of Canada. It is the industry, cities and technologies that incorporate the essence of Canada. Members are referenced as individuals, by name (e.g. John A. MacDonald). Not group or ethnic aberration, they are the Canada that other groups contribute to.

ABORIGINAL AND FRANCOPHONE GROUPS:

The development of the second group, the Aboriginal and Francophone citizens, is a relatively new one in Alberta curriculum, or at least one is led to believe the same. Predicated upon the progressive imagination of the Western Canadian Protocol the Program document and other current curriculum projects, it is almost as if these groups (and their contributions to Canadian identity) have been discovered. However, in an effort to extract and identify the contributions of these peoples, we also marginalize them, attribute to them an add-on status as that existing outside of the mainstream. In doing this we create a binary, issuing citizenship by invitation. Thus we run the danger of over identification in terms of issued characteristics, histories and culture.[20] These groups move in and out of the collective memory by command and when abandoned, as is the case in several of the grade themes, disappear entirely. We have here the *second tier* of status orientation. Although members of the Founding Father's group in terms of discourse association and reification, these groups are

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[20] In suggesting that this group has been over identified I am not claiming that recognition is antithetical to group interest. It is in what Taylor titles the 'the game of recognition' that I take exception. Taylor points out that multiculturalism is a concept forged from two contradictory forces, the need for external recognition, and the desire for self-autonomy (1996). Thus multiculturalism is a compromise at best, definitions and boundaries vacillating under the impermanency of readjustment and negotiation. These tensions are evident in this paragraph as they are in this thesis. Multiculturalism is then a game of political activism and compromise (I promote that the model constructed in chapter three can accommodate such compromise). Representation then is not an objective thing and must be struck between the tensions described above. These groups, however, deserve better than the statuses issued them in the Program document, even if the exact solution is difficult to interpret. The neo-liberal tenor of this post-WCP curriculum contains little in concessions for members of the second and third tiers as developed in this chapter.

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issued a hyphenated status. They are Aboriginal-Canadians, Francophone-Canadians, their contributions noteworthy yet frozen in synchronic references, artifacts to be examined and acknowledged. The Francophone-Canadian resides in a "multicultural" world protected by charter, constitution and bilingual legislation. Is the same true of the first tier? Aboriginal-Canadians are North Americans who are past contributors to Canada and must be recognized. They are protected by treaty and exist at arms length from Canadian civil society, mediated through government mandates, legislation, and departments. Aboriginal Canadians are associated with the oral, spirituality and not religion "and hold a unique relationship with the land" (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 103). Like Francophone-Canadians, Aboriginals pop in and out of the Canadian landscape. However, we ask "students to demonstrate an understanding of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people ... as an integral part of Canadian identity" (p. 103). An understanding of one of Canada's poorest groups without a significant class analysis; without even mention of social class and its impact on Canada's Aboriginal people and their collective culture.

If French and British strains are linked to national building and the French being bilingual and multicultural, Aboriginal-Canadians are linked to a pre-Canadian darkness, a landscape preceding Canada - either concept or entity. The discourse of *patronage* ensures that Francophone and Aboriginal citizens are recognized as contributing Canadians but because the document withholds from the reader significant detail in terms of conflict and conquest with regard to Canadian settlement, neither group are accorded the proper status owing. Both groups are referenced as diverse when examined in context divorced from the Canadian norm. Their contributions as Canadians seem more homogeneous as diversity now belongs to another. They are denoted a presence in Canada but not as first-tier Canadians. This group occupies a second tier recognized yet marginalized in the process.

CULTURAL GROUPS:

This group must be understood as being distinct from those other founding peoples instrumental to Canadian settlement. Here we experience the discourse of the

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other; ethnic, distinct, culturally diverse in search of an identity. The text searches for "strategies" for culturally diverse Aboriginal, Francophone and ethnic groups to maintain their cultural and linguistic identities (Alberta Learning, 2002, p. 84). But unlike Aboriginal and Francophone members, this group comes from the outside. Who are these Canadians? They are the immigrants of the present as well as some indecipherable memory of the past. On page sixty, the text instructs the reader to recognize the identities and contributions of diverse Aboriginal, Francophone and cultural groups, but the reader is left to imagine the identities of these cultural groups, the roles they undertook and the contributions tendered. The imagined community of Alberta citizens leaves something to the imagination here. This group occupies the *third tier* of status orientation. They are raced (interesting without suffering racism), coloured, but not necessarily, and have immigrated from somewhere else, even if their descendents have resided in one place for literally centuries. Cultural groups through the exoticization of identity enrich and revitalize, they are said to possess 'vitality' and 'unique gifts' that may add to the Canadian spirit. They are ubiquitous, amorphous and indistinguishable from one another, synchronic and exogamous.

Backward looking discourse adds in or fills gaps in Canadian history. We intimate that there is something else there, something missing in this Grand Narrative of Canada and issued just enough to feel sated. However, the discourse of the add-on, rather than fulfilling the requirements as set out by as an inclusionary model of education, only serves to highlight the moments when these groups are not present. The construction of tiers of representation is literally that. True inclusion would mean moving all Canadian groups into the first tier of assumed Canadian citizenship. It would be to affirm the value and dignity of Canadian citizens recognizing that all are raced, coloured, and at one period or another, arguably hailed from another place. This is not our party.

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CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

It has been the assertion of this study that current curricula programs as designed and administered through Alberta Learning in social studies education for this province are inadequate. Citing previous research studies on these curricula, I have reason to question the suitability and relevancy of Alberta Learning's program in matters and approaches specifically addressing the issue of diversity/multi-citizenship or multiculturalism. Attempts have been made to convert social studies programs into documents engaging the diverse learner. Increased presence has been paid to language, (e.g. gender/racial inclusiveness, textual images and content) in an effort to adapt a curriculum program to increasingly diverse needs and demands of Alberta's learner. However, as earlier stated this process has largely been unsuccessful in incorporating an authentic or critical multicultural approach. I have described this process as a mere "piling on of information" on existing mainstream citizenship themes. Thus curricula adaptations occur without directly challenging the authorial voice of "Whiteness" or the "readership" subject as conforming to or originating from the White Anglo-Canadian mainstream. I have stated elsewhere that multicultural curricula is firstly multicultural learning. That multicultural learning is a dynamic process originating from and administered at the level of the classroom. That multicultural learning must accommodate diverse backgrounds and cultural difference.

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That multicultural learning is contingent upon larger autonomy of the classroom teacher in the effort to encourage the learner as a member of a "public space," encouraging divergent citizenship archetypes inclusive of all Canadians.

The demands made upon our schools, in terms of providing a more inclusive and fair multicultural education for all are increasing. Cultural diversity is the status quo, and the push calls for teachers to become evermore vigilant in accommodating the interests and needs of these groups. Furthermore, group division is exacerbated by inequities of social class and the stigmas of poverty. The mistakes of the past hold a poor vision for the future. Notably the demands have always been there to degree and simply ignored.

But this study also incorporates other voices, interview respondents, who issued the mandate to validating or invalidating the assertions above. These participants provide valuable input, judging the effectiveness of Alberta Learning's social studies present curriculum and providing feedback on the future potential of a new social studies program, with the curriculum program reviewed and juxtapositioned against the extensive backgrounds of this cohort. The question posed, *is this a valuable document in direct consideration of the needs and demands of a multicultural society?*

I answered the discourse question in Chapter Six of this study, with the goal of producing a more direct and thorough reading of the program draft. In Chapter Three I have constructed an educational model of Critical Multiculturalism and promote this model given its available strengths in accommodating a more diverse and fair educational process. The interrogative, does this program meet the standards of Critical Multiculturalism?

1. Critical Multiculturalism is critical pedagogy. In saying this, there is recognition or an activism that moves beyond the ideal of multiculturalism as racial or as ethnic difference. Drawing from an expansive sociological literature of critique and exploration, Critical Multiculturalism calls for an ongoing review of educational practice, societal inequality, and how curricula is complicit in perpetuating the myths of meritocracy, Whiteness, and neutrality.

2. Critical Multiculturalism is anti-racist education. Critical Multiculturalism questions societal and school practices that lead into mono/cultural interpretations of curriculum and pedagogy.

3. Critical Multiculturalism recognizes the role of school and schooling in the formation and representation of student identity. Gender, race, religion, nationality, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age and exceptionality are all factors in identity formation and ultimately student success.

4. Critical Multiculturalism draws from both structural and post-structural theory in reviewing the construction and dissemination of knowledge. In saying this, it is recognized that knowledge is closely integrated with power.

5. Critical Multiculturalism avoids essentializing and reductive practices affecting social policy, critique and action. No student, group or concept can be reduced to categorical imperative, descriptive interpretation, or generalizable process.

6. Critical Multiculturalism is an emancipatory project. The goal is to engender a generation of learners with the freedom to make choices not only on what they may become but who they are.

So in summary, does this program document promote curriculum as a Critical Multiculturalism resource? As importantly, does this program provide the resources and direction for accommodating a more inclusive and fair educational program?

A LOOK AT THE RESEARCH DATA

THE INTERVIEW DATA

In reviewing the respondent data with the effort of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the new social studies program in recognizing the backgrounds, beliefs, and values of all of Alberta's students, it is essential that one consider the authorial system of coherency, or respondent world view. For those respondents who adopt what I have labelled a model of "liberal pluralism", in many ways, this document does what it claims. For by initiating a greater awareness of others, by learning about diverse group experiences (if in fact this does happen) students could become politically empowered to respect the differences and interests of these groups. For those who support a more *critical model* advancing structural issues - goals of

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critical education, peace education, and greater class-consciousness, it becomes evident that this program falls markedly short in several areas. And for the one respondent who advocated we move beyond conventionalized understandings of curricula and schooling, arguably, we have not yet begun to configure a program that can effectively address the diverse interests of Alberta. For here the solution is not as easily established, through the addition of more materials and content on Africa, or the introduction of a Black history month. It is not to deny that structural inequities exist in society and must be addressed in education, both by raising the awareness of teachers and helping student articulate and understand the pressures they feel in daily living. However, the problem is also administrative (a position supported by the author of this study). We cannot accommodate culture by teaching culture or class-consciousness - it must be discovered. We cannot engage diversity by standardizing culture as a curricular component. Assimilationist programs are initiated in pedagogy as well as curriculum, and until we better understand this it is doubtful that real progress can be made. Curricula must then be conscripted as action, drafted as if every nuance is site based, engaging the backgrounds of students and the processes of learning.

The familiarity and positioning of educational practitioners (respondents included) can and does involve them in a stream of political processes, conceptualizations and beliefs. Thus, teachers frequently embrace the same value structures that they find themselves criticizing. The circularity and layering of discourse, forms worldviews, identity typographies, and beliefs structures difficult to back away from. Community backlash, government control and censure, class positions, ethnicities, age, gender, affect how teachers see their universes, and curriculum revisions. This is expected. It is one of the goals of this study to articulate these social processes, at the same time honour the reflexive and self-governed responses of professionals. We have succeeded here.

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MY OWN PROJECT OF INTERPRETATION – IS THIS A CURRICULA SUPPORTING CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS

Does this program draft support the tenets of Critical Multiculturalism? In a word, "no". While the Aboriginal and Francophone components communicate intention, the document does not deliver. Theoretical development is weak with the model relying upon the "rights based" discourse of "liberal pluralism." The emphasis remains here on political based change, negotiation and negative freedoms. Multiculturalism as a signifier is avoided. The style of pluralism adopted here serves to accommodate difference as surrounding a central or common culture. There is no place for disagreement or meaningful deviation here from this hegemonic norm. The "founding fathers" philosophy of inclusion here seems no accident. The Aboriginal, Francophone and British groups involved have little to gain through the promotion of multiculturalism and have historically lobbied for greater recognition and autonomy outside of a multicultural framework. This is not a multicultural document, and what little concessions are handed to Francophone and Aboriginal groups are issued within this centre-satellite orientation. The document penalize other Canadians who while culturally distinct are not earmarked as significant contributors to the Canadian landscape in a limited partnership which denies the multicultural essence of Canadian diversity.

Anti-Racist or critical approaches are shunned and pedagogical models premised upon historical/materialist criteria nonexistent. This is not an emancipatory project (but a defensive manoeuvre). It is not that the Authorial voice of this document does not recognize a specific need or issue requiring redress. It is simply that the failure to address diversity in curricula itself is not viewed as structural/historical and is strategically broached via increased mediation. Concessions evolve by the way of add-ons intended to facilitate the voices of those previously disenfranchised or ignored. Unfortunately while the effort is taken to present the image of a more inclusive curriculum (attenuating former assimilationist models of Canadian citizenship) the result is not convincing. A significant population of Alberta's students are

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symbolically marginalized, there is little here for the educator wishing to coordinate curricular resources with specific classroom demands, and a discourse of *conciliation and commonality* obfuscates meaningful dialogue on difference. Linkages between social class, ethnicity and gender, so pronounced in Alberta society, are effectively occluded. Difference is promoted to be as much an organ of idiosyncratic experience as societal structure. Ideology is advanced as a legitimate marking of difference. In a world presently reeling from the effects of racism and brutality the document provides no theoretical mechanism for determining, under its pluralistic umbrella, which ideologies are acceptable, and more importantly, which are not. The decision to avoid a confrontational discourse is evident. Arguably this document communicates a conscious decision on the part of Alberta Learning to back away from many of the original tenets of the WCP Foundation Document (admitting that even the WCP Framework is far from a perfect document with its "founding fathers" emphasis). A compromise at best, the document is neither critical nor multicultural in its scope.

ALBERTA LEARNING SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM: IS IT A DOCUMENT OF INCLUSION?

For some respondents - yes, given their educational models and the attempts made through this document to focus on the subjects of identity and culture. A strong reported Aboriginal and Francophone emphasis means a more inclusive education for this group. Attempts have been issued to recognize the contributions past and present of other cultural groups as well. Thus the students of Alberta are offered a curriculum program that wanes away from the traditional focus upon the sensationalized pastimes of the male mainstream – economics, development and war.

For others it is not, as the document does not sufficiently penetrate and expose the related issues and structures that delimit and oppress. There is a need for an emphasis upon social class, peace education, and a stronger recognition of knowledge/power. A more sophisticated and critical theoretical model fostering a meaningful discussion on diversity is required. For these respondents the document does not go far enough. It ignores the uneven nature of the social terrain. Not all students hail from the same

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socio-economic and political background. It does not sufficiently acknowledge the diverse nature of the classroom itself in terms of an overall strategy for pedagogy. Is there a plan to educate teachers or allow sufficient space for adapting the curriculum to specific learning situations?

As mentioned, the document falls far short of the multicultural model employed and advocated earlier in this thesis. The substantive criterion has not been met. Can this document be used in an Aboriginal classroom and become a markedly different experience than its employment in an urban mostly white middle-class environment? More importantly, what does it say to the sixth generation Chinese-Canadian? Inclusion is not learning about culture and identity as a thing others possess, something that may be quantified and reported. An inclusive curriculum encouraged students to adapt that knowledge repertoire to their individual needs and experiences. The claim is made that this document is constructed to do just that. The reality is somewhat different. Gone is the WCP conception of a *distinct outcome* that can be dovetailed to differing cultural environments (e.g. Aboriginal learners).

The "distinctive outcomes" agenda, as philosophically outlined in the Foundations Document and reviewed earlier acknowledges specific prerogatives affecting Aboriginal and Francophone. The aim here is to encourage the integration of Aboriginal and or Francophone culture in specific subject areas (i.e. social studies), and to facilitate appreciation and awareness of that culture (WCP Framework, 2000a, p.1). By employing a framework that acknowledges the necessity for "distinctive outcomes" contained within a common core of general and specific learning outcomes the WCP collaboration goal is to reconcile the requirement for a standardized curricula approach with the need to recognize diverse subject position. This is an attempt to accommodate the specific needs of the Aboriginal and Francophone learner offering greater local input into curricula development and assessment. The approach harbours the potential of reinforcing a sense of pride in culture and community, dovetailing institutionally administered forms of knowledge with cultural expectations and experiences.

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The revised Alberta Learning edition backtracks in the WCP promise to acknowledge the importance of cultural traditions and institutions, localized networks of schooling and realistic integration (for specific groups). Are we to expect the implementation of this very important philosophy? Where is it? This indicates, more than anything, a conscious decision by the requisite planners to abandon the call for a more inclusive program. Perhaps the decision made by Alberta Learning to 'go it alone' involves significantly more than bad timing.

Acknowledged, there is a greater focus here upon culture and identity. Multiple perspectives are emphasized and the individual learner is said to be important given that person's unique social location within a diverse environment. But the language as employed in the Alberta Learning Social Studies Program of Studies Front (draft) has limited theoretical sponsorship. Obtuse and equivocating the reader is left on uncertain theoretical terrain. Furthermore, the content of the Alberta Learning Social Studies Program of Studies (draft) leaves the reader wondering just how these initiatives are going to be implemented. Especially given the conciliatory tone of a document that does not encourage its own focus upon critical discovery.

At the heart of the problem lies the significant social distance between a needed "particularist" approach to social studies/history emphasizing *difference* (the potential for conflict),[1] and an employed value orientation approach which prescribes to social studies/history a civic function.[2] To use an example from California, Diane Ravitch, one of the two principle authors of the California Curriculum Framework (circa 1990's), criticizes "particularist" program documents, documents which seek to expose all the ugliness of the past as "particularistic" education teaches children to see history as a story of victims and oppressors" (Blum, 1996, p. 42). Ravitch claims that the *particularist* approach only serves to enrage the descendents of those victimized, building upon a culture of resentment and anger (p.42). The solution, as advocated by Ravitch, is to lie - that is unless the correct value orientation is placed upon the

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[1] Particularism marks history as, at best, a negotiated terrain punctuated by the political interests and desires of relevant actors and groups.

[2] Here the role is to inspire students to become better student and citizens, a project that masks the mistakes of the past in the attempt to provide a more positive model for the citizens of the future.

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teaching of social studies/history the curriculum cannot serve as a source for inspiration and civic guidance.

However, the starting point for any curriculum should not be in bias played out as value, and while history is not completely determinate, a biased or dishonest representation of the forces and values of the past makes for an uncertain future. Particularly if we are to believe, and I would support we should, that unlike some reports on the present stage of the human condition, many of the unpleasantness and evils of the past remain with the societies of the present. Arguably, a major contrivance in the present day "war" against manifest forms of institutional and overt racism is understanding these past indiscretions. Thus our actions hinge on the knowledge of how precipitating values and structures, historically situated, can inform behaviour. Value oriented approaches – like the Program document reviewed for this study - emphasize commonalities while ignoring basic material/historical realities in that both structural and hegemonic predispositions are blindly accepted remaining unchallenged. For some learners in this province, a belief in the *Grand Canadian Narrative* may only serve to reinforce his/her sense of security as weighed against the uncertainty of existing within a difficult world. However, for others, caught outside, occupying the societal margins (class, race, gender, sexual orientation) curricular dishonesty exposes the all too real world of contradiction and alienation. A curriculum must produce critical challenges (multiperspectival) to our popular memories of the past if we are to experience success in altering the future. Blum (1996) argues, in addressing race and history in the US, that[3]:

> It is both historically more truthful as well as educationally sound to face up to the dishonourable facts of our racial history, while finding ways of teaching these facts that do not produce psychic ill effects... A flexible and sensitive antiracist pedagogy should be able to accomplish this...The purpose of civic education is to work towards a realization of the best, in the hope that we will one day be in a

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[3] It should be noted that while this is a U.S. example, little evidence is issued that these examples cannot provide further enlightenment in understanding the Canadian system. The promotion by some that Canada exhibits a history unsoiled by racism or issues of inequality and that school curriculum has not contributed to the whitewashing of that history has been discredited almost universally by historians.

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better position to claim devotion to equality as a central meaning of American history. (p. 42-43)

Inclusive education is education acknowledging both the antecedents and aftershocks of difference. It is a program forged through compromise and honesty, the process of inviting the other into the fold – perhaps for the first time. Not under your terms but under the negotiated uncertainties of change. Inclusive education is not the project of naming then learning about someone else, it is the attempt to - at least for a moment -become that person. It is allowing the space – in curricula and pedagogy - for this to happen.

SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

In terms of the final analysis my position stands in variation from many of the respondents interviewed. Similarities in terms of document interpretation and viability however do exist – particularly with those respondents exercising more critical approaches to diversity and culture. I believe that programs intent upon bolstering curriculum without adequate attention issued to pedagogical considerations will ultimately fail – even with the support and full implementation of the Program. But equally true curricula remain a vital link in effective learning. The need to develop a public space where learning can occur seems imperative if our intent is to include students in the educational process. A greater recognition of this will ultimately translate to a more equitable setting. The program then must make better accommodation for teacher input, classroom public space, and program editing.

Other approaches that will prove helpful include:

❖ A consistent review of the effectiveness of the document in an effort to recognize strengths while correcting weaknesses. A dependable source of resource data will prove helpful here.
❖ Maintaining a more sophisticated understanding of both client and curriculum. Paying attention to matters of demography and varience is a beginning if the goal is to produce a valuable and effective curricula for all learners. Furthermore, a greater theoretical understanding and articulation of political-economy, culture, representation and identity formation by curricula planners would prove beneficial in producing a document which displays sophisticated counter-

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hegemonic capabilities, facilitates significant varience - in terms of difference, and is more responsive to specific pedagogical demands.

❖ A more consistent and ongoing review and revision process. The goal is for curricula to change with demands. The extremely complicated and time consuming process of revision currently employed, arguably, is not capable of this - despite admirable intensions.

❖ The need to see curricula as a process of engaging the learner not as content for bringing the learner into a given way of thinking and speaking. The seminal works by the distinguished educator Paulo Freire stands as a suitable example here. Both teacher and learner should employ higher analytical processes, differentiated learning approaches, and a consistent critical method of inquiry in the effort to develop a more reliable and relevant form of knowledge production and internalization.

CITIZENSHIP, AXIOLOGY, THE ROLE OF THE *GOOD*, AND THE POLITIC OF THE *OTHER*

The Alberta Learning Social Studies Program of Studies Framework (draft) at times communicates mixed messages to the reader. That is upon reading particular passages some are convinced of the greater merits of the effort, embracing a metanarrative seemingly intent upon producing a more fair and inclusive package than employed in the past. Overlapping and penetrating this grander axiology however is a discourse of expediency. Groups are added-in or added-on. Well worn assimilationist themes and approaches are reconfigured, albeit employing the new language of diversity and culture. Methodologies remained unaffected and unquestioned. The collision here an affectation – speculatively, the language of bureacratized politics exposing that *Other* of the text.

For some readers this document communicates an undeniable *Good* (an initial reaction by some, a steadfast assessment by others). But does it? Does the Program advocate in favour of the larger concerns confronting a truly *inclusive* education? That is, are the rights, histories, beliefs, values, physical and cultural differences, penchants, of others recognized supported and celebrated in the greater act of instruction and learning? Are students encouraged to review the world politically, in their own voice, as that thing which affects how they live and how they make sense or meaning at any given situation. Are the students "reading the world" as they "read the words"(Freire, 1996). For the *citizen* what is the intent of the *Good* here – civic resonsibility,

knowledgabilty, sound moral action, altruism and cooperation, assimilation, complicity.[4]

It is the assessment of this study that the *object* of this text wanes from its issued purpose. This is not a treatment on *identity* and *citizenship* – at least not as read through the language of diversity and inclusion. The program does not sufficiently promote the discourse of fairness, multiculturalism, inclusive learning.

This Program does not serve to accommodate multiple group interest or even provide the apparent pretence to do so, as is the case with the WCP. As written in the opening chapter, we are confronted with a reactionary curriculum form, in many ways less dynamic than the programs delivered in the 1980s. We are presenting a new story of Canada, but it is basically the same story from another angle (culture), and only one story.

Yet the process of inclusion is a positive one and, if not provided, should be supported through curricular actions. Stated more strongly, the *Good* of *inclusion* as facilitated through a more open and ostensivly fair social studies curriculum is acknowledgably appropriate and needed at this juncture in Alberta's development. To recognize that this *Good* exists as an admirable challenge, and pursuant to this, to work towards this *Good,* appears the greatest challenge to those employed in the continuing refinement of this Project. The stakes are simply too high to do otherwise.

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[4] Remembering that the word citizen applies to those identity features attributed to someone or adopted by that same individual and does not necessarily indicate an alliance with any geopolitical or geographic association (e.g. nationalism).

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APPENDIX - DISCOURSE ANALYSIS- METHODOLOGY GUIDELINE

PARADIGMATIC

A. THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

1. Why was the discourse written? - Reasons or rationales are often included in text structures but in many cases they advocate particular discourse paths that mask both alternative discourses and underwriting political agendas. These non-disclosed paths or policies belong to the realm of the "other", symbolically sustained at the extra-discursive level. A process that reviews alternative discourse patterns within a text can be used in assessing the validity of a rationale. Often many source discourses that will aid in determining authorship are excluded from the original text completely and are, thus, more difficult to review. It is, however, important to remember that discourses may be excluded from a text and still indirectly referenced, e.g. contradiction, binary opposition, and irony.

2. Is the text over familiar to a particular social group? - As actors within a societal framework, many may be ignored while others are directly or indirectly referenced, e.g. white western male.

3. What tacit reader knowledge is assumed? - It is beneficial to read the text with regard to specific knowledge expectations that the text can use for both the purposes of inclusion and exclusion.

4. What historical underpinnings contribute to the authorial persona created? - Evaluating text as a product of historical processes can elucidate authorial qualities familiar with specific ideals of social organization, e.g. "Victorian" or state bureaucracies.

5. Does the authorship feign neutrality? - Ask how the authorship relates to the text. Often mechanism feigning neutrality is used to legitimate certain knowledge claims.

6. Does the Authorship work from authority? - If knowledge claims are promoted and backed through credentialism the impetus can be to intimidate an obsequious readership.

B. THE QUESTION OF READERSHIP

1. To whom does the text appear to be addressing? - It may be acknowledged by many that professional journals limit readership in ways which other texts do not, e.g. vocabulary, assumed background knowledge, targeted narration. However, all discourse is delimiting by constructing specific subjectivities that the reader must

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assume if he or she wishes to partake in the communication process. Determining textual subjectivity can aid in its deconstruction.

2. How does the text exclude? - Listed here are specific ways in which a text limits readership. Language, class, theoretical approaches can all be exclusionary factors in a text. As in empirical settings, resistance is often generated at the threshold of exclusion in a process of signification that many cannot adhere to. One might expect meaning regimes to shift significantly in a text given a feminist or gay reading. Whom must the reader become to be included?

3. What must the reader know? - Knowledge expectations underwriting textual discourse can shape both political and philosophical contexts as well as delimiting readership in quantitative ways. In certain cases the reader is not only excluded, he/she is never in the "game".

C. THE QUESTION OF THE OBJECT

1. What is the object of the text? - Needed here is a determination of what is actually being conveyed by the text. Many discourses will be emphasized but many more will remain underdeveloped. The object of any text pertains to those discourses selected. However it remains vital in the fulfillment of an analysis to focus on the discourses themselves and not the explicitly denoted statements overtly represented in a discursive situation. For example, a fireside chat by a politician reminding children to display qualities of obedience and loyalty towards their parents may arguably be addressed more at the level of political altruism than filial observance. One cannot assume because an intention is stated that it is in fact the intention.

2. How is the object legitimized within the text? - Here it is necessary to question or examine any contradictions that occur in establishing the object. Contradiction remains inherent to the legitimation process and assumes a relationship with both the object and the other of any discourse.

D. THE QUESTION OF THE OTHER

1. What assumptions underwrite contributing paradigms or premises? - In economics assumptions often manifest themselves as principles or laws. In other declared disciplines the methods may vary. However, by necessity, all knowledge claims predicated on particularized background assumptions remain bound by the validity and soundness of those assumptions. In secondary social studies texts economic principles are often sported as explanations for obtuse and complicated social phenomena enabling the authorship to avoid the "other", or explanations that answer to the empirical nature of that phenomena. Food prices that are prohibitively expensive are often described as the products of an upward sloping demand curve, and poverty the misallocation of scarce resources. Accountability is, thus, diminished and responsibility is waved.

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2. Are philosophical assertions made without adequate qualification? - Any assertion offered as knowledge or truth claim requires qualification to some degree. Many claims, e.g. concerning the properties of fire, are well documented and researched and thus accepted without the inclusion of complementing data. But other claims are often broader in dimension. Particular to this second group are assertions made which require significant philosophical clarification and substantiation, e.g. ideals associated with human ontology. One cannot make the claim that consumption and happiness are always positively related or that one-parent families are in some state of imbalance without significantly qualifying that assertion empirically, philosophically, or otherwise.

3. Does a discourse turn back on itself? - This event frequently occurs in passages through the means of contradiction, e.g. "don't get me wrong, I am not prejudice". The other is exposed here at the point of contradiction.

4. How many perspectives or explanations are given? - If an argument or text is advanced from several perspectives some of which conflict, it becomes more difficult to accuse that particular source of portraying bias. Most matters of text chosen for inclusion in a Social Studies curriculum are of a complicated enough constitution to warrant an evaluation that examines more than one perspective.

5. Does a discourse use technique to manipulate other discourse? - Listed below are several types that are used.

5.1 - *Judicial Satisfaction*: use of language that supports its own position, e.g. "undoubtedly."

5.2 - *Common Sense Argument* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): discourse will appeal to a universal culturally understood sensibility within a society, or what is deemed one's common sense, e.g. "the policeman must have practiced legal search procedures, as he knew that his evidence would be found inadmissible otherwise."

5.3 - *Empiricist Subjectivism* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): is the use of discourse in ways that presuppose the thoughts or opinions of others, e.g. "it must have been of their opinion that he was lying."

5.4 - *Positivist Empiricism* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): is the use of certain data derived historically then superimposed on a specific discourse situation in the attempt to infer a conclusion. This technique is frequently used in history text, e.g. "it was well proven in the first world war that aggression is not a defence."

5.5 - *Fraternal Critique* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): is often used as a form of justification in discourse whereby the narrative identifies with a subject out of fraternal sentiment, e.g. "she had been dealt a terrible blow that day with her dismissal and all, so she should not be blamed."

5.6 - *Affirmation of the Object* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): usually occurs as the restating of the "object" in an attempt to validate a truth claim, e.g. "we reject such an idea as being preposterous."

5.7 - *Negation*: the denial of a particular perspective or discourse as a possibility, e.g. "such an advancement could never have been offered to a man of his education."

5.8 - *Natural Reason* (Burton and Carlen, 1979): similar to a *Common Sense Argument* but appealing solely to the principles inherent in logic. The technique itself oversteps the use of such principles through extrapolation that cannot be supported, e.g. "she was the only person there and had to have done it."

5.9 - *Narrative Neutrality*: is a narrative attempt through the authorship to occupy a neutral position attempting to lend the discourse a validity that is ill deserved, e.g. "thus, it appears as if communism is truly an inefficient system."

5.10 - *Binary Opposition*: is frequently used to imply a particular quality or category of qualities through either the denial or validation of the binary opposite(s). What is significant here is that legitimation is pursued through that which is not stated, e.g. "the British were relieved to be home again where customs were restrained, traditions were conservative and the people went about their ways in a state of peaceful sophistication."

5.11 - *Temporal Neutrality*: reflects an attempt by a discourse through metadiscourse or some other means to suspend a text beyond the stream of events that occur in historical dimensions. A discourse is then free to review historically placed events or epochs without drawing dimensional links to the here and now of the text. Governments frequently release disturbing information a set period after the occurrence of the event(s) on the pretence that there is no substantive connection to be made between the "then and now," e.g. "this period of mass genocide marks a low point in human existence."

5.12 - *Value Loading*: represents the choice of specific associations through word choice or connotative reference. Included here are the juxtapositioning of discourses that alter textual meaning. This can occur through individual word choices, e.g. "foreign born man" or "working class decision," or the superimposition of a picture or quotation on another discourse with significant contextual differences, e.g. an endorsement by Lincoln advocating the merits of individual free choice appearing below a government discourse promoting unilateral tax cuts.

5.13 - *Equivocation or Ambiguity*: occurs when a word or discourse formerly associated with one meaning is used with a different association in latter developments of the same text, e.g. the words "necessary force" may be manipulated in a government inquiry from a discourse which is laid down historically through jurisprudence to one which justifies the shooting of demonstrators at a recent event.

5.14 – *Exnomination*: is the evacuation of a concept from the linguistic system as no alternative meaning or interpretation appears to exist. An exnominated signifier then carries one meaning granted a natural or universal status or that, which cannot be challenged (Barthes in Fisk, 1997, p. 290). For example, the term "labour dispute" is used to explain conflict as it occurs within a working environment. Interestingly, the role of management is exnominated from the equation, the assumption being that management positions are universally understood across social context. A total exnomination sees management as a neutral actor, partial exnomination holds

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managerial interests to be partially at fault but never censurable in the ways of labour. The language of accountability does not exist as it is exnominated.

5.15 – *Metaphor*: are non-literal decoration or stimulants to the individual's imagination (Fisk, 1997, p. 291). War, sports, religion and drama provide the fodder for metaphors commonly printed in electronic texts. Metaphors alter context and draw on alternative discourses not directly associated with the principle discursive structure of a sentence or argument. For example, "right off the bat" alters sentence meaning (unknowingly on the part of the consumer) by introducing a barrage of signifiers associated with sports e.g. male, competition, and domination. Metaphors are so pervasive and ubiquitous in language use that we use them constantly without acknowledging their presence. Unfortunately, the ideological meanings that these discourses carry with them are felt and drawn upon when meaning in constructed.

E.   LAYERING OF DISCOURSE

1. Does a specific discursive statement result in the intersection of two or more conflicting discourses? – Some racist arguments borrow from Christian or scientific information which is removed from its original context (Parker, 1992). Contradiction is exposed at this intersection point. Such situations of conflict frequently occur in discourses, which endeavour to legitimate normative assertions.

2. Is a discourse premised upon a "*transcendental signified*"? (Burton and Carlen, 1979) - Many discourses attempt to legitimate themselves by drawing upon a metaphysical, ontological or scientific absolutes as a truth base. Various religious, philosophical or scientific assertions are often used to underpin a discourse that begs of its own question, e.g. "the Bible is infallible in its wisdom because it says so in the Bible." Furthermore, the *transcendental signified* is used to substantiate theoretical perspectives that are untenable without it, e.g. structural functionalism or economic determinism. Closure cannot be imposed on the strength of such an assertion and introduces a potential crisis in legitimation.

3. Are two or more incommensurate discourses used to express a single ideal? (Parker, 1992) - The problem here arises when one discourse or ideal is formed from two or more discourses that are distinct and different. In economics the term "free enterprise" offers such an example, whereby two very distinct discourses are amalgamated and used as one highly inaccurate denotation.

4. How does metadiscourse colour discourse (Crismore, 1989)? Metadiscourse should be reviewed within the context of a discourse or text as potentially biased discourse that can alter meaning. The omniscience neutrality of narration must be treated as a discourse deserving attention.

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F. DISCOURSE AS A HISTORICAL PROCESS

1. Does a discourse approach a subject historically? (Parker, 1992) - This issue is discussed in some detail above. A discourse that fails to acknowledge a text's responsibility to treat subject matter historically alters meaning in significant ways.

2. Does a discourse reflect back on itself as a historical creation? - All discourse is the product of historical processes and should reflect on itself as such. Any bid for neutrality as exercised through the authorship is misleading and inaccurate.

3. Does a discourse create and recreate other discourse forms ahistorically? - Some discourses may establish a prominence that so profoundly affects other discourses as to historically alter those discourses. The result is a discourse that actually rearticulates itself (*transcendental signified*). Freudian theory is a fitting example to use here, e.g., in some ways Freud's theories have done more to alter the human psyche than explain it.

4. How does discourse draw on other discourses? - All discourse historically incorporates other discourse forms which, when examined, can help one better understand the transference of meaning structures within the text.

G.   THE ROLE OF POWER

1. Does the discourse appeal to an external authority for legitimation? - If a discourse does not make such an appeal, whose authority will endorse the discourse? Teachers, governments, interest groups and corporate firms all to varying degrees hold vested interests in the publication and distribution of educational discourse. It is, therefore, important to weigh the potential influences these parties hold for the average knowledge consumer. Do specific paradigms, images, or attitudes reflect the particularized interests of these parties? It is vital that one's research remains in touch with the specifics of how the intersecting lines of power are aligned and played out in discursive and extra-discursive ways.

2. What truth claims are made within a discourse? - The sanctioning of particular truth claims within a discourse will often indicate potential abuses of power or power/knowledge within that context.

3. Is the discourse exclusionary? - Discourses always make prerequisite demands on the individual. Discourses that unfairly make demands on the specific "culture capital" or knowledge base of the reader are disempowering and exclusionary.

4. Are discourses used to build or convey hierarchical structures within a text? - Texts that select or establish normative based nomenclatures emphasize some discourses while diminishing others. History texts are often guilty of this transgression by holding some events or actions as significant while others are rejected, downplayed or ignored.

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5. Does a discourse practice editorial bias? - Here one normative position is promoted over another overtly without significant qualification. These occurrence are sometimes blatant and easily noticed, but other times not. Sometimes such indiscretions may be used to mask more insidious abuses of power.

6. Is a discourse underwritten by other discourses? - Ideological slogans and definitions are often used to legitimate a discourse or conceal the "Other" from emerging. These discourses may be laden with contradictions if scratched below the surface, e.g. the heavily loaded connotations that words like "communist" or "red" bring in the United States.

7. Is the language used within a discourse appropriate? - Language selection, connotation, and the use of binary opposition all successfully alter meaning within a text. Overcoding or ideology can be the result, a direct product of unequal power differentials as manifested in discourse.

8. Is one social group advanced over another? - This question deals more often with exclusion than more overt forms of discrimination. It is important here to ask who the discourse is about and why.

9. Is bias and discrimination hidden under the veil of empiricism? - Discourses are often conveyed through carefully chosen empirically based narratives that conceal contrasting perspectives. Many newspaper articles are written with the pretence of objectivity, but downplay or efface other contributing discourses that are vital in establishing context, e.g. it was reported in the North American press that Chilean civilian riots "disrupted" Santiago as the people denounced the "oppressive" Allende regime. But the papers failed to mention that the marchers numbered less than 500, the majority of which were spouses of high-ranking members in the Pinochet administration.

SYNTAGMATIC

A. TAUTOLOGICAL FALLACIES

1. Does a discourse or text rework research questions or inquiries? - This technique as discussed above is commonly used in public and/or historical inquiries where a party may conceal a hidden political agenda. By distorting or manipulating the focus of the inquiry responsibility or accountability can be reapplied or avoided entirely.

2. Does a discourse appear to suddenly have shifted conceptual ground? - Tautological fallacies are often difficult to detect. The consumer often only receives subtle shifts in trajectories as feelings of sceptical uncertainty. These perceptions can be likened in geophysical terms to the sensations experienced by individual following

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minute earth tremors. In suspected cases of distortion, discourses must be traced back to the significant point of equivocation.

B. DISCOURSE AS A SYSTEM OF COHERENCY

1. How does a discourse construct a worldview? - Every discourse ties into a specific mapped picture of the world. By establishing a cursory model of that world an analyst can chart coherency. This model can also prove beneficial in underlining the intended readership of the discourse while highlighting the coalescence of power and ideology along inclusive lines.

2. What specific discourses contribute to the coherency of the text? - One can determine how reviewing and deconstructing specific contributing discourses establish coherency. Included here are visual images, italicized print, summaries, review questions, sentence phrases and vocabulary.

3. Does the authorship draw upon the principles of *concision* in validating discursive claims (Herman & Chomsky, 1988)? The premise is simple arguments with strong ideological approval within society need little in terms of explanation or empirical data to lend them credibility. Conversely, arguments with a low approval rating, that is arguments that are not "commonsensically" held, require significantly more attention on the part of the author. For example, in the 2003 "Iraq crisis" President G.W. Bush has managed to win significant support with an anxious American public by connecting Iraq and Iraq's leader Hussein with the signifiers, terrorism, totalitarianism, and weapons of mass destruction. Seemingly, no supporting argument is necessary or when issued, only at a rhetorical level. This approach fits in well with truncated media bites, a declining attention span and a renowned political naiveté on the part of the American public. Interestingly, counter arguments offered by peace activists, U.N. representatives and concerned individuals have been quite detailed and factual in discrediting Bush's argument. As Bush's appeal draws upon American xenophobia and misapprehensions, it is ideologically appropriate and thereby consumed with acceptance in its brevity. The pro-peace argument, however, must produce significant evidence to establish credibility given its ideological unpopularity with the same group. Unfortunately, an argument of a length and ideological vein ill adapted to American media structures and sensibilities.

APPENDIX - DOCUMENT REVIEW

Documents for Review –

Alberta Learning (2000). *What's Happening*. Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (2000). *Canadian History in Alberta's Current Social Studies Program*. July, Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (1999). *Alberta Response to the Draft Foundations Document for the Development of the Western Canadian Protocol*. November, Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (2001). *Alberta Response to the Draft Foundations Document for the Development of the Western Canadian Protocol*. February, Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (1992). *Program of Studies - IOP Social Studies 16-26* (Senior High)." Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (2000) *Program of Studies - Social Studies 13-23-33* (Senior High)." Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (2000) *Program of Studies - Social Studies 10-20-30* (Senior High). Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (1989). *Program of Studies - Social Studies* (Junior High). Edmonton.

Alberta Learning (1990). *Program of Studies - Social Studies* (Elementary). Edmonton.

Western Canadian Protocol (1999). *Aboriginal Perspective on Education: A Vision of Cultural Context Within the Framework of Social Studies: Literature/Research Review - kindergarten to grade twelve project.*

Western Canadian Protocol (1999). *Foundation document: The common curriculum framework for social studies - kindergarten to grade twelve* (Draft).

Western Canadian Protocol (1999). *Overview of Related Research: Common Curriculum Framework for Francophone Education – kindergarten to grade twelve*

Western Canadian Protocol (1999). *Reshaping the Future of Social Studies:*

Literature/Research Review- kindergarten to grade twelve project.

Western Canadian Protocol (2000). *Foundation document: The common curriculum framework for social studies kindergarten to grade twelve.*

Western Canadian Protocol (2000). *The common curriculum framework for Aboriginal language and culture programs - kindergarten to grade twelve.*

The Western Canadian Protocol (2001). *The Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12.* (Draft) February.

APPENDIX - INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CURRICULUM PLANNERS

Background Information

1. What is your background as a curriculum planner or, or teacher, for Alberta Learning officer?

Probes: Academic and professional **qualifications; years of teaching** and Alberta Learning work; areas (major, minor); geographical locations of teaching experiences (social and cultural dimensions); **involvement in social studies teachers curriculum** activities.

2. Have you had any input into the design of the most recent unreleased social studies curriculum

DIVERSITY AND THE CLASSROOM:

3. Do you view cultural diversity - e.g. religion, ethnicity, race, as an important distinguishing feature in accommodating student learning within the classroom?
   Probes:
   - i. **Some theorists claim** that school programs, and more **specifically curricula, often marginalize members** of minority cultural groups by distorting or excluding their histories, contributions, and lived experiences.
   - ii. **Should we exercise sensitivity towards individual student needs**, as based upon their cultural background, e.g. race, ethnicity, religion?

4. Would you describe the present student composition of the Alberta classroom as culturally diverse? Why or why not?
   - i. What is cultural diversity to you

5. Does this diversity, or homogeneity (lack of diversity), as the case may be, offer any special challenges in designing and implementing the curriculum? If so, how?

   Probes:
   - i. **Need teachers conditionally qualify curricula knowledge,** or dovetail knowledge to specific cultural interests? **Censor curriculum material** to accommodate specific cultural interests?
   - ii. **Relationships between students**

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iii. **Relationships with parents**

6. In your assessment does the existing curriculum, as administered through *Alberta Learning*, adequately address the cultural, backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns of Alberta's students?
    Probes:
    i. Do the texts adequately **represent all racial, religious and ethnic groups?**
    ii. Are students encouraged or discouraged from **pursuing diverse experiences and beliefs?** How?
    iii. Is the curriculum **critical of often taken for granted societal practices?** How?
    iv. Is there a group you find frequently **over represented in curricula text?** Which one and How?
    v. Do you find that that the curriculum **assumes a specific reader,** e.g. male, white, urban, middleclass? How?

7. Is the potential socio-economic class of a student a factor that should be taken into account when designing curricula?
    i. Do we **design for the middleclass?**
    ii. **Relationship** between class and culture?
    iii. **Impact on learning and teaching?**

8. Is the potential gender of a student a factor that should be taken into account when designing curricula?
    i. **Relationship** between gender and culture?
    ii. **Impact on learning and teaching?**

9. What curriculum changes could Alberta Learning enact, if any, to better conform to the cultural, backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns of Alberta's students?

ALBERTA EDUCATION DRAFT:

10. Does the document mark a serious departure from the existing curriculum (Alberta Learning)? How?
    Probes:
    i. Promoting value in alternative pedagogies, curricula strategy and worldviews?
    ii. **How are cultural differences promoted and managed** in the textual discourse?
    iii. **What changes are proposed** for better recognition of these groups?
    iv. How **significant** are the changes?

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11. Do you find that the changes offer Aboriginal and Francophone groups the chance of better and more equitable representation?
        Probes:

12. Are the cultural interests of other non-Aboriginal/Francophone minority groups emphasized sufficiently?
        Probes:
            i.   **Which groups** (if any)?
            ii.

13. Are the specific backgrounds, beliefs, interests or concerns of one or more groups over represented?
        Probes:
            i.   **Is there an overtly identified norm**, mainstream, or generalizable centre/group?
            ii. Is there an **implied norm,** mainstream, or generalizable centre/group?
           iii. **What specific traits**/qualities are identified with this centre?

14. Does the draft document adequately incorporate the goals/spirit of the program as outlined in the *Program Rationale*?
        Probes:
            i.   Are many of the principles and **provisos as advanced** in the acted upon in the draft?
            ii.

15. **If applicable:** In assisting with the production and design of Alberta Learning's social studies k-9 draft document, would you advocate that the issues affective of culture, and cultural difference (as exhibited in Alberta's schools), influenced you and in turn, your input in the project.

16. Is the present draft document a fair document for all students?

FUTURE DIRECTION OF CURRICULA:

17. In the process leading up to the present, specific efforts have been taken to consult with "cultural groups" and interested parties. Are you satisfied with the consultation process?
        Probes:

            i. **Should the power** to design and implement curricula **be divested amongst specific stakeholders,** e.g. "groups with common experiences culturally?"

18. Should Alberta Learning provide curricula that are group specific?

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  i. **Is a localized curriculum an obstacle** to the larger educational goals of the public?

  ii. **How much centralized control and standardization is required,** in terms of curricula design?

19. Do you perceive recent movements towards change in curricula, i.e. change attending to the different needs of all students, to be a good thing?

  Probes:

   i. Are these efforts **working?**

   ii. Are continued pressures to diversify curricula factional and **divisive?**

20. Should we do more? Why?

APPENDIX - INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

Background Information

1. What is your background as a schoolteacher?

    i.   **Academic and professional** qualifications; years of teaching; areas (major, minor); geographical locations of **teaching experiences** (social and cultural dimensions); involvement in **social studies** teachers **curriculum** activities.

Diversity and the Classroom:

2. Would you describe the present student composition of your social studies classes as culturally diverse? Why or why not?

    i.   Meaning of "culture" (ethnicity, "race", gender etc).

3. Do you view cultural diversity - e.g. religion, ethnicity, race, as an important theme in the process of teaching and learning within the classroom?

    Probes:

    i.   Do you **teach** to the perceived cultural **differences** of your students?

    ii. Do you **exercise sensitivity** towards individual student needs, as based upon their cultural background, e.g. race, ethnicity, religion?

    iii. **Why?**

    iv. **Anti-racist education** and practices

4. As a teacher how do you acknowledge or promote the understanding of student difference within the classroom?

5. Does this diversity, or homogeneity (lack of diversity), as the case may be, offer you any special challenges in managing and implementing the curriculum? If so, how?

    Probes:

    i.   Do you ask students to remain **critical** of the curriculum?

    ii. Do you find yourself making **corrections** to the curricula to dovetail with specific cultural interests?

    iii. Do you find a need to **censor** curriculum material to accommodate cultural interests?

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       iv.   **Relationships between students** from diverse backgrounds?

       v.   **Relationships between parents?**

6. In your assessment, does the existing curriculum, as administered through *Alberta Learning*, adequately address the cultural, backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns of the students within your classroom?

    Probes:
       i.   Do the texts adequately **represent all racial,** religious and ethnic groups? How?
       ii.   Are student **cultural backgrounds encouraged** or discouraged?
       iii.   Is the **curriculum critical of societal practices** that delimit cultural expression. How.
       iv.   Is there a group you find frequently **over represented** in curricula text?
       v.   Do you find that that the curriculum **assumes a specific reader,** e.g. male, white, urban, middleclass? How?

7. Does the present curriculum assume middle class standards? How?
       i.   Any **relationship between class and culture?**
       ii.   **Impact** on teaching and Learning?

8. Does the present curriculum address issues of gender, and gender inequality? How?

    Probes:
       i.   **Relationship** between gender and culture?
       ii.   **Impact** on teaching and learning?

9. What curriculum changes could *Alberta Learning* enact to better conform to the cultural, backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns of the students within your classroom?

Alberta Education Draft:
10. Does the document mark a serious departure from the existing curriculum (Alberta Learning)? How?

    Probes:
       i.   By promoting value in **alternative pedagogies, curricula strategy and worldviews?**
       ii.   **How are cultural differences promoted** and managed in the textual discourse?
       iii.   **What changes are proposed** for better recognition of these groups?
       iv.   How **significant** are the changes?

11. Do you find that the changes offer Aboriginal and Francophone groups the chance of better and more equitable representation?

    Probes:
    - i. Are "distinctive pedagogies and outcomes" advanced for the groups in question?

12. Are the cultural interests of other non-Aboriginal/Francophone minority groups emphasized sufficiently?

    i. Which groups (if any)?
    ii. What other groups do you believe might benefit from the "distinct outcome" approach?

13. Are the specific backgrounds, beliefs, interests or concerns of one or more groups over represented?

    i. Is there an **implied normal,** mainstream, or generalizable centre/**group**?
    ii. What **specific traits**/qualities are identified with this centre?

14. Does the draft document adequately incorporate the goals/spirit of the program preamble/ the program rational?

    Probes:
    i. Are many of the principles and **provisos as advanced** acted upon in the curriculum component of the draft?

15. Overall, does the Alberta Learning draft attend positively to disparate beliefs and concerns as occurring within your classroom?

Future Direction of Curricula:

16. In the process leading up to the preparation of the Alberta Learning draft, specific efforts are being taken to consult with "cultural groups" and interested parties. Are you satisfied with the consultation process?

    Probes:
    i. **Should the power** to design and implement curricula be **divested amongst specific stakeholders**, e.g. "groups with common experiences culturally?"
    ii. How much centralized control and **standardization is required**, in terms of curricula design?

17. Should Alberta Learning provide design curricula that are group specific, utilizing mechanisms, like a "distinctive outcome" program, to accommodate diversity?

18. Do you perceive recent movements towards change in curricula, i.e. change attending to the different needs of all students, to be a good thing?

Probes:

    i.   Are these **efforts working?**

    ii.   Are continued pressures to diversify curricula **divisive?** How?

19. Should we do more? What? Why?

20. Any final comments on the new Social Studies Curriculum in relation to "culture"?