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Social Studies, Teaching and Mennonites: An Interesting Alliance

by

Douglas Ray Zook 

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Department of Secondary Education

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 1995

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A Dream

From the beginning in 1525 through the present, Mennonites have pursued a dream:

A dream that it is reasonable to follow Jesus Christ daily, radically, totally in life.

A dream that it is practical to obey the Sermon on the Mount, and the whole New Testament, literally, honestly, sacrificially.

A dream that it is thinkable to practice the way of reconciling love in human conflicts and warfare, nondefensively and nonresistantly.

A dream that it is possible to confess Jesus as Lord above all nationalism, racism, or materialism.

A dream that it is feasible to build a communal church of brothers and sisters who are voluntary, disciplined and mutually committed to each other in Christ.

A dream that life can be lived simply, following the Jesus-way in lifestyle, in possessions, in service.

--David Augsburger, "The Mennonite Dream," © MBM, 1970.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Social Studies, Teaching and Mennonites: An Interesting Alliance* submitted by Douglas Ray Zook in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education.

Dr. J. Parsons

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Dr. E. Callan

Date September 27, 1995

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to discover to what extent social studies teachers in Mennonite high schools transmit an Anabaptist-Mennonite ideology to their students. The use of Harold S. Bender's articulation of key Mennonite beliefs was used as a template for this research. The topic is introduced by providing the purpose, importance, questions, definitions, considerations and organization of the study. An examination of the origins, ethos and educational philosophy and structures of the Mennonites is delienated. This examination is followed by a brief exploration of the literature regarding social studies and ideology. The methodology of the study is then described. The research findings regarding students, teachers and acquired documentation are described in detail. The initial questions of the study are addressed. The findings support the notion that there is evidence of the transmission of a Mennonite ideology from teacher to student. The study is concluded with some reflections by the researcher regarding the process and content of the investigation.

Acknowledgements

As with many tasks in one's life, this thesis was not a solitary effort. I would like to express genuine appreciation to several individuals whose efforts resulted in the completion of this study:

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J. R. Zook and C. L. Lehman Zook whose ability to provide a sense of roots and, although not without some pain, wings in order that I could pursue those things to which I am called.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Joining Interests With Questions

I. Establishing Voice

... Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart.
Try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms
and like books written in a very foreign tongue.
Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them.
And the point is, to live everything.
Live the questions now.
... Perhaps you will then gradually without noticing it,
live along some distant day into the answer.

-- Rainer Maria Rilke

During a difficult time in my undergraduate years a friend sent me a card with the above words by the German poet Rilke on it. These words have meant a great deal to me, and now as I begin writing this thesis I return to them. I am not so sure that I have faithfully lived the questions I originally began with, but I have made the attempt. This thesis is a response to questions that have been in gestation for many years. It is important at the outset to establish my voice, the discourses that I am a part of, the narratives that shape my existence, to ground myself. The postmodern notion of multiplicity of voices and layers of meaning is a helpful way for me to explain my own interest in the topic of this investigation.

I am inextricably bound up in a web of chosen and unchosen involvements. I am a white middle class male child of parents raised in the Anabaptist - Mennonite tradition of Christianity whose ancestors emigrated from Europe to North America to escape religious persecution. Each of my parents' historicity is solidly placed within the Anabaptist - Mennonite discourse. Their lives, and subsequently mine, have been bound and loosed in this narrative. The world that I grew up in was one of

close connection with relatives who had also been shaped by this religious discourse. The narrative(s) I was socialized in were (are) to varying degrees intertwined with aspects of the ethnic-religious perspective: conversation, activity, work and worship patterns.

Quite obviously other narratives also formed my historicity, but the Anabaptist - Mennonite narrative was certainly dominant. It was used as an evaluator of other narratives as being better than or less than; it was also used to explain family roles and responsibilities. As an adult I have chosen to embrace that tradition despite the paradoxes inherent in it. It has formed the basis of my religious orientation and involvement as well as a network for social and even employment opportunities.

Since childhood my educational experiences, grade school to university, have occurred in the public educational institutions of Alberta. I am currently in my eighteenth year of formal schooling. I am currently in my eleventh year of a teaching career. I am currently teaching social studies (and English) in a private sectarian, non-Mennonite, school. The socio-economic and political communities in which I exist greatly impact my lifestyle and view of the world. I would be considered a liberal (small "l") or left-leaning in my approach to teaching. What that actually means is a bit uncertain except that it generally, in the context of my work, suggests that I do not support a conservative or right-leaning agenda in political and or economic matters. This matter of liberal or conservative and left or right are such value-laden terms embedded with differing meanings by their speakers as to render them almost meaningless unless one knows the speaker's connotation of the word(s).

It seems crucial to clearly establish some of my historicity so that the reader can gain some understanding of the many voices which

together are attempting to make some euphonistic sense of the discovered learnings. Palmer (1980), a Quaker educator, has said it well, "[w]hen our teaching and learning get divorced from experiential knowledge, we foster the great illusion that to have thought about a thing is to have lived it!"

Walter Brueggeman, an American theologian, talks about the idea of dominant and alternative consciousness. (Prophetic Imagination, 1978) He frames his conversation in the biblical cannons and suggests that to be faithful is to be part of the alternative consciousness as he outlines it. To live out an alternative consciousness, which I believe I am called to do, is no small task amidst tremendous forces from the dominant consciousness. To come back to the words I began with, the narratives and discourses that I embrace and the ones that I have been part of which I struggle to free myself from have established and are establishing the voice that I bring to this part of my life called thesis.

II. Purpose of the Study

This study is an attempt to investigate to what extent the Anabaptist-Mennonite ideology is transmitted in Mennonite schools by teachers to students. Within North American society the religious voice receives selective hearing. Within the religious society the Anabaptist-Mennonite voice also receives selective hearing. And within the religious educational society the Anabaptist-Mennonite voice receives even more selective hearing.

I trust that the forces of consciousness that work within me also work within others. Teachers have an interesting vocation. They are

people who work as agents of a "state". Those teachers who work within the smaller state (Christian and Anabaptist-Mennonite) within a larger more dominant state (North American culture) must be especially tuned to these forces of consciousness -- at least this is the mythology that lives within the tradition. In this study, I was curious to see how these forces of consciousness played themselves out as social studies teachers in Mennonite schools attempt to teach an alternative consciousness. The intersection of belief and praxis are the focus of this study.

It is an important consideration of this study that while the purpose is to measure the level of the transmission of ideology through a process of written and spoken reponses, this measuring has limitations. There is often a gap between what individuals say and how they act. There is also often a gap between what individuals can say and what they actually know. The way in which an individual perceives something and their ability to express that perception is not necessarily a clear reflection of the known reality. There are important intangibles that are not easily described. Discovering these nuances, however significant, was not the purpose of this study. It is, nonetheless, clear that such nuances exist and influence the transmission of ideology from teacher to student. The purpose of this study was to determine, through the use of questionnaire, interview and documentation, to what extent such transmission occurs among Mennonite social studies teachers teaching in Mennonite high schools.

III. Importance of the Study

As with many faith communities, the Anabaptist-Mennonite community is continually wrestling with its own identity in the current pluralistic North American and international milieu(s). Although this Christian community claims an over 470 year old tradition, the processes of acculturation and assimilation have exhibited incredible force on the Mennonites. In the last fifty years the forces of change have radically altered the practice, and in some cases the beliefs, of Mennonites. Moving from a strongly normative practice of non-involvement with the dominant society, it is becoming less foreign to identify Mennonites in a wide spectrum of occupations as opposed to traditionally agrarian lifestyles. Previously non-resistant (read hesitant to be involved) Mennonites are now, for example, entering the realms of politics as democratically elected representatives and forming Christian Peacemaker Teams which act as mediators in serious international conflicts -- the current situation in Israel is only one example of their involvement.

Mennonite and other historians have traced such a change, among numerous others, to have taken shape during and immediately following the World War II era. The idea of greater societal involvement can be traced, at least in part, to the educational institutions of the Mennonite Church. The institutions of the Mennonite Church have historically had a significant role in disseminating a Mennonite ideology to its youth. If an understanding of the role of teachers, social studies teachers in particular, in such Mennonite schools could be described, it

may prove helpful in identifying meaningful ways to promote a Mennonite identity and community.

IV. The Question(s)

In setting out my study, I began thinking about a study that would address two areas: social studies curriculum and Mennonite educational institutions. As I thought and bantered ideas around with others I added some further areas for examination: interpretation, adaptation, ideology, structure, and Mennonite ethos. The question that emerged for research became:

How do ideological structures affect how people teach?

To frame this question in a Mennonite educational institution context, the question then became:

How do teachers in Mennonite schools interpret the social studies curriculum to reflect the Mennonite ethos in which they exist?

This study involved an investigation that attempted to examine how the ideological structure, Mennonitism, affects how people, social studies teachers, teach in Mennonite schools. This question required clarification through a whole set of related questions:

1) What is involved with social studies curricula?

2) What is ideology?

3) What is the Mennonite ideology?

4) How do Mennonite teachers understand the Mennonite ethos?

5) To what extent do Mennonite teachers interpret and adapt the curriculum to fit with their understanding of the Mennonite ethos?

6) To what extent do the structures in which Mennonite teachers work affect their teaching?

V. Definitions

Several terms and phrases used throughout the body of the thesis require some explanation to facilitate understanding.

1) Mennonites:

Mennonites are a group of people who claim spiritual ancestry, in some cases genealogical, from a group of reformers in the 16th and 17th centuries called Anabaptists. The common beliefs of the Anabaptists involved adult baptism, non-violence, non-conformity, simplicity, community, and the priesthood of all believers. These same beliefs are common among Mennonites of today. There are numerous groupings of Mennonites from the Old Order Mennonites, who drive horse and buggies, to more modernistic groups who live in the suburbs of metropolitan cities. Mennonites were only one group who descended from these early Anabaptists; Hutterites and the Amish are two other groups who share theological commonalties but whose lifestyles are visibly different than mainstream society.

2) Mennonite Church:

The Mennonite Church is the largest and oldest Mennonite church body in North America. Its primary original membership was made up of European peoples of Swiss-South German background. The first settlements were in Germantown, Pennsylvania, United States of America. The majority of this group is found in the United States of America although members of this group are also found in Canada in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

3) Pacifism / Non-resistance:

Since the beginning of the Anabaptist movement the issue of whether it was possible for Christians to use violence in the pursuit of a goal was highly debated. Most Anabaptists strongly held to the belief that a Christian could not in any way use violence and be consistent with what the New Testament taught. As the Anabaptist movement grew, this belief about the use of violence became an obvious characteristic of the Anabaptists. In this century the terms pacifism and nonresistance have been given prominence through the work of a few Mennonite scholars during the 1940s and 1950s. This articulation characterized Mennonite understanding of their peace theology. A lack of action when confronted with violence was considered the appropriate Christian response. (The classic example was that Mennonite men did not go to war.) These understandings are currently being questioned as the only legitimate ones for Mennonites today. A more active attempt at peacemaking is becoming more accepted as exhibited through Mennonites attempting to influence government policy makers to consider peaceful rather than violent responses to events.

4) Peace theology:

The common expression used to delineate Mennonite understanding of the relationship between violence, the state, and the Christian.

5) Separation of church and state:

The principle of separation of church and state is a fundamental one in Mennonite theology. Mennonites have historically felt uneasiness mixing politics and religion even to the extent of not becoming involved in the electoral process.

6) Mennonite ethos:

The Mennonite ethos is the name I have given to the characteristic spirit, prevalent tone or sentiment, of the people or community called Mennonites. This ethos includes those things which are understood as being normative for Mennonites especially in relationship to orthodoxy and praxis. Mennonite orthodoxy has been frequently delineated in the confessional statements of the Mennonite Church.

7) Ideological structure:

Ideological structure is the fundamental beliefs, values, and goals that permeate an organized institution and which direct its actions.

VI. Considerations

A. Delimitations:

To make my study more manageable:

1. I chose to examine Mennonite Church schools, as opposed to other Mennonite denominational schools, because of my familiarity with and awareness of them.

2. High school social studies teachers and students were the focus group.

3. Because the oldest schools in some of the most populated Mennonite areas are in Pennsylvania and Indiana, I used these schools as the focus of my study.

4. I chose to interview teachers from only three Mennonite Church high schools, but i sent questionnaires to all high schools listed in the Mennonite Yearbook & Directory1994.

B. Limitations:

The generalizability of my data may be limited by these factors:

1. I only interviewed a small number of teachers from three Mennonite Church schools. Their views may not be representative of other teachers.

2. I did not examine the General Conference or Mennonite Brethren Church schools. These groups constitute the other two largest

Mennonite bodies in North America. These populations are heavily concentrated in Canada. My data, except for one school in Ontario, which I contacted through the mail, will be American based. (Applications for Canadian schools may be limited due to the differing milieu of these societies as delineated in Rod Sawatzky's (1980) article "Ten Things American Mennonites Should Know About Canadian Mennonites.")

3. The biases of these schools, and the church conferences which operate them, may well minimize the usefulness of the data to other schools and teachers.

C. Assumptions:

1. I anticipated that the schools I contacted and the teachers I interviewed would provide honest, thoughtful, and accurate information.

2. I would be able to interview at least six social studies teachers during the 1994 summer.

3. I believed that the schools I contacted and the teachers I interviewed would have knowledge of and experience with a Mennonite community.

4. Teachers would feel free to talk about their teaching.

VII. Organization of Thesis

Each of the proceeding chapters will unfold in the following sequence. Chapter Two will concern itself with a literature review discussing Mennonites. Chapter Three will concern itself with a literature review discussing ideology and social studies. Chapter Four will outline the methodology used in the research. Chapter Five will detail the experiences concerning Mennonite students. Chapter Six will examine the interviews with and questionnaires from teachers. Chapter Seven will analyze the collected course syllabi. Chapter Eight will provide some observations from the researcher regarding the research. In Chapter Nine I will provide some of my personal thoughts about the research content and process.

Chapter Two: The Exploration of Mennonites

A man's dog died so he went to his pastor for a burial service. The pastor said, "No, Mennonites don't do that. Maybe the priest down the street will do a service for you."
"Pastor, do you think a $1000 donation will be enough?"
"Man, why didn't you tell me it was a Mennonite dog?" the pastor quickly responded.

-- from Festival Quarterly, Spring 1993

This chapter will provide an overview of the history of the Mennonites; it will also briefly outline the contemporary Mennonite scene and analyze the concept of Mennonite educational institutionalism. This chapter is intended to provide a window frame from which to look into the Mennonite community and its ethos. This viewing will form a basis from which to later examine the Mennonite ethos apparent within Mennonite schools.

Mennonite Origins

The story of the Mennonites traces its roots to the religious, social, and political turmoil present at the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century when a group of reformers emerged to challenge both the Protestant and Catholic religious understandings. Describing the complex history of any group of people in an annotated manner is an ambitious task. In fact the narrative of the Mennonites is becoming increasingly debated as new readings of the Mennonite story are being

published. As Haas (1992, p. 7) points out, it is becoming more complicated to answer the question,

> What is a Mennonite? The matter is further complicated when one realizes--as Mennonites are realizing -- that the Mennonite movement never was a monolithic community. Diversity has always been a part of the Mennonite heritage, even in its earliest years, five centuries ago. So it is not only difficult to say who Mennonites are, but also who they were.

In the sixteenth century a group of reformers, later to be derogatorily nicknamed Anabaptists (re-baptizers), hoped that Ulrich Zwingli, who was advocating even further reforms than Martin Luther, would be the catalyst that would bring about much of the desired change. Zwingli, to their dismay, was not prepared to break completely with the established religious and political order of his native Switzerland. In 1525 a group of people dissatisfied with Zwingli's accommodations to the civil authorities chose to act on their convictions. On January 21, 1525, Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz, and George Blaurock, opposing the common practice of infant baptism as being contrary to scripture, re-baptized themselves (Wenger, 1977, p. 34).

The disagreement with Zwingli involved more than the issue of infant baptism. The underlying issue was the composition of the church. As J. C. Wenger, Anabaptist historian and theologian, asked: "Should it be a state and people's church (all infants were baptized and became members of the church and state) or should it be a believer's church (persons who repented of their sins, turned to Christ and pledged loyalty to Him for life)?" (Wenger, 1977, p. 33)

This choice of adult baptism signaled the beginning of the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland. The action of these men, and later women, was believed to be "a pledge of loyalty to follow the way of Jesus Christ. Baptism therefore had to be entered upon only with mature understanding and by one's own choice. Genuine faith and discipleship, following Jesus, could not be forced upon anyone." (Haas,1992, p. 7)

The significance of this act cannot be underestimated. By re-baptizing themselves as adults they were not only rejecting the religious order of the day but also the political order. Neither the Roman Catholic Church or the civil authorities could stand such an attack on their authority. The Anabaptists gained a quick and numerous following among the peasants, who were already chaffing under religious, economic and political duress, as well as among the urban populations who also desired greater freedom and who were tired of the corruption in the church of the day.

On February 21, 1527, Michael Sattler, an early Anabaptist leader, helped to unite the Anabaptists by having them accept the Schleitheim Confession or "Brotherly Union" as it was called. (Wenger,1977, p. 40) This confession was disseminated among the Anabaptists and became a unifying document for them, although it was not completely accepted by all Anabaptists and "Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin wrote refutations of "the confession as a whole." (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 798) At this conference the "Brotherly Union" (Schleitheim Confession) helped to formulate the separatist nature of Anabaptism (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 379).

The Schleitheim Confession became accepted by the Swiss and South German Anabaptists although, as Beulah Stauffer Hostetler points

out, it was later replaced by the "Dordrecht Confession" of 1632 which was written for the Mennonites in the Netherlands (Stauffer-Hostetler, 1989, p. 1). The Schleitheim Confession gained widespread recognition but, while European Mennonites moved onto other confessions, "[t]he new settlements in North America, composed principally of Swiss / South German Mennonites, formally adopted the confession early in the eighteenth century and did not officially replace it until the second half of the twentieth" (Hostetler, 1989, p. 1).

Melchoir Hoffman in 1523 led reforms in the Netherlands at about the same time as things were happening in Switzerland (Wenger, 1977, p. 43). Two groups emerged from Hoffman's reforms: one sought to use force to usher in the Kingdom of God and another was more pacifist in nature. Of this pacifist group Menno Simons emerged as the leader in 1536 (Wenger, 1977, p. 46). Simons was to be the most prominent leader and the one from which the current Mennonite groups are named. Through his leadership the scattered and fragmented Anabaptists groups were, for a time, unified.

The Anabaptists of the sixteenth century "were seen as radicals persecuted by both Catholics and Protestants, who felt threatened by their radical faith and lifestyles" (Kauffman & Driedger, 1991, p. 28). Quite naturally great persecution dogged the Anabaptists whenever they were found. The great zeal with which the early Anabaptists attempted proselytization was gradually lessened as mere survival became ever more difficult. Kauffman and Driedger (1991, p. 8) note that "[p]ersecution drove many Anabaptists from the urban commercial fray into centuries of being the 'quiet in the land,' tucked away toward the periphery of society as tillers of the soil."

Some Mennonite groups, however, found varying degrees of acceptance over the centuries. "While Anabaptists in Central Europe fled the cities, in the northern cities they survived first as an underground movement, later as a tolerated minority, and finally as a recognized religious group (Krahn, 1981, p. 92 in Kauffman & Driedger, 1991, p. 28).

Mennonite Beliefs

Haas (1992, pp. 10-11) has attempted to summarize the beliefs of the early Anabaptists:

1) God was not bound by any set religious system;
2) humans are free to choose to love, know and follow God;
3) an ethical Christian life was possible on earth;
4) the ability to follow Christ through difficulty and persecution;
5) the use of violence, "the sword of war and resistance," was unacceptable;
6) the total separation of church and state;
7) an emphasis on the life and teachings of Christ and his apostles; and
8) a freedom for all people to read and interpret the Bible for themselves.

After describing these beliefs, Haas states that "[t]here were tensions in Anabaptist thought created by the recovery of practical biblical discipleship on the one hand, and the rediscovery of divine

freedom on the other. These were resolved differently by different groups of Anabaptists" (Haas, 1991, p. 11).

Another analysis of the commonalities of these differing groups cites several themes as being evident among the sixteenth century Anabaptists after 1540. All shared a basically synergistic view of salvation (human and divine cooperation). Justification was seen as a progression in holiness; the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount was the guide to it. Baptism was considered to be the sign of lay emancipation from clerical control and the spiritual enfranchisement of lay people (priesthood of all believers). The Anabaptists developed a Gemeindechristentum centered on the congregation, in contrast to the clericalized territorial churches, both Catholic and Protestant (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 24). These beliefs constituted not merely an attempt at reform in the Roman Catholic Church but a clear break with Catholic dogma.

Myron Augsburger (1994), noted church statesman, also articulates well some characteristics of the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists were unequivocal in their emphasis on *sola Scriptura* ; they desired to rediscover "Christ and his Word." They desired to emulate the experience of the early church and establish "an existential relationship with the risen Christ." The Anabaptists emphasized discipleship. The living out of faith in day to day actions defines the Christian experience. As Mennonites today read the Scriptures, they discover how to live out their faith in a contemporary setting as did the early Anabaptists almost five hundred years ago.

A critical part of the Anabaptist movement was the belief that violence could not be used by its members. Nonresistance has shaped

the heart of Mennonite theology through the centuries. The Biblical basis for this position is traced to the teachings of Jesus Christ, especially in Matthew 5, and also in the teachings of Paul, as written in Romans 12. "Anchored on these and other Scriptures, nonresistance became the Mennonite mode, par excellence, of coping with evil. Rejected were revenge, retaliation, coercion, physical force, and of course participation in military service" (Driedger & Kraybill,1994, p. 23). This peace theology along with the other distinctives of these Anabaptists have been maintained in various modes since the sixteenth century.

The Swiss Anabaptists: South German & Austrian Anabaptists

The Swiss Anabaptists and the Anabaptists of the North (the Netherlands and north Germany) were quite different in their origins: the Swiss being only one-fifth urban to begin with "and almost completely rural two years later" while "W. L. C. Coenen (1920:1-90) made a study of the Anabaptist martyrs in the Netherlands and found that not one of the 161 martyrs was a farmer." (Kauffman and Driedger, 1991, p. 29) Interestingly enough many of the Anabaptist leaders in Europe were highly educated for their day while their followers, as noted by Kauffman and Driedger (1991), were not necessarily educated. The persecution of the Anabaptists throughout Europe had varying effects in various regions. The Anabaptists in Switzerland, Austria, and South Germany escaped to the mountainsides and into the valleys of the Alpine regions. As Kauffman and Driedger (1991) emphasize, this movement resulted in the Swiss Anabaptists developing a stronger separatist doctrine than the Dutch Anabaptists did.

The Swiss experience contributed to the development of a "two-kingdom" ethic, emphasizing the separation of church and state. The Swiss Anabaptists believed that the followers of Christ are "called out" from "the world" to lives of holiness as members of the kingdom of God. While acknowledging the legitimacy of the government over the "affairs of the world," the Anabaptists asserted the primacy of the claims of God over the claims of the government (Driedger and Kauffman 1982:270-75 in Kauffman and Dreidger, 1991, p. 30).

When the Swiss Mennonites migrated to the United States of America, their understanding of separation from the world was retained.

Participation in the political process was avoided by these Mennonites. Rural environments were deemed more appropriate for the practicing of their religious commitments than was the urban environment because of its "morally compromising world of commerce, industry, politics, and entertainment" (Driedger and Kauffman 1982:270-75 in Kauffman and Driedger, 1991, p. 30).

For the Mennonites of Switzerland and southern Germany it was important to develop a carefully regulated discipline, Ordnung, that would keep their community distinct from the dominant society. Humility and obedience became the characteristics of Mennonite community expectations. These characteristics were seen to be a continuation of the Anabaptist goal of Gelassenheit (yieldedness, submission, composure) (Haas, 1992, pp.16-17).

The Swiss Mennonites were initially the ones who came to the United States and Canada beginning first in the United States in the seventeenth century. Many of the Mennonites in northern Europe, however, moved into what is now Poland. Pressures within this former Prussian state resulted in a significant migration of Mennonites into the Ukraine. Many Mennonites did, nonetheless, remain in the Netherlands and Danzig area (Klassen, 1989 in Kauffman and Driedger, 1991, p. 31). By 1683 the first Swiss Mennonite community was established in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Later in the 1870s, 18,000 Mennonites from Russia emigrated to the United States and Canada (Wenger, 1977, pp. 52-53). Subsequent emigrations from Europe to North America occurred among the Mennonites. As the Mennonites began to integrate into the North American context, their faith expressions were molded to reflect the milieus in which they found themselves.

The term Mennonite came to replace the earlier designation of Anabaptist for a number of reasons, but this new term of Mennonite was not without its ambiguities. Its connotations have often suggested a "separatism and legalism" (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 556) that sits uncomfortably with some groups, and they have sometimes dropped the name Mennonite in their church names while still adhering to the theology. Sawatsky (1990) identifies several ambiguities in the term Mennonite for Mennonites. First, there is an endemic tension between "sectarian separation from the world and missionary responsibility to the world." Second, often the term Mennonite is used to characterize groups who reject "modern culture including, for some, modern technology" and then other more numerous Mennonite groups are identified with these more separatist groups. Third, there is an ethnic and religious implication by the use of the word:

> [t]he quest to nurture their vision of the true church in peace and quiet and to separate themselves from a hostile and evil world, encouraged Mennonites over the centuries to pursue a strategy of relative ideological and geographical withdrawal. Assisted by endogamy and other mechanisms of boundary maintenance, the Mennonites over time developed a sense of being a unique people -- even an ethnic group (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 556).

There is a great variety of theological, political, and cultural viewpoints found among Mennonites. The global Mennonite community reflects a spectrum from liberal to conservative, and from left to right (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 557). Despite the ambiguities noted

by Sawatsky, the name Mennonite is more often than not used among the various groups that align themselves with Anabaptist orthodoxy and praxis. The three largest Mennonite groups existing in North America include the:

1) Mennonite Church (MC) which is the largest Mennonite denomination (102, 276 members in 1989 according to Lichdi, 1990, p. 413). Most of its members are of the Swiss-South German origin who first arrived in the United States of America three hundred years ago. They are primarily located east of the Mississippi River while 10% are located in Canada, mostly in Ontario. Many of its members are of Amish background. They are "greatly concerned with nonconformity and still the most rural, but changing rapidly" (Kauffman and Driedger, 1991, p. 32).

2) General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) which is the second largest (62, 806 members according to Lichdi, 1990, p. 404) with 53% in United States and 47% in Canada and a majority of its members living west of the Mississippi River. In 1860 the GC church was formed by Mennonites from South Germany settling in Illinois and Iowa (1830-1850) along with some Mennonites who broke away in 1847 from Mennonites (Swiss) in Pennsylvania. The GCs are regarded as the most liberal of the Mennonite groups. The majority of this group are from a Dutch-Russian background but there is a sizable Swiss minority among their membership.

3) Mennonite Brethren Church (MB) which is the third largest group (43,452 members according to Lichdi, 1990, p. 412), almost all of which are of Dutch-Russian heritage. The church is located more in Canada than in United States, and mostly west of the Mississippi River. It originated in Russia in the 1860s where it broke with the dominant Mennonite group due to its desire for more emphasis on conversion and evangelism.

Of these three groups the Mennonite Church (MC) ethos and institutional structures, specifically educational, are the focus of this thesis. The remainder of the thesis will be concerned with this group.

Mennonites (from the Mennonite Church) in North America

The influences of revivalism, institutionalization, fundamentalism, and pietism, as identified by Stauffer-Hostetler (1987), had a tremendous influence upon the Mennonites in the 19th and 20th centuries. The economic, social, and especially religious changes within North American society were beginning to greatly affect Mennonite communities. Hostetler's examination of influences on Mennonites, specifically in the Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church (an area north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), analyses the forces which have impacted Mennonites. Although the results of her study would vary from conference to conference, it can be argued that these forces have had significant influence on the Mennonite Church as a whole. As secular pressures mounted and modern evangelicalism gained inroads into Mennonite constituencies, they reacted differently from outright

rejection to cautious approval. The bishops, who were typically responsible for the care and oversight of congregations, and the ministers of local congregations attempted to discern what was and was not appropriate behaviour for Mennonite people. Societal involvements were restricted, which was not unfamiliar, and clothing styles became mandated. The boundaries separating the Mennonites and their neighbours became clearer and more impenetrable. These boundaries, however, have been severely tested, and in many ways eliminated, in the last fifty years.

In 1921, in reaction to modernism, a statement entitled "Christian Fundamentals" was approved by the leaders of the Mennonite Church (Hostetler- Stauffer, 1987, p. 5). Later, in 1963, a revised Mennonite confession of faith was approved which retained the general pattern of the Dordrecht Confession of 1682 which had served as a unifying force among the Anabaptists of its era (Hostetler-Stauffer, 1987, p. 6). In July of 1995, the Mennonite Church accepted a new confession of faith. This document uses inclusive language and eliminates some of the previous items referring to specified roles for men and women as compared to the 1963 statement which used masculine language and established a specific role order for men and women.

Numerous events have shaped the ethos of the Mennonites in this century. These include industrialization, modernization, urbanization, and two world wars. An event which has had an indelible imprint on the Mennonite community was a speech given by a Mennonite theologian in the 1940s, an event examined below.

Ethos of the Mennonites

The ethos of the people within the Mennonite Church has undeniably been affected by the "Anabaptist Vision" as elucidated in the 1940s by Harold S. Bender. Harold Bender was a significant church leader in the first half of this century. He was a professor of Goshen College (a Mennonite liberal arts college located in Goshen, Indiana) in church history, Bible, and sociology from 1924 to 1962; dean of Goshen College, 1931-44, and dean of Goshen Biblical Seminary 1944-62 (Mennonite Yearbook 1994, p. 10). In an essay entitled "In Search of a City," Bender formulated a question that continues to haunt Mennonites:

> In the past century and a quarter, thousands of Mennonites have found a home in the favored and tolerant commonwealths of the United States and Canada Whether in these new lands of liberty they may not face more subtle dangers of assimilation, more threatening ultimately to their way of life than the outright animosity the hostile society of old Europe, remains to be seen (Wenger, 1966).

There is much current discussion regarding the validity of Bender's synthesis of Anabaptism but his ideas certainly have helped and continue to help to shape the dimensions of the Mennonite Church.

In a Gospel Herald April 19, 1994, article entitled "The Anabaptist Vision: Reassurance and a rallying point for the church," Albert Keim recounts Bender's articulation of the Anabaptist movement. On December 28, 1943, at Columbia University in New York City, Harold Bender gave an address to the American Society of Church History of

which he was the president. In his speech on the Anabaptist movement Bender identified three principles that he deemed central to the early Anabaptists:

1) Christianity as a life of discipleship based on the example of Christ;
2) the church as a fellowship of adult believers; and
3) love and nonresistance governing all personal and social relationships.

For Bender discipleship, which was tied to nonconformity to the dominant societal values and behaviours that contradicted Christian ones, was key to the Anabaptist movement:

> [d]discipleship implied the transformation of the entire life of the believer. The focus for the Anabaptists was not so much on the inward experience of grace -- as was true for Luther -- but on the outward application of that grace to all human conduct. The key word for the Anabaptists was not faith but Nachfolge Christi (Keim, 1994, p. 3).

What nonconformity means today among Mennonites is indeed varied: a simple lifestyle, noninvolvement in direct military service, refusing to pay the percentage of taxes used for war involvements, nonviolent demonstrations protesting violence, refusal to swear oaths, peace and service opportunities sponsored by the church, formalized relief efforts, modesty, humility and integrity in business, social and personal ethics, and Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs

(Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 636). According to Keim, Bender's articulation of his understanding of the Anabaptist movement provided Mennonites with a "convincingly simple explanation of the meaning of their history" (p.8). Therein, however, lay the problem. Bender had perhaps oversimplified a diverse and multilayered history and coloured it with a Swiss interpretation of the whole Anabaptist movement.

The themes of discipleship, the community dynamic of mutuality and love, and the overriding spirit of peace emerged in Bender's synthesis. These ideas had been reoccurring throughout the issuance of statements of faith and practice among the Mennonites since their origins among the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century. According to Gross (Mennonite Yearbook & Directory 1994, pp.9-10), Bender's Anabaptist Vision

> was, at its base, conservative in its attempt to conserve the best of our faith-tradition; it was liberal in being open to testing any and all new scholarship that impinged upon the quest toward an honest portrayal of our Anabaptist-Mennonite past.

Levi Miller, in his article "The Anabaptist Vision and how it has changed the Mennonite Church" (Gospel Herald, April 26, 1994), states that Bender emphasized "nonresistance and biblical pacifism" in his articulation of the Anabaptist movement (p.1). This emphasis resulted in a strong attitude among Mennonites to serve in the name of Christ throughout the world especially after the Second World War. (In the 1920s a relief and service organization was begun to assist Mennonites living in Russia who were being persecuted. This agency was named the

Mennonite Central Commitee. Its mandate broadened significantly after World War Two to include service to more than just Mennonites in need.) The Mennonite practice of being separate from the dominant society began to change. The influence of Bender's ideals became widespread in Mennonite circles.

By the 1970s, the Anabaptist Vision had become a standard for membership in much of the Anabaptist family. For more traditional Mennonites, who were quietly withdrawing and quietly growing, the older Mennonite Church standard of nonconformity and nonresistance still had meaning. But for the moderns -- who were also growing, though not as quietly -- a new standard of peace, community, and discipleship was in place. Mennonites could be both modern and traditional by espousing the Anabaptist Vision Despite the claimed reductionism of Bender's ideals, it has had tremendous influence among Mennonites, Miller concludes his brief article on the Anabaptist Vision by noting that "most important of all the Anabaptist Vision has given us Mennonites a biblical and historical place to stand in the modern world" (p. 5).

Miller mentions that three years after Bender's 1962 death, a booklet was published that contained Bender's Anabaptist Vision speech. The booklet was called The Anabaptist Vision, and it is still in print. It contains some interesting and valuable information which helps to establish the context for this study.

Although Bender in his historic speech in 1943 to the American Society of Church History tends to describe a rather idealistic recreation of the Anabaptist movement, his characterization, for many Anabaptists and for most Swiss Anabaptists, tended to be accepted as an accurate portrayal of the essence of the movement. Recently some scholarship

has attempted to problematize parts of his interpretation. Bender (1944), in his published speech, described the movement as one that was "the culmination of the Reformation, the fulfillment of the original vision of Luther and Zwingli ... [and] a consistent evangelical Protestantism seeking to recreate without compromise the original New Testament church, the vision of Christ and the apostles" (p, 13). As Bender later stated in his speech, the early Anabaptists were attempting "to organize a church composed of solely earnest Christians" (p. 18). The foundational truths of Anabaptism for Bender were summarized in three points: 1) "a new conception of the essence of Christianity as discipleship," 2) "a new conception of the church as a brotherhood " and 3) "a new ethic of love and nonresistance" (p. 20). Each of these tenets requires further exploration.

Christianity as discipleship

Bender (1944) considered the principle of discipleship as primary for the Anabaptists. As he says,

> [t]he Anabaptists could not understand a Christianity which made regeneration, holiness, and love primarily a matter of inteliect, of doctrinal belief, or of subjective "experience," rather than one of the transformation of life. They demanded an outward expression of the inner experience (p. 20).

The working out of one's salvation in everyday life was considered the authentic measure of one's faith. " As previously mentioned, the great word of the Anabaptists was not 'faith' as it was with the reformers, but

'following' (nachfolge Christi) (p. 21).Bender repeatedly notes that many of the Anabaptists' persecutors, although unsympathetic to their plight, wrote about their godly lives (pp. 21-26). The evidence of the Anabaptists' conscientiousness about their lives is a discriminative feature of the Anabaptist spirit for Bender.

The church as a brotherhood

Part of the Anabaptists' contention, along with the other Protestant reformers, was the understanding of the nature of the church. For the Anabaptists, voluntary membership as evidenced in adult or believers' baptism and a subsequent commitment to "holy living and discipleship" was paramount (p. 26). As Bender explained, "[t]his vision stands in sharp contrast to the church concept of the reformers who retained the medieval idea of a mass church with membership of the entire population from birth to the grave compulsory by law and force" (p. 26).

In tandem with the idea of the church composed of a body of committed and practicing Christians living out the highest standard of the New Testament was the insistence on the separation of the church from the world. The Anabaptists held to the practice of nonconformity of the Christian to the worldly way of life. According to Bender, the Anabaptists believed that

> [t]he world would not tolerate the practice of true Christian principles in society, and the church could not tolerate the practice of worldly ways among its membership. Hence the only way out was separation (*Absonderung*), the gathering of true Christians into their own Christian society where Christ's way could and would be practiced (p. 27)

Following from this understanding emerged a clear drawing of lines by which one knew what was deemed acceptable by the "brotherhood" and what was not acceptable. Bender continued in this vein by saying that "A logical outcome of the concept of nonconformity to the world was the concept of the suffering church. Conflict with the world was inevitable for those who endeavored to live an earnest Christian life" (p. 28). Bender's idealism about the early Anabaptists was expressed in his continued emphasis on this point of separation: persecution could have been avoided but they chose not to conform to the dominant society and became willing to suffer the inevitable consequences, even death (p. 29). He also noted as a specific effect of the Anabaptists' notion of the church as a community that mutual aid, helping one another with physical needs, was evident in the movement.

The ethic of love and nonresistance

Perhaps one of the most contentious issues within Anabaptist communities, in terms of practice, was the idea of rejecting violence of all forms. Bender, while being explicit in his description of the rejection of violence by the Anabaptists, provides the least explication of this tenet among the three he identifies as delineating Anabaptism. While Bender

concedes that not all the Anabaptists completely rejected the use of violence, he is emphatic that, "[t]he Brethren understood this to mean complete abandonment of all warfare, strife, and violence and of the taking of human life" (p. 31). He cites several early Anabaptist leaders -- Conrad Grebel, Pilgram Marpeck, Peter Riedemann, Menno Simons -- as explicitly denouncing the use of violence in any form for followers of Christ (pp. 31-32). He concluded this section of his speech by stating that, "[i]t should also be remembered that they held this principle in a day when both Catholic and Protestant churches not only endorsed war as an instrument of state policy, but employed it in religious conflicts" (p. 33). Love and nonresistance were galvanizing points for the Anabaptists; "[this] meant no participation in war, violence, or taking of human life" (p. 3).

Bender's formative speech outlined the understanding that the Anabaptists were attempting to follow Christ as individuals in a variety of social contexts as well as together as a separate faith community which was in opposition to the dominant political, economic, and religious constructs of their era.

Current Views on the Significance of Bender's Anabaptist Vision

As mentioned earlier, there are questions about the validity of Bender's analysis of the Anabaptist movement. I contacted Beulah Stauffer Hostetler on January 22, 1995, to ask her about Harold Bender. Hostetler has done substantial research, taught, and published in the area of Anabaptist studies; she also had worked with Harold Bender. During our telephone conversation I asked her specifically about the criticism of Bender's "Anabaptist Vision," She said the problematizing derives from a man named Stayer (a Methodist) and a school of scholars at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario. Stayer et al have attempted to make the origins of Anabaptism more complex, she noted.

Bender's vision is viewed, by these scholars, as being limiting once the scope of Anabaptists is considered. The question has been regarding the streams of Anabaptism and not with the appropriation of his three principles, Stauffer-Hostetler said. This new school of thought chooses whatever model desired to be expressed and uses it as Anabaptist. These principles have had a high priority within the schools of the Mennonite Church (MC); Bender's points have been clearly adopted by the Mennonite Church's educational structures. While Bender's speech describing the Anabaptist Vision was given in 1943, it was not until the 1960s that it was commonly referred to in church literature.

I also asked her about peace and nonresistance and the current interpretations of these concepts. She said that since the 1950s there has been an increased call for activism. The notion of nonresistance, according to her, has not so much been discredited as simply expanded.

Every Anabaptist-Mennonite confession of faith has contained some reference to nonresistance albeit in different ways. It was evident from our dialogue that while questions remain about Bender's synthesis of Anabaptist thought, it has, nonetheless, been a critical part of Mennonite institutional structures especially educational ones. (The significance of Bender's Anabaptist Vision is evidenced by the fact that fifty years after the first publication of "The Anabaptist Vision" a conference of scholars, pastors, and lay leaders was held to examine its impact on the contemporary Mennonite Church and its relevance for Mennonite identity in the twenty first century. The papers presented at this conference were later published in a 1995 book, Refocusing A Vision: Shaping Anabaptist Character in the 21st Century.

Mennonites of the Twentieth Century

There is a plethora of information about the origins, development, and beliefs of the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement. Previous paradigms of what it meant to be a Mennonite are being reconstructed. The 1980s and early 1990s have seen a renewed examination of Mennonite identity. Michael King, in his book Christian Identity in a Homeless Age: Trackless Wastes & Stars to Steer (1990), provides an interesting analysis of the question of Mennonite identity. In King's autobiography and theological analysis, he attempts to come to grips with his identity as a Mennonite as well as some of the theological implications of being Mennonite in the latter part of this century. King suggests some of the reasons for this century's shift away from a generally isolationist stance. These reasons range from a variety of stresses to one of accommodation

and assimilation almost welcomed by contemporary Mennonites. He refers to Beulah Stauffer-Hostetler's work on this topic and notes "[o]ne cause of stress was the modernistic theology fundamentalism reacted against." He continues by saying that "the changes in social and economic structures" accelerated changes (p. 26).

The Mennonite Church reacted to the pressures for change with what Stauffer-Hostetler calls "defensive structuring and codification of practice." Expressions of this reaction included a high rate of marriage within the group, strong authoritarian control, limitations on association with outside groups, and adoption of cultural identity symbols (p. 27). "Back then, one knew women preachers, house-husbands, jewelry, unions, voting, fighting (whether in war or against classmates), and most musical instruments were wrong" (p. 27). Then, about the middle of this century, the strong boundaries and clear lines between Mennonites and their neighbours crumbled.

Stauffer-Hostetler (1987) notes that, in the quarter century following 1950, virtually all of the elements of defensive structuring disappeared from Mennonite practice. She also notes that, during the period of disappearing cultural identity symbols, it appeared to some Mennonites that their only difference from their Protestant neighbors was the inability of Mennonites to articulate their beliefs. King (1990) offers six reasons for the disintegration of this separatist position of isolation common among many Christian groups prior to 1950 especially the Mennonites. These reasons were: secularization, modern transportation and communication, plurality and pluralism, relativism, individualism, and loss of authority. Interestingly, King's analysis argues for a holding in tension the past and the present rather than adopting a renewed

isolationism or embracing an undirected eclecticism. Elements of his analysis are validated by the institutional structures and lifestyle choices among the Mennonites in this decade.

In an informative article, Sawatsky (1990) responds to the question, "What does Mennonite mean?" His conclusion to the question is a fitting closing to this part of the exploration of Mennonites:

> To be Mennonite is not so much to share a creed or a liturgy but a story. The story of the Mennonite experience over nearly five centuries of history is premised upon an incarnational theology, upon the quest to become a people within the body of Christ, by God's grace, and rooted in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, in a world frequently alien or even hostile to this Way. To be a Mennonite means to identify with a particular Christian community with a particular story (p. 557).

Mennonite Education

History

The extent of Mennonite involvement with institutional education varies depending upon which stream of Mennonitism is being discussed. For the purposes of this study, the Swiss Mennonite group called the Mennonite Church (MC) was the focus. The first Mennonite immigrants arrived in Germantown (today part of Philadelphia), Pennsylvania, in 1683. By 1718 Christopher Dock, a Mennonite educator, began a school in the Skippack community near Philadelphia. ""Dock, a progressive for his time, believed that a teacher should motivate children to do things from a love of doing rather than to force them by threat of physical punishment" (Studer, 1967, in Steiner and Mullet, 1992, pp. 295-296).

In the 1830s, the United States public schools begin to replace community religious schools. Mennonites participated in public schools because they were controlled locally; the religious values of the community were reflected in the textbooks; and the schools only had eight grades. The changes in the public schooling system were to create later tensions for the Mennonites. Steiner and Mullet (1992) note that there was a growing acceptance by the early 1900s of secondary and post-secondary education in the Mennonite Church. Non-agricultural career opportunities and the church's interest in preparing capable missionaries for overseas work helped with the acceptance of advanced education. In fact many Mennonite youth were already attending public secondary schools and some, although fewer in number, were entering post-secondary institutions.

In the 1930s and 1940s concerns were raised among Mennonites about public education. The issues of nationalism, militarism, secular influences, and extracurricular activities were viewed as compromising traditional Mennonite beliefs and practices. Mennonites were becoming increasingly uneasy with public education; they would soon choose to offer an alternative to the public school.

Although North American Mennonites did not begin establishing high schools until about one hundred years ago, many of the early Anabaptists did receive university education (Kraybill, 1993). The ambivalence of Anabaptists can be seen in the ironic note that many early Anabaptists were university trained but some of these same highly-educated Anabaptists blamed the corruption in the Catholic Church on the "higher" learning of the clergy. "This distrust of formal theological education, the experience of stinging persecution by educated authorities, and living in rural areas for decades fostered a suspicion among Mennonites"(p.8). An anti-intellectualism, consequently, developed among Mennonites that went unchallenged until the latter part of the twentieth century.

Secondary schools began to appear in North America in the late 19th century. Two themes provided the impetus for the development of Mennonite secondary schools from the late 19th century to the 1960s: 1) the emergence from isolation as a result of the church's growing missions and service efforts and 2) the preservation of a way of life as a result of growing threats to the church's accepted lifestyle -- nonconformity. Public schools were seen to be becoming dominant in instilling conformity among American youth and more importantly among Mennonite youth. The exposure of Mennonite youth to the lifestyles of the

dominant youth culture was perceived as a threat to the Mennonite values. The influence of the world wars during this ti[illegible] also heightened the sense of urgency by the church in keeping its youth part of the Mennonite community (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 722).

Because of these threatening issues, Mennonites began to create educational institutions for the teaching of their youth. The preservation of Mennonite distinctives, especially among the young people, was considered necessary. Kraybill (1991, p. 51) describes this ethos:

> The twin doctrines of nonconformity and nonresistance marked the major boundaries of the Mennonite world. Distinctive garb and taboos on social behaviors staked off the borders between church and world. Plain dress symbolized obedience to the Scriptures, loyalty to the Mennonite church and nonconformity to the world. The doctrine of nonresistance -- nonparticipation in the military and non-use of lawsuits-- continued as a test of church membership. The American flag, symbol of a patriotism that would kill enemies rather than love them as Jesus taught, did not reflect the humble stance of nonresistance.

The 1940s and 50s, however, were the beginnings of the end of almost a century of strong emphasis on common Mennonite practices such as dress, hairstyles, participation in athletics and school dances, and attendance at movies.

With growing concern leaders within the Mennonite church began to take action. The idea of Mennonite schools as alternatives to the public schools was viewed as one way in which the standards of the Mennonite churches could be maintained among their youth. In particular,

Mennonite high schools were seen as the avenues by which these standards and values could be disseminated because at this age the youth were most prone to break with the accepted lifestyle patterns. The aim of almost all of the Mennonite high schools was to preserve these lifestyle patterns (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, pp. 803-806).

The first era for Mennonite secondary schools was from 1890 to 1920. Most of these schools later became colleges. These schools were established because of a lack of public high schools to meet the growing needs of Mennonites. The second era for Mennonite secondary schools began circa 1940 and lasted until 1960. These high schools were designed to offer to Mennonite youth what the public schools could not. They were located in large Mennonite communities, and often they were controlled by district conferences.

As noted earlier, "[t]he support for Mennonite high schools developed because of the pressures brought on by World War II, compulsory school attendance laws, and the gradual assimilation of Mennonites into society" (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 804). These post 1940 high schools sought to "protect, safeguard, and isolate Mennonite youth from secular society" (p. 804). If the environment could be controlled, the Mennonite ministers and bishops believed there would be a greater opportunity to keep Mennonite youth in the Mennonite church. An additional rationale given for the establishment of these parochial schools was the secularization occurring in public education.

After 1961 few Mennonite high schools were established. (In fact only five out of the twenty-two that are listed in the Mennonite Yearbook & Directory1994 were established after this date. Of these five, none are members of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council.) The

jurisdiction of Mennonite schools are either under regional conferences or patrons; the majority of high schools are owned by regional conferences. The number of Mennonite youth attending Mennonite high schools has grown from 25% in 1961-62, although dropping to 20% in 1969-70, but up to 36.6% in 1986 (p. 806). Enrollment in Mennonite high schools varies amongst communities east of the Allegheny Mountains. In Pennsylvania, some high schools enroll over 50% of the local Mennonite population whereas others range from 20% to 30%.

Philosophically, Mennonite high schools have moved from a former stance of isolationism to a current stance of involvement with the world. This reality is consistent with the work cited by King (1990) and Stauffer-Hostetler (1987). The principles that Bender outlined in his Anabaptist Vision, community, discipleship and peacemaking, are prevalent in Mennonite schools. Steiner and Mullet (1992, p. 297) comment that themes common in mission statements from Mennonite elementary and secondary schools include "peacemaking, caring learning environments, multicultural learning, honoring God and living a life of service to others." In the conclusion of their chapter on Amish / Mennonite Schools, Steiner and Mullet (1992, pp. 300-301) suggest that "[e]mphasis has shifted from nonconformity and separation from society to engagement with the global community and preparation for the young to live out their lives committed to Christ's call to reconciliation and peacemaking." This paradigm shift has resulted in a re-focusing of beliefs and practices; it can be argued, perhaps, a more authentic -Anabaptist theology has consequently emerged.

Organizations

In 1961 the Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC) was officially organized. Its goals were

1) to simulate long-range planning and goal setting;
2) to promote understanding of and growth in Christian education with a Mennonite-Anabaptist perspective;
3) to provide and/or direct educational research on behalf of the member schools;
4) to stimulate curriculum development efforts;
5) to provide for personal fellowship of chief school administrators;
6) to establish and maintain a strong relationship with the Mennonite Board of Education in order to coordinate the educational efforts of the schools as they relate to the colleges and congregations; and
7) to organize and carry out efforts beneficial to the individual schools, administrators, board members, faculties, and students.

MSEC serves as a consultative body to those schools desiring membership; it also works, as is appropriate, with the Mennonite Board of Education (MBE) which oversees the operations of all the Mennonite Church's educational institutions. Every two years the MSEC holds teacher's conventions for its member school teachers. These conventions are a time for professional development of teachers who are employed by Mennonite schools.

Philosophy

In 1971 an important document emerged in the area of Mennonite education. It was entitled Mennonite Education: Why and How? A Philosophy of Education for the Mennonite Church by Daniel Hertzler. This document was done in collaboration with Don Augsburger, Paul Bender, Ira E. Miller, Laban Peachy & John Howard Yoder, noted Mennonite leaders. Appendix A of the document is labeled Theological Statements for Philosophy of Mennonite Education which was written in consultation with Mennonite educators and theologians. This statement was developed as a background for an investigation into the philosophy of Mennonite education. It was not intended as a comprehensive philosophical articulation of Mennonite theology, but rather as an attempt to think about education as it relates to the Mennonite church.

The appendix includes five headings. Under several of these headings information deemed appropriate to the concerns of this paper are examined. Later, some of the chapters are discussed.

Under section "II. The nature of the church and the meaning of membership" the emphasis is on one of being a "covenant people [who] exist as a reconciled and reconciling community and live in fellowship with God and with one another" (p. 54). It is clear that this emphasis revolves around the individual's faith community, his/her lifestyle choices and his/her commitment to nonviolence. These same tenets are then expected to be taught and modeled in the education of the church's youth.

Under section "IV. The mission of the church, "[t]he Christian is a pilgrim: he does not attach himself permanently to any place or culture;

he lives in a voluntary minority community in a pluralistic society, in several overlapping communities or 'worlds'" (p. 58). The church's role is to be in service to the larger society, and it does not become involved in violent actions. The church also calls for a response from those not a part of it through a variety of ways. It attempts to provide for the welfare of people that is in keeping with its understanding of the meaning of what God is doing in history. The church schools also share in this mission.

Under section "V. Supplementary Statement on Childhood and Personhood" are some illuminating comments about how individuals are viewed. It describes the salvation of individuals as more than just a singular event but rather an experiential process. The idea is expanded throughout this fifth section:

> The young person is thus to be seen as bearing potentiality for learning in either direction. In line with Anabaptist rejection of the traditional doctrine of original sin, which linked sinfulness to procreation, and which seemed to make God responsible for evil, the child should not be seen as evil, with a will which needs to be "broken" by education. In line with the Anabaptist rejection of infant baptism, the child should not be seen as a young church member needing only to be sheltered from harmful influences. The human person is at all ages, in varying degrees, an arena where the awareness of self is born and cultivated in the context of choice between good and evil (p. 60).

The school setting can, quite obviously, become another place, beside the home and church, where this understanding of teaching a child about him/herself, faith and the world can occur.

In Chapter 2, "Theological Preface," Hertzler (1971, pp 15-16) provides seven "theological axioms" which summarize the more detailed philosophical positions in Appendix A. In Chapter 3, "Mennonite Philosophy of Education: Basic Questions," Hertzler (1971, pp. 17-29) provides some valuable insights. This chapter examines purposes, elements, and theories of education. The purpose of church education is "to teach the meaning of Christian peoplehood" (p. 20). Love for him/herself, others and God; being knowledgeable about his/her heritage and articulate about his/her faith; and being willing to contribute to his/her church and the broader world are the inherent ideas embedded in this goal. The elements in the educational process include providing *background information and perspective* on the community of which the learners are a part, *teaching of values* congruent with the community, *training in the skills* needed to function in society and *structuring a personal view of reality* from the learner's standpoint. These purposes and elements intentionally reflect a Mennonite world view.

Hertzler concludes this chapter with an articulated summary of a Mennonite educational philosophy:

1) The people of God are a distinct people with a distinct calling an unique educational goals. They must educate to a) transmit their history and make their identity clear; b) train in the skills needed to carry on the work they consider important ; c) teach the values they consider important; and d) help the young develop his/her own personal view of reality.

2) The task of education is carried on not only in schools, but it is the work of the whole community. In fact, it is only as they are practiced by

the group that values taught in schools can be expected to be taken seriously.

3) The educational task is seen as a part of the people's faithfulness to God and thus should be subjected to regular scrutiny to keep it in touch with the goals and needs of the people of God.

4) The ultimate purpose of education as practiced by the people of God is to aid in living as a reconciled and reconciling people. (p. 29).

In Chapter 4, "Mennonite Educational Strategy: A Proposed Ten-Point Formula," Hertzler (1971) argues that the church is really a people within a people. These people are called both to be separate from and servants to the dominant society. As a result Hertzler notes that in the church's educational program should be concerned to equip Christians to function in this role. They should learn as much as they can about the human situation, come to understand human limitations, and should be made familiar with the biblical world view and Christian values. An education program should teach the skills required for ministry in the work of witness and reconciliation.

Hertzler recognizes that agreement on the "best institutional strategy is not likely and that local conditions may differ sufficiently that a pattern which is valid in one community would not be equally so in another" (pp. 33-34). He continues that "[t]he implications of our philosophy would de-emphasize expensive buildings. Rather, Mennonite educational institutions on all levels should make quality relationships a

first priority"(p. 39). Bender's paradigm of community, discipleship and peacemaking are strongly represented in this chapter.

Hertzler notes that the Mennonite educational institutions are assumed to strive for excellence in teaching and will prepare students through training in abstract thinking and appropriate vocational skills. He states that the expected educational requirements by accrediting state bodies may be accomplished while at the same time the program can be deliberately altered as needed to train young persons for responsible Christian living (p. 42).

At the end of Hertzler's philosophical analysis of Mennonite education he cites several significant points. One of these points is particularly poignant for the topic under study. He says,

> The goal of Mennonite education is a person who will be informed about his heritage and articulate his faith. He will have a sense of identity and vocation as a Christian and will see his occupation as a way in which to serve Christ. He will see himself as a person of value and so will respect himself and others. He will possess emotional independence, the capacity for critical judgment, and willingness to be unpopular. He will be concerned about spiritual, social, and economic opportunity for the poor and the oppressed and will himself not become a slave of affluence. Loyalty to Christ and Christian values will deliver him from too great devotion to his home country. In fact he can be at home in any country, for as a Christian he is really a world citizen (pp. 47-48).

It is useful to contrast the above, 1971 statement, with one made by Steiner and Mullet (1992, p. 290) in their examination of Mennonite

educational priorities. They say that Mennonite educational goals reflect the importance of peacemaking and reconciliation through societal involvements in local and global communities. Youth are taught to value decision-making that occurs within the context of community. A daily application of faith in Christ is stressed. The educational task "is seen as a part of the people's faithfulness to God and thus should be subjected to regular scrutiny to keep it in touch with the goals and needs of the people of God." Most Mennonite parents presume that change is inevitable and represents opportunity as long as the change is grounded in essential Anabaptist theological understandings.

It is significant to note that these two statements, approximately twenty years apart, reflect similar themes. These themes reflect a concern with a sense of Anabaptist-Mennonite history and theology, community, service, peacemaking, and a global perspective. The 1971 study, Mennonite Education: Why and How? A Philosophy of Education for the Mennonite Church by Daniel Hertzler, examined in the preceding pages is useful in elucidating this Mennonite view of education.

The development of Mennonite educational institutions, organizations and attempts at articulation of a Mennonite educational philosophy emerge out of a people who have attempted to interpret and make relevant their Anabaptist heritage. The characteristics identified in the history of the Anabaptist-Mennonites and in Bender's Anabaptist Vision are certainly prominent in Mennonite education structures of the past fifty years. This ideology seems to permeate the writing and thinking of Mennonite educators.

Chapter Three: The (Brief) Exploration of Theory

In a preadolescent boys' Sunday school class in the Hyattsville Mennonite Church in Maryland, the teacher was describing the threefold division of the ancient Jewish tabernacle -- an outer court for Gentiles or non-Jews, a second court only for Jews, and the Holy of Holies for *special* people. "Can you guess who these *special* people might be?" asked the teacher.

"I think it was the Mennonites, replied a seven-year old boy confidently.

-- from Festival Quarterly, Winter 1994 [Italics mine.]

This study was an attempt to discover the interplay of the discipline of social studies, the understandings of ideology, and the ethos of Mennonite educational structures. In this chapter a selective examination of social studies and ideology will be presented. In no way is the information provided in this chapter meant to be an exhaustive review of data on social studies or ideology. The intention is to provide a cursory look at aspects of social studies and types of ideologies that can provide some reference points to facilitate understanding of the research and subsequent findings.

Social Studies

The teaching of social studies in high schools is based on the demands of the prescribed curriculum from the government agency

responsible for education, the school culture, the teacher's preferred way of doing things and the needs of the students enrolled in the course. Social studies is a composite of various other disciplines: history, geography, anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science and economics. It signifies the extensive attempts by teachers "to make some pedagogical sense of the multiplicity of knowledge gained from the more or less scientific study of human relationships and interactions" (van Manen , Parsons, 1983 in Parsons, Milburn and van Manen, 1983, p. 3).

The role of the social studies teacher requires that the teacher be clear about the orientation that they bring to the classroom because "[e]very educational action that a social studies' teacher takes illuminates a particular philosophy or belief system providing information about what values a teacher holds, how a teacher views teaching, and how a teacher views social studies" (van Manen , Parsons, 1983 in Parsons, Milburn and van Manen, 1981, p. 9). It becomes crucial then for a teacher to be cognizant of the approach s/he takes in the classroom so that what s/he is doing is consistent, effective, and appropriate. The criteria that teachers use to evaluate their consistency, effectiveness, and appropriateness should reflect several things. van Manen (1983 in Parsons, Milburn and van Manen, 1983) suggests that the manner in which the learner, the social context, the subject matter and the teaching of social studies are approached will suggest the underlying values in the curriculum. Whether those values are life-giving becomes a significant question. The teacher needs to be the one who embodies values that demonstrate a viable life.

Citizenship education in Canada has been strongly emphasized in the social studies curriculum. Towards this end, Canadian social

studies curriculum has generally manifest two views: a knowledge-based approach and a skill-based approach. Tomkins (1983 in Parsons, Milburn and van Manen, 1983) describes the knowledge-based approach as one that has suggestions of indoctrination and attempts to convey traditional beliefs and positive identification with the students' heritage where responsible citizenship is a by-product. He describes the skills-based approach as one that emphasizes the development of intellectual skills such as critical thinking and problem solving to enable the student to function effectively in a pluralistic society as a citizen-in-action.

Curriculum development, although it allows for teacher, professor, trustees, and lay people involvement, largely rests in the hands of the government departments which invariably reflects some amount of diverse political pressures that are frequently impacting public education. Tompkins (1983, in Parsons, Milburn and van Manen, 1983, p. 27) reinforces this point by stating that "curriculum policy making and development are complex processes subject to a wide range of influences emanating from sources as diverse as Canadian society itself." Whether a provincial education department or ministry chooses a knowledge or skills based approach to social studies often is determined by the current political climate.

Another emphasis in Canadian social studies education has been in the broad area of global or, as it is sometimes also called, peace education. The aim of global education is to create an awareness of the interconnectedness of political, economic and social relationships among all peoples and to develop a conscientization that will result in decisions that promote a more sustainable world. It is important that

teachers and students together explore what it means to exist in a global community. Learning about the causes, conflicts, and potential solutions to the critical issues affecting the global environment becomes not someone else's concern but everyone's concern.

While the form of social studies courses, the role of the teacher, the impact of governing bodies, the importance of the social context, and the needs of the students are pivotal elements in social studies education, these elements are translated differently by each school district or jurisdiction in North America. The American education system appears to be as diverse as each of the fifty states. While the schools involved in my research study all teach social studies, their definition of the course varies. Most frequently they have social studies departments under which many courses are taught. These courses may include government, economics, and world issues to name but a few. The privately funded schools that I did my research in are not required to follow the state approved curriculum because they do not receive state funds. If they, however, use state approved texts, which they do, they are allowed a discount price on the purchase of those texts.

The schools from which I interviewed teachers would tend to follow a similar curricular approach to Alberta's skills-based approach although there is a blending of the two. It would appear (Swartzendruber, Lehman, Deiner 1994 interviews) that the philosophy of the social studies curriculum, among the sample researched, has changed over the years from a knowledge-based approach to a skills-based approach. Another similarity to Canadian social studies programs in general and Albertan ones specifically is the concerted effort in the American school sample to develop a global educational perspective in their social

studies programs. The significant difference evident between the public Canadian and private American schools was in their ideological structure. In the past some social studies teachers in the public educational systems in Canada have aimed for neutrality in their teaching -- some would say value less. In Mennonite educational institutions social studies, along with the other disciplines, is/are designed to be taught explicitly from a uniquely Mennonite perspective -- some would say value laden. Each system's ideology is quite different. The intention of this point is not to create two solitudes but to emphasize that historically Mennonites have promolugated a specific ideology in their schools that is not necessarily shared in other educational settings.

Ideology

The context within which individuals are socialized reflects a specific ideology. There are numerous ways to consider ideologies (Koole, 1983). What is ideology? Michael Apple (1979 in Koole 1983) notes that ideology is a problematic concept. Most people agree that one can talk about ideology as referring to some sort of 'system' of ideas, beliefs, and fundamental commitments or values about social reality; but, here the agreement often ends. Apple (1990, p. 20) stresses that "interpretations differ according to both the scope or range of the phenomena which are presumably ideological and the function -- what ideologies actually do for the people who 'have' them."

The various interpretations of ideologies can be placed on a continuum. At one end is the "interest theory" of ideology, rooted in the Marxist tradition. The interest theory of ideology understands ideology's

primary role as the justification of vested interests of existing or contending political, economic, or other groups. (Apple, 1979, pp. 20-21 in Koole, 1983, p. 19) At the other end is the "strain theory" proposed by Durkheim and Parsons; it views ideology's most important function as providing meaning in problematic situations in order for individuals and groups to take action. The range of interpretations, according to Apple, can be extended to fit between these two poles.

In Ideology and Curriculum (1979, pp. 155-157 in Koole, 1983, p. 17), Apple suggests several questions useful in examining a school's ideological knowledge: Whose knowledge is in the curriculum? Why is it being taught to this particular group, in this particular way? Whose cultural capital, both overt and covert, is placed within the school curriculum? Whose vision of economic, racial, and sexual reality provides the direction in the curriculum? Whose principles of social justice or economic reality are embedded in the content of schooling?

Koole's (1983, p. 13) study of the relationship between ideology and social studies refers to Nelson's (1981, p. 3) synthesis that ideology includes 1) moral, ethical, and normative views of major human endeavors, including social, economic, and educational relationships; 2) a rationalization of group interests; 3) an essential position from which significant attitudes and actions are derived; and, 4) implied theories of human nature.

In Ideologies (1992), a Social Studies 30 textbook, an explanation of "ideology" is provided for students, although it can be used beyond the scope of a high school context. Baldwin, Berube, Booi et al describe an ideology as a "set of beliefs about the world," and a "systematic set of beliefs that provides a fairly thorough picture of the world that a group of

people accepts as true."(Baldwin, Berube, Booi et al, 1992, p. 7) They then highlight a list of characteristics, although not exclusive, that help to further clarify the meaning of an ideology. They state that it is

1) a set of basic assumptions about human nature and society:
2) an interpretation of the past ;
3) an explanation of the present;
4) a vision of the future;
5) a goal (usually utopian) for which to strive, and a strategy to achieve this goal;
6) heroes (martyrs, founders, leaders), rituals (pledges, anthems, salutes), and sacred documents (Bibles, manifestos, constitutions);
7) a strong emotional appeal that is designed to win converts and encourage action ; and
8) a simple, easily understood picture of the world, which it claims is the truth.

While the focus of the text is political and economic systems, these characteristics are easily transferable to an educational and/or religious setting. The importance of an ideology is crucial even though the acceptance of it may be equally consciously and unconsciously done. Baldwin, Berube, Booi et al (1992) note that ideologies are significant because they provide explanations that help people make sense of their environment. Decisions can be made by evaluating how the confusing issues that confront people correlate with their ideology. The future seems more predictable and a feeling of security results.

An ideology can also bind people together by offering them a common value system and a way of viewing the world. Ideologies promise a "good life" and offer a method of attaining it. Another way to look at an ideology (Parsons, 1994) is that it is 1) a thing one accepts and chooses to act upon and 2) a type of hegemony, in the neo-Marxist sense, that moves one to act even though a clear sense of a specific ideological structure may not be present at the moment of action.

Apple's, Nelson's (via Koole, 1983), Baldwin et al's, and Parsons' explications of what an ideology is are quite useful. The threads from their thinking can be seen to be woven into the ideology of Mennonitism. This study concerns itself with a religiously-based ideology that also collapses political, economic, and social boundaries into it. The Anabaptist notion of living one's faith in all aspects of one's life required that faith be the dominating force in their lives and all other aspects flowed from this centre. This ideology reflects the all encompassing nature of the aforementioned interpretations of an ideology. The Anabaptist ideology has provided a people with a sense of identity, belonging, and promise for well over four centuries.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Three friends were enjoying their soup at a restaurant when each one discovered a fly in his soup. The Presbyterian flicked his fly out of the soup and continued eating, The Methodist carefully picked up his fly and threw it away. The Mennonite wrung his fly out before he, too, tossed it away.

-- from Festival Quarterly, Spring, 1993.

The purpose of my study was to research the question **How do ideological structures affect how people teach?**

I specifically chose to frame this question in a Mennonite educational institution context and to ask **How do teachers in Mennonite schools interpret the social studies curriculum to reflect the Mennonite ethos in which they exist?**

The study involved an investigation to examine how the ideological structure, Mennonitism, affects how teachers, specifically social studies teachers, teach in Mennonite schools. This question required clarification through a whole set of related questions:

1) What is involved with social studies curricula?
2) What is ideology?
3) What is the Mennonite ideology?
4) How do Mennonite teachers understand the Mennonite ethos?
5) To what extent do Mennonite teachers interpret and adapt the curriculum to fit with their understanding of the Mennonite ethos?
(6) To what extent do the structures in which Mennonite teachers work affect their teaching?.

In order to investigate the chosen topic several steps were taken that required some intense searching for information. These steps are delineated and described in sequential order below. Many of them, however, occurred concurrently as the thesis was completed. The intention of this chapter is merely to provide an overview of the research methodology. A detailed examination of the data will occur in subsequent chapters.

1. Literature review

As the anecdote suggests, there is a mythology about Mennonites, but how much of this mythology is true? It became apparent that examining information on the topics of Mennonites, social studies, and ideology would be necessary. As individual topics, Mennonites, social studies, and ideology proved relatively simple to research. Correlating these three topics, however, proved almost impossible. In fact in terms of high school social studies there was a pronounced paucity of material. Besides consulting the traditional centres of library holdings and databases, numerous experts (like college professors, historians, and educators) were also queried. The lack of study in this area was unexpected. It became apparent to me that the three topics would need to be investigated separately and then later synthesized.

The inquiry about Mennonites became oxymoronic: difficult yet simple. My own background and experiences provided me with much information about Mennonites, yet trying to cull from sources, and plethoric they are, a succinct articulation of the origins and ethos of the Mennonites as well as their educational development became an

interesting but overwhelming task. I decided to divide up my inquiry into the aspects of origins, ethos, and education in a separate chapter. I considered such a division useful for the reader of the thesis, who I expected would be unfamiliar with the ethnic-religious group of the Mennonites. Such elaboration, I decided, would help give the reader some background from which to consider the analysis involved in the study of Mennonite social studies education.

The inquiry about social studies and ideology, much shorter than the one regarding Mennonites, became a task of providing some explication and exploration as well as then identifying commonplaces that could be used as references for the later analysis. As I reviewed the work that had been completed, I recognized that much has been written, and argued, with specific reference to social studies, specific reference to ideology, and general reference to the relationship of the two. Investigating workable commonplaces for each of these terms became necessary for the later appropriation to the specific context of Mennonite schools. My intention was not to provide an in-depth investigation of these concepts but to discover some useful basis that would facilitate the study. I came to believe that some specific consideration needed to be given to the different ways of seeing social studies in the Alberta context as compared to how social studies is seen in the American context. The review of social studies and ideology were deemed to fit together into a second chapter of the general literature review.

2. Selection of sample

Using the Mennonite Board of Education's listing of schools, I chose to write to all twenty-two of the high schools and ask them to participate in the study.

These schools are administered by their respective conferences in addition to local and regional boards. (The Mennonite Church groups its individual churches into geographic regions. There are [illegible]-one conferences in the Mennonite Church of North America.) Ten of the twenty-two schools are members of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC), a loose organization intended to foster collegiality and development among its member schools. Of these twenty-two Mennonite high schools, I was able to interview teachers at three schools.

3. Questionnaires

Teacher Questionnaire

I developed a questionnaire which focused on four questions for teachers:

1) What would you identify as the significant elements comprising the Mennonite ethos (characteristic spirit, prevalent tone or sentiment, of a people or community) of your institution?

2) Which topics in your curriculum do you find require modification if they are to reflect the elements you previously identified?

3) Would you provide three specific examples of how you alter the curriculum you teach to reflect a Mennonite ethos.

4) Describe any of the tensions you experience between the curriculum and a) your understanding of Mennonite faith and/or b) the Mennonite ethos of your institution.

Student Questionnaire

I also developed a questionnaire with two questions for students:

1) What would you identify as significant elements comprising the Mennonite ethos (characteristic spirit, prevalent tone or sentiment, of a people or community) of your school?

2) Describe two ways in which your teacher demonstrates this understanding of a Mennonite ethos. (Teacher and student responses were expected to be narrative.)

4. Correspondence and questionnaires:

I sent out letters to administrators and teachers to request their participation in this study along with questionnaires to be completed to the aforementioned schools. I provided a suggested due date, May 6, 1994, when the questionnaires should be mailed back to me. I anticipated that I would need to do some following up on the mailings in order to have the completed questionnaires returned. It did, as expected,

become necessary to contact individual teachers several times to return the requested information. Some teachers never did respond.

5. Responses to Questionnaires

After sending out twenty-two sets of questionnaires, I awaited with anticipation for their completed return. Surprises were certainly in store. Of the twenty-two schools sent material, six schools consented to participate by returning the questionnaires, four schools sent response letters declining participation and twelve schools simply did not respond.

A variety of reasons were given by the four schools who sent letters declining participation. All letters were written from the administrative levels of each school. The responses received prove interesting and are provided below, albeit in an abridged format. Names of individual teachers and specific schools have purposely been deleted or changed in the interests of confidentiality.

1) "Our school uses the A. C. E. curriculum in grades 8-12. Because of this [structured curriculum] there is little opportunity to interpret history from an Anabaptist perspective. We do try to acquaint our students with the Anabaptist heritage by requiring an "Anabaptist History" course for juniors and seniors every other year."

2) "Please note that the Salem Christian School is no longer a Mennonite school but has been an interdenominational school since 1975. Our social studies teacher belongs to a Pentecostal denomination and so may reflect certain Anabaptist beliefs but is not part of an

Anabaptist church." [Interestingly this school is listed as a Mennonite school in the Mennonite Yearbook & Directory 1994; the reason for the inconsistency or discrepancy is unknown.]

3) "I must inform you that our school did not participate in your research project on the interpretation of the social studies curriculum to reflect the Mennonite ethos. It seems to me that our school is lacking clear direction in that area. I am certainly interested in the topic. We try to include some Anabaptist history in our church and world history course, but the scope of that inclusion is quite limited. I am sure that the teachers of the history courses do approach their instruction from a distinctly Christian viewpoint, but their own understanding of a Mennonite ethos is somewhat limited."

4) "We do not see a good way to be involved in this project. As a Mennonite High School in LaGrange we get many such requests and need to say no to most of them to protect instructional time and staff workload." [I was however able to interview one of their social studies teachers as well as a former administrator.]

The non-participation responses of these schools is diverse: choice of a "structured curriculum," no longer being a Mennonite school, lack of "clear direction" regarding their Mennonite ethos, and time constraints. The interest and/or support, however, of the study was positive.

An enumeration of the total sample of eleven schools that responded to my requests for participation in the study are outlined below:

1) Prince of Peace Mennonite School (an MSEC member)

The school was willing to be involved in the study. Students did not, however, fill out any of my questionnaires. I was allowed to interview their high school social studies teachers. One was to be away for most of the summer in Belize so I was left with one teacher to interview which I did. This teacher provided me with institutional documents as well as course syllabi.

2) Conestoga High School (an MSEC member),

The school was also willing to be involved in the study. The social studies teacher and his/her grade 11 (Junior) students filled out the student questionnaires. No course syllabi were returned for my examination.

3) Faith Mennonite High School (an MSEC member)

The school was interested in being involved with the study. Students did not, however, fill out any of the questionnaires. I was given permission to interview two of their social studies' teachers as well as another teacher who had been at the school for a great length of time and who had an interest in my topic. I was provided with course outlines, syllabi, and institutional documents from these teachers.

4) Waterloo Christian School

This school did not choose to participate in the study but they did respond with an explanatory letter.

5) Big Valley Mennonite High School

The school participated in the study by completing the questionnaires for teachers and students.

6) Hesston Christian School

The school chose not to participate but did send a letter of explanation.

7) Shalom Mennonite High School (an MSEC member)

The school also chose not to participate in the study, but they did send a letter explaining their decision. I was able to, nonetheless, interview one of their social studies' teachers as well as one of their former administrators.

8) Milford Christian School

The school chose to participate in the study. One of their social studies teachers filled out the teacher questionnaire. The school also sent some course descriptions.

9) Bird-in Hand Mennonite High School

The school was willing to participate in the study to the extent that their history teacher filled out the teacher questionnaire.

10) Elkhart Christian School

This school did not choose to participate in the study, but it did respond with a letter of explanation.

11) Altoona Mennonite High

The school participated in the study. Two social studies teachers and these teachers' grade 11 and 12 students completed and returned the questionnaires mailed to them.

The six schools who chose to participate in the completion of teacher and student questionnaires were not uniform in responding to both aspects. Four of the schools completed both questionnaires while two schools only responded to the teacher questionnaire. A summary of these teacher responses occurs after each question; these responses are recorded in chapter six. Pseudonyms have been used for each of the teachers.

6. Interviews

Using the three schools who chose to participate, cited above, I set up interviews to gain a more in-depth understanding about these teachers' practices. I traveled to the United States in the summer of 1994 and conducted the interviews. I had anticipated spending about two hours with each teacher, but that did not happen. The interviews actually took from forty-five minutes to one and a half hours.

During these interviews, some of the teachers were prepared to discuss my previously sent questions, others were more reticent. I had

hoped that the teachers would provide me with examples of some of their units and syllabi, but only one teacher did. Another teacher later sent information to me. I also interviewed two people who were not social studies teachers. One was a retired school administrator and the other was a semi-retired math instructor. Both of these individuals offered interesting and valuable information regarding my topic. They helped to provide a broad perspective of Mennonite education. I taped all of the interviews as well I took anecdotal notes.

7. Transcription of data:

The information from all the questionnaires returned from the schools and teachers was compiled into a summary document which appears later in this thesis. The tape recorded conversations were typed out as closely as possible to verbatim, but some of the conversation from the recordings was difficult to understand. Information from these transcriptions appears later in this thesis. The anecdotal notes taken during the interviews were compiled and integrated into the analysis of the teacher interviews done in chapter six.

8. Analysis of data:

Once the documentation from the questionnaires and interviews was compiled and summarized, then the process of identifying common themes, understandings and practices occurred. This process is detailed in the next three chapters of the thesis.

Chapter Five: The Experiences with Students

Several years ago a young Mennonite woman, Rose, enrolled at Oklahoma State University. She gave her religious preference as Mennonite and asked for a single room. The single rooms were all spoken for, but at the first cancellation the dean of women made an administrative decision and gave Rose the room. The dean cautioned the other coeds "to be nice" to this new student, for she would be different. Two months later, one of the girls asked Rose, "Why were we supposed to treat you differently?"

--from Festival Quarterly, Winter 1994

Student Questionnaire Responses

In collecting the data from the Student Questionnaires, I used a simple procedure. Each time a word or phrase was used that seemed to be a key idea, I counted it. For example if a student commented about peace, nonresistance, and/or conscientious objection in their response then I would count one mark for each of those terms in the tabulation. After tabulating the responses I attempted to categorize them using the three characteristics previously derived from Bender's (1944) Anabaptist Vision -- summarized as community, discipleship, and peace. Several responses were difficult to categorize and so I chose the heading of doctrines.

A total of 102 student questionnaires were completed and returned. These student questionnaires represented three Mennonite high schools.

Question 1:

What would you identify as the significant elements comprising the Mennonite ethos [the characteristic spirit, prevalent tone or sentiment, of a community] of your school?

Answers: Community

59+ 40 =99 31% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. classes / chapels on Mennonites; closeness of student body-family like; calling teachers by their first names; school & church relationship)

Answers: Discipleship

53+ 50 =103 32% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. social code; pray rather than sing national anthem; say pledge of allegiance; no flag; modesty; against the world's view)

Answers: Peace

32+ 16 =48 15% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. anti-war; strong emphasis on peace; nonresistance; conscientious objection to war)

Answers: Doctrines

13+ 5 =18 6% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. covering; trinity; not allowed dances; against homosexuality)

It is curious to see which responses were the most common. Those responses which were mentioned four or more times are indicated below.

Answers: Community	
chapel (four times a week)	16
chapels (in general)	11
he!pful/caring teachers	12
friendly teachers	12
calling teachers by their first names	8
classes on Mennonites	6
Mennonite community	6
love one another/neighbours	4

Answers: Discipleship	
Bible classes	8
no flag	6
no guns	4

Answers: Peace	
peace	9
conscientious objection to war	6
nonresistance	6
against abortion	5

Question 2:

Describe two ways in which your social studies teacher demonstrates this understanding of a Mennonite ethos.

I divided the data from three schools into two sets. The first set is out of a sample of 89 responses. The second set is out of a sample of 69 responses. Together these student responses provided a sample of 158 responses from 102 students.

Answers: Community

17 + 18 =35 or 22% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. explain well / teach us the history of Mennonites; discusses the Mennonite: Confession of Faith; presents Mennonite views; we're like a big family)

Answers: Discipleship

10 + 10 =20 or 13% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. emphasizes cooperation; talks about what is moral; live simply for others to raise their own standard of living; encourages us to be better in our life with Christ)

Answers: Peace

39 + 19 =58 or 37% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g. pushes "pro-peace" propaganda; honor nonviolent people and organizations; believes in conscientious objection to war; war [is taught] from different perspectives)

Answers: Others

18 + 24 =42 or 27% (of the questionnaires mentioned)

(e.g.. gives opinion; short tests; I'm not a Mennonite; teacher helps me a lot)

The most common responses cited three or more times are categorized and then identified below:

Answers: Discipleship

Mennonite history	7
abstain from social drinking, harmful drugs	3
models behaviour	3

Answers: Peace

examines stories of Mennonite pacifists/COs	17
promotes pacifism	7
emphasizes evils of war	7
war [is taught] from different perspectives	5

The analysis of this data occurs in Chapter Eight of the thesis. A few summary comments about the data in this chapter may prove helpful. The responses to the question about describing the Mennonite ethos revealed that peace (theology) seems to be the least recognized by students as defining the ethos of their schools. This is interesting to compare with how students described how their teachers exhibited his/her understanding of a Mennonite ethos. Among these responses peace (theology) was at least 10% higher than any other response category. This discrepancy may be related to the fact that students understanding of their schools' ethos is more removed from them as compared to the immediacy of the classroom teacher. It may also suggest that their teacher is more concerned with peace theology than the school. The explanation for this discrepancy requires further investigation that is beyond the scope of this study.

A final note about the calculations of responses is necessary. Because of the nature of the tabulation of the responses, frequency and multiplicity of response were intertwined. As a result, the total percentages for responses do not equal 100%. This rather complex recording, perhaps inexperienced is a better descriptor, has not seemed to diminish the overall trends evident in the data.

Now that student responses have been presented, the next area of experiences in the research process to be described concerns the teachers.

Chapter Six: The Experiences with Teachers

Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus [the first ordained female minister in Virginia Conference] tells of a time when she was an interim pastor in a large city. She planned to visit a woman who had just had a baby, so she called to ask the information desk attendant about visiting hours for pastors.

"Well, pastors are allowed anytime, but not the pastors' wives."

"Fine," said Ruth. "I 'm the pastor, and I don't have a wife."

-- In Festival Quarterly 1992

In this chapter the information gathered from teachers and other educational personnel will be reported. Some of the data was surprising, exciting, and even disappointing. The chapter is divided into two sections: 1) Teacher Questionnaires -- these were returned by mail and 2) Teacher and Educational Personnel Interviews -- these were completed in the months of July and August of 1994. The amount of material in this chapter, while substantial, is only a fraction of the voluminous data that was collected and transcribed.

A Teacher Questionnaires

The six schools who chose to participate in the completion of teacher and student questionnaires were not uniform in responding to both aspects. Four of the schools completed both questionnaires while two schools only responded to the teacher questionnaire. A summary of these teacher responses occurs after each question. Pseudonyms have been used for each of the teachers.

Question 1:

What would you identify as the significant elements comprising the Mennonite ethos [the characteristic spirit, prevalent tone or sentiment, of a community] of your school?

Summary of Answers:

Although there seemed to be some uncertainty ("I am not sure what the question is here.") teachers also cited several specific characteristics. These characteristics included: 1) "even though we exist within a conservative community with many having an Amish background, the Anabaptist Vision seems dimmed. Perhaps it is more apathy than an anti-spirit.", 2) "evangelism, non-government involvement, servanthood, nonresistance", 3) "student centered emphasis, training students to be members of God's kingdom, discipleship in daily life through ... ethical and moral decisions, service, teacher- student relations are casual - teachers are mentors", 4) "covered the Mennonite Confession of Faith in chapels," Bible requirement, Chapel program, don't take off school on military holidays, don't have a flag or a flag pole on campus, goal to increase Mennonite students and faculty, schedule chapel speakers from Mennonite agencies, community aspect attempted."

Question 2:

Are there any topics in your curriculum that require modification if they are to reflect the elements you identified in Question 1? If so, what are they?

Summary of Answers:

Two teachers responded in the negative while the other four answered affirmatively to this question. "Definitely!" responded one teacher. Then he went on to elaborate by citing examples. One example was the topic of a "just war". Another teacher stated, "Yes, we frequently talk about God's way versus the government's approach to things. We go to the Bible for principles to apply." A third teacher replied, "I believe we examine history and U.S. government issues from a distinct vantage point in my classroom. My Mennonite-Christian values weigh most analysis of events, usually in subtle ways; other times less so." The fourth teacher noted that he brings in additional "Mennonite perspectives" to supplement the "secular textbook" because, as he wrote, "This is useful in showing that there are numerous perspectives on history -- not just the textbook's."

Question 3.

Would you provide three specific examples of how you alter the curriculum you teach to reflect a Mennonite ethos?

Summary of Answers:

Numerous examples were provided by five of these six teachers. a) One began by writing, "I am not an ethnic Mennonite and I do not alter set curriculum." He did, nonetheless, talk about how he addresses "issues often not included in texts such as women's issues, black history, native history (including field trips to reserves), and Chinese history etc.."

It is helpful, I think, to read the words that the other four teachers wrote in response to the question asking them to cite three examples of how they alter the curriculum to reflect a Mennonite ethos.

Eli King

1. The Plight of the American Indian. The textbook teaches strongly that Manifest Destiny left the American frontiersmen and the U.S. government no other choice but to follow the dictates of such men as Andrew Jackson and Josiah Strong. I then bring into the classroom such videos as Lawrence Hart (a full blood Cheyenne Mennonite minister and a peace chief): The Cheyenne Peace Chiefs. This video puts the Batile of Little-Bighorn and General Custer into a different light. Texts do not talk about Chief Black Kettle and Chief Sweet Medicine waving white flags in front of the American troops who, in spite of all the attempts to surrender, come and kill children, women and old men.

2. The American Military: I do not call the "Reagan" missile a "peace keeper" and then the men of war are not on peaceful missions but are guarding the power and the glory of America. Instead of pointing out the "glorious" victories in wars, I point out the awesome devastation war has caused. (I happen to have been able to see war destruction first hand in Europe in 1945 and continued with the rehab program under Mennonite Central Committee[the service and relief agency for most Mennonite groups] for fifteen years.) I then teach that the way to peace is not weapons but going with a reconstruction unit. A student of mine is now in his second year in Bangladesh and will be there another year.

3. The American Government, the Supreme Court. It is such a privilege to point out that the sovereignty of the citizen of heaven lies in the commands of the Scripture and the Sermon on the Mount. However due respect is advocated for any president, be he a movie star, divorced and remarried, horoscope reader (Reagan) or a former C.I.A. agent (Bush) with his military arm, or Clinton who many do not want to trust. I simply call for a respect and a commitment to God who is after all the only True Sovereign.

Levi Stoltzfus

1. Civil War: We talk about the cause and the impact of this war but do not go into each battle. We tell how Mennonites responded to the draft.

2. Indians & Blacks: Our secular texts show a slant we need to adjust. We attempt to create feelings for these people and trust them equally to us.

3. Holocaust: We attempt to find a way we could/would respond to another holocaust based on our Mennonite ethos.

Jacob Fischer

1. War: Looking at the Mennonite experiences in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, First World War, and the Second World War.

2. Teaching Strategy: using cooperative learning to enhance student skills in interactive communication.

3. Government: Questioning one's use of the courts in bringing civil suits against others. Simply sorting out when a Mennonite/Christian would sue or choose not to sue if at all.

Amos Yoder

The two I gave in question 2 could go here I think! [Cited using additional resources to supplement textbooks.] When we study Hiroshima we compare the text's stated reason for the decision with information from Sojourners and other sources that suggest other motives for that decision.

Question 4a:

Describe any tensions you experience between curriculum and a) your understanding of Mennonite faith.

Summary of Answers:

Two teachers provided no responses, one said, "None," and the remaining three teachers recorded more detailed responses. One teacher identified the contradictions between the voices the parents of his students listen to, the "need to be a strong military nation" and his own sense of national responsibilities. Another teacher cited a tension as the "Excessive pro-United States curriculum with a rather narrow world view." He continued by stating, "Some lack of clarity as what the Mennonite ethos is." A third teacher wrote "The curriculum tends to compartmentalize faith and 'other subjects,' we should work more at integration of these."

Question 4b:

Describe any tensions you experience between curriculum and b) the Mennonite ethos of your institution.

Summary of Answers:

The responses to this question were scant. Three teachers had no responses although one stated, "Feel free to call. I'd be happy to talk." One teacher answered, "None. Most of our Mennonite history, etc., is taught in Religious Studies courses, not History. I enclose some of this material." The other teacher who wrote a response said, "Very much the 'stille im land'. Teach the Bible and history as a fact and not meddle with government affairs or express my view points. This is the position many take including the clergy. So as a long term MCC [Mennonite Central Committee -- the service arm for most Mennonite denominations] worker at one time and for seven years on the MCC Board of Directors, my views clash heavily with the community which is more interested in the material world and the sport scene. But we do have our 'fun', I appreciate the straightforward discussions I can have with the students."

B. Teacher and Educational Personnel Interviews

During the summer of 1994 I interviewed seven individuals in three tstates. I met with five teachers from three different schools. Of these five, four were social studies teachers who were asked the same questions initially as those on the questionnaires sent to the other social studies teachers in the sample. Each of the interviews was tape-recorded and then carefully transcribed. I discovered a large number of

commonalties among these educators in their descriptions of their teaching methods, philosophies, and institutional milieus. The common themes that emerged from the interviews were the emphases on 1) community, 2) service, 3) peace making, and 4) an intentional inclusion of diversity of opinion. The first three themes correlated with the Anabaptist vision outlined by Bender. A summary of the social studies teacher interviews appears on the following pages. The interview with the fifth teacher appears later under the heading "Interview with Joseph Swartzendruber."

I also interviewed a former teacher and administrator. This interview was tape-recorded and transcribed. The transcription was only partially done due to the poor quality of the recording of our conversation. I also met with and asked some questions of the then president of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC), Benjamin Zaerr. I was able to take notes while we dialogued. I was also allowed to rummage through some of his office files to look for pertinent information on my topic of study. The data retrieved from both of these encounters is placed after the interview notes from Joseph Swartzendruber.

Interviews with Social Studies Teachers

In the interviews with teachers, I asked a number of questions.

Question 1:

What would you describe as the significant elements comprising the Mennonite ethos of your school?

Summary of Answers:

Peter Lehman was quite cognizant of the ethos of his school. He replied that it was a school directly operated by and responsible to the United Conference of the Mennonite Church. The name of the school also indicated its Mennonite connections. In the mission statement of the school, community building was an emphasis. He added that, "We try to latch onto that basic Anabaptist concept of sharing and having a kind of group awareness or consciousness." There is an avoidance of authoritarianism in favor of practicing a "standing alongside" of students. A campus Senate exists at the school which provides an opportunity for students to present their points of view on issues at the school. In particular he noted that in the social studies courses a nationalistic focus would be very much less than in the public schools. The school has intentionally designed its curriculum so that it is more global in emphasis. When asked further about the Mennonite perspective, Lehman stated that it is broader than just the Mennonite Church.

Henry Coffman seemed unsure about the whole question about ethos. He commented about the "very well entrenched Mennonite community" which is well-educated and feels very much a part of their society. He further responded that they do not fly the American flag at the school. He noted that they have chapel services three times a week. He mentioned that in the area of discipline there is an attempt to work through situations rather than come down hard on students.

Grant Troyer stated that the faculty is largely Mennonite, the student population is about 70% Mennonite, its financial support is largely from Mennonites and that it is supported by and connected with the Mennonite Conference. The Christian perspective is given in classes

and each morning is begun with a twenty-five minute chapel. Troyer reflected that community, service, and peace making contributed to the focus of the school. A concrete example he cited was that, in the last three years, the school has been working on "mediation sorts of things." In fact, Troyer teaches a course on conflict resolution which will become required for all sophomores. "I think it is one of the areas where we have said we want to make peacemaking practical and we would like to have all students exposed to that. Not just a few who elect it. ... they get moments of it in Bible class and other places but this would be another way to introduce it."

Amanda Kauffman strongly stated, "There's a lot; it is very Mennonite." She continued, "there is very much an emphasis on global awareness, very little, if any, notion of America the great." She then went on to describe an incident concerning a sports event that created great controversy because of the absence of the American flag in their gym. Kauffman continued by explaining some more areas that contribute to the Mennonite ethos of her school. The teachers are on a first name basis with the students, there is "very much a sense of community" and "very much everyone is equal from the janitor to the principal; so much so that it is almost problematic." She mentioned that social studies "is extremely different." "If I were teaching social studies in a public school I would probably be fired. I couldn't hide my pacifism." It is important to "try to get the kids to think for themselves." The importance of questioning things was cited as a defining characteristic of the school. The school also has a peace society; it offers Bible courses and Mennonite history courses.

Question 2:

Are there topics in your curriculum that require modification if they are to reflect the elements you identified in question 1? If so, what are they?

Summary of Answers

Peter Lehman explained that in Pennsylvania there is a minimum requirement for the number of courses in specific disciplines but that the content is flexible. Because courses are not based on specific textbooks, there is a great deal of freedom in the selection of materials. They do not spend a lot of time in their courses on the military dimensions of the Civil War, American Revolution, or other conflicts. "In designing our own courses we can shape them a little bit more by what we include and what we don't include to move the direction we would like to go." They do change the curriculum but, Lehman said, "I don't think we change things drastically; we have to be aware that students are going to college and there are basic "elements they need".

Henry Coffman emphasized that for him it was important that students learned "the general knowledge" but that "other voices that haven't been seen and heard" also be brought into the course. He mentioned that, in the course on the former Soviet Union, he brings in the Mennonite experience and adds to the Jewish experiences briefly talked about in the text. He tries to bring in these stories for the class through other sources while "at the same time always throwing out different interpretations -- always throwing out the nagging question of what is the just way of doing things." He attempts to critically analyse the ideas of

justice by presenting alternative ways. He cautioned that "I hesitate to say that is unique to one school but that's how I try."

Grant Troyer explained that there are some requirements mandated by the state in terms of the types of courses they teach but in some cases they go beyond these requirements. "I've never had the sense that we're doing this because the state says you know you got to do it." He explained that there is freedom in terms of what they teach and how they teach: "There's not a sense of we must do this because the state requires it; we have freedom to teach US. history the way we want to teach US. history."

Ar[illegible] Kauffman mentioned that they "don't get any kind of a master list from the state that says this must be included." The teachers at the school write the curriculum then it goes through an approval process. The curriculum for each course is rewritten at least once every five years. The institution has guiding principles and objectives that all of the curriculum must be tied to these goals.

Question 3:

Would you provide three specific examples of how you alter the curriculum you teach to reflect a Mennonite ethos?

Summary of Answers

Peter Lehman in relating about a course titled, Colonial History, has compiled a source that deals with Mennonites and other pacifist groups in the area. The issue of paying war taxes is examined during this era as well as in the twentieth century. He cautioned that students are not

always interested in an Anabaptist view point; "the Anabaptist's perspective doesn't always work. They tune you out pretty fast." Lehman explained that some current students and parents are attempting to "distance themselves from the traditional perspective from what people had about Mennonites." The emphasis on nonconformity in specific external matters, dress, and activities is questioned by some of these people. He elaborated that "Parents are the ones who have kicked over the traces [and] who put that unique identity of nonconformity as I have described it." Lehman agrees that things were too legalistic in prior years, "But after a while I find myself asking what is the difference. If it doesn't show up in some of these values?" To have students move beyond their politically conservative, a "heartbed Republican community," and economically prosperous community the school attempts to provide an alternative viewpoint. The school has a course on social reform and a course called "Poverty and Affluence." To examine the issue of capital punishment, he has compiled a folder which has arguments for and against the issue.

Henry Coffman noted that the historical courses would involve an examination of Mennonite history in Pennsylvania. When he talks about U.S. politics and government he tries to bring faith into the topics that are discussed. "At times it is a very up front perspective and other times it is a little less direct." In examining war he attempts to examine causes leading to war in order to prevent further war; he does not delve into a great deal of military tactics. Dealing with conscientious objection to war is important since it "is often neglected in textbooks." He explained that he has "different assignments to put students into the situations to get

primary source materials and to realize how difficult it would be at that time to resist the strong patriotic appeal of your country."

The Gulf War was studied for bias and censorship during times of war and used to examine various responses to involvement in war. Coffman commented that " It's hard sometimes to articulate some things" that reflect a Mennonite perspective. He emphasizes "alternative thinking" that moves beyond the entrenched Mennonite view that the students often have. During the Gulf War he used the Mennonite Weekly Review, a national newspaper reflecting the perspective of a variety of Anabaptist groups. He also uses a periodical called The Other Side which presents another alternative perspective to the dominant American view point.

Coffman strives to be "pushing at the edges" of interpretation. In his U.S .Foreign Policy course when discussing the Philippines he asked students what they thought the role of the US should be in the Philippines. He discovered that the majority of the students agreed with the role the US were playing in the Philippines. He commented that this really aroused his interest and that he wanted to continually have students critically assess what was happening in the world. When further asked if there were any specific things he did to reflect a Mennonite perspective, he explained that "[i]t's hard sometimes to articulate some things. Often I give assignments that really push the kids into views that are alternative, that are not the Mennonite view because I find some of them are so entrenched. They haven't done a lot of alternative thinking. I sort of challenge in that way."

Grant Troyer noted that when he teaches about wars he examines the effect of these wars on Mennonites. As he says, "The conscientious

objector position in WWI and WWII, the Vietnam war those sorts of things get included." He further commented on the Vietnam war. He uses the stories of an Mennonite Central Committee worker, Earl Martin, who lived in Vietnam, to broaden the scope of the analysis of the war. He added that there is a variety of perspectives on the issue of war among his students but he attempts to "give the freedom to give kids a chance to say where they're at and what they're thinking." The historic roots of Mennonites settling in [LaGrange] County are studied. During our discussion, the notion of separateness occurred; Troyer responded that separateness is played out more in terms of values than previously understood as being separate in dress and activities.

In U.S. Government class the role of the government and the relationship of Christians to government and their loyalty to God is dealt with. "That's one place I talk about what are the limits of our obedience or loyalty to government when it conflicts with our faith and our values. At what point do we not obey government or follow conscience?" Specifically Troyer explained that military involvement or not paying war taxes may be such issues where a person disagrees with the government imperatives. He added that he has talked with students about registering for the draft, or not to, when they are eighteen years old. Troyer encourages discussions among the students to examine various positions on issues. One example he cited was Operation Desert Storm where he discovered a variety of responses to the actions of the US and other governments. He reflected that, in response to an oppositional position to the school's, "This is part of our foundation; we are not going to force you to but you have the right to question but we're not going to back down on some of those sorts of positions."

Amanda Kauffman responded that for her "it all boils down to perspective." She emphasized how tolerance is related to being a Mennonite. As she commented, "But I think part of being Mennonite and being Christian has to do with acceptance." She noted that what she does is not subtle. She cited an example of discussing an American World War One protester and added, "And I don't think I could get away with covering the topic [war protesters] in public school." She has used the Mennonite Archives at Atlantic College, which is nearby, to examine Mennonite responses to war. She does not specifically use textbooks although she keeps about twenty-five different US history textbooks in her room. When asked about using Mennonite periodicals she responded that she does not use them in class although she sometimes copies useful articles for her files. As she noted, "Most high school students are allergic to the idea of being saturated with Mennonite theology."

Question 4:

Describe any tensions you experience between curriculum and a) your understanding of Mennonite faith and/or b) the Mennonite ethos of your institution.

Summary of Answers

Peter Lehman replied that "There's nothing that I can think of where I would feel that the administration and my colleagues weren't in there 100%." He added that "a lot" of the board members are politically conservative where he is not necessarily but that they have become

more progressive in the last thirty years [since he began teaching at the school].

Henry Coffman said that the "biggest problem [is] with the omissions in the textbooks." He attempts to "incorporate a minority perspective". In terms of the administration he feels fully supported although "sometimes parents are a bit more nervous," but he feels "a healthy tension about that." In attempting to present alternative viewpoints that may not be appreciated by all parents Coffman seeks to present an investigative approach where several sides are examined. He asserted that he felt "very strong support" by the constituency for the school.

Grant Troyer said that he did not feel there was a "great amount of diversity" between his understanding of the Mennonite faith and the curriculum, faculty, administration, board, or institution. He noted that the most diversity would occur among the constituency. As an example he cited a parent feeling that there was too liberal a slant provided in a social studies class or course. In response to this accusation he has attempted to provide a consistent "balance of illustrations" on issues when he teaches.

Amanda Kauffman stated that she creates tension "all the time." She added, "I cause tension and I don't know it." In an attempt to expose her students to a broader religious environment she took them to a Benedictine Episcopalian monastery. The event created some problem regarding differing worship patterns that she needed to work through because of the Mennonite understandings of worship, in particular the Eucharist / communion observance. She also talked about the discrepancy between Mennonite theology and culture. She stated that

"theology versus culture becomes an issue. Because I think I understand Mennonite theology 100%, and I think I agree with it but culturally speaking I'll never understand it." She noted that theology and culture are two separate things, "but other people don't" for as she said, "I don't think as a group there is much differentiation made between the two concepts at all."

In addition to these four questions, I also asked a few questions that emerged from the interviews themselves. Two of these questions are listed below along with the responses given by the interviewed teachers. What follows these two questions and answers are some important findings that simply emerged from the conversations with these teachers.

Question 1: What do students leave with when they leave your school?

Summary of Answers

Peter Lehman reflected that "One of the things they pick up is servanthood, service." He explained that this service could be specifically church related or in a service related profession. "I guess for me, although, I don't want to push it too far, I think it gives me more satisfaction than any single thing that I observe the number of our alumni that after they leave do choose a profession or activity which demonstrates that they aren't just trying to become a part of the American materialistic rat race but rather they do have an other's orientation and they do want to serve."

Henry Coffman, in response to being asked whether students had a good understanding of what it meant to be Mennonite, replied that he

thought they did. "In fact," he said, "the criticism that I've heard from some students is that they know that better than they know their American history. Well it's like you do know your American history, you've just learned it differently." He stated that they do leave having a strong sense of their Mennonite roots.

Grant Troyer stated that he thought the students left with a "much more positive sense of being Mennonite than I had. For me as a student the rules on dress and that we did not participate in sports with other schools, we were very separate; we were very different. I think that the differences today are not so much on the separation, the separation that physically separates but on the values on what it means to be a Mennonite, a Christian in the world today." He explained that the integrative nature of what the school is attempting is much more important; the importance of students incorporating the values represented in the school into their lives is the goal. He emphasized that "Being Christian, Mennonite is not just you can't do this and you can't do that. You can be separate and yet participate with a difference." Troyer also explained the service emphasis of the school. He said that they are "talking about making service a requirement."

Amanda Kauffman found this question problematic. She replied, "I think you're asking an impossible question. It's like what Margaret Mead said about fish. Are you familiar with the quote? I don't know if I can quote her verbatim but Margaret Mead said something like if fish were anthropologists, the last thing they would ever know is water."

Question 2: Why so few responses?

Summary of Answers

Henry Coffman responded that he thought that teachers were just too busy. D. Kauffman replied that it was timing; as he said, "most of us are so busy." He thought the component of submitting syllabi was a bit intimidating. He said, "I also suspect that there might be some suspicion that somebody is getting nosy. They might say something that may reflect negatively on them [the institution]. Some of it is the Mennonite suspicion of the intellectual and the scholar to begin with." I replied, "That's curious when you're sending it to Mennonite educational institutions." And he answered, "I know."

Grant Troyer suggested that I attend a Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC) meeting of Mennonite teachers where I would have a captive audience. He noted that it was really an issue of time. He had asked other social studies teachers to meet with me but "time is just of the essence." As he explained, "there's so many things competing with a teacher for time."

Amanda Kauffman was not asked this question.

Additional Interesting Comments

Peter Lehman noted that, with regard to how his school is Mennonite, curriculum development was important. "How can we better present the information with a Mennonite interpretation?" was a question

he stated as being present at his institution. The process of hiring teachers and maintaining connections with the conference and churches strengthens this awareness. He also noted that MSEC also facilitates this Mennonite perspective. At the social studies department meetings at the MSEC conference there is an opportunity to "get together with others to talk about what it means to be a Mennonite school." He understood that there was a Mennonite history textbook being developed through the Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pennsylvania, at the moment. [I contacted the Mennonite Publishing House and they were not publishing a history text at the time.]

The emphases at this Mennonite school, for this teacher, "means to understand the past and the present and thereby in doing understand how faith has played a role in the lives of other people, to learn the diverse expressions of faith, to learn the diverse expressions of Mennonite faith, and I guess to throw faith right in there with everything else and all the avenues and better understand it so we can more have a well-informed faith based on others' as well as our own experiences." These emphases are reflected through the chapel programs, seminars (he takes kids to Philadelphia for four days), and his use of resources (he uses many MCC videos). They utilize the local resources: the Mennonite museum, the Meeting House, as well as taking students to Mexico and local community service opportunities.

Reflecting on the mission statement of the school Grant Troyer said that "one focus of that statement has to do with a sense of us being part of the international church, the international community, the global community. And looking at the world not just from an American perspective but from a perspective of the Christians of different parts of

the world and people as parts of the world." He reiterated throughout his comments the importance of the "global church".

In responding to the question of whether the school's understanding of what it means to be a Mennonite had changed, Troyer replied that, "in some ways I think the values haven't changed as much as the way in which we teach them or model them or experience them." The SMH (Shalom Mennonite High) difference is sensed by students with regard to differing values than the dominant society, "and not just becoming a part of the value [dominant] system."

Henry Coffman, in answering a question about the school's mission statement, commented that "it's always a tension of not wanting to be too Mennonite, just presenting the Mennonite view, but also to understand how the other American views reflect disagreements, agreements. i guess that's when I feel comfortable when I feel some tension; I am always uncomfortable if everyone in the classroom is agreeing ... always trying to develop a healthy sense of questioning because I that's where I find faith my grows."

Amanda Kauffman responded that "[b]eing Mennonite, other than the obvious pat answers like being a follower of Christ, and leading a simple lifestyle, and being a pacifist ... i think that the great divide between Mennonites and other Christian denominations is putting faith into action. I think that's the great divide."

When asked about characterizing the school's constituency Kauffman replied, "Bizarre. They are. They're bizarre." Later she noted that "[Prince of Peace] is a strange place. Everything is so incredibly Mennonite." She also commented that the school existed in a strong Mennonite and Amish community which did not necessarily support it. In

fact, she added, "[t]here are a lot of Mennonites who would be just as happy if [Prince of Peace] closed its doors." To be Mennonite, for this teacher, means "to be part of a community of strong values that does not chase after what all society tells [are] its goals, rejects the rat race, uses their gifts to help other people." She added the idea of treating all people "Christianly" without treating anyone less so.

Interview with Joseph Swartzendruber

This teacher was not a social studies teacher but a math teacher. I interviewed him because of his long-term association with Mennonite schools. (He was also a minister in the Mennonite church for most of his life.) I asked him what were the distinguishing features of the school in its inception. He replied that most of the students were Mennonite, the regulated dress code, the concern that in World War II 50% of the men of the conference had entered the army. He also stated that the emphasis on nonresistance and nonconformity were considered the motivations for beginning the school. He noted that the school initially stated its goals as scholarship, spirituality, and service. Today the goals of the school are academic, spiritual, and lifestyle. He saw these current goals as parallel to the early goals.

In response to my question about how are those things played out in the school, he noted that the social studies department had considered offering Advanced Placement courses, but the emphasis of this curriculum would not be the school's emphasis so they decided against it. He added that many of their students are involved in service programs

after they graduate. The school also has a service day in the fall and hoped to make a service component part of the graduation requirements.

Joseph Swartzendruber thought that the students learned that to be a Mennonite involved peace and service and that this learning would be prominent in their chapels and special events with the type of people who are asked to speak. When asked whether teaching about what it means to be Mennonite is explicit or not, he responded "I would think it is more the osmosis kind. I don't think that we stress Mennonite vision as such; we make it more broad Anabaptism."

Interview with Samuel Deiner

I also interviewed Samuel Deiner, a former administrator of Shalom Mennonite High School. The recording was so poor when I listened to it later that it became too difficult to transcribe; however, I gathered some valuable fragments from what was audible and from what I recalled of the interview. When asked about what his sense of being Mennonite was, Deiner replied that he shared Harold Bender's vision. He also strongly believed in the separation of the church and the state. He described some of the history of the school and its transition from a rather isolated school in the larger LaGrange community to a more productive participant in the community. Deiner's history with Mennonite educational institutions and his keen sense of some of the effects of the changes experienced among Mennonite schools in the last fifty years made him an interesting subject to interview.

Interview with Benjamin Zaerr

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to interview Benjamin Zaerr, who at the time worked for the Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC), and who now is the president of the Mennonite Church's Mennonite Board of Education. When I asked Benjamin Zaerr what Mennonite teachers do to convey a Mennonite ethos in their teaching, he replied "I can tell you, not enough."

I also asked him about Mennonite understandings about education and he replied, "[w]e have not sufficiently thought that through." It seemed to Zaerr that there has been little research done into the area of promoting a Mennonite ethos.. He noted that there are no flags on display in MSEC member schools; flags would not appear where the school would hold worship services.

I was allowed to rummage through some of the MSEC teacher conference files. I hoped to find some indication about whether or not there had been sessions that focused on the topic of Mennonite ethos and social studies. Of the documents that I looked through, the titles and sessions of these conferences seemed to relate somewhat to Mennonite ethos:

1) Date: September 30 to October 2, 1993
Title / Emphasis: Transmitting a Faith of Contemplation and Action
Sessions: Keynote: On Being a Christian in a Multicultural / Multiethnic World

2) Date: October 3 to 5, 1991

Title / Emphasis: Biding Cultures Through Education for Service

Sessions: Our Radical Faith Implications for Alternative Education

Attributes of Internationalists Preparing Internationalists in Our Schools

3.) Date: September 28 to 30, 1989

Title / Emphasis: Roots: An Exploration of How Ethnicity and Culture Affect Our Work

Sessions: focused on being Mennonite

Looking through a variety of papers about MSEC conferences, I discovered a memo from June 8, 1983, which described an upcoming Social Studies Teachers' Consultation to be held at Hesston College in Hesston, Kansas. I could not locate any further information about this conference. Through my discussions with Benjamin Zaerr I was made aware that, at each of the MSEC conventions, there are subject area meetings for the related teachers, social studies being one of them.

Zaerr gave me a paper he had presented at a Mennonite Board of Education gathering which sheds some light on the questions I am attempting to investigate. Zaerr (1983, p. 1) states that "Anabaptist/Mennonite beliefs and ideals are based on biblical themes and relate to beliefs about God, humankind, the natural world, and the social order." His contention is that "[t]hese ideals and beliefs set the Mennonites apart from most people in North America and world cultures as well as from other religious groups" (p. 1). The task of Mennonite

schools is to provide educational environments where these ideals and beliefs are inherent in the curriculum (holistic) of the school.

Zaerr cites a study done by Glen Roth (date not given) where Roth examines the organizational dimensions of Mennonite schools. Zaerr then takes Roth's eight principles for organizational structure and operating procedures and analyzes them with regard to Mennonite schools (pp. 2-4). The eight principles appear to be ones deemed important for Mennonite schools by Zaerr. These principles include:

1) The ultimate interests of both the group and the individual are valued and provided for in the life of the body.
2) Mutual respect and sharing are openly advocated.
3) Communication is to be honest, direct and open between persons, within and between groups, and with outside groups or persons. Responsibility for institutions serving the common good is vested in groups rather than individuals.
5) Groups make decisions by consensus.
6) Leadership is a multiple and shared function.
7) Peace and reconciliation are important in interpersonal relationships.
8) Life is purposeful and school activities are goal directed.

Zaerr stresses that "Mennonite/Anabaptist beliefs and ideals are in constant threat of either dying a slow death by group stagnation or of being replaced by the ideals of the prevailing culture through direct challenge or amalgamation."(p. 3). He notes that, for a sub community such as Mennonites, it is easy to become captivated by the dominant

societal ideals and become less interested in their own community ideals. The above eight principles of school structure and operation are dependent upon the strength and weakness of their antecedent Anabaptist beliefs and values, but Zaerr stresses that their survival is also dependent on the shaping of Mennonite schools by Mennonite educators (p. 3). It is clear that the organizing bodies, such as MSEC, for Mennonite schools are deeply concerned with developing and perpetuating a discernible Mennonite ethos among their member schools.

In this rather extended look at teacher related experiences, the overwhelming finding is that the template of Bender's Anabaptist Vision is apparent to some degree in the thinking of almost all these individuals. Further comments will be made on this data in Chapter Eight; the next chapter reports the findings regarding documentation, syllabi, course outlines, school handbooks, that were discovered in this quest.

Chapter Seven: The Experience with Documentation

A non-ethnic Mennonite, Kathy Middleton Raphael was always frustrated when new acquaintances would play "the Mennonite game" with her and become perplexed by her non-Mennonite sounding name. Finally, she began introducing herself as "Kathy Middleton --no, it's not a Mennonite name." Her hurt feelings disappeared one day when, after meeting the late John Kauffman of Atglen, Pennsylvania, he responded with, "Now it is!" She felt as if her soul had just received a hug!

--from Festival Quarterly, Winter 1995

Several teachers sent me course outlines and syllabi as per initial request; most of the teachers did not. I gathered some of the information that follows from my time at the schools I visited in the United States. My general belief is that the Mennonite ethos is characterized in the documentations gathered. Some of the subsequent comments and quotes will exemplify this point. My caution regarding this data is that there is little evidence, other than what has been gathered from what the interviewed teachers stated, that what is written down is being put into practice in the classroom. My research leaves the question of actual practice unsubstantiated -- such substantiation may be something for a later study. Aliases have been given to the schools cited.

Prince of Peace Mennonite School

The mission statement at Prince of Peace Mennonite School reads: "The primary purpose of [Prince of Peace] is to encourage and enable each student to become a more informed, skilled, and compassionate disciple within the church of Jesus Christ...Students will learn the skills and content of academic and vocational courses, Biblical studies, and Christian faith and practice."

The school's catalogue and handbook, under "Ideals and Standards," reads "[Prince of Peace] endeavors to have all teaching in the curriculum, the co-curricular activities, and the daily life of the students in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and the ideals and standards of Christ as taught by the Mennonite Church." Later, under "Guiding Principles," it states that the "[f]aculty and administration shall be expected to model a community of cooperation, mutual support, and accountability. Learning experiences shall be designed to emphasize cooperation and students shall be enabled to increasingly experience and be committed to a community for mutual support and service."

Under "Social, Civic and Cultural Goals" the handbook identifies the development of the goal of students to "[r]espect and abide by civil law unless it conflicts with Christian values." This statement is repeated numerous times throughout the teacher's syllabi for various courses. The school requires specific "Skills and Experiences" of its graduates such as "[d]emonstrate conflict resolution skills in solving a human relation problem commonly encountered in family and/or work."

Specifically under "Social Studies" these statements are found: "As God's people in this community, we aim to teach and learn social

studies so that we can contribute in positive ways to peaceful life and human welfare around the world." In the course syllabus for the course titled "Government" contains a stated goal that students will "[r]ecognize that the meeting of human needs, be they physical, spiritual, or political, is a necessary concern of the Christian Church." In a course titled US History a primary goal is for students to "[r]espect human life and dignity and refrain from participation in organization such as the military." The same course lists another goal that each student should "formulate his/her personal opinion concerning Christian values and participation in war."

Even though the students are encouraged to discover their own beliefs about issues the agenda of the school strongly reflects a Mennonite ethos where peacemaking is important.

Bird-in-Hand Mennonite High School

At Bird-in-Hand Mennonite High School their mission statement reads: "[Bird-in-Hand Mennonite High School] is a Christian educational community within the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith tradition and linked to the congregations of the Mennonite Conference .. It provides opportunities for youth to integrate sound academic learning with growth in character, faith, and service to God and all creation, in a setting where personal worth and corporate responsibility are taught and lived daily. Bird-in-Hand accepts the Bible as the basic witness to God's revelation and emphasizes the need to accept and follow Jesus in daily life."

Under the section "Theological and Philosophical Statement: Anabaptist Heritage" it reads "As a servant of Anabaptist-Mennonite

congregations, Bird-in-Hand identifies itself with their heritage of faith and experience. The re-discovery of the biblical Believer's Church in the sixteenth century has revealed a people who believed in and followed Jesus Christ as God's revelation, accepted believer's baptism, showed love in human relationships, and rejected all forms of coercion, including warfare."

The importance of the Anabaptist emphasis in this school is clearly identified; however, how this emphasis is developed in the course syllabi is unknown because no syllabi were returned for examination.

Altoona Mennonite High School

At Altoona Mennonite High School, the mission statement of the school states: "[Altoona] Mennonite School offers a quality educational experience emphasizing daily integration of Christian faith that challenges students to grow in mind, body, spirit, and education."

A few of the goals -- there are ten -- associated with the mission statement are pertinent to the topic under investigation: "Regularly promote and model for each student the importance of a lifestyle of gratitude, service, justice, and stewardship. Uphold Anabaptist interpretation of scripture and historical perspective. Impress upon our students the importance of pursuing excellence and wise decision-making, according to Kingdom values, in all areas of life. Model and teach an appreciation for the diversity of cultural heritage within our school community."

In the course titled "Global Citizenship" it notes that "[t]he course will conclude with a group study of Joining the Army That Sheds No

Blood by Susan Clemmer Steiner" (a Mennonite minister). In this same course some selected objectives include: a) "Identify economic, social and spiritual needs of three world regions, and analyze how indigenous churches are responding to them." b) "Search for alternatives to current US foreign policies which impact our sisters and brothers in Central America, Africa and other places, in hurtful ways." c) "Explore the implications for lifestyle, vocation and faith suggested for the Christian global citizen."

In a course titled "Global Geography" the students are expected to "[e]xplore the future of rich-poor relations on the Earth and critique the American Dream in light of the world situation." In another course titled "U.S. History" the students are asked to "[r]elate the Mennonite experience in America to the larger society." In "Economics" the objectives include "[e]xamining individual and corporate Christian responses to our nation's economic priorities and culture." and to "[i]ncrease awareness of economic problems and challenges faced by Third and Fourth World nations."

The importance of social responsibility in a global context is intertwined in the courses offered at this school. This responsibility is embedded in a Mennonite ethos as revealed in the school's mission statement.

Shalom Mennonite High School

At Shalom Mennonite High School the mission statement reads: "At [Shalom] Mennonite High School you are encouraged to develop a faith that will enable you to face the future with confidence and purpose.

Our goal is to provide an excellent education which challenges you to a life of Christ-like mission, peacemaking and service in a global society."

In the school information for students under "Social Studies" the following statements are made: "Social Studies courses emphasize that God created and sustains the world, the nations, and their people who share common basic needs. Rather than setting nations apart, the courses develop the theme that a global interdependence exists among nations in order to meet human needs. This emphasis, interpreted from an Anabaptist perspective, combines with an understanding of United States history and government so that we can live as responsible citizens according to God's purpose."

The "U.S. History Survey 2" course (1890s - 1990s) contains the phrase "[e]mphasis is placed in themes relating to Native Americans, other minorities, Mennonites, and Pennsylvania history during this period." The description of the course "Conflict Solution" (a Gr. 11 & 12 elective) states: "[t]his course examines methods of solving conflicts between individuals, sociological/ethnic groups, and nations by other means than violence. Mediation training is included as part of this course. Students who successfully complete this training may choose to become peer mediators on campus" In "Consumer Economics" "[a] consideration of Christian values in economic decisions is a primary underlying theme.

It would appear that the elements of mission, peacemaking, and service, espoused in the school's mission statement are represented in the courses taught in this school.

Faith Mennonite High School

At Faith Mennonite High School, the mission statement states "[Faith] Mennonite High School, in partnership with the family and the church, seeks to develop the God-given abilities of students in preparation for responsible stewardship of life as members of God's people in a global society. As an educational center of the Mennonite Conference, [Faith] serves youth and families who share Anabaptist values."

In the promotional material for the school, under "Caring Community" it reads: "When there are struggles, we find guidance and security in our shared bond as Christian brothers and sisters. We try to resolve conflict with redemptive discipline, encouraging each person to grow by working through a problem rather than ignoring it or being destructively punished." Under "Mennonite Identity," Christian values it reads: "Jesus is the center of [Faith]. A vibrant, growing faith forms the very heart of life and learning for the whole person. By word and action, our goal is to call students to follow Jesus Christ in personal faith and commitment. These values of life, integrity, worship, peace-making, and service characterize our Christian community rooted in the Anabaptist Mennonite heritage." Under "Expand your mind. Challenge your heart. Get ready for life," it reads: "[a]n education which includes parents and congregations as partners. An education which prepares students for a lifetime of service to the church and the world."

From the social studies syllabi at Faith the following information was discovered. The Social Studies Department rationale reads: "[i]n social studies education at [Faith], Anabaptism is used as the basic frame

of reference. Anabaptist principles such as peace, service, justice, community, and stewardship provide bases by which the values of the constituent Christian community are examined, tested, and supported within the various courses. An attempt is made to foster an attitude of respect for law and authority and to encourage a sense of appreciation for the heritage of the United States. Nevertheless, this is done in the context of a deeply ingrained Anabaptist world view that emphasizes a citizenship which transcends narrow self-interest and uncritical nationalism."

The objectives for the social studies courses at this school include the note that the student will:

1) develop a sensitivity to social injustice that generates a commitment to positive action;
2) give priority to non-violence as a means of resolving conflict;
3) develop global awareness that recognizes and respects the varied cultural values and different political, economic, and social patterns in today's world; and
4) recognize the necessity of practicing good stewardship of resources on both a personal and national level.

In a course titled "Poverty and Affluence" the description states that "[c]ertainly we who claim to be Christian have responsibility to do something. It will be our goal this quarter course to, at least, heighten awareness and, possibly, stir to action." The resources cited for the

course include Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, MCC films, videos and a source titled "Christian Peacemaking in a Nuclear Age."

The focus of this school obviously reflects a Mennonite ethos from its mission statement to its course syllabi to the use of resources in specific classes.

Summary

It needs to be stated again that the information gathered from school brochures, catalogues, and course syllabi requires some qualifications. Of the twenty-two schools initially contacted, only six schools' data was collected, and the extent of what was gathered greatly varied. The information that was delineated above was chosen selectively. As the material was read, terms, items, descriptions were highlighted which seemed to reinforce the notion of a Mennonite ethos, using Bender's ideas, as described earlier in this paper. While much has been omitted, it is significant that there are explicit references in the material that do, in fact, suggest that the schools consciously attempt to establish a Mennonite ethos throughout their school programs, especially in social studies. Frequent references to the terms Anabaptist, Mennonite, service, responsibility, peacemaking suggest the preeminence of such an ethos and clearly echo the understandings of the Anabaptist Vision ideals of community, discipleship, and peacemaking. In addition the emphasis on a critically thinking, globally aware individual is stressed in the documentation examined. This new emphasis has grown in prominence in Mennonite communities, and it is being reflected in their schools as Mennonites enter the next century.

Chapter Eight: Researcher Responses

I opened my thesis with a creed, "The Mennonite Dream," representing an ideology which Mennonites have attempted to follow since their beginnings in the sixteenth century. The purpose of the thesis was not to idealize or glorify the Mennonite experience. As a person who knows first-hand the realities of the Mennonite community, I acknowledge the failure and inconsistencies that exist in this community. My intention was to see the extent to which Mennonite social studies teachers in Mennonite schools reflected a Mennonite ethos. I wondered if a Mennonite ethos was a significant part of the culture of Mennonite schools.

In order to research this topic I began with the question **How do ideological structures affect how people teach?** To contextualize the question in the desired research group and focus on my subject area of interest, I extended the question to read **How do teachers in Mennonite schools interpret the social studies curriculum to reflect the Mennonite ethos in which they exist?** I realized that further questions would need to be asked in order to examine how the ideological structure, Mennonitism, affects how people, social studies teachers, teach, in Mennonite schools. The following questions guided my research:

1) What is involved with social studies curricula?

2) What is ideology?

3) What is the Mennonite ideology?

4a) How do Mennonite teachers understand the Mennonite ethos?

4b) How do students in Mennonite schools understand the Mennonite ethos? (This question was added later.)

5) To what extent do Mennonite teachers interpret and adapt the curriculum to fit with their understanding of the Mennonite ethos?

6) To what extent do the structures in which Mennonite teachers work affect their teaching?.

It seemed that an appropriate way to synthesize the research done for this thesis was to address each of the six questions in a systematic manner. By responding to each of these questions, it is hoped that some reasonable conclusions can be articulated regarding the topic of this investigation.

1) What is involved with social studies curricula?

Among the schools chosen for the sample, social studies curricula covers several courses of the humanities typology. *Government, Politics, Economics, Poverty & Affluence, History* and numerous other courses are placed under the schools' social studies umbrella. This umbrella is different than the one used in Alberta's social studies programs where an interdisciplinary method is utilized in the school system.

Tomkins (1983) distinguishes two approaches to social studies curriculum: "knowledge-based" and "skills-based." The Alberta curriculum documents and programs of study appear to pursue an approach that endeavors to integrate both of these approaches. This conclusion is validated by the dictum to social studies teachers that their evaluations of student performance are to be measured equally in their

attainment of the knowledge and skill objectives outlined in the social studies' programs of studies.

The curriculum documents observed in the school samples, interviews with teachers and one administrator, and documentation appear to suggest that the integration of the knowledge-based approach along with the skills-based approach is also characteristic in Mennonite educational institutions. Some examples from school catalogues, curriculum guides, and syllabi illustrate this combined approach.

In one source under the heading "Social Studies," the statement is made that "[a]s God's people in this community, we aim to teach and learn social studies so that we can contribute in positive ways to peaceful life and human welfare around the world." In an "Economics" course student objectives include "[e]xamining individual and corporate Christian responses to our nation's economic priorities and culture" and to {i]ncrease awareness of economic problems and challenges faced by Third and Fourth World nations."

In another source outlining the social studies' programs of the school, the description reads: ,.". [r]ather than setting nations apart the courses develop the theme that a global interdependence exists among nations in order to meet human needs. This emphasis, interpreted from an Anabaptist perspective, combines with an understanding of United States history and government so that we can live as responsible citizens according to God's purpose." A course titled "Poverty and Affluence" lists one of the goals of the course as "to at least heighten awareness and, possibly, stir to action" students regarding their Christian responsibility to act on the knowledge they have learned in an experiential manner.

Knowledge of a specific topic or a field of study, as indicated, is not enough. Students are required to move beyond and use investigative skills to apply that knowledge to the world(s) in which they live. It can be seen, then, that while the form of social studies is different the emphasis on both knowledge and skills are prominent among the sample schools as well as in the Alberta context.

2) What is ideology? and 3) What is the Mennonite ideology?

Numerous interpretations can be given to the notion of ideology. Apple's (1979) questions designed to discover a school's ideological basis are one method. One of the questions that he asks, reveals some interesting insights. He asks, "Whose principles of social justice, or economic reality are embedded in the content of schooling?" An educational response, from a Mennonite perspective, to this question would attempt to challenge the notion of social justice being defined from a nationalistic bias. Such a response would suggest that the Christian is called to live out an ethical life where economic sharing of one's possessions is considered a normative part of one's everyday life.

Although such a response appears appropriate for Mennonites, by examining the institutional structures already in place it is also obvious that the perpetuation of Mennonite educational institutions requires financial resources which may well take precedence over caring for the needy person in the local or international community. When it costs thousands of dollars to send a student to a Mennonite educational facility, it is obvious that the dominant socio-economic realities will

nonetheless prevail although these are questioned by the very structures which depend upon acquiring the funds that are debated. The social justice noted in Apple's question, in a Mennonite context, would be understood to be reflected in the life and teachings of Jesus who called on his followers to live a life of justice in all relationships.

Nelson's (1981, p. 3 in Koole, 1983, p. 13) synthesis of ideology includes four aspects:

1) moral, ethical, and normative views of major human endeavors, including social, economic, and educational relationships;
2) a rationalization of group interests;
3) an essential position from which significant attitudes and actions are derived; and
4) implied theories of human nature.

Koole's points can be seen through three sources: 1) Bender's articulation of the Anabaptist Vision, 2) Mennonite Education: Why and How? A Philosophy of Education for the Mennonite Church, and in the 3) Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Church.

1) Anabaptist Vision

The Mennonite Church derives its world view from the Bible as interpreted by its community members. The rationalization of group interests, significant attitudes and actions, and an understanding of human nature are drawn from this interpretation. The Anabaptist vision is

essentially a communal model in the sense that the laity and the clergy join together to form the community in a lateral manner as opposed to an hierarchical one. The moral, ethical, and normative views of major human endeavors -- including social, economic, and educational relationships -- all revolve around an Anabaptist interpretation, whether that be in family, church, or community relationships. The Mennonite understanding is well reflected in one of the early Anabaptist martyrs' sayings that "No man can follow Christ except he follow him in life" (Hans Denck). There is a strong emphasis on lifestyle as the genuine witness of the Christian experience; Mennonites tend to believe that what one does is a much more authentic measure of one's ideology than what one says.

Bender's synthesis of Mennonite beliefs, his articulation of the Anabaptist Vision in 1943, gathered together the themes of discipleship, "Christianity as a life of discipleship based on the example of Christ," the community dynamic of mutuality and love, "the church as a fellowship of adult believers," and the overriding spirit of peace, "love and nonresistance governing all personal and social relationships" (Keim, 1994, pp. 2-3). The forms these principles have taken in the institutional settings of the Mennonite Church are numerous According to Keim, (1994) Bender's articulation of the Anabaptist movement provided Mennonites with a "convincingly simple explanation of the meaning of their history" (p.8). This simplicity posed a problem: had Bender perhaps oversimplified a diverse and multilayered history colouring it with a Swiss interpretation of the entire Anabaptist movement."

Hostetler (1995), in response to some of the criticisms of Bender's analysis, notes that, while there are questions about the transference of the Anabaptist Vision to all streams of Anabaptism, the principles Bender

articulated have had a high priority within the schools of the Mennonite Church (MC). To reiterate a point made earlier in this thesis, Hostetler stated that Bender's interpretation of the Anabaptists has been adopted by the Mennonite Church educational structures.

Miller (1994) notes that Bender's ideas of nonconformity to the dominant society and nonresistance in the face of violent action have been redefined in the last half of this century. The typical position of noninvolvement in activities deemed inappropriate for church members has dramatically shifted, although much of the same ideology and ethos remains. The concept of separation from mainstream society is being replaced with much more of a sense of responsibility to contribute in positive ways to a just society, not simply a just Mennonite community. The concept of pacifism is being challenged with ideas of peaceful activism. Faithfulness, then, is not so much seen in what is not done but in what is done.

2) Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Church

The Mennonite Church's faith statement of 1963 is consistent with the Anabaptist Vision ideals as outlined by Bende . It also fulfills Nelson's ideological typology, with an exception. It does not explicitly address his second point, "a rationalization of group interests". The sense of a world view that subscribes to a traditional Christian faith which includes a description of God's nature, the biblical canons, and the view of human beings nature, role, and responsibility in the world is provided in this confession of faith. Its tenets are in keeping with earlier Anabaptist confessions and emphasize Bender's rubric of discipleship, community,

and nonresistant love. The newly accepted 1995 confession of faith also reflects this rubric.

3) A Philosophy of Education for the Mennonite Church

The emphasis evident in the philosophy document (Hertzler, 1971) reflects much of Bender's Anabaptist Vision. Regarding the mission of the church, as evidenced in its schools, in the document it is stated that the Christian "lives in a voluntary minority community in a pluralistic society, several overlapping communities or 'worlds'" (community). The student is seen as being in a process of growing in faith,"at all ages, in varying degrees, an arena where the awareness of self is born and cultivated in the context of choice between good and evil" (discipleship). The purposes of education involve a lifestyle of loving action towards God and people; being informed about the student's heritage and able to articulate his/her faith; seeing him/herself, as well as others, as a person of value and respect, and ready to contribute toward the service of humanity and the development of a Christian peoplehood (peacemaking).

The Mennonite educational philosophy interestingly includes a point stressing the necessity of accountability so that the educational and religious goals of the church are achieved. In the document the importance of reconciliation as part of the educational process and learnings is continually cited. The Anabaptist Vision clearly fits with this examination of education within the context of the Mennonite Church.

The ideology of the Mennonite Church expresses itself through a distinct ethos that is theologically and culturally intertwined. Mennonite

interactions with society have been relatively minimal until this century in North America. For the Mennonite Church, in fact, such interaction was generally prohibited. The insulatory and isolationist approach has resulted in strong ties among the community. The pressures of the twentieth century, especially after 1950, have lessened those ties but there still is a distinctive Mennonite ethos that permeates Mennonite life. The principles that Bender identified in 1943 are characteristically found in Mennonite educational institutions as will be discussed next.

4a) How do Mennonite teachers understand the Mennonite ethos?

In responding to this question three sources of information are included: 1) teacher questionnaire responses, 2) teacher interview responses and 3) student responses.

1) Teacher Questionnaire Responses

The responses by teachers on the Teacher Questionnaire were quite varied. However, teachers tended to use significant terms such as Anabaptist Vision, servanthood, nonresistance, discipleship, Mennonite Confession of Faith, and community. While the responses that included these phrases are consistent with the Mennonite ideology delineated previously, it is important to observe that there were few comments that specifically answered the question about the teacher's understanding of the Mennonite ethos of their respective schools. How important this ethos

is for the teachers was clearly evident in the length of their responses: some were extremely brief while others were relatively copious.

2) Teacher Interview Responses

In studying the responses of the social studies teachers I interviewed, I concluded that two areas seemed to define the Mennonite ethos for them: 1) community and 2) peacemaking. Their sense of community included the Christian, the Mennonite, and the global communities. The strong presence of a Mennonite population in the school and its connection with a larger Mennonite body also seemed to be an important criterion for these teachers.

The question about "the Mennonite ethos" seemed to be a nebulous one for some of the teachers; others seemed comfortable and direct in their responses. Three of the four teachers noted that the Mennonite ethos was evident in the relationships in the school. The sense of community was established through a "standing alongside" with the students, as one teacher phrased it, rather than a standing over the students. In some schools all persons were called by their first names to emphasize the communal nature of the school. Among these teachers the importance of nationalism / patriotism was de-emphasized. As one teacher noted, there is "very, very little, if any, notion of America the great." One school offers a course on conflict resolution that will soon become required for all sophomore students.

As can be read, Bender's two principles of community and peacemaking are an integral part of these teachers' understandings of the ethos of their schools. The aspect of discipleship can also be seen in

some of their other responses. I asked the teachers, "What do students leave with when they leave your school?" The responses suggested that servanthood, a sense of Mennonite heritage, and the belief that Mennonite values should be lived out by the students were part of the ethos that students carried with them.

The idea of servanthood and living out values ties together with Bender's ideas of discipleship. This connection was also seen in other comments made by the teachers in the course of the interviews. The significant difference for one teacher was that he felt that the students were exposed to differing values than the dominant societal ones. These values could be classified as reflecting the trilogy of discipleship, community, and peacemaking.

Another teacher succinctly put it that she "think[s] that the great divide between Mennonites and other Christian denominations is putting faith into action." Interestingly, this teacher noted that although her school was "incredibly Mennonite," it was a "strange place." Her responses, however, seemed to suggest that her school's ethos fit into Bender's synthesis of Mennonite ideology.

The information gathered through the analysis of school catalogues, syllabi, and promotional brochures does support that the Mennonite ethos present in the sample schools also reflects the Anabaptist Vision as articulated by Harold Bender over fifty years ago. It would seem that the Mennonite ethos is still focused around community, discipleship, and peacemaking but the interpretation of what those concepts mean for students, teachers, and schools in the late twentieth century is an on-going process of definition and application.

4b) How do students in Mennonite schools understand the Mennonite ethos?

The student responses were broken down into four groupings: community, discipleship, peace, and doctrines. The responses seemed to suggest that community and discipleship emphases were similar at 31% (99 of 324 student responses mentioned the aspect of community) and 32% (103 of 324 student responses mentioned the aspect of discipleship) respectively. The emphasis on peace was considerably lower at 15% (48 of 324 student responses mentioned the aspect of peace). The categorization of doctrines was tabulated at 6% (18 of 324 student responses mentioned the aspect of doctrine).

The characteristics of community seemed evident, although the language used to express these characteristics was generalized. Calling teachers by their first names was an example that indicates a sense of community but not the specific idea of a movement towards a recognition of the value and calling of all individuals. The evidences of discipleship were also obvious; Bible classes were cited the most frequently. Such a response indicates the source for an understanding of discipleship requirements for living Christianly.

The peace category was the most in keeping with the language of the Anabaptist Vision, although it too was quite generalized: peace, nonresistance, conscientious objection to war were common responses. It appears unusual that only 15% of the students' sample responses fit with this grouping. Dialogue with students may well reveal different findings or more definitive findings. Despite the vagueness of these student responses, it does seem reasonable to suggest that the

Mennonite ethos is embedded in the schools they attend. However, the extent of this ethos is not clear and the percentage of student responses indicating a peace characteristic is puzzling and, to me, a bit unsettling.

It would have been most helpful for my study if I would have been able to interview the teachers who taught the student sample, but that was not possible. As a result, the data from my research is suggestive, but certainly not conclusive.

5a) To what extent do Mennonite teachers interpret and adapt the curriculum to fit with their understanding of the Mennonite ethos?

This question was addressed by asking the teachers about their use of curriculum.

1) Teacher Questionnaire Responses

Two of the six teachers wrote that they did not need to change the curriculum to reflect a Mennonite ethos. (In my perception, one of these teachers did not seem to understand the concept of a Mennonite ethos.) The remaining four teachers noted that they change the curriculum in a variety of ways. These ways included: examining Christian perspectives on political issues, portraying Mennonite-Christian value positions, and using Mennonite periodicals to supplement textbook perspectives.

Some of the specific ways these teachers altered the curriculum they teach to reflect a Mennonite ethos were cited. These included using alternative resources, videos, and periodicals; bringing in alternative

perspectives on issues; sharing personal experiences with war's destructiveness, Mennonite response to the draft, Mennonite involvement in war, questioning the morality of civil suits; and using cooperative learning.

2) Teacher (social studies) Interview Responses

Three teachers noted that they supplement the courses as well as orient the courses to reflect a Mennonite flavour. Minimizing the military strategies of wars and including Mennonite experiences, as well as other minority groups, were mentioned as examples of supplements. These four teachers all compose their own curriculum which may or may not be based on state directed curriculum. The knowledge basis of the social studies curriculum, in particular the history courses, appears to be similar to the public schools; but, how that knowledge is interpreted and presented tends to reflect the Mennonite perspectives of the teacher.

These teachers had several specific and illuminating examples of how they change curriculum to reflect their understanding of a Mennonite ethos. Their responses to this aspect of the interview were quite lengthy. In the responses it became apparent that teaching about nonresistance, to use Bender's term, was overt. Examining the history of pacifism among groups, especially Mennonites, was cited by all of the teachers. (One teacher noted that such a discussion was "often neglected" in the textbooks.)

Discussing the issue of whether to pay the portion of taxes that go solely for the American military was part and parcel of the analysis of the topic of peacemaking. An important question that one teacher noted, that

seems to summarize this point, was "At what point do we not obey government or [chose to] follow [our] conscience?" It is clear that the teachers interviewed have a strong commitment to peacemaking and do not subscribe to the militaristic tone of their surrounding communities. The way in which teachers approached the issues and/or topics in their courses seemed to be stressed in their responses; "it all boils down to perspective," said one teacher.

The teachers stressed that it was not necessarily an easy task to present a Mennonite perspective. The students were not always engaged by such a perspective. One teacher noted that "[m]ost high school students are allergic to the idea of being saturated with Mennonite theology." Another stated that, "the Anabaptist perspective doesn't always work. They tune you out pretty fast." This teacher noted that there appears to be a distancing among some of the students and parents from the outside community's view of traditional Mennonites.

The long history of separation from the world, a part of Bender's discipleship idea, has created problems in the Mennonite community. Not the least of these problems is the remaining stereotypes of Mennonite dress patterns and restrictive societal involvements. It was clear that even though these teachers attempt to present a Mennonite perspective, reflecting discipleship, community, and peacemaking, it is not wholeheartedly accepted by students and/or parents. Although the ideals appear to be part of the educators' and educational institutions' understandings, to what extent students accept and then live these ideals is unknown.

5b) **How do students think about how their Mennonite teachers interpret and adapt the curriculum to fit with their teachers' understanding of the Mennonite ethos?**

The student questionnaires asked "Describe two ways in which your social studies teacher demonstrates this understanding of a Mennonite ethos." Prior to this question, students had previously been asked to describe the Mennonite ethos of their school. The categories of community, discipleship, peace, and other were used to tabulate the results. The results proved interesting but not conclusive: 35 of 324 students' (or 11%) responses were grouped under the category of community. Examples of responses in this category included "teaching us the history of Mennonites" and "we're like a big family;" 20 of 324 students' (or 6%) responses were grouped under the category of discipleship. Examples in this category included "talks about what is moral" and "live simply;" 58 of 324 students' (or 18%) responses were grouped under the category of peace. Examples in this category included "pushes pro-peace propaganda" and "believes in conscientious objection to war;" and 42 of 324 students' (or 13%) responses were grouped under the category of other. Examples in the other category included such comments as "short tests" and the "teacher helps me a lot."

The most frequent number of responses related to the idea of peace which is in keeping with what the teachers' own emphases seemed to be. The reasons for the low percentage of discipleship (16%) and the high percentage of other (13%) are uncertain. From some of the comments from the teacher samples, questionnaires, and interviews, it can be inferred that there is a shift among the Mennonite constituency in

terms of how important discipleship issues are or perhaps how these issues are interpreted. Where once the church and/or conference were/was a determining factor affecting (read prescribing) behaviour, the current movement is away from corporatism and towards much greater individualism. (A recent article in the denominational magazine, Gospel Herald, May 30, 1995, challenges the laity to re-consider the importance of following the church leadership.) This shift has affected the schools. Other explanations could be in student understanding of the question or the lack of clarity of the question. Student data does seem to suggest that the ideas of community, discipleship, and peace are significant in the sample schools but that other ideas have also had a pronounced impact on the students.

6) To what extent do the structures in which Mennonite teachers work affect their teaching?

This question will be addressed by commenting on 1) teacher questionnaire responses, 2) teacher interview responses and 3) the Mennonite Secondary Education Council.

1) Teacher Questionnaire Responses

Little was written in this area from these teachers. One teacher noted that other perspectives strongly impact the students and the parents. One organization was cited, regarding its influence, with the comment that it emphasizes the "need to be a strong military nation." This teacher also noted that his sense of peace is not necessarily shared by

his students in terms of the death penalty. Another teacher noted that there is an "[e]xcessive pro-United States curriculum with a rather narrow world view." A third teacher stated that "[t]he curriculum tends to compartmentalize faith and "other subjects," and suggested that "we should work more at integration of these."

Two teachers shared their confusion about how a Mennonite ethos related to the curriculum and the institution. One teacher noted that the school still seemed to hold to the notion that Mennonites should be the "quiet in the land" and should not take an activist role in terms of government affairs. (The vestiges of the ideas of separation that evolved among the Mennonites over the centuries obviously remain to some degree despite internal and external forces for change.) This teacher explained that his "views clash heavily" with this Mennonite community's understanding of the Mennonite ethos.

The structures in which these teachers work affects them differently. Some teachers seemed to feel that they were in agreement with their institutions and experienced little tensions in terms of Mennonite thought or action. Others tended to experience more tensions in their schools because of a different understanding of this ethos. Whether or not teachers experienced congruence with their school's curriculum and ethos, it is clear that more research is needed in this area to determine to what extent the institutional structures and the environment in which they work affects teachers.

2) Teacher Interview Responses

The teachers in this study seem to work in environments that support much of their understanding of a Mennonite ethos. Three of these four teachers thought that there was a great deal of congruence among the school's faculty, administration, and board regarding philosophy. Each of these groups, as well as the parents and conference to which the school belongs, helps shape the philosophy of the school. Two teachers noted that sometimes parents feel uncomfortable because they (the teachers) provided a "too liberal slant" in their social studies courses. and that as social studies teachers they need to present alternative positions as students investigate issues.

The dominant consciousness in the society does tend to exert considerable influence among the Mennonite population even though Mennonite theology tends to run counter to such influence. The consequences of this influence seem to find its way into the schools through parental input which may or may not be consistent with the Mennonite ethos of the school. As noted previously, the importance of providing a global perspective in the social studies classes does seem to be a growing development in these teachers' schools. Sometimes such an approach runs counter to other values represented among the student body but the challenge then becomes how to reflect the Mennonite ethos of the school while still allowing dialogue with other voices.

3) The Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC)

MSEC is an organization that attempts to provide leadership for member Mennonite schools. It seeks to have a voice in how its member schools adhere to a Mennonite ideology. Curriculum development, teacher and administrative professional development, and collegiality among its members are some of the focus areas for MSEC. In an interview with its now former leader, Benjamin Zaerr, it was evident that he felt that there was a great deal of work to do in schools regarding developing a visible Mennonite ethos. Some of the MSEC teacher conferences had been designed to work at this area of Mennonite ethos and in particular how it related to social studies.

Zaerr provided me with a paper he had written in this area. The thesis of his paper was that the promulgation of Anabaptist beliefs and values is dependent on Mennonite educators. The task of Mennonite schools, he contends, is to provide an environment where these beliefs and values are inherent in the school curriculum. In this paper Zaerr also stresses that there are certain principles (eight) that need to guide Mennonite institutions if their ethos is to be preserved. School structures need to reflect these principles especially among the teaching faculty.

These eight principles, except for possibly two, can be subsumed under Bender's three Anabaptist characteristics with relative ease. The point here is that Zaerr's discussion paper also reflects Bender's belief that Mennonite educational institutions have a responsibility to reflect a Mennonite ethos. The school structures should affect the teachers. Several of the practices that Zaerr suggests were actually evident in the data collected from the samples of teachers and students. These

practices included cooperative, discovery, and inquiry learning as well as a focus on mediation-type activities. These activities were common examples shared in both the teacher responses and Zaerr's paper. My research suggests that there does appear to be some degree of consistency among the Mennonite schools and their umbrella organization, MSEC, regarding a Mennonite ethos even though Zaerr believes that there needs to be more of an understanding of a Mennonite ethos demonstrated in the schools. The context within which Mennonite social studies teachers teach is certainly affected by their schools' involvement with the Mennonite Secondary Education Council, although the degree of this influence has not been clearly determined in this study.

Responding to the Questions

In responding to the questions that I posed when I began this thesis, I have hoped to adequately answer them using the data I have collected and interpreted. The question **To what extent do teachers in Mennonite schools interpret the social studies curriculum to reflect the Mennonite ethos in which they exist?** can be answered. To a significant extent the teachers that I was in contact with do interpret the social studies curriculum that they teach to reflect the Mennonite ethos in which they exist. This interpretation is demonstrated through their own reflections about their teaching, the documentation that I examined and to a lesser extent the student perceptions of their teaching. An understanding of a Mennonite ethos not only pervades the institutions in which the teachers work, but it is generally evident,

although not with all the teachers, among these Mennonite social studies teachers.

The strands of this study, while at times frayed, can be woven together to display a rather clear vision of Anabaptist-Mennonite ideology. This ideology is discernible in the way in which Mennonite social studies teachers engage their students in Mennonite schools. The characteristics of community, discipleship, and peacemaking, although interpreted more broadly than when Bender so eloquently described them over fifty years ago are salient features among the Mennonite Church high schools of today. The Anabaptist ideology that these schools claim appears to be an integral part of their ethos. This study was undertaken to discover whether or not such an ideology was part of the schools' ethos. While other questions have been created, this one question has been answered albeit in a limited manner.

Chapter Nine: Afterthoughts

There have been several times throughout my work on this thesis that I have taken some time to reflect on what has taken place. It seemed appropriate to write about some of those reflections because they have been an integral part of the process. I include these reflections here in an abridged manner.

November 11, 1994

As I sit here and think through some things it is rather interesting that I am doing this activity on Remembrance Day. Yesterday I was explaining to my students the importance of the day for nations and I thought how ironic it was that I, a Mennonite of conscience, should be telling students about a day that has a very different meaning for me than it does for most of them as well as the larger socio-economic-political culture of our nation. What I wanted to write about, however, will be of a different vein.

My initial assumptions, some articulated, some imagined, appeared in keeping with my experience and knowledge of social studies, teaching and Mennonites. When I began this study, I believed that the teachers selected for my sample would have an interest and willingness to participate in this study. I also believed that these teachers would be able to articulate their philosophy of teaching and be able with relative ease to converse about their pedagogy. What I discovered was that interest and willingness of teachers was minimal. They, as I, have busy lives and what I was asking of them was simply another thing to

increase their workloads. I also discovered that it was not that easy for teachers to discuss their philosophical understandings or their pedagogy. It was a difficult task to encourage these teachers to talk about issues that required significant thought. I think that they wanted to be sagacious with their responses and not simply appear flippant with their answers.

I also had a few assumptions regarding social studies but I will only refer to one of these assumptions. I anticipated that social studies would significantly allow for teachers to display their ideological frameworks. Because of the subjective nature of social studies, I expected that what a teacher believed would clearly be displayed in his/her teaching. My expectation was met especially as teachers talked about how they dealt with examining issues in their class. (Much of this dialogue has already been cited in Chapter Six.)

The other area where I had several assumptions was regarding Mennonitism. I expected that Mennonite distinctives would be more implicit than explicit, more covert than overt, more subtle than obvious In several ways I was incorrect. There were very visible signs of Mennonite distinctives: the absence of the American flag was one example. Subtleties, however, also existed. The absence of locks on lockers suggests the emphasis on community even though little is said about this procedure in those schools where this practice occurs. I expected that Mennonite isolationism would be negligible in terms of full participation in the economic and social aspects of the culture in which Mennonites live. This expectation was not completely realized, although certainly Mennonite students and teachers, for the most part, have become visibly no different than other members of their societies. I also expected to

discover that Mennonite schools would reflect the changing ethos of the Mennonite Church. I was encouraged to discover that the Mennonite schools in my sample were changing but their changes reflected the paradigm of the Anabaptist Vision (community, discipleship and peacemaking) in a contemporary manner.

I had several other reflections from November, but these provide a sense of my thinking at that time. Perhaps my greatest disappointment at this time was the lack of participation of Mennonite high schools in my study. Finding enough willing participants for a study is probably not a solitary experience.

May 24, 1995

It has been about a year since I first began this study. The process is a great deal more difficult and strenuous than I had imagined. My findings, nonetheless, are encouraging.

I think that Bender's Anabaptist vision can well serve as a template for the Mennonite schools from which I gathered information. It is clear that his emphases of discipleship, community, and peace are still evident within Mennonite educational institutions. I had hoped that I would find the remnants of this ideology, but I did not know to what extent it would exist. The philosophical statements, institutional structures, and teaching faculty seem to embody these three principles to a large extent.

In addition to these principles, it is quite obvious that a greater openness to dialogue and an exploration of a range of opinions is not only accepted but encouraged within the Mennonite educational settings. The expressions that these foci are manifested in are significantly

different than in earlier generations. The importance of dress regulations as a sign of nonconformity, for example, has long since declined although modesty is still an enforced norm. Political involvement, at one time restricted, has now become a question of how to be involved and not necessarily if one should be involved.

The peace position, explicitly stressed in the conscientious objector position regarding conscription, is clearly portrayed through the data gathered and appears stronger than it has ever been in Mennonite educational institutions. Some schools require mediation types of courses so that students come to see that a peace position is more than simply not being involved in a war but that it is a lifestyle. These learnings were easily seen in the data.

While the mission statements and course syllabi suggest a strong Mennonite ethos, not all the teachers interviewed or teacher questionnaires could clearly describe the Mennonite ethos of their school. It was a difficult question for some of them. The difficulty could arise for several reasons, lack of thought about the question, uncomfortableness with addressing the question, unfamiliarity with the Mennonite experience/theology and/or it could be that the nuances of the ethos are so familiar that they are unconsciously understood. If, however, the teachers are truly unsure, then what they communicate to their students may also be unclear. Perhaps some of these aspects, however, are better lived out rather than simply talked about. Living, rather than talking, is certainly a long practiced Anabaptist approach to dissemination of ideology and ethos.

June 1995

In thinking about what I would do differently about this study if I were to do it again, I wrote down a few thoughts.

In reviewing the study I have completed, I believe that if I were to redesign it I might find it helpful to only concentrate on one school and do interviews with its teachers and students. One school may well have provided more continuity and more context for a thorough interpretation of the findings. The study I have completed provides a fragmented look; it seems to lack an in-depth application of the data.

Because Harold Bender's explanation of Anabaptist thought became a template for this study as it progressed, it might have been helpful to focus the research on his ideals in terms of questions asked in the questionnaires and interviews. Such a focus could have perhaps revealed some further insights into the praxis of Mennonite educators.

The returning of student and teacher questionnaires and syllabi from teachers became quite a protracted experience. Even after personally calling and writing some of these teachers, I did not receive many responses. It might have been more realistic to only request information from the schools where teachers were interviewed and at the time of interview make a point of obtaining the requested information.

Part of the learning that takes place in writing a thesis is about the process, not just what appears on paper. My advisor has pointed this reality out to me a few times.

September 8, 1995

It would be rewarding if I could close with some profundity, I am unsure that will happen. I did want to, though, discuss or raise a few more questions about my thesis.

The student responses that I collected raise several questions in my mind. What instructions were students given by their teachers before they filled out the questionnaires? Did the students really understand the questions? How well do the students understand their own Mennonite identity and theology? How important is it to them to be Mennonite? I wonder if students were not answering the questions with answers they thought would be appropriate rather than honest responses? If i asked students what community, discipleship, and peacemaking were, I wonder if they would know? My hunch is that the student responses require much greater context before they can be considered reliable. It would have been advantageous for me to administer the questionnaires and follow them up with selective interviewing. My sense is that students at Mennonite schools cannot articulate a Mennonite ethos as well as my interpretation of the data might suggest.

I found it incredibly interesting that the teachers who I knew were not from Mennonite background tended to have a more difficult time in articulating a Mennonite ethos. One of the teachers in particular was quite confused over the idea. Another teacher could relate well to the theology but not the culture. It would appear that there are many nuances about the Mennonite community that are, quite naturally, most easily detected by those raised in such a community.

The previous observation leads me to another related idea. The relationship of culture to ethos is one that is implicitly tied in with Mennonite experience. It is highly ironic that the descendants of the Anabaptists have created a culture into which one can be born. The early Anabaptists, who died for the belief that each person must make a mature decision to become part of the Christian community, would be puzzled by the fact that people claim to be Mennonites who do not hold to the theological tenets of Anabaptism. This experience is not unknown within Mennonite communities. There has been a strong ethnic identity among Mennonites that binds them together. While the ethos of the Mennonites involves a religious commitment, at least Bender's paradigm does, there is also a cultural relationship that may be more important to some individuals than the religious faith component. The reality of this paradox raises problems when the totality of the Anabaptist ideology is considered. Those problems, however, will have to be considered in another context.

From the early radicalism of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century to the separated and isolated Mennonites of the following centuries to the assimilated and emerging activist Mennonites of the late twentieth century, the dream of a community of people committed to following God through the example of Jesus Christ in a nonviolent way has challenged these people. They have not always been faithful to this dream. They have established schools for their children to learn about community, discipleship, and peace. These schools have hired teachers who attempt to reflect the ideology and ethos of the Mennonite way. Although not without failure, it can be argued that these schools and these teachers have helped to interpret and foster a Mennonite ideology

which the students can choose to accept or reject. This element of choice has always been an essential characteristic of Mennonite ideology and it appears that it continues to be part of the educational experiences of Mennonite youth in Mennonite high schools.

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