

This paper discusses the curriculum in relation to civic education and national consciousness and to emerging programs in Canadian Studies, focussing on the work of the Canada Studies Foundation. It stresses the need in Canadian Studies for a non-ideological approach that will enable students to confront and consider diverse interpretations of the Canadian experience. Canadian Studies is defined broadly to include the social sciences and humanities and to take account of skills, values and attitudes as well as content.

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National Consciousness, the Curriculum and Canadian Studies

INTRODUCTION

In this discussion, "curriculum" is used to refer simply to the experiences provided or available to young people in their formal schooling. That aspect of schooling most concerned with developing an awareness of Canadian society and concern for its future may be called civic education. As such, it embraces the emerging new field of Canadian Studies but goes beyond the traditional subject matter categories associated with that field. Civic education is more than Canadian Studies and Canadian Studies is more than the social studies.

Such a view of the curriculum emphasizes the importance of values and attitudes no less than the acquisition of knowledge. It cannot ignore the social milieu in which the school operates. This milieu constitutes what has been called the "hidden curriculum", and educational research increasingly suggests that this curriculum is no less influential (and may be more so) on the young than the formal process of schooling itself. If one accepts recent social science findings that the most powerful determinants of school achievement lie outside the school, the significance of the hidden curriculum becomes more apparent.¹

¹See for example James S. Coleman et al, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966) and the British Plowden Report, *Children and Their Primary Schools* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1967). See also J.M. Stephens, *The Process of Schooling* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd.; 1967).

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CONCEPTS OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND NATIONALISM

In speaking of national consciousness, one need hardly dwell in 1972 on the dilemma inherent in the term "national", on the ambiguities of it, and on the difficult political and educational problems it raises. In this discussion, the term "consciousness" is equated with "awareness" and "national consciousness" is taken to mean that as a citizen of a recognized political community called Canada, one is aware of the particular set of problems that members of that community share at any given time. By maintaining membership in that community, one tacitly accepts responsibility for those problems. The socialization of the young to Canadian society means the creation of an awareness or consciousness of its nature or, more properly, of the conflicting interpretations of that nature. The purpose of socialization is to prepare students, as future citizens, better to assume their inevitable responsibilities for shared problems. Such citizens will be nationalists in the simplest sense, as George Woodcock has put it, in that they will accept the fact that history has made them a distinct people, with a common history, inhabiting a clearly defined territory.²

This limited concept of national consciousness will seem fragile to latter day nationalists and accords more with the concept of patriotism defined by George Heiman.³ In his terms, patriotism is the love of the land of one's birth or domicile, a concept deeply rooted, he claims, in man's nature, in loyalty to clan, tribe and hearth. Patriotism can be distinguished from nationalism in being pluralistic rather than particularistic in its inclinations, as it is based on an attachment to the whole community rather than merely to any part of it. Heiman implies the same distinction between the nation-state and the nationalist state as that advanced more recently by Ramsay Cook.⁴ The nation-state does not encompass all the individual's interests nor are other loyalties incompatible with it, e.g., attachment to religion, family or party.

The Canadian problem of developing a patriotic spirit and what Heiman refers to as "a specific, widespread and well-articulated national culture" arises from facts obvious enough: two different major nationalities and religious denominations, a federal system of government, the vast size of the country and the proximity of the United States. Of all the possible ingredients of a Canadian patriotism "the feeling for the land", to use

²George Woodcock, "A Plea for the Anti-Nation," *The Canadian Forum*, L11, No. 615 (April, 1972), p. 17.

³George Heiman, "The Nineteenth Century Legacy: Nationalism or Patriotism?" in Peter Russell (ed.), *Nationalism in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Limited, 1967), pp. 323-340.

⁴Ramsay Cook, *The Maple Leaf Forever* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971).

Hodgetts' phrase, seems to offer the best promise and it may be significant that in his study he found that for English-Canadian students this was by far the strongest identification with the nation.⁵ Such a patriotism could afford a basis for dialogue with our francophone compatriots and accords with the non-racial view of nationality that Professor Kenneth McNaught claims has long characterized the outlook of English-speaking Canadians.⁶

The term "national consciousness" is often used synonymously with "national identity." Both can be related in meaning to the long standing demand that we educate for Canadian unity. Yet Northrop Frye has pointed out that unity and identity are really quite different concepts, especially in Canada. Unity is national in reference, international or comparative in perspective and rooted in a political feeling. Identity is a cultural and imaginative concept, local and regional in nature. In Frye's words, "The tension between this political sense of unity and the imaginative sense of locality is the essence of whatever the word 'Canadian' means."⁷

Echoing Frye's view, two of our leading historians, Ramsay Cook and Maurice Careless, have spoken of "limited identities." In Cook's words,⁸

"Perhaps instead of deploring our lack of identity, we should attempt to understand the the regional, ethnic and class identities that we do have. It might just be that it is in these limited identities that 'Canadianism' is found and that Canadians find this situation quite satisfactory."

Careless, following this quotation from Cook, proceeds to consider the traditional "nation building" approach to the study of Canadian history. This Ottawa-focussed, Ontario success story of the Canadian experience ignores the fact that region-building could be an equally valid interpretation. Confederation can be viewed as a coming together of regions, most of which had antecedent self-governing political status, not to mention a cultural sense of nationhood, especially in the cases of Quebec and Nova Scotia. Since 1867, Canadian development has been the story of the strengthening of these regional entities. Even urbanization, often viewed as a nationalizing, homogenizing force can be seen as a regionalizing one, as each urban centre has interacted with its own distinctive hinterland and thus largely worked, says Careless, "to confirm regional identities in twentieth century Canada." In these terms, Canadianism is a view of the whole country from a regional perspective. It counters a view of our

⁵A.B. Hodgetts, *What Culture? What Heritage? A Report on Civic Education in Canada* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1968), p. 88.

⁶Kenneth McNaught, "The National Outlook of English-Speaking Canadians" in Peter Russell (ed.), *Nationalism in Canada*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Limited, 1967), pp. 62-63.

⁷Northrop Frye, "In Quest of Identity and Unity, *The Globe Magazine*, (February 20, 1971), pp. 8-9, 12.

⁸Ramsay Cook, "Canadian Centennial Celebrations," *International Journal*; XXII (Autumn, 1967), p. 663.

history that has led to a teaching in which, in Careless' words, "There are the good guys and the bad, the unifying nation-builders and their foes . . ."9

One need not accept Careless' interpretation of Canadian history, but it can be viewed as a valid alternative to the traditional nation-building interpretation that has been emphasized in our curricula and textbooks. Alternative interpretations are especially needed at a time when our latest breed of nationalist intellectuals, impressed by the ideological success of their counterparts in Quebec, are, in McNaught's words, "strongly tempted to reply in kind with counter ideologies of English-Canadian nationalism."¹⁰ For our present purposes, it is of interest to note that a leading spokesman for this new breed, Melville Watkins, engages in the familiar and historic task of deploring the absence of national standards and a national curriculum in Canadian education. Like many before him, he yearns for a national history that will create national myths.¹¹

The fact is that contrary to Watkins and others, we *have*, as Careless indicates, taken a national view of our history and it has failed. This is surely the central finding of Hodgetts in his famous report, "*What Culture? What Heritage?*"¹² That document condemns the bland consensus view of our past which has ignored the rich texture of the Canadian experience. It is this generalized history, taught from one-dimensional textbooks that, as much as badly-educated teachers and sheer indifference to Canadian Studies, has made it so difficult to capture the imagination of students. Isolated in their classrooms, restricted by the barriers of our separate provincial school systems which, nevertheless, with the significant exception of Quebec, tend to use similar textbooks and to follow the same sterile, nation-building approach, teachers and students are simply unable to confront the diversity of the Canadian mosaic.

As we seek to remedy these faults in a period of public disillusionment with education resulting in part from excessive expectations regarding what our schools can accomplish, we will be wise to avoid extravagant claims about our power to influence the future course of Canadian society. We also possibly need to be less concerned about the influence of North American mass culture which may be no more successful than is formal education in making an impact on the basic forces of family and community, with their deep-seated ethnic, cultural and social attitudes. Such, at least,

⁹J.M.S. Careless, "Limited Identities' in Canada," *The Canadian Historical Review*, L. No. 1 (March 1969), pp. 1-10.

¹⁰McNaught, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

¹¹Melville Watkins, "Technology in Our Past and Present" in William Kilbourn (ed.), *A Guide to the Peacable Kingdom* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1970), p. 286.

¹²Hodgetts, *op. cit.*

is the view of another of our historians, W.L. Morton, who suggests that the differences between the Canadian and American people run far deeper than a common mass culture might imply.¹³ We can ask, for example, what relationship mass culture and formal schooling have to the current unprecedented interest in Canadiana? The answer would seem to be very little, given that an adult population that is buying Pierre Berton's books in such numbers grew up at home under the first post-war wave of the American media and in school under the last wave of the old British colonial curriculum. Both influences have been amusingly described recently by Margaret Atwood.¹⁴ Since the mid-sixties, there appears to have been a marked shift in Canadian attitudes, towards a new nationalist consensus. This is reflected most clearly in attitudes towards the United States which, in Peter Regenstreif's words, can be considered "an index of Canadian self-confidence." As recently as 1967, a statement suggesting that "less foreign capital should be used to develop Canada even if the standard of living of some people were to decrease" was supported by only 34 per cent of those interviewed in a poll but rejected by 45 per cent. Three years later these figures had been reversed: 46 per cent favoured the statement and only 32 per cent disapproved of it.¹⁵

ANTI-AMERICANISM AND CANADIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Although the contemporary Canadian Studies movement (the word is entirely appropriate to the often evangelical overtones that characterize it) reflects probably the strongest upsurge of nationalism ever seen in this country, it is by no means the first time that the schools have been seen as playing a vital potential role in socializing the young to a positive view of their society and to a strong concern for its survival. This was evident from the very beginning of schooling in Upper Canada where we find, as early as the 1790's, concern being expressed about the influence of American teachers and texts in the schools of the province. It was charged that teachers from the United States "used their own schoolbooks . . . and tinctured the minds of their pupils with their own political views."¹⁶ In 1799, it was proposed that American schoolmasters be excluded "lest they should instil republicanism into the tender minds of the youth of the province."¹⁷ In 1834 the legislature imposed citizenship requirements on

¹³W.L. Morton, *The Canadian Identity* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1961), p. 81.

¹⁴Margaret Atwood, "Nationalism, Limbo and the Canadian Club", *Saturday Night*, (Jan. 1971), pp. 10-11.

¹⁵Peter Regenstreif, "Anti-Nationalism in Canada: A Comment on Canadian Political Culture," *Association for Canadian Studies in the United States Newsletter*, II, No. 2 (Autumn, 1972), p. 8.

¹⁶J.G. Hodgins *Schools and Colleges of Ontario, 1792-1910*, Vol. 1 (Toronto King's Printer, 1910), p. 1.

American immigrant teachers.¹⁸ Concern about American books reached a peak in 1847 when it was found that half the books used in the schools came from the United States.¹⁹ Most American books were soon replaced by the Irish National Readers, an event which conveniently marks the beginning of a British colonial curriculum heritage that endured into the 1950s.

That a common bond of nationalism resting on repulsion from the United States can be traced in almost a direct line from these beginnings down to the present day is evident from a mere juxtaposition of two expressions of concern a century and a half apart. In 1833, Dr. Thomas Rolph, a choleric British visitor to Upper Canada, recorded his dismay over American influence in the following words:²⁰

"It is really melancholy to traverse the province and go into many of the common schools; you find a herd of children instructed by some anti-British adventurer instilling into the young . . . mind sentiments hostile to the parent state; false accounts of the late war . . . geographies setting forth (American cities) as the largest and finest in the world; historical reading books describing the American population as the most free and enlightened under heaven and American spelling-books, dictionaries and grammar teaching them an anti-British dialect and idiom."

On May 30, 1972, the Toronto Star's editorial columns expressed exactly similar sentiments:

"American textbooks . . . can be an effective and insidious instrument for Americanizing the thinking of young Canadians at the most impressionable period of their lives. They can instill the idea that the United States is the centre of the world; that its foreign policy is always right and its opponents have always been wrong; that its ways of doing things are the most advanced and efficient on the globe."

To at least some nineteenth century Canadians, replacement of American schoolbooks by British texts was hardly a step forward. Stamp has recorded how George Brown fought against the Irish National Readers and demanded the provision of Canadian textbooks.²¹ But the increasing emphasis in the United States on citizenship and loyalty to a national state did not occur in Canada because loyalty was to Britain and to British institutions. For Canadians, nationalism wore the garb of imperialism, as Ramsay Cook has pointed out - and to that extent merely reflected the ideological propensity of people in all the western nations, including the United States, to fuse the two concepts into one.²²

¹⁷J.G. Hodgins, *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada*, Vol. 1 (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1896), p. 34.

¹⁸J.G. Hodgins, *Schools and Colleges of Ontario*, Vol. 1, p. 153

¹⁹C.E. Phillips quoting Egerton Ryerson in "Canadian-American Experience in Educational Co-operation," from *Education in the Postwar World* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1947), p. 98.

²⁰J.G. Hodgins, *Documentary History*, Vol. III. p. 3.

²¹Robert M. Stamp, "Canadian Education and the National Identity," *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 5, No. 3 (December, 1971), pp. 134-35.

²²Ramsay Cook, "The Uses of Literature in Cultural History," unpublished ms. (Toronto: Canada Studies Foundation, 1971), p. 3.

Be that as it may, Stamp is probably right in suggesting that Confederation brought little change in civic education in Canadian schools. Education was made a provincial concern and the British North American colonies retained the school systems they had developed before 1867. Paradoxically, an American-style patriotism was gradually promoted by means of flag-saluting, allegiance-pledging, patriotic songs and poems and other means. Much of this centered on Empire Day which, more than July 1st, became the Canadian equivalent of July 4th²³.

The most interesting effort to develop a distinctive Canadian nationalism after Confederation was that associated with the Canada First movement. Carl Berger has shown how this movement, based on imperialistic and racist thinking, advanced the concept of the northern character of Canada as one of the chief attributes of her nationality.²⁴ Northern character was seen as deriving from Canada's northern location, her severe winters and her heritage of "northern races." It was reflected in the key words of the national anthem, "the true north strong and free" which provides the title of Berger's fascinating paper.

Life in our northern latitudes was seen as creating and sustaining self-reliance, strength and hardihood. If "northern" was synonymous with strength and self-reliance, "southern" was equated with degeneration, decay and effeminacy. Liberty was believed to have originated among the tribes of northern Europe and depended on northern characteristics. Ideas like this were expressed by such Canada Firsters as Robert Grant, Haliburton who entitled his 1869 address to the Montreal Literary Club, "We are the Northmen of the New World." Invoking the glories of the Canadian winter, Haliburton took what had been since Voltaire's time, to quote Berger, "the symbol of sterility, inhospitality and worthlessness and turned it into the dynamic element of national greatness."²⁵ Similar views were expressed by a Nova Scotia school teacher, Charles R. Little, in a two-volume history of Canada.²⁶

Later nationalists such as George Parkin, pursuing the theme of northernness during the 1890s, claimed that due to its climate, Canada would have no negro problem "which weighs like a troublesome nightmare upon the civilization of the United States." Nor would its cities "attract the vagrant population of Italy and other countries of Southern Europe." Thus did the theory of northernness supply a basis for anti-Americanism. Climate was

²³Stamp, "Canadian Education and the National Identity," p. 137.

²⁴Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free" in Peter Russell (ed.), *Nationalism in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Limited, 1966), pp. 3-26.

²⁵*Ibid.* pp. 5-7.

²⁶Charles R. Little, *Popular History of the Dominion of Canada*, 2 vols., Boston, 1877 and 1879, cited by Berger.

claimed as a “fundamental political and social advantage which the Dominion enjoys over the United States.” It ensured an order and liberty that contrasted sharply with the disorderly American democracy in the enervating climes to the south.²⁷

Concepts of Canadian nationalism inherent in the notion of northern character have a long intellectual history that should be known to teachers and students, especially at a time when we are experiencing a new upsurge of national feeling. As a theme, this notion has continued into our own time in the writings of Vincent Massey, a son-in-law, incidentally, of George Parkin, in those of W.L. Morton and in John Diefenbaker’s northern vision to which, as Berger says, Canadians eagerly responded. Berger states:²⁹

“If Canadian nationalism is to be understood, its meaning must be sought and apprehended not simply in the sphere of politician decisions, but also in myths, legends and symbols . . . For while some might think that Canadians have happily been immune to the wilder manifestations of the nationalist impulse and rhetoric, it seems that they too have had their utopian dreamers, and that they are not totally innocent of a tradition of racism and a falsified but glorious past . . .”

It would be a fascinating and much-needed exercise for an historian of Canadian education to trace the influence in our curricula of these ideas and many others. Certainly, myths, legends and symbols related to Canadian northernness abounded in much that was taught to some of us, as for example, in the novels of R.M. Ballantyne which I was required to read in school and, later, to assign to my own pupils. The writings of Ralph Connor and Robert Service provide further examples. Such writings formed an admixture with the writings of Kipling and many others that dwelt on imperial glories, the whole forming the colonial curriculum to which several generations were subjected.

TWENTIETH CENTURY SEARCHES FOR COMMON APPROACHES AND NATIONAL GOALS

Another story that needs to be told is that of the long quest for a common approach to Canadian history. As Phillips reminds us, the subject ranked a poor second to British history for many years after Confederation. The place of British and Canadian history in schools “was determined less by educational considerations than by the fear that an opposition party might exploit the susceptibility of the voters to cries of disloyalty.” Thus, when in Ontario the requirement of British history for high school entrance was rescinded at the request of teachers and inspectors, it was suddenly and

²⁷Parkin quoted in Berger, *op. cit.*, pp. 9,15.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

almost immediately restored in December 1893, when an election was in prospect. Nevertheless, Phillips tells us, there was a tendency to give increasing attention to Canadian history.³⁰

Not surprisingly, the quest for a common approach to Canadian history that would be acceptable alike to French and English-speaking Canadians has been closely related to attempts to create viable national organizations in education. Such attempts, starting with the formation of the Dominion Educational Association in 1892 (renamed the Canadian Education Association in 1918), followed later by the National Council on Education in 1919, comprise an interesting chapter in our efforts to develop a national consciousness in educational matters. The latter organization during its life (which ended before World War II) displayed special interest in problems of education related to citizenship.³¹ At the 1892 founding meeting of the Dominion Education Association, there was asked a question that has been asked many times since:³²

“Are we going to be provincial in our education or are we going to be national? . . . Let us try and do what the politicians have not yet done, - what the public sentiment of this country has not yet done, viz., to band together the twenty thousand teachers of Canada . . . and through them declare to the world that Canada is not divided into provincial ideas, but that the sentiments of the provinces are formed into one harmonious whole.”

The president of the new body, George W. Ross, Minister of Education for Ontario, made a comment reflecting other views long familiar to Canadian teachers:³³

“I have perused with great care the various histories in use in all the provinces of this Dominion, and I have found them all to be merely provincial histories, without reference to our common country . . . Can't we agree upon certain broad features common to the whole of this Dominion with which we can indoctrinate our pupils, so that when a child takes up the history of Canada, he feels that he is not simply taking up the history of Canada, such as the old Canada was, but that he is taking up the history of a great country.”

The story of the efforts of the Association to sponsor a common text on the history of Canada that would be acceptable to all provinces has recently been told by Professor Genevieve Jain.³⁴ The provincial governments did follow up the idea and contributed \$2000 for a prize competition which yielded fifteen manuscripts. Although the winning one was published in 1897, the plan was not successful.³⁵ Professor Jain's interesting paper

³⁰C.E. Phillips, *The Development of Education in Canada* (Toronto: W.J. Gage Limited, 1957), p. 487.

³¹For a brief discussion of these developments see Phillips *op. cit.* pp. 347-50.

³²Dominion Education Association, *Minutes and Proceedings*, 1892, pp. 50-51.

³³Dominion Education Associations, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

³⁴Genevieve Jain, “Trois Generations de nationalisme dans les écoles du Québec et de l'Ontario, 1867-1914” (unpublished paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Montreal, 1972).

reveals, too, in reports of legislative debates about the teaching of patriotism, that earlier nineteenth century concerns about this topic and about American influences were still very much alive in Ontario during the 1890s. It also reveals what a wealth of material is available for those who are interested in the history of curriculum development as it relates to the promotion of national consciousness. Finally, it reveals the familiar ideological pitfalls facing those who would develop curricula on a national scale. This was the experience of the Canadian Education Association which in 1943 established a committee for the study of Canadian history textbooks. The committee's report, published in 1945, is particularly interesting for its account of the difficulties that were met. As the report notes, "The mere knowledge that the Committee was at work led to the publication of a number of articles and editorial comments in one section of the press, most of which were of such a character as to incite distrust of the project." The reader is told that "No sooner had the letters to historians on 'Certain Controversial Questions' been prepared than the Committee was embarrassed by the resignation of the member who had been designated as French Secretary for this undertaking."³⁶ The report did recommend a more balanced and comprehensive treatment of Canadian history but its limited success in achieving the acceptance of history textbooks emphasizing "the common heritage of the Canadian people" may be divined by reading the findings of the B and B Commission's special study of this question that was conducted a generation later.³⁷

The story of late nineteenth century efforts to universalize schooling and to broaden the curriculum is an aspect of the story of industrialization and urbanization which is beginning to receive the attention of our social historians. Related to it is the story of the part played by our schools in socializing immigrants to a dominantly Anglo-Saxon value system. That story is likely to be revealed as much by literary as by historical materials. We need to know much more about how the Canadianization process was reflected in the curriculum, in the administration and organization of the schools, and in the many statements of "philosophy" that emanated from provincial departments of education over the decades.

The struggle to universalize schooling and to broaden the curriculum antedates Confederation, of course, and a study of it can conveniently begin with the work of Egerton Ryerson which points up the longstanding tension between so-called "progressive" and "traditional" strains in our

³⁵Discussed by Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

³⁶The Canadian Education Association, "Report of the Committee for the Study of Canadian History Textbooks," *Canadian Education*, 1, No. 1 (October 1945), pp. 3-34.

³⁷Marcel Trudel and Genevieve Jain, *Canadian History Textbooks, A Comparative Study*, Studies of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, No. 5 (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1970).

education. We know very little about the continuing debate over ends and means in Canadian education that has focussed so much on this tension. The story of the acceptance of science teaching in Ontario schools before it was widely accepted in Great Britain is an interesting footnote, together with the introduction of the practical subjects, the so-called "frills" that latter day traditionalists were to denounce so vigorously. The social context in which these changes occurred is rarely appreciated, but a detailed study of the Macdonald movement that arose after 1890 would probably tell us much. This major national intervention in the Canadian curriculum was undertaken by a philanthropist, Sir William Macdonald, who was interested in promoting a more practical, less bookish schooling, better suited to the needs of an industrializing society. Shortly, there developed the Federal Government's interest in promoting technical training. The influence that both these developments have had on curricula, and the extent to which they have promoted national perspectives in education is another question that needs to be investigated. Professor Stamp has recently contributed to our knowledge in this respect.³⁸

Various efforts to promote national consciousness through such bodies as the C.B.C. and the National Film Boards, to name but two, are also little known, especially where their impact on curricula is concerned. The myth of provincial autonomy effectively disguises the large, even determining role long played by Ottawa in education. With forty federal agencies presently spending over two billion dollars annually on education, this role has probably never been larger. With much talk about the need for a national industrial strategy, our constitutional blindfolds prevent us from seeing the comparable need for a national educational strategy. Paradoxically, such a strategy could be a means of according a greater respect for provincial rights in education, since the federal role would at least become clearly defined. The complex story of the numerous efforts to establish a formal federal presence in education since 1867 is another one that needs to be better known.

Related to the question of a national strategy is the old one of whether there is a recognizable entity called Canadian education. We also need to ask how Canadians have perceived education. It might be profitable for curriculum scholars to investigate the views of such educators as Sir Arthur Currie, Sir Fred Clark and Peter Sandiford all of whom at various times maintained that a distinctive Canadian philosophy of education could be

³⁸See Robert M. Stamp, "Technical Education, the National Policy, and Federal-Provincial Relations in Canadian Education 1899-1919" *Canadian Historical Review*, L11, H (December, 1971), pp. 404-423.

identified and, moreover, attempted to define one themselves.³⁹ Such efforts were related to attempts to define a common Canadian value system and, as noted above, this can be traced back at least as far as the Canada Firsters and forward to Vincent Massey, right down to our present period of national soul searching. Again, such efforts should be of interest to curriculum scholars concerned with Canadian Studies. Recently, social scientists such as Naegele and Porter have examined the Canadian psyche from a more scholarly point of view. These analyses and those of foreign scholars such as Seymour Lipset in his well known comparative studies of Canadian and American societies and value systems are also of interest.⁴⁰ All make reference to education and, for our purposes, it is instructive to note Porter's belief that the Canadian emphasis on pluralism, particularly as exemplified by ethnic differentiation, has served class interests in Canadian society and reduced democratic possibilities, including equality of educational opportunity. Porter claims that education is not valued in Canadian society and that educational policies are slow to emerge from a political system based on elitist principles. Here could be an explanation of the lack of interest in educational research in Canada, including curriculum research and development. We might also note Downey's study of the Canadian image of education which showed that, especially compared with Americans, the Canadian public saw education as serving individual rather than social needs. His work, carried out more than ten years ago, showed that Canadians rated the teaching of world citizenship as more important than the teaching of Canadian patriotism.⁴¹

CANADIAN STUDIES PROGRAMS AND PROPOSALS FOR NEW NATIONAL EFFORTS IN CURRICULUM

The present interest in the Canadian Studies curriculum may be said to have been officially launched with the publication of Hodgetts' report.

³⁹See Sir Arthur Currie, "Is Canadian Education Fulfilling its Purpose?" *Proceedings Eleventh National Conference of Canadian Universities*, London, Ontario, 1927; Sir Fred Clarke, "Education in Canada - an Impression," *Queen's Quarterly*, XLII (Autumn 1935), pp. 309-321 and "Secondary Education in Canada," *The Yearbook of Education for 1934*, London, 1934; Peter Sandiford, *Comparative Education*, second edition, (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1927) and "Curriculum Revision in Canada," *The School* (February 1938), pp. 472-477.

⁴⁰See Kaspar D. Naegele, "Canadian Society: Some Reflections; and "Canadian Society: Further Reflections" in B. Blishen (ed.) *et al*, *Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives*, revised edition, (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1964), pp. 1-19, 497-522; John Porter, "Social Change and the Aims and Problems of Education in Canada," *McGill Journal of Education*, 1, No. 2 (Fall, 1966), pp. 125-130 and *The Vertical Mosaic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965); S.M. Lipset, "Value Differences, Absolute or Relative: The English-Speaking Democracies" in B. Blishen (ed.), *op. cit.* pp. 325-40; "Canada and the United States - a Comparative View," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 1, No. 4 (November, 1964), pp. 173-185.

⁴¹L.W. Downey, "A Canadian Image of Education" in B. Blishen (ed.), *Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives*, third edition (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1968), pp. 213-14.

Launched significantly enough as a centennial project by the board of governors of exclusive Trinity College School for Boys in Port Hope, Ontario, the report comprises the most thorough study of the teaching of any subject area ever conducted in Canada. It rapidly became, and remains, that *rara avis* in Canada, a best seller on a topical educational problem.

Apart from the desire to investigate “the unsubstantiated but very extensive volume of criticism that questions the value of Canadian Studies . . .” the investigation was motivated by the belief that “the quality of civic education in any nation is an important factor in moulding that nation’s future”, by “the apparent lack of understanding and sense of national purpose among Canadians as we approached the one-hundredth anniversary of Confederation” and by “the conviction that the study of Canada and its problems should and could be one of the most vital subjects taught in our schools and . . . could become a much more effective instrument than it now is in the fostering of understanding among (our) people . . .”⁴²

In essence, *What Culture? What Heritage?* is an assessment of civic education — that is, of the influence of formal instruction in developing the feelings and attitudes of young Canadians towards their country and its problems and the knowledge on which these attitudes are based. Its conclusions are now familiar enough, centering on the dominance of a narrow, almost pedantic view of Canadian history based, as noted earlier, on what Hodgetts called a bland consensus interpretation that failed to excite the interest of students in the vast majority of the nearly 1000 classrooms that he visited. The great regional and cultural diversity of the country was ignored as were those “continuing Canadian concerns” that in the past and today have dominated our social, economic, cultural and political life, e.g., urbanization, technology, the American presence, biculturalism, regional disparity — to name only the most prominent. The parochialism of teachers, their lack of skill and training in Canadian Studies, their adherence to outmoded teaching methods and their subservience to school bureaucracies were major classroom factors contributing to the low estate of the field. Outside the schools, the universities were the major source of the problem due to the fussy methodology purveyed by faculties of education and the concomitant lack of any philosophical or historiographical context in which to view the problems of teaching. This was complemented by the arid scholasticism of academics in faculties of arts with their seeming disdain for teachers, if not for teaching itself. Hodgetts regarded as one of his major findings that all the weaknesses he observed in the schools were present in the institutions of higher education.⁴³

⁴²Hodgetts, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

⁴³Hodgetts, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

It is all too easy to fault Hodgetts' assumptions, methodology and conclusions. The great strength of his study is that it is based on detailed classroom observations. He claims to be able to support every statement made about the actual teaching process from actual data in his files. He points out that very few studies of subjects and methods of teaching have been carried out by means of actual observations. Thus, recent U.S. studies of political socialization that have emphasized attitude surveys and tests of political knowledge of children make generalizations about the actual and potential influence of schooling in the absence of information about the classroom process itself.

On the other hand, Hodgetts' preoccupation with what was taught and with teaching methods caused him to ignore learner characteristics, those forces contributing to what Stephens calls "spontaneous schooling", i.e., the obscure, unconscious but powerful constellations of motivations and dispositions with which the child enters the classroom.⁴⁴ In deploring the "sharply opposed views of our history" that he observed in the classrooms of the two cultures and in implying that these may result in "entirely different value systems", Hodgetts surely confuses symptom with cause. These systems are more likely an inevitable outgrowth of the traditions and historical experience of each group - of the spontaneous forces which Stephens, together with Coleman, Plowden and others have identified as powerful determinants of learning, constituting the hidden curriculum referred to earlier. Hodgetts' study focussed on the secondary level although contemporary psychological evidence would point to the necessity of stressing earlier schooling when attitudes are probably most decisively formed.

Hodgetts' basic prescription for reform was the establishment of a Canadian Studies Consortium, an interprovincial but politically independent organization to be sanctioned by the Council of Ministers of Education for the purpose of serving as a data bank and clearing house for the activities of several regional centres exclusively concerned with the development of Canadian Studies materials and teaching strategies. In effect, this comprised a recommendation for decentralized, grass-roots, teacher-based reform, predicated on improving the quality of teaching by both pre-service and in-service means. The organization was planned to function via the regional centres, in co-operation with departments of education, school boards, teachers organizations, faculties of education, universities and interested lay groups.

In line with Hodgetts' recommendation, the Canada Studies Foundation was established in March, 1970 with the general aim of improving the quality of Canadian Studies mainly at the elementary and secondary school levels over a five-year period. During this period, it is hoped that new

⁴⁴Stephens, *op. cit.*

materials, and teaching approaches of sufficient merit will have been developed that can be “plugged into” courses of study in private and secondary school systems across Canada. To this end, and with the approval of the Council of Ministers of Education of the ten provinces, the Foundation assists in the development of and co-operation among project teams of educators in different parts of Canada. These regional teams are composed of people from different levels and interests in education - classroom teachers, university professors representing different disciplines, curriculum specialists, administrators and community personnel. This co-operative process of “horizontal” interaction (i.e., across provincial and regional boundaries) and “vertical” interaction (among various levels of educators) is regarded as of at least equal importance to any “concrete” products that may emerge from the Foundation’s work. The Foundation is thus in no sense a curriculum development project analogous to the well known American projects that flourished during the 1960 s. It is both less and more than that: less because, as already implied, it is not concerned with developing a total curriculum in Canadian studies; more because, as a facilitating and funding organization, it seeks to develop new processes of interaction in Canadian education through new means of communication among teachers and students. It has a primary interest in what have been called the “secondary effects” or “side effects” of the learning process.

By the end of 1972, more than thirty teams were functioning in all ten provinces, developing materials and approaches around such broad topics as urbanization, regionalism and cultural diversity, the influence of the American mass media on francophone and anglophone societies and the impact of technology.⁴⁵ The basic organizing principle being used for all work is that of “continuing Canadian concerns”. “Continuing” implies the necessary historical perspective if students are to understand the significance of contemporary issues in Canadian life. “Concerns” imply an interest in those questions that are relevant to the needs and welfare of all or most Canadians because they have significance for the quality of the civic life of our citizens. It is generally agreed that more attention needs to be paid to social history through developing materials and approaches related to such areas as labour history, family studies, immigration, women in Canadian history and so on. Approaches utilizing concepts from the new social sciences also need to be explored. We have a substantial and growing body of regional literature which has yet to find its way into our curricula. If we take a broader view of history, extending beyond political and diplomatic affairs, we may find that the boundary between history and fiction disappears. This has already happened in the general public domain where the best narrative history, such as the work of Pierre Berton, has achieved a popular success never vouchsafed the novel in Canada. As for fiction

⁴⁵See Canada Studies Foundation, *Annual Report*, (Toronto: The Foundation, 1972).

per se, there are now history courses in which much of the reading consists of Canadian novels. Eli Mandel's course on Canadian Culture and Society at York University is a *tour de force* in Canadian humanistic education.

A glance at the largest project funded by the Canada Studies Foundation illustrates the principles upon which its work is constructed. Project Canada West brings together teams from the four western provinces in the development of curriculum materials and themes around the topic of Canadian urbanization. As such, it is a project unique in the history of Canadian education where curriculum development is concerned. Utilizing the talents of approximately 75 teachers and an equal number of consultants, Project Canada West pools people and resources from the four provinces to create new patterns of co-operation among diverse groups, including most of the western universities, all the provincial teachers associations, the provincial departments of education and most of the larger urban school systems. Fourteen project teams, each working on a particular facet of urbanization, are developing materials and procedures that it is hoped can be used across Canada. The participating teachers and the estimated 3,000 students that have become involved are becoming aware, often for the first time, of the viewpoints and problems of their counterparts in neighbouring provinces.

At Brunskill Elementary School in Saskatoon, teachers and pupils are investigating how identity is achieved in a modern urban society. Pupils are encouraged to consider "Who am I?" and through discussions and interviews with their classmates, begin to realize that each is unique in terms of cultural or ethnic background, family tradition and origins. Interviews with teachers and parents expand the concept of identity, and, of equal importance, give pupils valuable social and inquiry skills. Interviews with retirees in local senior citizens' homes are the culmination of this phase of the work and permit application of these skills with considerable success. In Saskatchewan, the life of a senior citizen spans the history of the province and through the interviews, pupils were led into such topics as the world wars and the depression. They also learned that recent decades have seen a marked shift of population from country to city, not only in Saskatchewan but throughout Canada. Younger pupils were led to ask, "Has Canada been in many wars?" Older pupils, viewing pictures of the depression Regina riots, realized that social protest is not a phenomenon unique to the 1970s.

In Nanaimo, B.C. another Project Canada West team is developing a study of municipal government. Here, senior secondary students, with the help of questionnaires designed under the direction of teachers and a U.B.C. political science specialist in urban government, are studying citizens' perceptions of and participation in the political process at the municipal level. This activity will lead to a consideration of urban political problems in relation to provincial and national policies. A simulation game developed around the

theme of Canadian urban government, utilizing Nanaimo as a data base, will provide a teaching aid useful in classroom settings elsewhere in Canada. As in the Brunskill project, teachers' guides are planned including accounts of the development procedures used and examples of the instruments created (e.g. questionnaires) that should be of assistance to schools anywhere that are seeking to pursue similar themes.

The Laurentian Projects, funded largely by the Canada Council, are a group of bilingual projects involving teachers and students from Quebec and Ontario schools. Thus, groups from Quebec and Peterborough, working on the theme of technology and its impact on Canadian society, have exchanged materials and personnel as a means of testing out various units of work that have been developed. Funds for exchanges and translation have been provided from special grants made by the Secretary of State. Another project, also based on exchanges of teachers, students and materials, involves groups from Montreal and Toronto who are developing common approaches to the study of various periods in Canadian history, utilizing source materials in each case from the "other" side.

The Canada Studies Foundation has encouraged the first co-operative endeavour between educators of Hull and Ottawa in the National Capital Region. In an attempt to bridge what the B and B Commission called "the widest river in Canada", English and French-speaking educators from schools and universities in the region are developing studies around the theme "Towards a Mutual Understanding", based on historical and contemporary considerations of what makes a citizen in this setting. Among the products envisaged is a kit on the National Capital Region that could be used elsewhere.

Another Laurentian Project brings together teachers, writers, artists and other academics for the purpose of exploring "l'dee de la nation" through a series of dialogues based on an examination of Canadian literature and art, two of the most neglected areas of our curricula. Utilizing a wide range of sources, e.g., writers and artists themselves, galleries, museums, historic sites, it is intended that a series of folios, guides, manuals and short reports be produced that will facilitate the use of Canadian literary and artistic materials and activities in any subject area of the curriculum.

Project Atlantic Canada was recently described in the *Canadian Forum*, possibly with some exaggeration, as "the one really successful example of Atlantic co-operation in education . . ." ⁴⁶ The purpose of the project is the production of materials and the development of teaching strategies within the broad theme of regionalism and cultural diversity. Consisting of four semi-autonomous groups (one involving teachers in Newfoundland-

⁴⁶Peter McCreath, "Current Developments in Education in Atlantic Canada," *The Canadian Forum*, L11, No. 621-2 (October/November 1972), p. 72.

Labrador, a second based in New Brunswick, a third joint N.S.-P.E.I. group, a fourth involving francophone teachers from the four provinces), the work is proceeding under the direction of a co-ordinating committee representative of all of them. As in Project Canada West, most of the universities, all the teachers' associations, the departments of education and many school districts are co-operating, with the aim of developing materials and approaches in a Canada-wide context for Canada-wide use.

While work has been proceeding in the three major regional groupings of Foundation projects described here, the secretariat of the Foundation has devoted considerable effort to the development of guidelines for the conduct of Canadian Studies programs at all levels for use within and outside the projects. This work and the concomitant development of a conceptual framework for Canadian Studies is a rare example of indigenous effort in Canada. As in so many other areas, we have been content to live off the largess of others. The Massey Royal Commission in criticizing our dependence on educational research made no concrete suggestions for remedying this condition.⁴⁷ It is indeed likely that the commissioners, given their own biases and their unwillingness to have their own folk wisdom challenged, saw no need for such research. The basic questions of why we teach, what we teach, how we teach - as difficult as any in social science - have continued to be ignored in the academic community - possibly because academics realize that these questions go to the roots of their own professional lives. Attitudes are illustrated by the statement by a member of a social science department noted for its research on poverty, that all the preparation needed for a career in the schools is an honours degree in one's subject and some practice teaching. It had apparently never occurred to this man that the problem of teaching children of poverty might raise as many questions as the question of poverty itself.

Basic to the work of the Canada Studies Foundation is the central role of the teacher. In the highly centralized provincial courses of study in the past, the curriculum was literally what was handed from "on high" to the teacher - although, to be sure, imaginative and innovative teachers have always found the means to interpret curricula in their own way once the classroom door has been shut. In the typical American curriculum projects of the 1960's, development was largely in the hands of academic experts who sometimes set out to create what they frankly called "teacher proof" packages. Not surprisingly, this approach did little to change what happens in classrooms. With decentralization of curricula now in vogue, the teacher

⁴⁷ *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949-51* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), pp. 15-16.

is becoming a curriculum planner. This does not obviate the need for theoretical work in curriculum development but, as Connelly has argued, it does suggest the need for new forms of training for teachers in curriculum decision-making.⁴⁸ It is clear that the teacher is rightly no longer content to be a hewer of wood and drawer of water for academics and administrators. In Canada Studies Foundation projects, training and expertise are provided through workshops and conferences, together with built-in provision for academic and curriculum consultation. Time is provided by funds that pay for the release of teachers, the hiring of substitutes and honoraria for summer workshop activities.

Yet it would be naive to suppose that such efforts, given resource limitations and experience elsewhere, can be much more than palliatives. We need to consider a national but decentralized effort in teacher education, focussing mostly on the in-service level and devoted to building curriculum development skills. This effort must be field-based rather than university-based, possibly along the lines of the "training complexes" proposed in the United States by B.O. Smith or the teachers' centres in the United Kingdom.⁴⁹ Such a national effort could be the major function of the successor organization which the Canada Studies Foundation hopes to bring into being after 1975. This is the Foundation's ultimate goal, the projects described here being regarded as means of demonstrating the feasibility of an interprovincial educational enterprise. To date, reliance has been mainly on private funding but the matching support that has been generated from the many groups co-operating in the field, as described here, together with Canada Council and Secretary of State funding and the endorsement of the Council of Ministers, suggests that the ultimate goal is realizable. Certainly the proposed organization would have to be non-political and semi-autonomous. This suggests a model analogous to that of the Schools Council of Great Britain. As such, it could have far-reaching implications for teacher education, educational research and curriculum development in Canada. It could, in short, be part of an interprovincial educational strategy. The formation in 1972 of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, a federation of several pre-existing separate professional groups, could assist the promotion of such a strategy. The new society is represented on the Social Science Research Council which has recently, for the first time, recognized education as a discipline for its purposes. Where research is concerned, we need many more studies of the type cited here that were instigated by Naegele, Porter and others during the 1960s, as well as historical studies of the type undertaken by Berger. More directly in line with

⁴⁸F. Michael Connelly, "The Functions of Curriculum Development," unpublished mss. (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1972).

⁴⁹See B.O. Smith *et al*, *Teachers for the Real World*. (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1969).

the concern of this paper for curriculum, we need historical studies of how curriculum has developed in Canada, together with studies of the roles of school, family and other institutions in the socialization of children and youth in the past. We also need contemporary studies of how the political socialization of Canadian young people occurs and how values and attitudes are formed. Fortunately, all these matters are beginning to engage the attention of Canadian social scientists and educational researchers.⁵⁰

In the work of the Canada Studies Foundation, there has been recognized the need for a national journal for teachers in the field, a professional organization and an information retrieval system or network that might also include consultative services. All these needs present familiar difficulties associated with the bilingual character of Canada and its extreme regionalism. For example, a plethora of provincial journals and teachers organizations exist. This is highly desirable but does make difficult the assembling of the "critical mass" of resources, including people, needed for effective work on the national scene. There is likewise a plethora of local Canadian Studies activity in the form of conferences, workshops, short courses and many other related activities. An information and consultative service would be valuable in making these efforts better known and in co-ordinating them where this seems necessary or desirable.

The Canada Studies Foundation's efforts are, as indicated, directed mainly to the elementary and secondary levels. Its interest in teacher education suggests a greater future concern for the post-secondary level. In 1971, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education established an office of Canadian Studies, one of the first activities of which was the holding of a national conference on Canadian Studies in the universities. The conference provided an inventory of an impressive and growing extent of activity in the field. A similar conference of junior colleges was held in October, 1972. A number of strong programs in Canadian Studies have been established in these institutions in several provinces. Also in 1972, a special commission of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada was set up, with Canada Council funding, to investigate Canadian Studies offerings at the post-secondary level. The commission has a broad mandate and it is to be hoped that concrete proposals may be forthcoming that will enhance the scope and quality of Canadian Studies programs in colleges and universities.

⁵⁰For some examples, see P.N. Byrne, "Political Orientations of Canadian Urban Elementary, Junior and High School Students." Unpublished master's thesis, University of Toronto, 1970; G. Peter Smith, "Soundings in the Development of Political Perception in Canadian Children." Unpublished master's thesis, Carleton University, 1970; Edmund Sullivan *et al*, "The Development of Canadian Students' Political Conceptions," *Interchange*, 1, No. 3 (1970), pp. 56-67; David M. Williams, "A Study of Pre-adolescent Value Preferences: Grade, Sex and Socio-economic Differences." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1972; John W. Kehoe, "An Experimental Study of Values and Attitudes," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1972.